

1 KODIAK/ALEUTIANS FEDERAL SUBSISTENCE
2 REGIONAL ADVISORY COUNCIL MEETING

3
4 PUBLIC MEETING

5
6 VOLUME II

7
8 Best Western Kodiak Inn
9 Kodiak, Alaska
10 September 30, 2015
11 9:00 a.m.

12
13
14
15 COUNCIL MEMBERS PRESENT:

16
17 Speridon Simeonoff (Telephonic)
18 Melissa Berns
19 Coral Chernoff
20 Patrick Holmes
21 Thomas Schwantes
22 Antone Shelikoff
23 Rebecca Skinner
24 Della Trumble (Telephonic)
25
26 Regional Council Coordinator, Karen Deatherage

27
28
29
30
31
32
33
34
35
36
37
38
39
40
41 Recorded and transcribed by:

42
43 Computer Matrix Court Reporters, LLC
44 135 Christensen Drive, Suite 2
45 Anchorage, AK 99501
46 907-243-0668/sahile@gci.net

1
2
3
4
5
6
7
8
9
10
11
12
13
14
15
16
17
18
19
20
21
22
23
24
25
26
27
28
29
30
31
32
33
34
35
36
37
38
39
40
41
42
43
44
45
46
47
48
49
50

P R O C E E D I N G S

(Kodiak, Alaska - 9/30/2015)

(On record)

MADAME CHAIR BERNS: Good morning.
Mitch and Della, are you on the line.

MS. TRUMBLE: Della, I'm here.

MADAME CHAIR BERNS: We'll give Mitch a
few more minutes.

MR. SIMEONOFF: Good morning, this is
Mitch.

MADAME CHAIR BERNS: Good morning,
Mitch. Anyone from Karluk on the line.

(No comments)

MADAME CHAIR BERNS: We're hoping to
have somebody from Karluk on the line this morning
under our tribal governments to give a report.

(Pause)

MADAME CHAIR BERNS: Go ahead.

MS. DEATHERAGE: Good morning
everybody. This is Karen Deatherage, the Council
coordinator. First, I'd like to remind the Council we
do have two motions that were tabled yesterday that are
currently on the floor.

We have the wildlife proposal, No. 16-
21, and that proposal is waiting for -- pending a
report from the area biologist before the Council makes
a decision.

The second proposal is for the Board of
Fish, No. 194. A copy of that has been given to you
this morning. There are also copies of that proposal
on the table in the back for the public. And we are
waiting for a report from the area biologist before a
decision is made on that proposal. There was a request
from one of the Council members yesterday for an
analysis, a Staff analysis from Fish and Game on the
Board of Fish Proposal, No. 194. We were informed by

1 Fish and Game that that analysis will not be a
2 available until February prior to the Board of Fish
3 Board meeting.

4
5 Secondly, I did want to make a comment
6 about yesterday's meeting and, in particular, the FRMP
7 process, the Fisheries Resource Monitoring Program.
8 One of the things that I've noticed, and I've been here
9 a very short period of time, but -- is that this
10 Council, in the last two cycles, anyway, have always
11 been the first Council out of the gate to meet, the
12 Kodiak Council has, and often the Staff prepares these
13 new presentations and you guys are the ones that get
14 the first shot at it. And we want to let you know
15 that, first of all, we really appreciate the time and
16 the energy that you put into it because it helps the
17 Staff work out a lot of tweaks for our next meetings
18 coming up. And even though it may take some time, your
19 input has very much been appreciated. We went through
20 that last year with the rural determination process.
21 And I can tell you that I, proudly, told the folks back
22 at the office that the majority of the comments that
23 were valid that came in were from this Council and the
24 public meeting here in Kodiak. And, again, you were
25 the first one to get the report on the latest update on
26 the rural determination.

27
28 So, although it takes some time, we
29 want to let you know that we really appreciate it.

30
31 Thank you.

32
33 MADAME CHAIR BERNS: Do we have Karluk
34 on the line?

35
36 (Comments)

37
38 MADAME CHAIR BERNS: I think we'll come
39 out of recess and go right into tribal government
40 reports. It is 9:08. And for tribal government
41 reports, we've got Tom Lance with Sun'aq Tribe of
42 Kodiak.

43
44 MR. LANCE: Good morning everyone.
45 Madame Chair. Council. My name is Tom Lance with
46 Sun'aq Tribe of Kodiak, Natural Resources Department
47 Director.

48
49 I just want to give a quick update
50 reminding us of where we were at at the last meeting.

1 The tribal council is still very concerned about the
2 sea otter. You heard Tribal Vice Chair, John Reft,
3 yesterday, speak about that.

4
5 They're also very concerned about the
6 ghost pot fishing going on, derelict crab pots.

7
8 Now, to add more to the -- fuel to the
9 fire, I guess, things that they're also concerned
10 about, and these have developed now since the last time
11 we met, the issue of invasive species with crayfish in
12 Buskin Lake. They've been there for some time,
13 according to Don Tracy, from Fish and Game, but now
14 with the current trend, with maybe warming climate,
15 warmer waters, perhaps these critters will become more
16 of a problem than what they've been in the past and
17 that's something that we want to find out more about,
18 learn about. Sun'aq Tribe is pursuing grant money to
19 try to team up with KRAA, the Kodiak Regional Aqua
20 Culture, and Fish and Game as well as Kodiak Saltwater
21 Conservation District, who has been pretty active doing
22 incidental trapping to supplement what Fish and Game
23 has done in the past. And this year they changed their
24 trapping technique and actually found enough crayfish
25 to make us kind of wonder, you know, do these guys --
26 are perhaps successful because they found clutches of
27 eggs on some of the females. So we would like to know
28 where they're going in the Buskin watershed and what
29 their potential impact may be to our fishery because
30 Buskin watershed, as you know, is the largest
31 subsistence fishery we have on the island, per capita,
32 I guess.

33
34 So that's that.

35
36 And then something that's been going on
37 for many years but never really caught much attention
38 because it's needed, it's for defense of our nation,
39 but it's the military training exercises that are
40 annually held, or nearly annually held in the Gulf of
41 Alaska. And this past year it came to a new level of
42 attention because of the timing of it. Before it had
43 been in the winter, during seasons when they -- we --
44 everybody thought it would have less impact on
45 fisheries and that sort of thing, and subsistence
46 fishery, again, is our major concern. What kind of
47 impact does the Navy training exercises in the Gulf of
48 Alaska have on salmon migrating past. And this year
49 the exercise began in middle of May and ended May 29th,
50 I believe, or thereabouts. And here we have a user of

1 a resource, the largest Federal agency, by any account
2 using the resource but, yet, they're not here talking
3 about what impacts they have on our resources. And the
4 Aleutian Island Chain, the whole coast of Alaska has
5 suffered quite a bit of impact from many different
6 disasters since World War II, not to mention, you know,
7 the most recent ones with Exxon Valdez and then now
8 with -- even Alaska Aero Space and their exploding
9 rocket here recently. We don't know anything about
10 that yet. They haven't released too many details about
11 what kind of impacts it may have on marine resources.

12

13 So I don't know if any of you saw the
14 paper yesterday, an article was in an insert called
15 Native Roots, it's an annual publication by the paper
16 every year, and Sun'aq Tribe presented a couple of
17 paragraphs regarding the Navy protest that we staged
18 this year. And I would like to just read through it
19 very quickly because I think it succinctly captures
20 everything that we were concerned about without going
21 into great details here.

22

23 The land and sea are our lifeblood with
24 connections intertwining our culture, yet, this past
25 June and, again, over most of the previous 30 years the
26 US Navy and other military branches have trained and
27 practiced in the Gulf of Alaska waters with little or
28 no understanding for the environmental consequences
29 they may impart. On June 10th, 2015 Sun'aq Tribe of
30 Kodiak and Native Village of Afognak Tribal Councils
31 joined in a formal government to government
32 consultation with DOD representatives. On all accounts
33 tribal leaders admonished DOD Navy for disregarding
34 aspects of life in the Gulf, including the local people
35 with some ancestral ties predating the fourth
36 millennium BC. Our declarations to oppose the Navy and
37 others potentially causing degradation to the Gulf of
38 Alaska are not based on emotion, they are more than
39 supported by science and recent legal rulings that have
40 banned harmful naval training practices off the coast
41 of Hawaii and California.

42

43 Sun'aq Tribe wishes to thank all of you
44 for protesting, reporting, sharing information about
45 the people of the Kodiak Archipelago and our ecosystem
46 that sustains us. Kodiak Island Borough, several
47 tribes, various fishermen all agree on one issue, the
48 Navy's use of the Gulf of Alaska for certain training
49 activities is unacceptable if it harms the web of life
50 from krill to whales. Kodiak and other Alaskan

1 communities have been under duress from various
2 disasters since World War II and we appear to be near a
3 tipping point for the natural resources based systems
4 our communities are built upon.

5
6 So that's our report. And we hope to
7 continue working with the Navy to mitigate any impacts
8 that they may have.

9
10 Thank you.

11
12 MADAME CHAIR BERNS: Thank you, Tom.
13 Do we have any questions or comments for Tom from the
14 Council.

15
16 Yes, Tom.

17
18 MR. SCHWANTES: Yeah, Tom, is there any
19 evidence that there's been harm to our resources as a
20 result of the Gulf activity?

21
22 MR. LANCE: We have no positive
23 conclusive evidence.

24
25 What's interesting is, is that just two
26 weeks prior to the Navy arriving for their exercises,
27 another Naval detachment was here investigating cites
28 leftover from World War II that still needed
29 remediation. And when I spoke to those folks they had
30 no idea that their counterparts would be back up here
31 two weeks later putting more ordinance and possibly
32 toxic materials back in the water. And so they were
33 very upset. We're upset that there's no plans for a
34 cleanup of this material that is -- some of it is being
35 deposited off shore, potentially on the Continental
36 Shelf, Portlock Bank, as an example, it's a very, very
37 important fishery for our community, including
38 subsistence use when they don't catch them right local
39 here in the bay.

40
41 But, yeah, a lot of the material that
42 they use is off shore in very deep water, but we still
43 are concerned about the impacts because nobody has
44 studied it, we don't know. And as far as the whales
45 go, we understand that a lot of the whales have died
46 recently because of perhaps toxins, (indiscernible)
47 acid and saxitoxin, things like that. But NOAA folks,
48 they aren't here today to give us a report on that.
49 I'd like to hear more about that too.

50

1 Thank you.

2

3 MR. SCHWANTES: Thank you, Tom.

4

5 MADAME CHAIR BERNS: Any further
6 questions or comments for Tom.

7

8 (No comments)

9

10 MADAME CHAIR BERNS: We have John Reft,
11 did you want to speak.

12

13 MR. REFT: John Reft, the Vice Chair of
14 Sun'aq. Commenting on the Navy out in that area,
15 blasting.

16

17 I spent five years out there with one
18 of the best, hardest fishermen on Kodiak Island fishing
19 king crab. We fished 10 to 15 miles off shore, it was
20 dangerous but out there was the biggest stock of crab
21 that Kodiak Island had, and nobody could compete out
22 there with Mr. Google, the guy I fished with, the
23 captain of the Widgeon. They were all scared to fish
24 out there, that's why it was so good. But I seen crew
25 members come and go, one after another, said we were
26 crazy but the money was good and the crab were
27 fantastic. When we'd come in with the king crab,
28 there'd be a line of boats unloading and whoever was
29 under the lift they moved them and always put us in.
30 There was a lot of resentment to Mr. Google because
31 they wanted those section crab, they were so huge. And
32 I never saw crab like that anywhere in the years down
33 in the Alitak and all over that, I fished as a
34 commercial fishermen. And these stocks of crab were
35 out there in mid-winter when it was touch and that's
36 the area where the Navy was blasting. And when I found
37 this out, then I started mentioning it to the council
38 at meetings and kept it up, nothing was happening, and
39 pretty soon word got out in town and this and that and
40 everybody got together and formed a protest down there
41 on the city dock. But it was too late.

42

43 But, to me, the Navy does not care, all
44 they want to do -- at that time they were talking
45 320,000 pounds to 620,000, and that just blew my mind
46 because the stocks out there -- and I mean you're
47 talking halibut, king, tanner crab, all those shellfish
48 and stuff, but not counting the salmon, herring and
49 everything else that go through there during the time
50 they're blasting.

1 And I did not agree with it and,
2 further, we got together with the coastal areas from
3 the -- like Cordova, Eyak Nation, Homer, Kenai, Kodiak,
4 Ouzinkie, Port Lyons, the Native Village of Afognak and
5 we all got together there and I made an agreement in
6 Anchorage with Miller, from Kenai, that the information
7 that we have would be sent to a guy in Cordova that was
8 working on this for next year and all that information
9 would be put together in one unit and Tom, our
10 biologist, is supposed to send his information to them
11 so we could all work together on it to protest it next
12 year, the bombing, get them out of there.

13
14 And then later on after we got this
15 thing going, I'm watching TV in the morning at 5:00
16 a.m., National Geographic, my wife's not there and I
17 can watch it then, but here comes the Navy blasting off
18 of California and they're denying they're doing any
19 damage, the officer that was on TV, denied there was no
20 damage whatsoever from the bombing, from the sonar,
21 tests and what they were doing. Then right after that
22 was over, I thought that was the end of it and here
23 comes another film on the same topic, and it showed
24 where they were bombing out there, there was like a
25 school of 70 dolphins got so scared and disoriented,
26 that they beached right in a harbor on the sand and the
27 people were down there fighting to get them back in the
28 water so they'd live and seven of them died, but this
29 denial of destruction I do not agree with from them.
30 And the guy that came to our meeting, when we talked
31 with them, and we didn't want it to happen, like Tom
32 probably said, he told us face to face there's no
33 problem whatsoever, but when you get whales and
34 different things dying out there, there's a reason for
35 it and those tests should not be allowed in our
36 traditional fishing waters where they can destroy a lot
37 of things.

38
39 And that's my objection, backing up
40 Tom's statement. I came in too late to hear it all,
41 but I'm sure he covered it thoroughly. So that's the
42 last on that comment.

43
44 The other one was from yesterday.

45
46 When there was predators, like in the
47 fishery, when I was a kid, I remember that one of the
48 biggest predators that the Fish and Game said that that
49 we had was the Dolly Varden. They eat the eggs in the
50 river in the fall and the fry when they come down in

1 the spring, and they had a five cent bounty on the tail
2 back then. These are really predators. And I object
3 to them making it a sportfishery out of it. This is
4 detrimental to the whole salmon industry and
5 everything. They're protected. All we're doing is
6 hurting ourselves. And there's a lot of them out
7 there. For instance, I checked just to see how bad it
8 was. So I caught a Dolly Varden in the Buskin above
9 the airport bridge, it was about that long (indicating)
10 and I cut it open and I checked the stomach and I
11 counted 90 salmon fry in one Dolly Varden.

12

13 MS. LEE: Wow.

14

15 MR. REFT: 90. And I could not believe
16 it because they were still intact in the stomach. They
17 eat and they get full, they go aside, then they come
18 back and eat again. They just keep doing that, and
19 that's not counting the eggs in the fall, what they do
20 to them. So that's very objectionable to protect the
21 Dolly Varden in my opinion.

22

23 The other one is the Buskin River and
24 all the rivers on the road system here are getting
25 overrun with bears. They're so protected by the Fish
26 and Game, and even the Coast Guard, you cannot do
27 anything out in the Buskin River to sportfish to
28 protect yourself and your family. And the bears are
29 all over the place, all the rivers, it's getting
30 dangerous and it won't be long before people start
31 getting mauled or killed. And I told them, I said, if
32 I'm out there with my grandkids, I says, I'll go down
33 fighting to protect them, law or no law. Just like the
34 people from up north, when they got to feed their
35 families, they'll go down fighting right to the end,
36 just to keep their families alive and survival and
37 subsistence.

38

39 But this road system has to be
40 protected when we get bears running around and Acrombie
41 for years and now Manashka Road, coming through town,
42 the houses on Spruce Cape, up by Safeway, they ought to
43 have an open season, let Dick Rohrer and them come in
44 there and thin them out, protect the town.

45

46 (Laughter)

47

48 MR. REFT: There's too damn many bears
49 and they're overly protected. And each one that has
50 cubs comes down that river and teaches them how to

1 survive, how to fish and then they come back with their
2 own and it just keeps building up, building up, and
3 they're still protected, but we're not protected.

4
5 I think that's enough on my comments.

6
7 Thank you, Madame Chair.

8
9 MADAME CHAIR BERNS: Thank you, John.
10 You did mention about the ghost pots, do you have any
11 comments about that.

12
13 MR. REFT: On the what?

14
15 MADAME CHAIR BERNS: On the ghost pots,
16 you mentioned that early on?

17
18 MR. REFT: Ghost pots?

19
20 MR. LANCE: The crab pots.

21
22 MADAME CHAIR BERNS: The crab pots.

23
24 MR. REFT: Oh.

25
26 MADAME CHAIR BERNS: Did you want to
27 comment on the crab pots.

28
29 MR. REFT: Oh, yeah, excuse me. Yeah,
30 the crab pots, to me, were not the problem out here, it
31 was the sea otter, not the crab pots.

32
33 The crab pots are so small, the meshes
34 deteriorate eventually or -- and regulations, you got
35 to have that -- I can't even remember what it's called
36 now, yeah, to disintegrate after time so they can get
37 out. But if you go out in the Buskin and you work the
38 area, I'm not a pencil and paper person. I go out
39 physically, I know what's there, I know what's going
40 on, I've fished this whole island all my life. I know
41 every rock and petal and what goes on, and that's
42 personal knowledge. And if there's any objection with
43 your pencil and paper, that's not good enough for me.
44 You have to go out and see what's going on personally
45 in order to be able to speak your peace on it. There's
46 a lot of sea otter out there now and they're cleaning
47 up everything. If they're not regulated somehow we'll
48 have nothing left out there, just like Antone's and the
49 rest of these bays, now they're working down the east
50 side. You heard them state that, some of the guy -- I

1 think it was Mitch and some of them from down in the
2 south end. But there's a lot of activity that goes on
3 beyond Womens Bay here and I'm not just referring to
4 Womens Bay, I'm talking about the area, and how
5 detrimental certain species are to us.

6

(Pause)

7

8

9

MR. REFT: Oh, yeah, thank you, Tom.

10

11

12

13

14

15

16

17

18

19

20

21

22

23

24

25

26

27

28

29

30

31

32

33

34

35

36

37

38

39

40

41

42

43

44

45

46

So it was very good to work with them.

47

48

49

50

they decided that we were at the point in life where we

1 needed to get together, like we were in the caucus and
2 stick together as one unit on decisions, so that we
3 couldn't be split up and dictated to and stuff, that it
4 was very good. So that was the final outcome of the
5 meeting. They are going to go ahead and work on the
6 emperor goose opening some more. There is a
7 possibility, even if it was voted to keep it closed
8 until 2017.

9

10 Thank you.

11

12 MADAME CHAIR BERNS: Thank you, John.
13 Do we have any questions or comments for John, from the
14 Council.

15

16 Yes, Mr. Holmes.

17

18 MR. HOLMES: Yeah, Johnny. It's really
19 good that Sun'aq is here and you, in particular,
20 because you have such a long history in Kodiak. And I
21 think we'll probably hear a little more from the
22 Migratory Bird folks. Tom was gracious enough to ask
23 Coral and I to attend the AMBCC meeting at Sun'aq a
24 couple of weeks ago. And at that point we asked them
25 -- we were told that the threshold discussions and the
26 harvest of 3,500 emperor geese proposed for next year,
27 that that was decided upon by Washington, DC, and so we
28 asked their representative to send to Karen the
29 transcripts of that meeting in Washington, DC, but
30 something happened, it got lost and I don't think it
31 was anybody's fault. I did get some information on
32 that. And then after your meeting I was talking with
33 some folks back in context, out of state, let's say,
34 and they said that the main decision on the 3,500 came
35 out of the Anchorage Staff, and so then I sent a
36 request back asking to have a copy of transcripts of
37 that meeting and a summary. But I did get some of that
38 information from their coordinator, I think who's going
39 to talk on the phone later this morning, and just to
40 find out how that was developed. And also chatting
41 with Dan Rosenberg, he's the State representative on
42 the Flyaway Council, I guess they've been going through
43 a year long program reviewing the survey technique and
44 methodology for making estimates on the population, and
45 I know you've gone up in SuperCubs to look at salmon in
46 streams and know what aerial survey is all about, it's
47 tough to do and you have to give those folks a pat on
48 the back for trying to cover so much area at once. But
49 at least the preliminary results when they had this
50 hired -- a volunteer statistician was that their

1 estimates might be off as much as 90 percent or more,
2 the variance on it so. So I guess that is scheduled to
3 be presented coming up sometime in the next few months.

4

5 So I think it was most commendable for
6 folks up in Fairbanks to say, well, let's wait a minute
7 and let's get down and look at it because the testimony
8 our Council has gotten and -- from Coral and other
9 folks here in town, from local guides, is that, you
10 know, we have a fair number of geese here during their
11 survey period and also Della's working on a similar
12 type of program out west on the Peninsula. So I'm very
13 hopeful, particularly with the help of Sun'aq and the
14 various tribal councils around the state that we might
15 have a more thorough examination on the goose thing,
16 because the 3,500, that kind of falls in the area --
17 and I know when people are hungry they get what they
18 need, and I know folks here in Kodiak and out west,
19 have been very, very scrupulous on not hunting emperor
20 geese because they wanted to get a general opening.

21

22 MR. REFT: Yeah.

23

24 MR. HOLMES: And, you know, up north,
25 they take an average on the subsistence surveys of 32
26 to 35 to 3,600 and the best I can gather, and correct
27 me, I think you might have gotten the same feeling, is
28 that's where the 3,500 came from.....

29

30 MR. REFT: Exactly.

31

32 MR. HOLMES:is only open for
33 what's been taken, so if you combine that with the
34 seasons that they proposed, that just leaves folk out
35 west here, in our neck of the woods, totally out in the
36 dark, so I really commend your politicking and poking
37 on that Johnny.

38

39 Thank you, Madame Chair.

40

41 MR. REFT: Yeah, thank you, Pat.

42

43 The main thing I stressed with them is
44 that we have a larger area here that needs to be
45 surveyed and they haven't gone down, further down the
46 east side to the south end to see what's there because
47 I personally know there's a lot of geese down there.
48 And at that meeting we had one of the village reps
49 tuned in in agreement with me, from Akhiok, it was the
50 village rep, he was on the intercom and he said, oh,

1 yeah, we got a lot of geese down here, but this is the
2 area that they don't survey and this is what I'm trying
3 to get them to do for the Kodiak Island, is get the
4 whole place checked out to find out what the total
5 amount really is that lives on this island.

6

7 Thank you, Pat.

8

9 MADAME CHAIR BERNS: Yes, Tom.

10

11 MR. SCHWANTES: Yeah, just a couple of
12 questions -- questions and comments.

13

14 First question, Johnny, you've been
15 around here a long time, are you aware of any evidence
16 that these Navy exercises have caused damage to a
17 resource?

18

19 MR. REFT: I'm -- Tom, I'm not
20 distinctly aware of any evidence incidents that have
21 been reported from it other than the whales.

22

23 MR. SCHWANTES: Okay. And then I have
24 to agree with you on your assessment of the bear
25 population. And just a reminder, there is a way we can
26 address that through proposals to the Board of Game and
27 Board of Fish on the Dollys, so maybe we need to keep
28 that in mind and try to get something in there.

29

30 MR. REFT: Yeah.

31

32 MR. SCHWANTES: Maybe extend the season
33 or whatever there.

34

35 MR. REFT: And, Tom, that kind of all
36 intertwines in what I'm saying is the protection. And
37 I really am against the Navy bombing out there because
38 I know what's out there.

39

40 There wasn't a fisherman that fished
41 out there, and I was there for five years on the best
42 king crab stock that this island ever saw. And I know
43 when they come in, where they go, the whole thing. I
44 hated it out there, it was dangerous, I mean surgeries
45 and everything from being on deck, but I was with a
46 good, good Christian fisherman, Jerry Google, Sr., and
47 I trusted him with my life and I made the money with
48 him. But there are rich stocks out there where they're
49 bombing and they should be removed from bombing
50 anywhere out there in our Kodiak waters where we're

1 trying to build up our fisheries and our shellfish.
2 And that goes back to the sea otter, they're killing
3 us. Shellfish are disappearing, there's no protection
4 for them the way it's going now.

5
6 Thank you.

7
8 MR. SCHWANTES: Thanks, Johnny,
9 appreciate your comments.

10
11 MADAME CHAIR BERNS: Thank you. Do we
12 have any other additional comments or comments.

13
14 (No comments)

15
16 MADAME CHAIR BERNS: Thank you, Mr.
17 Reft.

18
19 MR. REFT: Thank you, Madame Chair.

20
21 MADAME CHAIR BERNS: Do we have anyone
22 from the Karluk IRA or Karluk Tribe on the line.

23
24 KATHERINE: Yes, this is Pat.

25
26 MADAME CHAIR BERNS: Hi, good morning.
27 We'll go ahead and give you the floor, if you can state
28 your name and organization and we're all ears.

29
30 KATHERINE: We've been having problems
31 down here with the commercial fishery. And we've come
32 into problems with Fish and Game. And for the last
33 couple years they've been having our -- it opened up,
34 out to our -- the mouth of our river and they're
35 corking straight across the mouth so -- and then during
36 the fall times when we put our subsistence up so we end
37 up not getting our required subsistence to last us for
38 the winter. You know, it's just not the village of
39 Karluk, you know, it's people who actually come down
40 and open up their little camps, whatever, and try and
41 put their fish away.

42
43 But we recently came into some news
44 that we're going to just go and try to take control of
45 all this down here for our village and for it to
46 survive.

47
48 MS. ANDREW: This is Alecia Andrew.
49 Karluk Tribal Council president. And we've tried to
50 work for years with Fish and Game here locally and with

1 new management there is no communication at all.
2 Nobody listens to us down here, and so we are going to
3 just take over and we have just decided that we're
4 going to go and assert our rights as Karluk, as a
5 reservation that we are, and to protect the fishery for
6 the people first and foremost.

7

8 The way things are going there's not
9 going to be any fish left in this river.

10

11 You know, people say that it reached
12 the escapement, well, you know, if you look at the
13 history that.....

14

15 KATHERINE: Us, as villagers that lived
16 her our life, we don't see the fish that they're
17 counting up there that's going through that weir up
18 there. They're either doublecounting them or they're
19 counting the fish that are coming out, the dog salmon,
20 or the steelhead that's coming out, they're not --
21 those people they got up at that weir, they don't know
22 what kind of fish they're looking at, I don't care what
23 that Jackson, James Jackson thinks his people know what
24 they know up there, teach them; how, our own people
25 can't tell when they're looking at fish going by
26 whether that's a red salmon or a steelhead, unless they
27 literally pick them up out of the water and look at
28 them.

29

30 MS. ANDREW: And like I said they don't
31 listen to us. We got a hold of Fish and Game, that the
32 -- the Troopers that come down, and we have boats out
33 here have their net, they're seining right across the
34 mouth of the river and here at high tide, here about a
35 week ago, you had a boat lose a seine and got sucked
36 into the river, and nobody listens to us. We try to
37 send pictures. We try to send video. And they're just
38 -- they don't pay attention. And, again, there's no
39 communication with Karluk Tribal, the people in the
40 village and Fish and Game.

41

42 KATHERINE: And our own people are
43 being told, the only fish that they count down here and
44 the ones that they care about is the red salmon, they
45 don't care about the silver salmon, they don't care
46 about the king salmon, those are mute [sic] to them.
47 The only ones they count are the red salmon and we are
48 in danger of losing our king salmon.

49

50 MS. ANDREW: But we just wanted that

1 for whoever was involved on the call, or whoever was in
2 the room there, to just know that we're going to be
3 putting notices out and we're just tired of it. We're
4 just going to do what we need to do to survive out here
5 because it's obvious to us now that nobody is listening
6 to us.

7

8 MADAME CHAIR BERNS: Thank you, Alecia.
9 Comments. I'm sorry, what was your name.

10

11 MR. JACKSON: James.

12

13 MADAME CHAIR BERNS: James, with ADF&G,
14 comments.

15

16 MR. JACKSON: Yeah, hello, this is
17 James Jackson, the area management biologist for salmon
18 and herring, commercial and subsistence fisheries in
19 the Kodiak area.

20

21 And it was -- the last few years at
22 Karluk we've had substantial sockeye runs and we've
23 exceeded or nearly exceeded our escapement goal. For
24 example, this year we were at the upper value of our
25 early run escapement goal. And the late run, we also
26 -- we basically exceeded the upper value of the
27 escapement goal for the late run.

28

29 And just to be clear we do not fish the
30 mouth of the river, we fish the mouth of the lagoon.
31 The river is about two miles away. And we haven't
32 fished the lagoon in about 20 years, but we can't even
33 fish inside that lagoon, we just haven't done that.
34 And it's just a tremendous run this year.

35

36 The kings, are.....

37

38 KATHERINE: What's the difference
39 between the mouth of the lagoon or the mouth of the
40 river, we consider that the Karluk Lake up there.

41

42 MS. ANDREW: And I'm sorry, but just
43 the attitude and the snide remarks and the comments we
44 get back and it is you, James Jackson, you know we've
45 tried to work with you and it just does not work.

46

47 KATHERINE: And it's just not us here
48 in the village, it's the people who come here, your
49 sportsfishermen who have tried calling you also with
50 their concerns and complaints, and that's your

1 attitude, is, oh, we don't care about the other
2 fisheries down in Karluk except the reds.

3

4 MR. JACKSON: Through the Chair, again,
5 this is James Jackson.

6

7 With regard to king salmon the
8 Department has done what it could with regard to the
9 commercial fishery within the bounds of what the Board
10 of Fish has set that we can do. We have -- the entire
11 purse seine fishery for the Kodiak area in June cannot
12 retain king salmon, and that's as true at the mouth of
13 Karluk as it is up on Shuyak. So we're doing what we
14 can to get kings in the rivers as much as we possibly
15 can.

16

17 That being said, the Board of Fish, has
18 stated that the areas around Karluk, and the majority
19 of the west side is managed based on Karluk escapement.
20 And in the last few years we've had some tremendous
21 sockeye runs there. So early on we've had some heavy
22 fishing, we didn't -- we haven't fished the mouth of
23 the Karluk this year until the fall, and, again, that
24 had to do with the tremendous run. The run was late
25 and it was even -- even the fact that it was late it
26 was tremendous. You're talking over 600,000 sockeye
27 escaped. We have very well trained technicians. It is
28 very easy to differentiate between a sockeye salmon and
29 a pink salmon and a chum salmon and a king and a.....

30

31 KATHERINE: No, no, no don't let him
32 talk about, whatever, there, Mr. Jackson, but you don't
33 know our river like we know our river. When I was a
34 little girl we would see millions of fish going through
35 here. You were counting a couple hundred thousand
36 worth of fish, lots of fish, not compared to back in
37 the old day. My grandpa and them used to say they
38 could run across our lagoon, what you call it, or the
39 river, on top of fish without getting wet.

40

41 MS. ANDREW: And the guys come here and
42 watch the escapement and will swear by it, there have
43 not been that many fish come through this -- the weir
44 and in this river like that, not -- there's not nearly
45 as much as it was showing in the escapement levels from
46 your paperwork.

47

48 MADAME CHAIR BERNS: Yes.

49

50 MS. DEATHERAGE: Excuse me. This is

1 Karen Deatherage, the Council coordinator for the
2 Kodiak Council.

3

4 And we are here to definitely hear the
5 concerns of the Karluk Tribe and what I would like for
6 everybody to keep in mind is that this is an
7 opportunity for the Karluk Tribe to relay its concerns
8 to the Council. And while James Jackson is here to
9 provide the data from the Fish and Game Department, I
10 think it would be best if the Karluk Tribe would share
11 the information that would be helpful to our Council to
12 see if there is something that the Council can do on
13 behalf of the tribe for this issue.

14

15 So appreciate your cooperation in that
16 regard.

17

18 (Pause)

19

20 MADAME CHAIR BERNS: Thank you. Do we
21 have any other further questions or comments from the
22 Council for the Karluk IRA.

23

24 Yes, Mr. Holmes.

25

26 KATHERINE: So we would thank the
27 Council for hearing our concern.

28

29 MADAME CHAIR BERNS: Thank you. And
30 Mr. Holmes has a question for you.

31

32 MS. ANDREW: Okay.

33

34 MR. HOLMES: Hi. I hope things are
35 going well with other things for you folks down there.

36

37 I was talking with Ronny Lind some time
38 ago, I've been in Kodiak since '63 and have spent quite
39 a bit of time around the item and (microphone issue) --
40 I beg your pardon, I'm an old geezer, I forgot to turn
41 on my mic there. But anyway I've been here in Kodiak
42 since '63 and I know quite a few folks, but I was
43 chatting with Ronny Lind a while back and he said he
44 had some feelings, and I was wondering if you could
45 comment on, has the lagoon got more shallow, or what's
46 happened in the lagoon.

47

48 MS. SIMEONOFF: Madame Chair, this is
49 Mitch. I can't hear Pat at all.

50

1 (Repower system)

2

3 KATHERINE: Mr. Holmes, yes, our river
4 did get extremely shallow.

5

6 MS. ANDREW: And we're having a hard
7 time hearing you also here in Karluk.

8

9 (Pause)

10

11 MR. HOLMES: I don't know, there may be
12 some problems with my mic here. I can't hardly even
13 drive a cell phone, in fact, I can't drive a cell
14 phone. But I was just wondering about change in the
15 depth of the lagoon, because I recall in the '60s, '70s
16 and even into the '80s they used to school up really
17 heavy just inside the mouth of the spit there and I'm
18 wondering if it's gotten so shallow that the darn
19 little buggers are just shooting right straight up.
20 Are they staying in the lagoon like they used to?

21

22 MS. ANDREW: No. No. They're -- they
23 pretty much stay outside in the ocean, and then when
24 tide starts coming in they start going by.

25

26 MR. HOLMES: Well, that's kind of a
27 heck of a deal, you know, I'm wondering if there might
28 be some way to -- where our Council or the advisory
29 committee or something, and Fish and Game might be able
30 to massage the thing so that they could maybe set up
31 some kind of a directed -- well, you know, like before
32 statehood they used to beach seine in the lagoon for
33 the canneries. I was wondering if they might be able
34 to put in some thought to find some way for you folks
35 to have a dedicated beach seine in there for
36 subsistence and maybe try to find a way to try to get a
37 little bit of a balance there on -- so that you folks
38 would have a better opportunity to get your fish.

39

40 James, could you touch on that, maybe
41 the Refuge, I don't know quite where the overlaps are.
42 But it's a pretty tough thing when the traditional
43 areas of fishing change.

44

45 Thank you.

46

47 MS. ANDREW: Thank you, Mr. Holmes.

48

49 MR. JACKSON: Through the Chair. Mr.
50 Holmes.

1 Yeah, the fish haven't been holding in
2 the lagoon as much as they used to in the past, and I
3 don't know if that's a function of the lagoon's
4 actually filling in or if that's a bit having to do
5 with our new weir location, too. We actually moved the
6 weir a lot further down. It used to be a little
7 further up the river and now it's almost in the inter-
8 tidal area within the lagoon and so it actually passes
9 fish I think a little faster than it used to. So you
10 don't see the substantial buildups as much as you used
11 to.

12
13 That being said, we sample fish
14 throughout the course of the year. And in the fall,
15 particularly, when the water gets low the fish still do
16 hold in the lagoon and we have to go out and make sets
17 in the lagoon to sample our fish. And it's pretty
18 easy. We're not near as good as the guys in Karluk
19 are, they come down and get their fish a lot better
20 than we can, but it usually only takes us about one set
21 to catch three to 700 sockeye. And if the tribe would
22 like to set up a way for us to hold those fish so they
23 could come down and get it, we'd be happy to work with
24 them.

25
26 MR. HOLMES: Well, hopefully that might
27 be part of the solution there. I know how frustrating
28 it is to try and get your food. And now that I'm an
29 old geezer now, going to the Buskin with my 42 year
30 old, I spend more time rowing back than I do fishing
31 anymore, but I hope maybe that might be able to help
32 some. And please let us know if something like that
33 will work out.

34
35 Thank you.

36
37 MADAME CHAIR BERNS: Thank you, Mr.
38 Holmes and Mr. Jackson. Do we have any further
39 questions or comments for Karluk IRA.

40
41 MS. CHERNOFF: I have one.

42
43 MADAME CHAIR BERNS: Yes, Coral.

44
45 MS. CHERNOFF: Mr. Jackson.

46
47 MADAME CHAIR BERNS: Yes, go ahead.

48
49 MS. CHERNOFF: This is Coral Chernoff.
50

1 An event I went to over at Fish and Game, before, the
2 group of us was told that Fish and Game manages for
3 commercial fisheries; is that correct?

4

5 MR. JACKSON: Through the Chair, Mrs.
6 Chernoff. The Fish and Game manages for fisheries --
7 subsistence fisheries and commercial fisheries.

8

9 MS. CHERNOFF: Okay.

10

11 MR. JACKSON: So we manage all those
12 fisheries in the Kodiak area.

13

14 MS. CHERNOFF: We were told in that
15 room that they manage mostly, or mainly for commercial
16 fisheries. So then I was wondering if people come
17 forth with a concern about their subsistence is there a
18 procedure that you go through or are there certain
19 people at certain levels that all -- you know, you all
20 sit down and discuss this with the people who's concern
21 came forward, or does it just -- you know, like do they
22 just talk to you, and they're not happy with your
23 answer and so everyone gets upset, or is there a proper
24 procedure to go through?

25

26 MR. JACKSON: Through the Chair. Mrs.
27 Chernoff. There's a procedure but a lot of it is just
28 coming to talk to either myself, the sportfish
29 biologist, there's layers of Staff above me as well.
30 They can talk to my boss, who's the regional management
31 coordinator, they can also talk to the regional
32 supervisor, Nick Sagalkin, about this. There's also a
33 Board of Fish process that they could go through.
34 There's lots of different things they can do.

35

36 MADAME CHAIR BERNS: Great. Thank you.
37 Do we have any further questions. Yes, Mr. Holmes.

38

39 MR. HOLMES: Correct me, James, but I
40 believe that even though your job is commercial
41 fishing, the mandate for the Department is subsistence,
42 and I think that, you know, with a little bit of
43 discussions I think might well be able to really help
44 folks down there get their fishery and if they need it
45 when your sampling isn't going on, that I'm sure you
46 could help facilitate a way for them to do seining in
47 the lagoon themselves, or to come down, as you've
48 offered, when you're doing your sampling on the fall
49 run. And so there is a definite way and I know that
50 that's your mandate, isn't it, subsistence. It's tough

1 to do all three.

2

3 MR. JACKSON: Through the Chair. Mr.
4 Holmes. There's definitely a subsistence priority in
5 the state of Alaska.

6

7 You know, that being said, when you're
8 talking about the sockeye run at Karluk, you have to
9 put things in perspective. We're not talking about the
10 Buskin where there's 6,000 fish and there's several
11 thousand people vying over a few fish, you're talking
12 about 600,000 sockeye with -- I mean it's a lot of
13 fish. There's a -- there's a -- it's the largest
14 sockeye run in the area, it's huge. There's so many
15 fish down there it's hard to ponder.

16

17 And, yes, there's a subsistence
18 priority and we try to make sure that there's fish
19 available. But that being said, most of the complaints
20 that we actually get out of Karluk have to do with
21 sportfisheries. Have to do with king salmon. The
22 limited availability of king salmon because there's a
23 lot of sportfish guides, there's a lot of people that
24 stay down there. And those are the majority of the
25 complaints we get in the spring. In the fall we get a
26 lot of complaints from local clients that go down there
27 to catch silvers. And when you have a tremendous
28 sockeye run, we do have to manage the area based on
29 both sockeye and silver salmon, but at the same time
30 when you have that huge volume of sockeye and you have
31 to control the run, it's simple time and area. When
32 there's that many fish and you've exceeded your
33 escapement goal that time becomes unlimited, and the
34 commercial fishery in that area gets smaller and
35 smaller and smaller, which is why we've kind of
36 collapsed around the lagoon. Because it was the most
37 effective way to actually control the sockeye salmon
38 escapement into Karluk.

39

40 And, subsistence-wise, we do get those
41 complaints, we do talk to the folks down there about
42 that, but there's a tremendous amount of fish down
43 there still.

44

45 MADAME CHAIR BERNS: Thank you.

46

47 Karen.

48

49 MS. DEATHERAGE: Madame Chair. I would
50 like to ask the Karluk Tribe if they were interested in

1 having one of our OSM Staff talk about the meeting that
2 we had with the Karluk Tribe a couple of weeks ago
3 where they outlined all their issues, and we'd be happy
4 to review those issues for the Council today if you are
5 interested in having us do that.

6
7 MS. ANDREW: Yes, that'd be absolutely
8 wonderful.

9
10 MS. DEATHERAGE: So George Pappas from
11 the OSM is on the phone and he will go ahead, with the
12 Chair's permission, and relay that information to the
13 Council.

14
15 MADAME CHAIR BERNS: Thank you. Go
16 ahead, Mr. Pappas.

17
18 MR. PAPPAS: Good morning, Madame
19 Chair, and members of the Council.

20
21 We had a meeting the other day. We had
22 a teleconference with the Native liaison here at OSM,
23 Karen and myself. It was a scoping session with the
24 members from the Karluk community, it was not an
25 official tribal government to government discussion or
26 consultation, it was a scoping meeting to understand
27 the concerns that were being brought up here.

28
29 About half of the issues that were
30 discussed or brought up, the primary reason for the
31 meeting was to discuss coho salmon subsistence needs
32 and timing. A lot of folks know that subsistence
33 harvest of fish -- subsistence users harvest fish at
34 different times of years and different species at
35 different times of years for certain purposes. It was
36 explained to us after the blue flies are gone and after
37 the humpies are gone in the Karluk area serious effort
38 is expended by subsistence users to target coho salmon.

39
40 The issues brought up earlier about
41 concerns about the commercial fishery at the mouth of
42 the lagoon targeting -- or chinook reducing the flow of
43 fish into the river. Additionally -- yeah, about
44 timing and species. It wasn't about sockeye as much --
45 it was certainly folks took coho -- there are -- we
46 have the concerns about speciation of different salmon
47 at the weir; what type of trainings that are provided
48 -- well, you discussed that.

49
50 And there was reports from residents of

1 Karluk about poor fishing conditions, last year and
2 this year. One example being provided, making three
3 sets catching one spawned out fish about this time last
4 year so concerns about obtaining fish at that time.

5
6 And impacts of the sportfishery,
7 there's an active sportfishery in that area and success
8 is significantly impacted by lack of fish.

9
10 Additionally, there was discussions
11 about communications with the Department of Fish and
12 Game managers, which you discussed.

13
14 There's also a concern about steelhead.
15 That's something that has been brought up today.
16 There's concerns expressed about steelhead and how
17 they're handled. This is discussing the outmigrating
18 steelhead in the springtime for local residents, from
19 dead smelts, spawned out the -- the outmigrating past
20 the weir, from the dead smelts, outmigrating fish on
21 the backside of the weir, so down stream of the river.
22 And there was concerns about how the fish were being
23 handled.

24
25 And let's see here, serious complaints
26 about subsistence priority and not being able to meet
27 the apportions of their needs.

28
29 Let's see here, additionally, a new
30 subject matter that has not been discussed yet, members
31 from the Karluk community expressed concerns about
32 scallop trawlers, commercial fishing about 200 yards
33 off shore in front of the ocean beach, which is out off
34 the lagoon there, concern that the commercial fishermen
35 appearing to be a scalloper was fishing very hard on a
36 scallop bed for about a consecutive week of making
37 passes and resulting, the residents indicated that
38 there was dead crab floating up on the shores,
39 inability to catch marine fish near shore after this
40 activity. Issues with not being able to catch halibut,
41 which is not part of this Federal Subsistence Program,
42 but there is another program for that. And was
43 interested to find out more information, is it legal,
44 what the impacts are.

45
46 And that was on -- put a blip on the
47 OSM's radar because, uniquely to Karluk compared to
48 other parts of the state there is marine -- there is
49 Federal subsistence fisheries range districts, so it
50 goes out to, what, a thousand yards, out in front of

1 the -- from the beach, each direction for a couple of
2 miles and that was established, I think, in the '50s, I
3 don't remember exactly what, but there is marine
4 jurisdiction there and if that activity takes place in
5 marine jurisdiction under -- where ANILCA applies and
6 Federally-qualified users are not -- are being
7 challenged. There's a possibility of looking into that
8 further.

9

10 Now, I believe somebody on Fish and
11 Game might be on line to discuss that.

12

13 And that's about the content of the
14 subject matter that's been brought up, there may have
15 been a little more details, but I wanted to provide
16 that. And to remind folks in Karluk, if they want to
17 further discuss these issues, this is a great place to
18 present them to the RAC.

19

20 Thank you, Madame Chair. Appreciate
21 it.

22

23 MADAME CHAIR BERNS: Thank you very
24 much.

25

26 Do we have any other further comments
27 in regards to this issue with Karluk.

28

29 Go ahead.

30

31 MR. STICHERT: Yeah, good morning. My
32 name is Mark Stichert. I am the area management
33 biologist for shellfish and groundfish fisheries here
34 in Kodiak, Chignik, as well as the Alaska Peninsula.
35 And I'm more than happy to speak towards the scallop
36 issue.

37

38 MADAME CHAIR BERNS: Okay, please do.

39

40 MR. STICHERT: Okay. I guess maybe
41 I'll start with just a broad overview of the scallop
42 fishery in general. The commercial scallop fishery is
43 a unique fishery in that it's co-managed by both the
44 Federal government as well as the State of Alaska.

45

46 Under this management scheme, the state
47 of Alaska has authority for most management aspects of
48 the fishery, meaning we have authority to set the
49 seasons, we establish the harvest limits for the
50 quotas, we establish bycatch limits for that fishery.

1 We have authority to implement and establish an
2 observer program, as well as define what types of gear,
3 the size of vessels and the amount of crew that can be
4 used.

5
6 So with that in mind, there has been a
7 longstanding scallop fishery in Shelikoff Strait. That
8 fishery extends back into the late '60s, early 70s.
9 The fishery opens on July 1st every year and runs
10 through the end of February, I believe. It's a
11 relatively small fishery. The last 10 years there's
12 been an average of about four boats that fish in the
13 fishery and during most years most of those boats do
14 fish in Shelikoff. When we set the harvest levels
15 prior to the start of the season in July, we set --
16 basically divide the Shelikoff in half. Longitude of
17 154, basically a line running straight north of Larsen
18 Bay. We establish a harvest limit north of that line,
19 as well as south of that line. The preponderance of
20 catch comes north of that line. The last several years
21 the GHL, or the harvest quota has averaged between 50
22 and 70,000 pounds, about 95 percent of that comes to
23 the north. The GHL, or the harvest limit for the area
24 concerning Karluk is 5,000 pounds.

25
26 Currently these vessels are required to
27 have an onboard observer 100 percent of the time while
28 they're fishing. We do this because we -- not only it
29 gives us an ability to track and monitor the amount of
30 bycatch coming up in the fishery it also allows us to
31 take samples and collect biological information as well
32 as track the catch that happens during the fishery. So
33 it is a Fish and Game requirement. There is 100
34 percent observer coverage on these vessels.

35
36 In recent years -- I got a little bit
37 of harvest data here for you. In the shellfish
38 statistical areas, that's immediately right in front of
39 the Karluk River drainage, we've seen effort right in
40 front of the village there in 2010, 2013, '14 and then
41 again this year. The annual harvest in that area
42 ranges between about 1,100 to 3,000 pounds of scallops.

43
44 There are no restrictions in terms of
45 where those vessels can fish currently. You know, the
46 Alaska Board of Fisheries establishes the open and
47 closed waters for this fishery, so those vessels are
48 currently able to fish from zero -- you know, from on
49 shore all the way out into Federal waters.

50

1 They certainly use an intensive gear
2 type. They use these new Bedford style dredges. These
3 dredges are -- many vessels will fish two dredges.
4 They can fish two dredges up to 13 feet wide, I
5 believe. So we certainly recognize there is some hard
6 on bottom contact with those vessels and that's one of
7 those reasons that we require 100 percent observer
8 coverage.

9
10 And we also do set a maximum cap on the
11 amount of tanner crab that can be taken by that
12 fishery. That cap is informed by our annual tanner
13 crab survey. If the fleet catches -- exceeds that cap,
14 we close the fishery for the rest of the season
15 regardless if there's more scallops to be caught or
16 not.

17
18 I think I'll turn it over to you for
19 more questions.

20
21 MADAME CHAIR BERNS: Yes, go ahead, Mr.
22 Schwantes.

23
24 MR. SCHWANTES: Yes, Madame Chair. Can
25 you give us an idea what the bycatch is actually in
26 that area?

27
28 MR. STICHERT: That's a good question,
29 thank you.

30
31 So in this -- in the area kind of in
32 close proximity to the Karluk River Drainage and the
33 village there, in 2010 -- so in total for the last five
34 seasons we've noted 436 tanner crab, 103 dungeness
35 crab, zero king crab, and 19 halibut. So on an annual
36 basis we're looking at, you know, between 150 to 200
37 crab species caught as bycatch recorded by observers
38 and a handful of halibut each year.

39
40 MR. SCHWANTES: And that was over how
41 long of a period?

42
43 MR. STICHERT: So that was 2010 --
44 there was no effort in that area in 2011 and '12, so
45 that's a four year period.

46
47 MR. SCHWANTES: And no king crab?

48
49 MR. STICHERT: We show zero king crab.
50 So when I saw 100 percent observer coverage, you know,

1 obviously there's a -- the vessels are required to have
2 an observer on board 100 percent of the time while
3 they're fishing, it doesn't -- you know, there's one
4 observer, so they're obviously not handling every
5 single tow. We have a stratified sampling system. So
6 they will sample every third or fourth tow and then we
7 will take that average and extrapolate that back to the
8 tows that were unsampled.

9

10 So it's not perfect but we feel
11 comfortable with the numbers. We think they show a
12 pretty good index of what's happening in that area in
13 terms of bycatch.

14

15 MADAME CHAIR BERNS: Thank you. Do we
16 have any other questions.

17

18 Rebecca.

19

20 MS. SKINNER: So this question might be
21 for George and Fish and Game.

22

23 So as far as next steps, through the
24 Board of Fish, people from Karluk could put forward a
25 proposal to limit the area where the scallop dredgers
26 can fish, so they can put in a proposal to keep 300 to
27 a mile off shore or something like that. Through the
28 Federal Subsistence process, since I'm understanding
29 that those fall under Federal jurisdiction, based on
30 what George said, what are the other options through
31 the Federal system to create limitations on the scallop
32 dredgers in that area? And I think that question is to
33 George maybe.

34

35 MR. PAPPAS: Through the Chair. George
36 Pappas, OSM.

37

38 MADAME CHAIR BERNS: Yes, go ahead,
39 George.

40

41 MR. PAPPAS: If subsistence users are
42 having a challenge or their continued subsistence uses
43 are being challenged for one reason or another, public
44 safety issue, competition by non-Federally-qualified
45 user groups, they can do basically two options. They
46 can file a -- they can submit a proposal to the Federal
47 Subsistence Board requesting closure to the area to
48 non-Federally-qualified users or something along those
49 lines, an area and times that waters under Federal
50 subsistence fisheries can be closed to non-Federally-

1 qualified. That's an option.

2

3 For more immediate relief, they can
4 file a request for a fisheries special action to do
5 some modification to the area to ensure Federally-
6 qualified users are meeting their needs.

7

8 An example, right there in front of
9 Kodiak, Womens Bay is closed to non-Federally-qualified
10 users for king crab. There's not enough king crab to
11 go around for everybody and there, specifically under
12 Federal subsistence fisheries jurisdiction the fishery
13 has been restricted to the harvest of king crab only to
14 Federally-qualified users for a long time. As a matter
15 of fact, I think it's the longest standing fisheries
16 closure we have in the state under Federal regulations.

17

18 So there's two options.

19

20 One, to submit a special action request
21 or, two, submit a proposal to the Federal Subsistence
22 Board and OSM to assist with the proposal for the idea,
23 if folks want that. So there's two options.

24

25 This is a unique situation, in that,
26 it's the only part of Alaska that has Federal
27 subsistence fisheries jurisdiction in marine waters but
28 not in freshwaters. So the Karluk, lagoon, the river,
29 all the way up to Mile 16 or something like that, river
30 mile 16 are not under Federal subsistence fisheries
31 jurisdiction.

32

33 Does that answer your question.

34

35 MS. SKINNER: It does thank you.

36

37 MADAME CHAIR BERNS: Yes, go ahead.

38

39 MR. STICHERT: Thank you. Mark
40 Stichert, again, with Fish and Game.

41

42 And certainly in conjunction or as an
43 alternative to that Federal process, anyone with some
44 concerns could also petition the Board of Fish. The
45 Board does ultimately establish the regulations that we
46 use to guide the fishery and it's certainly within
47 their purview to close whatever area folks deem
48 reasonable to close. And, as always, I'm more than
49 happy -- I know the Board process can be complicated
50 and a little bit intimidating at times and I'm

1 certainly available to help people work through that
2 process.

3

4 MADAME CHAIR BERNS: Thank you. Go
5 ahead, Tom.

6

7 MR. SCHWANTES: Madame Chair. I think
8 you said that the amount of scallops that were
9 harvested in that area were between 1,100 and 3,000
10 pounds, is that per year or is that over the four year
11 period?

12

13 MR. STICHERT: Mr. Schwantes. That's
14 per year so for this four year period that -- we've had
15 fishing recently -- the total scallop harvest has been
16 13,664 pounds of shucked scalloped meat.

17

18 MR. SCHWANTES: Thank you.

19

20 MADAME CHAIR BERNS: Yes, Mr. Holmes.

21

22 MR. HOLMES: Madame Chair. I was quite
23 encouraged about this last discussion and I think
24 Kodiak folks think very parallel, comments of Tom and
25 Rebecca and Mark, and George, it all kind of coalesces
26 there, and, quite frankly I think I'd be more than
27 willing to do a motion, if the folks at Karluk would
28 like to close that area of their reservation. It
29 obviously wouldn't have a whole lot of impact on the
30 scallop folks but I think it would make folks down
31 there feel better. And, you know, I would really
32 suggest, because I know Fish and Game, if folks want to
33 do the Board process, they'll help, and I would
34 strongly suggest, you know, that our Council provide
35 support to give you folks some kind of a closure there
36 to keep the scallop fishery off your beach. And I
37 would suggest parallel action be taken with Mark at
38 Fish and Game, and George Pappas could help on the
39 Federal Subsistence Board. And then you could also, I
40 would suspect, because of that, there's the NOAA
41 interaction, or I don't know who is involved in the
42 halibut on the -- I mean the scallops on the Federal
43 side but I know the State has comanagement with them.
44 I think that if you were to talk with Mark, I think
45 that you could probably get proposals going on both of
46 those.

47

48 I think, Karen, next year is our next
49 meeting, shellfish and fisheries.....

50

1 MS. DEATHERAGE: (Nods affirmatively)

2

3 MR. HOLMES:so we could provide
4 you some strong support on that if you came up with a
5 draft proposal.

6

7 And the other thing I'd like to comment
8 on is that I do believe back when my good friend Herman
9 Squartsoff, both he and I would be called into the
10 State Advisory Committee on things to help the villages
11 as the subsistence advocates, and I believe before
12 Herman died we both were called in, and we did put
13 forth a nomination for someone for Karluk to the Fish
14 and Game Advisory Committee, and I don't know right now
15 who's the rep for it because it's Karluk and Larsen
16 Bay, but I will personally try to call today or
17 tomorrow to the State Fish and Game Advisory Committee
18 coordinator -- and I know it's all complex -- but I'll
19 see if I can find out who your rep is and if there
20 isn't one presently for Karluk at the State Board,
21 we'll sure jolly well try to -- I'll go to their next
22 meeting and talk to their Chairman, because quite often
23 he comes to our Council meetings and is a big supporter
24 of subsistence needs, and see if we can't make sure
25 that you've got somebody to be your rep on the State
26 side on the citizen's part of regulations.

27

28 And I know our Council has really
29 listened to your concerns and it sounds like we,
30 hopefully, will be able to facilitate some improvement
31 with things for you on the salmon with James Jackson's
32 help and we've got the area sportfish biologist here,
33 and, you know, we'll sure do our best for you.

34

35 Thank you.

36

37 MADAME CHAIR BERNS: Just a comment
38 on.....

39

40 KATHERINE: Thank you so much, that
41 would be most helpful.

42

43 MADAME CHAIR BERNS: And just piggyback
44 on what Mr. Holmes was stating. I represented the
45 community of Old Harbor at one of the previous ADF&G
46 Advisory Council meetings and they were trying to find
47 a representative for Karluk and Larsen Bay and so if
48 you have someone in mind we can get that information --
49 or myself or Pat can get that information to you, the
50 coordinator's name so that you can get your

1 representation there at the State level.

2

3 Mr. Schwantes.

4

5 MR. SCHWANTES: Yeah, I understand
6 their concern and I have that concern as well but I
7 think it would be premature for this Council to make
8 any kind of a motion or move forward without seeing
9 something come from the Karluk area. And so I would
10 like to see a proposal of some type, whether it be to
11 the Board of Fish or whether it be to the Subsistence
12 Board from Karluk before we take any action on it.

13

14 Thank you.

15

16 MADAME CHAIR BERNS: Thank you. Do we
17 have any other further questions or comments for Karluk
18 IRA.

19

20 Mr. Holmes.

21

22 MR. HOLMES: Yeah, I just wanted to
23 answer Tom's comment there. I think that process will
24 be initiated here because we've got James and Don Tracy
25 to help on the State side thing on trying to facilitate
26 the better results on salmon and we're going to try and
27 get them connected to the Fish and Game AC for the
28 State side, and also the State and Federal with
29 George's help on a scallop closure. So I think our
30 next meeting will be fisheries so we'll see those
31 things bouncing back to us. I don't know what the
32 State Board schedule is but I think you've got folks'
33 ears, and so I think, you know, you have some
34 conversations with those people that have offered their
35 help to you. And I know Melissa and -- because we've
36 had some good reps from Larsen Bay and Karluk in the
37 past and so I think that might have fallen through the
38 cracks. So think about who would be a good person and,
39 you know, we'll sure try to get them nominated and I'll
40 go to the AC meeting, if I'm in town and I'm sure
41 Melissa will take it up too. And we'll see if we can't
42 get you folks a little more active role.

43

44 Thank you.

45

46 MADAME CHAIR BERNS: Yes, go ahead.

47

48 MR. STICHERT: Mark Stichert, again.
49 And certainly in the interim I think I can help answer
50 some of Pat's questions, for the scallop issue anyway.

1 It's a three year cycle when they take
2 up proposals, scallops fall under the Statewide
3 miscellaneous shellfish meeting. That meeting,
4 unfortunately was held in-cycle this year, it was in
5 March, so it would be April of 2017 will be the next
6 call for proposals.

7
8 And I certainly can't speak on behalf
9 of the scallop fleet or industry but they are a small
10 fleet. Certainly I can help put people together and it
11 might be that if you can express some concerns to the
12 fleet themselves they might be more than willing to
13 find some accommodation in the interim, or perhaps even
14 a long-term solution to people's concerns as well.

15
16 Thank you.

17
18 MADAME CHAIR BERNS: Thanks. Yes, go
19 ahead.

20
21 MR. JACKSON: This is James Jackson,
22 area management biologist for salmon and herring,
23 Kodiak.

24
25 I could also say that the next Board of
26 Fish meeting for the Kodiak salmon and herring is going
27 to be in January of 2017, the call for proposals will
28 be spring of 2016, so next spring. And we could always
29 help out anybody, we always do, with proposals to the
30 Board of Fish.

31
32 And I also just wanted a point of
33 clarity for everybody, early on -- mostly what we're
34 talking about with regard to salmon is fishing within
35 the inner-KarluK section, and early on that inner-
36 KarluK section can't open until the Department
37 perceives that we're going to exceed the escapement
38 goal. So there's already a degree of safeguards before
39 you can even fish that close. And when we -- there is
40 actually traditional closed waters that even if you
41 open the inner-KarluK section there's kind of a wedge,
42 an area around the mouth that we don't allow fishermen
43 to fish. It definitely decreases the efficiency of the
44 seine fleet and it makes so it's really difficult to
45 control escapement, and it -- we usually don't roll
46 back those closed waters until we already know we've
47 exceeded our escapement goals. So it's not something
48 that we just do all the time. We don't just fish the
49 mouth of the KarluK, we don't cork it off with seiners
50 in every opening. It's a difficult place to open as it

1 is.

2

3

And just to help clarify things.

4

5

KATHERINE: No, you guys just cork it off when it's time for us to get our subsistence fish, when all the blue flies are gone, when the weather isn't so warm out and when there's a good breeze out there for us to put our dried fish up.

10

11

MADAME CHAIR BERNS: Mr. Holmes.

12

13

MS. ANDREW: I'm sorry, I know that you said that this isn't between Karluk and James Jackson, but it's really hard to sit and listen to that when we are here and we see what is going on and we sent pictures and videos and it did no good this year.

18

19

MADAME CHAIR BERNS: Thank you, Alecia.

20

21

MR. HOLMES: Yes, Madame Chair. I think that they sure try to do their best and I think trying to provide some way and I know the agencies, it's sometimes difficult to deal with all of the political bullshit of writing up proposals, but that's also part of their job. So if you have just a concept on the -- what you'd like to achieve, you know, please talk to James or the other folks and our Council coordinator, Karen Delrich [sic], can make sure that you've got her phone number and we can get those people to help you work on your proposals.

32

33

But I have one question for James, and you mentioned several times exceeding escapement goals, because I think the goal for everybody, whether it's subsistence, sport or commercial, is making sure that we have continuing stability in the runs. What happens if you go way over your goal, do you end up getting more fish when those parent year salmon kids come back, or do you end up getting less, or what happens if you blow your goal?

42

43

MR. JACKSON: Through the Chair. Mr. Holmes.

45

46

In the years when we -- and it's pretty common to exceed your escapement goal in Karluk, it's a very large system and it's difficult to control. In the years where we've exceeded our escapement goals, those return years from those parent years had

1 diminished returns. So you saw a lot less fishing.

2

3 MR. HOLMES: So it ends up that things
4 go downhill for everybody if you screw up and get too
5 many fish in then?

6

7 MR. JACKSON: Through the Chair. Mr.
8 Holmes. It's a bit of a tricky-wicket actually because
9 oddly enough when you have weak runs you have more
10 commercial closures, you have less fish overall but you
11 tend to have more fish moving into the lagoon, so
12 commercial and sportfish-wise it'd probably be better
13 -- or not -- subsistence and sportfish-wise, it'd
14 actually probably be better in the lagoon. When we
15 have large escapements you get these large pulses of
16 fish and once you have those large pulses of fish, to
17 slow down the escapement you have to take large chunks
18 of the fishery, take out of the -- you have to have
19 commercial openings. And so oddly enough when we had
20 weak runs it's usually the best sportfishing and we
21 have no subsistence problems.

22

23 MR. HOLMES: Okay. That's good. And I
24 really like your offer to help the folks there. And
25 suggesting that the research folks, when they go down
26 to do their sampling, coordinate with the villagers
27 down there and so if you could let James know who's a
28 good contact, so when they have those folks go down to
29 do their seining and sampling then, you know, they
30 should be able to guarantee a three to 500 or 700, I
31 don't know how many fish they catch but, you know,
32 they'll even help you catch the fish.

33

34 So please keep in contact and let them
35 know and I think they'll do all they can to help you.

36

37 Thank you.

38

39 MADAME CHAIR BERNS: Thank you, Mr.
40 Holmes.

41

42 Coral.

43

44 MS. CHERNOFF: This is Coral Chernoff.
45 I thank you ladies for calling in from Karluk.

46

47 I think one thing -- I think it's
48 really important to have these conversations, and
49 through this conversation I'm hoping that Fish and Game
50 perhaps could understand that subsistence fishing and

1 getting fish for the rest of the year that you're going
2 to eat for the winter is not just about how many fish
3 are coming through or I need 25 fish, as Alecia said,
4 or the other lady, and as several of us know up here,
5 it's a matter of having this specific window, when the
6 weather is nice, when you're not doing other things.
7 You know there's some other specifics about it, and I
8 hope that we can come to understand that when we're
9 talking about subsistence. We're just not talking
10 about we need 25 fish or 100 fish or 400 fish, that,
11 having that window at that specific time, during
12 specific weather when you're not getting chewed up by
13 bugs and there is wind and -- that's all very
14 important, and I hope that we can have a better
15 understanding of that through this conversation, also.

16
17 KATHERINE: Yes, I thank you for all
18 those comments. And this is Katherine (indiscernible).

19
20 You know I've got kids and we survive
21 off our fish during the winter but I can only put 20
22 fish up for smoked salmon, that gets my goat.

23
24 MADAME CHAIR BERNS: Thank you,
25 Katherine. Do we have any other further -- yes, go
26 ahead.

27
28 MS. SKINNER: This question is for
29 James Jackson.

30
31 Did I understand correctly that you're
32 only measuring escapement for sockeye?

33
34 MR. JACKSON: Through the Chair. Ms.
35 Skinner. No, we count all salmon species. We
36 enumerate the down stream migration, up stream
37 migration of steelhead. We count kings. We count
38 sockeye. We count the chum. It basically is all
39 species of salmon.

40
41 MS. SKINNER: And you count coho as
42 well?

43
44 MR. JACKSON: We do.

45
46 MS. SKINNER: Okay, thank you.

47
48 MR. JACKSON: I would point out that
49 the Fish and Game has a large funding problem and next
50 year we probably will be pulling the Karluk weir around

1 the beginning of September so we're not even going to
2 count basically half of the late run. So we probably
3 won't count coho. We actually -- we count less of the
4 silvers every year as the funding goes away because we
5 pull the weir earlier and earlier every year.

6

7 MS. SKINNER: So a follow up note to
8 that, I've started a running list of things we should
9 add to our information priorities for our funding
10 requests and I think we need to write Karluk as one of
11 those, and potentially looking at maybe some kind of a
12 research or monitoring project in the Karluk area,
13 particularly if Fish and Game, with the reduced
14 funding, isn't able to track and support management of
15 subsistence fisheries in that area. So I'm adding that
16 to my list.

17

18 KATHERINE: Okay, this is Katherine. I
19 have a question for that Jackson fellow. So is the
20 weir closed down now and what time did it close down
21 this year, and is that why the commercial fishing is
22 still open outside Karluk here?

23

24 MR. JACKSON: This is James Jackson
25 from the Fish and Game.

26

27 The weir closed down last week, I
28 believe, on the 21st. We were able to secure funding
29 to keep it in for an extra two weeks this year. And
30 the commercial fishery has been open at the mouth
31 because we essentially exceeded our sockeye salmon
32 escapement goal and it was felt that there was enough
33 of an abundance of silvers as well.

34

35 And just last week, there's still a
36 large amount of sockeye moving into Karluk. There's
37 intermittently commercial fishermen fishing at the
38 mouth of Karluk, and just last week they caught 70 or
39 80,000 sockeye. So there's a large volume of fish
40 still moving into Karluk.

41

42 KATHERINE: No, they're not, they're
43 getting corked off and taken outside the mouth of the
44 river.

45

46 MADAME CHAIR BERNS: Okay. Thank you
47 very much. Do we have any other further questions or
48 comments from the Council for Karluk IRA.

49

50 (No comments)

1 MADAME CHAIR BERNS: Seeing none.
2 Thank you very much, Alecia and Katherine for calling
3 in and sharing with us your concerns regarding your
4 subsistence issues out in the Karluk area, and we look
5 forward to working with you guys in the future.

6
7 MS. ANDREW: Okay. Appreciate your
8 time, thank you.

9
10 MADAME CHAIR BERNS: Thank you. On our
11 agenda, do we have any other Native organizations
12 wishing to speak at this time.

13
14 (No comments)

15
16 MADAME CHAIR BERNS: Okay. We are
17 going to take a 15 minute break and then we'll go right
18 into Kodiak National Fish and Wildlife Refuge. So we
19 will reconvene here, it's about 10:40 - five minutes
20 to.

21
22 (Off record)

23
24 (On record)

25
26 MADAME CHAIR BERNS: Okay, we're going
27 to get started, if you can please get seated.

28
29 (Pause)

30
31 MADAME CHAIR BERNS: Thank you. And,
32 Mitch and Della, do we still have you on line.

33
34 MS. TRUMBLE: I'm here.

35
36 MADAME CHAIR BERNS: Okay. We'll wait
37 for our two other Council members to be seated and then
38 we'll get started here.

39
40 (Pause)

41
42 MADAME CHAIR BERNS: And I'm going to
43 back track a little bit, I know I said we're going into
44 Kodiak US Fish and Wildlife Refuge, I did have a
45 request from Natasha Hayden with Native Village of
46 Afognak so we're going to give her a moment to speak
47 prior to going into Fish and Wildlife Service's report.

48
49 MS. HAYDEN: Thank you, Madame Chair.
50 Like you said, Natasha Hayden from the Native Village

1 of Afognak Tribal Council.

2

3 Just to give you an update on some of
4 the things that we've been paying attention to and
5 we've been involved in.

6

7 Many of you are familiar wit Dig
8 Afognak Camp out of Afognak. This year there was a
9 reduced number of camps, we've been raising money for a
10 mess hall and we were able to construct that mess hall.
11 The outside's completely done, the wiring's done, the
12 light's done, there's -- I think there's heat, and it
13 was set up so that it was useable this year for camp.
14 And so some of those funds that normally would go to
15 additional camps was diverted to construction of that.
16 It's not completely done but this year I think we had
17 over 80 people in the one building. We had our company
18 picnic -- or the Afognak shareholder picnic out there
19 this year and we were able to host the meal inside and
20 for the first time in 20 years we had everybody under
21 one roof, which was pretty amazing.

22

23 During the subsistence camp, I'm not --
24 I don't have direct knowledge of how it was obtained,
25 but I understand that we obtained cultural use permits
26 to harvest deer out of season, seal, and there -- they
27 had an eligible Alaska Native harvesting otters as
28 well. That was really successful. They're also
29 harvesting salmon and processing salmon and smoking.
30 That's a very successful program that is educating our
31 youth on how to be good stewards of the environment and
32 to harvest our resources.

33

34 We also were involved with the
35 activities that Sun'ag was involved in regarding the
36 Northern Edge training off shore. We also participated
37 in the government to government relations with the
38 Department of Defense prior to the training. I believe
39 where that stands now is we're actively trying to
40 organize to provide requests of consultation. I think
41 that's the track that we're going now for the future.
42 Because what I understand is the environmental impact
43 statement has given them permission to conduct their
44 training, I think it's for five years. So this is the
45 first out of the five years that they've already done.
46 So we're trying to obtain an agreement from the
47 government to be given consultation when they're
48 designing what the training activities are going to be.
49 So how many bombs, what types of pollutants, what type
50 of contaminants, what sort of active sonar, because of

1 the -- the broad range of what's allowed in their
2 statement, what they've reported to us, that they were
3 going to use a small fraction of what they're allowed
4 because -- so we just don't know. It could be anything
5 from zero to 600,000 pounds of ammunition, so we're
6 trying to get them to provide to us along with Sun'ag
7 Tribe.

8
9
10 One of the things that I've heard
11 pretty wide spread recently is there's been a lot of
12 dead birds and I believe you guys talked about it
13 yesterday. I had to leave early so I wasn't involved
14 in -- or wasn't able to listen to the whole
15 conversation. But I've had people who are just
16 residents of Kodiak come up to me and say what's going
17 on with the dead birds, why are there dead birds
18 floating outside the harbor, why are there dead birds
19 floating in our channel. And I've heard that they're
20 off shore birds that normally aren't even near shore
21 and they're showing up and they're dead. I personally
22 was out in Middle Bay this summer and walking along the
23 beach there was dozens of dead birds on the beach,
24 which I've never seen before. So I've heard lots of
25 accounts of that and I know that that's a concern
26 locally, and I don't know -- we don't know what the
27 cause of that is, it's possible that the algae bloom
28 that might be contributing to the death of the whales
29 but it also could be related to the training and we
30 just don't know, but there's lots of people that are
31 concerned about that.

32
33 We've also been actively involved in
34 the Gulf of Alaska bycatch management process. The
35 Kodiak Island Borough and city of Kodiak have formed a
36 joint work force -- task force on fisheries -- joint
37 fisheries work -- work force, task force, and they had
38 called for interested parties who wanted to participate
39 in a roundtable discussion of stakeholders regarding
40 the Gulf bycatch management program. Where they're at
41 now, the North Pacific Fisheries Management Council had
42 been on a track to -- they had proposals on how to --
43 what different programs to implement to manage bycatch.
44 They were, what appeared to be, very focused on
45 implementing a similar program to what's been
46 implemented before and rationalization or privatization
47 of the fisheries. As a representative of the tribe I
48 was able to participate in that roundtable discussion.
49 There was one held earlier this summer, it involved --
50 there was -- I think I was the only tribal
representative. There was Denise May from Native

1 Village of Port Lyons. There was lots of
2 representation from industry, processors and some small
3 boat fishermen. I'm not sure what the relevance would
4 be to you guys but just to let you know that we are
5 involved in that. The state of Alaska had -- with the
6 new administration last fall, the Governor -- or the
7 new Commissioner of Department of Fish and Game had
8 requested that the Council, the North Pacific Fishery
9 Management Council, take a pause in that process. I
10 believe they were supposed to rule on that, or start
11 their process to make a ruling on that last year and so
12 they paused on that. Coming up in a couple of weeks, I
13 believe it's next week at the upcoming fisheries
14 management council meeting, they're -- on their
15 schedule is to take that back up again. It could be --
16 nobody really knows what the state of Alaska is going
17 to propose, if they're going to request that they move
18 forward with the existing proposals from last year, or
19 if they're going to be introducing new proposals.

20

21 It is our hope that the North Pacific
22 Fisheries Management Council include some form of
23 community representation in the management structure of
24 the bycatch. We are hoping that there will be -- if it
25 goes into a rationalization type program, that it will
26 not be inclusive only to vessel owners and processors.
27 We're hoping that there's going to be some community
28 protections involved that will give the communities an
29 opportunity to be involved in both how -- if the fish
30 is owned, as a commodity, that it not only be owned by
31 the boat owners and the processors, but give the
32 communities an opportunity to participate in that
33 ownership.

34

35 And I think that's all from us.

36

37 MADAME CHAIR BERNS: Thank you,
38 Natasha. Do we have any questions or comments for
39 Natasha.

40

41 Mr. Holmes.

42

43 MR. HOLMES: Thank you, Natasha, for
44 your report. I kind of missed out the last couple of
45 years on going to camp because I've got grandkids now
46 and I used to go to camp just to have -- I forget the
47 Alutiiq name but, grandpa/uncle talks too much about
48 critters.

49

50 (Laughter)

1 MR. HOLMES: I have such a wonderful
2 time there.

3
4 And I've noticed that, you know, since
5 the cultural renaissance here in Kodiak over the last
6 30, 40 years, just how important these culture camps
7 are and your presentation here, I don't know,
8 emotionally warped me back in time to listening to your
9 mom and dad trying to help solve things in Kodiak and
10 the ladies at NVA and all the tribes around our area
11 and out west do these culture camps, how important they
12 are to the community and learning about subsistence and
13 our history. And I've met some folks at OSM that some
14 -- that felt that -- Federal employees that they felt
15 they really gained in their first few months on the job
16 coming to work in Alaska, because there's very, very
17 few, I think Tonya's probably one of the few exceptions
18 of somebody that was born in Alaska and understands the
19 community, and they expressed their esteem on going to
20 camps, like your camp, and other places, so that they
21 could learn about folks and the culture in which
22 they're involved in, in managing fish and critters in
23 Alaska. And I just think the NVA, the Dig Afognak is
24 really a cultural gem for our community, and I would
25 certainly encourage any new State or Fish and Game
26 person to take a few days and drop in at the camp and
27 just kind of see what's going on and understand our
28 culture and why subsistence is so important.

29
30 So I truly thank you for making your
31 presentation.

32
33 MS. HAYDEN: Thank you.

34
35 MADAME CHAIR BERNS: Thank you, Mr.
36 Holmes. Do we have any other further questions or
37 comments for Natasha with NVA.

38
39 (No comments)

40
41 MADAME CHAIR BERNS: Thank you,
42 Natasha.

43
44 MS. HAYDEN: If you don't mind, Madame
45 Chair, there's a couple other things that I thought of.

46
47 One is that we have been involved in
48 raising the awareness of the blood quantum issue here
49 in our region. That is something that is a pretty big
50 concern to us at NVA. The state of Alaska, statewide

1 doesn't have a blood quantum issue like we do here so
2 when it comes to harvesting sea otters the minimum
3 blood quantum, as you know, is one-quarter coastal
4 Alaska Native. That is rapidly being aged out in our
5 area and so we've reached out to AFN Subsistence
6 Committee, there's been some discussion about a couple
7 of different regions in the state that have agreed to
8 put forth some money to fund a research project to try
9 to evaluate what the impact of that lack of blood
10 quantum is going to have on the state.

11
12 I think where we're at right now is
13 that they are maybe at 80 percent funding and we're
14 looking to obtain the rest of the funding from our
15 Alaska Native organizations to fund that research.

16
17 And then I would also like to put a
18 plug in for our camp. As you know the public funds are
19 drying up rapidly. Our tribe is heavily dependent on
20 grants and it's getting less and less available for us
21 all the time. So we are actively pursuing other
22 fundraising methods. We're going to be having a live
23 auction and dinner coming up in February and we are
24 looking to just raise the profile of our tribe. It's
25 going to be fully to -- all the funds would be going to
26 Dig Afognak and we would just love to see everybody,
27 you know, come out and support us. And we're going to
28 be requesting donations from the community for items to
29 be auctioned off. So if anybody has anything they
30 would like to contribute, and we would love to see
31 everybody attend that if they can.

32
33 Thank you.

34
35 MADAME CHAIR BERNS: Thank you,
36 Natasha. Okay, then.....

37
38 MR. HOLMES: Madame Chair. I'd just
39 like to make one more plug on the culture camps.

40
41 You know, I think that one of our
42 members of our community that works out at the Refuge
43 there has really been instrumental in helping get these
44 things going and helping them all and I believe brought
45 in these little stuffed critters so we can keep in mind
46 what emperor goose looks like and Harlequin and other
47 critters.

48
49 And the comments on the dead sea birds washing
50 in, I like to take my geezer walk, and I was just

1 chatting with Coral about this little wishbone that I
2 found at the beach and it just got me thinking that,
3 you know, this little, really little wishbone might
4 jolly well be from this little gentleman standing here
5 looking at me and, you know, how everything interacts
6 and I remember how Denny Gleislhofer used to toodle
7 around the island counting his Harlequin ducks and
8 finagling ways to get diesel oil for the boat to toodle
9 over to Larsen Bay and do some, you know, unplanned
10 things, but always still connecting how the service and
11 Fish and Game interrelates with these camps and how
12 much we are a total community and how important it is
13 for all the agencies and all the folks in the
14 communities to participate in this and preserving this
15 wonderful treasures that we have, subsistence.

16

17 So I do hope everybody, all the Fish
18 and Gamers and Fish and Wildlife go to the auction and
19 dinner here that NVA is going to do and I hope that you
20 continue to do all your wonderful work supporting
21 subsistence.

22

23 Thank you very much, Madame Chair.

24

25 MADAME CHAIR BERNS: Thank you, Mr.

26 Holmes

27

28 I think we're going to move forward.
29 We have Anne Marie LaRosa with US Fish and Wildlife
30 Service, Kodiak, and we'll have their report.

31

32 MS. LAROSA: Thank you, Madame Chair
33 for the opportunity to address the Council.

34

35 We'd like to talk about the work that
36 we've done over the past year. We mentioned at the
37 last meeting that we lost a critical subsistence
38 biologist position. And so we've been working hard to
39 try to accomplish the same level of work that we
40 accomplished with 25 percent fewer resources. So I'm
41 very proud to say that our Staff really stepped up and
42 we got most of what we would have gotten done with more
43 people, but there were one of things that we weren't
44 able to do. I think we had a really productive year.

45

46 So we're going to report on fisheries
47 activities, wildlife activities, and then some of
48 Tonya's outreach that she's been doing.

49

50 And then we welcome your comments on

1 the work that we do, and any concerns that you have.

2

3 And Robin Corcoran will address what
4 she knows about the murre and other sea bird situation.

5

6 So Kevin VanHatten is here and he's
7 going to address some of our fisheries activities.
8 He's our pilot and fishery biologist.

9

10 MR. VANHATTEN: Good morning, Madame
11 Chair. My name is Kevin VanHatten, I'm a fisheries
12 biologist, pilot for the Refuge. And one of the --
13 other than the piloting duties that I do, one of the
14 things I help -- or I just monitor the fisheries
15 management that's been done by Fish and Game over the
16 course of the summer.

17

18 I take the information that they
19 provide, usually through email and with the help of our
20 RIT provide subsistence reports to the Office of
21 Subsistence -- OSM, weekly reports. That's one.

22

23 The other one is when we have good runs
24 or poor runs we also, in conjunction with Fish and Game
25 provide order -- emergency orders for either reducing
26 the fishing -- restricting the fishing areas, which
27 happened in early June of this year for the Ayakulik
28 and Karluk for chinook, which basically reduced or
29 restricted the taking of chinook in those river systems
30 until the end of the year to protect that; those
31 fisheries.

32

33 Another -- and I -- a project that I
34 started with the help of our bear biologist and one of
35 the Ph.d. candidates that worked with us started a
36 project on the Akalura, which was using the time lapse
37 photography system to try to enumerate sockeye salmon
38 moving into the system and this is with the help of
39 commercial fish James Jackson. I did a lot of
40 consultation with him and his crew throughout the
41 winter to kind of narrow it down on what system to use.

42

43 With that being said, pretty much
44 basically what we did throughout this last summer.

45

MADAME CHAIR BERNES: Thank you.

47

48 MS. LAROSA: Bill Pyle apologizes he
49 wasn't able to be here. He's actually working on --
50 he's in Anchorage at a meeting to help move forward the

1 project that he spearheaded with the Western Alaska
2 Landscape Conservation Cooperative and that's the
3 temperature monitoring, which is a collaboration with
4 State, tribal and private partners. And many of you, I
5 think, are involved in that. It's a coordinated
6 standardized and multi-jurisdictional regional
7 monitoring of freshwater salmon habitat throughout
8 Alaska. There's another one in Bristol Bay as well.
9 So that's to monitor the temperature aspect of salmon
10 habitat, and that just started in 2015. I think Bill's
11 been doing workshops on getting people trained in the
12 methodol -- the standard methodology to use for that.
13 So hopefully that'll give us some good data in kind of
14 a landscape perspective of what's happening with water
15 temperature that may help us with salmon management.

16
17 The Karluk Lake enhancement proposal by
18 KRAA, people are probably wondering what's up with
19 that. We should, hopefully, have a decision document
20 out at the end of this month. We're working with our
21 regional office, the decision document is actually
22 signed by our Regional Refuge Chief. So we're working
23 to get the information to him and to have those
24 conversations and get that out, hopefully by the end of
25 this month. And I think at the last meeting we gave an
26 update on the fact that we had the public meetings and
27 we had the comments and we consolidated the comments
28 and in this final environmental assessment there'll be
29 a response to all those comments.

30
31 I think that would be it for fisheries,
32 so thanks Kevin. And I would call up -- oh, sorry.

33
34 MADAME CHAIR BERNS: One moment we've
35 got a fisheries related question.

36
37 MS. LAROSA: Okay.

38
39 MADAME CHAIR BERNS: Go ahead.

40
41 MR. SCHWANTES: Yeah, on this -- Madame
42 Chair. On your water temperature thing, that's
43 something you're just starting this year, something
44 that's starting this year?

45
46 MS. LAROSA: That's correct.

47
48 MR. SCHWANTES: And I believe I heard
49 you say that you were going to try to determine how
50 that was going to have an effect on the salmon. And I

1 guess my question is, is if you don't have any historic
2 information on water temperatures, how is that going to
3 help you determine what's going on with the salmon?

4

5 MS. LAROSA: I'm sorry that Bill isn't
6 here to better address the proposal. We won't directly
7 take that information. I think the information will be
8 there to be available for managers of salmon throughout
9 the area to use with the other information that they
10 collect to try to determine what's happening with
11 temperatures across -- and we know what temperature
12 salmon can tolerate and where they -- you know, what
13 they need to live and reproduce, so I think that's the
14 intent of looking at it at this point in time.

15

16 MR. SCHWANTES: I guess my point is, I
17 understand you're going to start gathering those
18 temperatures now, but if you don't have any
19 temperatures from previous years, how is that going to
20 help you determine what's going on with the salmon runs
21 compared to the past?

22

23 MS. LAROSA: Again, I'm not as familiar
24 with Bill's proposal as he is but I don't necessarily
25 think it's a comparison to the past, I think it's more
26 looking towards the future and with the potential
27 effects of the changing climate.

28

29 MADAME CHAIR BERNS: I'd like to
30 comment on that.

31

32 I work with -- I serve on the Alutiiq
33 Tribe of Old Harbor and have worked with Mr. Pyles on
34 our project and actually installed the water and air
35 temperature gauges up in the Big Creek system. Big
36 Creek, we don't have previous data on but as a tribe
37 and it being our primary subsistence source for our
38 community for salmon it is something that we want to
39 monitor as climate change has become an issue within
40 the state of Alaska. So we don't have any previous
41 data but talking with Mr. Pyles there is some data from
42 the Karluk River and I know he is working with Larsen
43 Bay Tribe and so they do have some previous
44 temperatures and he did say that from that they do see
45 an increase in the temperatures. And so it's something
46 that they want to monitor over time. I know that this
47 is a three year project, but just so that it can be
48 long-term, we are, within Old Harbor, looking at
49 applying for additional funds so that we can carry this
50 on for longer than the three year period so we can get

1 a broader data base as we go forward.

2

3 Okay.

4

5 MR. HOLMES: Madame Chair.

6

7 MADAME CHAIR BERNES: Yes, go ahead.

8

9 MR. HOLMES: I don't know that Bill
10 would know about it, but I believe that if I recall
11 talking with when FRED Division was formed, that was
12 the Fisheries Rehabilitation and Enhancement Division
13 of Fish and Game, I believe that was '72, '73 somewhere
14 in there, they picked up and I remember the Bureau of
15 Commercial Fisheries, I remember seeing some grey
16 literature on data that they had when they had weirs
17 and were doing projects at Karluk, and also all around
18 the island, and so FRED Division has data and I believe
19 there's old BCF reports on data.

20

21 And to help answer Tom's question, I
22 think, Anne Marie was trying to get at, is, you know,
23 there's some defined lethal temperatures for salmon and
24 just like this fall, not having our monsoon at all, you
25 know, we got, I don't know, 100,000 humpies in the
26 Buskin and the silvers just flat wouldn't go up because
27 the water temperature was too warm and, you know, it
28 was way down and gathering this information for the
29 future we may well find that Alaska salmon maybe
30 they're more culturated to colder waters than the
31 decision that -- I don't know what temperature that
32 they croak in the Sacramento River, but it's a really
33 important project to get down. And then I see Bill
34 being able to go back and look through the grey
35 literature, chat with the limnologist with the Fish and
36 Game and bring a lot of that out. Because that's a lot
37 -- that's an incredibly important thing but it can't
38 only be done by the Federal government, and with all
39 the cuts we're having, the tribal interactions, I mean,
40 gee, that's the only way to go and get things done and
41 that's what I think we gathered on our long discussion
42 on financing and what our Council encourages for
43 support.

44

45 So hat's off to you folks.

46

47 MADAME CHAIR BERNES: Thank you, Mr.
48 Holmes. Do we have any other fisheries questions,
49 related.

50

1 (No comments)

2

3 MADAME CHAIR BERNS: Okay.

4

5 MS. LAROSA: Next Bill Leacock, our
6 wildlife biologist will speak.

7

8 MR. LEACOCK: Hello, Madame Chair, and
9 Council. Bill Leacock, wildlife biologist with the
10 Kodiak National Wildlife Refuge. I'd like to take this
11 opportunity to talk a little bit about our wildlife
12 projects this past year and covering some of the
13 material that McCrae Cobb covered in the past and I'll
14 do my best and perhaps with some help from my ADF&G
15 colleagues.

16

17 Typically in a normal year we try to
18 monitor bear population with two tools that we use.
19 One is called the intensive aerial survey and we pick
20 out an area, or two areas, hopefully every year to fly
21 at low altitude and count every bear in a systematic
22 fashion within that area. This year we were hoping to
23 do an area at Sturgeon and Southwest Kodiak Island, but
24 unfortunately we do this in cooperation with our
25 colleagues at ADF&G, but unfortunately with early leaf
26 out and the weather conditions, this mild weather
27 conditions this past winter and warm spring, leaf out
28 occurred too early and would have obscured our
29 sightability of the bears and biased our results so we
30 decided, in conjunction with our ADF&G colleagues,
31 decided not to do it this year, we hope to do that next
32 May.

33

34 Okay.

35

36 And we're in discussions quite
37 frequently regarding this. So we hope to have the
38 resources to do this next year.

39

40 Another tool that we have is what we
41 like to call the brown bear stream survey. And there's
42 a suite of streams in Southwestern Kodiak Island that
43 have been monitored since mid to late '80s and we've
44 been continuing that effort, and we did so again this
45 year. We were able to complete 16 survey -- complete
46 surveys in that area. This area includes rivers and
47 anadromous tributaries of Karluk, Red Lake and Frazer.
48 Again, we were able to complete 16 of these surveys.
49 The long-term average was seven so we did a little bit
50 better than in the past. And we've seen a little bit

1 of a shift recently. In the recent past we've seen a
2 small number of -- what we do -- when we're doing a
3 survey we fly, again, at low altitude, excuse me, and
4 count every bear within 100 meters of each of these
5 tributaries, and we do three of these a week, from
6 approximately July 4th through the end of August. And
7 that's what we did again -- we did this past year,
8 successfully. And when we count all these bears within
9 that 100 meter corridor we classify them as single
10 bears and/or -- or sows with cubs, and then we classify
11 those family groups as either sows with spring cubs,
12 this years cubs, cubs of the year, or older cubs and we
13 count the number of cubs in each of those family
14 groups.

15
16 So jumping back then, in the recent
17 past we've seen a pretty low proportion of family
18 groups, which was a concern. It indicated that there
19 wasn't a lot of recruitment going on. But in the past
20 three years, and this year -- and, indeed, this year
21 we've been seeing quite an increase in the number of
22 family groups and it's at or slightly -- this year, at
23 or slightly above the long-term average, and that's
24 encouraging.

25
26 So another brown bear -- some other
27 brown work we're doing is we've got one -- we've got a
28 project that's been going on, on looking into bear/
29 salmon, it's a bear/salmon research project in the
30 Karluk, Red Lake and Frazer Lake systems, which we've
31 been monitoring salmon runs in some of -- in a suite of
32 anadromous tributaries into those -- of those three
33 lakes and trying to relate that to bear movements and
34 habitat use and general ecology. We continued that
35 this year. It's been going on since 2012. This is the
36 last year for that project in particular. We have a
37 graduate student that's been working on that since that
38 time from the University of Montana, Flathead Lake
39 Biological Station, and he will be finishing up his
40 dissertation in May of 2016, and hopefully producing
41 three publications which will be out for the public.

42
43 How much detail would you like to go in
44 here.

45
46 MS. LAROSA: Do you want me to hand
47 that out for you?

48
49 MR. LEACOCK: Yeah, if you could.
50

1 This is some preliminary results from
2 this year's work. It's just some slides, some
3 illustrations that we've put together to give you a
4 little more information on it. Okay. Instead of me
5 just blabbering on.

6
7 Okay.

8
9 That first page, if you take a look at
10 it, that identifies the rivers that we're currently
11 working in. Within each of those rivers we've set up
12 these remote, it's a parrot system, originally a parrot
13 system of video -- remote video cameras and time lapse
14 cameras in order to quantify the salmon runs into each
15 of these streams, okay. And that second page kind of
16 shows one of the systems, okay. They're standardized
17 across the whole area and we've actually been
18 developing this since 2010, and we've got it pretty
19 much perfected now.

20
21 The third page will give you some of
22 the results. So salmon escapement into the nine
23 streams that we were monitoring this year, some
24 interesting things. You look at -- I don't know how
25 familiar you are with tributaries on Red Lake, but you
26 look at Connecticut Creek, over 100,000 sockeye went up
27 that creek, it's not a very big creek. If you know
28 Southeast Creek, it's even smaller, it's probably about
29 as wide as this table in most places and they had
30 89,000. Penell, which is quite a bit larger only had
31 about 24, or 25,000. So anyway, we've been monitoring
32 these over the last -- since 2012 -- pardon me, 2013,
33 all of them since 2013.

34
35 And on each of those streams we also
36 had time lapse cameras to develop an index of bears
37 occurrence on those streams, on each of the streams we
38 had a minimum of three bear cams. Connecticut we had
39 10 because there's a special situation that we were
40 looking into.

41
42 And you'll see on that same table, bear
43 detections, okay, along those -- along those streams.
44 Now, detections doesn't mean independent bears there.
45 So you look at Red Lake River and there weren't 21,000
46 bears on Red Lake River, that's just detections, okay.

47
48 (Laughter)

49
50 MR. LEACOCK: But it indicates that

1 Red Lake River gets a lot of bear use and it gets a lot
2 of bear use especially in the early part of the season
3 when salmon aren't available elsewhere because they're
4 moving into Red Lake to go to spawn in Connecticut and
5 Southeast and along the shoals.

6
7 If you look at the next page, there's a
8 little graph -- you guys can take a look at this when
9 you go home or whenever, and stuff and pay attention
10 and feel free to give us a call and I can explain it
11 more. And we'll be having a -- once the draft progress
12 report is out then that'll be available -- and approved
13 then that will be available for your review and it
14 explains this quite a bit better.

15
16 So it shows salmon abundance in the
17 tributaries during this past summer. Lots of -- again,
18 lots of colors there and stuff but it shows you the
19 general pattern.

20
21 And you take a look at the next page
22 where you have that, kind of that graph with the big
23 blue blob on it and that's salmon abundance plotted
24 against bear attendance, okay, across all streams.

25
26 Okay.

27
28 And you'll see that -- by looking at
29 this you see the black line that bear attendance was
30 quite high very early in the season and then it dropped
31 considerably as the season progressed. And I'll talk
32 about that in just a moment.

33
34 Take a look at the next page and we
35 have bear detections across all the streams and you can
36 see it's -- it's on top of each other so you can see
37 that Red Lake River has by far the most, so the
38 thickness of each of those colors is the contribution
39 or the relative number of bear detections within those
40 streams.

41
42 This year we also collared seven
43 additional new bears to look at finer detail habitat
44 use and movement patterns. And you'll see a map on the
45 next page that shows some of the det -- some of the
46 locations through August 11th, okay. We're compiling
47 more recent data -- or data from more recent surveys
48 now.

49
50 We also mentioned earlier about the

1 temperature or monitoring effort that's been going on
2 that was spearheaded by Bill Pyle. We tapped into that
3 and we've been monitoring water temperature in all of
4 these streams and with the hope that some time in the
5 future when we gather all this data and if we continue
6 monitoring the runs in these creeks that we'll be able
7 to tease out some relationships. And so that's just
8 kind of a -- it's a violin plot of the different -- of
9 the temperatures in the different streams.

10

11 The last page then is just a plot of
12 smooth daily temperature across these focal streams and
13 the air temperature. The air temperature is that one
14 up there on the top, the red one, and how -- and then
15 temperature, daily temperature for each of the other
16 streams. And you can see that there is somewhat of a
17 relationship -- a pretty good relationship between air
18 temperature and stream temperature, which, of course,
19 has implications for our salmon resources.

20

21 So that's it on that.

22

23 Deer. Again, McCrae is generally the
24 person here at the Refuge that takes care of the deer
25 surveys and stuff and we was not here, we didn't have
26 the resources and so we did not do a deer survey this
27 year. But anecdotal evidence from people that have
28 been out in the field indicates that the deer
29 population is doing quite well. We hope to carry this
30 out next year but we'll see what resources we have.
31 I'll go ahead and let ADF&G speak to that. They're
32 doing some great work up in Afognak.

33

34 In cooperation with ADF&G, both here
35 and out of Juneau, two organizations, the agencies have
36 been setting up a goat project, in which, 31 goats were
37 captured and there's two primary purposes of this. One
38 is to develop what we'd like to call a sightability
39 index of sorts so that we can get a better -- have a
40 better method for estimating and monitoring population.
41 The other purpose, primary purpose, is to look at
42 relationships between habitat use and relationships
43 between the goats and their impact on vegetation. And,
44 hopefully, at some point be able to develop some type
45 of a carrying capacity estimate. And John or Nate
46 could probably speak more to that. They have been more
47 intimately involved than I have.

48

49 Okay.

50

1 And that's about it for me. If there's
2 any questions I'd be -- try to be -- be glad to try and
3 answer them.

4
5 MADAME CHAIR BERNS: Yes, go ahead,
6 Rebecca.

7
8 MS. SKINNER: Since we have the benefit
9 of you being here, I was wondering if we can go back to
10 the slide presentation Figures 8 and 9. I am hoping
11 that you could talk a little bit more about what this
12 data that's represented in these pictures tells you.
13 So Figure 8, I think, is tracking the location of
14 specific bears on a map with a little colored dot so
15 you can see where they've been over time, but I was
16 wondering if at a high level you could kind of compare
17 and talk about, you know, bears that seem to be in one
18 location versus bears that wander around, kind of for
19 the benefit of people that don't have this in front of
20 them. And then with Figure 9 you do have underneath
21 the graph a note about the early and abundant
22 elderberry crop, so I was.....

23
24 MR. LEACOCK: Oh, yeah, sorry I skipped
25 over that.

26
27 MS. SKINNER:hoping you could
28 talk about the fish versus the berry consumption and
29 kind of comparing, or giving your -- I'm really
30 interested in your, kind of, interpretation and
31 feedback across each of these years, 2013 to 2015, and
32 the differences that are shown in the graph.

33
34 MR. LEACOCK: Okay. Thank you, Ms.
35 Skinner. I kind of skimmed over that and missed one of
36 them actually.

37
38 The map locations, that's just a really
39 simplified collection of all the data that we've
40 collected to that date on locations. So actually we've
41 been monitoring the number of bears since 2012 and
42 looking at their movement patterns in relationship to
43 resource availability, primarily salmon.

44
45 Okay.

46
47 So how does the timing, and we're using
48 this data, currently, to look at how timing and
49 abundance of salmon in all of these different
50 anadromous streams impacts, bear movement and habitat

1 use, okay. It's a little more complicated than that.
2 And we're also developing what we like to call resource
3 selection function, so we're looking at all the
4 resources available to the bears, looking at all these
5 -- we've got over 40,000 -- yeah, well in excess of
6 40,000 locations for these bears and we're using that
7 data to get a better -- to develop a better
8 understanding of how they use the landscape and move
9 about it and what's important.

10
11 On the graph there I kind of skipped
12 over somehow, that has 2013, 2014 and 2015. In 2013
13 the elderberry crop was more -- it's just showing
14 salmon abundance and bear attendance along these
15 streams. In 2013 the elderberry crop was more or less
16 about -- it wasn't a very good crop and it was -- the
17 timing or phenology of it was what we would call more
18 normal, okay, so elderberries were ripening in mid- to
19 late August that year. And typically what happens on a
20 year like that is bears will start exploiting those
21 elderberry crops, okay, so they may have been on the
22 streams for quite some time and then they move off
23 periodically and exploit those elderberry crops.

24
25 In 2014 and again this year, the
26 elderberry crop started ripening, or there was a large
27 amount of ripening by July 21st in 2014 and July 19th
28 this year. And what we saw was bears -- and -- our
29 regular telemetry data from our collared bears
30 supported this, or confirmed this, bears and suspicions
31 of everybody else, the bears moved off of these streams
32 and went to the elderberry zones, the elderberry crops,
33 okay, and they spent almost all of their time in the
34 elderberry crops until about late August when they
35 started trickling back to some of the streams.

36
37 So it makes the picture a little more
38 complicated, it's not just a salmon availability and
39 timing issue but it's also other primary food resources
40 and the ones that vary among years.

41
42 MADAME CHAIR BERNS: Thank you. Mr.
43 Holmes.

44
45 MR. HOLMES: Yeah, this is really
46 exciting to get this and particularly looking at this
47 in a historic refuge management perspective because I
48 remember three, four -- I can't remember, Mr. Rohrer
49 probably recalls the manager, but the local guides at
50 that time, this is like 25 years ago, maybe, or so,

1 were branching into doing bear viewing. And the one
2 fellow who was working there, O'Malley, and the bear
3 distribution changed radically and they disappeared and
4 so this fellow lost his guiding thing there for bear
5 viewing because the manager ignored Vick Barns'
6 research at the time, it was all preliminary, but he
7 had it all shracked up, that the food source, i.e., a
8 big berry crop moved the bears around, and, so, you
9 know, didn't really look at the information that was
10 available to him at the time and so it displaced, you
11 know, someone trying to develop a little better part of
12 his business. And it's so really nice to see this
13 being reconfirmed that, you know, hey, if you got a
14 high carbohydrate thing available and all you got to
15 eat is mucky old moldy salmon, well, people -- bears
16 are like people it'll kind of shift around.

17

18 So I think this is very exciting work.

19

20 I think your distribution is very cool
21 that that young fellow did there. And I can recall at
22 Frazer, and I know a lot of other biologists have done
23 a lot of field work, you can be in an area and there
24 won't be any salmon at all show up, but when that first
25 surge comes up the stream, all of a sudden within 10
26 hours all the bears from that end of the island will be
27 at, you know, less than a day, somehow they can
28 communicate, I don't know what sort of way they figure
29 it out but they obviously can't see the birds moving or
30 whatever, but it's so exciting to see 25 bears show up
31 at a stream within half a day of when the salmon move
32 up, you know, at that first part when they're really
33 hungry. So I guess it's like a sale at McDonalds or
34 something.

35

36 But, anyway, my commendations to you
37 folks on getting some of this work done like this.
38 It's just really swell and I like your outreach to the
39 university folks, and I hope that we can see more of
40 this.

41

42 And I had a question for Anne Marie. I
43 thought, you know, when you had made your comment about
44 losing, oh, that great gentleman that was doing the
45 deer study, his position, I thought that our Council
46 had quite a talk and I don't remember, and I'll have to
47 go back and look, if we had a letter to, you know, the
48 Federal Subsistence Board on our concern on losing that
49 position because of its importance to bears -- oh,
50 McCrae Cobb's slot. And I did, myself, do some calling

1 around trying to, you know, find some encouragement on
2 that, but I think before we adjourn -- I did find out
3 that that was mainly an allocation within the Alaska
4 District on where those funds went, McCrae moved so
5 being the slot was open where he went, but, we ended up
6 in our region losing out, and so I think our region,
7 Kodiak, losing out on our subsistence and our deer
8 research position, that it would be appropriate for us
9 to have that a point of concern in our letter to the
10 Federal Board, that we would like to see that position
11 refunded. I did some personal calls on it but didn't
12 get anywhere. But I think it would carry some more
13 clout if our Council, would, to provide, again, if we
14 haven't done it, or if we haven't done it before, some
15 support for the Kodiak Refuge on the imperative nature
16 of refunding that position.

17

18 Thank you, Madame Chair.

19

20 MADAME CHAIR BERNS: Thank you, Mr.

21 Holmes.

22

23 MS. LAROSA: This is Anne Marie,
24 through the Chair. Thanks very much. And we'd
25 appreciate that support.

26

27 It did happen as a result of what we
28 call work force planning, which is a response to
29 overall budget cuts in the Federal government and in
30 the Fish and Wildlife and in our region, and so that
31 was sort of our hit for that effort.

32

33 One project we didn't mention, but Bill
34 sort of alluded to was Bill Pyle has been working on,
35 and that's the Refuge in partnership with ADF&G and the
36 Kodiak Brown Bear Trust, is working on initiating a
37 bear and berry relationship research. And so Bill Pyle
38 and a couple of technicians with him this year have
39 gone out to try to refine the methodology to use for
40 that because there wasn't any standard methodology so
41 we're trying to quantify berries and then connect that
42 to bear use of those berries to compliment the work
43 that Bill was doing. And I think Nate might talk about
44 it a little bit later so I'll leave him some stuff to
45 talk about since Bill isn't here. But we started that
46 work and Bill will be looking at the data that they
47 collected this winter and working with Fish and Game on
48 refining some methodology that they might use to look
49 at berries and bears.

50

1 MADAME CHAIR BERNS: Go ahead.

2

3 MR. LEACOCK: Bill Leacock with the
4 Refuge. Just to touch upon that.

5

6 You know, we were talking, Mr. Holmes,
7 some time ago about the -- you know the lack of
8 information on how bears respond to berries, et cetera,
9 and stuff, so there's a lack of data had never
10 systematically been collected on berry production and
11 berry phenology and so that -- so Bill Pyle initiated
12 this in cooperation with ADF&G and the trust to try and
13 set up a system for monitoring this. And, indeed, he
14 had a technician on and he also had an ANSEP student
15 working with him this year, which was -- we've been
16 trying to get an ANSEP student for a number of years
17 now and we got one, a great kid from -- well, he's from
18 the Kuskokwim but he's a really great kid.

19

20 Thank you.

21

22 MS. LAROSA: Through the Chair, this is
23 Anne Marie, from the Refuge.

24

25 That brings up a good point. We had
26 tried to get an ANSEP student from Kodiak, and they had
27 a student and I think it was a young woman and at the
28 last minute for some reason, and I didn't ever know
29 why, she backed out so we're still very interested in
30 having an ANSEP student here working with the Refuge
31 from Kodiak. Randall Friendly, who we had from the
32 Bethel area is a fantastic person and we love him and
33 we'd love to have him back but I think they would like
34 to have him in Bethel and he might like to be a little
35 closer to home. So I would welcome your help in trying
36 to, you know, beat the bushes and get some of the local
37 kids more interested in the ANSEP program here because
38 I think it's a fantastic opportunity.

39

40 Oh, and one other comment on the bear
41 viewing, we did, Pat, get a lot of comments from our
42 guides this year, about, well, the bears just simply
43 aren't there. And we experienced that when we were out
44 in the field doing other work, that the bears just
45 simply kind of vanished from those areas where people
46 might traditionally do the bear viewing. So I think
47 that over the long run, if this is a pattern that
48 starts to develop with -- we don't really know all the
49 implications of the changing climate that it could have
50 implications for bear viewing.

1 MR. HOLMES: Yeah, that's for sure. I
2 think the difficulty arose awhile back, is that, you
3 know, that that manager didn't particular realize that
4 it wasn't the people out watching the bears, it was the
5 fact that the bears, they didn't care about the people,
6 they just wanted some better grub. And so I think it's
7 really good to get all the information you can.

8
9 And I'd like to also continue in my
10 role of the positive vibes on trying to get Alaska
11 Native folks and particularly Native folks from here, I
12 know the Department can't make choices based on race
13 but when I was with the Department and, shucks, you
14 talk to Orville Lind there, the coordinator, and, you
15 know, we tried to get folks working at Chignik -- from
16 Chignik, and outreach to the local communities and when
17 I had large crews here from Kodiak I found that former
18 Kodiak high school students and ones that had a long
19 history in our community and particularly some of the
20 folks with Alutiiq were ones that were stairs (ph) and
21 really worked and always was excited, when you start
22 with 20 of them and then somebody -- you find out years
23 later, finished their -- got a Masters in Science at
24 UAF or something like that, you know, you just want to
25 go and give them a hug. And so I really appreciate you
26 folks searching for volunteers and trying to get them
27 involved in your program. And I also would salute Fish
28 and Game for trying to do that, too, so good job.

29
30 MS. LAROSA: Madame Chair, this is Anne
31 Marie. One final note, maybe on the ANSEP program, I
32 just got some information back from them, I guess they
33 had the first two graduates of the program that are now
34 tenure professors, I believe, at UAA, and teaching in
35 the program now so it is a really, really exciting
36 program.

37
38 But what I do have to say is there are
39 a lot more kids on the engineering side than on sort of
40 the natural science side, so any help we can get in
41 trying to promote that aspect of the program, even
42 though there's a lot of people in it, there aren't that
43 many in, sort of, the resource management side of the
44 program.

45
46 MADAME CHAIR BERNS: Just to speak to
47 the ANSEP program, I'm a member of the Kodiak Rural
48 Regional Forum and we have an education working group.
49 That we do see ANSEP as a great asset for our youth and
50 we actually are going to have them come out and do more

1 outreach within the Kodiak region and in our rural
2 communities, so that's a great promising thing looking
3 into the future.

4
5 This past year we did have two students
6 from Old Harbor, I believe two students from Port Lion
7 and I think a few others from Kodiak that participated
8 in that program which was very successful and I had --
9 one of them was my niece and she just came back
10 ecstatic. So, yeah, great program and hopefully we'll
11 get more into the natural resource side with things as
12 well.

13
14 MS. LAROSA: Okay, now Robin Corcoran,
15 our bird biologist will talk to you about some of the
16 work that she's been doing and also a little bit about
17 what we know and maybe don't know about the bird die-
18 offs that everybody's been noticing.

19
20 MS. CORCORAN: Thank you, Madame Chair
21 and committee members for giving me this opportunity to
22 speak today. My name is Robin Corcoran, and I'm the
23 bird biologist with Kodiak National Wildlife Refuge.

24
25 I thought I'd start out with emperor
26 geese. I noticed that you've included the spring
27 survey results from 2015 in your handout, and so I'm
28 not really going to talk about that, and I think
29 Migratory Bird Management is going to talk more about
30 that.

31
32 But Bill Pyle was nice enough to put
33 copies on the back table of our winter survey that we
34 do here on Kodiak. And it's in cooperation with
35 Migratory Bird Management, so Heather Wilson, who's the
36 pilot biologist on the spring surveys was also the
37 pilot biologist on this most recent survey.

38
39 And so emperor geese were counted
40 primarily on the east side of Kodiak in February 2015.
41 And you'll see the results, it's just preliminary,
42 Heather gave us some of that information. But the last
43 time a survey was done was 2010 and the numbers for
44 emperor geese were very consistent. She had about
45 6,700 emperor geese on the 2015 count and about 6,800
46 on the 2010 count. And in conjunction with some
47 funding from Alaska Department of Fish and Game, their
48 Waterfowl Division, they also extended the emperor
49 geese survey to include Canada geese, particularly in
50 the Old Harbor area, so there's information on Canada

1 geese, and that survey had been done previously in 2002
2 and the numbers were up from the 2002 survey. So in
3 2002 in the Old Harbor area they had about 1,000 birds
4 and it looks like they're up to about 1,800 in the more
5 recent survey.

6
7 And, I'm sorry, this is on the back
8 table. So I guess it could be passed out, but it's
9 just a pretty brief three page summary.

10
11 MS. DEATHERAGE: Madame Chair. That
12 information was handed out and put in your supplemental
13 materials in the folder.

14
15 MS. CORCORAN: Sorry about that.

16
17 But if funding allows we'd like to try
18 and keep this survey going on like a five year basis.
19 It was started by the Refuge and Migratory Bird
20 Management back in the 1990s so it provides some good
21 local information on the wintering emperor geese
22 population.

23
24 And I thought I'd also bring up another
25 study that's going to start this winter. The US Fish
26 and Wildlife Service partners with the USGS,
27 particularly here in Alaska, the Alaska Science Center
28 in Anchorage, and Joel Schmutz, who's a goose biologist
29 with the Alaska Science Center. He's partnered with
30 the -- primarily with the Alaska Maritime Refuge, but
31 part of the study will take place on Kodiak, so we are
32 also a partner. He's looking at cross-seasonal affects
33 of disease and constraints on the numbers of emperor
34 geese. And I could talk more about this proposal, but
35 the work hasn't started yet here on Kodiak, but it will
36 start this winter. And it'll be two winters of work.
37 He works primarily with the geese on the breeding
38 grounds on the Yukon Delta, and so he's put geo-
39 locators on birds this year. He wants to tie birds
40 there -- the breeding success on the Yukon Delta with
41 where they winter. And so he has three separate
42 wintering sites chosen and he's got here in Kodiak, on
43 the road system, and then he's also going to work out
44 in Adak in the Central Aleutians and then on Shemya in
45 the Western Aleutians and he's going to compare the
46 wintering ecology in those three regions and see how
47 that ties to the breeding biology and so we'll be a
48 part of that. But, again, that's just starting so
49 it'll be two winters starting December of this year and
50 then continuing December of the following year.

1 And so that's it for emperor geese.

2

3 And then I thought I'd talk about,
4 there's a variety of monitoring and research projects
5 that I'm involved with but the one that I think is of
6 most interest to the committee is a near shore marine
7 bird survey that we conduct every June and August, so
8 we're looking at breeding birds.

9

10 And since 2011 it's been a transect
11 based survey so we do five kilometer transects and we
12 try and have the survey be Archipelago wide, so we're
13 trying to cover all of the Archipelago minus the
14 Trinity Islands down at the south. It takes about
15 three weeks to conduct the survey so we can only do
16 about a third of the island because of time and
17 logistical constraints each year. So we are on a three
18 year rotation. So we do the -- we started with the
19 east side of Kodiak in 2011, moved on to Afognak and
20 Shuyak in 2012 and then did the west side of Kodiak in
21 2013, and so we're now in our second cycle. We
22 repeated the east side of Kodiak last summer, and this
23 summer we were on Afognak, Shuyak and so I just thought
24 I'd -- I haven't had much time to do anything with the
25 data so I'm just looking at raw numbers. But I thought
26 I'd at least mention some of the very unusual sightings
27 that we had this year. Particularly with common murre,
28 the little upright bird over there.

29

30 (Laughter)

31

32 MS. CORCORAN: We don't have huge
33 breeding populations of common murres here so although
34 they're here in the near shore in the summer regularly,
35 particularly on the east side of Kodiak, they're not in
36 the vast numbers because we don't have huge -- we're
37 talking 20, 30, 50,000 birds, these are typical
38 breeding colonies that you have along the Alaska
39 Peninsula and into the Aleutians, we don't have that
40 here but we still have common murres here. But this
41 year was really unusual because we had so many. And
42 they are typically seen off shore. So we have two
43 survey zones. We have a near shore zone, which goes
44 from the tide line out to about a quarter mile. Then
45 we have an off shore zone, which we starts at about a
46 quarter mile off shore and goes to about three miles
47 off shore.

48

49 Typically we see these guys only in
50 that off shore region. There's just a few breeding

1 colonies, the Trinity Islands, they breed out at
2 Chiniak rocks, Table Island, Light Cape and Kluta,
3 there's a few hundred birds that attempt to breed, but
4 most of the birds we see are non-breeders. They're
5 floaters, they can take up to seven years to return to
6 a colony for the first time to breed, so they're very
7 interesting biology.

8
9 But in any case, just to give you an
10 idea of how unusual this year was, in 2012 when we
11 surveyed Afognak, Shuyak in June of 2012 we only had 34
12 common murre, and this year was unbelievable we had
13 2,000. And in August when we surveyed in 2012 we only
14 had 250 common murre and this year in August we had
15 5,000. And the other interesting thing is that near
16 shore zone, that tide line out to a quarter mile, we
17 had maybe about six percent of our murre in that zone,
18 in 2012, but we had almost 60 percent of our murre.
19 So thousands of murre were actually in that narrow
20 zone within the tide line to a quarter mile. And why
21 that was we don't quite understand. We think it's tied
22 to forage fish distribution, quality, quantity, it's
23 uncertain. But we have been seeing this die-off event.
24 And we first got reports in early April, and at the
25 same time the Kenai Peninsula in the Seward area, they
26 were also seeing large numbers of common murre and
27 then there were reports from the Alaska Peninsula and
28 out and into the Aleutians. So it's pretty widespread.
29 There's been reported colony abandonment in Kachemak
30 Bay, where the entire colony, the birds arrived,
31 initiated and then abandoned. Some of our large
32 numbers may be related to this colony abandonment in
33 other areas, the birds came here.

34
35 Our die-off here on Kodiak, although we
36 had large numbers, and large numbers in unusual
37 locations we didn't notice the birds on the beach until
38 August along the road system. And to be honest we
39 never saw it on our survey and we were spending a lot
40 of time on the beaches. And I don't know if we missed
41 it, our survey ended September 4th. But they
42 definitely started seeing it while we were out on the
43 survey along the road system. There were reports from
44 Pasagshak and Kalsin and Widow Bay of large numbers of
45 birds and we're still monitoring beaches along the road
46 system and there are still new birds arriving. I did
47 the last survey on Monday and most of the carcasses out
48 on the Ugak Bay side, Pasagshak, and Berry Lagoon,
49 those are old carcasses; I don't think there's a huge
50 number of new birds. But closer to town, Holiday Beach

1 and I think Mission Beach and in the harbor we're
2 seeing a lot of birds. We've been able to collect and
3 send in about 30 carcasses to the National Wildlife
4 Heath Center in Madison, Wisconsin and they've done
5 some preliminary data, not diagnostic work, and all of
6 the birds have been emaciated with no body fat and no
7 gastrointestinal contents so they don't have any food.
8 They're going to do further tests. They're interested
9 in the harmful algae bloom, possibility, and so they'll
10 test for the toxins related to paralytic shellfish
11 poisoning. It's a bit problematic because they like to
12 test stomach contents for saxitoxin, domoic acid, the
13 two toxins related to shellfish poisoning and thus far
14 they've only really been able to get stomach
15 secretions, but they're going to continue to try and do
16 that work.

17
18 But I also wanted to mention, there's a
19 program called COASST, Coastal Observation And Seabird
20 Survey Team that's based out of the University of
21 Washington, it's been active on Kodiak for several
22 years, and they're reporting common murre, a great
23 increase in common murre deaths. And then these die-
24 off events and carcasses on beaches in California,
25 Oregon and Washington, as well as in Alaska. So it's
26 not only a Kodiak or Alaska problem. In fact, it seems
27 to be more pronounced in the Lower 48 and in
28 Washington, Oregon and California. And these are not
29 unprecedented, there have been murre die-offs in the
30 past. This species just seems to be more sensitive at
31 times, especially it seems to be related to strong El
32 Nino events, which all indications are we're
33 experiencing a stronger El Nino year this year.

34
35 So that's all the information we have
36 but we, perhaps, will have more once the National
37 Wildlife Health Center finishes with the carcasses that
38 were sent in.

39
40 And I guess I would like to end on a
41 good note, it wasn't a bad year for all birds on our
42 survey.

43
44 We had really steady numbers of
45 puffins. We don't have very high -- great numbers of
46 puffins on the Afognak, Shuyak transects but horned
47 puffin and our tufted puffin numbers were consistent
48 between the 2012 and the 2015 survey. And black oyster
49 catchers harlequin ducks and pelagic cormorants also
50 seemed to do well.

1 And in August we get information on
2 productivity because we can age the birds so we know
3 the hatch year birds, the young year birds and all
4 indications are that black oyster catchers had a great
5 year. And the pelagic cormorant nests that we saw all
6 had multiple young and big ready to fled young so they
7 seem to be doing pretty well.

8

9 And so I thought I'd end on a good
10 note.

11

12 MADAME CHAIR BERNS: Mr. Holmes.

13

14 MR. HOLMES: I know you didn't get
15 over to Larsen Bay this year because you're working the
16 southeast side but I was wondering if any of your
17 projects, the otter counters or anything, if they're --
18 you know, because Denny used to do really intensive
19 work on harlequins that are almost a resident duck
20 between the fresh waters and Larsen Bay and that's been
21 a point that some of the folks there in Larsen Bay have
22 questioned, was the drop in numbers, and it's something
23 that we've mentioned before, but I was wondering if you
24 saw any hints of any changes in the harlequins in
25 Karluk Lake or, you know, in any of your other projects
26 or Larsen Bay. And it's unfortunate because a lot of
27 the serious duck hunters are getting too old to hunt
28 anymore, and, so, you know, trying to find out what's
29 really happening and -- and any -- any feelings about
30 harlequins on the part of the island that you did
31 survey, or anything you've heard from your other
32 colleagues.

33

34 MS. CORCORAN: Yes, thanks for the
35 question.

36

37 We will be back on the west side next
38 year so we'll survey Uyak Bay where the declines have
39 occurred.

40

41 I think Steele Davis and Harry Dodge
42 have both reported that they feel like the harlequin
43 ducks, the situation there may be improving. So we've
44 surveyed it -- Denny surveyed it the last few years, my
45 predecessor at the Refuge, the bird biologist, he
46 surveyed Uyak Bay from 2004 and 2007 and I continued
47 that survey in 2009, and then we surveyed again in 2013
48 so we have a pretty good handle -- the population
49 dropped precipitously until about 2007 but now it seems
50 to have leveled out. And each year that we've surveyed

1 it since then, '09, and '13, we found between 200 and
2 300 birds in Uyak Bay. So, yeah, we're -- I'm not sure
3 what's going on with that population but we'll get out
4 there and count them next year.

5
6 MR. HOLMES: Yeah, I believe -- Madame
7 Chair, through the Chair. I believe from, you know,
8 looking at Denny's data and then that last effort
9 there, you know, it did stabilize but it dropped like
10 two-thirds. And so the comments were not all Alutiiq
11 folks, you know, include harlequins in their soup duck
12 list but there are some folks that, you know, an
13 important thing. And the comments that we got several
14 years ago when Alec Paramanoff Jr., was on our Council
15 was he -- some of the folks were feeling that there was
16 a correlation within the increase in the amount of
17 trophy duck hunting by folks coming over from Europe
18 and targeting specifically harlequins and other ducks,
19 and I know some of the guides at the Fish and Game AC,
20 when we brought up that point, some of them are very
21 strict with their clients, some of them bring the meat
22 into the village for folks and others haven't done
23 anything on reducing it and are promoting it more, and
24 so that's sort of a conflict in duck management because
25 harlequins, I think, statewide, have declined, but
26 Kodiak was one of the more stable places, at least, my
27 vague recollection of my last gab with -- with Denny.
28 And so, you know, our Council was concerned to know how
29 that's tracking. Because if the problem is with
30 sporthunting being the thing reducing the harlequins
31 then probably the first approach would be to talk with
32 the guide association and, of course, some of them feel
33 it's just the people that are outfitting and not
34 guiding professionally that are encouraging this
35 hunting of the extra birds.

36
37 So several years we asked about having
38 a log book program implemented by somebody, the Refuge
39 has a conditional operating permit for outfitters that
40 work on the Refuge, to ask them to keep track of what
41 their harvest is in the outfitters, and everybody --
42 you know, because most of -- not everybody, but most of
43 them do have a conditional use permit to be on the
44 Refuge, that operate in Uyak, and so that was one
45 concept we were hoping to see develop somehow so that,
46 you know, maybe we could get a positive response from
47 that whole user group to be more conscious that those
48 numbers are dropping, and I don't know maybe some of
49 the other sea ducks too.

50

1 So it's a complex problem but based on
2 chats with some of the folks from Larsen Bay it's still
3 something that hasn't been answered and it's something
4 that could be done quite easily, I think, in, you know,
5 interactions between the agencies and the people that
6 are encouraging that type of hunt because it's a
7 relatively new industry for guides and outfitters and
8 so if we see that happening in that area, could it
9 happen somewhere else and then how does that affect
10 subsistence. So that's why I keep asking questions
11 about it every year, and hope that we can provide some
12 encouragement to take a stronger look at that
13 relationship.

14
15 I know Koniag was working on a grant, I
16 don't know if it came through to try to study
17 harlequins in fresh water and saltwater and I don't
18 know where that grant went. But, again, it's a marked
19 opportunity. You might put a transect -- little
20 asterisks in our transcripts for grant mongers to look
21 at that for, you know, potential grant source to be
22 able to help the Refuge, but in the end run help the
23 subsistence users that use sea ducks.

24
25 So really appreciate you doing what
26 you're doing and if we can find some way to find some
27 moderate self -- judged, yourself, implemented
28 solutions then it doesn't have to go to some kind of
29 crises management.

30
31 So thank you very much.

32
33 MADAME CHAIR BERNS: Thank you. Do we
34 have any other further questions or comments.

35
36 (No comments)

37
38 MADAME CHAIR BERNS: Go ahead, Anne
39 Marie.

40
41 MS. LAROSA: Okay, thanks. We'll wrap
42 it up with Tonya Lee.

43
44 MS. LEE: Good morning -- afternoon.

45
46 MADAME CHAIR BERNS: Yes.

47
48 MS. LEE: Good afternoon, Madame Chair,
49 and Regional Advisory Council members. Thank you very
50 much for this opportunity to speak before you. My

1 name, again, is Tonya Lee and I work for the Kodiak
2 National Wildlife Refuge. I'm the Refuge information
3 technician there.

4
5 If you are following along in the
6 Refuge update we're going to flip back a couple pages
7 to the Kodiak subsistence salmon project. And this
8 project is done in terms of field work. It started in
9 2012 and it's assessing the Larsen Bay, Old Harbor and
10 Kodiak subsistence salmon use patterns and how they've
11 changed over times. So we did some in-house surveys
12 and observations of people doing their subsistence
13 salmon and did a lot of documenting. That was an ADF&G
14 Subsistence Division and myself. They are in the lead
15 for writing this up and I've offered myself for review
16 and to help finish it, it's in -- Bill Pyle's talking
17 directly with Jim Fall and it's not completed yet but
18 it should be in the near future. And that's the Kodiak
19 subsistence salmon project. There's no page numbers.

20
21 And I was going to go over, briefly,
22 the subsistence permit system. As most of you are
23 probably aware, the Refuge Federal Subsistence Program
24 offers several different subsistence hunts including
25 deer, brown bear, and elk on Afognak and Raspberry
26 Islands. And when I go to the village communities this
27 time of year I'll offer a permit to residents there
28 through their tribal and give the tribal people a
29 chance to offer them as well. And I think generally
30 speaking a lot of the villagers are hunting under State
31 regulations. You'll see there in Table 1 a graph of
32 what has been issued through our office and the
33 villages and what has been taken in parenthesis.

34
35 So I'll continue unless you have
36 specific questions about that.

37
38 (No comments)

39
40 MS. LEE: And now we're flipping back
41 to -- oh, go to sea otters, and that's a page over
42 after mountain goats. And I was just going to talk
43 briefly about marking and tagging. Brad Bentner from
44 the Marine Mammal marking and tagging program in the
45 regional office came here and he trained a few more
46 taggers. Two in Port Lions and one in Ouzinkie and one
47 here on Kodiak at Native Village of Afognak. And I can
48 sense that they may be busy, I don't actually get their
49 numbers or their reports, but I had a lot fewer tagging
50 opportunities at the Refuge because I think that they

1 were getting more of the load there. And there's a
2 typo there but we've tagged to-date five sea otters at
3 the Wildlife Refuge there at the Buskin Headquarters
4 for 2015 so far. We also get a lot of tusks coming
5 through there and I think we're the only deal that does
6 tusks. People -- usually Fish and Game employees or
7 fishermen or Coast Guardsmen are typical people who get
8 tusks, find them on the west -- out west there.

9

10 Okay.

11

12 And you can go ahead and flip over,
13 please, to the outreach page, it's the last and second
14 to last page and I wanted to mention, briefly, a
15 program we started this year, called, share your plate.
16 It's under subsistence outreach. And I was pretty
17 excited about this project and I was able to purchase a
18 bunch of processing equipment to share with the
19 community that'll most likely be distributed at the
20 Fish Tech Center, over there where they already have a
21 lot of equipment and people who understand this project
22 and want to share it. So we've got a little flier of
23 what equipment will be available, including a Big Chief
24 smoker, a meat grinder, it's a one-horse power
25 commercial grade, a juice steamer, an All American
26 pressure canner, a dehydrator, it's a real nice
27 commercial grade, and a vacuum sealer.

28

29 So the other part of this project was
30 having expert teachers demonstrate some subsistence
31 ways that they felt comfortable doing. And Melissa
32 Berns did a great job here. And we were able to have
33 Bogie Holmes also demonstrate berry and plant
34 preservation. We had almost 50 people come to Melissa
35 Berns and it was a sausage and jerky demonstration as
36 well as a Kombucha starter recipe. And let me tell you
37 I'm enjoying my Kombucha immensely, it's kind of crazy
38 but it's a really good thing, very healthy. So thank
39 you so much Melissa Berns for doing that.

40

41 And I look forward to having more
42 people, if interested, just show their knowledge and we
43 can do it any way you'd like. I'd like to get it on
44 document and share, if possible. And just excited
45 about that project and just learning about all the
46 many, many wild foods programs that are already in our
47 community.

48

49 So this year we were able to do the
50 Migratory Bird calendar contest. It's in the village

1 communities. And it was an organized effort with the
2 State of Alaska, the regional office, and with Fish and
3 Wildlife Service. Each year this contest has a theme
4 and an art piece and a literature piece. It went over
5 very well with the village schools. And I was just
6 going to honor the winners. All of the schools
7 participated and we had four kids win a page in the
8 calendar for the 2016 calendar from different villages;
9 Sara Reft from Karluk, Denise Kalmakoff from Akhiok,
10 Gavina Mueller from Ouzinkie and Angel Christensen from
11 Old Harbor one her literature in the contest for the
12 calendar. And I also have extra copies of this year's
13 calendar that I wanted to show you guys, you can have
14 one even though we only have a fourth of the year left.
15 And next year I promise you'll get a copy.

16
17 So overall I just think it's really
18 important to share with youth in our community, the
19 importance of wildlife, and learning about place base
20 information and knowledge. So I just try to gather
21 unique tools that are meaningful to the kids in our
22 community and use them, such as the bird mounts. The
23 harlequin ducks came in good use during the migratory
24 bird calendar contest and in our effort to make the
25 village aware of the harlequin decline in the Larsen
26 Bay area. So the harlequin is in Uyak so I work with
27 the village of Larsen Bay. And we work with the
28 harbormaster who knows her ducks pretty good in the
29 school there to teach the kids, not only the life
30 history of the bird, their migration pattern, and
31 things like that, and then how the birds are counted
32 and why the biologists get the numbers they get.

33
34 So other tools I get really excited
35 about are like the string model in the back of the
36 room, and it's just a reminder that the Refuge is right
37 out our front and back door. And this model was
38 actually inspired by one -- a Kenai bear kit that had a
39 string model, just a real simple thing, and then you
40 got pictures of Big Creek from the air and this is
41 actually Big Creek inspired model with high peaks in
42 the background and the stream in front and so if you
43 can take the time during lunch or after the meeting to
44 check it out with the Kodiak wildlife, we always remind
45 kids what animals are native to the island and what
46 have been introduced and what animals are in their
47 area. Are there elk in their area. Mostly not unless
48 they live in Ouzinkie. And where are the caribou
49 living. And just reminding kids of all that stuff.
50 And there's endless, limitless opportunity for a model

1 like that to use as setting up in scenarios and
2 teaching kids specific things. You could just let your
3 imagination run wild and have fun.

4
5 So also I'd just say that it is a play
6 therapy for adults.

7
8 (Laughter)

9
10 MS. LEE: So feel free. Don't forget
11 to play because it's been a -- it's been a good
12 meeting, it's been kind of long.

13
14 (Laughter)

15
16 MS. LEE: Sorry.

17
18 (Laughter)

19
20 MS. LEE: I don't know if it's the wish
21 of the Council, but I do have on screen the trail
22 camera pictures and I just selected a couple I could
23 show you, or even one, but if you'd like to, just look
24 at it later on your own time, I have them on my
25 computer.

26
27 So the trail camera kit has been a real
28 great thing to use as a tool to teach kids how you can
29 get closer to hunting spots, learn more about the
30 wildlife that's there, and this has been endless as
31 well for opportunities to use. So it's up to you. I
32 know it's almost probably lunch time.

33
34 Madame Chair.

35
36 MADAME CHAIR BERNES: We'll continue on
37 and then we can look at them after lunch, we're going
38 to try to keep to a strict schedule here.

39
40 (Laughter)

41
42 MS. LEE: I will always take your
43 recommendations and advice, any guidelines you have
44 that I could do a better job in outreach to our
45 communities. And I really appreciate this time before
46 you.

47
48 Thank you, and that concludes my
49 report.

50

1 MS. LAROSA: And this is Anne Marie,
2 that concludes the Refuge report. Thank you for
3 letting us take this time.

4
5 MADAME CHAIR BERNS: Are there
6 questions or comments for Tonya or Anne Marie, and I've
7 got a few comments. We'll go to Mr. Holmes.

8
9 MR. HOLMES: I'd like to -- Anne Marie,
10 I'd like to compliment Tonya and I'd like to pass on a
11 bit of an anecdote from one of the leading tribal CEOs
12 in town, and it's a feeling I feel strongly about
13 myself, is that, this work that Tonya does in outreach
14 is just so good and helps us find the right connections
15 with what's going on on the Refuge, and this one lady
16 mentioned to me that because of the -- I forget what
17 you call it, government to government consultation, she
18 can spend two-thirds of her morning just sorting papers
19 on what's important to different government agencies
20 and what they need to respond to, but she said that all
21 she needs is a call from Tonya that there's an
22 important meeting or something that needs her attention
23 and she knows, she can just put it all aside and take
24 care of the thing that Tonya is bringing her awareness.

25
26 And what she does with the kids in the
27 school, all around the island is really good. And I
28 know that if something comes up and she knows that I'm
29 interested in or the Council members might be
30 interested in she gives us a little buzz, just a quick
31 little note on the computer or something, and being
32 sometimes I can't remember where my shoes are at the
33 door, having those reminders is exceptional and she's,
34 I think, a real treasure and a resource to the Refuge.

35
36 MS. LAROSA: Thank you for that
37 feedback.

38
39 MADAME CHAIR BERNS: And I would just
40 like to mimic Mr. Holmes' comments. I've had the
41 pleasure of working with Tonya and requesting her to
42 work within my own community, whether it's at the
43 school during our cultural week or outreach with youth
44 that I know we'll be harvesting during the Federal
45 season, to make them aware of the rules and regulations
46 that apply to them, she's been more than willing to
47 come out and to share those and also to work with our
48 youth so that they're able to learn more about the
49 wildlife in our area.

50

1 And also having the pleasure of working
2 with her in this wild foods project. I'm hopeful that
3 you're able to get that information out about the loan
4 program for the equipment to the other schools and
5 tribes around the island because a lot of those pieces
6 of equipment are quite pricey, that people might not
7 have access to them, but they are really important in
8 sharing and passing on food processing practices.

9

10 So, yeah, thank you for that.

11

12 Any other questions.

13

14 (No comments)

15

16 MADAME CHAIR BERNS: I do have one
17 public comment. Mr. Rohrer would like to address the
18 sea duck issue with Wildlife Refuge.

19

20 MR. ROHRER: Thank you, Madame Chair,
21 member of the Committee. My name is Dick Rohrer, big
22 game guide, sportfish guide on the Refuge, incidental
23 sea duck harvest by some of our fall hunting clients.

24

25 And as I listened to Member Holmes talk
26 about the harlequin duck harvest I felt it necessary to
27 bring the Council and Mr. Holmes up to speed on current
28 regulations.

29

30 The reference to what I think many of
31 us felt was way over harvest went back a number of
32 years of sea ducks, when the daily bag limit was 15 per
33 day. So a frenchman could come from France, and they
34 did, come to Kodiak and they could harvest 15
35 harlequins at the time, or stellers ediers. The next
36 day they could go harvest another 15 harlequins, and
37 that was the possession limit and they could take those
38 back to France and mount them and do whatever, trade
39 them, sell them, all of which, of course, for us was
40 not legal at that time. And I'm talking about possibly
41 15 years ago, at that time there were several guides in
42 Kodiak who implemented personal limits on their clients
43 as to how many harlequins they could take, as Mr.
44 Holmes referred to. Today, however, the season bag
45 limit on harlequin ducks for non-residents is four
46 ducks for the season. So we've gone from a 15 per day
47 bag limit to four per season. Obviously that makes it
48 pretty clear why there's been some increase in
49 harlequin population.

50

1 So Mr. Holmes mentioned the possibility
2 of implementing a log book process. I'm about log
3 booked up to here.

4
5 (Laughter)

6
7 MR. ROHRER: I don't think that's
8 necessary at this time, we've taken care of it with the
9 bag limit and consequently that restrictive season bag
10 limit has done away with the interest and effort. On
11 top of that there was a major Federal effort called
12 Operation Eider where undercover agents were put with
13 many of our Kodiak guides and a number of charges were
14 made, a few cases, a few people were convicted, not too
15 many, so there was a big effort and we're now, I think,
16 with some increasing numbers there specifically in
17 Uyak, why all of those things have contributed to that.

18
19 I operate strictly in Uganik and we
20 haven't had those -- our observation isn't that we had
21 -- that we've had those substantial decrease in
22 harlequin numbers but if you look at the number of non-
23 guide lodge operations in Larsen Bay, not just
24 residents of Larsen Bay but outside people running
25 lodges there, unguided deer hunters, unguided
26 incidental duck harvest that's totally different from a
27 hands on guided one guide per client, with that kind of
28 control, that's a big difference, and so I think that's
29 plenty of reason for what was viewed and possibly
30 happened of way over harvest in Uyak that we didn't
31 necessarily see other places. But that should turn
32 around now.

33
34 So thank you, Madame Chair.

35
36 MADAME CHAIR BERNS: Thank you, Mr.
37 Rohrer. Do we have any other questions or comments for
38 Kodiak National Wildlife Refuge.

39
40 MR. HOLMES: I want.....

41
42 MADAME CHAIR BERNS: Mr. Holmes.

43
44 MR. HOLMES: Madame Chair. I'd like to
45 thank Dick for that clarification. I was unaware of
46 that change in the seasonal bag limit and, you know,
47 the perplexity of some of the folks on the --
48 subsistence users on the west side wasn't with the
49 Kodiak guides because they tend to be pretty
50 professional but it was because of the increase in

1 outfitting, and so I'm glad that you clarified that for
2 us. I would rather suspect it probably came from the
3 Kodiak Guide Association trying to put a lid on it
4 because that's very similar to what many of your
5 colleagues, or the ones I know in Uyak were trying to
6 do, so my hat's off to you folks.

7

8 Thank you, very much.

9

10 MADAME CHAIR BERNS: Thank you. And
11 thank you Anne Marie.

12

13 Okay, in the interest of time we will
14 take lunch at this time, but we will make that a short
15 lunch and come back in 45 minutes, so 1:15 and then
16 we'll go into Migratory Birds.

17

18 1:15. 1:15, 15 not 50.

19

20 (Laughter)

21

22 (Off record)

23

24 (On record)

25

26 MADAME CHAIR BERNS: So I think we're
27 going to reconvene if we can get everybody to come
28 together please.

29

30 Thank you.

31

32 (Pause)

33

34 MADAME CHAIR BERNS: Thank you all for
35 coming together and having a short lunch there. We're
36 going to start back up with -- let's see where were we,
37 Alaska Migratory Birds; is that correct Karen, and
38 we're getting a presentation set up.

39

40 MS. LOWE: Do you have Izembek before
41 Migratory Birds.

42

43 MADAME CHAIR BERNS: We're going to do
44 Izembek following, we had to give Migratory Birds an
45 exact time following lunch due to other obligations.
46 So we're going to do their presentation and then go
47 into Izembek.

48

49 MS. LOWE: Okay.

50

1 (Pause)

2

3 MADAME CHAIR BERNS: Hi, do we have
4 Eric Taylor on the line with us.

5

6 MR. TAYLOR: Yes, hi, this is Eric.

7

8 MADAME CHAIR BERNS: Hi, Eric. We are
9 all set up and we've got Palma -- will be sharing your
10 slides if you can -- you can go ahead and begin your
11 presentation and just let her know when you're ready
12 for her to change.

13

14 MR. TAYLOR: Great, thank you. I'm
15 Eric Taylor, I'm the Division Chief for Migratory Bird
16 Management with the US Fish and Wildlife Service here
17 in Anchorage, and I want to thank the Chairman and the
18 rest of the Council for the time this afternoon to
19 present an update on the status and management of
20 emperor geese. So before I start, can everybody hear
21 me okay.

22

23 MADAME CHAIR BERNS: Yes, we have you
24 loud and clear, thank you.

25

26 MR. TAYLOR: Great. All right. And
27 it's a little bit awkward to do a presentation via
28 teleconference so I apologize. As everyone knows we
29 are at the end of the fiscal year and travel was looked
30 at very carefully for the Federal government, in our
31 agency it was decided between the budget and relative
32 to the last of the fiscal year it was better that I
33 stick to Anchorage and do this via distance. So I
34 can't see everyone's hands if you put them up but you
35 can ask questions and interrupt me during the
36 presentation or feel free to hold your questions and
37 I'd be happy to address them at the end.

38

39 Last year I'm sure the committee
40 members -- or Council members remember Julian Fisher
41 who's the waterfowl section chief delivered the
42 presentation, we were able to come down to Kodiak last
43 year and Julian was busy this week so I am filling in
44 for him.

45

46 So next slide.

47

48 I'll go through the emperor goose
49 distribution just to make sure everybody kind of
50 refreshes their memory on where birds are, what time of

1 the year.

2

3 So about 90 percent of emperor geese
4 nest on the Yukon Kuskokwim Delta, the coastal fringe
5 of the Yukon Delta, particularly the Delta National
6 Wildlife Refuge and that's indicated by the black
7 rectangular box there on the figure. Emperor geese
8 also nest in small numbers on the Seward Peninsula and
9 along the Kamchatka Peninsula of Russia but it's
10 probably less than 10 percent of nest off the YK Delta.
11 Most birds stay on the YK Delta throughout the summer
12 but in late summer, non-breeding birds, birds that are
13 younger than four years as well as failed nesters,
14 birds that may have lost their nests due to predation
15 or flooding, here what's called a molt migration, in
16 the molt to Kamchatka Peninsula, to Russia passing over
17 St. Lawrence Island and there on the -- on the
18 Kamchatka Peninsula they'll do what's called a
19 simultaneous wing molt, they'll molt all of their
20 flight feathers and become flightless for up to three
21 weeks and they remain there until early August. By
22 mid-August birds start migrating south again. They
23 arrive on the Alaska Peninsula where they remain until
24 about mid-October to late October and then they start
25 migrating to the far ends of the Aleutian Islands, we
26 well as Kodiak. That's the primary wintering grounds
27 there indicated in that red box along the Alaska
28 Peninsula and that encompasses all the way out to
29 Boulder and Kodiak Island. The birds remain there on
30 the Alaska Peninsula and Kodiak until March or April
31 and they start to return back to the Alaska Peninsula.
32 There they stage during the spring period and fatten up
33 on food resources before migrating back north to YK
34 Delta.

35

36 Next please.

37

38 So declines in the 1960s prompted
39 flyaway wide meetings all along the Pacific Flyaway
40 involving the Federal government, the Fish and Wildlife
41 Service, as well as the Department of Fish and Game,
42 sporthunters, and subsistence hunters on trying to come
43 up with reasons and solutions to declines, not only in
44 emperor geese but also in Pacific brant, greater white-
45 fronted geese and cackling Canada geese, birds that all
46 depend on the Yukon Delta to nest. And in 1984
47 formalized an agreement called the Hooper Bay Agreement
48 and one year it was renamed to the Yukon Delta Goose
49 Management Plan, and those partners got together to
50 decide population objectives as well as harvest

1 thresholds that would trigger opening or closing of
2 seasons for all the species and in this case for
3 emperor geese. So the population objective as this
4 slide shows was set at 150,000. And some people
5 thought that was possibly too low, some people thought
6 it was a compromise. But based on a figure that was
7 estimated, a survey in 1964 it felt like it was
8 reasonable. And then there were harvest thresholds set
9 up at 80,000 where if the population would hit 80,000
10 or higher the hunting season could be reopened, it was
11 closed in 1986 to sporthunting, in 1987 to subsistence
12 hunting. And then it would be closed at 60,000 or
13 less. And the Pacific Flyaway Goose Management Plan
14 evolved out of the Yukon Kuskokwim Goose Management
15 Plan. It was developed by the Fish and Wildlife
16 Service, the Alaska Department of Fish and Game, as
17 well as members from the Alaska Migratory Bird
18 CoManagement Council, Peter Devine from the
19 Aleutian/Pribilof Islands, Austin Ahmasuk from Bering
20 Strait Norton Sound, Ralph Anderson from Bristol Bay
21 and Tim Andrew from the Association of Village Council
22 Presidents. So it truly was a collaboration between
23 State, Federal agencies as well as rural residents.

24

25 Let's see next slide.

26

27 This is a map of our spring survey.
28 And the spring survey was selected as the official
29 monitoring survey or the index to monitor emperor
30 geese. It was selected for a couple reasons.

31

32 One is based on historical estimates
33 were available for that geographic area and time period
34 and also birds are concentrated and are highly visible
35 in late April to early May. So it was adopted as the
36 official index to monitor and track the emperor goose
37 population.

38

39 So since 1981 we have flown this survey
40 from the north Jacksmith Bay, you can see at the very
41 top and then along the coast, along the entire Bristol
42 Bay coastal area to south Naknek and then along the
43 north of the Alaska Peninsula, the north coast line to
44 Bechevin Bay and then we cross the Peninsula and do the
45 south side of the Alaska Peninsula from basically King
46 Cove all the way over to Wide Bay.

47

48 The survey's done with a Cessna 206.
49 We fly about 110 knots, about 150 feet above sea level
50 and about 100 yards off shore. Both the pilot and the

1 observer monitor emperor geese from both sides of the
2 aircraft. The locations are entered into a recorder
3 into two laptop computers using remote microphones and
4 each observation is recorded with a GPS for each
5 observation. Interesting, for this survey the same
6 observer, I'm guessing some folks know Chris Dau, Chris
7 Dau has been the same observer on this survey from 1981
8 to 2015.

9

10 Let's see what else do I want to say.

11

12 (Pause)

13

14 MR. TAYLOR: About 95 percent of the
15 emperor geese that we count on this survey occur from
16 Egegik on the north part of the Alaska Peninsula out to
17 Izembek Lagoon Complex, so basically Cold Bay. So
18 about 95 percent of the birds, obviously fewer birds,
19 less than five percent of the birds will occur on the
20 south side and then between Jacksmith and south Naknek.

21

22 Next slide please.

23

24 This is a figure that depicts our
25 emperor goose spring index so the vertical axis goes
26 from zero to 160,000. The horizontal axis are the
27 years that we've conducted this survey. There was one
28 survey done in 1964 that counted about 140,000 emperor
29 geese. And as I mentioned we have been doing the same
30 survey from 1981 through this year, 2015. You can see
31 the three thresholds, the horizontal lines, the black
32 line at the top is the population objective at 150,000,
33 the harvest closure and the red line is 60,000 and then
34 we can reconsider hunting at that orange line or resume
35 hunting at 80,000. The black line that goes up and
36 down is what's termed the three year average and so, as
37 you can see the estimates or the indices for each year,
38 they vary year by year. As a result of birds that --
39 as an index, we clearly don't count all of the emperor
40 geese. Birds may be late in arriving to the Alaska
41 Peninsula or some birds may have left the Alaska
42 Peninsula when we do it. We may miss birds and we
43 certainly do so we use what's called a three year
44 index. So in this case the last three year index here
45 is 81,875 so that's the average of 2015, '14 and '13.
46 So one thing that's of interest, of course, is that
47 three year average is above the line of 80,000 where
48 hunting could be resumed or could be considered and
49 it's the first time we have been above that line and
50 above that threshold since 1984.

1 The other figure or the other line you
2 could pay attention to is the one in purple which shows
3 the 10 year growth rate, that's the growth rate at
4 about one percent per year. If you drew a line over
5 the last 30 years it'd be less than that, about 0.4
6 percent. So the population is slightly growing. In
7 fact, all four of our surveys or recent analysis that I
8 sent to the Council by Josh Dooley shows that all of
9 our survey data all show small amounts of growth so
10 they're all in agreement but not substantive growth.

11
12 And then you can see that between 1986
13 to 2015 the emperor goose season has remained closed.

14
15 Next.

16
17 And then you'll have to click through
18 the bullets so go to the next bullet and you'll see in
19 2012 to 2015 we, we, being the Alaska Migratory Bird
20 CoManagement Council, which is comprised of the Fish
21 and Wildlife Service, the Alaska Department of Fish and
22 Game and 11 Native Alaskan rural regions had received
23 four proposals. One from Kodiak, another from the
24 Aleutian/Pribilof Islands, the Association of Village
25 Council Presidents on the YK Delta and the Bering
26 Strait regions, all have submitted proposals to open
27 the emperor goose season. So clearly there was
28 interest statewide in an emperor season.

29
30 Next please.

31
32 During that same time period for those
33 proposals, both the Federal government and the State
34 government were unable to support opening emperor geese
35 to hunting because the three year average was below
36 80,000. And, in fact, this year at mid-April when the
37 AMBCC held its meeting in Anchorage, the Alaska
38 Migratory Bird CoManagement Council passed what's
39 called a consent agenda which also included, as has
40 been in the past, a closed emperor goose subsistence
41 season for 2016. So as you remember from the last
42 slide, just two weeks later, in April of this year, we
43 counted 98,155 emperor geese on that spring staging
44 survey and that, as a result, raised the three year
45 average to 81,875 birds to above the threshold where
46 hunting could be considered.

47
48 In July of 2015 we distributed our 2015
49 survey data. So we conducted the survey in late April
50 but like all of our surveys we spend considerable time

1 looking at the data, making sure the data were
2 collected correctly and doing the analysis and then
3 writing a peer view report. So we release all of our
4 data for all of Alaska in July and that's data on
5 Pacific brant, greater white-fronted geese, crackling
6 Canada geese, dusky Canada geese on the Copper River
7 data, all of the data are released in July for the
8 Pacific Flyaway Council meeting that's held that month
9 and the Service regulations committee, that's the board
10 with the US Fish and Wildlife Service that considers
11 regulatory proposals for that year.

12

13 Next slide please.

14

15 So it should say background two, and
16 then the next bullet, July 2015. The Pacific Flyaway
17 Council meeting was held in Reno, Nevada. And at that
18 meeting our shop, the Fish and Wildlife Service
19 Migratory Bird Management, the Alaska Department of
20 Fish and Game and Patty Schwalenberg, who's the Alaska
21 Migratory Bird CoManagement executive director, as well
22 as Todd Sanders, the Flyaway representative, all met to
23 discuss the possibility of a limited emperor goose
24 subsistence season in 2016. The reason we met is that,
25 as the previous slide showed, our survey was conducted
26 just two weeks after the Migratory Bird CoManagement
27 Council met and it was felt like had the data been
28 available the AMBCC would have considered a subsistence
29 harvest season for emperor geese and we felt like, was
30 there a possibility that that could be considered. And
31 the four representatives felt like it was and we asked
32 for the.....

33

34 Next slide please.

35

36 The AMBCC executive committee then met
37 and that comprised of Peter Probasco, who's the
38 assistant regional director, Bruce Dale, who's the
39 wildlife division chief for Alaska Department of Fish
40 and Game and Myron Naneng who represents the Alaska
41 Native caucus on the AMBCC met and they unanimously
42 approved amending the consent agenda to approve a
43 limited emperor goose harvest season in 2016.

44

45 Next please.

46

47 That was presented to the Pacific
48 Flyaway Council and the Council endorsed the AMBCC
49 regulations including consideration or opening for the
50 emperor goose season for subsistence and then in July,

1 one week after the Pacific Flyaway Council met, the
2 Fish and Wildlife Service's regulations committee
3 approved the AMBCC 2016 regulations that included a
4 limited emperor goose subsistence hunt in 2016.

5
6 Next slide.

7
8 However, the Service Regulations
9 Committee attached four provisions for the 2016 emperor
10 goose season.

11
12 Next please.

13
14 No. 1. A limited harvest of 3,500
15 emperor geese to ensure the population
16 growth continues toward the population
17 objective.

18
19 So that figure came from two factors,
20 really. One is that the population
21 long-term is growing at 0.4 percent per
22 year. It's essentially just barely
23 growing. In the last 10 years it's
24 growing a little bit higher at one
25 percent per year. And then based on
26 subsistence harvest data that have been
27 collected by the Alaska Department of
28 Fish and Game, over the last nine years
29 the reported harvest of emperor geese
30 is around 3,200 birds. So we felt like
31 given the reported harvest, which is
32 likely a conservative estimate, but
33 nonetheless it's the estimate we have
34 to work with, of about 3,200 and that
35 the population is barely growing, the
36 Service Regulation Committee was
37 comfortable approving this limited
38 harvest of 3,500 birds.

39
40 Next.

41
42 No. 2. The second provision of the
43 Service Regulations Committee was that
44 a harvest allocation, for example,
45 either by an individual or a family or
46 a village quota or a permit hunt needed
47 to be implemented to ensure that the
48 harvest is less than or equal to 3,500
49 birds.

50

1 Next please.

2

3 No. 3. That there would be agreement
4 on a monitoring program to index the
5 abundance of the emperor goose
6 population.

7

8 No. 4. That the Pacific Flyaway
9 emperor goose management plan would be
10 revised by 2017.

11

12 Next.

13

14 The two boxes that are in yellow,
15 number 1 and number 2, both of those were to be
16 completed by the 1st of November of this year.

17

18 Next slide.

19

20 So I'm going to bring you up to -- I'm
21 sorry, was there a question.

22

23 MR. HOLMES: Yeah, Eric, this is Pat.
24 It seemed to me that when we, and I may be totally
25 wrong, at one of the local AMBCC meetings here in
26 Kodiak, we were told before that there had been one
27 percent increase over 10 years, but did that include
28 this last survey of 98,000, because it would seem if we
29 were told two years ago it was one percent, that the 98
30 ought to kick it up more than one percent. And so I'm
31 kind of curious about that.

32

33 And then the limiting at 3,500 based on
34 the slow growth, I want to know if your conclusions did
35 take a rolling average and readjust it because the last
36 three years make a significant difference over the
37 early reports of the slow growth.

38

39 MR. TAYLOR: Yeah, Pat, I don't know
40 the growth rate for the previous three year average, I
41 can get that for you. I doubt it made a significant
42 difference from one years worth of data. It influenced
43 it to some degree. But the important point is no
44 matter what index you use or what time period, this
45 population is barely growing. And that was the concern
46 of the Service Regulations Committee. We're at -- in
47 that three year average of 81,000 but it's taken us 30
48 years to get there. Furthermore, we're considerably
49 away from the population objective that was set by all
50 of those concerned with emperor goose management.

1 And then finally the Service
2 Regulations Committee was really concerned with the
3 harvest that has continued on this species despite it
4 being closed since 1987. And they were concerned to
5 the point where they wanted to put a harvest that would
6 ensure the population would continue to grow knowing
7 that that harvest has been unable to be checked in the
8 previous years. So I don't -- to answer your question,
9 in terms of difference in growth rates, I don't have
10 that, but I can get that to you, but in terms of
11 consideration of the most recent data, yes, the SRC did
12 consider that.

13

14 MR. HOLMES: Yeah, thank you. Because
15 -- you know, and I'm looking at your table here since
16 1981 and that slope there, it says long-term average
17 four percent per year and, oh, this answers my
18 question, I should have looked at it, it was like five
19 percent growth up until 2014, so you're correct, that's
20 my error. Because the 35 number, of course, you've
21 heard by now from Johnny and other folks, that really
22 opens it up, it's not a general hunt or even a
23 subsistence hunt, it's just forcing the folks up on the
24 Delta to report what they catch and really eliminates
25 any harvest anywhere else, so that's kind of why we're
26 a little grumpy.

27

28 Thank you.

29

30 MR. TAYLOR: Well, no, I understand and
31 I hope you have additional questions. I'll try to
32 address that, there's a few slides here at the end that
33 I hope may shed some light on that but there is
34 concern. There's widespread concern about where the
35 3,500 came from, how it's to be allocated in a fair and
36 transparent manner among all of those. There's concern
37 that there's individuals or regions, like the Kodiak
38 region, that are interested in harvesting emperor geese
39 that -- during a time period that if it's restricted to
40 a subsistence hunt, the birds may or may not be there.
41 So there's a lot of -- well, there's a lot of factors
42 that we have yet to address.

43

44 And you could see that -- let's see
45 since I can't see the slide I'm not for sure where
46 you're at, it should be a slide that says current
47 status, the next bullet is 13 to 14 August; is that
48 where you're at.

49

50 MADAME CHAIR BERNS: Yes, that is where

1 we are.

2

3

MR. TAYLOR: Okay, great.

4

5

Okay. So once the Service Regulations Committee made the decision and the word was distributed to Alaska, the Native caucus, they met in mid-August, the 13th and 14th to discuss the provisions that were put on this hunt and, both, the State of Alaska and the Fish and Wildlife Service participated on half days of those meetings. There was no decision that was made at that meeting but alternatives were looked at and, indeed, there was -- Pat, you mentioned, there was a lot of discussion about where the 3,500 came from and the justification that was surrounding that number and so we really didn't finalize any recommendation toward an allocation.

18

19

So once month later the -- if you go to the next bullet, the 23rd of September, the AMBCC met and they recommended a delay in the emperor goose subsistence season until 2017 and that decision was unanimous among the Native caucus as well as Fish and Wildlife Service and the Department of Fish and Game.

25

26

If you go to the next slide the first checkmark is it was delayed because it provided an opportunity to review survey designs and population data as well as a harvest potential analysis, and that is being completed by two studies. One by the Fish and Wildlife Service, Josh Dooley, and another by the Alaska Department of Fish and Game, Steve Fleishman and Bob Stend. And I distributed the report to Pat and others for the Kodiak Regional Advisory Council on the 14th of September asking for a review because I think it addresses some concerns that Pat has raised in the past. We have looked at very carefully at all the survey data we have collected over the past 30 years in order to look at what the harvest potential may be for this species.

41

42

The second reason the -- if you hit the next, please, the second checkmark shows that the AMBCC wanted to revise the Pacific Flyaway Emperor Goose Management Plan, so the analysis by the Fish and Wildlife Service and the Alaska Department of Fish and Game will feed into the revision of the Pacific Flyaway Goose Management Plan.

49

50

Next please.

1 So the report that I distributed on the
2 14th of September is entitled analysis of emperor goose
3 aerial and nest flock survey data and harvest potential
4 and it's by Josh Dooley. Josh is a wildlife biologist
5 with the US Fish and Wildlife Service. He's based out
6 of the Division of Migratory Bird Management out of
7 Maryland but lucky for us he is actually -- his office
8 is in Portland Oregon and so the first thing -- Josh
9 was just hired recently and his first assignment I was
10 able to negotiate with headquarters and ask him to look
11 at all of our emperor goose survey data. So these are
12 some of the findings that Josh has in his report. And
13 I would encourage the Council, it's a large report. I
14 will warn you it's very quantitative in nature, however
15 Josh has done an excellent two page summary at the very
16 beginning of the report and I would encourage all of
17 you to at least read that two page summary because I
18 think it will certainly be of interest to all of you.

19
20 The first finding was that emperor
21 geese are susceptible to hunting and based on the
22 literature they're easier to harvest than other goose
23 species. The bird decoys very easily. And secondly
24 when one bird is harvested, the others often do not
25 flare away like pintails or mallards or scoters or
26 other geese but tend to come back. And so one can
27 harvest quite a few if you're interested. The second
28 finding is harvest has been determined as a limiting
29 factor, limiting population size. So that has been
30 shown in the scientific literature since 1992 and most
31 recently in 2008. So the harvest that has been
32 occurring has limited the population size as well as
33 population growth.

34
35 Next.....

36
37 MADAME CHAIR BERNS: Excuse me, Eric.

38
39 MR. TAYLOR: Go ahead, yes.

40
41 MADAME CHAIR BERNS: If you could wrap
42 this up in the next minute or so we'd appreciate it.

43
44 MR. TAYLOR: Yep, you bet, I think I
45 have about three more slides.

46
47 The objective is to then overall to
48 implement a harvest strategy that is a compromise
49 between maximum population size and maximum sustainable
50 harvest. So what we want to do when we revise the

1 management plan is to get a reasonable balance between
2 getting this population to grow and then also allowing
3 the maximum sustainable harvest for people to harvest
4 statewide. And right now there appears to be little
5 evidence, based on our analysis so far, and it's
6 undergoing a peer review that there's substantive
7 harvest capacity beyond current levels.

8

9 So the next one is just to go through
10 the Pacific Emperor Goose Management Plan Committee,
11 there's two of them. And you just hit both, there'll
12 be two bullets. The Pacific Emperor Goose Management
13 subcommittee is comprised of Dan Rosenberg and myself
14 and then the AMBCC emperor goose subcommittee, Dan
15 Rosenberg also chairs it and you can see the
16 representatives from the various rural regions,
17 including both Sonny Squartsoff and John Reft from the
18 Kodiak region.

19

20 Next slide. The revision of the
21 management plan will include, so these are things that
22 I hope anyone that's interested in emperor geese will
23 weigh in on:

24

25 What should be the population
26 objective;

27

28 How should we survey and monitor the
29 population;

30

31 What should be a reasonable harvest
32 strategy for both the fall and
33 subsistence hunt; and

34

35 Then what research or management
36 priorities

37

38 And the second bullet is the revision
39 process where we will look at new information on
40 abundance and distribution. Everyone will have the
41 opportunity to review interim products. We'll have
42 face to face meetings, teleconferences and then we will
43 finish the plan in 2017 that will set the
44 recommendations for both the spring/summer as well as
45 fall harvest regulations.

46

47 And with that, probably short on time,
48 but I'd be happy to address any questions if the
49 Council has any.

50

1 MADAME CHAIR BERNS: Okay, thank you,
2 Mr. Taylor.
3
4 I'm going to ask Council, at this point
5 in time to limit your comments, and make your questions
6 to the point. We do have some time constraints upon us
7 with our agenda so I will go ahead and open up the
8 floor for questions for Mr. Taylor.
9
10
11 (No comments)
12
13 MR. TAYLOR: I'd be happy if -- if
14 there are questions that.....
15
16 MS. TRUMBLE: Della Trumble.
17
18 MR. TAYLOR: Go ahead.
19
20 MADAME CHAIR BERNS: Yes, go ahead,
21 Della.
22
23 MS. TRUMBLE: I guess my first
24 question, on these surveys and the timing and looking
25 back at it historically it's been done in April, so,
26 Pat, that was one of the reasons I didn't do anything
27 -- we didn't do anything, fishermen are not on the
28 water in April is part of that reason. So my question,
29 I think, is, would it be helpful at any point to do,
30 the guys are on the water from January to March, to
31 have them do any sort of reporting, are they seeing
32 anything unusual and I'd be more than happy, they can
33 email that or drop that information off to me to get it
34 to you. My question is, would that be helpful and then
35 if it is, do you have some sort of format that you
36 could email to me that we could use.
37
38 MR. TAYLOR: Della, that's an excellent
39 question. The week before we did our April survey I
40 sent out a note to all communities and representatives
41 and all Refuges as well as to Pat and others, in terms
42 of looking for emperor geese, during the time period
43 that -- again, this is late April, and we did the
44 survey, I think, from the 28th to the 30th of April
45 this year, so what we wanted to know is whether, for
46 example, John or Sonny or others were seeing large
47 concentrations of emperor geese somewhere where we're
48 not counting them. So we did do that, we only got one
49 or two observations of very few birds, less than 10
50 actually, from a few Refuge personnel.

1 But to answer your question, yes, we
2 would -- we are always interested in understanding
3 distribution and abundance of migratory birds and in
4 this case emperor geese. There's no format
5 requirement. Karen has my email and I should have
6 given Karen some of my cards, but, Karen, if you would,
7 perhaps you could distribute my email among Council
8 members, but, yes, we would appreciate any and all
9 observations of emperor geese at any time.

10

11 MS. TRUMBLE: Okay. And then following
12 up with that, too, if I can get some -- I'll get some
13 contact info to you because I can get Aleutian/Pribilof
14 Island Resource Department involved with this so we can
15 go farther on out. And then just as a comment from one
16 of the fishermen, today, when we were talking about
17 this, is some hunters that were down towards Pavlof,
18 basically, said there's a big number down there. And
19 when I've gone through Cold Bay, a couple weeks ago, I
20 know that the young lady that does the count with Fish
21 and Wildlife from King Cove, she's new to the program,
22 she was over there and they were doing surveys on -- so
23 I guess my question is, on the fall surveys, you're not
24 necessarily -- are you trying to do a population count,
25 or what exactly are those surveys and what -- because I
26 don't ever see -- I don't think I've ever seen any
27 information from that.

28

29 MR. TAYLOR: Yep, another good
30 question. We do do a fall survey. And it's also a
31 fall staging survey and it's essentially the same route
32 of the figure that I showed for the spring survey.
33 There's one other component of that fall survey and
34 that is we do a photographic survey at the same time
35 where we shoot high quality images, high resolution
36 images of emperor goose flocks, and we can tell young
37 of the year versus adult birds, so birds that are young
38 of the year have dull heads versus adults two or three
39 years older, or older than that, with white heads, and
40 so we get an estimate of what's termed production of
41 that year. So we use that in order to look at how
42 production may vary relative to our counts to see if
43 our counts are matching high years of produc -- of
44 population estimates versus -- we see relatively few
45 young of the year birds, whether that's reflected in an
46 overall lower population. All this information is
47 looked at very carefully by Josh Dooley in that report
48 that I distributed mid-September. So it explains the
49 geographic and temporal extent of the survey, why the
50 survey is conducted and how the survey agrees or

1 disagrees with the other survey data, both aerial and
2 ground survey that we collect on emperor geese. And
3 there are -- I'd be happy to distribute the reports of
4 the fall staging survey as well.

5
6 MS. TRUMBLE: I'd appreciate that. And
7 then I have one more possible suggestion here. You
8 made a reference to the executive council, which
9 included Pete Probasco and I forget who else, then a
10 tribal member, which is Myron Naneng, I'm not sure what
11 the process is for, you know, Fish and Wildlife
12 concludes those -- and the State, is to include maybe a
13 -- possibly even two more tribal members on that, and
14 that would be one from Kodiak and one from the
15 Aleutians and, you know, we could look at somebody
16 that's on the water that has a good grasp for what's
17 going on, from the fishermen maybe. And the reason I
18 say this, and I bring this up, is because I think the
19 education piece of all of this is important.
20 Unfortunately it's been our experience, and going back
21 to the classified Area M, that we do have some
22 conflicts with up north, but I've also found that if
23 people don't understand each others regions you can
24 hypothetically believe something and you can stick to
25 it, but if we're able to learn and move forward and try
26 to work together that has a lot better potential of
27 success. So maybe to keep that in mind
28 Kodiak/Aleutians as we move forward.

29
30 But other than that, thank you so much
31 for the report, through the Chair.

32
33 Thank you.

34
35 MR. TAYLOR: You bet. And just to
36 clarify, Della, the executive committee is one
37 representative from each group, so Pete Probasco from
38 Fish and Wildlife Service, Bruce Dale was the
39 individual from the Alaska Department of Fish and Game,
40 and Myron Naneng from the Native caucus. And I should
41 clarify that, and I'm not for sure if Patty's on the
42 phone or not, but Myron is not the permanent person or
43 representative for the Alaska Native caucus. In the
44 case of Fish and Wildlife Service and Department of
45 Fish and Game they usually are, through the Assistant
46 Regional Director and the Division Chief for the Alaska
47 Department of Fish and Game, but for the Alaska Native
48 caucus it rotates on a periodic basis among the
49 regions. So those are just the three individuals that
50 vote for their respective groups. So, Myron, before

1 Myron would cast a vote he would gain the opinion of
2 all the other 20 representatives and then, you know, if
3 there's a disagreement among the Native caucus then the
4 Native caucus would work it out, but Myron is speaking
5 for, when he's on the executive board, for the entire
6 Native caucus. So Peter Devine is on from the
7 Aleutian/Pribilofs and John Reft represented the Kodiak
8 region.

9

10 But your point is well taken in the
11 sense that emperor geese occur across five different
12 Alaska Native rural regions and all of them have a
13 voice at the table relative to management for this
14 species.

15

16 MS. TRUMBLE: Okay, thank you.

17

18 MADAME CHAIR BERNS: Thank you, Mr.
19 Taylor. Do we have any questions, additional questions
20 or comments from the Council for Mr. Taylor.

21

22 Yes, Mr. Holmes.

23

24 MR. HOLMES: Yeah, Eric, I appreciate
25 you sending me those answers to my questions the night
26 before the meeting. And some of the communications
27 which got flat lost between your shop and OSM and us,
28 and I did forward those to the members, but I don't
29 think anybody's had a chance to look at those notes and
30 comments you sent me but I do appreciate you doing that
31 and I'm sure you bear in mind the sticky wicket on the
32 3,500 and that the feeling I get from folks down in our
33 necks of the woods and out in the Aleutians is that
34 they've been playing it really straight and not getting
35 any of the geese. And so I certainly hope that this
36 review process and the review of the surveys shakes
37 things out so that if you have a small subsistence
38 hunt, at least there's some kind of allocation where
39 there's a potential of just getting a few birds for
40 each community so at least they can have it for a
41 potlatch or something. Just to, you know, because our
42 Council has mentioned before, it's been closed so long
43 a lot of our elders are passing away and really haven't
44 had a chance and some folks just go ahead and get them
45 anyway so that's just kind of the ironies of life in
46 the north, I guess.

47

48 And so I want to thank you for your
49 hard work and everything and we'll keep communicating.
50 And I think after folks get a chance to look at some of

1 the emails that you sent me and forwarded, you know, it
2 might stimulate some more discussions and we'll try to
3 keep those communications going.

4

5 Thank you, so much.

6

7 MR. TAYLOR: Well, you're very welcome.
8 And, again, I apologize for at least the Service
9 Regulations Committee transcripts and getting to you
10 late, and, indeed, if there are questions that come to
11 mind, you know, and someone says, shoot I should have
12 asked Eric this question, Karen has my email, please do
13 not hesitate and ask me whatever question and I'll
14 remind the question there's no question that I
15 certainly won't try to address.

16

17 And I apologize for not coming down in
18 person. I will -- given the Council's interest in
19 emperor geese I will try to do so next year, but in the
20 interim -- and if you review those products, if you
21 have any questions whatsoever, please don't hesitate to
22 fire me off a note.

23

24 MADAME CHAIR BERNS: Yes, Coral.

25

26 MS. CHERNOFF: This is Coral Chernoff.
27 When I attended the regional AMBCC meeting here, I
28 received a handout and I don't know if you have that.
29 It's a table that allocates the geese per region and it
30 looks like Kodiak would -- according to this table we
31 would be receiving possibly an allocation of 41 geese
32 for the Kodiak villages and 84 geese for the Kodiak
33 city and road system. Are they still looking at those
34 numbers that are on this chart, are you familiar with
35 the chart I'm looking at?

36

37 MR. TAYLOR: Yes, I'm looking at it
38 right now. That was a draft table developed by the
39 Alaska Department of Fish and Game, office of
40 subsistence, and draft being the key word here,
41 Lillian developed this table based on the percent of
42 human population in emperor geese regions -- or the
43 regions that have access to emperor geese. And so it
44 was -- the important point is it was a starting point
45 for regions to come together and say, is this something
46 that, you know, we can work from. So clearly the
47 allocations -- the distribution of birds, the total
48 number of birds is not what everybody wants, but we are
49 certain that we can't do an unlimited harvest on
50 emperor geese like pintails or mallards where there are

1 no limits during the subsistence season. The emperor
2 goose population won't be able to withstand that. So
3 the point is, for that table, it's just a starting
4 point, and there was no decision on allocation that was
5 made. In fact given the amount of time that the Alaska
6 Native caucus had to work with and given that there was
7 some large analysis that are still pending, like Josh
8 Dooley's report, and Steve Fleishman and Bob Stend's
9 report, it was felt that deciding upon an allocation
10 would be delayed until such time that, you know, all
11 the information could be considered by everybody.

12

13 There's not been a decision in terms of
14 allocation.

15

16 MADAME CHAIR BERNS: Thank you, very
17 much, Mr. Taylor. Do we have any other additional
18 questions or comments from the Council.

19

20

21 (No comments)

22

23 MADAME CHAIR BERNS: Okay, thank you
24 very much for your presentation.

25

26 MR. TAYLOR: All right, thank you.

27

28 MADAME CHAIR BERNS: At this time we'd
29 like to welcome Izembek National Wildlife Refuge,
30 Stacey Lowe.

31

32 MS. LOWE: Good afternoon, I'm Stacey
33 Lowe, the wildlife biologist at Izembek Refuge. Also
34 on the phone we should have Doug Damberg. Doug, can
35 you hear us.

36

37 MR. DAMBERG: Yes, I'm here. This is
38 the Refuge manager and I'm sorry I can't be there in
39 person today. I'm in the process of transferring to a
40 new position in our Anchorage office. But, yes, I'm on
41 the line here to listen and help answer any questions,
42 so go ahead Stacey.

43

44 MS. LOWE: Okay. I've provided a
45 written report and it should have been included with
46 your packet. I'm going to briefly try to summarize the
47 results of our surveys that have occurred since the
48 last meeting in the springtime.

49

50 I'll start out with the caribou in Unit

1 9D, the Southern Alaska Peninsula Herd. The hunt closed
2 on March 31st and resulted in only one of the 20
3 Federal permits being filled. In total for that year
4 20 permits were allocated amongst the five communities
5 equally with four being distributed to each community.
6 This year the dates of the season have remained the
7 same but we did increase our allocation to 40 permits
8 spread among the communities.

9
10 This winter the Izembek Staff conducted
11 a winter minimum population count on the Southern
12 Peninsula Herd. Due to weather and some other
13 conditions the survey was spread over multiple days.
14 Most of the area was covered and we counted 1,316
15 caribou which is consistent with what the State has
16 been reporting for the cow to calf ratios and the bull
17 ratios showing an increasing trend still. Again, just
18 to note, that is a minimum population count, we don't
19 consider that a full population census.

20
21 We also conducted a minimum count on
22 Unimak Island and in total we observed 230 caribou.
23 And also that's consistent with a small, but, yet,
24 increasing trend on the island. I believe the State's
25 going to call in and report on the bull and calf ratios
26 from their survey so we'll just skip through the table
27 there.

28
29 I did try to graph everything on one
30 chart to show just kind of a comprehensive picture of
31 what's going on out there. And, again, as you can see,
32 both the total population and the fall bull and calf
33 ratios all three indices are increasing.

34
35 Also we assisted the State this summer
36 in tracking calf survival and mortality rates on Unimak
37 Island and I believe they're going to report on that as
38 well.

39
40 This year we were unable to conduct our
41 annual brown bear stream survey index. We do hope to
42 continue that survey next year.

43
44 This fall we're working on, right now
45 the counts are underway on the Pacific black brant,
46 where we conduct the population age ratio counts. In
47 conjunction with that we also try to do some of the
48 emperor goose ground based ratio counts as well.

49
50 In addition this fall we're continuing

1 to work with USGS scientists on a study to collect
2 feathers from juvenile black brant and this is a study
3 basically trying to assess the distribution of where
4 the production is coming from, from the different
5 breeding areas. If you remember last year, we did do
6 an initial phase of the study where we collected 104
7 samples and the results were intriguing, showing a
8 higher portion coming from the Arctic, which was
9 interesting and this year we're hoping to definitely
10 increase the sample size from that. I've included a
11 graph that shows this, this is from the USGS report.
12 And if you'd like any additional information on the
13 study, just be sure to let me know and I can contact
14 the PI, David Ward, and certainly as we get a more
15 final conclusive report I'll be sure and pass that
16 along.

17
18 This year we also conducted the tundra
19 swan survey on both the Izembek and Pavlof Units on the
20 Refuge. This was conducted in early May. In total, we
21 observed 812 swans and 95 nests amongst both units.
22 The graphs do split out the units as they are
23 considered separate populations due to the non-
24 migratory nature of the Izembek population, that's why
25 those are separated out. In general we saw increases
26 in the total number of swans but also the nesting pairs
27 in both areas. In the Pavlof Unit, in particular, the
28 numbers were probably bias high due to one large flock
29 of 242 swans on one lake. We haven't seen that before,
30 not sure what was going on there, if those guys were
31 just still hanging out before moving forward further
32 north. But that definitely inflated the number. But
33 it's still not the highest number ever seen.

34
35 This fall we're also continuing to work
36 with USGS to monitor the Avian Influenza from hunter
37 harvested geese and ducks from the Refuge. Each year
38 we've roughly sample about 1,000 birds. As a result of
39 this research Andre Ramey from USGS and his colleagues
40 have published an article in the Journal of Eiderology,
41 and this is titled dispersal of H9N2 influenza avian
42 virus between East Asia and North America by wild
43 birds. And this article highlights some of the
44 outcomes of their work and does also provide evidence
45 for intercontinental viral dispersal by migratory birds
46 and it's very interesting work that they're doing. And
47 if you need help tracking down the article just let me
48 know, I can send along the PDF of that.

49
50 We're also working with USGS on eel

1 grass monitoring in Izembek Lagoon. Each year we
2 typically conduct surveys from April to October at
3 Grants Point along two transects. This year we have
4 decided to expand the eel grass monitoring protocol to
5 include annual surveys of a point grade system across
6 the entire lagoon. So we did go out and sample
7 approximately 120 points looking at the productivity
8 and other trends across the lagoon. In addition to
9 this we're still working on developing the written
10 protocol but it'll basically be a three level survey
11 with different spacial scales. So we'll have a small
12 scale, this larger point grid scale and then also one
13 step above that looking at satellite imagery to
14 quantitatively track the trends and the distribution of
15 the eel grass in the lagoon over time. And we hope to
16 have that protocol done probably within the next six
17 months or so.

18
19 This year we also continued our sea
20 lion monitoring on Unimak Island. We deployed several
21 more cameras and removed some where photos we counted
22 revealed that there weren't any sea lions on those
23 areas. We're still working on the final report for
24 that. I just gave an example graph from one of the
25 haulouts at Cape Seratraf to show some of our
26 preliminary numbers there, and we're happy with the way
27 that research is going and we plan to continue that.

28
29 As a result of that we have detected
30 that the walrus are continuing to haulout on Unimak
31 Island so we've also deployed some of those same
32 cameras to provide data on how often and how many
33 walrus are using Unimak Island. To our knowledge, the
34 walrus have not been documented there since the late
35 1970s. And last year we detected approximately 2,200
36 walrus hauled out on Unimak and they stayed there
37 anywhere from between July to approximately November so
38 we're hoping with these additional cameras deployed
39 where those guys are hauling out we'll be able to get
40 some better data on their use of the island.

41
42 I also wanted to report that this
43 summer we did experience a walrus mortality event where
44 we estimate between 30 and 50 walrus died and washed up
45 between Unimak Island and King Salmon. This includes
46 reports from Refuge, other folks that were flying in
47 the area and fishermen as well. Unfortunately none of
48 the carcasses we were able to collect samples from,
49 they were all too decomposed by the time we got out to
50 them. So we're unsure of the cause of the die-off at

1 this point but we did record locations when possible
2 and are keeping track of this and we'll continue to
3 monitor it into the fall here.

4
5 This happened around the same time as
6 the large sea bird mortality event, as you heard about
7 from the Kodiak Refuge report. We experienced kind of
8 the same patterns, maybe a little bit earlier, at the
9 end of May we observed approximately 200 dead common
10 murrelets. All the carcasses we found from that group
11 were too decomposed for analysis, however, in July we
12 started observing many more species in addition to the
13 murrelets including kittiwakes, horned puffins and
14 shearwaters and a couple of other species as well. And
15 we were able to submit 11 carcasses for analysis to the
16 wildlife health center, and our results were very
17 similar to what Robin reported from Kodiak, where the
18 birds died from emaciation and apparently no other
19 causes. Everything was negative for avian influenza,
20 avian cholera, and they are continuing further tests to
21 look for levels of domoic acid, that hopefully might
22 point in some direction towards why these birds are
23 dying off.

24
25 In total, we estimate between the Cold
26 Bay area, False Pass, King Cove, and basically the
27 lower Peninsula that probably anywhere from two to
28 3,000 birds in total died. And this occurred anywhere
29 from the middle of June until the middle of August, it
30 seemed to taper off.

31
32 This summer we also continued our water
33 temperature and monitoring study. In August we visited
34 the stations, the 25 stations that we deployed last
35 year and we swapped out the sensors to get another
36 years worth of data and at this point we haven't
37 analyzed the data yet so I don't have any news to
38 report on that information yet.

39
40 To touch on some of our outreach
41 activities.

42
43 This last year the Refuge, again,
44 hosted the annual Christmas bird count. In conjunction
45 with that we also hosted a wildlife trivia night for
46 the local community. It was a great turnout and it was
47 enjoyed a lot by the local residents. We plan to
48 continue that again this year.

49
50 In the spring we also hosted our annual

1 Refuge open house. Folks had the opportunity to
2 interact with Staff and tour our facilities. Again,
3 this was well attended and appreciated by the
4 community.

5
6 This summer we had a great opportunity
7 to work again with Alaska Maritime Refuge and we had
8 the youth conservation corps visit our Refuge for about
9 two weeks and they got to help out on all sorts of
10 different projects and contribute a lot to our Refuge
11 through maintenance and biological assistance. In a
12 short amount of time they made a great impact.

13
14 This year we also continued our ferry
15 tours, where passengers on the Tustumena are picked up
16 and taken on a tour, not only of the Refuge office, but
17 all the way out to Grants Point, and this includes
18 interpretation along the way. Each ferry, we host
19 approximately anywhere from 20 to 30 vehicles that we
20 have.

21
22 This year we also participated and
23 hosted a waterfowl decoy contest for the Cold Bay
24 students where we went out and observed wildlife and
25 translated those observations into craft and they
26 carved their own wooden waterfowl decoys. It was a
27 great experience for everybody involved.

28
29 I put a note in our report about our
30 Refuge website. I just wanted to let folks know that
31 that's available and we do try to update that as
32 frequently as we can with our projects and results from
33 our surveys if you want to check in on that
34 periodically and see what's going on.

35
36 A few other things I just want to touch
37 on that occurred after the printing of our report.
38 This summer we were also able to participate and go
39 over to the King Cove culture camp. We had four Refuge
40 Staff that were able to attend and that was a great
41 experience and we look forward to hopefully doing that
42 again in the future.

43
44 Also we've been working with the new
45 wildlife sentinel in King Cove, Dakota Walker, and
46 we're working on ways to communicate observations of
47 wildlife occurrences, such as the mortality events we
48 experienced this year and just other ways to share
49 observations and work towards communicating better
50 about what's going on in our neck of the woods. So

1 that's been very exciting.

2

3 Also we're still working on getting our
4 second wildlife biologist down in Cold Bay. And we
5 have announced the position and received about 100
6 applications so we look forward to having somebody else
7 on board here soon.

8

9 And if anybody has any questions.

10

11 MADAME CHAIR BERNS: Great, thank you,
12 Stacey.

13

14 Tom.

15

16 MR. SCHWANTES: Yeah, Stacey, just one
17 your walrus mortality. Were you able to determine
18 whether or not the walrus -- or the ivory was harvested
19 from those walrus?

20

21 MS. LOWE: On the majority of them they
22 were not yet harvested, that's correct.

23

24 MR. SCHWANTES: Thank you.

25

26 MS. LOWE: And some of the reports we
27 had were from folks that harvested but they were from a
28 lot of different people so.

29

30 MADAME CHAIR BERNS: Rebecca.

31

32 MS. SKINNER: So at the beginning of
33 this when Doug Damberg said he's transferring to a new
34 position in Anchorage, did he mean in a new position
35 out of the Refuge or a new position -- okay, can you
36 speak a little about that or maybe Dan can.

37

38 MR. DAMBERG: Hi, Rebecca. Yeah, I
39 will be leaving the Refuge manager position moving into
40 a regional office position in Anchorage and my position
41 will be advertised sometime probably in the next month
42 or so and hopefully filled in time for the next RAC
43 meeting. So I'm not certain how the time tables will
44 play out but it will be filled after I leave.

45

46 MS. SKINNER: Thank you.

47

48 MADAME CHAIR BERNS: Thank you. Any
49 further questions for Izembek. Go ahead, Pat.

50

1 MS. TRUMBLE: Yes, this is Della,
2 Madame Chair.
3
4 MADAME CHAIR BERNS: Yes, go ahead,
5 Della, and then we'll have Pat.
6
7 MS. TRUMBLE: Stacey, can you give me
8 the breakdown of the permits, the 40 permits and what
9 -- where they went to.
10
11 MS. LOWE: Yeah, I'd have to
12 doublecheck with Doug. I believe there were 10 permits
13 issued to -- each to Cold Bay, King Cove, False Pass
14 and Nelson Lagoon.
15
16 MR. DAMBERG: That's correct.
17
18 MS. TRUMBLE: Okay. Cold Bay, King
19 Cove, False Pass and Nelson -- can you tell me what
20 happened to Sand Point.
21
22 MR. DAMBERG: Sand Point got 10 permits
23 also Della.
24
25 MS. TRUMBLE: Well, you basically --
26 well, I'm hearing that there's -- Doug, I think you
27 probably know, it was my understanding False Pass
28 should have gotten five and Nelson Lagoon five; is that
29 correct, or how -- I can't get 40 with five
30 communities.
31
32 MR. DAMBERG: So each of the
33 communities got 10 permits.
34
35 MS. TRUMBLE: So False Pass, Cold Bay,
36 King Cove, Sand Point, and Nelson Lagoon, that's five
37 communities.
38
39 MR. DAMBERG: I'm sorry, I believe
40 Nelson Lagoon didn't get any. It was Cold Bay, Sand
41 Point, False Pass and King Cove, I can confirm that for
42 you.
43
44 MS. TRUMBLE: That's correct, because
45 Nelson Lagoon is on the north side. So Sand Point,
46 it's my understanding, were going to give up their
47 permits, did that happen because they said they
48 normally don't come down this far. I know there's
49 small numbers -- there's a small area inside of Pavlof
50 that they could possibly hunt caribou on, were those

1 permits given up?

2

3 MR. DAMBERG: Eventually they were all
4 distributed. They sometimes use them or distribute
5 them a little bit later than some of the other
6 communities, but at this point all the permits that
7 were provided to them were utilized.

8

9 MS. TRUMBLE: Okay. I guess with that
10 being said, I'm some what -- some of the things that we
11 figure through this, like the definition of what a
12 rural resident is came up, since I'm not working with
13 the tribe any longer, and -- so we tried to work with
14 them on that and Doug did have -- make sure that
15 everybody understood what the Federal definition of,
16 and I appreciated that, that help on that.

17

18 The only other thing is are there any
19 other plans with Izembek in the future, it's my
20 understanding, are you guys -- are you guys buying some
21 property over in Cold Bay?

22

23 MR. DAMBERG: No. What do you mean as
24 far as Anchorage or something else, we don't have plans
25 to buy any property, we're looking at some additional
26 quarters for Staff but not property.

27

28 MS. TRUMBLE: Okay. So if you're
29 looking for additional quarters for Staff is there --
30 are you planning on increasing the Staff in Cold Bay or
31 what is the plans in the future.

32

33 MR. DAMBERG: Well, we are increasing
34 our Staff with the biologist position that Stacey
35 mentioned but we actually had that position before the
36 big cutbacks that we went through over the past, let's
37 say five to seven years, so we had that position and
38 lost it, that's being refilled now. But we've never
39 had enough housing for all our Staff out here. Some of
40 our permanent Staff are in leased quarters with other
41 agencies and we still don't have enough with this other
42 person so that's what we're really trying to do is make
43 sure we have enough to accommodate people that are
44 here. In addition, you know, we have a bunkhouse and
45 try to provide those facilities for other folks that
46 come through here as well, whether they're seasonal
47 people, researchers or even folks like Dakota are
48 welcome to utilize those facilities if they're over
49 here.

50

1 MS. TRUMBLE: At one point in time
2 there was a liaison position that was supposed to be
3 open based on whether the funding, it was not clear
4 though, has that position ever been posted or is it
5 still a possibility.

6
7 MR. DAMBERG: You know, Della, it is.
8 We made a first run at it this year by hiring a
9 seasonal Park ranger trying to do a little bit of
10 outreach. It was a fairly short-term position the way
11 it worked out but it did get it in a place where we had
12 a little more outreach capacity and so we hope to do
13 that again. It's not a permanent position, we use our
14 extra funds we have here to fund it. But we hope to do
15 that again next year and have that person involved. If
16 you remember, Bridget was one of the folks who came
17 over for the culture camp and helped out there a little
18 bit. So I think it'd be great to work together to see
19 if we could increase that capacity a little bit more
20 over the next year.

21
22 MS. TRUMBLE: Okay. The reason I bring
23 it up, Doug, is that when I worked with the tribe in
24 prior years and then I think it was Nancy that was the
25 -- Nancy who was the manager over there at the time,
26 that position was supposedly to work with communities
27 within the region and the hope was to try to recoup
28 somebody that actually is born and raised and lived in
29 the region to be able to work closely, not only with
30 the other tribal councils within the region but to also
31 work with the local fishermen and create some good
32 rapport. So that's kind of where I was headed with
33 this because I think when you find somebody that
34 doesn't understand the issues surrounding subsistence,
35 in the case of the young lady that you had just
36 mentioned, I think it creates -- there's a learning
37 curve here and it would be good to find somebody local,
38 maybe somebody out of high school, a young person out
39 of high school, I think, in the future, to keep that in
40 mind, would be a recommendation.

41
42 MR. DAMBERG: Yeah, absolutely totally
43 agree Della. We advertised that this year as a local
44 hire where folks could apply and if we could work with
45 you next year to find ways to increase interest as far
46 as applicants that would be absolutely great, it'd be a
47 wonderful way to really maximize the outreach that
48 position could do.

49
50 MS. TRUMBLE: Okay, well, I'll be happy

1 to work with you to find somebody, possibly even in
2 King Cove, I'm sure we could find some space for them.

3

4 MR. DAMBERG: Good, thank you.

5

6 MADAME CHAIR BERNS: Thank you, Della.

7 Pat.

8

9 MS. TRUMBLE: Madame Chair, I don't
10 have anything further.

11

12 MADAME CHAIR BERNS: I'm sorry, did you
13 have anything further Della.

14

15 MS. TRUMBLE: No. No, I'm good, thank
16 you. Thank you.

17

18 MADAME CHAIR BERNS: Mr. Holmes.

19

20 MR. HOLMES: Yeah, Doug, I wanted to
21 first compliment you, I think you're probably one of
22 the first managers out there that probably since
23 Melissa Berns' dad was -- or grandpa was with Fish and
24 Wildlife Service to kind of go out and leave your
25 uniform at home and say, hi, folks, I'm the new dude,
26 what do I need to know. I hope you can pass on that
27 philosophy to your successor, being there in the
28 Anchorage office, and maybe to carry out to a broader
29 arena in Alaska. I think you really made a difference
30 as far as how the villages out in that neck of the
31 woods take a look at the Service.

32

33 And Item 2, I wanted to remind you
34 about that commitment we got four or five years ago,
35 that your Refuge would have a priority for planes. I
36 understand your new -- your old plane's dead and
37 there's one on order but it doesn't make it there for
38 your survey season, I hope you remind your bosses that
39 they made that commitment to our Council, that you
40 would have a plane for your surveys. So hopefully if
41 there's some other area that doesn't have the crises of
42 diminished caribou could provide a plane and pilot for
43 you so that you folks can get your surveys.

44

45 Third item. I just want to thank you
46 for what you're doing, and I hope you folks get your
47 new biologist and I might even talk to my wife about
48 going back to work and applying for a Refuge manager or
49 a biologist out there, but that would make me put my
50 proof where the pudding is.

1 But, anyway, thanks for all your hard
2 work. Bye.

3
4 MR. DAMBERG: You're welcome and thank
5 you, Pat, I appreciate your comments. I will pass that
6 on to folks in the future, for sure.

7
8 MADAME CHAIR BERNS: Thank you. Do we
9 have any further questions for Izembek.

10
11 (No comments)

12
13 MADAME CHAIR BERNS: All right. Thank
14 you very much Stacey.

15
16 Okay. We'll move right along and we
17 are going into ADF&G reports and if you'll bear with me
18 we're going to bounce around a little bit on here to
19 address some of the motions that we had on the table
20 yesterday and we'll start off with a presentation from
21 Dave Crowley, the Southern Alaska Peninsula Unimak
22 Island caribou and wolf update.

23
24 Please.

25
26 MR. CROWLEY: Thank you. This is Dave
27 Crowley, can you hear me okay?

28
29 MADAME CHAIR BERNS: Yes, we can.

30
31 MR. CROWLEY: Okay. I will start out
32 with the Southern Alaska Peninsula Caribou Herd.

33
34 As Stacey said we are continuing to see
35 a recovery on that. In our last composition survey
36 that we did in October we came up with 45 bulls per 100
37 cows and 45 calves per 100 cows. And we estimate the
38 population to be at around 2,000 and that's based on
39 kind of a collar detection rate that we apply to our
40 count. The individuals are looking -- individual
41 caribou are looking to be in very good body condition,
42 the ones we capture or observe from the helicopter are
43 looking very healthy. For the first time we're seeing
44 pretty good sized groups of yearlings, long yearlings
45 hanging out together and that's another good sign.

46
47 The harvest has been fairly low. Last
48 year we issued -- ended up issuing 177 permits. We
49 basically revisited the drawing and pretty much
50 everyone who applied and did not already receive a

1 permit for the Nelchina we went ahead and mailed them a
2 Tier II permit. So 177 were issued, we've only got
3 seven reported so far this year. But the year is not
4 quite over yet. We still have the winter harvest to
5 go. So the bottom line is we are going from a Tier II
6 drawing hunt to a general season harvest ticket hunt
7 next year for the SAP, and that's going to be open to
8 residents and non-residents with similar season dates
9 that we have now.

10

11 Any questions on the SAP.

12

13 (No comments)

14

15 MR. CROWLEY: Okay, hearing none, I'll
16 move on to the NAP. The Northern Alaska Peninsula
17 Caribou Herd.

18

19 We're seeing a bit more recovery in
20 that. We figure the population to be at 2,700. In our
21 composition survey from last fall we had 40 bulls per
22 cows, 34 calves per 100 cows. And overall again the
23 animals are looking in good condition and we decided
24 that in 2016 we're going to open a Tier II drawing hunt
25 starting with 200 permits, we're kind of following the
26 same model as the SAP where we start low and just kind
27 of ramp up to there -- from there, depending on harvest
28 and that kind of thing.

29

30 We are in the process of finishing up a
31 newsletter to be sent to all the residents that could
32 participate in that hunt and hope to get that out here
33 in the next couple of weeks before the period where you
34 can actually apply for that permit, which is November
35 and December. So that is a work in progress, just
36 about finished. And, again, Tier II drawing so it'll
37 be open to residents of 9C and 9E, and a limited
38 drawing of 200 permits.

39

40 So questions on the NAP.

41

42 (No comments)

43

44 MR. CROWLEY: Okay. I will continue
45 with Unimak Island then very quickly.

46

47 We did a calf mortality study again
48 this spring. We saw about 70 percent survival through
49 July and we're going to get another number here in
50 October when we return to Unimak to do the composition

1 count we'll get another data point for calf survival.
2 But improved calf survival.

3

4 Let me pull up the numbers real quick
5 here for Unimak. Bear with me here a second. Yes,
6 only 15 bulls per 100 cows on our October composition
7 survey, 22 calves per 100. The calves have definitely
8 increased. The bulls, you know, they're trickling up
9 and Stacey reported their count at 230 caribou on
10 Unimak which is an improvement over the last count.
11 You know, I think there might be a slight increase
12 there, at best, at least it looks like they've stopped
13 declining and maybe we've turned the corner here and
14 started to increase in population size on Unimak.

15

16 It seems that -- and I don't have any
17 data, but it's just -- from what I've seen from the
18 air, and we spent a lot of time flying Unimak and
19 talking with other folks that there doesn't seem to be
20 as many wolves on Unimak. We did have a harvest of
21 seven wolves last year, which is up a little bit, I
22 think it was six the year before and the year before
23 that it. The wolf harvest is not high but it seems
24 like there's fewer wolves on Unimak right now, of
25 course that could change. Wolf numbers on the SAP seem
26 to be stable. We, of course, are not doing the
27 intensive management program there, we stopped in, I
28 believe 2011 after the population started recovering.
29 The wolf control project on the NAP has been largely
30 unsuccessful. It's really difficult for hunters to
31 come over to the Alaska Peninsula and deal with the
32 logistics and the weather and, of course, the lack of
33 snow.

34

35 So we are recommending and we're kind
36 of in the process of suspending that program for this
37 year.

38

39 Wolf harvest has been relatively poor
40 except for 2011 when we had that really heavy snow
41 winter. But hunters and trappers are still taking by
42 far the majority of the wolves on the Alaska Peninsula
43 and non-resident hunters are participating, they're
44 actually creeping up there in the proportion of wolves
45 taken. The guided bear hunters primarily are
46 encouraged to take a wolf tag with them and that
47 harvest has been ongoing.

48

49 So not a lot of harvest. I think the
50 wolf populations are probably stable over most of the

1 Peninsula.

2

3 Any questions -- I kind of rambled
4 around there, any questions on the NAP or Unimak
5 Island.

6

7 MS. TRUMBLE: This is Della, Madame
8 Chair.

9

10 MADAME CHAIR BERNS: Yes, go ahead,
11 Della.

12

13 MS. TRUMBLE: I didn't see it and it
14 may very well be here. What is your target for wolves,
15 the population target for Unimak?

16

17 MR. CROWLEY: I don't believe we have
18 one. We did not implement a wolf control project on
19 Unimak Island. And so for that reason we really don't
20 have a population objective for wolves.

21

22 MS. TRUMBLE: Yes, I think I might have
23 been referring to caribou, I know it was referring to
24 caribou.

25

26 MR. CROWLEY: Oh. Yeah, the population
27 objective is around 1,200 caribou for Unimak Island and
28 we're at just over 200 right now.

29

30 MS. TRUMBLE: Okay. That was my
31 question. All right, that helps, thanks.

32

33 I guess just a comment before I get
34 off, but it's really encouraging to see these numbers.
35 And I do know that we had a fairly mild winter last
36 year and whether that may have contributed to some of
37 this also and I guess we'll see, depending on what kind
38 of winter we have this year, but, yeah, at least these
39 numbers are encouraging.

40

41 Thank you.

42

43 MADAME CHAIR BERNS: Yes, go ahead.

44

45 MR. KRON: Yes, Madame Chair, this is
46 Tom Kron with OSM. Earlier in the meeting we talked
47 about Wildlife Proposal 16-21, and we deferred it until
48 we had Dave on the line and I guess my recommendation
49 would be to restate the motion and then have the
50 discussion with Dave, see what his perspective is based

1 on biology.

2

3 Thank you, Madame Chair.

4

5 MADAME CHAIR BERNS: Absolutely that's
6 where we're going next. Thank you.

7

8 Do you have anything further, Dave.

9

10 MR. CROWLEY: No, Madame Chair, that's
11 it for me.

12

13 MADAME CHAIR BERNS: Thank you very
14 much.

15

16 So with that we'd like to back up to
17 Wildlife Proposal 16-21 caribou seasons in Unit 9C and
18 9E. We had a motion on the table put forward by Mr.
19 Holmes to endorse this and seconded by Antone and to
20 follow our proper procedures I guess we'll move to
21 agency comments.

22

23 Go ahead.

24

25 MS. DEATHERAGE: Madame Chair. The
26 Council was going to ask Mr. Crowley about the status
27 of the caribou herd because there were concerns about
28 opening up the hunt in that area so some Council
29 members wanted to hear from Mr. Crowley on that.

30

31 MADAME CHAIR BERNS: Okay, thank you.

32

33 Rebecca.

34

35 MS. SKINNER: So this is Rebecca
36 Skinner. In your explanation of the -- is it the
37 Southern Peninsula Herd, the 9C and 9E, you indicated
38 that for the next year you are going to be opening up a
39 limited hunt, I think you said 200 animals, so in the
40 proposal that's in front of us to allow a Federal hunt,
41 it does say that Federal permits may be issued in
42 conjunction with the State hunt. And I'm wondering if
43 you know or if someone can comment, in conjunction
44 with, does that mean the Federal permits would be
45 included in say the 200 or is it 200 under the State
46 hunt and then additional Federal permits issued.

47

48 MR. CROWLEY: Thank you, Rebecca.
49 Madame Chair. Yeah, the objective would be in that
50 combination between State and Federal permits it would

1 be 200 animals. And we haven't actually had the
2 discussion with the Becharof Refuge if and how they
3 would like to do that. But that's certainly something
4 that we're going to consider if people want to have the
5 ability to hunt on Federal lands, they could go ahead
6 and get a permit from the Refuge.

7

8 What we're finding with Izembek is that
9 most people just picked up the State permit because you
10 could hunt, you know, any land.

11

12 I do have the dates if you're
13 interested in the season dates that we have in codified
14 by statute that, you know, the dates have already been
15 set basically.

16

17 MS. SKINNER: Thank you. So that
18 response and the information received today addressed
19 the concerns I had with this proposal yesterday so I
20 would be prepared to support Mr. Holmes motion today.

21

22 MADAME CHAIR BERNS: Do we have any
23 further questions from the Council for Mr. Crowley.

24

25 MS. PETERSON: Madame Chair. This is
26 Chris Peterson from Alaska Fish and Game. I just
27 wanted to clarify to Rebecca that just spoke, did refer
28 to this as the SAP and it is the NAP, it's the Northern
29 Peninsula Caribou Herd, not the Southern that we are
30 speaking of.

31

32 MS. SKINNER: Yeah, that's why I went
33 back and clarified that I was referring to 9C and 9E
34 because those were the numbers I could.....

35

36 MS. PETERSON: Okay.

37

38 MS. SKINNER:find quickly in the
39 proposal.

40

41 Thank you.

42

43 MS. PETERSON: Okay, good, thank you.

44

45 MADAME CHAIR BERNS: Yes, go ahead.

46

47 MR. KRON: Madame Chair. This is Tom
48 Kron again with OSM. And I just wanted to clarify for
49 the record the motion that Pat originally made was to
50 support the preliminary conclusion by OSM on Page 55.

1 I wanted to make sure -- the second was also in support
2 of that, but I wanted to make sure that everyone was
3 focused on that.

4

5 MADAME CHAIR BERNS: Okay. At this
6 time we have a motion on the table which has been
7 seconded. I'd like to call for a vote, all those in
8 favor.

9

10 IN UNISON: Aye.

11

12 MADAME CHAIR BERNS: Any opposed.

13

14 (No opposing votes)

15

16 MADAME CHAIR BERNS: None opposed.

17 Motion passes. Thank you very much.

18

19 Okay. We are going to move down to
20 ADF&G Kodiak deer and mountain goat update with Mr.
21 Svoboda.

22

23 Mr. Holmes.

24

25 MR. HOLMES: Madame Chair. Before we
26 get back to Kodiak, I had a couple comments you had
27 missed me, and before Dave leaves.

28

29 One, I find it interesting that the
30 number, when Lem Butler was going to do an action on
31 Unimak was a harvest of six wolves and it looks like
32 the folks there at False Pass have been getting six or
33 seven a year and so we're starting to see on that
34 guesstimate of several years ago that it seems to be
35 working out pretty well. And it makes me wonder about
36 on Lem's research project there awhile back where they
37 took the 26 adult wolves on the calving grounds on 40
38 percent, and we've seen those marvelous improvements in
39 the South Alaska Peninsula Herd, you can't help but
40 wonder what would have happened if that had taken place
41 on 100 percent of the calving grounds, if we wouldn't
42 have doubled the increase in the South Peninsula Herd.
43 So I really would like to commend Fish and Game for
44 that small experiment years ago and their attempts and
45 I sure have to hand it to the VPSOs there at False
46 Pass, because I know when we had our hearing for the
47 RAC on Unimak Island several years ago we had an
48 impassioned comment from one of the ladies there that
49 she had to go and grab her kids out of the yard the day
50 before because there was a wolf stalking her kids in

1 her yard at False Pass.

2

3 So it sounds like the numbers are going
4 down slowly and also we're seeing a positive response
5 in caribou.

6

7 I do have an important question, and if
8 you could -- I don't know if you'd hang in there or if
9 we need to come back to it, but we had some earlier
10 discussions today on the Federal Refuges statewide
11 having some changes to policy regulations, so if you
12 could hang on, once we finish the State thing here I
13 wanted to ask you about they had a table showing bear
14 baiting in Unit 9E and so I'd like some clarification
15 on that and on some other items. So if you could hang
16 on until Nate and John are done, we could come back to
17 you.

18

19 Thank you.

20

21 MADAME CHAIR BERNS: Thank you very
22 much.

23

24 MR. CROWLEY: Yeah, Madame Chair, yeah,
25 I can standby.

26

27 MADAME CHAIR BERNS: Thank you. Go
28 ahead.

29

30 MR. SVOBODA: Thank you, Madame Chair,
31 and the Council for hearing us today. You might recall
32 back in February we gave you a pretty extensive packet
33 with a lot of information and gave a pretty extensive
34 report at that time. So we don't have a whole lot of
35 new data since then so we'll try to be pretty brief,
36 maybe an hour, hour and a half.

37

38 (Laughter)

39

40 MR. SVOBODA: Just kidding. I'll go
41 quick.

42

43 (Laughter)

44

45 MR. SVOBODA: But we will talk about a
46 few other things in addition to mountain goats and deer
47 just to give the Council a real quick update.

48

49 Hopefully -- I apologize for submitting
50 this late, but hopefully you guys all got the one page

1 -- actually it's two pages, front and back, and I
2 apologize for those of you on the phone who don't have
3 that, we can certainly email that to you.

4
5 But starting off we'll talk about brown
6 bears a little bit.

7
8 The population of brown bears on Kodiak
9 Archipelago is stable to increasing. We estimate the
10 population to be about 3,500 animals. In 2014 and '15
11 our harvest was 184 bears, 140 of which were males and
12 44 females. We also had five bears killed in defense
13 of life or property. We're consistently getting large
14 bears on Kodiak as we always have, that hasn't changed.
15 In the spring of 2015 we had 17 bears that were
16 considered trophy bears, meaning they had a skull of
17 over 28 inches. In the fall of 2014 we had six bears
18 that were submitted. And that's pretty good, pretty
19 high numbers with regard to trophy bears. Also the
20 hide quality has been excellent, both in the spring and
21 the fall the last few years.

22
23 As one of our colleagues, Bill Leacock
24 mentioned earlier, we typically do intensive aerial
25 surveys in the spring. Unfortunately due to early
26 green up the last two years we've been unable to get
27 those surveys done. So next year we're hoping to
28 expand and maybe do even a few more to catch up on what
29 we missed in the past.

30
31 We're currently collaborating with
32 researchers at a couple universities to develop a
33 robust population model. That's something that we've
34 been missing on Kodiak for a number of years. We've
35 had a few population estimates in the past but nothing
36 as of recent. So I just actually got a draft of the
37 manuscripts last week so we're hoping by the end of
38 2015 that'll be available for everybody to read.

39
40 With regards to a couple of issues that
41 we've had, nothing really major. We've had -- with
42 regard to town bears, the level of bears in town has
43 been pretty consistent. We haven't had any big
44 upswings, actually, in fact, it's been lower than in
45 previous years. And it's usually just a couple of
46 individuals that typically are young males that have
47 tendency to get into mischief and it's usually one or
48 two individuals that seem to be causing issues. It's
49 been pretty good so far this summer, you know, the fall
50 is always an interesting time, as soon as the fish runs

1 start dying off. So we'll see what happens here in the
2 next month or two.

3
4 There's been a few concerns with waste
5 management, particularly with the lack of bear
6 resistant containers that we have on Kodiak Island. We
7 are currently working with the Borough Assembly, and
8 particularly the solid waste advisory board within the
9 Borough to address some of those concerns and also
10 working with Alaska Waste Management, who's been
11 incredibly helpful through all this and pretty much
12 willing to do anything that we request of them.

13
14 So it's really promising and it's going
15 pretty good.

16
17 A little bit -- I'll touch briefly on
18 the research component to all these species, too, very
19 briefly. Some of this was mentioned previously.

20
21 We have two research projects currently
22 under way regarding brown bears in the Archipelago.
23 One of which is on Sitkalidak Island and that is a
24 collaborative partnership with the Alaska Department of
25 Fish and Game and the Old Harbor Native Corporation,
26 where we are developing a survival estimate for female
27 brown bears on the island. We're also trying to
28 estimate annual (indiscernible) and cub survival, as
29 well as the reproductive interval of females. This is
30 a continuation of a long-term project that my
31 predecessor, Dr. VanDale started a number of years ago
32 looking at survival and productivity.

33
34 This past year we collared 11 bears
35 with the help of Melissa. She came out with us as the
36 Old Harbor representative and captured some animals,
37 put some radio collars on them, and we've been tracking
38 them ever since and plan to into the future. As of
39 September 18th we had 17 bears radio collared on
40 Sitkalidak Island that we continue to follow on a
41 monthly basis to assess survival and productivity in
42 the spring.

43
44 We also have a project that we're just
45 getting kicked off on Afognak Island. This is another
46 collaborative project with Alaska Department of Fish
47 and Game as well as Ouzinkie Native Corporation,
48 Natives of Kodiak, Afognak Native Corporation and
49 Koniag Native Corporation. So it's a big project with
50 a lot of partners. We're attempting to evaluate

1 habitat use patterns in relation to timber harvest and
2 forest sessional stage. Specifically we're trying to
3 determine survival rates and productivity as well as
4 investigate seasonal movements, distribution, and
5 resource use. So where they're moving throughout the
6 island and what resources are they taking advantage of
7 at different times of the year, particularly in regard
8 to different sessional stages of the forest. As you
9 guys know, Afognak Island has been pretty consistently
10 logged since about the 1970s so we're trying to
11 determine, both with bears and elk, which I'll address
12 in a little bit, we're trying to determine what impact,
13 if any, positive or negative, that this might be having
14 on both the elk and the bear population.

15
16 Currently we don't have any bears radio
17 collared on Afognak. We did have some up until this
18 summer. All the collars that we had on dropped off, as
19 scheduled, this summer, but we do have plans next year
20 in the summer of '16 to collar a number of animals,
21 we're hoping to target about 40.

22
23 And as Anne Marie and Bill alluded to
24 earlier, very briefly, we also have -- and it's being
25 headed by the National Wildlife Refuge, but it's a
26 collaborative effort with the Refuge, Fish and Game,
27 some local guides, but it's a collaborative effort to
28 assess berry production. Specifically trying to get
29 berry abundance and distribution across the island and
30 get some idea of phenology so when are berries
31 available and when they are to what extent, you know,
32 as far as amount. And, again, this is -- the idea is
33 to develop a method to monitor annual berry abundance
34 throughout the Archipelago. There will be one thing
35 that Anne Marie asked me to touch on that they failed
36 to mention is there will be a citizen's science
37 component to it. We'd like to get a good distribution,
38 or a good distribution of sample areas across the
39 island and so we're going to be looking for volunteers,
40 citizen scientists, if you will, to help us with these
41 surveys and to help us assess the berry production on
42 an annual basis. And we can talk more about that
43 another time if you're interested in.

44
45 Moving on to deer. As everyone knows
46 we had a pretty significant decline following the
47 winter of 2011 and '12 where we estimate between 40 and
48 50 percent of the population was lost due to severe
49 weather. We had a great rebound with these last two
50 winters, really mild winters so the population is

1 increasing pretty rapidly. We've been getting a number
2 of observations from guides, from pilots, from just
3 citizens and hunters throughout the island that are
4 pretty consistent with what we've been observing with
5 increased deer numbers. As well as the deer that have
6 been observed have excellent body condition. We're
7 seeing a lot of fat, healthy deer really, and pretty
8 good twinning rates as well, which is something that's
9 really encouraging. So the population has rebounded
10 pretty quickly as most of your populations do. And I
11 would imagine continue to do so as long as we don't
12 have another really severe winter.

13

14 Winter severity is, as you probably
15 know, the main factor on Kodiak Island that affects the
16 deer population way more than hunting does, winter
17 severity is kind of the limiting factor for population
18 growth on the island.

19

20 In 2014 and '15 we harvested 3,069
21 deer, 2,582 of which were bucks and just shy of 500
22 does at 487.

23

24 We recently hired last year a new
25 research biologist for Region 2. His name is Tony
26 Corcoran and he's based out of Anchorage. He'll be
27 doing some work in Kodiak as well as Cordova and some
28 other areas in the region. And as soon as Tony
29 finishes up a couple projects that he's got under way,
30 we're looking at considering a genetic based method to
31 estimate population size on the island. That's one
32 thing that we've kind of -- it's kind of been a looming
33 question that we've had for a number of years is, where
34 exactly is the deer population on the island. We don't
35 really know that for sure, just because the magnitude
36 and the remoteness of the island makes it really
37 difficult to do certain surveys that might be more
38 robust in other areas of the state.

39

40 Moving on to elk. In 2014 and '15 we
41 harvested 64 animals, 26 males, 37 females. We also
42 had one illegal harvest of a bull. This year, I think,
43 is going to be a banner year for elk hunting. We've
44 only had, what, five, John, reported so far but we
45 anticipate that to climb rather quickly because word on
46 the street is people are being pretty successful this
47 year so that's great.

48

49 We estimate the population to be about
50 942 elk, roughly, on the -- among eight herds on the

1 island. Our goal is to maintain a population of about
2 1,000. We haven't reached that since probably the late
3 '90s, early 2000s is the last time we were at 1,000
4 elk. But what we've noticed in the past few years is
5 our bull and calf ratios are increasing in most herds,
6 which is promising. We have about a 23 percent calf
7 ratio in our last surveys, however, we believe there's
8 greater potential for the elk herd on Afognak and
9 Raspberry. So we're trying to determine -- this is
10 kind of a joint project with the bear project that I
11 mentioned earlier, kind of same objectives as the bear
12 project, trying to determine what impact logging might
13 be having on the elk population. We believe, like I
14 mentioned, that there's greater potential for the
15 population on the island. We think that the numbers
16 can increase but we're trying to figure out why exactly
17 they haven't.

18

19 That's mostly it for elk.

20

21 As I mentioned with the bear, I won't
22 really reiterate stuff. But we did kick off this
23 project, kind of a pilot project last year and we're
24 going to expand it in 2016, both with the elk and the
25 bear, same objectives, and also with the elk we're
26 going to try to get another 40 animals radio collared.
27 We did capture and GPS nine female elk last summer and
28 we've been following them ever since. Those are
29 obtaining locations every 100 minutes. And to-date
30 we've collected just over 30,000 locations so far. And
31 we did finally get one full year of data so now we can
32 actually start getting some analysis and see what
33 movements, some home range analysis, some resource use,
34 what food resources are they using at different times
35 of the year.

36

37 We also set up -- as part of that study
38 we set up a number of randomly selected vegetation
39 sites to try to assess vegetation on the island to see,
40 one, what resources are available for elk, and, then,
41 two, to determine what, of those resources, are elk
42 taking advantage of, both on a spacial and a temporal
43 scale. So as the year goes on, how does elk resource
44 change throughout the year. For instance, do they
45 stuff different in the winter as they do in the summer,
46 as they do in the spring, et cetera. And, again, we
47 plan to expand that project in 2016.

48

49 Moving on to mountain goats. In 2014
50 and '15 we harvested 344 mountain goats, 203 of which

1 were male, 141 were female. As everyone is pretty
2 aware RG480 a couple years ago was moved, which is the
3 southern portion of the island, was the -- the quota
4 was changed to a two goat bag limit in RG480 and that
5 has been wildly popular across the island. Kodiak is
6 quickly becoming a goat hunting destination hot spot.
7 So we have the number of hunters has continued to
8 increase year after year. The number of hunters going
9 down to RG480, which is the registration area and
10 pursuing two goats has been increasing every year.
11 Last year we had 38 hunters kill two goats, this year
12 we've had 44, in '14 and '15 we've had 44 hunters kill
13 two goats in RG480. The number of goat hunters
14 continues to rise. We issued 1,339 registration
15 permits for RG480 last year, which I think is an all
16 time high. And 240 goats out of the 344 goats, so 240
17 out of the 344 goats were harvested in the RG480 last
18 year. And we estimate the population to be somewhere
19 around 2,700 goats island wide.

20

21 This year we are -- during our surveys,
22 we only had a partial survey this year due to weather
23 and we try not to do surveys when the season opens up,
24 you know, so we don't have any conflicts with hunters.
25 But this year we were able to count, visually count 536
26 goats during our partial survey. We didn't get all of
27 the areas surveyed. But within those we had about a 23
28 percent kid ratio which is pretty good.

29

30 The population is stable in some areas
31 and it's decreasing slowly in other areas, such as the
32 road system, which we've noticed -- what we've noticed
33 with goats in the past is they typically have almost
34 exponential growth until they hit kind of plateau out
35 and they reach a certain carrying capacity, if you
36 will, they have a tendency to drop off and then they'll
37 level out at a lower number. So that's kind of what
38 we've been noticing in certain areas of the island.
39 Some are still continuing to increase. Not a whole
40 lot. We think we're getting pretty close to reaching
41 our maximum number of goats, although there has been
42 possibly some expansion in some areas, like the
43 Speridon Peninsula over the last few years.

44

45 Okay.

46

47 A little bit about the goat research
48 which Mr. Leacock addressed earlier. We have a joint
49 project going on with the Kodiak National Wildlife
50 Refuge. We want to quantify seasonal and annual habitat

1 selection as well as movement patterns of goats across
2 the island. We're also interested in reproduction and
3 survival rates. Kodiak has a really unique situation
4 with regard to goats. It's been experiencing what's
5 referred to in the literature as a web of population
6 growth, where we have an expediential population growth
7 that happens very rapidly over a short period of time.
8 So it's, from a biological standpoint, it's something
9 that's very interesting to research and to watch occur.

10

11 So, yeah, this year we -- as part of
12 that project this year we captured -- in June we
13 captured 31 -- captured and put GPS collars on 31
14 goats. A pretty good distribution across the island
15 and pretty good gender distribution as well with 12
16 males and 19 females. Some of these collars are
17 collected, two locations a day, some of them are
18 collecting locations every three hours, so kind of
19 varies. We've collected about 60,000 locations so far
20 on 46 animals over the course of about four years. So
21 we're getting quite a bit of data. And as I mentioned
22 this is a joint project with the National Wildlife
23 Refuge. And, McCrae Cobb, who, we all miss, is
24 currently based in Anchorage and he's kind of taken the
25 lead on analyzing much of this data so we'll
26 collaborate with McCrae on analyzing the data that we
27 get from these collars. And that analysis and
28 population modeling is currently underway. McCrae got
29 a good start on that shortly after he moved to
30 Anchorage.

31

32 So that's most of the updates. I'll
33 give you -- yeah, that's pretty much it. I won't go
34 into any more.

35

36 MADAME CHAIR BERNS: Thank you very
37 much. Do we have any questions for Mr. Svoboda.

38

39 Yes, Mr. Holmes.

40

41 MR. HOLMES: Briefly. Thank you for
42 the great report there Nate. Everything I would ever
43 want to know.

44

45 I wanted to ask you a question as far
46 as -- one I've asked all the other agency folks, how's
47 your budget look, are you getting cut, are you going to
48 have John running around with a stick with a dart on
49 the end to do bears; are you going to be able to do
50 your job next year.

1 MR. SVOBODA: I do that already.

2

3 (Laughter)

4

5 MR. SVOBODA: No, actually, you know,
6 despite statewide budget cuts, you know, budgets are
7 always an issue and I really appreciate that question,
8 Pat. Right now and I hesitate to say this, but right
9 now it looks like, from a wildlife standpoint, it looks
10 like our budget is fairly good for the next couple
11 years. You know, it certainly is not increasing but
12 it's not decreasing at a rapid rate like some of the --
13 like commercial fisheries for instance. You know,
14 luckily through Pittman-Roberts and funds we've been
15 able to maintain many of the projects that we have
16 underway. But, thank you, Pat, I appreciate that.

17

18 MR. HOLMES: Yeah, that's good. Well,
19 I'm glad you probably have your 400 bucks a year that
20 Larry had for deer research so at least you have enough
21 for coffee when you get back from the cold.

22

23 Thank you.

24

25 MADAME CHAIR BERNS: Any further
26 questions.

27

28 (No comments)

29

30 MADAME CHAIR BERNS: Seeing none --
31 okay, go ahead, Karen.

32

33 MS. DEATHERAGE: Madame Chair. I keep
34 passing you little notes about the dwindling time and
35 agenda, so I'd like to propose the following because we
36 do still have a motion on the floor for Proposal 194
37 for the Board of Fish. It's unlikely we're going to
38 get to that proposal unless this Council believes it's
39 a priority but there are a lot of other issues before
40 that. We still have to hear from James Jackson on the
41 Upper Station. We have the Afognak Lake issue followed
42 by Buskin River. Then we have the OSM report, which
43 should be very brief. That could be followed by the
44 annual report, which probably won't be brief, because
45 you do need to build your annual report draft. Then
46 the Council needs to decide on the all Councils
47 meeting, if there's any issues there and then decide
48 your fall 2016 meeting.

49

50 If you do not believe that Proposal No.

1 194 to the Board of Fish is not a priority, my
2 recommendation would be to have the person who motioned
3 and seconded that withdraw that motion. And if there's
4 time at the end of this meeting to take that issue up,
5 the Fish and Game person, I have his number, I can call
6 him, and have him call in to answer any questions.

7

8 So thank you very much.

9

10 MADAME CHAIR BERNS: Thank you, Karen.
11 And I think with that, I think we're all done, thank
12 you very much.

13

14 MR. SVOBODA: Thank you, Council.
15 Thank you, Madame Chair.

16

17 MADAME CHAIR BERNS: Pat, did you have
18 a comment.

19

20 MR. HOLMES: Yeah, Madame Chair. I can
21 wait for that for the end. And I think as long as we
22 discuss something I think we can even do follow-up with
23 emails or phone polls on some items, I don't know
24 which, Karen. But we also have had, when Mitch is
25 here, we've ground through until 9:00 or 10:00 o'clock
26 at night with a brief break so let's go for it. I
27 would like to get back to the Peninsula area bear
28 management person because that relates to the question
29 we explored earlier about statewide regulatory changes
30 for Refuges, if we may, Madame Chair.

31

32 MADAME CHAIR BERNS: Yes, absolutely we
33 can address that.

34

35 (Pause)

36

37 MADAME CHAIR BERNS: And that would be
38 under Page 41 in your packet. I do believe it starts --
39 it was also an additional handout that was in your blue
40 binder, and I believe that Mr. Holmes wants to address
41 this to get some clarification; is that correct?

42

43 MR. HOLMES: (Nods affirmatively)

44

45 MADAME CHAIR BERNS: Okay. You have
46 the floor.

47

48 MR. HOLMES: You still on line, Dave.

49

50 MR. CROWLEY: Yes, I am.

1 MR. HOLMES: Okay. We had some
2 questions since this whole concept has come up, of
3 taking individual Refuge manager's philosophies,
4 incorporating that as a policy and then implementing
5 policies and regulations statewide. And so I don't
6 know if you've seen it, it was a news release July
7 2015, and I'll just briefly hit you with the things
8 that they would like to implement as law and on the
9 Refuges statewide.

10
11 I understand from talking to some of
12 the folks down in Juneau that there are similar
13 perspectives developing and possibly in the Forest
14 Service and Park Service on similar items. And I'll
15 just kind of go into this, in the middle of it, read it
16 to you, and then there's two, four, five points that
17 are really important that we need to know about for
18 your area, and how it relates to our region.

19
20 Okay.

21
22 To start the discussion it says,
23 prohibit the following, particularly
24 efficient methods and means for non-
25 subsistence Federal take of predators
26 on Refuges in Alaska due to the
27 potential for cumulative effects of
28 predator populations and the
29 environment that are inconsistent with
30 our mandates to conserve natural
31 biological diversity, biological
32 integrity and environmental health on
33 Refuges in Alaska.

34
35 And then it lists those points that
36 they -- I guess they had quite a few, but this is what
37 they've come down to.

38
39 First No. 1 -- and I'll stop at each
40 one and you can tell us whether or not that's going on
41 in your Refuge because I -- or your management area
42 because I don't think they happen for the rest of the
43 Council here in Kodiak and on the South Peninsula and
44 out west.

45
46 No. 1. The take of bear cubs or sows
47 with cubs and the exception would allow
48 for resident hunters to take black bear
49 cubs or sows with cubs under customary
50 and traditional use activities at a den

1 site from October 15th to April 30th,
2 and then it says, in specific, Game
3 Management Units according to State
4 law.

5
6 I don't believe that here in Kodiak or
7 Unit 9, that the take of bear cubs or sows with cubs is
8 allowed for anybody is it?

9
10 MR. CROWLEY: No, it's not, you're
11 correct, Pat.

12
13 MR. HOLMES: Okay. The take of brown
14 bear over bait. That's not kosher in our neck of the
15 woods, is it over where you are?

16
17 MR. CROWLEY: No, sir.

18
19 MR. HOLMES: Okay. The take of bears
20 with traps or snares?

21
22 MR. CROWLEY: No. No bear trapping
23 allowed.

24
25 MR. HOLMES: Okay. The take of wolves
26 during spring and summer denning season, May through
27 August 9th, and that's usually when the pelts are
28 pretty bad for trapping anyway; is that allowed in your
29 neck of the woods?

30
31 MR. CROWLEY: Well, let me check real
32 quick here, the answer to that is yes it's allowed in
33 June. I believe that was a relatively recent change but
34 as you pointed out the pelts are not in good condition,
35 nobody hunts wolves then and, in fact, most of the
36 wolves are taken by brown bear hunters during that
37 spring bear season. So, yeah, there's a season but in
38 practicality there certainly isn't a hunt for them.

39
40 MR. HOLMES: Yeah, I think our Council
41 -- thanks, Coral, I get lost doing what I'm doing, I
42 need all the help I can.

43
44 (Laughter)

45
46 MR. HOLMES: I think our Council at one
47 time had made a recommendation along that line and we
48 were just really trying to get some awareness of
49 problems on the Peninsula and kind of halfway serious
50 about it, so it's really not anything effectively being

1 done.

2

3 And then the last item is the take of
4 bears from aircraft on the same day as air travel
5 occurs, the take of wolves or wolverine from aircraft
6 on the same day as air travel is already prohibited, so
7 we can't take bears the same day by air, can we?

8

9 MR. CROWLEY: No. You're correct on
10 that one. And let me go back and clarify wolves.

11

12 The wolf hunt is actually closed April
13 30 but wolf trapping is through June 30.

14

15 MR. HOLMES: Okay. Thank you very
16 much. I think that clarifies things a lot and will
17 allow us to have a quick vote as to whether to endorse
18 this or not.

19

20 Thank you.

21

22 MR. CROWLEY: Thank you, Pat, and thank
23 you, Madame Chair.

24

25 MR. HOLMES: Madame Chair. I can't
26 remember what we were doing, I have notes to ask for a
27 motion on this. I don't know if maybe that's something
28 that we could just have some concurrence and tuck in
29 our letter of concern to OSM or do we need to vote on
30 it.

31

32 MS. DEATHERAGE: Madame Chair.

33

34 MADAME CHAIR BERNS: Yes.

35

36 MS. DEATHERAGE: This issue for the
37 proposed rule for US Fish and Wildlife Service National
38 Wildlife Refuge is an action item so if the Council
39 would like to comment on this or have a motion to
40 endorse or oppose that rule, as given at this meeting,
41 then they can do that.

42

43 MADAME CHAIR BERNS: Thank you.

44

45 MR. HOLMES: Madame Chair. I would like
46 to make a motion that we do not endorse the proposal on
47 Page 41, 42 as proposed by the US Fish and Wildlife
48 Service to implement policy into statewide regulation
49 changes as it relates to bears and wolves, so I guess a
50 vote of no confidence.

1 Thank you.
2
3 MR. SCHWANTES: Madame Chair.
4
5 MADAME CHAIR BERNS: Yes, go ahead.
6
7 MR. SCHWANTES: Pat, how about revising
8 that into not opposing it to upholding it.
9
10 MR. HOLMES: Roger that.
11
12 MR. SCHWANTES: And that's pretty clear
13 that we oppose it.
14
15 MR. HOLMES: I accept that as a
16 friendly amendment.
17
18 MADAME CHAIR BERNS: Thank you, very
19 much. We have a motion on the table, do we have a
20 second.
21
22 MR. SCHWANTES: I'll second it.
23
24 MADAME CHAIR BERNS: We have a first
25 and second. Let's see, any question.
26
27
28 (No comments)
29
30 MADAME CHAIR BERNS: Hearing none, can
31 I call for a vote. All those in favor please signify
32 by saying aye.
33
34 IN UNISON: Aye.
35
36 MADAME CHAIR BERNS: Any opposed.
37
38 (No opposing votes)
39
40 MADAME CHAIR BERNS: Thank you very
41 much, motion passes.
42
43 I think that we are kind of due for a
44 little break here if you don't mind. Let's take a
45 quick 15 minute break and then get ready to go until
46 8:00 o'clock tonight.
47
48 (Off record)
49
50 (On record)

1 MADAME CHAIR BERNS: Let's get back
2 together again, that was a fast 15 minute break. Can
3 you please all come back together.

4
5 (Pause)

6
7 MADAME CHAIR BERNS: Okay. Now that we
8 have -- let's get everybody seated here. We're going
9 to continue with ADF&G reports, and move on to Upper
10 Station sockeye salmon status with James Jackson,
11 please. We'll follow that up with the Afognak Lake
12 sockeye salmon monitoring project and then the Buskin
13 River sockeye project update, and lastly ACR No. 6,
14 Alitak with James Jackson.

15
16 MS. DEATHERAGE: Madame Chair. I think
17 we decided to go ahead and wait on ACR No. 6.

18
19 Thank you.

20
21 MADAME CHAIR BERNS: Okay.

22
23 MR. JACKSON: Hi, again, Madame Chair.

24
25 (Laughter)

26
27 MR. JACKSON: I'll make this as quick
28 as I possibly can. My name is James Jackson, the area
29 management biologist salmon and herring commercial
30 fisheries Kodiak.

31
32 I'm also here with Heather Finkle, one
33 of our lead research biologists and we're going to kind
34 of tag team this. I'm just going to give you a general
35 overview of what the Upper Station escapement was and
36 management actions we took this year, and then Heather
37 is going to give you a rundown of some of the research
38 projects that we're doing on the lake.

39
40 So to start with, the Upper Station
41 early run was weak this year but through some pretty
42 severe fishery restrictions in June in the Alitak
43 District we were able to achieve the lower value of the
44 escapement goal for the first time in quite a while,
45 actually. The lower -- or the goal for early run Upper
46 Station is between 43 and 93,000 fish and we ended up
47 with 53 -- or 54,000 sockeye salmon past the weir,
48 which is pretty good.

49
50 Late season Upper Station was weak and

1 late and, again, through some pretty severe commercial
2 fisheries restrictions in the traditional fishing
3 areas, the traditional sockeye fishing areas, we were
4 able to achieve the lower value of the escapement goal
5 there with approximately 132,000, 133,000 fish. And
6 like all sockeye runs in the Kodiak area, it was very
7 late this year and we probably missed a great deal of
8 those fish as well.

9

10 And that kind of covers the management
11 aspect.

12

13 MS. FINKLE: Madame Chair. Council
14 members. Heather Finkle here.

15

16 As far as the research aspect, we've
17 been conducting grab sampling of the sockeye salmon
18 smolt for the past couple of years getting age, weight,
19 length data and also collecting genetic tissue samples
20 for future analysis. So far preliminary results show
21 that the smolt coming out of the system are healthy,
22 they're large, they're comparable to Karluk smolt.
23 Let's see starting last year KRAA started collecting
24 the water samples from the lake but we've been
25 processing them so we're getting a suite a limnological
26 data as well showing that conditions in the lake are
27 healthy. The rearing conditions continue to be
28 historically healthy so it's on par with, yeah,
29 historical lake conditions.

30

31 And to address Mr. Schwantes' concern
32 about the historical temperature data for reference to
33 the temperature monitoring network, there's
34 intermittent limnological data that goes back to 1952
35 for the Kodiak Archipelago so there is historical data
36 that we can reference. It's discreet data, it's just
37 from one sampling station for the most part but now we
38 have the temperature loggers in and we're getting
39 continuous data throughout the summer.

40

41 That's all I have, thank you.

42

43 MADAME CHAIR BERNS: Thank you very
44 much. Anyone have questions. Mr. Holmes.

45

46 MR. HOLMES: A quick question. I guess
47 with what you just related to us, you did a lot of
48 work, made the bottom end of the goals, the lake looks
49 great, the critters look good, even if we're having
50 global warming, the odds are, as things are going to

1 improve a little bit in the limnology sector because
2 you're probably going to get a little better production
3 on the plankton and the things that the smolt eat, so I
4 think that's extremely exciting and the best news that
5 we could accept at this point.

6

7 Thank you.

8

9 MADAME CHAIR BERNS: Thank you, Mr.
10 Holmes. Any other questions.

11

12 (No comments)

13

14 MADAME CHAIR BERNS: Thank you very
15 much.

16

17 MR. HOLMES: Oh, and let us know if you
18 guys get in a budget crunch, not that we have any
19 effect, but at least we could write a letter saying, go
20 team.

21

22 (Laughter)

23

24 MR. JACKSON: Through the Chair. Mr.
25 Holmes. We're probably going to cut a weir in Alitak
26 next year or the year after next. We haven't decided
27 whether it's going to be Dog Salmon or Upper Station.
28 But we're taking pretty severe budget cuts. And the
29 only system that we currently count in Alitak, that we
30 count fish twice on, is the Frazer system, where the
31 fish passes and Dog Salmon weir, and more than likely
32 if we were to cut a system it would be Dog Salmon.

33

34 So big cuts.

35

36 MADAME CHAIR BERNS: Thank you very
37 much. Next we'll go into the Afognak Lake sockeye
38 salmon monitoring project with Darin Ruhl.

39

40 MR. RUHL: Madame Chair. Council
41 members. Thank you for giving me the time today to
42 present this. My name is Darin Ruhl, I'm with Fish and
43 Game and I'm the project investigator of the Afognak
44 Lake sockeye salmon stock monitoring project.

45

46 Today I will be summarizing the
47 preliminary findings of the 2015 smolt out migration,
48 the adult assessment, Afognak Lake limnology and the
49 outlook for the 2016 season.

50

1 Beginning with the smolt assessment,
2 the crew deployed the Alitnik and installed the smolt
3 traps on April 22nd. Daily catches numbered below 15
4 for the first couple weeks and they began to ramp up on
5 May 8th giving the confidence that we did not miss any
6 early portion of the smolt out migration. 19,102
7 sockeye smolt were captured using the incline plane
8 trap giving us a total out migration estimate of
9 142,830 smolt, which is about 200,000 fish below
10 average and the second lowest estimate since the smolt
11 project inception in 2003. And there was a handout
12 that I provided, I don't know if it was -- do you guys
13 have that in front of you, about a five page quick
14 handout that kind of gives a little bit further detail
15 and figures and tables in there.

16

17 (Pause)

18

19 MR. RUHL: So like I said I'm just
20 giving a brief overview here but there is more detailed
21 information in that handout that was given out to you
22 yesterday.

23

24 (Pause)

25

26 MADAME CHAIR BERNS: It's right before
27 147 in your booklet, it does not have a number on it
28 for those of you that are looking.

29

30 (Pause)

31

32 MADAME CHAIR BERNS: Go ahead.

33

34 MR. RUHL: Okay. So we sampled -- the
35 crew sampled 360 smolt out there for weight and length
36 in 2015, that's about two percent of the catch, that's
37 our target. The condition, which is an equation of
38 weight and length, of those 360 smolt were considered
39 healthy. Age one smolt composed 63 percent of those
40 sampled as is typical for this system. Low water
41 conditions persisted from June 5th until the traps were
42 pulled on June 19th.

43

44 For the adult assessment, the weir was
45 installed and fished tight on May 6th and the first
46 adult sockeye was passed on May 11th. The total number
47 of adults passed was 38,151 sockeye which put us closer
48 to the upper end of the escapement goal. That
49 escapement goal is 20,000 on the lower end and 50,000
50 on the upper end. The escapement came in over the 15

1 year average, which is approximately 32,000 and just
2 below the most recent five year average of 41,000. The
3 sockeye escapement has been within the upper and lower
4 goal since 2008. The crew sampled 585 adults for age,
5 sex and length, and the dominant age classes were one-
6 threes, 46 percent; and one-twos. 52 percent of the
7 escapement was female and 48 percent was male. The age
8 and sex compositions were fairly typical for the
9 Afognak Lake system. The weir was pulled for the
10 season on August 17th.

11
12 Lake limnology. The zooplankton
13 biomass remained low in 2015 and historically it's been
14 fairly low. Analysis of the lake chemistry for 2015 is
15 incomplete at this time. On two separate dates Heather
16 Finkle here with us, successfully ran 15 hours of
17 missions with Fish and Game's autonomous underwater
18 vehicle, created an update bathymetric map for the
19 Afognak Lake, and that is on the back page of the
20 handout. In comparison to the old bath map, the high
21 resolution map increased the mean depth to 9.2 meters
22 from 8.6 meters, and the max depth increased to 26
23 meters from 23 meters.

24
25 For outreach, each year since 2010,
26 Fish and Game technicians have coordinated, and I've
27 coordinated or the project investigator has coordinated
28 with ANC, Native Village of Afognak, Dig Afognak for
29 the cultural summer camps that occur out there.
30 Generally the youth would come out to the weir, they'd
31 do like dissections and just talk about subsistence
32 lifestyles, but generally just the cultural summer camp
33 that happens. Each year they've made it out but this
34 year there was pretty poor weather during the three day
35 window we had so we were unable to meet up with the
36 Native corporations and kids this year. But we do look
37 forward to meeting up next year with them.

38
39 So in summary, the field camp was open
40 10 days earlier than average in 2015 to address the
41 mild winter the Kodiak area experienced and the
42 possibility of missing an early portion of the smolt
43 out migration due to the warmer lake temperatures.
44 That's always a concern of missing early fish but we're
45 pretty sure that we did not this year.

46
47 Since the inception of the smolt
48 project in 2003 we usually see high water events
49 occurring early in May and lower water conditions
50 toward the middle of June. So this year, you know, it

1 was really mild, we had low water conditions. The
2 smolt did not immigrate early in the season like we
3 thought they might due to the warmer water conditions.
4 They tracked closer to historical patterns moving out a
5 couple weeks later after we were out there. But the
6 low water conditions throughout the small trapping
7 season could have decreased the catch rate of our smolt
8 trapping system and giving us poor confidence in the
9 smolt estimate that we came up with.

10

11 Adult weir operations went well and
12 water conditions did not seem to affect the adult
13 returns to Afognak Lake system.

14

15 Although the subsistence and commercial
16 salmon harvests are not finalized, managers opened the
17 southeast Afognak section early in the fishing season
18 and when the run timing was exceeding the in-season
19 goals, closure markers were moved closer to the stream
20 terminus to increase harvest opportunities.

21

22 For 2016 the outlook. OSM funding will
23 be continued for the smolt assessment and limnological
24 monitoring. No forecast is available at this time for
25 the 2016 adult return. We do plan to continue our
26 capacity building partnership with ANC and NVA and the
27 Dig Afognak, and I will be compiling data in the coming
28 months and a detailed annual report on the projects
29 findings should be finalized by April.

30

31 So, thank you, that's all I have.

32

33 MADAME CHAIR BERNS: Thank you very
34 much. Do we have any questions.

35

36 Mr. Holmes.

37

38 MR. HOLMES: Briefly. I might have
39 missed it. But how did the condition factor look on
40 the smolt, are they relatively robust because then one
41 might make a conjecture that you'll see a similar trend
42 that we've seen for the last three or four years of
43 making it over the lower end of the goal, so are they
44 happy and does that mean that, you know, people might
45 look forward to a little more subsistence fishing there
46 next year.

47

48 MR. RUHL: Yes. Figure 2 in the
49 handout there. I've got a condition factor figure
50 there, and, yes, they're above average. The age twos

1 were considered above average as far as healthy
2 condition, .81 and the age ones were at, I believe it
3 was at .78. So, yeah, they're healthy and looking
4 good.

5
6 MR. HOLMES: Well, that's very good
7 news, thank you, sir.

8
9 MADAME CHAIR BERNS: Do we have any
10 other questions from the Council.

11
12 (No comments)

13
14 MADAME CHAIR BERNS: Thank you very
15 much for your report. We're going to move along to the
16 Buskin River sockeye project update with Tyler Polum.

17
18 MR. POLUM: Thank you, Madame Chair.
19 Members of the Council. My name is Tyler Polum, I'm
20 the assistant area sportfish biologist for Kodiak, the
21 Alaska Peninsula and the Aleutian Islands. And the
22 principal investigator for the Buskin River sockeye
23 stock assessment project funded through OSM.

24
25 I submitted a report to the RAC that's
26 in your meeting materials and I'll just quickly give
27 you an update on our 2015 season and let you ask any
28 questions, if you have any, from the report.

29
30 Currently our weirs are still in right
31 now because the silvers are still out in the ocean so
32 the project's ongoing, even though we're not, the
33 sockeye run is almost over. This year to-date we've
34 counted about 8,700 sockeye through the Buskin Lake
35 weir which is above the upper escapement goal of 8,000.
36 There were no restrictions on the subsistence fishery
37 or the sportfishery. And as of now we've counted about
38 65,000 pink salmon as well and as of yesterday about
39 900 silvers. We actually counted about 700 silvers
40 yesterday so that's good news.

41
42 We also run a smaller weir on Lake
43 Louise tributary, for those of you not familiar with
44 the project, but we actually counted about 280 sockeye,
45 which is pretty low, but we also think that a lot of
46 those fish just didn't go up the creek this year
47 because there was virtually no water and it's just a
48 little tiny tributary creek and the fish have a really
49 tough time navigating it at low water.

50

1 The 10 year average for sockeye in the
2 Buskin is about 12,000 fish so we're below average but
3 still well above our -- or still above our upper
4 escapement goal and well above the lower escapement
5 goal. And at Lake Louise it's about 1,200 sockeye and
6 so we're well below that, though not the lowest sockeye
7 count ever, which was below 100 fish.

8
9 The subsistence harvest and commercial
10 harvest, as well as sportfish harvest are not available
11 for the season as they'll be -- as the data will be
12 collected -- or processed this winter and then they'll
13 be available next -- hopefully by the next time we meet
14 or I present to you. But the historical average for
15 the subsistence fishery harvests about 4,000 sockeye in
16 front of Buskin. Last year it was about 5,500 sockeye
17 taken from the Buskin area, and this year the -- as
18 just anecdotally we sample the harvest of the
19 subsistence fish from in front of Buskin, both on the
20 fishing grounds and at the docks. And the fishery
21 appeared to be, for the first two weeks of June we
22 collected a lot of samples, we actually exceeded our
23 total season sample goal in the first two weeks of
24 June, however the fishing dropped off, at least from
25 our sampling, the last two weeks of June as the run
26 came in quite late for the most part. We actually
27 counted 50 percent of the sockeye run in July, which
28 typically it's three quarters of the way done by July
29 1st. So typically we count less than a quarter of the
30 run in the month of July and this year we counted over
31 half. And that was likely just due to the low water
32 that we had, at least for the Buskin, there was really
33 no significant rain fall that affected the river from
34 about the July 4th weekend through now, through this
35 last couple days.

36
37 As I mentioned before we did sample
38 sockeye caught in the subsistence fishery. We got
39 about 250 samples, most at the beginning of June, which
40 we do like to spread the effort out through the whole
41 fishery, which is typically the month of June, but like
42 I said most of our -- most of the samples we saw from
43 the effort that the subsistence fishers had was in the
44 beginning of June. And we collected about 316 samples
45 from Buskin Lake and I have -- I actually have some
46 preliminary ages from those fish, which most of them
47 were age one-three and two-three fish which are the
48 older age classes from the Buskin River, which -- which
49 is comparable to -- mostly comparable to previous
50 years. Typically we see a few more of the age two-two

1 fish, which was about 17 percent this year, so that's a
2 little bit different, but we haven't done any, you
3 know, formal analysis yet to know if that's a marked
4 difference or not. In the subsistence fishery, most of
5 the fish are age one-three and two-three fish as well,
6 which are the older and larger fish which you would
7 expect to see in a gillnet fishery.

8
9 And as far as the size of the fish, we
10 got a lot of reports of smaller fish in the subsistence
11 fishery and in the river. And we did see -- at least,
12 anecdotally, when I did -- just did a quick comparison,
13 the fish -- the length of the sockeye that we sampled
14 in both the subsistence fishery and at the weir were
15 smaller than -- smaller than average but, again, it
16 hasn't gone through any formal analysis to know if
17 that's, you know, a statistically valid, but at least
18 anecdotally the fish were smaller this year.

19
20 We interviewed -- every year we
21 interview subsistence users about their residency and
22 traditional use of the Buskin and other areas, and this
23 year we contacted 16 subsistence users and all but one
24 were from Kodiak, and all but two -- or all but one, I
25 believe, were traditional users of the Buskin. And
26 while they all reported fishing other areas, like
27 Litnik and Pasagshak.

28
29 We hired an intern this year. We
30 typically hire two interns with funding through our OSM
31 project and this year we were able to hire one and
32 we've been going through some challenges with our
33 internship program in regards to that our local hire
34 that we've done through the high school in the last
35 couple of years -- or since the beginning of the
36 project doesn't always -- it doesn't seem to meet the
37 qualifications that we have for our statewide
38 internship program so we did hire quite late this year
39 in April, right before our project started. But we
40 were able to hire one intern and he did a fantastic job
41 for us, and hopefully next year we'll be able to get
42 everything ironed out and hire our typical two interns
43 again, which are Federally-qualified subsistence users
44 typically from -- typically Kodiak high school
45 students.

46
47 And then the only thing that's not in
48 the report that I submitted, is, we are, with funding
49 through the -- for mitigation from the airport
50 expansion, we are starting or attempting to start a

1 radio telemetry project on coho on the Buskin, which is
2 basically -- we're attempting to put radio transmitters
3 in about 150 silvers in the Buskin throughout the
4 course of the run and determine whether what percentage
5 of those fish actually go into Buskin Lake by the end
6 of the season, or typically by now. We also are
7 tagging some of those fish with just a visual marker, a
8 dart tag to measure the same outcome. So far, as I'm
9 sure most of you are aware, on the road system at
10 least, the silvers are extremely late. We only just
11 yesterday counted a significant portion, or significant
12 number of silvers at the Buskin and put out a bunch of
13 tags so we are going to keep our weirs in and hopefully
14 count some silvers, hopefully get some rain here soon
15 so we can actually put some of these radio transmitters
16 out and get something out of this first year of the
17 project. The project's supposed to continue through
18 2017 so for two more years and we're hoping to maybe
19 salvage something from this year so we can get an idea
20 of how many of those fish will actually go into the
21 Buskin Lake versus staying in the main stem of the
22 Buskin River.

23
24 And that's about all I have, I'd open
25 it up for questions.

26
27 MADAME CHAIR BERNS: Thank you, Tyler.
28 Do we have questions.

29
30 Rebecca.

31
32 MS. SKINNER: Earlier we heard about
33 concerns of crayfish in Buskin Lake, can you say
34 anything about what kind of a potential threat those
35 might pose to that Buskin system and the fish.

36
37 MR. POLUM: You know we don't know a
38 lot about the life history specific to Buskin Lake.
39 They were first documented, officially documented in
40 the year 2000 by Sportfish Division here in Kodiak, and
41 seen pretty much every year since then just on an
42 informal basis. You know we see them at the lake
43 outlet at our weir in August and September every fall
44 for the most part. They will eat salmon smolt,
45 however, and I'm sure dead salmon eggs like most of the
46 foragers in Buskin Lake, however the population seems
47 to be pretty small from up until recently. And maybe
48 as Tom mentioned earlier growing with these warmer
49 summers we've been having. To what affect on the
50 salmon, that remains to be seen. I think it's probably

1 negligible since they've been there for awhile through
2 several life cycles of sockeye salmon at least.

3
4 During that time we've gone through
5 some serious ups and downs in the sockeye population in
6 Buskin which appears to be totally unrelated to the
7 crayfish. So I would say at least from our standpoint
8 it doesn't appear to have a -- to pose a threat at this
9 time but it, you know, if there is an estimate of the
10 population that comes out of some of these studies, you
11 know, that's obviously something we would use and like
12 to be aware of.

13
14 Yeah, I hope that answers your
15 question.

16
17 MADAME CHAIR BERNS: Thank you, Tyler.
18 Do we have further questions.

19
20 Mr. Holmes.

21
22 MR. HOLMES: Yes, ma'am. Of course a
23 lot's going to depend on what the species of crayfish
24 they are and if they're some that somebody brought up
25 from Louisiana then they're barely hanging in and if
26 they're some from Washington or Oregon then we may end
27 up having some competition with feed on insects. I
28 don't think if they're Washington, Oregon ones they'll
29 be burrowing into the banks like Louisiana or ones in
30 the Mississippi. But it's certainly something to keep
31 an eye on.

32
33 I want to ask my regular question.

34
35 How you guys doing, what do you think
36 the subsistence run is going to be for next year. You
37 did lose your funding on smolt because you had a budget
38 cut back on Staff and didn't have Staff to run your
39 smolt program and that used to be something where you
40 could give us a lot more certainty on what might be
41 coming. But given that we've had some reasonable
42 escapement goals achieved, and looking back four or
43 five years, what do you think next year's going to be.
44 Is it going to be maybe average, low, I mean that's the
45 question, what's your gut feeling.

46
47 MR. POLUM: Mr. Holmes, through the
48 Chair.

49
50 You know we're past or at least at the

1 very tail end of the -- of what would be the return
2 from the parent years of those really low escapements
3 in 2008 and 2009 so I -- by all accounts the Buskin is
4 very healthy and we would expect to see -- we expect to
5 meet our escapement goals if not exceed the upper
6 escapement goal. We don't expect to see any
7 significant down turns or see any problems with the
8 system right now. That's -- you know, as you've
9 mentioned in the past we don't have a crystal ball to
10 see everything and we go off of weir counts for the
11 most part and look at trends, but that's our
12 perspective, at least, that it's healthy and appears to
13 be stable for the most part.

14
15 MR. HOLMES: Thank you. I worked
16 really hard on all that discussions about the Buskin
17 River and I just kind of gave up when I saw the
18 mitigation was going to be so small toward salmon and
19 that the money was already preassigned by the FAA for
20 anything that they wanted to do, and so it'll be
21 probably used for something good but it isn't going to
22 be anything relating to the critters that actually
23 could be impacted by that runway extension. And that
24 was really sad but I guess that's part of coming into
25 duty of being an old fart because you can only fight so
26 many battles. And I really had hoped that they would
27 have set up, A, mitigation fund that would be devoted
28 solely to salmon for the Buskin, rather than do the
29 regular political response like they do everywhere in
30 the world, at least they didn't assign the money to
31 some swamp in Missouri.

32
33 Thank you. And good luck on your work
34 next year.

35
36 MR. POLUM: Yeah, thanks, Mr. Holmes.
37 And I just wanted to clarify we -- the radio telemetry
38 project is funded in part by the Airport Mitigation
39 Funding, but the -- with a significant commitment from
40 our Staff here in sportfish.

41
42 MADAME CHAIR BERNS: Thank you very
43 much Tyler. Do we have any further questions.

44
45 (No comments)

46
47 MADAME CHAIR BERNS: Seeing none, we're
48 going to go on to the OSM report with Mr. Tom Kron.

49
50 MR. KRON: Madame Chair. The OSM

1 report is in your book on Pages 156 through 158, and
2 given the press of time it's there for you to look at,
3 it's informational.

4

5 That's all I have. I'll try to answer
6 any questions if you have any.

7

8 Thank you, Madame Chair.

9

10 MADAME CHAIR BERNS: Does the Council
11 have any specific questions in regards to the report
12 provided by OSM at this time.

13

14 MR. HOLMES: I think it's a nice
15 comprehensive quick summary Madame Chair. And
16 discussions on the things to try to address chinook and
17 the bycatch and interactions with the North Pacific
18 Management Council and bridging the gap with Native
19 communities and conservation, I think those are just
20 really splendid. And the ANSEP program, I think, is
21 going to be -- even though that's happening in other
22 regions, it has the potential of some day helping us.

23

24 And so I don't have any questions other
25 than to say nice job to OSM for keeping us informed.

26

27 MADAME CHAIR BERNS: Any further
28 questions from OSM.

29

30 (No comments)

31

32 MADAME CHAIR BERNS: Hearing none, I'm
33 going to backtrack a little bit further in time for us.

34

35 (Laughter)

36

37 MADAME CHAIR BERNS: We're going to go
38 back and cover Item No. 6 under ADF&G, the ACR No. 6,
39 Alitak, the Board of Fish proposal.

40

41 MS. DEATHERAGE: Madame Chair. The ACR
42 No. 6 is different from Proposal 194.

43

44 MADAME CHAIR BERNS: I apologize, okay,
45 James Jackson. They're two separate, so we're going to
46 address Alitak and then we're going to go on to 194.

47

48 MS. DEATHERAGE: To clarify, Madame
49 Chair, you're going to do ACR No. 6 and then go on to
50 194.

1 MADAME CHAIR BERNS: That is correct.

2

3 MR. JACKSON: Madame Chair, hello
4 again. My name is James Jackson. I'm the area
5 management biologist for salmon in -- I'm the area
6 management biologist here.

7

8 ACR 6 is an agenda change request put
9 before the Board of Fish for the October meeting coming
10 up here to amend the Alitak District Salmon Management
11 Plan to achieve sockeye salmon escapement goal mid-
12 points for Upper Station and Frazer Lakes and limit the
13 escapement of jack sockeye salmon into Frazer Lake to
14 no more than 10 percent of the total Frazer Lake
15 sockeye salmon escapement.

16

17 This ACR seeks to change the Alitak
18 District Salmon Management Plan, however, it has no
19 specific changes requested or suggested.

20

21 And just to give everybody kind of a
22 little background, in the 2014 Board meeting there was
23 several changes made to the Alitak District Management
24 Plan, the staggered fishing periods were suspended to
25 more effectively pulse fish to Upper Station. The Dog
26 Salmon Flat section could be opened before Frazer Lake
27 escapement goal was exceeded. The Dog Salmon Flat
28 section could also be opened independent of traditional
29 fishing areas based on achieving Frazer Lake sockeye
30 salmon escapement goal. In addition the Upper Station
31 OEG was changed from 25,000 fish to 30,000 fish but
32 only if the Department determined that the early -- or
33 the Frazer escapement goal was going to be exceeded.
34 And the Department also raised the Upper Station early
35 run BEG to 43,000 to 93,000 fish.

36

37 Additional comments. Neither the early
38 nor late run Upper Station sockeye salmon stocks were
39 designated as a stock of concern. Early run sockeye
40 salmon BEG was not met in 2014 but the OEG was. And
41 the BEG was achieved in 2015 with over 54,000 sockeye
42 salmon counted through the weir. Late run sockeye
43 salmon BEG for Upper Station has been achieved in both
44 2014 and '15. With regard to jacks, jack sockeye
45 salmon are not considered part of the escapement if the
46 jack sockeye salmon escapement portion is greater than
47 10 percent at Dog Salmon weir.

48

49 Do you guys have any questions.

50

1 MADAME CHAIR BERNS: Any questions or
2 comments for Mr. Jackson.

3
4 MR. SIMEONOFF: Madame Chair, this is
5 Mitch.

6
7 MADAME CHAIR BERNS: Yes, go ahead,
8 Mitch.

9
10 MR. SIMEONOFF: Yes. The jacks in
11 Upper Station are they -- what are they doing with
12 them, are they just letting them go, are they going to
13 kill them off like they said they were going to.

14
15 MR. JACKSON: Through the Chair. Mr.
16 Simeonoff.

17
18 The jacks are having problems at
19 Frazer, not Upper Station. Almost every run of sockeye
20 salmon has a certain proportion of jacks that show up,
21 they always do. Frazer's the one that has a very
22 strange two year on, two year off high jack proportion
23 problem. And in the years where we have those high
24 jack numbers essentially the Department says, listen
25 we're not going to count those as escapement, they're
26 all males and we basically just wait until some big
27 fish go up and use that for our escapement.

28
29 In 2014 and 2015 through direction from
30 the Director of Fish and Game, we also instituted a
31 jack culling project. Because those jacks do come in
32 in such large numbers, in both years we did cull a
33 certain number of those jacks at Frazer. And I have to
34 say that the overall jack percentage for the last two
35 years in comparison to the high jack years has been
36 lower than what we've seen in the past. So it looks
37 like naturally those number of jacks are also -- or the
38 proportion of jacks are coming down. And then on top
39 of that we also, like I said, cull a certain number of
40 them. And it's been working with varying degrees of
41 success. Last year it worked a little better than this
42 year. This year we had a truly phenomenal pink
43 escapement at Dog Salmon River and our jack trap was
44 less than effective because pinks, which were very
45 small, made it into the jack trap as well as jacks.

46
47 MR. SIMEONOFF: Okay, thank you. I
48 meant to say Frazer, I'm sorry.

49
50 MADAME CHAIR BERNS: Thank you, Mitch.

1 Do we have any further questions.

2

3 Mr. Holmes.

4

5 MR. HOLMES: As far as the effects on
6 subsistence, it sounds like this whole effort, does
7 that need our endorsement because the hopes are is that
8 we'll be seeing a little better production at Upper
9 Station, which is a concern for our Council.

10

11 MR. JACKSON: Through the Chair. Mr.
12 Holmes. The ACR really actually, it doesn't have any
13 -- suggest any specific changes, it just says that they
14 would like to change the plan.

15

16 And just as a point of clarification,
17 an ACR is an out of cycle Board proposal. In other
18 words, every three years you're supposed to have Board
19 proposals, that's what the -- the regular Kodiak cycle,
20 this is an out of cycle Board proposal. And the Board
21 of Fish will only take it up if they think there is a
22 conservation reason or to correct an error in
23 regulation or some unforeseen problem that has come
24 about. And we don't even know if the Board's going to
25 take it up yet. The Board's going to read this and our
26 Staff comments in two or three weeks and then decide
27 whether they want to bring it up some time this winter,
28 and later on we'll be able to have Staff comments,
29 whether we're for or against it.

30

31 MR. HOLMES: So do you need our support
32 at this point on it or just kind of let it ride as
33 informational.

34

35 MR. JACKSON: Through the Chair. Mr.
36 Holmes. We're completely neutral on ACRs right now.

37

38 MADAME CHAIR BERNS: Thank you very
39 much. Do we have any further questions in regards to
40 this for Mr. Jackson.

41

42 (No comments)

43

44 MADAME CHAIR BERNS: Seeing none, thank
45 you very much.

46

47 MR. JACKSON: Thank you, Madame Chair.

48

49 MADAME CHAIR BERNS: Okay. Now, we're
50 going to go on to Proposal for the Board of Fish, 194.

1 MR. STICHERT: Yeah, hi, this is Mark
2 Stichert with Fish and Game. Sorry I had to step out
3 of the meeting here this morning, or this afternoon.
4 But Proposal 194 concerns the pollock trawl fishery
5 that occurs in Unalaska Bay adjacent to the port of
6 Dutch Harbor.

7
8 This proposal -- I guess I'll preface
9 my comments by saying this proposal will be first taken
10 up by the Board at their February 2016 meeting but they
11 won't be taking any action on it until the March 2016
12 meeting, given we're a ways out and working on the
13 analysis for a number of other proposals for meetings
14 that occur between now and then. The Department hasn't
15 initiated the Staff comments or have any analysis on
16 this proposal specifically yet. However, this issue
17 has been in front of the Board on a number of occasions
18 in the recent past. They addressed it in 2010 and an
19 almost identical version of it in 2013 so I can
20 reference some of the background and comments from
21 those meetings.

22
23 I think the proposal also did a pretty
24 good job explaining what it is they want to do.

25
26 Currently the Unalaska Bay, the entire
27 Unalaska Bay is closed to pollock trawling under
28 Federal regulations from January 1st through June 10th.
29 During the 2013 meeting, I believe, or 2010, the last
30 time the Board brought this up, the Board heard from
31 users, mostly recreational subsistence users that they
32 were using the bay for their purposes primarily in the
33 summertime so at that time the Board extended that
34 Federal closure beyond June 10th so the bay is closed
35 now through June 31st. However, beginning August 1st
36 and that runs through November 1st, which is the
37 regulatory closure of the pollock season in the Bering
38 Sea, portions of Unalaska Bay remain open to pollock
39 trawling, so like about half of the bay remains open to
40 trawling after August 1st. This proposal is
41 petitioning the Board to make that closure of the
42 entire bay permanent year-round.

43
44 Again, this information is a little bit
45 dated but in terms of a little bit of data on the
46 fishery itself. From 2003 to 2012, so in those 10
47 years an average of 10 pollock trawl vessels operate
48 inside the bay. The waters in question, on average,
49 every year they harvest around 4.5 million pounds of
50 pollock, so given the size of the Bering Sea pollock

1 fishery there's a relatively limited amount of effort
2 inside the bay but certainly again somewhere around 4.5
3 to 5 million pounds a year annually. In terms of the
4 associated bycatch from those pelagic trawl vessels
5 inside Unalaska Bay, Pacific cod and Atka Mackerel are
6 the two species of groundfish that are most commonly
7 harvested as bycatch.

8

9 With that said, there are, on average,
10 for that 10 year period up to 2012 about 8,000 --
11 between eight and 9,000 of Pacific herring are caught
12 as bycatch, about 1,100 Pacific halibut -- 1,100 pounds
13 of Pacific halibut are caught as bycatch and also
14 somewhere around 7,500 pounds of salmon are caught as
15 bycatch and that bycatch is mostly from chum salmon and
16 chinook salmon.

17

18 So that summarizes kind of the previous
19 amounts of -- in a nutshell, from the last time this
20 proposal came up and I think I'll turn it over to you
21 and be happy to answer any questions.

22

23 MADAME CHAIR BERNS: Thank you. I'm
24 going to turn the floor over to Mr. Holmes, he brought
25 this to our attention and had some questions in regards
26 to this.

27

28 MR. HOLMES: Yeah, Madame Chair. I
29 think that I would suggest that our Council support
30 this closure. It was brought up by a former Council
31 member, Vince Tutiakoff, a couple of times and he has
32 voiced concern about the impact out there on, not only
33 subsistence caught fish and Atka mackerel and herring
34 and things that people ate but also chum and coho
35 salmon, possibly, although they didn't identify any
36 coho.

37

38 The new revised opening from August 1
39 to November, the runs out there, when I was working as
40 the Aleutian salmon biologist, you really hardly -- you
41 know, the pinks come in late and the coho do too and
42 there's a very small chum run at the head of the -- of
43 Captain's Bay there at Unalaska and they really don't
44 have much of an opportunity out there. And I think
45 just in supporting our former colleague I'd like to say
46 that we would support that closure based on the
47 information given by the Unalaska Native Fishermen's
48 Association.

49

50 Thank you, Madame Chair.

1 MADAME CHAIR BERNS: Mr. Schwantes.

2

3 MR. SCHWANTES: Yeah, Madame Chair. I
4 guess I'm in opposite of that. I don't feel that we
5 should support this.

6

7 I don't feel that, from my read of
8 this, this is not a subsistence issue, it's more of a
9 commercial fisheries issue. And I see some real
10 contradictions in this proposal. It talks about the
11 waters being opened from September 1st to November 1st
12 for the trawl fleet, and then it says; it appears that
13 the game are being scattered or driven from the bay
14 coincidentally as the trawl fishery is happening. And
15 it talks about a small commercial fishery or
16 increasingly required to leave the bay, but then it
17 says, most of the trawling occurs when other user
18 groups are using the bay during the summer and fall
19 dislocating the smaller boats. And then later on it
20 says, we considered limiting all commercial fishing
21 vessels under 35 feet in length. But so few of them
22 are fishing inside the bay that their impacts are not
23 nearly that of the trawl fleet.

24

25 So it's just -- to me, this seems like
26 more of an issue between large boat and small boat and
27 there's certainly some contradictions in there. I
28 don't see that they've spelled this out as a
29 subsistence issue myself.

30

31 MADAME CHAIR BERNS: Rebecca.

32

33 MS. SKINNER: I also have concerns with
34 supporting this proposal at this time, particularly
35 lacking ADF&G Staff feedback on it.

36

37 One of the things I wonder in this bay,
38 I mean for me to have a good understanding of potential
39 impacts that might come from this, I'd like to hear
40 more about the pollock impact on other species. I've
41 heard a fair amount of testimony in different contexts
42 that pollock are kind of voracious eaters and they do
43 impact the existence of other species that people might
44 want to harvest in areas. I understand the concerns
45 with trawl as a fishery but if there's a no harvest of
46 pollock and pollock overrun the bay, I don't know that
47 that's a desired outcome either. But without more
48 information I would have a hard time assessing that.

49

50 I -- along those lines to put a

1 proposal into the Board of Fish you can, and, in fact,
2 this happens at Board of Fish meetings, you can write
3 it on a piece of paper and hand it to the Board of
4 Fish, so it doesn't mean that this -- I'm not saying
5 it's not well researched and well thought out, but I
6 don't know if it was or not because anybody can write
7 up a proposal, without having a Staff recommendation or
8 some sort of feedback relating back to the data related
9 to any of these fisheries in that area, I do have
10 concerns about supporting this proposal right now. I
11 think it's, for me, premature, and I just don't have
12 enough information.

13

14 MR. STICHERT: And this is Mark
15 Stichert with Fish and Game. I can say on the proposal
16 from 2013, it's nearly identical to the one in front of
17 you now. We were -- we view this as largely an
18 allocation issue between different user groups,
19 therefore, the Department was neutral on the proposal
20 as we don't have enough information in terms of any
21 biological consequence outside of identifying what
22 harvest have occurred in the fishery in the past.

23

24 MADAME CHAIR BERNS: Thank you. Do we
25 have additional comments, questions. Go ahead, Coral.

26

27 MS. CHERNOFF: This is Coral Chernoff.
28 I just have a question, do we know how many trawl boats
29 are operating in this area.

30

31 MR. STICHERT: We do. Again, this is
32 Mark Stichert. So, again, I'm just referencing the
33 last Staff comments from this proposal in 2013.

34

35 For the 10 year period between 2003 and
36 2012 the number of vessels range from a low of four
37 vessels in 2012 to a high of 19 vessels in 2004, and
38 these are boats that specifically harvested cod inside
39 the area in question. The 10 year average is 10
40 vessels. And, again, I don't have the 2013/14 or '15
41 yet because we haven't started it, but it looks like
42 it's been fairly consistent around, you know, five to
43 15 boats.

44

45 MADAME CHAIR BERNS: Mr. Schwantes.

46

47 MR. SCHWANTES: Yeah. Another
48 question, I think when you were talking earlier
49 regarding this proposal, you said that it wouldn't come
50 up at this cycle but that it wouldn't be heard until

1 later; is that correct?

2

3 MR. STICHERT: Yeah, so, yes, mostly
4 correct. It is in this Board cycle. Right now the
5 Board of Fish will first take this proposal up in mid-
6 February at the South Alaska Peninsula and Aleutian
7 Islands Finfish Board meeting, however, they're going
8 to take public testimony and consider the merits of the
9 proposal but they are not going to take final action on
10 it until mid-March, so we're about six months out until
11 they take final action on this proposal.

12

13 MADAME CHAIR BERNS: Thank you.
14 Rebecca, did you have a comment.

15

16 MS. SKINNER: I have a question. Mark,
17 when you answered the question about how many trawl
18 boats operate in the area, I thought you said boats
19 were in there fishing cod, were they in there fishing
20 cod or fishing pollock.

21

22 MR. STICHERT: Explicitly fishing
23 pollock. So these exact waters are already closed for
24 bottom trawl so it's already prohibited to do bottom
25 trawling for cod, it's only open for pelagic, you know,
26 basically pollock fishing. And that's generally
27 consistent with most State waters, you know,
28 particularly on Kodiak here, most State waters inside
29 three miles are closed to hard on bottom trawling but
30 they all are open to mid-water pollock trawling, so
31 that's fairly consistent with what you see around here
32 as well as out on the Peninsula.

33

34 MADAME CHAIR BERNS: Thank you. Do we
35 have further questions.

36

37 MR. HOLMES: Call for question.

38

39 MADAME CHAIR BERNS: So we had a motion
40 on the table from Mr. Holmes from yesterday -- please
41 refresh my memory, I just have some notes here.

42

43 MR. HOLMES: Basically it was to
44 endorse the proposal from the Unalaska Native
45 Fishermen's Association, Proposal 194, that would close
46 the inner part of Unalaska Bay during the season that
47 it's open when the local salmon are coming in and don't
48 really need to go into detail but just endorsing their
49 proposal. And so it'd be yes or no.

50

1 Thank you.
2
3 MADAME CHAIR BERNS: So we have a
4 motion on the table, do we have a second.
5
6 MR. SHELIKOFF: Second.
7
8 MADAME CHAIR BERNS: Seconded by
9 Antone. All those in favor, please signify by saying
10 aye.
11
12 MR. HOLMES: Aye.
13
14 MR. SHELIKOFF: Aye.
15
16 MADAME CHAIR BERNS: We have two in
17 favor, all opposed. Aye.
18
19 MR. SCHWANTES: Aye.
20
21 MS. SKINNER: Aye.
22
23 MS. CHERNOFF: Aye.
24
25 MADAME CHAIR BERNS: On the phone,
26 Mitch and Della.
27
28 MR. SIMEONOFF: Aye.
29
30 MS. TRUMBLE: Aye.
31
32 MADAME CHAIR BERNS: Are you -- is that
33 an aye to oppose?
34
35 MR. SIMEONOFF: In favor.
36
37 MADAME CHAIR BERNS: I didn't
38 understand.
39
40 REPORTER: He's in favor.
41
42 MADAME CHAIR BERNS: I'm sorry, Mitch,
43 were you in favor or opposing, which was your vote?
44
45 And Della.
46
47 MR. SIMEONOFF: In favor of the vote.
48
49 MADAME CHAIR BERNS: And Della.
50

1 MS. TRUMBLE: In favor, aye.
2
3 MADAME CHAIR BERNS: The vote was four
4 to four. The motion fails. Thank you, very much.
5
6 And thank you, Mr. Stichert, for your
7 time.
8
9 MR. STICHERT: You're welcome, thank
10 you.
11
12 MADAME CHAIR BERNS: Okay. With that,
13 we are going to move along. We did move our annual
14 report and we're going to address that at this time,
15 and you'll find that on Page 99 in your booklet.
16
17 (Pause)
18
19 MADAME CHAIR BERNS: And I'm going to
20 turn the floor over to Karen Deatherage.
21
22 MS. DEATHERAGE: Thank you, Madame
23 Chair. If you could just give me a minute to get set
24 up here.
25
26 (Pause)
27
28 MS. DEATHERAGE: Madame Chair. Council
29 members. As you can see on the screen, it's a little
30 difficult, but, I've set up a template for the annual
31 report.
32
33 The annual report from this Council
34 meeting would reflect activities for the fiscal year
35 2015 or for the year 2015. The way that we've been
36 asked to set them up, even though it is at your
37 discretion, is to go ahead and define the issues that
38 you had, and then also to provide a recommendation,
39 whether that be regulatory or policy or for more
40 information or analysis. You have a copy of the annual
41 report and reply in your book as well as a supplement
42 if you wanted to refer to those issues that you brought
43 up in the 2014 report.
44
45 And, Madame Chair, and the Council,
46 what I'd like to propose is that you can go ahead and
47 share what issues you would like to have in your
48 report, as a draft, I will type them or capture as much
49 information as possible on this, but it will be very
50 drafty, and then we'll go ahead, when I get back, we'll

1 clean it up and send it out to you all for review.

2

3 (Pause)

4

5 MS. SKINNER: Can I start with an
6 issue.

7

8 MADAME CHAIR BERNES: Yes, please,
9 Rebecca, I'm still trying to find my paper here.

10

11 MS. SKINNER: All right. So these were
12 the things that I've written down throughout the
13 meeting and I guess I'll just list them and then if we
14 decide they're not appropriate for the report, I'm fine
15 with that.

16

17 One of my categories was the OSM
18 Fisheries Monitoring funding review process, and so I'm
19 making two separate issues. That's one issue. The
20 other one will be supporting the specific proposals
21 from this RAC's region. But under the funding review
22 process, discussing fund -- I'm trying to remember what
23 I meant here. I had funding priorities. So I think
24 just the process of how we're asked to respond to the
25 priority list that we get, without having the full
26 proposal, without really having much structure to go
27 through our own prioritization of the potential
28 projects, when you're looking at a limited pool of
29 funding and realizing that some of those projects might
30 not get funding. The other component was admin area
31 versus RAC area, that seemed to generate a fair amount
32 of challenge in the discussions. So we're in the
33 Southwest Region, but our RAC is not the only RAC in
34 that area. So that was part of the challenge. And
35 then maybe either a sub-bullet under that, or another
36 bullet would be a process that would allow us to talk
37 to the -- I guess the Bristol Bay RAC so that we don't
38 feel that we're just promoting our own projects without
39 regard to theirs. So it feels like a more, maybe
40 collaborative partnership.

41

42 And then as a, kind of a separate
43 issue, but related to the funding process, I think we
44 should specifically support the Kodiak -- well, I had
45 Kodiak proposals, but the Kodiak and Western Aleutians
46 proposals and include some language as to why we are
47 supporting those proposals so that there's actually
48 information that the Federal Subsistence Board can look
49 at when they're trying to decide which proposals to
50 fund.

1 As another bullet point I had Refuge
2 closure regulations. I know we already passed a motion
3 on this but I think there was a lot of dialogue and
4 comment that the Council made that I would like to have
5 captured in the annual report. And I know early on, I
6 think Della had made some suggestions about seeking
7 more feedback from the statewide RACs before the regs
8 were rolled out to the public. So I heard that as, you
9 know, trying to get more input from some of the, kind
10 of organized stakeholder groups like the RACs because
11 it didn't sound like there was much stakeholder buy-in
12 from the discussions here. But specifically there was
13 a lot of, I think, agreement to keep the 12 month
14 limitation, not to roll it up to three years.

15
16 My first bullet point was Refuge deer
17 biologists, biologist position. I think at some point
18 we had expressed support to maybe backfill McCrae's
19 position or support funding for the Refuge biologist.

20
21 And then my last bullet point that I
22 wrote yesterday was emperor geese, anticipating that we
23 would address that again, but I'm not sure if -- all
24 right, I see nods down the table, so emperor geese and
25 other people can fill in what the actual content of
26 that would be.

27
28 MADAME CHAIR BERNS: Yes, go ahead,
29 Tom.

30
31 MR. SCHWANTES: Yeah, I think the
32 emperor geese one is one we want to touch on again,
33 considering that their proposal is only to harvest
34 3,500 animals and that number of animals is already
35 being harvested illegally. So my concern is, if we're
36 going to have a season we need to make sure that it's
37 done in a proper way so that the Kodiak/Aleutians gets
38 a share of those birds. And I think that's something
39 that we should put in there.

40
41 I also agree, wholeheartedly, with
42 information, the bullet points on the Refuge
43 regulations. In fact, I had written some up on that
44 this morning. But this afternoon, I just found out
45 that -- I think we were kind of misled yesterday in US
46 Fish and Wildlife's presentation in the fact that I
47 just found out today, this regulation is already in
48 Washington, D.C., to be approved.

49
50 Thank you.

1 MADAME CHAIR BERNS: Rebecca.

2

3 MS. SKINNER: I remembered what my
4 bullet point was about -- under the OSM Fisheries
5 Monitoring funding. By funding priorities I meant we
6 -- if we know what some of our priorities are right now
7 we should include them in our annual report to make
8 sure that -- an understanding that the next funding
9 cycle won't come up for -- I think until 2016, maybe we
10 can capture some of those today even if it's only for
11 our own -- to remind us later down the road what we
12 thought our priority needs would be.

13

14 Thank you.

15

16 MADAME CHAIR BERNS: Yes, go ahead.

17

18 MR. RIVARD: Don Rivard with OSM. A
19 couple of things.

20

21 You can always list that with us, we
22 will note them. Anything that has to do with the FRMP
23 projects, we should be noting that directly and taking
24 that back. It doesn't need to go into your annual
25 report. I mean you could still do it. But two things,
26 if it's FRMP we should, as Staff, be noting down any
27 priority information needs, it doesn't have to go in
28 your annual report. Nor does anything that can be
29 handled through the regulatory process. We can still
30 note that down that you want to do something.

31

32 But this is kind of -- the annual
33 report is for issues outside of those two processes.

34

35 MS. SKINNER: Yeah. So my suggestion
36 on the regulatory change to the Refuge is because there
37 was very strong feelings across the Council, so it
38 seemed like -- and I would look for other feedback, but
39 it seemed like there were strong enough feelings that
40 people might want to have it in there.

41

42 For the funding priorities, to me, it's
43 important to have that in here almost as an indication
44 of the Council, how important these are, so that we
45 make sure to identify and remember to do this regularly
46 because if we don't get these funding priorities -- if
47 we don't identify them and pass them forward we're
48 really shortchanging ourselves as far as getting funded
49 on some of the proposals. So that's why I personally
50 think it's important to have it in our annual report.

1 But I do understand your comments.

2

3 Thank you.

4

5 MADAME CHAIR BERNES: Mr. Holmes.

6

7 MR. HOLMES: I would concur with Becky
8 on that.

9

10 And, you know, I do think it's most
11 important to put forth our discussions on needing to
12 have an administrative review on how that's handled
13 because I asked one of the Staff, I lost the numbers
14 but I did have them here a few minute ago, and, you
15 know, I always thought that Bristol Bay had more
16 subsistence users than we did and perhaps that, you
17 know, Don's comment was, they got more proposals for
18 there, but if you look at it, it seemed to me out of
19 the \$3 million, it was about 2.3 million for Bristol
20 Bay because they got more proposals in and about 700-
21 something for our region and, yet, our population and
22 our subsistence use is probably greater. I remember
23 when we had our discussions on whether we were rural or
24 not, our community came up with this immense list of
25 numbers of species that we use. We don't get the big
26 marine mammals but, you know, once you start looking at
27 what doesn't get reported, we consume tons of stuff
28 here. And so, you know, we'd just like to get a little
29 more equity in the review.

30

31 And I thank you, Don, because I think
32 we're going to do a hell of a lot more discussing and
33 making sure that these bullet points that we're coming
34 up with of concern to our Council get out to folks
35 looking for funds because I see that Fish and Game's
36 coming short, Fish and Wildlife's coming short, tribal
37 grant monies are coming short, community infrastructure
38 at the city and Borough, and so we're going to need to
39 get a lot of people working together to get little bits
40 of money all over. And I would assume if we can
41 recruit funding for some important projects, you know,
42 if you're having overlapping of two or three government
43 groups then that gives a -- like you were suggesting, a
44 little more impetus for it.

45

46 And so I think we'd like to put that
47 in. I think we should have a complimentary discussion
48 in there and appreciation for the explanations that we
49 got, but here's a couple of thoughts that might enhance
50 the process. Something of that kind of verbiage.

1 MADAME CHAIR BERNS: Mr. Schwantes.

2

3 MR. SCHWANTES: I guess one of the
4 things that I would like to see in there, too, is that
5 the changes that were made were in -- in the past the
6 RACs had more input into those funding proposals and
7 now it seems like we've been kind of taken out of that.
8 But I think what you explained, this year, that was
9 changed, and so we have less input into those programs
10 than we used to have. We used to have somebody sitting
11 there at the table and now we no longer do.

12

13 MADAME CHAIR BERNS: Yes, go ahead, Mr.
14 Rivard.

15

16 MR. RIVARD: Well, I don't think you
17 have a less of a role than you've ever had. The only
18 thing that really has -- the fundamental thing that has
19 changed, as I pointed out yesterday, is that, it used
20 to come in front of you and the TRC recommendation was
21 fund or do not fund and we're no longer doing that.
22 We're just -- the way it's being done is you see the
23 rankings. So potentially all of them could be funded.
24 There's no recommendation to do not fund any of them at
25 this stage, they're still in the running is what I'm
26 saying. So your role, and you did it very well
27 yesterday, was to discuss these things and give your
28 thoughts and your recommendations and your insights
29 into what you think is important to do in your region.

30

31 MADAME CHAIR BERNS: Thank you.

32

33 MR. SCHWANTES: Thank you.

34

35 MR. HOLMES: Madame Chair. I think
36 part of what Tom's referring to is many years ago when
37 OSM Was first getting started they actually had a
38 technical review person from each RAC. I wasn't on it
39 because I was doing too many other things. But I think
40 for a year or two we did have that. And I really
41 appreciate the dialogue that we had here, Don, on where
42 the whole Council reviews it because depending on who
43 the Chair person is, everyone has different reflections
44 and so I think we've made a really good start on this
45 and I really appreciate your time you devoted to it.

46

47 MADAME CHAIR BERNS: I'm not sure if
48 everyone agrees but I think that I heard a bit from
49 Kodiak and I know that they're having their sea otter
50 surveys as well but if we want to mention about concern

1 with sea otters -- sea otter population control in
2 relation to the decline of shellfish and other
3 subsistence resources and also the spread of, you know,
4 sea otters being seen in areas where they haven't been
5 seen previously, as Mitch had said, they come into the
6 south end of the island and it was also shared here on
7 the north end, that subsistence users are having a more
8 difficult time with getting their crab and shellfish.

9

10 Rebecca.

11

12 MS. SKINNER: So I don't disagree with
13 having sea otters as one of our issues. For me, I'd
14 like to see more information. I believe at the last
15 meeting we received some report on sea otters. I think
16 there was reference to a survey that had been done in
17 Womens Bay but we didn't have the data yet and then I
18 don't remember seeing the data in our book this time.
19 So I think an issue -- or to me, if it said south and
20 north end subsistence issue -- subsistence users are
21 having difficulty getting shellfish and, you know, we'd
22 like more data or exploration of the potential
23 relationship to sea otter population. Because that --
24 I mean I would really like to see that before we start
25 talking about population control because I'm not even
26 sure what the population is based on what we've gotten.

27

28 MADAME CHAIR BERNS: I agree. And I do
29 believe, if I remember from the last meeting, it was a
30 survey which was done along the west side of the
31 island; is that correct, because I know that Larsen Bay
32 had also weighed in on their issues with seeing an
33 abundance of sea otters over the past several years,
34 and also having difficulties with getting crab and
35 clams also in their area.

36

37 Go ahead.

38

39 MR. SCHWANTES: Madame Chair.

40

41 MR. HOLMES: Well.....

42

43 MR. SCHWANTES: Madame Chair. I
44 believe that's correct and I believe one of the issues
45 that Johnny Reft addressed was that now we're seeing
46 that otter population moving down the east side and
47 affecting the crab and shellfish populations down that
48 side of the island as well.

49

50 MADAME CHAIR BERNS: Yes, Karen.

1 MS. DEATHERAGE: In looking at the --
2 Madame Chair, in looking at the Kodiak report at this
3 meeting it appears there was an Archipelago wide survey
4 done but it doesn't get specific to areas. the other
5 thing, though, that I noticed, that you could put in
6 your annual report, is that, you appreciate the marking
7 and the tagging, because that's going to help give more
8 information on where these otters go and they've
9 trained new people to be able to do that.

10

11 Thank you.

12

13 MADAME CHAIR BERNS: Thank you. Coral.

14

15 MS. CHERNOFF: I guess on that note,
16 too, it would be nice to see some of the data, with the
17 marking and tagging, if we could have reports on where
18 those sea otters were taken because when we tag, we do
19 say, you know, this sea otter was by itself, or it was
20 in a pod of 100 or in a pod of 20. So that would be
21 good information, maybe, for us to have. As well, as
22 if we're going to tie the shellfish issues to the sea
23 otter, also maybe we can get some data on how many
24 people are getting shellfish -- I mean because if
25 nobody's even fishing for crab, you know, you have to
26 have permits to do that, if no one's even fishing for
27 crab in Womens Bay, how can we take that information
28 and really give it any weight and talk about how the
29 sea otters are eating everything if no one, in fact,
30 has, say, fished there in five years, or, you know,
31 things like that.

32

33 Just getting more data so we're going
34 somewhere with this conversation.

35

36 Thank you.

37

38 MR. SHELIKOFF: That's a good idea.

39

40 MADAME CHAIR BERNS: Mr. Holmes, were
41 you.....

42

43 MR. HOLMES: I think Coral hit on a
44 good point. But I think if we turn that discussion in
45 reverse we can go and get some data from the local Fish
46 and Game, because most people I know have totally given
47 up on fishing crab in this neck of the woods. You used
48 to be able to go out and get -- I remember I used to be
49 able to fill my canoe in 15 minutes with two ring nets
50 -- but I think we could ask the Fish and Game for their

1 historic records for Chiniak Bay, that's probably as
2 close as they're going to get, but we could make a note
3 saying that a large portion of this catch of king crab,
4 tanner crab, dungeness used to occur off -- in the
5 Federal waters area of the Maritimes and the Buskin
6 River and Womens Bay, and now there's no commercial
7 fishery, there's no sportfishery, there's no
8 subsistence fishery there and the one thing that has
9 really increased is obvious predation and from our --
10 observations of our constituents. So I think we can
11 get some information to say this isn't there anymore,
12 rather than not having it.

13

14 Is that rationale.

15

16 MADAME CHAIR BERNS: Coral.

17

18 MS. CHERNOFF: I think to add to that
19 information would be good to get like in different
20 areas around the island, like in Old Harbor where there
21 are no sea otters, what people saying about the crab
22 and the shellfish, are they the same as other people
23 are saying, or just, you know, making notes, really
24 looking at it, I guess. And the more information we
25 have, the more we can really seriously look at it.

26

27 MADAME CHAIR BERNS: And I will say I
28 am a well known harvester animal, also tagger of sea
29 otters and I am contacted -- I know Mitch can speak for
30 his area down in Akhiok, I can only speak from when I
31 was fishing down in that area, but growing up we had
32 never really seen throughout the years that I'd
33 commercial fished around Alitak Bay area, Deadman's, it
34 was very rare to even see a sea otter and then fishing
35 three years ago you'd see them all over the place.
36 Around the east side up into Old Harbor, we value our
37 shellfish and our crab very much so, so that whenever
38 there is a sea otter spotted word spreads very quickly
39 and we take care of that problem.

40

41 (Laughter)

42

43 MADAME CHAIR BERNS: But we have been
44 seeing an increasing number of sea otters in and around
45 the east side and around Sitkalidak Island. I've been
46 contacted from several community members, tribal
47 members from Larsen Bay, Ouzinkie and also Port Lions
48 who have, you know, asked me to come out, you know,
49 please do your hunting this year over in our village
50 because when we go, it's like a -- I take my cousins

1 with me and we just do it up -- do it up right. If
2 you're going to spend the money and spend the time
3 you're just going to -- we get them all at once, and
4 then I usually do it out of Port Lions. But to have
5 other communities contact me saying that this is an
6 issue for them, it really is a concern.

7

8

Mr. Holmes.

9

10 MR. HOLMES: Another bullet would be
11 the Kodiak salmon subsistence concerns on the south end
12 of Kodiak, and then we could grab some of the verbiage
13 we had on discussion of the funding that Don had
14 mentioned, those items, if we could grab some of that
15 discussion and stick in there because, you know, that's
16 an unanswered thing. It looks like the agencies are
17 moving towards supporting that but we need some
18 verbiage that says, yeah, that's a good thing to have
19 that because it's something we've discussed for a long
20 time.

21

22 And I think we could probably go back
23 over our last letter and see how we thought it was
24 answered because I have some scribbles there and I
25 really need to go back over it again. But we can also
26 go back on our previous communications if we disagree
27 on the comments that we were given back. So that might
28 be another bullet, is unanswered questions from
29 previous correspondence.

30

31 MADAME CHAIR BERNS: Yes, Coral.

32

33 MS. CHERNOFF: We were talking about
34 the emperor goose so now that it's looking like we have
35 a hunt, this wasn't really discussed. I know I went to
36 the regional, the AMBCC meeting and they talked about
37 how they're going to allocate that. I would like to
38 see the Subsistence Board, if we can find out if we can
39 be involved at this point. They have to figure out how
40 they're -- first of all how they're going to allocate
41 those statewide, and I did have this -- you know this
42 table that gave initial amounts and, you know, like we
43 were going to get -- the Kodiak area was going to get
44 125 geese, Aleutian/Pribilofs was going to get 316,
45 Yukon Kuskokwim Delta was going to get 1,667; so I
46 would like to see the subsistence -- I would like to
47 see the RAC be involved in, if we can be, to be
48 involved in how those are allocated. And then after
49 that they have to figure out a permitting system. How
50 are they going to permit for those limited amount of

1 birds and how they're going to monitor them. You know,
2 are we going to spread them out, you know, through the
3 villages, or are all the villages going to get the same
4 amount. Some villages, at the last meeting were saying
5 they didn't even have birds in their area, Ouzinkie, I
6 think was saying they don't even have them, the
7 emperors so are they still going to -- you know,
8 there's things to talk about and be concerned about
9 with allocating. At least we should be concerned for
10 our region and how they're going to permit, who they're
11 going to let hunt for those things.

12
13 It seems like something we should be
14 involved in.

15
16 MADAME CHAIR BERNES: Mr. Holmes.

17
18 MR. HOLMES: Another point was the
19 about the change at Izembek and that they're due to
20 have their airplane replaced. And I think we should
21 have a note in there that we've been given a priority
22 from the regional office that there would be a plane
23 there for surveys. So something that would say that we
24 want to make sure that that commitment is still there,
25 to transfer a plane if a new plane is not available for
26 them, so that they've got a plane in Cold Bay to be --
27 and a pilot, to be able to do the surveys.

28
29 I think that's really keen to give them
30 that support, and we could reference back that we had
31 that commitment at the -- I forget the day of the
32 meeting, but it was a Cold Bay meeting when we were
33 talking about the Unimak EA.

34
35 MS. TRUMBLE: Madame Chair.

36
37 MADAME CHAIR BERNES: Yes, go ahead,
38 Della.

39
40 MS. TRUMBLE: I had to take a call now
41 at the other office and then -- a short one, Pat, can
42 you repeat what you were just talking about in regards
43 to.....

44
45 MADAME CHAIR BERNES: Pat, your mic.
46 Could you repeat that, we had a mic on and had you cut
47 out, I'm sorry.

48
49 MS. TRUMBLE: I'm sorry. I had to step
50 into the other office and take a call and then another

1 call here, and I kind of caught the end of what Pat was
2 saying, can he repeat that in regards to Unimak and
3 Cold Bay.

4

5 MR. HOLMES: Roger that.

6

7 I was wanting to mention that we had
8 gotten support some years ago, because of the
9 importance of the South Peninsula and Unimak caribou
10 decline, radical decline, that's a good adjective, that
11 we had been given support from the regional office that
12 they would have a plane available so they could do
13 their surveys because they have missed surveys without
14 having it. They're due to have their plane replaced
15 this year, but if something should happen that that
16 plane doesn't become available, it would seem
17 reasonable that they would transfer a plane from
18 somewhere else on one of the other Refuges or from
19 Anchorage, so that there is a plane in Cold Bay to do
20 those surveys.

21

22 MS. TRUMBLE: Thank you.

23

24 MADAME CHAIR BERNS: Do we have any
25 other issues that we would like to have addressed in
26 our annual report.

27

28 MS. TRUMBLE: Madame Chair. I have
29 something.

30

31 MADAME CHAIR BERNS: Yes, go ahead,
32 Della.

33

34 MS. TRUMBLE: The first one, I think,
35 is the location of our meetings. There are a lot of
36 people not happy that this meeting is not in Cold Bay
37 where it usually is, or at least within this Aleutian
38 region. And in talking to Rick a couple of -- Koso --
39 a couple of weeks ago, he had planned on trying to get
40 on the ferry and going and -- because I think he was in
41 Cold Bay or he might still be in Cold Bay, but his
42 concern is, you know, when you're spending basically
43 70-some thousand dollars to move eight caribou off of
44 an island in a projected two year budget that money can
45 be used, I think, you know, more productively and
46 trying to help the RACs especially when we've had so
47 many issues that are going on, or ongoing due to global
48 warming. You know, I think when you outweigh one issue
49 over the other, and I think that's a point well taken,
50 but I think definitely need to have our region

1 represented somehow. We're far enough away as it is
2 and this makes it really hard.

3

4 That's the first one.

5

6 The second one, I think, I brought it
7 up with the Refuge manager and it has to do with the
8 position of the regional liaison. And just listening
9 to the discussion like around that you just had in
10 regards to Kodiak, what communities doing less and, you
11 know, what are they seeing, and even if it's a part
12 time position that can be supervised by the Refuge
13 management, however, located in one of the communities
14 within a perspective region, in this case, I would say
15 there's a part-time person, or even up to six hours a
16 day, five days a week or a certain amount of hours a
17 week that a position in not only the Aleutians, but
18 Kodiak, I think would be beneficial, and also
19 beneficial for the RACs being able to, I think, getting
20 more information. I mean some of us -- it sometimes
21 gets a little hard for me to be doing things, and I'm
22 working full-time, and things -- I think it would be
23 beneficial, that outreach, plus I think it's good
24 capacity building.

25

26 The other thing along those lines, I
27 think, you know, when we talked about marine mammals
28 and things and what they're seeing, especially like the
29 walrus around Unimak and, you know, last year, and then
30 continued this year with what they're seeing, also I
31 think up in the north side, Port Moeller has seen a lot
32 more sea otters, killer whales and sea lions, which are
33 not -- you usually don't see a lot of, and those are
34 things somebody, you know, I think working with
35 organizations to make sure that -- it's important as we
36 see these changes going on within our perspective
37 regions.

38

39 But those are, right off the top of my
40 head, a couple other issues.

41

42 MS. DEATHERAGE: Council. Member
43 Della, through the Chair. I do want to address the
44 issue of our meeting this go around.

45

46 As you know we were originally
47 scheduled to meet in Adak, and we did find the costs
48 prohibitive to be able to go out there, and not just
49 for the Council members, but we also need to consider
50 travel for the Staff members that need to be able to

1 report to you. And so that was an issue. But we did
2 then -- I did a cost analysis for going to Cold Bay,
3 which, at the time was going to be accepted but there
4 was no space in Cold Bay when I called to be able to
5 provide lodging for our members, as well as Staff and
6 agency representatives. I think it's a busy time of
7 year there for some hunting and we just couldn't find
8 the space. And then, at Pat's suggestion we tried Old
9 Harbor, and, once again, we did have some difficulties
10 finding accommodations for our members, and the costs
11 were high.

12

13 So I think that's -- one thing to at
14 least keep in mind that we do look at going out to some
15 of these communities, the timing is important, because
16 if hunting is going on and the guides have people in
17 there, it's going to be tough for us to try to get
18 accommodations.

19

20 Thank you.

21

22 MR. HOLMES: Madame Chair.

23

24 MS. TRUMBLE: Madame Chair.

25

26 MADAME CHAIR BERNS: Go ahead, Della.

27

28 MS. TRUMBLE: I realize that may have
29 been the case but I personally think, not even
30 personally, it's been brought to my attention also, but
31 being able to be in the region is important and more
32 effort, I think, in the fall meeting needs to be made
33 in a lot more timely manner because, you know, gosh if
34 somebody would have gotten on the phone with me I could
35 have helped figure something out in Cold Bay. But
36 we'll keep that in mind for the future.

37

38 MADAME CHAIR BERNS: Thank you. Go
39 ahead, Tom.

40

41 MR. SCHWANTES: Yeah, I guess that
42 would be my comment, too. We're going to decide at
43 this meeting where our fall meeting should be and when,
44 and, certainly I think there's plenty of opportunity.
45 And I'm not trying to pass any blame here, but I'm just
46 saying maybe we need to start earlier and try to get
47 something set up, you know, before the beginning of the
48 year even so that in the future we can hold those
49 meetings where we need to hold them.

50

1 Thank you.

2

3 MADAME CHAIR BERNS: Rebecca.

4

5 MS. SKINNER: I agree with the meeting
6 location comments and I guess I was going back and
7 forth whether that was an appropriate issue to include
8 in this annual report. But with that specific
9 reference to the \$70,000 on caribou removal, if those
10 were Federal agency dollars being spent on that and it
11 really came down in some ways, budgetary constraints, I
12 think it is an appropriate issue to put in our annual
13 report, because you're talking about how to best
14 allocate Federal resources and I do think as a RAC, as
15 an advisory group, there's a tremendous amount of
16 benefit to get out into other communities. And I
17 personally have never been down on the chain and I
18 think for me to go out there would certainly help me to
19 better understand some of the discussions and issues
20 that are coming up outside of the Kodiak region, and
21 that's where my familiarity is, is with Kodiak. But,
22 overall, I do think it's very important for Council
23 members and for Staff to go out into the more rural
24 communities.

25

26 So I support having that in this annual
27 report.

28

29 MADAME CHAIR BERNS: Mr. Holmes.

30

31 MR. HOLMES: Madame Chair. I might
32 suggest some other verbiage when we're talking about
33 like the 70K for caribou, we should also maybe toss in
34 the cost of the fox removal on Chirikof, but maybe
35 before either of those is the probable planned cost for
36 -- wasn't there going to be some big honcho meeting
37 here on Thursday and Friday, a retreat, and what was
38 that going to cost as compared to the difference
39 between us meeting here and us meeting at Adak. Which,
40 you know, it's supposed to be -- I mean it's in our
41 charter that we're supposed to represent the folks of
42 our region.

43

44 And I can recall at one time we had,
45 from the tribe and the corporation of St. Paul Island,
46 they offered to put us up and feed us, everyone that
47 came, for free, if we would just come. And I went and
48 checked on the cost, and that was when Reeves was
49 flying and it was cheaper to go there, by a bunch, than
50 it was to come here to Kodiak. And so sometimes the

1 priorities get changed and, you know, if they can plan
2 a retreat here then it would be really nice for us to
3 at least be able to get 80 miles to Old Harbor
4 sometime, or to Adak or Unalaska.

5
6 And I have one question, on that
7 meeting coming up, the winter meeting, now, is that
8 going to take the place of next spring's meeting, or
9 are we having a spring meeting too?

10
11 MS. DEATHERAGE: Pat, through the
12 Chair. It will take the place of the spring -- it's
13 the winter cycle meeting, and it will take the place of
14 that. I'd like to also make one comment regarding the
15 Aleutian Chain and the Council's having not been able
16 to meet there this year, I did a little historical
17 project to find out if, in fact, the Kodiak/Aleutians
18 Council had ever met on the Aleutian Chain and, in
19 fact, they have not, according to the data that I was
20 able to find. So I thought that was important.

21
22 I also want to say we appreciate --
23 Cold Bay's on the -- I'm sorry -- yeah, we appreciate
24 the idea of sometimes local communities stepping up to
25 help with those costs, I can tell you one of our
26 Councils is going to be meeting in Buckland, and you
27 can be guaranteed there aren't any Princess Hotels
28 there, so the Council members are actually being hosted
29 by local residents, and this is certainly something we
30 can look into.

31
32 MADAME CHAIR BERNS: I would just like
33 to comment on that as well.

34
35 I think that it does take, you know,
36 for these smaller communities within the RAC region, to
37 be able to go out to them, planning needs to happen in
38 advance, I know that our lodges in Old Harbor, they
39 close down -- many of them close down for the winter
40 making lodging very difficult to find for a large group
41 of people, however, if we plan in advance and work with
42 those RAC members, such as Della and myself and Rick
43 and whoever else lives out in these rural locations,
44 and through their contacts as well, through contacts of
45 other RAC members, that you can make those connections
46 in advance and make that something possible.

47
48 I know that Al Cratty, he served on
49 here for several years prior to me and it was always
50 something that he looked forward to, was having the RAC

1 meeting out in Old Harbor, and when we had planned on
2 -- I know that people were just going to be put up in
3 different houses as well, because we didn't have the
4 lodges at that time, and we planned on doing community
5 potlucks and welcoming the RAC into our community
6 because it was something that, you know, we really
7 looked forward to. I think that weather had always
8 played an issue with the fall and the spring travel, as
9 it does within most of Alaska, but we do need to make
10 those efforts, and to try to make those connections in
11 advance. And I know that for Old Harbor, I do have --
12 basically my families kind of own all three lodges
13 there.....

14

15 (Laughter)

16

17 MADAME CHAIR BERNS:so to be able
18 to contact them in advance and know, I mean they can
19 open up their lodges ahead of time, you know, get them
20 dewatered or hold them open a little bit longer just
21 to accommodate us and they're always more than willing
22 to do that because they are members of our community
23 and they are subsistence as well and see this as an
24 important thing to get the outreach out to the
25 villages.

26

27 MR. HOLMES: And, you know, I think the
28 lodges would be fine, I've slept at the school at Old
29 Harbor and Haakenson's old store on occasion because I
30 couldn't get anywhere and there wasn't anywhere to go,
31 or on a fishing boat, and even though I'm getting to be
32 an old grumpy geezer and Tom and I have snoring matches
33 that wake up the whole building, we probably might need
34 a tent separate, but, you know, it's being able to talk
35 to folks and I think that's the message, I hope that
36 goes through to the Staff that's all left.....

37

38 (Laughter)

39

40 MR. HOLMES:that, you know, if
41 you go out and -- and, please make sure that shows up
42 into the minutes somewhere, is that, you know, you go
43 out and you say, geez, what do we need to know, you go
44 out and meet folks. And I know, Kron, when he was the
45 AYK guy, he traveled the whole bloody Yukon and
46 Kuskokwim Rivers bopping in and saying, hi, here's
47 what's up, you know, what do you folks want to say.
48 And, you know, you got to just sit down on a wet log
49 and draw lines in the sand with folks so that you know
50 what their concerns are. Because cultural differences,

1 you're not going to get anybody from Akhiok, other than
2 Mitch, that's going to say he thinks something's wrong,
3 and, you know, it -- it -- you need to be able to get
4 out. And it's just a bit hypocritical and absurd that
5 we couldn't get to Adak when they were planning a
6 retreat here. And I would really like to know who had
7 things set up with guides or going sportfishing after
8 the meeting because that's -- that's really not fair.
9 Not fair. They should be going out themselves to Old
10 Harbor and Larsen Bay and Akhiok and saying, hi, I'm
11 the regional pencil guy from Anchorage, and how are
12 your pencils today.

13

14 Anyway, I'm being silly and tired.
15 But, anyway, we're having a nice chat.

16

17 MADAME CHAIR BERNS: Thank you, Pat.
18 Karen, were you.....

19

20 MS. DEATHERAGE: (Shakes head
21 negatively)

22

23 MADAME CHAIR BERNS: Okay. Do we have
24 any other items we'd like to add to our annual report
25 before we review them.

26

27 (No comments)

28

29 MADAME CHAIR BERNS: Karen, would you
30 mind recapping and going over all of the items that we
31 discussed and then we -- okay, go ahead, Tom.

32

33 MR. SCHWANTES: Not an issue yet.

34

35 (Laughter)

36

37 MR. SCHWANTES: But in the past we've
38 talked about the number of people on our RAC that are
39 all from Kodiak Island, and we've talked about the
40 importance of trying to get members from other areas in
41 the region on the board and I don't know if that's
42 something we want to put in the annual report or not.
43 But it's something we have talked about in the past.

44

45 MADAME CHAIR BERNS: We have discussed
46 that, that I do remember. And has there -- was there
47 outreach done, Karen.

48

49 MS. DEATHERAGE: I believe you changed
50 your charter and it's back in D.C. for approval.

1 REPORTER: Karen, your mic.
2
3 MS. DEATHERAGE: So you discussed it
4 last time.
5
6 REPORTER: Karen, your mic, please.
7
8 MS. DEATHERAGE: Sorry. Madame Chair.
9 The Council did put it in their charter, it still is in
10 the charter, it has not -- that portion has not been
11 approved, but while we are on that subject my
12 understanding is, the selection of alternates for the
13 Councils has been approved.
14
15 MR. HOLMES: All right.
16
17 MS. DEATHERAGE: So -- and the ISC and
18 others, the committee, are going through that process
19 now -- or have gone through that process at the July
20 work session. So you'll be getting information on that
21 when the Secretaries get back to the Council members
22 that were on the nomination, or did put in -- or the
23 applicants that were nominated. So as far as the
24 geographical differences, yes, that is cited in the
25 charter, to try to reach that goal, but it can be
26 difficult.
27
28 MADAME CHAIR BERNS: Mr. Holmes.
29
30 MR. HOLMES: Madame Chair. I was just
31 thinking, you know, beings we hope to achieve this as
32 folks move on or leave the Council, I was thinking, I
33 tried to get a hold of Tom Hoblet when the openings
34 were for this section but he was out cod fishing, and,
35 I think, maybe each one of us should think about
36 somebody that we know out west -- I know the Chignik
37 isn't included so that drops out a lot of Kodiak
38 relations that are in that neck of the woods, but I was
39 thinking I'll probably maybe make a try to call up --
40 or Della's got lots of connections down there in King
41 Cove, you know, Stanley Mack or, you know, Pete Devine,
42 he's a sharp guy, he's on the Migratory Bird thing, I
43 remember his dad and, you know, he might be a good
44 person to get his application in either as an alternate
45 or a future member. I was thinking maybe Larry Dirks,
46 or Suzie Goladoff at Unalaska. Maybe we should give
47 Vince a call and see if there's somebody from his neck
48 of the woods. You know, ask Rick to see who's out at
49 Adak that's a good spokesman that might want to step
50 in, you know, and I think we should all just try to

1 think about some people that are very good speakers and
2 thinkers that are in other parts of our region, to see
3 if they would be interested in applying and encourage
4 them to do so.

5

6 MADAME CHAIR BERNS: Thank you, Pat.
7 On that note as well, gosh, it was in February or March
8 I was in Juneau for work related to my Native
9 Corporation job, but had the privilege to visit with
10 folks with the Aleutian/Pribilofs Island Association as
11 well as the ANC's for that area, and there was -- they
12 did -- I'm not even sure how we got on the topic, but
13 we talked about the RAC and they did express, you know,
14 their little bit of frustration that they didn't have
15 representation and I, you know, explained to them that,
16 you know, it was a concern of the RAC, that we wanted
17 to have a balance and did encourage them to put names
18 forward of individuals that they thought would be
19 fitting for this. And so I'm not sure if they had
20 taken that back with them and had done so but I do
21 agree that it's outreach that needs to be done.

22

23 MS. DEATHERAGE: Madame Chair.

24

25 MADAME CHAIR BERNS: Karen.

26

27 MS. DEATHERAGE: Just to let you know
28 that there are currently four seats that will -- terms
29 that will expire in 2016 so the opportunity for new
30 applicants is certainly there. We have a new
31 nomination packet on line. That nomination packet has
32 also been sent already to the local tribes along the
33 Aleutian Chain and in Kodiak. We try to do as much
34 outreach as we can.

35

36 My personal history with doing
37 outreach, however, is the best people to do it are
38 sitting right in front of me, and that's you all, to
39 try to talk to people about your experiences on the RAC
40 and how important it is to have this body and its
41 decision-making authority.

42

43 Thank you.

44

45 MADAME CHAIR BERNS: Mr. Schwantes.

46

47 MS. TRUMBLE: Madame Chair, this is
48 Della.

49

50 MADAME CHAIR BERNS: Yes, go ahead,

1 Della.

2

3 MS. TRUMBLE: Can you email the
4 packets, the nominating packets to each of us so we can
5 just shoot it off to people ourselves.

6

7 MADAME CHAIR BERNS: Thank you, Della,
8 Karen will do that. Mr. Schwantes.

9

10 MR. SCHWANTES: Yes, I was just going
11 to comment, we not only have four expiring next year
12 but we have three expiring this year and I would
13 certainly encourage all three of them to reapply.
14 They're valuable members and have a great deal of
15 knowledge. I would certainly encourage them to
16 reapply.

17

18 MS. DEATHERAGE: Through the Chair.
19 The three individuals whose terms have expired in 2015,
20 that has already gone through the nomination panel for
21 review. We did get applicants from different areas for
22 that but the process has already ended and the
23 selections have been made, they're in the Secretaries
24 office from my understanding. So this would be for the
25 2016 cycle, which I currently show the seats expiring
26 are Antone Shelikoff, Patrick Holmes, Richard Koso and
27 Sam Rohrer. Those are all expiring in 2016.

28

29 Thank you.

30

31 MADAME CHAIR BERNS: Mr. Holmes.

32

33 MR. HOLMES: Yeah, I'd like to continue
34 for sure and I -- for awhile there I was getting awful
35 tired but I am just so encouraged with our new members
36 that we've added and their ability to look at the
37 situation and I am -- it's just -- this was the most
38 fun meeting for me, even though I seem like I'm dopier
39 than usual. It was really swell. So if you want to,
40 Karen, rerun my old application, you know, I'd like to
41 continue for sure.

42

43 And when we get done with this
44 discussion I have a very small thing. I lost this
45 notes from one of the Kodiak elders and just for the
46 Council's awareness, I don't think it needs to go too
47 far.

48

49 Thank you, Madame Chair.

50

1 MADAME CHAIR BERNS: Go ahead, Coral.

2

3 MS. CHERNOFF: So this is something
4 that's come up a couple times, but not really been
5 talked about and that's those caribou that were taken
6 out in CAG Alaska.

7

8 So I know a few times it's the cost of
9 it has been brought up but my concern was that this is
10 certainly subsistence meat and it's my understanding
11 that they had no intention of bringing the meat until
12 -- well, this is according to an ADN story I read, that
13 Murkowski -- Senator Lisa Murkowski made them get
14 somebody to bring the meat back. I'm not sure, you
15 know, if that story was correct or not, but I'm
16 concerned that -- I don't know how we can communicate
17 with the Refuge when they're eliminating animals, if
18 they're edible animals, if it's -- they could contact
19 somebody in the area or we can somehow insist that
20 edible meat or, you know, with the fox -- how many fox
21 did they remove, 100 and something -- 112, they removed
22 them during a time, as far as I'm concerned, furs are
23 also subsistence. I know we -- so in getting them to
24 better respect those animals that they're removing, if
25 it's possible that they have usable meat or parts, to
26 contact the people to use those meat and parts. And I
27 don't know how -- I don't really know, I guess, what
28 I'm asking, but it's definitely a concern of mine and I
29 think it's a concern, obviously, of Lisa Murkowski if
30 she insisted that they go get the meat.

31

32 And in the article -- in another
33 article I read, I think they had stated that if they go
34 to remove again, it's not for sure that they're going
35 to remove the meat next time. That concerns me.

36

37 So I don't know what I'm asking.

38

39 (Laughter)

40

41 MADAME CHAIR BERNS: Yes, Mr. Holmes.

42

43 MR. HOLMES: As long as we're all
44 giggly here it's a good thing we didn't have a wine
45 tasting. But on this last topic I think we have CAG
46 Alaska caribou issue, but that's one component of when
47 the Maritime Refuge is dealing with removals of animals
48 because we have caribou, we have fur, we've got beef
49 issues on Sand Point, and I know the Osterbecks out
50 there will probably be out there in a very upset manner

1 when those are removed. We have the cattle at
2 Chirikof. And, you know, in some of these situations
3 it would be good for the -- I understand the Fish and
4 Wildlife is working with the Coast Guard on a
5 memorandum of understanding, and they have -- it's
6 something I've suggested for years on these things,
7 because I used to really help the Department, is when
8 they have a vehicle of opportunity to make that
9 available and have the agencies be the ones that have a
10 flexible sampling crew, so that, you know, you might
11 have something where if they got a helicopter stationed
12 at Adak well then you muster your local group and go do
13 your thing at CAG Alaska. But at CAG Alaska they did
14 admit on the record that the first time they went they
15 did not remove all the meat, they just took part of it,
16 and so that means somebody took something home to eat.
17 This last time they did coordinate with either Pitka or
18 the Aleut Corporation, did have some folks there, to do
19 that.

20

21 But you know \$70,000 for the tiglaks to
22 go there while they took out seven caribou is quite a
23 hunt, and most of the, you know, the boats at Adak, the
24 smaller ones -- you know, the 36, 40-footers, it's like
25 an hour drive from downtown Adak to the place on CAG
26 Alaska where they were whacking the caribou. And so
27 they really do need to think about in the broader
28 context when they're doing these eliminations on
29 integrating with local communities because they really
30 want to avoid the debacle that they had a few years
31 ago, Tom, what was it Hagermeister Island or whatever,
32 anyway, that is carried in the hearts of many Alaskans
33 as quite an exercise in stupidity, even though they did
34 try it, they did have people scheduled but, you know,
35 anyway so there's two issues there.

36

37 CAG Alaska, and the other critters
38 working with other agencies, multi-agencies approach
39 the things, and doing it in a cost effective way. And
40 I'll send you a note on CAG Alaska caribou that I had
41 written down for my comments for our last discussion on
42 it because I did clearly recall commenting that they
43 could and should -- part of the problem is -- what they
44 said, there's too many caribou in Adak, well, there
45 used to be three Navy special service cabins on the
46 south end of the island where most of the caribou were
47 at and I think they should get together with the Aleut
48 Corporation and Pitka, the folks that own the north end
49 of the island and give up on trying to think of the
50 south side of Adak as the wilderness and just allow

1 those buildings to be rebuilt, get some of the local
2 indigenous population that are guides and let them set
3 up service there so that they can reduce the numbers on
4 Adak and then you'll have less critters going to CAG
5 Alaska and then you won't have to have a \$70,000
6 caribou hunt that is questionable anyway.

7

8 So I'll try and give you some verbiage
9 on that.

10

11 MS. TRUMBLE: Madame Chair.

12

13 MADAME CHAIR BERNS: Yes, Della.

14

15 MS. TRUMBLE: Pat. It's my
16 understanding that's a three year project so that's
17 70,000 in just the first year. I'm not -- you know, I
18 don't know if that's still the case but that's what I
19 was to understand.

20

21 MADAME CHAIR BERNS: Thank you, Della.
22 Rebecca.

23

24 MS. SKINNER: So on Issue 9 I'd like
25 language added that reflects we're a Regional Advisory
26 Council under the Federal Subsistence Board and we're
27 looking at, you know, subsistence resources and
28 subsistence users that tend to use much, if not all of
29 the parts and pieces of whatever we're harvesting. And
30 I think in recognition of that, when things, and this
31 is just actually Issue No. 9, but, you know, if they're
32 'harvesting caribou or killing foxes or anywhere else
33 where a Federal agency is going in and doing removals
34 of animals or resources, that recognizing the
35 importance of subsistence, particularly when these
36 resources are subsistence resources in subsistence use
37 areas, that the Federal agencies should be reaching out
38 to the communities and it's not just the meat or the
39 fur, I mean it could be the stomach or the esophagus or
40 different parts of the animal that are used by either
41 tribes or, I mean, you don't have to be Alaska Native
42 to be a subsistence user, and that's not a small thing.
43 I think as a subsistence user that's a big thing to
44 have such waste that's being carried out by Federal
45 agencies, and, again, it's not just the caribou, it's
46 not just the foxes on Chirikof Island, it's wherever
47 these activities are carried out.

48

49 Thank you.

50

1 MADAME CHAIR BERNS: Do we have any
2 other additions for the annual report.

3
4 (No comments)

5
6 MADAME CHAIR BERNS: Karen, would you
7 mind going back and recapping all that we have covered
8 and then as a Council we can add to that as we see fit
9 and then as you said, you can send your draft out to
10 everyone and we can add our comments as well.

11
12 MS. DEATHERAGE: Thank you, Madame
13 Chair. And bear with me, I typed my scribbles here and
14 I think the spelling's probably -- oh, I just lost it
15 -- oh, there we go.

16
17 The first issue is the FRMP, the
18 Fisheries Resource Monitoring Program. And the first
19 thing, I think, is always good, is to let them know,
20 the folks at OSM know that the Council appreciates that
21 they're going to take the comments back. That our
22 representative here will be taking the comments back to
23 OSM that you've made at this meeting and they will be a
24 consideration for the program.

25
26 In the meantime there were several
27 points that you wanted to bring up as concerns.

28
29 The first would be the priority
30 information needs and how those are discussed and how
31 the Council can play a role in those in the future.
32 You know, how they're asked to respond to that.

33
34 The second is the issue of the
35 administrative area for the FRMP versus the actual RAC
36 area. And that it would be appreciated to have a
37 process that would allow for discussion between the
38 regional RACs included in the administrative region of
39 the FRMP.

40
41 The next would be a point saying that
42 we would certainly support the Kodiak proposals in the
43 current system. I'm not sure, we might need to flesh
44 that one out, I caught what I could on that.

45
46 And then the last one is do an
47 administrative review on how the funds are handled.
48 There appears to be discrepancies between allocation of
49 funds between Bristol Bay and Kodiak/Aleutians, for
50 example, even when they're based upon population and

1 the number of proposals received.

2

3 So are there any comments, additions,
4 edits, slashes and burns for the Issue No. 1.

5

6 MADAME CHAIR BERNS: Rebecca.

7

8 MS. SKINNER: I guess my only comment
9 on the first bullet point is in looking at the funding
10 priorities as they relate to the Council, I think, now,
11 we understand, as a Council, how important it is that
12 we have a robust and detailed list of funding
13 priorities, so what I don't want to get back from the
14 -- you know, in response, is, thank you for your
15 comment, this is the appropriate avenue you need to
16 follow to get the funding priorities in, because I
17 think we know that now. But I guess my bigger concern
18 is it appears as though this -- for some reason, kind
19 of flew under the radar, so my bigger concern is why
20 wasn't this emphasized to this RAC that, you know, you
21 really need to put some time into this because these
22 are important, these are driving resources that are
23 coming into your community to fund -- monitoring
24 proposals that are important.

25

26 So that's my only comment there, is
27 just reading the responses from, I guess, the Federal
28 Subsistence Board before I can -- I can already predict
29 what the response is going to be, which we appreciate
30 the response, but I think right now we -- like we know
31 this is important, we know how to get the information,
32 and we just need to do that.

33

34 Thank you.

35

36 MS. DEATHERAGE: Madame Chair. I might
37 be able to answer that question. I think part of the
38 issue is you were not a Council member during the time
39 period when, in fact, the priority information needs
40 was requested, and that's what we heard from Don Rivard
41 earlier. But if there's a better way to come up with
42 how that process works.

43

44 MS. SKINNER: Exactly. I understand
45 those priorities were developed before I was on the
46 Council but from what I'm hearing, I don't get the
47 sense, and I'm not hearing that there was robust
48 discussion at the Council level. So that's my concern.
49 Is regardless of who's sitting up here, the process
50 needs to make sure that people understand this is

1 important and we have a process that encourages and
2 insures that we have the discussion, articulate what
3 those priorities are and report it up to the correct
4 people. So it's really a process concern or
5 recommendation.

6

7 MADAME CHAIR BERNS: Go ahead, Tom.

8

9 MR. SCHWANTES: Yeah, I have to agree
10 to that. And I think part of the problem is that some
11 of these proposals go in from other agencies and we're
12 not even aware of them. And it would be good if, when
13 these proposals come in, that they would come back to
14 us so we could comment on them before the decisions are
15 made for the funding -- as to the funding.

16

17 Yeah.

18

19 MR. HOLMES: Yeah, that's right, Tom,
20 because we don't really need to -- excuse me, Madame
21 Chair. It doesn't have to be the full blown proposal,
22 it could just be.....

23

24 REPORTER: Pat, your microphone.

25

26 MR. HOLMES:you know, the Alaska
27 Congress of Rattlesnake Hunters proposes to make sure
28 that there aren't going to be rattlesnakes screwing up
29 subsistence in Kodiak and just a basic summary and not
30 necessarily even the cost, but just the concept of what
31 they're trying to do.

32

33 MR. SCHWANTES: Yeah.

34

35 MR. HOLMES: Then, you know, we could
36 take a look at that and say, gee, this sounds good,
37 that sounds dumb, and then the scientists can do their
38 own technical review of it. But at least knowing
39 conceptually what's being tossed out. And I think
40 we're all going to get out there and do some hustling
41 for sure.

42

43 MADAME CHAIR BERNS: Go ahead, Tom.

44

45 MR. SCHWANTES: I think if that would
46 come back to us then -- when it first goes in, then we
47 could take a look at it and make sure that those
48 criteria are met so that we would have a better chance
49 for funding of whatever that program is.

50

1 MADAME CHAIR BERNS: Yes, go ahead.

2

3 MR. KRON: Madame Chair. Member
4 Schwantes. Member Holmes.

5

6 Again, as was noted yesterday a lot of
7 these proposals come in on the very last day. We don't
8 know what's going to come through the door until they
9 arrive, and then they're scrambling basically to get
10 this technical review committee, and they're supposed
11 to just focus on the technical part. You know, they
12 don't know the people and the issues. That part is --
13 the technical review stuff is totally separate from the
14 review that you folks did yesterday. The InterAgency
15 Staff Committee will weigh in. Dr. Chen was here -- is
16 here -- and so they'll have a perspective they'll share
17 with the Board and then ultimately the Board will make
18 a decision and you'll have a representative from the
19 Council there while that decision is being made. So,
20 again, I think you're -- you're going to get to weigh
21 in, you did yesterday, and you've continued the
22 discussion here today, but, again, I don't know how I
23 get all these proposals out to you all through the
24 process.

25

26 The other thing we've got that's an
27 issue is the contracting folks within Fish and Wildlife
28 Service essentially have kind of put limitations on how
29 we have to handle things because this is a contract and
30 that's one of the reasons you don't get to see a bunch
31 of the stuff. So there's those issues as well.

32

33 Thank you, Madame Chair.

34

35 MADAME CHAIR BERNS: Tom.

36

37 MR. SCHWANTES: Is there a way that we
38 could maybe move that deadline up so that then we could
39 take a look at it before it goes to the.....

40

41 MR. KRON: Yeah, I don't know, I'll
42 ask, you know, maybe Palma can weigh in. But it's
43 always been a challenge to get all of these pieces done
44 so that the Federal Board can look at it. They're all
45 considered kind of separate processes. And, again,
46 just try and get them done so that they're ready for
47 the Board, and often the decisions are made just right
48 after the Board meeting, what's going to happen, what
49 isn't and what's funded, what isn't, and so -- but
50 let's hear what Palma has to say.

1 MS. INGLES: Again, for the.....
2
3 MR. KRON: Thank you, Madame Chair.
4
5 MS. INGLES:record, my name is
6 Palma Ingles and I'm an anthropologist and I've been
7 very involved with the FRMP process over the years,
8 since starting there.
9
10 What I would suggest for your Council
11 to do is write a letter, from the Council, to the new
12 head of fisheries, who is Stewart Cogs -- Cogs.....
13
14 MR. KRON: Cogswell.
15
16 MS. INGLES: Cogswell. Because he can
17 -- and also Jennifer Harden, who's the new supervisor
18 for Anthropology, so send a letter to the two of them
19 through OSM, and request -- make your request; saying
20 we're very concerned we're being left out of the loop,
21 we would like to see this, is there any way to move
22 this forward, even a month, six weeks or something, so
23 that the Council has a chance to review it before it
24 goes to TRC.
25
26 Because part of the reason this was
27 redesigned this year is because Stewart's new and he
28 was very interested in taking the process and trying to
29 improve it and so he's trying some new things, but we
30 have enough time, because our next call for proposals
31 will go out, I think, sometime next year, so we have a
32 little bit of time. Like time is kind of the essence,
33 to make sure and get your request in to him and to
34 Jennifer, also, since she's the head of anthropology,
35 and it's fisheries and anthropology that do the FRMP.
36 And so if you make your request heard, I mean, we need
37 that information now, so that we do have time to
38 consider it and possibly push the timelines a little
39 bit.
40
41 Thank you.
42
43 MADAME CHAIR BERNS: Yes, go ahead,
44 Tom.
45
46 MR. KRON: Madame Chair. Just to
47 followup, again, Tom Kron with OSM.
48
49 And, I think, you know, I think Palma's
50 got an excellent suggestion. You know, essentially the

1 discussion I heard yesterday and today and then kind of
2 thinking about the process, and it's going to be a real
3 push to try and get everything done but, you know, one
4 thing you might ask for is whether or not the Council's
5 could weigh in on these before the Technical Review
6 Committee does because then some of the stuff that you
7 were reading, you know, they're going to be told, no,
8 you've got it wrong, don't be thinking this, this is
9 the way it is relative to our priorities. So, again, I
10 would suggest that that would be something you'd think
11 about putting in this letter.

12

13 You know, have you look at it before
14 the Technical Review Committee does.

15

16 Thank you, Madame Chair.

17

18 MADAME CHAIR BERNS: Mr. Holmes.

19

20 MR. HOLMES: Madame Chair. I might
21 suggest that you see if you have a volunteer here from
22 the Council to draft a letter and we can route it
23 around and then send it to Karen on that topic.

24

25 But I think this topic is a good one. I
26 think this has been the most dynamic discussion we've
27 ever had on proposals and on the proposal process and I
28 think it's due to some of our newer membership
29 stimulating our thought process.

30

31 But I think that this concept is one
32 that should go into this winter Board meeting on RAC
33 issues of interest to other RACs. And I think one of
34 the things we also should be thinking about is, putting
35 together our list of things we want to talk about with
36 the other Councils and route them through our
37 coordinator to compile a list of here's some
38 brainstorming from the KARAC about what we'd like to
39 chat about when we get together, and then that might
40 allow if the other RACs -- most who haven't met yet --
41 but if they spent a little bit of time cogitating on
42 that, then I think it would be a much more dynamic
43 meeting than if -- Tom would do a good job -- so would
44 Glenn, you know, if he's not thinking about silvers too
45 much.

46

47 (Laughter)

48

49 MR. HOLMES: But, you know, it just
50 would be a cool way to get the Councils more part of

1 the process rather than the bureaucrats.

2

3 Thank you, Madame Chair.

4

5 MADAME CHAIR BERNS: Rebecca.

6

7 MS. SKINNER: So I do have a concern --
8 I think sending a letter is great. I do have a concern
9 asking that the Councils weigh in before the Technical
10 Review Committee because reading the Technical Review
11 Committee summaries and being able to compare that to
12 the -- basically the project abstract that was prepared
13 by the proposer was very helpful. And I'm concerned
14 that if the proposals did not first go through the
15 Technical Review Committee that would highlight, kind
16 of summarize here's the project, and summarize what
17 some of the -- what they found to be the challenges and
18 issues. I actually thought for the ecological
19 proposal, it worked really well to be able to read the
20 Technical Review Committee review and respond to that
21 because we could see specifically where they saw
22 weaknesses and obviously from our perspective, it
23 appeared that -- the weaknesses -- and I don't want to
24 say they weren't actual weaknesses, but as far as
25 having an impact on subsistence users or as far as --
26 and now I can't remember some of the specifics with
27 that proposal, but I think through the discussion,
28 particularly from Mitch and Melissa, it became clear
29 that some of the findings of the Technical Review
30 Committee were maybe not reflective of what's actually
31 happening in those areas.

32

33 So for that reason, I guess, I'm not
34 sure that we'd want to see it after the Technical
35 Review Committee, but I do agree with sending a letter
36 saying that we would like to be more in the loop, or at
37 least have that process looked at. Because I do think
38 the process, as it is now, is not the most effective
39 and I think it's frustrating. And I have a feeling
40 it's frustrating for a lot of different stakeholders.

41

42 MADAME CHAIR BERNS: Tom.

43

44 MR. SCHWANTES: I guess one of my
45 concerns was in the various types of criteria that was
46 required from what -- from what I was able to get out
47 of those, the ones in our areas, we really didn't spell
48 out -- they didn't really spell out that it was
49 concerns about a subsistence shortage and so I think
50 that -- that was my reason for wanting to take a look

1 at those before they went to the review process so that
2 we could take that look and say, hey, this is why --
3 this is the real reason why we want this project
4 funded.

5

6 MADAME CHAIR BERNS: Pat.

7

8 MR. HOLMES: Madame Chair. I think
9 Tom's got a good point there, and I'm just going to
10 quit talking about this subject because I think we've
11 covered a whole lot of ground. But, you know, one of
12 the things I think we can do as a group is, you know,
13 correspond a little more in email and, you know, when
14 we run across some grant mongers is, you know, suggest
15 to them that in their process of developing their
16 proposal that they, themselves, interact with us a bit
17 so that we can perhaps assist them in putting it
18 together.

19

20 I'm out of gas, thank you, Madame
21 Chair.

22

23 MADAME CHAIR BERNS: Thank you, Pat.
24 Do we have anything further on -- yes, go ahead, Pamela
25 -- Palma, sorry.

26

27 MS. INGLES: Madame Chair. Palma
28 Ingles once again, for the record.

29

30 One other suggestion, in your letter,
31 what you might want to suggest to Stewart and Jennifer,
32 if you send this letter, is that -- because we will be
33 designing the call for proposals next year and we'll
34 spell out what's required, we could put a paragraph in
35 there that says; consult your local RAC and that way
36 you know we can say -- they can confirm that -- I know
37 -- I'm not trying to circumvent the process that we
38 already have in place that says the RAC comes up with
39 the priority needs, and we do supposedly -- the TRC is
40 supposed to look at, you know, are they applying for
41 something that's been listed by that particular RAC as
42 a need, but it would be good if we could easily have a
43 paragraph as part of the requirements, talk to the
44 local RAC, make sure you understand what the priority
45 needs are and is there further information.

46

47 Thank you.

48

49 MADAME CHAIR BERNS: Thank you, Palma.
50 Great suggestion.

1 Do we have anything further on Item 1
2 that we'd like to add.

3
4 (No comments)

5
6 MADAME CHAIR BERNS: Go ahead, Karen.

7
8 MS. DEATHERAGE: Madame Chair. This is
9 Karen Deatherage for the record. I'm a little unsure
10 about -- we should certainly support the Kodiak
11 proposals and provide justification for these
12 proposals, what is the intent of that so I can make it
13 clear.

14
15 Thank you.

16
17 MADAME CHAIR BERNS: Rebecca, go ahead.

18
19 MS. SKINNER: I think that paragraph
20 was intended to include more detailed justification for
21 the Kodiak proposals.

22
23 So one would be that the proposals
24 address areas where there is a resource shortage. For
25 me, one of the things I kept raising is -- my
26 perception is the data or the proposals would help --
27 would directly help management of those resources, as
28 compared to some of the other proposals that didn't
29 really seem to have a strong link to management and --
30 and, you know, further impact subsistence use to that
31 -- or subsistence access -- user access to those
32 resources.

33
34 Those were the two I can think of. I
35 can look at my notes but there's probably other
36 specific comments down the table.

37
38 Thank you.

39
40 MR. SIMEONOFF: Madame Chair, this is
41 Mitch.

42
43 MADAME CHAIR BERNS: Go ahead, Mitch.

44
45 MR. SIMEONOFF: Yeah, that was my main
46 reason for pushing those two proposals, Olga Bay, was
47 they were the only two proposals that dealt with a
48 shortage of a resource and directly affected
49 subsistence users.

50

1 MADAME CHAIR BERNS: Thank you, Mitch.
2
3 Go ahead, Rebecca.
4
5 MS. SKINNER: So I guess I would also
6 like to include something that Mitch said a couple of
7 times, which was -- I wrote down Olga Lake, I don't
8 know if that's Lake or Bay, but he referenced the runs
9 used to be 150,000 and now they're down to 25,000 but I
10 would like those two numbers to be included and
11 attributed to Mitch and then he can correct me if I've
12 misstated that.
13
14 MADAME CHAIR BERNS: Go ahead, Karen.
15
16 MS. DEATHERAGE: Through the Chair.
17 Member Skinner, you wanted to put that in the letter or
18 in the annual report?
19
20 MS. SKINNER: It's part of the detail
21 that had to do with we should certainly support the
22 Kodiak proposals, it's up in that paragraph. Yeah. Or
23 however -- yeah.
24
25 MADAME CHAIR BERNS: I'm sorry, you can
26 say something to the effect of the historical, you
27 know, numbers historically. I'm not sure where Mitch
28 got his numbers from but make sure we pull up the right
29 numbers to reflect what they used to be and what they
30 currently are.
31
32 MR. SIMEONOFF: Yeah, the earlier
33 report said there was about 30,000 now, we heard
34 earlier this summer it was down to 25 and then it's
35 back up to 30, so we'll use the correct numbers but I
36 do remember when it was 150,000 escapement in Upper
37 Station, or Olga Lakes.
38
39 MADAME CHAIR BERNS: Rebecca.
40
41 MS. SKINNER: And also the testimony
42 from James Jackson with Fish and Game that just because
43 there is no escapement goal doesn't mean there's --
44 well, actually there's no escapement goal because the
45 system isn't monitored, which, actually is a reason to
46 have the -- to fund this proposal so that there is some
47 monitoring. And also his affirmation that having
48 numbers, some numbers for the systems would be
49 valuable. And so that's from the Fish and Game
50 biologist who's responsible for those systems.

1 Thank you.
2
3 MADAME CHAIR BERNS: Mr. Schwantes.
4
5 MR. SCHWANTES: Yeah, I got a quick
6 question. When does this annual report actually go in.
7
8 MADAME CHAIR BERNS: Karen.
9
10 MS. DEATHERAGE: Member Schwantes,
11 through the Chair. This annual report will be drafted
12 effective this meeting cycle and will be approved by
13 you at your winter meeting. So it does not go in until
14 after the Council approves the annual report at the
15 winter cycle meeting.
16
17 MR. SCHWANTES: So all of these
18 projects that we're talking about will have already
19 been approved or disapproved before this goes in?
20
21 MADAME CHAIR BERNS: Mr. Kron.
22
23 MR. KRON: Madame Chair. Mr.
24 Schwantes. We don't -- I do not know when, in fact,
25 the programs are going to actually be decided on, it's
26 varied over the years and relates very closely to what
27 happens from Congress and funding. So, again, usually
28 what happens is after the winter Board meeting in
29 January, a decision is made in a couple weeks and then
30 a letter is drafted and it's sent out. But, again, I
31 don't know what's going to happen with the funding
32 thing. The funding thing could affect it. There have
33 been years when the funding letters have not gone out
34 until later, in the winter, for example. So, again, I
35 think it's likely it'll be decided before this Council
36 meets with the other Councils and then, again, during
37 the -- that March, early March All-Council meeting
38 there'll be a time when just this Council can meet to
39 take care of your business and there'll be
40 opportunities to meet on various topics and to meet
41 with other Councils as well. But I think it's likely
42 that the decisions on current FRMP projects that you
43 were looking at yesterday, the decision will be made.
44 But I don't know, it's possible not, I do not know.
45
46 Thank you, Madame Chair.
47
48 MR. SCHWANTES: Thank you.
49
50 MADAME CHAIR BERNS: Karen.

1 MS. DEATHERAGE: Member Schwantes,
2 through the Chair. The other thing to maybe consider
3 is that this is your 2015 annual report and these
4 proposals are being addressed in 2015, so using them as
5 examples of why you would like to see the Council weigh
6 in on the justification could be good. Your comments
7 are already going to go in through Don Rivard to the
8 FRMP program, so those will not be lost before those
9 proposals are approved.

10

11 Thank you.

12

13 MADAME CHAIR BERNS: Thank you, very
14 much.

15

16 MR. SIMEONOFF: Can they also be
17 brought up at the January meeting of the Federal
18 Subsistence Board.

19

20 MADAME CHAIR BERNS: Yes, go ahead.

21

22 MR. KRON: Madame Chair. Mitch. Yes.
23 This will be, I think, one of the primary topics at the
24 January meeting. And, again, I had the impression I
25 hope you're going to be able to come in, but for sure
26 the Council will have the opportunity to have a
27 representative there and Mitch has been great. But,
28 again, this will be a primary discussion topic. So, in
29 addition to having the summary by Don of the input
30 that's been provided here in the past two days, Mitch
31 will be there to reinforce and strengthen that whole
32 discussion.

33

34 Thank you, Madame Chair.

35

36 MR. SIMEONOFF: Thank you.

37

38 MADAME CHAIR BERNS: Thank you very
39 much.

40

41 Okay. We are on Issue 1. Moving along
42 to Issue 2.

43

44 (Laughter)

45

46 MADAME CHAIR BERNS: Can I pass it on
47 to you, Karen, to continue with the review process.

48

49 MS. DEATHERAGE: Thank you, Madame
50 Chair.

1 Issue No. 2 is dealing with the
2 Proposed Rule by National Wildlife Refuge System
3 regarding sporthunting regulations on Refuge lands.

4
5 There is concern expressed by Member
6 Skinner that the agreement to keep temporary closures
7 should stay at 12 months and not be stretched out to
8 three years.

9
10 And I believe it was Member Schwantes
11 that thought that the Council was misled about what
12 input they could have on this regulation because it is
13 already in Washington, D.C., for approval.

14
15 MADAME CHAIR BERNS: Go ahead, Mr.
16 Schwantes.

17
18 MR. SCHWANTES: Yeah, I'd like to add a
19 couple other items to this one.

20
21 In the proposed new regulation, it's
22 talking about at the end of the required -- it says
23 must be -- let's see, temporary closures or
24 restrictions related to the taking of fish and wildlife
25 may still only extend for so long as necessary, and to
26 achieve the purpose of the closure or restriction these
27 closures or restrictions must be reevaluated as
28 necessary. My question is who decides. There's
29 nothing in there that says who makes that decision.
30 And then, again, further down it says, when a closure
31 is no longer needed action to remove it will be
32 initiated as soon as practical, and I would like to see
33 that changed to read: when a closure is no longer
34 needed, action to remove it will be initiated
35 immediately, rather than when somebody decides it's
36 practical.

37
38 MADAME CHAIR BERNS: Mr. Holmes.

39
40 MR. HOLMES: This is a bigger thing in
41 sporthunting.....

42
43 REPORTER: Pat, your microphone.

44
45 MR. HOLMES: Bigger thing in
46 sporthunting, drop sporthunting and just say proposed
47 management regulations.

48
49 MR. SIMEONOFF: Are we suggesting a
50 change to a regulation here?

1 MADAME CHAIR BERNS: No. We are
2 working on our draft annual report at this time.
3
4 MR. SIMEONOFF: Well, I know that. I'm
5 talking about.....
6
7 MADAME CHAIR BERNS: Karen will recap
8 it and read it. It's in reference to 50 CFR on Page 42
9 of your book Mitch -- 41.
10
11 MS. DEATHERAGE: Madame Chair. Putting
12 this in the annual report, given the timing, which has
13 already been highlighted in here that the Council feels
14 like it's being asked for input even though the
15 regulation is already in Washington, D.C., and
16 scheduled for approval, so I think that it might be
17 best to reflect the disappointment of the Council, that
18 these concerns that you have regarding the closures,
19 temporary closures and the need to know who would
20 actually decide on when to lift those closures, that
21 those issues cannot be entered into the record as a
22 comment on the regulation because it's already been put
23 forth for final approval.
24
25 MADAME CHAIR BERNS: Yes, go ahead.
26
27 MR. KRON: Madame Chair. Let me just
28 follow up on something.
29
30 Again, the two folks that were sitting
31 here yesterday when this was presented, you know, are
32 not benefitting from hearing this discussion and, boy,
33 if this goes in your annual report, essentially you
34 won't be signing it until next March, there might be
35 some benefit in just sending a letter with this
36 information in it now, so they have the information
37 now, so potentially they can do something because it's
38 going to become solidified between now and March if you
39 don't.
40
41 Thank you, Madame Chair.
42
43 MADAME CHAIR BERNS: Rebecca.
44
45 MS. SKINNER: Yeah, I would like to do
46 both, if we can send a letter with the comments to get
47 it into the administrative process at an appropriate
48 time to potentially have an impact on the proposed
49 rule, but I also think it's appropriate to include
50 something in the annual report, particularly expressing

1 our disappointment about -- not just how this was
2 brought forward, and I'll need other people down the
3 table to speak to this, but I get the sense that
4 there's disappointment with a lot of ways the Refuge is
5 choosing to conduct its relationship with us or with
6 subsistence users and communication and kind of a sense
7 of -- a lack of a sense of a collaborative
8 relationship. And I think -- so, and that's not
9 specific to this regulation, which, you know, may have
10 a fairly limited purpose. But I get the sense it's to
11 everything that the Refuge does, which is certainly
12 relevant to the subsistence process and subsistence
13 users. But I would look down the table to people who
14 have been on this Council longer, who could speak to
15 whether my assessment that I -- that there's ongoing
16 disappointment with the Refuge.

17

18 MADAME CHAIR BERNS: Mr. Schwantes.

19

20 MR. SCHWANTES: Yeah, I think I'd like
21 to make that specific to disappointment with the Refuge
22 over this specific issue so they know we're -- you
23 know, because our relationship with the Refuge has
24 improved considerably in some areas, but in this
25 particular issue, quite frankly, we're pretty
26 disappointed with them.

27

28 MS. DEATHERAGE: Member Schwantes,
29 through the Chair. Are you referring to a specific
30 Refuge or the Refuges in this region in general.

31

32 MR. SCHWANTES: I'm referring to the --
33 I believe this came through the Refuge manager, didn't
34 it, Pat, where did this come from originally?

35

36 MR. HOLMES: It's from the
37 regional.....

38

39 MADAME CHAIR BERNS: Region.

40

41 MR. SCHWANTES: From the region, so
42 that's where our disappointment is, with the region.

43

44 MADAME CHAIR BERNS: Rebecca.

45

46 MS. SKINNER: Well, and I think that
47 some of the disappointment or frustration stems from
48 the change in legislation, was it not the Refuge Reform
49 Act, the thing that happened back in what, around 1997,
50 that changed kind of the requirements for how Refuges

1 operate and as Anne Marie LaRosa indicated, some of
2 those changes are only just now being implemented and
3 I'm thinking of several specific examples with the
4 Kodiak Refuge, and actually there was some discussed at
5 the last meeting of this Council, where there were
6 things that the Refuge either allowed in the past or
7 there was a certain way things were done in the past
8 that are not being allowed or not -- and that those
9 could stem from changes in regulations that -- or laws
10 that put different expectations on all Refuges, and so
11 I think there's a bigger takeaway of outreach and
12 communication from the Refuge to the public and
13 including to this RAC to make sure that we understand
14 what those new requirements are. And -- well, because
15 I think that avoids frustration if you understand that
16 there are new requirements and what those are.

17
18 And I know Pat had asked for copies of
19 that Act, whatever it is, I can't remember right now,
20 but he had asked that copies of those be distributed to
21 us, and I think that would help.

22
23 But, I think, to me the overall
24 takeaway is kind of outreach and -- outreach and
25 education from the Refuge to us that can, I think, head
26 off some of this frustration that I heard last meeting
27 and I'm hearing this meeting.

28
29 MADAME CHAIR BERNS: Karen, for your
30 reference, it is the 1987 Refuge Improvement Act is
31 what was referred to.

32
33 Do we have anything further to add
34 under Issue No. 2. Council.

35
36 (No comments)

37
38 MADAME CHAIR BERNS: Karen.

39
40 MS. DEATHERAGE: Madame Chair. Just to
41 be clear, the Council would like to have a letter
42 drafted that would address the specific concerns that
43 you have with the proposed rule. And then we could put
44 the overall concerns that you have with the process in
45 the annual report.

46
47 MADAME CHAIR BERNS: That is the
48 consensus.

49
50 (Council nods affirmatively)

1 MADAME CHAIR BERNS: Issue No. 3.

2

3 MS. DEATHERAGE: Madame Chair. Issue
4 No. 3 is to support a Kodiak National Wildlife Refuge
5 subsistence biologist position, or perhaps just a
6 biologist position.

7

8 MADAME CHAIR BERNS: Mr. Holmes.

9

10 MR. HOLMES: If you remind me I can add
11 more meat to it, but it was to support refilling the
12 position that was vacated. That person took a position
13 in Anchorage but they did not fill the Kodiak position
14 when he left and that position is a subsistence
15 biologist who worked on those issues but he also was
16 working on ungulate research, deer, and the other
17 critters. And so his work in relation to the
18 variability of our deer and mountain goat populations
19 we view as very important and vital to the
20 understanding of the most important game, subsistence
21 animal, on the island.

22

23 Does that seem reasonable.

24

25 MS. DEATHERAGE: Member Holmes, through
26 the Chair. Do you have a specific recommendation or
27 would just like to relay support for refilling that
28 position.

29

30 MR. HOLMES: Yeah, we'd like to have
31 that position refilled. The person took a better
32 position in Anchorage, but instead of funding that with
33 different money they just eliminated it here. And so
34 that was a regular Staff position here and so if it's
35 now monies being used for administrative position we'd
36 like to see -- I'd like to -- well, anyway it would be
37 good to have that field position refunded to be able to
38 provide this vital research information for the Kodiak
39 Refuge and for the Kodiak subsistence community.

40

41 MADAME CHAIR BERNS: Thank you, Mr.
42 Holmes. Do we have any other additions for Issue No.
43 3.

44

45 Council.

46

47 (No comments)

48

49 MADAME CHAIR BERNS: Moving along to
50 Issue No. 4. Karen.

1 MS. DEATHERAGE: Thank you, Chair. The
2 emperor goose issue. One of the main concerns is the
3 proposal is to harvest 3,500 animals and that number is
4 already being illegally harvested. There's concern
5 because there's a need to ensure that the
6 Kodiak/Aleutians area get some of these birds. Now,
7 that it looks like a hunt will be approved and
8 allocated, how can the RAC be involved in the
9 allocation decisions and the permitting system and how
10 can we make sure our concerns regarding allocation are
11 received.

12

13 MADAME CHAIR BERNS: Rebecca.

14

15 MS. SKINNER: So I'm anticipating the
16 response from the Board would be go through your local
17 AMBCC representative. So I guess to me the -- well, I
18 don't know what the bigger issue for me is because I
19 understand it's a very small amount of birds and that
20 the tribal caucus has already tried to resolve the
21 allocation issue and they were unable to. So I mean is
22 our question truly how can the RAC be involved, or do
23 we understand that we need to talk to our AMBCC reps or
24 do we want a direct voice, or what's our question.

25

26 MADAME CHAIR BERNS: Coral first and
27 then Pat.

28

29 MS. CHERNOFF: This is Coral. I guess
30 I'm thinking that I don't want to get to the end of the
31 process and then now we have four birds and we weren't
32 involved in that before. I went to the meeting, they
33 sent another representative -- I guess there was no --
34 you can ask Pat, Pat was there also, I'm not sure that
35 there was -- there wasn't really an opportunity to give
36 any input there about what these numbers were and what
37 was our permitting system going to be. And then it
38 sounds like they've talked about it more when they went
39 to Fairbanks, but if we were at the meeting, it didn't
40 sound like they were going there with any plan in hand,
41 so it just feels like we're going to miss the boat, and
42 we're going to be at the end of the process and we're
43 going to go whoa we wish we would have been involved in
44 this.

45

46 And maybe we can just ask them, is
47 there an area where we can be involved, and if they
48 come back and say, well, call in, then we'll call in
49 and make sure our voice is heard or make sure -- you
50 know, if they don't really have a structure for us to

1 work in, like the last meeting I went to didn't feel
2 like there was a structure to work within, it makes my
3 involvement kind of difficult.

4
5 And so all I'm saying is I don't want
6 to be at the end of the process and go, whoa, wait we
7 wanted to be involved in that. I don't want to end up
8 that we have no allocation, we have no birds.

9
10 MADAME CHAIR BERNS: Mr. Holmes.

11
12 MR. HOLMES: They -- from talking and
13 listening to Johnny, and then Eric Taylor, they tabled
14 the whole issue on the allocations. I think we could
15 say that -- you know, because they're going to be
16 discussing it more, then I think we could express to
17 the Board saying that we are taking an active role in
18 interacting with the AMBCC and with the Flyaway Council
19 where we can have input as a subsistence --
20 representative of subsistence for the Kodiak and
21 Aleutians region, and that we had several points of
22 concern that we talked about earlier, and we could grab
23 those out of the minutes as you develop it and stick
24 those points in, that we would like you to be aware of.
25 And that we plan to continue to work with our local
26 AMBCC and also with the statewide process wherever we
27 can to provide our comments to provide for a rationale
28 allocation and a rationale process -- a rationale
29 process for allocation when the hunt reopens.

30
31 Because we can go back and grab those
32 comments that we thought the 3,500 is low, how can you
33 allocate that because it doesn't allow for any harvest,
34 anywhere other than Bristol Bay [sic], you know, we can
35 just kind of put that into the comment, because they're
36 going to come back and say you got to go to AMBCC and
37 the Flyaways anyway, but I think it's good for those
38 folks to know that we were bothered by the process and
39 by the conclusions that were developed in that process.
40 And because we're going to have a presentation -- I'll
41 try and see if I can finagle us to get a copy of the
42 transcripts so that we know.....

43
44 (Laughter)

45
46 MR. HOLMES: Technical break.

47
48 (Laughter)

49
50 MR. HOLMES: So that we have some kind

1 of idea on that survey. Because they've already done a
2 rough draft on it and it's getting in final form. So
3 that will let us just kind of get our mind set in there
4 because there's a whole lot going in this and I agree
5 with my colleagues here that, you know, the users,
6 particularly the users in our region who have been
7 honest are being held to task for other areas where
8 folks felt they had a stronger need. And so I have
9 hopes that we'll see -- this doesn't have to be written
10 down, but that we're going to see some improvement in
11 that interaction, and at least they're calling in and
12 talking to us by name where before we couldn't even get
13 an answer. And I can recall -- Tom can too, when he
14 first came on, we raised these questions, we asked them
15 to come, they didn't even come to our meeting and so
16 now at least they're making sure that we know what's
17 going on. So I think we made a big jump.

18

19 We just need to advise the Federal
20 Subsistence Board that we are going to be players and
21 we felt the process to-date has been unfair.

22

23 Is that a reasonable kind of thought
24 process.

25

26 MADAME CHAIR BERNS: Mr. Schwantes and
27 then to Rebecca.

28

29 MR. SCHWANTES: Just go back and change
30 the first line where it says can the Council be
31 informed, and I think we should say we feel like the
32 Council should be informed.

33

34 MR. HOLMES: Council should be
35 informed.

36

37 MR. SCHWANTES: Yeah.

38

39 MR. HOLMES: That should be KARAC.

40

41 MADAME CHAIR BERNS: Rebecca.

42

43 MS. SKINNER: In conjunction with
44 including this in our annual report, can we also send a
45 letter to our, either local AMBCC reps or the Sun'ag
46 Tribe that administers the AMBCC regional meetings, and
47 request an update. And I do appreciate that Pat
48 reached out and got a lot of really detailed
49 information that was fairly recent for us, but that
50 does not obviate the need for our regional reps to be

1 disseminating the information they get. That being
2 said, I realize these meetings just happened. So I
3 don't want to call them out for not sharing information
4 that they may or may not have and if it's been a short
5 timeline I understand that. So I don't -- so I'm not
6 suggesting that those comments go into the annual
7 report. But I do think a letter from us to our, I
8 guess, regional reps, or it is for Kodiak, I think the
9 Aleutians have their own rep and I don't want to speak
10 to that, but asking for the reps to give us a summary
11 of what happened and also at that same time, putting
12 forward our expectation that, you know, we would get
13 half of the birds or whatever, but just putting forward
14 our expectation that we would get more than zero birds,
15 or four birds or, you know, some very small amount of
16 birds.

17

18 MADAME CHAIR BERNS: Mr. Holmes.

19

20 MR. HOLMES: I think we should send a
21 copy to the local folks and also to Pete Devine. I
22 don't know if Della's got the stamina or has had an
23 espresso to keep listening in, and Mitch, but, you
24 know, I think we should keep the Peninsula and the
25 Aleutians in the loop and when we come up with a draft
26 letter that we have, you know, get it out to the
27 villages out on the Peninsula and to the Aleutians and
28 just send it to some of our old members and ask them to
29 circulate it.

30

31 I think one thing, backing up, we had
32 problems on the allocation -- actually the allocation
33 plan was good, the number 3,500 was the thing that I
34 think brought the whole management plan to a halt, and
35 so they're going to go back and review that, but I
36 think one of the other things that's really, really
37 important for Kodiak is the date of the opening. I
38 believe it can be opened as early as late March but it
39 doesn't open for us until April, some of the date
40 that's later, I know there's been a pressure, I forget
41 from where, in the state that they move the permissible
42 subsistence season into the spring, but on one side or
43 the other, the other side, but we need it opened
44 earlier here so we have access to them in April.
45 Because the structure, even if they had an opening, it
46 didn't matter how many geese there were, most of the
47 time they packed it up. So the date is something that
48 needs to be discussed during this time that the whole
49 management plan is tabled, and the date that would be
50 acceptable for people in our region.

1 Thank you, Madame Chair.

2

3 MS. TRUMBLE: Madame Chair, this is
4 Della.

5

6 MADAME CHAIR BERNS: Yes, Della.

7

8 MS. TRUMBLE: Yeah, I'm getting tired
9 too. I think first of all Pat I'm going to do two
10 things.

11

12 Number 1, I'm scanning these documents
13 to send to the Aleutians East Borough and APAE Natural
14 Resource Department, that they put in their newsletter
15 to distribute however they can so that the information
16 starts getting out there. Because even if APAE, I mean
17 I've talked to them a couple of times on some of this
18 stuff but it just -- you know sometimes you get a
19 reaction and sometimes you don't, so I think getting
20 this information out will be helpful.

21

22 The other thing, I think, in looking at
23 like the fall 2015 minutes where the tribes of Kodiak
24 met with the -- with the Alaska Migratory Birds
25 CoManagement Council, you know, we don't have that
26 opportunity so how -- you know APAE needs to take that
27 initiative to set up conference calls to have the
28 tribal councils on line to discuss not only the issue
29 of allocation but, you know, looking at some of the
30 information that's out there so they're part of that
31 decision-making process and can -- Peter has that
32 information, I mean they sponsor him, they help him,
33 that's the key right there.

34

35 But I will share it with Aleutians East
36 because they do have a newsletter that goes out and
37 then Aleutians East Fishermens newsletter that goes
38 out, you know, when you're dealing with some of these
39 resource issues, not only to share the information in
40 regards to the population on the caribou. So I will be
41 doing that just to hopefully help the process.

42

43 But I do know that a lot of people are
44 interested. There is some concern, I think, with some
45 -- I think hope to get more people involved with that
46 process.

47

48 MADAME CHAIR BERNS: Thank you, Della.

49

50 Karen.

1 MS. DEATHERAGE: Member -- Madame
2 Chair. I have a point of clarification, when the
3 Council is asking that -- Member Holmes, in particular,
4 that they provide a summary of what happened at the
5 meeting, is this the statewide meeting that you're
6 talking about that occurred up in Fairbanks, or are you
7 talking about the meeting that occurred here in Kodiak
8 with the region.

9
10 MR. HOLMES: I don't know that I'm
11 looking for what happened at the meeting, I think I
12 either forwarded it on email already or it's still --
13 it's in the process of coming to us from Mr. Taylor,
14 but -- I don't know, I'm too tired.

15
16 MADAME CHAIR BERNS: Rebecca.

17
18 MS. SKINNER: I think that was more my
19 comment. My expectation is that the reports will be
20 provided to us from our regional rep, which is Sonny
21 Squartsoff, alternate John Reft. They're the ones who
22 go to the statewide AMBCC meetings and I assume that
23 they get reports out of, for example, the Flyaway
24 meetings, if they do not get reports they certainly
25 should get reports, and I think us sending them a
26 letter saying, please update us on what happened at the
27 AMBCC statewide meeting and the Flyaway Council, et
28 cetera, et cetera, should, at the very least, prompt
29 them to reach out to the Flyaway Council or whatever
30 meetings they were not a part of, to get those reports.

31
32 Because from my view, the system is set
33 up so that we have a regional rep, it's their job to
34 represent the region, it's also their job to bring that
35 information back. And that's the piece right now that
36 I think is not as strong as it could be.

37
38 MR. HOLMES: Madame Chair.

39
40 MADAME CHAIR BERNS: Yes, Pat.

41
42 MR. HOLMES: Yeah, I concur with that.
43 Perhaps something to do, a way to approach that would
44 be to communicate to whoever it is, the coordinator for
45 those groups and have our coordinator either have it
46 sent to her or give them our emails as interested
47 parties so that we get it automatically and then we can
48 ask our local reps, Della could talk to Pete Devine
49 and, you know, when those things are over, so you get
50 the personal view of it so that our Council members are

1 kept up to date on what's going on. And the quickest
2 way of communications, you know, is minutes or
3 summaries thereof of the meeting, and then we can go
4 and talk to Sonny and say, gee, Sonny, what does this
5 mean, what happened, and then that would make it easier
6 for them and it would make it better for us to be more
7 informed.

8

9 Thank you, Madame Chair.

10

11 MADAME CHAIR BERNS: Thank you, Pat.

12

13 Do we have any additional information
14 we'd like to add under Issue No. 4.

15

16 (No comments)

17

18 MADAME CHAIR BERNS: Hearing and seeing
19 none, move on to Issue No. 5.

20

21 Karen.

22

23 MS. DEATHERAGE: Madame Chair. Karen
24 Deatherage for the record, Council coordinator.

25

26 The issue is involving sea otters and
27 the south and north end subsistence users are having
28 difficulty getting shellfish. The Council would like
29 to see data on marking and tagging projects for sea
30 otter s. They would also like to get data on
31 subsistence shellfish harvest in areas that may be
32 affected by sea otter populations, including historic
33 data on shellfish, tanner, king, and dungeness to see
34 if subsistence users are still, in fact, using the area
35 and if not why this is happening.

36

37 Also get comparative data between areas
38 where sea otters are or are not present. It's been
39 rare to see sea otters in some areas in the past but
40 now we're seeing them. Shellfish is a very valued
41 resource. We're seeing an increasing number of sea
42 otters on the east side of the island, other
43 communities have contacted RAC members regarding the
44 issues of sea otters. This has been a longstanding
45 issue with the RAC and the Sun'aq Tribe.

46

47 Thank you.

48

49 MADAME CHAIR BERNS: I'd like to maybe
50 change in the first sentence -- or the second one, the

1 south and north end subsistence users are having a
2 difficult time getting shellfish. I mean this is
3 something that I had also heard through the west side
4 of the island, so maybe change that -- I mean south end
5 we still have -- you know, we value our shellfish and,
6 you know, it's -- and we can get them but we've got a
7 big concern. I think it's the west and the north end
8 are having the more difficult time. I don't know I'm
9 trying to say it to where it's kind of a island wide
10 concern with the increasing number of sea otters.

11

12 Pat.

13

14 MR. HOLMES: I think that we should not
15 see that we would like to see data, I think we should
16 advise them that we are gathering data from the local
17 Fish and Game and NOAA folks as to previous historic
18 information on shellfish, crab harvest and that we'll
19 forward that to them as an area of concern for -- as an
20 area of concern. Because I think it'd be more
21 important for us to do that then them come back and
22 say, well, you just need to contact NOAA or whatever
23 and don't bother us.

24

25 But I think we should just put that
26 data together ourselves, when this comes out in a
27 draft, we can just tighten it up and say, hey, we're
28 going to find out what's going on to reinforce what our
29 traditional knowledge is and then we will want to see,
30 even though the Federal Board has nothing to do with
31 sea otters, but it's something we can put together for
32 a package, advise them that we're going to contact
33 whatever agency is involved with managing sea otters
34 and that we are really concerned. And we're just
35 letting the Board know that we're concerned because
36 they can't do anything.

37

38 But I think it's important for us to
39 say, hey, we've got this data set that says that they
40 used to get 5,000 king crab out of Womens Bay, nobody
41 has reported any king crab in the last 10 years, or
42 five years or whatever, and because most of the data,
43 you know, it'll have to be qualified from Fish and Game
44 saying Chiniak Bay reports because that's as small as
45 it comes, but they can say, based on personal
46 interviews, 80 percent of the harvest in the past has
47 come from Womens Bay, and then that allows us to
48 present a data package saying we used to have this, we
49 have nothing now.

50

1 Tom, you got some ideas.
2
3 MR. KRON: Well, just a comment.
4 Again, NOAA will be able to help with the shellfish
5 data, the crab data, but Fish and Wildlife Service has
6 responsibility for the sea otter population.
7
8 MR. HOLMES: Okay, good, so then we can
9 get to them through the Federal Board.
10
11 MR. KRON: Thank you, Madame Chair.
12
13 MR. HOLMES: Excellent. Yeah, that
14 would be really good if we could just keep prodding
15 away. I know -- and it would also behoove us, when we
16 get this together to send that to the Southeast RAC
17 because they're having from what I read in the paper
18 and hear on NPR they're having the same problems down
19 there in Sitka and Petersburg and Ketchikan and Hoonah
20 with otters eating everything they've got. And so I
21 think if we're saying, hey, we're concerned too, you're
22 concerned too, that's another project we can talk about
23 jointly on the Councils that affects the whole Gulf of
24 Alaska.
25
26 Maybe we could make a joke and saying
27 we would -- if folks really love the otters, that we
28 would be glad to send them all the otters and wolves
29 they want to California or Anchorage or wherever, and
30 they can then enjoy the beauty of watching the little
31 critters and they could feed them.
32
33 MADAME CHAIR BERNS: I would add maybe,
34 under, it says, south end has concerns about increasing
35 numbers of sea otters, possibly to change to local
36 knowledge reports, increasing numbers, throughout the
37 Kodiak Archipelago and then I believe.....
38
39 MR. HOLMES: Yeah, we're going to get
40 (indiscernible - no mic) and traditional knowledge or
41 something.
42
43 MADAME CHAIR BERNS: And I believe it's
44 -- yeah.
45
46 MR. SIMEONOFF: We also have the
47 Stellers Sea Lion and Sea Otter Commission, Leanna
48 (Indiscernible) from Old Harbor is the head of that.
49
50 MADAME CHAIR BERNS: And then I know

1 that all of -- and it's been awhile since I've actually
2 seen some of the reports, but it's Brad Bentner (ph),
3 out of Fish and Wildlife Service out of Anchorage that
4 we turn all of our tagging data into, so it'd be like
5 to see a lot of that information, or a report on it.

6

7 Rebecca.

8

9 MS. SKINNER: Two things. One, can we
10 make sure that we have all of the survey -- otter
11 survey data from Fish and Wildlife because I am pretty
12 sure at our last meeting when McCrae did his report, he
13 did a partial report on the otters, but I thought I
14 remembered him saying there were some areas where he
15 hadn't processed the data yet. I could be mistaken but
16 if we could just get the final report done, you know,
17 we'll be able to see if it exactly matches what we got
18 last time. And the final report is referenced in the
19 material we got from the Refuge this time, the data
20 just wasn't there.

21

22 My second point or question is what are
23 we trying to get with this otter issue. Are we going
24 for asking somebody to come in and exterminate the
25 otters or are we asking for data so that we can
26 effectively control the population so we don't kill too
27 many of them, or, I guess, I'm thinking if there's a
28 problem, we have the ability -- well, people who can
29 get otters, have the ability to address it, so where
30 are we going with this.

31

32 MADAME CHAIR BERNS: I think that as
33 one of the biggest concerns that Sun'aq had brought up
34 is that the difficulty to have access to the shellfish
35 in this area, and because of the abundance of the sea
36 otters they're seeing their resources kind of depleted
37 and that's also something that I've heard elsewhere.

38

39 MS. SKINNER: No, my question is, I
40 mean obviously if the otters are the problem, so the
41 solution is to control the otters, but where are we
42 going with this. Are we going to be asking someone to
43 kill otters on behalf of Sun'aq, are we looking for
44 more data that would help inform how many otters should
45 be taken, or are we going down a different road. I'm
46 just not clear, because this issue has come up before.
47 I'm just not sure what the perceived solution is
48 anticipated to be.

49

50 MADAME CHAIR BERNS: I think possibly

1 to look at the impact of the otter population on the
2 shellfish; is that kind of the ultimate goal.

3
4 Coral.

5
6 MR. SCHWANTES: That's.....

7
8 MS. CHERNOFF: Go ahead.

9
10 MR. SCHWANTES: Go ahead, Coral.

11
12 MS. CHERNOFF: I think when I brought
13 up the issue about getting all the data, I think my
14 issue is that I've been hearing about it for years and
15 years and years, and I find that my -- the information
16 that I go out and see is not the same as what people
17 are reporting. So I guess I want to see the data, I
18 want everybody else to see the data so we're all
19 looking at the same data. Because when I go out into
20 Womens Bay I don't see sea otters. I see them out
21 around the corner, you know, more into Middle Bay and
22 around Cliff Point and then there's, you know, five or
23 six that like to hang out off of Gibson. I have these
24 areas where I see, you know, a little, five or six, or
25 the last couple of years we've seen one cruising
26 through the harbor here or whatever. But I'm not
27 seeing the amounts that everybody else is seeing.

28
29 I also hear -- I'd like to see data
30 about who's eating clams. I know -- everybody knows
31 they still eat clams in Old Harbor, I eat clams, but
32 I've been out to Port Lions several times and people
33 are saying, well, we don't eat clams anymore. So, you
34 know, there's such a big PSP scare -- and I just would
35 like to see, you know, well, if people are saying, well
36 we don't eat clams, you know, because we've got all
37 these otters and they've eaten all the clam beds but,
38 in fact, they're not eating them because of the PSP
39 scare, that's two different issues, and it's hard to
40 just do anything or maybe we can just stop this
41 conversation or maybe we could figure out where we're
42 going with this conversation by seeing the data.

43
44 That was my intent with all the data
45 gathering or maybe asking for studies since there
46 apparently is money out there for studies, maybe we
47 should look at doing a crab study and sea otter study
48 or something in Womens Bay.

49
50 Thank you.

1 MADAME CHAIR BERNS: Tom.

2

3 MR. SCHWANTES: I think from listening
4 to Johnny and others from Sun'ag there is a big concern
5 so from my perspective what we're looking at, this
6 data, what we're trying to achieve here is what impact
7 are the sea otters having on the shellfish and the
8 impact that it's having on subsistence users.

9

10 MADAME CHAIR BERNS: Rebecca and then
11 Pat.

12

13 MS. SKINNER: So my question though is,
14 if the data comes back and shows, that, yes, sea otters
15 are having an impact on the shellfish, well, then what.
16 And I guess I'm afraid we're setting an expectation
17 that if the solution to the otter problem is like
18 predator control, that that there is a solution to be
19 achieved through this RAC and I'm not sure we're the
20 appropriate body to do that, but I also think there's
21 people who have the ability to go out and control the
22 otter population, and I think Melissa spoke directly to
23 that earlier.

24

25 So I'm just -- I'm not clear if we get
26 this data, and I understand why we want the data, but
27 let's say the data shows there's an otter problem, then
28 what. Or are we going to, at that point have the next
29 phase of the discussion, which is deciding, then what.

30

31 MADAME CHAIR BERNS: Mr. Schwantes.
32 Pat, and then Tom.

33

34 MR. HOLMES: What the heck. As far as
35 that question, because we need to let Mitch and Della
36 know what we're thinking about, I think the important
37 for our Council is to identify where we have shortages
38 and where we've had impacts on subsistence. And we can
39 do that fairly simply by putting together a historical
40 table, if we can, for here for the Chiniak Bay complex
41 on the important species that used to be harvested,
42 king crab, tanner, dungeness, which are no longer
43 harvestable. So we're waiving a red flag, just like
44 Mitch did with the problems at Upper Station and
45 saying, hey, we have a problem, this needs to be worked
46 on. So when we have this waive, then maybe we can get
47 one of these joint funding type of research proposals
48 to go. I was hoping to get it worked out after the
49 last two Kodiak meetings we had where we were talking
50 about Womens Bay and listening to Johnny and everyone

1 else being worried about them because, you know, otters
2 move in and then they move out. I suspect you'll see a
3 lot of otters in there in the spring in March and April
4 when the king crab come in the shallow to molt, and I
5 bet just nickels to donuts that's when they'll be back
6 in there full-time.

7

8 Now, what we do in the long run, I
9 think, is we need to stimulate the dis -- either A,
10 stipulate a discussion on management of them, just like
11 they do with the Whaling Commission up north, or we
12 just simply say, gee, we're having this problem, here
13 it is folks, and this is really causing an impact and
14 then we just quietly do it in the Kodiak way and let
15 the folks that handle that sort of thing, handle it,
16 and turn them into nice little handicrafts and not make
17 anything beyond it. Because we're not really a
18 management group, we're just a group to say, here's a
19 problem, it needs to be addressed, and then we let the
20 folks that can do that address the problem. But then
21 we have -- if somebody comes back and gives us a bunch
22 of gas about our local friends doing that for
23 handicrafts or whatever, then we can say, well, gee, we
24 identified the problem, it's been a problem for years
25 and no one's done anything so, you know, kind of let it
26 go at that. Just like the folks in Old Harbor, they
27 kind of know the problems there, they just take care of
28 it.

29

30 So I don't know that we need to go
31 beyond this point but I think it's important to
32 document that we've had this big shortage. I had hoped
33 to put together -- I talked to NOAA, I talked to Fish
34 and Game about maybe using a study, putting together
35 some money or applying for money for a study on Womens
36 Bay and using the KIC, which is the high school boat,
37 high school teacher and the kids, get some pots from
38 Fish and Game, get the shellfish biologist from them,
39 get NOAA and the divers there, and do a two year study
40 or three year study in the bay and have the kids learn
41 how to do a survey, mark/recapture. But I think what
42 we're doing is we're trying to set the base for further
43 research in the future and then we let the public
44 decide to do what they want to. And if Sun'ag wants to
45 and NVA and Woody Island want to form a Kodiak sea
46 otter commission, if folks in Southeast have got some
47 advice on how to do that then they can do it, or maybe
48 our folks can help them with their mutual problems, but
49 I think getting this little packet of information,
50 telling the Federal Board and the agencies, that's how

1 we tell the Federal agencies we've got a problem, then
2 that gets it out there. And then if somebody at NOAA
3 comes up with a good idea on how to do a little mini-
4 study or involve the school kids, then all the better.

5

6 At least that's my kind of feeling and
7 philosophy on the whole thing.

8

9 MR. SIMEONOFF: Thank you, Pat. They
10 don't need to be studied, they need to be hunted.

11

12 MR. HOLMES: Amen.

13

14 MADAME CHAIR BERNS: Thank you, Mitch.

15

16 MR. SCHWANTES: Take care of that
17 Mitch.

18

19 MADAME CHAIR BERNS: Get on it. And I
20 think, too, I mean that does lead back to -- I mean it
21 is setting the stage for, you know, for tribes to look
22 at, you know, with looking at the data and having it
23 presented to them sets the stage to look at if they are
24 starting to see an influx of the otters, you know, the
25 impacts that it will have in their area so that they
26 can, if need be, protect those areas.

27

28 Oh, gosh I had a thought and now I just
29 totally lost it, what the heck. Okay, lost it.

30

31 Rebecca.

32

33 I'll remember.

34

35 MS. SKINNER: Yeah, I think the most
36 recent set of comments is kind of my point. If there's
37 a problem and the problem is otters, the otters need to
38 be killed, people have the ability to do that, I guess
39 I'm having a hard time understanding why it's ending up
40 with us and then why do we need this study, and then
41 even once the data comes out, unless you're going to
42 actually do a management plan for otters, how does the
43 data change the situation.

44

45 But that's my -- and I don't need a
46 response, I mean we've probably spent long enough on
47 this, but that was my last thing.

48

49 MADAME CHAIR BERNS: I had.....

50

1 MR. SIMEONOFF: We don't need to do
2 anything, we need to inform the communities that the
3 sea otters are out there and they need to go get them.

4
5 MADAME CHAIR BERNS: I agree, Mitch.
6 And there is a larger issue that -- it just came back
7 to me, too, it was brought up with -- it was NVA
8 working with AFN on the blood quantum issue, is that a
9 lot of times too we're getting so diluted out that our
10 Native tribal members, often with a lower blood quantum
11 aren't able to go out and harvest or aren't, you know,
12 able to go out and legally harvest and feel good about
13 it. I see that quite often. And being a tagger, it
14 was said to me, when I went through my tagging training
15 that it's not my responsibility, I'm not law
16 enforcement to look at their blood quantum card or even
17 ask for that, they basically want the data and that's
18 the only information that I'm required to get from
19 them, is just about how many otters were in the pod,
20 what area they got them from, you know, the sex of
21 them, those types of things. But I do hear a lot from
22 younger people, younger hunters, the next generation
23 coming up, is that, they're afraid they're going to get
24 in trouble by hunting because they don't have that
25 blood quantum, which is just not fair because we're
26 completely being, you know, it's taking our traditions
27 away from us, you know, basically, is what it is. And,
28 so I mean I agree with what Natasha and what NVA is
29 working with AFN on, that's a whole other issue, but I
30 think it also feeds into this and people not feeling
31 okay about harvesting the otters.

32
33 Coral.

34
35 MS. CHERNOFF: This is Coral Chernoff.

36
37 I guess I was looking -- well, I'm
38 going to say again, I'm going to respond to Rebecca
39 even though she didn't need a response.

40
41 (Laughter)

42
43 MS. CHERNOFF: My idea with getting
44 data is I feel like as a Board we can get all this
45 information into one place and these people who keep
46 coming to the meetings or people who are sitting here,
47 they can get all this information as we're getting it
48 so they can view it, and realize that there is a
49 problem or not a problem.

50

1 I guess also, you know, and then we'll
2 get into more discussion maybe and maybe it'll spur
3 something, like maybe in Sun'aq Tribe or, you know,
4 Melissa, up here, she has friends that call her from
5 other villages, maybe it will spur somebody to go, oh,
6 yeah, let's see we have 16,000 otters, if they're an
7 issue, we have, what a thousand Natives living on this
8 island, probably 600 can hunt otters, let's go get five
9 each. So instead of people -- maybe we can help take
10 that step for people to be able to really look at this
11 issue and then maybe it'll spark something that'll go,
12 oh, we can solve our own problem, you know, and -- or
13 maybe, now, that we're having this discussion, we hear
14 this discussion all the time, maybe with some data and
15 some discussion people will say, oh, are we looking to
16 do something about that. Because, you know, we've
17 never had this discussion before, we just hear that the
18 otters are eating the shellfish.

19
20 And then also my experience is
21 different than other people's experience. So we have
22 two totally different experiences.

23
24 And I don't know that we can agree that
25 there's a problem or not so I think we need to maybe
26 look at taking that step to figure out is there a
27 problem or not.

28
29 MADAME CHAIR BERNS: Tom.

30
31 MR. SCHWANTES: I think the bottom line
32 for me is, is the otter population creating a
33 subsistence shortage issue. That's the bottom line.
34 And then obviously there's nothing we can do, as a
35 Board, to deal with that issue. I mean we're going to
36 get the information and then we can get it out to the
37 public, yeah, this is part of the problem why you're
38 having the issue, but there's really nothing we can do,
39 we can't encourage -- I mean.....

40
41 MADAME CHAIR BERNS: Well, put signs
42 up.

43
44 (Laughter)

45
46 MR. SCHWANTES: You can.

47
48 (Laughter)

49
50 MS. TRUMBLE: Madame Chair, this is

1 Della.

2

3 MADAME CHAIR BERNS: Yes, Della.

4

5 MS. TRUMBLE: You know, just to throw
6 this out there but when I talked about that community
7 liaison, this is one of those good outreach projects
8 for people to be doing in the villages.

9

10 MADAME CHAIR BERNS: Thank you, Della.

11

12 Rebecca.

13

14 MS. SKINNER: Yeah, I think I agree
15 with that. So I realized I did not state kind of my
16 underlying concern with -- so requesting data and
17 producing reports that already exist doesn't take a lot
18 of time, but if we're looking for a study that actually
19 shows whether otters are creating a shortage with
20 shellfish I think that's going to take a lot more, you
21 know, resource time and Staff time, and that's why I'm
22 asking, well, what is the point of this, where is it
23 going, because we're utilizing resources to do this
24 work and if there's not, to me, a clear purpose to it
25 or an appropriate purpose, where, kind of the system in
26 which we're working, we don't have a surplus of
27 resources, so I just want to make sure that whatever
28 we're asking for that, you know, we've thought about
29 the level of time and amount of resource it's going to
30 take and that whatever the output of that work is,
31 we're going to be able to do something with it, or we
32 actually have a plan for what we're going to do with
33 it.

34

35 MR. SCHWANTES: I guess what I'm
36 thinking is, we're going to throw it out there and
37 before we actually get to a point where we spend a lot
38 of money or some agency spends a lot of money doing the
39 research we're going to have an opportunity to say,
40 okay, what are our priorities, do we have something
41 else that's much more of a priority that would be of
42 much better use of these funds than doing this study.
43 And so I think here we're throwing it out, yes, it's a
44 potential problem, but when we get right down to
45 spending the money, is there something out there that's
46 more important than doing this, and, if so, then I
47 think as a RAC we would obviously support the project
48 that is a lot more valuable than this one.

49

50 MADAME CHAIR BERNS: Pat.

1 MS. TRUMBLE: Madame Chair, this is
2 Della.
3
4 MADAME CHAIR BERNS: Yes, go ahead,
5 Della, and then Pat.
6
7 MS. TRUMBLE: Sea otters fall under
8 marine mammals so this is basically through another
9 agency, isn't that correct.
10
11 MR. SIMEONOFF: That's correct.
12
13 MADAME CHAIR BERNS: The Fish and
14 Wildlife Service also does the, well we report back to
15 them on the -- or they provide us a report on them and
16 then the harvesters also report to Fish and Wildlife
17 Service.
18
19 Pat.
20
21 MR. HOLMES: Madame Chair.
22
23 MS. TRUMBLE: The reason I bring this
24 up is because every fall is I know we used to have the
25 Aleut Marine Mammals Commission and Peggy Osterbeck is
26 on the board for this, and it seems like maybe there's
27 another organization, I think, Mitch, aren't you
28 involved with it. But isn't it a matter of notifying
29 these different organizations that are basically on the
30 ground to start looking into this issue.
31
32 MR. SIMEONOFF: Yes.
33
34 MS. TRUMBLE: Thank you.
35
36 MR. SIMEONOFF: We have the Steller Sea
37 Lions and Sea Otter Commission, we should turn it over
38 to them.
39
40 MADAME CHAIR BERNS: Pat, and then
41 Coral.
42
43 MR. HOLMES: Madame Chair. To answer
44 Della's question, and to have a little fun with Tom,
45 about five years ago he was ready to choke me over the
46 whole discussion of Womens Bay crab because they were
47 so important and, you know, we don't know where the
48 money's coming from, where the money's going. I can
49 see, having watched the agencies through time have
50 small projects here in town. Fish and Game used to

1 have an unfunded project for years diving on tanner
2 crab, Guy Powell used to do it, unfunded. Maybe they
3 need money now to do it. The same with NOAA, their
4 whole project on the crab pots was part of their
5 studies that they were doing. I see what we're doing
6 is we're building a community consensus on identifying
7 a problem, which is what we can help with, just saying
8 well what information is there, we think there's a
9 problem. I think the little project I suggested would
10 be something that could be done reasonably well, where
11 you incorporate the schools, the tribes, the two
12 agencies in town that have people that sit around that
13 are frankly bored to death with writing reports and
14 want to get out and play in the water, you could borrow
15 six crab pots from Fish and Game, you could use the
16 boat, the boat may very well be transferred to Fish and
17 Game and then just given back to the school, but you
18 could have a very small number of people, multiple
19 agencies studying that bay. Because it takes three
20 years for king crab to recruit big enough to where you
21 can see it. They've been doing studies here bringing
22 down little not -- little -- just little crabs smaller
23 than the ends of this pen and letting them go and
24 spending tons of money or no money at all, but studying
25 them to see if they could recover them.

26

27 Well, Womens Bay, just like Alitak and
28 Moesher Bay, that is the last nursery area on this end
29 of the island for king crab. There will be a few of
30 them that move in there every March. So if you had a
31 program where we could get the local folks interested
32 that are studying these critters to go back to doing
33 some diving, taking some crab pots and doing
34 mark/recapture, see what the growth rates are on the
35 crab then you're having a way to show the world, all
36 the tree huggers, that, gee, we're studying what's
37 happened here, and we can even document anecdotally
38 that our Native friends have been keeping the otters --
39 we know what's happened, the crab are gone, mostly, so
40 if we study how things change through time and we buy
41 Coral a really nice Winnebago to sit out there and
42 gather her materials, and say geez there hasn't been
43 any there and we watch this population in this last
44 nursery grow, then we can show the world -- or at least
45 the Alaska agencies that, yes, some very selective
46 removals and maintenance of the population there, that
47 we can do positive things for people's subsistence.

48

49 And dungeness it only takes them two
50 years, three years to get to market size, tanner crab

1 is a little less, the kings is around seven years. So I
2 mean this could line up a really neat local project for
3 the biologists here, for the schools, for the tribes to
4 where we can just say, gee, we found this problem, we
5 know it was there and if we could get something like
6 that funded, then that, in my mind, would be the goal
7 of just trying to pull this information together. And
8 different people going to talk to the agencies, to Bob
9 Foy and to Nick Sagalkin at Fish and Game and say, hey,
10 we need this done. The tribes can do that. And the
11 tribes can interact with the Seal and Sea Lion
12 Commission, maybe we can just somehow get others worked
13 into that. Because we can show that, yeah, we care
14 about the otters, we don't want them all killed -- I
15 had to qualify that, but, anyway, we can show a cause
16 and effect and then we can show a solution in the long
17 run without having to spend millions of dollars, short
18 of shipping all the damned otters to San Francisco.

19

20 Anyway, that's my thoughts, Madame
21 Chair.

22

23 MADAME CHAIR BERNS: Thank you. I'm
24 going to go to Coral and then I've got a comment as
25 well.

26

27 Go ahead.

28

29 MS. CHERNOFF: So in looking at this
30 and listening to the comment, I guess I would like to
31 suggest that all we're doing is we're identifying that
32 sea otters have been brought up many, many times. And
33 recommend that for the next meeting can we just have
34 presentations on sea otters. Fish and Wildlife Service
35 sea otter surveys, the tagging information, if we could
36 have a presentation on that. Maybe we could have
37 someone from the Steller Sea Lion and Sea Otter
38 Commission come in and talk about issues they're
39 working with. Maybe any data that they have. And any
40 other -- if there's sea otter studies that have been
41 done at universities or specific days that actually
42 show that, you know, they've decimated populations,
43 things like that, very specific data and research
44 presentations is what I'd like to see, just because the
45 sea otter issue keeps coming up.

46

47 It seems to be something people want to
48 know about.

49

50 MR. HOLMES: Maybe if we do that for

1 the topic for the joint meeting. It's a big topic for
2 half of Alaska.

3

4 MADAME CHAIR BERNS: Thank you, Coral
5 and Pat. And just in the interest of time, we have
6 five more items to address here, and then we need to go
7 into our meeting schedule and we have Staff members
8 that have a flight to catch here shortly, so just in
9 the interest of that, I just want to let all know if we
10 can just capture our points that we want captured here
11 and then this will be circulated for review and for
12 comment, and then following that, it will be on our
13 next agenda for review and approval.

14

15 So I mean I value.....

16

17 MR. SIMEONOFF: Madame Chair.

18

19 MADAME CHAIR BERNS:these
20 conversations but just in the interest of time I want
21 us to keep that in mind, please.

22

23 Go ahead, Mitch.

24

25 MR. SIMEONOFF: Yeah, I like Coral's
26 suggestion. We take it off the annual report and have
27 all this information brought to us at our next meeting.
28 The problem is not going to go away, but you know all
29 the information we've been talking about now for the
30 past hour, we're not getting anywhere, but if we
31 brought it all to our next meeting we could have
32 something to bring back to our village and say there it
33 is, that's the problem, this is our solution, let's go
34 for it.

35

36 MADAME CHAIR BERNS: Thank you, Mitch.
37 I don't think she was -- she was not proposing to take
38 it off because it is an issue that continues to be
39 brought up to us; is that correct Coral.

40

41 MS. CHERNOFF: Yes, that's correct. I
42 was just being specific about that we still want to
43 talk about this and let's bring these bits of data to
44 our next meeting.

45

46 MR. SIMEONOFF: Yeah, I'd take it off
47 the annual report because we're not going to -- they're
48 going to steer us in a different direction anyway,
49 either to Fish and Game or to the Stellar Sea Lion
50 Commission.

1 MADAME CHAIR BERNS: I'm not sure how
2 we'd want to address that. I would personally like to
3 see it left on there, and I think that I see several
4 nods here at the table as well.

5
6 MS. TRUMBLE: Madame Chair, this is
7 Della.

8
9 MADAME CHAIR BERNS: Go ahead, Della.

10
11 MS. TRUMBLE: I think maybe, and,
12 Mitch, if you recall, the issue with Migratory Bird, we
13 actually might have had something in our annual report
14 just to generate that we would like more input from
15 Migratory Birds, and it may be something to just start
16 the process that we need more information from Marine
17 Mammals. Just keep it in the report.

18
19 MADAME CHAIR BERNS: Thank you, Della.

20
21 MR. SIMEONOFF: Okay.

22
23 MADAME CHAIR BERNS: So we are going to
24 move on to No. 6 and if we can, please, keep in mind
25 time.....

26
27 MR. SIMEONOFF: So, Pat, don't talk so
28 much.

29
30 (Laughter)

31
32 MADAME CHAIR BERNS: Put your hand
33 down, Pat.

34
35 (Laughter)

36
37 MADAME CHAIR BERNS: His mic's already
38 on.

39
40 MR. HOLMES: Respect your elders.

41
42 (Laughter)

43
44 MR. HOLMES: I was going to suggest --
45 I was going to suggest that each point, that the person
46 that made the point just go through and edit it and
47 then let everybody else jump on it and then that way we
48 could move along quicker, or we could just go from
49 where we're at and email it out, where we are.

50

1 But the next one is on the airplane, so
2 Madame Chair, I'd just like to do that quick and I'll
3 try not to talk, other than where I put input -- or if
4 there's a question and answer.

5
6 Is that okay Mitch.

7
8 MR. SIMEONOFF: I wasn't referring to
9 you, Pat.

10
11 (Laughter)

12
13 MADAME CHAIR BERNS: Sounds good.

14
15 Okay. Karen, Item 6.

16
17 MS. DEATHERAGE: Item 6 reads, Madame
18 Chair, and Council.

19
20 Kodiak salmon subsistence concerns on
21 south end of Kodiak Island.

22
23 MADAME CHAIR BERNS: What?

24
25 MS. DEATHERAGE: That is Issue 6,
26 somebody brought that up. This is not a
27 recommendation, this is, yeah, another issue.

28
29 MR. HOLMES: I confess on six.

30
31 It was basically taking the discussions
32 from those proposals that we had. There's a couple
33 real juicy sentences in there talking about justifying
34 the shortages of salmon in Akalura and Upper Station,
35 and then using Red Lake as a comparison to provide
36 baseline data to provide a means for hopefully
37 assisting improvements in sockeye subsistence for the
38 folks on the south end of the island. And, I don't
39 know, maybe you can just grab that back from the
40 transcript because I don't think I could say it twice.

41
42 MADAME CHAIR BERNS: Thank you, Pat.
43 That was actually recaptured in Issue No. 1 and
44 bulleted.

45
46 MR. HOLMES: Okay, kill it.

47
48 MADAME CHAIR BERNS: Yes. Remove it
49 and moving along to Izembek management.

50

1 Go Karen.

2

3 (Laughter)

4

5 MR. HOLMES: Okay, still guilty. Just
6 go back there eliminate the -- it says Izembek
7 management concerns about commitment, just eliminate
8 everything to commitment, above, first line.....

9

10 MS. DEATHERAGE: This.

11

12 MR. HOLMES: No, whoa, first line,
13 okay, and then just say eliminate the change --
14 eliminate concern -- just stay right there -- and about
15 -- okay, the KARAC -- just stay right at the start,
16 just stay right there, go back -- okay. Okay, our RAC,
17 Kodiak, KARAC had previously received a commitment from
18 the Regional Fish and Wildlife Service to always have
19 an aircraft available at the Izembek Refuge for their
20 surveys -- period.

21

22 We understand that they are going to
23 receive a new aircraft -- period.

24

25 Let's see, okay, and then let's just
26 start eliminating that -- to having new aircraft --
27 take that out -- and we don't need commitment because
28 we had that before and you can eliminate all that
29 because we can just make that statement and if they
30 don't believe it they can go back and look in the
31 transcripts, but we got it down.

32

33 So, therefore, we expect that there
34 will be a functional airplane for the Staff to do their
35 critical surveys of caribou which have been long
36 identified as an endangered subsistence resource for
37 the Alaska Peninsula -- period.

38

39 And then up above where the their is --
40 their caribou surveys, and then back it up, I don't
41 know if you need a semicolon or a comma, and then just
42 eliminate the last end and just -- does that get to the
43 point then. No, we don't need that -- oh, yeah,
44 caribou which have long -- has long been identified as
45 a subsistence resource problem -- drop down after
46 resource and between for -- problem on the Alaska
47 Peninsula.

48

49 And that's it. Just want to make sure
50 the airplane's going to be there. However you want to

1 phrase that politely. Let's see, no, we need concern,
2 let's just back up -- please assure that this
3 commitment will be followed through on -- period -- and
4 then eliminate the rest. That whole last sentence can
5 go away.

6
7 Did that kind of address it folks.

8
9 (Council nods affirmatively)

10
11 MR. HOLMES: So to read it back to
12 Mitch and Della.

13
14 Our KARAC has previously received a
15 commitment from the Region 7 Fish and
16 Wildlife Service to always have
17 aircraft available to Izembek for their
18 surveys. We understand that they're to
19 receive a new aircraft, therefore, we
20 expect that there will be a functional
21 airplane available to the Staff to do
22 their caribou surveys. Caribou have
23 long been identified as a subsistence
24 resource problem on the Alaska
25 Peninsula. Please assure that this
26 commitment will be followed through on.

27
28 MADAME CHAIR BERNS: Tom.

29
30 MS. TRUMBLE: Madame Chair. Pat. I
31 think, Pat, that's fine, but I also recall that we had
32 this in one of our letters before and were given
33 assurances. But I hate to kind of say this or do this,
34 but as we move along for whatever's left, can we just
35 kind of put what's outlined and maybe those of us who
36 have contributed or wanted it on there can edit it by
37 email, as a possible suggestion.

38
39 But, thanks, Pat, I think that's a good
40 thing.

41
42 MADAME CHAIR BERNS: Thank you, Della.

43
44 MR. HOLMES: Yeah, that's a good point,
45 Della. Why don't we just draft that as a letter from
46 the Chairman and also leave it in there as a concern
47 because it's kept -- keeps being a concern. But send a
48 letter to the Regional Office with that and leave it in
49 as a list of problems just so that we just continue
50 waving the flag and hope that they look at it sometime.

1 MADAME CHAIR BERNS: Okay, thank you.
2 Let's move along to Issue No. 7 please.
3
4 Karen.
5
6 MS. DEATHERAGE: Okay. Chair -- I'm
7 sorry.
8
9 (Pause)
10
11 MADAME CHAIR BERNS: Yes, Karen, go
12 ahead.
13
14 MS. DEATHERAGE: Madame Chair. The
15 Issue No. 7 was concern about locations of the
16 meetings. The Council expressed that it would like to
17 meet in local communities. There was concern over
18 spending \$70,000, for example, on caribou removal, fox
19 removal on Chirikof, cost of the RDT meeting in Kodiak,
20 but we can't meet in local communities; this is not
21 appropriate. The RAC feels that the region is not
22 represented and it is important to meet in these
23 communities.
24
25 MADAME CHAIR BERNS: Mr. Schwantes.
26
27 MR. SCHWANTES: And I'd think that we
28 just leave it as it is.
29
30 MADAME CHAIR BERNS: Thank you, Mr.
31 Schwantes.
32
33 MR. HOLMES: Remote communities. Not
34 local, but remote communities.
35
36 MADAME CHAIR BERNS: Rural.
37
38 MR. HOLMES: Yeah, rural.
39
40 MADAME CHAIR BERNS: Rural. Okay.
41 Thank you, any more comments.
42
43 MS. SKINNER: Yes, I have a comment.
44
45 MADAME CHAIR BERNS: Rebecca.
46
47 MS. SKINNER: Yeah, so the sentence our
48 region is not represented and it is important to meet
49 in these communities, I guess I'm assuming that's
50 referring to the Aleutians, but maybe some

1 clarification on what that means.
2
3 MS. TRUMBLE: Madame Chair, this is
4 Della.
5
6 MADAME CHAIR BERNS: Yes, Della, go
7 ahead.
8
9 MS. TRUMBLE: I think the rural -- it's
10 important to meet more within the rural communities
11 that our region represents and not just the regional
12 hubs, which the regional hubs are Cold Bay and Kodiak.
13
14 MADAME CHAIR BERNS: Thank you, Della.
15 That is noted.
16
17 MS. TRUMBLE: Thank you.
18
19 MADAME CHAIR BERNS: Any more additions
20 for No. 7.
21
22 (No comments)
23
24 MADAME CHAIR BERNS: Okay. We'll move
25 along to Issue No. 8.
26
27 Coral.
28
29 MS. CHERNOFF: Just, on the last issue,
30 on the wording there. I'd like to see where it says
31 the rural communities are not being represented due to
32 our restrictions, because we are also a rural
33 communities I would like that wording changed. I would
34 just say all communities are not being represented or
35 some people feel that all communities are not
36 represented.
37
38 Thank you.
39
40 MADAME CHAIR BERNS: Thank you, Coral.
41
42 Pat.
43
44 MR. HOLMES: Due to -- it says due to
45 our restrictions, due to our travel restrictions.
46
47 MADAME CHAIR BERNS: Thank you.
48 Anything else on Issue No. 7.
49
50 (No comments)

1 MADAME CHAIR BERNS: Moving along to
2 Issue No. 8.
3
4 MR. HOLMES: Excellent.
5
6 MADAME CHAIR BERNS: Karen.
7
8 MS. DEATHERAGE: Madame Chair. Issue 8
9 is regional liaisons. The RAC has expressed to provide
10 regional liaisons in the communities and these liaisons
11 can be individuals who either themselves survey what
12 the community is seeing or have the communities report
13 directly to them. The position would be helpful in
14 both the Aleutians as well as Kodiak. It's beneficial
15 to the RAC and the RAC's ability to get the information
16 that they need. It would help with walrus, sea lions
17 and sea otters sightings.
18
19 MS. TRUMBLE: Madame Chair.
20
21 MADAME CHAIR BERNS: Yes, Della, and
22 then Rebecca.
23
24 MS. TRUMBLE: Thank you. We brought
25 this up because of a position in the Izembek budget for
26 quite a number of years and it was never really
27 advertised but the reason behind the position was
28 trying to have someone that works for the Refuge that's
29 local within the region that has -- can create a good
30 rapport and outreach with the communities, you know,
31 within the area. I think it would be a good thing when
32 you're looking at trying to work with some of the
33 tribes or communities on what's being seen and if you
34 have people out there that work for you, you know, a
35 wildlife resource department, to kind of keep a head's
36 up on getting information back that, you know, you have
37 somebody to go to to work with, I think. And like I
38 say, that position is there, I don't see why they don't
39 push to promote it.
40
41 And the other concern is having someone
42 that's from the region that knows the people, knows the
43 different fisheries, knows the issues surrounding
44 subsistence and the laws because when you hire somebody
45 that doesn't have a clue, it's a learning curve and,
46 you know, it's very frustrating. I mean I've seen it
47 too many times happen with Izembek over the years, of
48 people not understanding what the subsistence laws are.
49
50 Thank you.

1 MADAME CHAIR BERNS: Thank you, Della.

2

3 Rebecca.

4

5 MS. SKINNER: I think Della answered
6 this, although the phone was breaking up.

7

8 I was going to ask who funds this
9 position, which would get down to this specific
10 recommendation but I understood Della to say that this
11 is a Federal Refuge -- Federal Refuges would fund it,
12 and so the recommendation would be that the Refuges
13 fund these regional liaisons.

14

15 Della, did I understand the funding or
16 responsibility of this position correctly.

17

18 MS. TRUMBLE: Yes. If it's within
19 their budget to, please, make effort, you know, make
20 that effort to have that position hired and working
21 with the various Refuges.

22

23 MADAME CHAIR BERNS: Yes, okay.

24

25 MR. KRON: Yeah, Tom Kron here with
26 OSM. And I guess a question, Della, and others. We
27 had a refuge information technician here that my
28 understanding goes out to the villages in this area.
29 Some of the Refuges have quite a number of refuge
30 information technicians. This regional liaison, is
31 this trying to increase the refuge information -- the
32 RIT base.

33

34 MS. TRUMBLE: Yes, that is the correct
35 position title. And I guess I'm really maybe more
36 after Izembek to make sure this position is hired. And
37 like I say whether it's a person that can work from one
38 of the communities that can work with them, I think
39 it's important to get more people -- somebody that's
40 from the region involved in. I'm almost positive these
41 communities could help with setting up an office space,
42 you know, if they need to but I can't just say how
43 important it is.

44

45 MADAME CHAIR BERNS: Thank you.

46

47 Pat.

48

49 MR. HOLMES: Della. Yeah, here in
50 Kodiak we have Tonya Lee is our information and

1 education tech and that's her assignment and I know
2 some of the other places in the state the Refuge have a
3 staff member assigned to it. Maybe approaching it from
4 the point of saying, you know, a regional thing, would
5 be -- a comment that the Refuges on the Alaska
6 Peninsula would have someone that their duty -- major
7 duty was to work as a liaison and maintain continuity
8 with the local tribes and folks in the village in their
9 immediate area. Because I know for all my friends out
10 west, you know, we talk about the Peninsula region but,
11 you know, a Fed thinks differently, but if you could
12 maybe get them to make a devoted position at Izembek,
13 which is closer to the other villages there so then,
14 you know, you'd have somebody to -- that was like your
15 Tonya Lee; what do you think of that concept. Because
16 getting a new position, they're trying to hire new
17 biologists and getting a new manager and I just hope to
18 heck they get a decent one -- a decent manager and a
19 good biologist but I hope, you know, they could assign
20 somebody that's there to fulfill that role. And I know
21 one of the things when Tonya went to work for the
22 Refuge is that they -- here in Kodiak, they didn't have
23 anybody to fulfill that role and I don't think there
24 was maybe two people at the Refuge at the time that had
25 been here more than three years, and so she's the
26 consistent link to the community. And I have a feeling
27 that's what you're trying to achieve, and I hope that
28 they can find and eventually fill one of their existing
29 positions with a resource tech like her.

30

31 And, anyway, good luck to you.

32

33 MADAME CHAIR BERNS: Thank you, Pat.

34

35 Rebecca.

36

37 MS. SKINNER: Under Issue 8, can we
38 lead off by saying how much the RAC values and
39 appreciates the RIT positions. I think Della has kind
40 of described a situation that I've observed locally,
41 which I think the RIT position is not valued as much as
42 some of the people that come in with, you know, high
43 level degrees and that kind of a thing, but I think the
44 RIT positions are very important. And I think
45 reiterating our Council values and appreciates that is
46 important.

47

48 Thank you.

49

50 MS. TRUMBLE: Madame Chair, this is

1 Della.

2

3 MADAME CHAIR BERNS: Yes, Della.

4

5 MS. TRUMBLE: Yes, on both the last two
6 speakers. And I think when you have a situation now,
7 like in Izembek, and the turnover has been with the --
8 with the managers has been pretty high and just people
9 -- you at least hope we can get somebody that'll be
10 around for awhile, you know, for -- with Izembek and,
11 you know, maybe Alaska Maritime like Kodiak has, that
12 we can keep -- you know, keep some sense of foundation
13 and getting a better relationship with both Izembek and
14 Alaska Maritime in the future.

15

16 Thank you.

17

18 MADAME CHAIR BERNS: Thank you. Coral.

19

20 MS. CHERNOFF: I think in that when we
21 mention the RIT position, if we could just express that
22 in our RIT, I mean we have so much appreciation for
23 her, she's local, she grew up here, she has family
24 here, she knows -- just like what Della was saying,
25 it's very important to have somebody and I think that's
26 why Tonya's been so successful here is because she
27 really knows this area and she really knows the animals
28 and she really knows the people. And I think that's
29 really important. If we could express that.

30

31 MR. HOLMES: Madame Chair.

32

33 MADAME CHAIR BERNS: Yes, Pat.

34

35 MR. HOLMES: Just a brief -- sorry, let
36 me try and get my voice back, Della.

37

38 You know I was truly impressed with the
39 -- Max niece and the granddaughter and daughter when I
40 met her when you had that really wonderful reception
41 for us at King Cove, and it would be just so wonderful
42 if you could find somebody that's sharp like her where
43 you could help facilitate getting a young lady like
44 that, where she would have -- be able to make an
45 application for the Refuge Manager, because, you know,
46 that's what you really need, is somebody that's not
47 going to be boogying out all the time, but knows and
48 respects the place. And I -- I'll try and plant that
49 seed in the few decision-makers that I know. And if I
50 ever get into the right handler at Auntie M's (ph)

1 office, you know, that would improve, I think,
2 interactions with the Federal government, completely,
3 is if they looked at that type of position where they
4 have a turnover every year or two and try to get
5 somebody local. They look at a local person as being
6 something evil and somebody connected with strip mining
7 or something, I don't know.

8

9 But I hope you get all the success in
10 the world.

11

12 MADAME CHAIR BERNS: Thank you, Pat.

13

14 I think that we really need to stay on
15 task here, just so that we can move through a little
16 bit more quickly. So if you do have comments, keep
17 them directly related to what we are writing into our
18 annual report so that we can get moving along and our
19 folks here that are with us will not miss their flight.

20

21 Thank you.

22

23 Any more on Issue 8.

24

25 (No comments)

26

27 MADAME CHAIR BERNS: Hearing and seeing
28 none, Issue 9, please, Karen.

29

30 MS. DEATHERAGE: Madame Chair. Issue 9
31 is on the CAG Alaska caribou issue. And it got
32 expanded to other issues but it -- there's concern that
33 it took Congressional leadership to encourage the
34 Maritime Refuge to donate edible meat from the CAG
35 Alaska caribou harvest this past spring, I believe it
36 was. In that same light there's also concern about
37 what happens to the fur from the fox that are removed
38 from the islands as well as cattle from Sand Point and
39 Chirikof. The Council would like to express the need
40 for treating these animals with respect and if they're
41 going to be removing invasive or non-invasive species
42 and there are subsistence issues then the Federal
43 agencies should be reaching out to the communities for
44 not just meat donations but other useful parts of the
45 animal, otherwise this is viewed by the communities as
46 waste being carried out by Federal agencies.

47

48 Some of the recommendations would be to
49 engage the members in the local communities or the
50 Coast Guard to help work with the agency in a cost

1 effective way to make this happen so there is not waste
2 of these resources.

3

4 MADAME CHAIR BERNS: Thank you, Karen.

5

6 Comments.

7

8 Coral.

9

10 MS. CHERNOFF: I would like maybe to
11 express in there that within their own harvesting of
12 wildlife they talk about wanton waste and how that's
13 prohibited and there they are, and would like them to
14 follow their same wanton waste rulings as we all have
15 to follow.

16

17 Thank you.

18

19 MADAME CHAIR BERNS: Thank you, Coral.

20 Any further discussion.

21

22 (No comments)

23

24 MADAME CHAIR BERNS: I think that
25 captured that, appreciate it.

26

27 Any other issues.

28

29 (No comments)

30

31 MADAME CHAIR BERNS: Karen, are we
32 done.

33

34 MS. DEATHERAGE: (Nods affirmatively)

35

36 MADAME CHAIR BERNS: Wow.

37

38 (Laughter)

39

40 MADAME CHAIR BERNS: Okay. So Karen
41 will go ahead and circulate this draft annual report
42 after it gets cleaned up a little bit. She will
43 circulate that to the RAC for further review and then
44 it will be on our agenda for approval at our next
45 meeting.

46

47 Moving right along to Item 13, future
48 meeting dates. Winter 2016 All Council meeting update,
49 meeting calendar, which is on Page 160 of your booklet.

50

1 Okay, Karen, were you going to address
2 this.

3
4 MS. DEATHERAGE: Madame Chair. Members
5 of the Council.

6
7 As you have heard the OSM is planning
8 an All Councils meeting to occur on March 7th in
9 Anchorage, Alaska and we have secured the Egan Center
10 for the meeting facilities. And in your book we have a
11 draft agenda for the joint Federal Subsistence Advisory
12 Councils. The first day will be a joint meeting where
13 we are going to be trying to cover topics that are of
14 interest to all the Councils. What I have been told is
15 the planned protocol for Councils to actually report on
16 issues that are important to them or the Councils take
17 on these issues is that one member of the Council,
18 likely the Chair, will be asked to report that
19 information and that is to keep the time limitations
20 because we just have one day.

21
22 Following that day, we've got five days
23 scheduled for the actual meeting, there's going to be
24 concurrent workshops on various topics for the
25 Councils. A lot of these topics were decided at the
26 Federal Subsistence Board meeting in January, when we
27 had an All Councils' Chair meeting, but there is space
28 for additional topics if there's interest. Each
29 Council will have one day where they will meet with
30 their own particular Council for one day of this
31 meeting, so you can talk about issues that are
32 important just for your Council. But otherwise you'll
33 have the opportunity to attend the concurrent sessions.
34 And they will be repeated so if you happen to have a
35 meeting on the day that we're talking about Roberts
36 Rules, for example, that topic will be covered again
37 another day.

38
39 As I said there's going to be various
40 topics but there are some areas where we are looking
41 for additional topics and I think we discussed earlier
42 -- or the Council discussed earlier the opportunity to
43 perhaps look at the FRMP. While that's going to be
44 discussed the first day in the joint session there will
45 be limited time for that, so if you feel that an
46 additional session or two on that topic is needed then
47 this is something I can propose to the OSM.

48
49 MADAME CHAIR BERNS: Pat.
50

1 MR. HOLMES: Madame Chair. Some of the
2 things that we bounced on that I can see that we need
3 to interact with some of the other Councils, one would
4 be sea otters, and that would be our region, I think
5 there's like Southcentral, Cook Inlet, Prince William
6 Sound and Southeast, but particularly Southeast, I
7 think all the Gulf of Alaska RACs could use some
8 discussions on those.

9
10 I think we talked about earlier Rebecca
11 mentioned on the fisheries research, the need for us to
12 have a session to interact with Bristol Bay so that
13 perhaps we could jointly get them to look at our
14 different -- subareas differently.

15
16 And then one thing that's come up
17 several times from the Southeast RAC, I don't know
18 where it would fit, if it would fit on the first day
19 somewhere or what, is their concerns about customary
20 and traditional determinations in terms of what they
21 see as the correct way for the RAC.....

22
23 MADAME CHAIR BERNS: It's on there,
24 Pat.

25
26 MR. HOLMES: Oh, it is, I beg your
27 pardon, I'm going blind, too, as well as dementia.

28
29 MADAME CHAIR BERNS: Karen.

30
31 MR. SIMEONOFF: This is Mitch.

32
33 MADAME CHAIR BERNS: Go ahead, Mitch.

34
35 MR. SIMEONOFF: Are you suggesting our
36 meeting day in this week.

37
38 MS. DEATHERAGE: Member Simeonoff,
39 through the Chair. I'm sorry, yeah, I had the wrong
40 day, the KARAC meeting is scheduled for Friday -- all
41 day Friday. I just noticed the typo because they gave
42 you Region 10.

43
44 MADAME CHAIR BERNS: Do we need to make
45 any.....

46
47 (Pause)

48
49 MS. DEATHERAGE: Madame Chair. I don't
50 believe there's any action items that are required of

1 the Council. I think we're just looking for any input
2 you might have with this proposed schedule. And it
3 sounds like you do have some input that I'm going to
4 relay to the OSM. And one of the other recommendations
5 that we could look at is to perhaps get you together in
6 an evening session or a during the day session with the
7 Bristol Bay Council to look at the FRMP proposals and
8 how you might work together in the future for those
9 proposals.

10

11 MADAME CHAIR BERNS: Thank you very
12 much, Karen.

13

14 So if anyone has any other additional
15 items of interest they'd like to see addressed at that
16 point in time, you can please email Karen.

17

18 Moving along to select our fall 2016
19 meeting date and location, Page 165 in your packet.

20

21 MR. HOLMES: Madame Chair. I'd suggest
22 that we meet in either Old Harbor or Adak.

23

24 MR. SIMEONOFF: Just keep it at Adak
25 until we get there.

26

27 (Laughter)

28

29 MADAME CHAIR BERNS: I agree let's go
30 to Adak.

31

32 (Laughter)

33

34 MS. TRUMBLE: Madame Chair.

35

36 MADAME CHAIR BERNS: Yes, Della.

37

38 MS. TRUMBLE: I would possibly, if
39 you're going to use Adak, as a back up in the Aleutian
40 region I would suggest you do maybe Sand Point because
41 Peter Devine is in Sand Point and he's the migratory
42 bird person, and I'm sure it's a heck of a lot cheaper
43 to fly to Sand Point than it is to Cold Bay, if that's
44 still an issue.

45

46 MADAME CHAIR BERNS: Okay, Karen, can
47 you investigate that and look at the cost differences
48 for both and a proposal.

49

50 MS. DEATHERAGE: Madame Chair. I would

1 be more than happy to do that.

2

3 I guess I have another proposal when
4 the Council's ready to hear it.

5

6 MADAME CHAIR BERNS: I think we're
7 ready.

8

9 (Laughter)

10

11 MR. SIMEONOFF: We're ready.

12

13 (Laughter)

14

15 MS. DEATHERAGE: Madame Chair and
16 Mitch. As you know the -- Aaron Poe from the Fish and
17 Wildlife Service and the Landscape Conservation
18 Cooperative presented the Aleutian Bering Island Sea --
19 Bering Islands LCC., and they are very involved in
20 sponsoring an Aleutian Life Forum next fall in 2016 in
21 Dutch Harbor. I sent out an email to all of you to
22 gage interest in possibly having the RAC meeting in
23 conjunction with that Aleutian Life Forum where up to
24 13 tribes may be represented from the Aleutian region.
25 I have already put together a proposal and a cost
26 analysis and put that forward to the leadership team at
27 the OSM to see if we could look at pre-approval, if the
28 Council elected to go to Dutch Harbor during that time
29 period, it would likely work out to one and a half days
30 for the Council meeting and one and a half days for all
31 the Council members to be able to attend some of the
32 workshops at the Aleutian Life Forum.

33

34 So this is something that is available
35 to you to either propose to the OSM that you meet in
36 conjunction with the Aleutian Life Forum, and, if so,
37 we can process the cost analysis for that and see if we
38 can get leadership approval.

39

40 Thank you.

41

42 MADAME CHAIR BERNS: And what are the
43 dates for that Karen.

44

45 MS. DEATHERAGE: The dates that were
46 told -- is August 13th through the 19th, so that's
47 another consideration of how that might impact fishing
48 and/or hunting seasons for the Council members and
49 their communities.

50

1 MADAME CHAIR BERNS: Mr. Holmes.
2
3 MR. HOLMES: Yeah, I had forgotten
4 that. I would like to -- as much as I would love to hit
5 Adak, I think that deserves some really good
6 opportunity for us to network in a tremendous way,
7 would be to go to Dutch Harbor and then if it ends up
8 that we can't do that then we could fall back to one of
9 the other remote places, maybe like Sand Point, like
10 Della suggested and then we could take up some of our
11 other important issues with the Peninsula folks there.
12
13 Thank you, Madame Chair.
14
15 MADAME CHAIR BERNS: Thank you. Do we
16 have any other suggestions for dates.
17
18 MS. TRUMBLE: Madame Chair, this is
19 Della.
20
21 MADAME CHAIR BERNS: Yes, Della.
22
23 MS. TRUMBLE: I don't know if it's
24 possible to have them take a look at those dates and
25 maybe they could consider it to the latter part of
26 August. My concern is basically everybody is doing --
27 either still commercial fishing or subsistence fishing
28 and hunting, or at least fishing in that area in mid-
29 August. But like I said, I don't know if those dates
30 are set in stone, maybe they can kind of tweak them a
31 little bit would be nice.
32
33 MADAME CHAIR BERNS: Go ahead, Karen.
34
35 MS. DEATHERAGE: Member Trumble,
36 through the Chair. I can certainly propose that to the
37 individual that's planning that, it's actually a team
38 of individuals. The Aleutian Pribilof Islands
39 Association is the one who put the proposal in to the
40 BIA to fund this event and my understanding is that the
41 funding has been approved for the tribes to attend and
42 that these dates have been selected but if it is
43 problematic for the Council then I certainly can
44 propose that.
45
46 My conversations with a representative
47 on the LCC is that they would be very excited to have
48 the RAC meeting during that time period.
49
50 Thank you.

1 MADAME CHAIR BERNS: Tom.
2
3 MR. SCHWANTES: Yeah, if for some
4 reason that shouldn't work out then I would suggest we
5 move our meeting to the latter part of September, like
6 we're meeting now, 28th, 29th, somewhere in there, in
7 Sand Point would be fine with me.
8
9 MADAME CHAIR BERNS: Sounds good to me.
10 Anybody else have any other suggestions for meeting
11 dates, times, locations.
12
13 Mr. Holmes.
14
15 MR. HOLMES: If we're going to meet
16 later, I think that we should try to -- Sam Rohrer
17 might have made it in but he got stuck with the weather
18 and if he's finishing up his fall hunts here in
19 September maybe just tentatively look at some time in
20 early October so we can get him because that's his real
21 big area of expertise is wildlife and he's got a lot of
22 experience on the Peninsula and Kodiak, and he is an
23 active guide, and so maybe we could try to contact him
24 and find out what date in the bracket of late
25 September, early October and get that back to our
26 coordinator to see if that would be feasible. Do an
27 email on it or something, because it's just a shame to
28 miss him for, often the most important meetings, where
29 he has got a great expertise.
30
31 MADAME CHAIR BERNS: Tom.
32
33 MR. SCHWANTES: Yeah, I agree with him
34 it would be good to have Sam here but Sam does a lot of
35 goat guiding and the goat season's open to the 20th of
36 October so, you know, those issues are something we
37 need to deal with again.
38
39 MADAME CHAIR BERNS: Can you take those
40 dates that were proposed and work on them.
41
42 MR. SIMEONOFF: Sam made a commitment
43 to be on this board, I mean, he made a commitment when
44 we set the calendar.
45
46 MADAME CHAIR BERNS: Karen.
47
48 MS. DEATHERAGE: Madame Chair. Am I
49 correct in assuming that this Council at this time,
50 which I think would require a vote, would like to meet

1 in Dutch Harbor first, if that is approved by the OSM,
2 and if -- and that would be the dates of August 13th
3 through 19th, unless we can propose a later time in
4 August that would work, otherwise the Council would
5 like to meet in Sand Point in the latter part of
6 September, and that could be pending a later date
7 selection after perhaps speaking with Member Rohrer
8 about his availability.

9

10 MR. SCHWANTES: I'd like to see us
11 tentatively lock up those dates of September 28th and
12 29th so that, if by waiting, if things don't work out
13 in Dutch, the other RACs may select those dates before
14 we have an opportunity to.

15

16 MS. TRUMBLE: Madame Chair.

17

18 MADAME CHAIR BERNS: Yes, Della.

19

20 MS. TRUMBLE: I agree with what was
21 just said. You know, once you get into October you
22 look at the Aleut Corporation meetings for us we start
23 here, and AFN, and October is a busy month for other
24 regional meetings going on.

25

26 MADAME CHAIR BERNS: Rebecca.

27

28 MS. SKINNER: I just want to make a
29 comment on Sam's behalf, that, you know, we all have
30 other commitments and we're meeting now to talk about
31 the meeting schedule, and I don't think it's
32 unreasonable to reach out to Sam to see are there some
33 dates he could commit to, and, Mitch, I understand -- I
34 wasn't at the meeting where he committed to meet today,
35 if that was the case, but, you know, that's the whole
36 point of having discussions about when we're going to
37 meet because we have work commitments, family
38 commitments, other board commitments and I think we
39 need to keep that in mind. But I'm also cognizant that
40 if people made a commitment to come to a meeting and
41 they didn't, I'm not excusing that either.

42

43 Thank you.

44

45 MADAME CHAIR BERNS: Coral.

46

47 MS. CHERNOFF: I would very much like
48 to see us go to Dutch Harbor. I think the opportunity
49 to meet that many people in the area is like a once in
50 a lifetime, as we all know, in Alaska, I mean to gather

1 that many people in our area out on the chain would
2 just be an incredible opportunity, and I think -- I
3 mean I'm all for that; and any other time I'm available
4 if we have to reschedule.

5
6 MR. SIMEONOFF: Yeah, this is Mitch.
7 I'd say that meeting in Dutch Harbor, and if that
8 doesn't work I'd go for the 28th and 29th of September,
9 because October is very, very busy.

10
11 MADAME CHAIR BERNS: Okay. Can we get
12 a -- do we need a motion.

13
14 MR. SCHWANTES: Do you need a motion?

15
16 MADAME CHAIR BERNS: Yes, please do.

17
18 MR. SCHWANTES: Okay. I'd like to make
19 a motion then that we strive to meet in Dutch Harbor
20 August 13th through 19th, or later in August if that's
21 available, and if not then we meet in Sand Point, if
22 possible, on the 28th or 29th of September.

23
24 MADAME CHAIR BERNS: We have a motion
25 on the table, do we have a second.

26
27 MR. HOLMES: Second.

28
29 MR. SIMEONOFF: Second.

30
31 MR. SHELIKOFF: Second.

32
33 MADAME CHAIR BERNS: We have three
34 seconds.

35
36 (Laughter)

37
38 MADAME CHAIR BERNS: Okay. Question --
39 can I call for the question.

40
41 MR. SCHWANTES: Call it.

42
43 (Laughter)

44
45 MADAME CHAIR BERNS: All those in favor
46 please signify by saying aye.

47
48 IN UNISON: Aye.

49
50 MADAME CHAIR BERNS: Any opposed.

1 (No opposing votes)
2
3 MADAME CHAIR BERNS: Seeing and hearing
4 none, the motion passes for those meeting dates and
5 times.
6
7 Closing comments.
8
9 I guess we can do closing comments, and
10 I guess we can just start -- I'll start to my right if
11 we want to -- if Council members want to go through and
12 do comments.
13
14 And, yes, we do have people planning on
15 flying out so, please, try to keep it.....
16
17 MS. SKINNER: Like six or seven.....
18
19 MADAME CHAIR BERNS:to the point.
20
21 (Laughter)
22
23 MS. SKINNER: Six or seven minutes.
24
25 MADAME CHAIR BERNS: Thank you.
26
27 (Laughter)
28
29 MS. CHERNOFF: Coral Chernoff.
30
31 MR. SIMEONOFF: Thank you everybody,
32 and I'm sorry I didn't make it in today or yesterday.
33 We really had the wind out here. Thank you, Melissa
34 for filling in. Okay, bye.
35
36 (Laughter)
37
38 MADAME CHAIR BERNS: Thank you, Mitch.
39
40 Della, would you like to do a closing
41 comment, please.
42
43 MS. TRUMBLE: Yes, thanks everybody for
44 another good meeting. I think hopefully I'll see you
45 all this fall, I'll definitely see you at the meeting
46 in Anchorage. But hopefully you all have good holidays
47 and a good winter until then.
48
49 Thank you.
50

1 MADAME CHAIR BERNS: Thank you, Della.

2

3 Coral.

4

5 MS. CHERNOFF: Coral Chernoff. Thank
6 you, Melissa, for filling in for Mitch and keeping the
7 meeting going. And thank you, Karen, for all your help
8 and everybody who came. And I really appreciate
9 working with all you people on here. I think we have
10 some great comments and I look forward to the next
11 meeting.

12

13 MADAME CHAIR BERNS: Thank you. Pat,
14 would you like to provide a closing comment.

15

16 MR. HOLMES: Yeah, sorry, I missed your
17 vote.

18

19 I did get in contact with Sam's dad, he
20 said Sam is still alive, they're trying to keep
21 themselves held down with rocks on the mountain where
22 he's at right now and that he would have been in for
23 this meeting if it hadn't been for the storm. He --
24 and this is all conjecture on Dick's part, but he
25 thought that quite possibly if we did get the mid-
26 August situation that he could do it, and that unless
27 he has a storm next year he's going to really try to
28 make that September date that you folks were leaning
29 towards. And so I hope that works out.

30

31 But as far as the meeting, I think this
32 has been the most productive meeting I've ever been at
33 in the umpteen years I've been on the Council. And I
34 think Karen is, on the way, got the making, if she's
35 not already the best, she soon will be the best.....

36

37 (Laughter)

38

39 MADAME CHAIR BERNS:coordinator
40 that we have ever had, and I just truly appreciate the
41 help from all the folks on our Council and it's just
42 like sometimes I'm thinking of a topic and then
43 somebody just addresses it so precisely and I'm just
44 thrilled and tickled and I am inclined to try to renew
45 my membership, if I can, because I'm just so proud to
46 be part of this group. And Palma's help on the
47 anthropology issues and OSM, Tom is always here, Glenn
48 is always here, these folks, I mean I don't understand
49 why you don't have cancer of the glutea maximus, but I
50 truly appreciate your help in getting our Council to

1 where we need to be and I think we've done so much
2 growth since I've joined.
3
4 This was a swell meeting.
5
6 MADAME CHAIR BERNS: Thank you, Pat.
7
8 Tom.
9
10 MR. SCHWANTES: Yeah, I'd like to just
11 express my appreciation to Karen, too, for not only the
12 way she's been able to get us going here in this
13 meeting but especially for being able to get the
14 materials out to us in a timely manner so we've had
15 time to take a look at it, spend some time in it before
16 we got to this meeting.
17
18 Melissa, I think you've done an
19 outstanding job and I appreciate you.....
20
21 MR. HOLMES: Yes.
22
23 (Applause)
24
25 MR. SCHWANTES:and all of the
26 comments -- all of the, you know, just really
27 appreciate the comments that have gone into these
28 discussions and I'll just leave it at that.
29
30 Thanks.
31
32 MADAME CHAIR BERNS: Thank you, Tom.
33
34 Antone.
35
36 MR. SHELIKOFF: I would just like to
37 say thank you -- not thank you, but it was good to meet
38 Karen.
39
40 You did a good job, Melissa, a very
41 good job, thank you.
42
43 MADAME CHAIR BERNS: Thank you.
44 Rebecca.
45
46 MS. SKINNER: I'll just say thank you
47 to everyone and those are my comments.
48
49 Thanks.
50

1 MR. HOLMES: Madame Chair, before we
2 pull the pin I had promised this elder.....

3
4 (Laughter)

5
6 MR. HOLMES:to have one last word
7 and I just found her card. She had called up and she
8 talked to me for like two hours last night but she
9 doesn't like to talk in public, she didn't want me to
10 mention her name, she did have a slight concern, I
11 don't think we need to address it.

12
13 But she wanted us to b aware, she went
14 to a meeting recently with a speaker named Ken Meter
15 (ph) from the states who talked on food self-
16 sufficiency, and he wanted to see the Federal government
17 drop food stamps, all public assistance, 90 percent of
18 the food in Alaska is imported, this guy is proposing
19 having farms everywhere in Alaska and totally
20 developing gathering your own food and she was worried
21 that this might cause some difficulties on competition
22 for subsistence.

23
24 So on behalf of this elder, I can just
25 tell her -- if she calls me back that I did let you
26 know about this potential problem coming up from
27 America. So thank you, Mrs. Chairman.

28
29 MADAME CHAIR BERNIS: Thank you, Pat.

30
31 And I did attend those food security
32 workshops, that clearly wasn't the message that I had
33 taken away from it, it was merely promoting how you can
34 be self sustainable and to promote Alaska grown foods,
35 and to promote the agriculture that we do have already
36 here in Alaska rather than importing from down in the
37 states and elsewhere, to, yeah, really support the home
38 grown efforts, and then also to foster that within your
39 own communities, is what I got from it.

40
41 Anyhow, I will be short.

42
43 But thank you all for bearing with me.

44
45 I do believe this was a very productive
46 -- very productive meeting and was able to take a lot
47 away from this, and I look forward to our next meeting
48 and hopefully we'll be able to make it to Dutch because
49 as Coral said, I mean that is -- it'll be great to be
50 able to get together with all those tribes and then

1 also to be able to do that outreach to try to get more
2 interest in membership from the Aleutian and Pribilof
3 to serve on this RAC with us.

4

5 So thank you.

6

7 With that, meeting adjourned, 8:07.

8

9 (Off record)

10

11 (END OF PROCEEDINGS)

1
2
3
4
5
6
7
8
9
10
11
12
13
14
15
16
17
18
19
20
21
22
23
24
25
26
27
28
29
30
31
32
33

C E R T I F I C A T E

UNITED STATES OF AMERICA)
)ss.
STATE OF ALASKA)

I, Salena A. Hile, Notary Public in and for the state of Alaska and reporter of Computer Matrix Court Reporters, LLC, do hereby certify:

THAT the foregoing pages numbered 149 through 382 contain a full, true and correct Transcript of the KODIAK/ALEUTIANS FEDERAL SUBSISTENCE REGIONAL ADVISORY COUNCIL MEETING, VOLUME II taken electronically by our firm on the 30th day of September, in Kodiak, Alaska;

THAT the transcript is a true and correct transcript requested to be transcribed and thereafter transcribed by under my direction and reduced to print to the best of our knowledge and ability;

THAT I am not an employee, attorney, or party interested in any way in this action.

DATED at Anchorage, Alaska, this 15th day of October 2015.

Salena A. Hile
Notary Public, State of Alaska
My Commission Expires: 09/16/18