

1 WESTERN INTERIOR ALASKA FEDERAL SUBSISTENCE
2 REGIONAL ADVISORY COUNCIL MEETING

3
4 PUBLIC MEETING

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6
7 VOLUME III

8
9 Community Hall
10 Galena, Alaska
11 November 5, 2015
12 8:00 a.m.

13
14
15 COUNCIL MEMBERS PRESENT:

16
17 Jack Reakoff, Chairman
18 Timothy Gervais
19 Don Honea
20 Pollock Simon
21 Darrel Vent
22 James Walker - (Telephonic)
23 Robert Walker - (Telephonic)

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29 Regional Council Coordinator, Melinda Burke

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43 Recorded and transcribed by:

44
45 Computer Matrix Court Reporters, LLC
46 135 Christensen Drive, Suite 2
47 Anchorage, AK 99501
48 907-243-0668/sahile@gci.net

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P R O C E E D I N G S

(Galena, Alaska - 11/5/2015)

(On record)

CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: So we're going to bring the meeting back to order again. I hope everybody got a good sleep, and so we're going to come down on the end of our agenda here.

You got any things for us, Melinda, go ahead.

MS. BURKE: Oh, always, Mr. Chair. Let's find out who's on the phone, first. Could we have the folks on the phone identify themselves quickly, please.

(No comments)

MS. BURKE: Anyone.

MS. OKADA: Good morning, Melinda. This is.....

MS. BURKE: Hey, Marcy, is that you.

MS. OKADA:Marcy Okada. Yeah, National Park Service.

MS. BURKE: Good morning.

MS. OKADA: Good morning.

CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Good morning, Marcy. Is anybody else on there.

(No comments)

MS. BURKE: All right, hearing none.

CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: I don't hear anybody.

MS. BURKE: Mr. Chair. We will have Mr. James Walker, and I'm keeping my fingers crossed that Mr. Carl Morgan will be joining us at about 9:30 so we will have a window of time where we will have a quorum. I think a vote on our letter will be able to

1 allow us to make it a little stronger. So we'll take
2 the letter up as soon as we hear James' voice on the
3 line.

4

5 I would like to see if there's any of
6 the agencies that are left on our agenda here, if
7 anybody would like to go first, I think we're all here
8 for the next few hours. I don't know of anybody who
9 needs to leave quickly. We still have the BLM update,
10 ADF&G, so I'll leave it up to the will of the Chair if
11 there's anything you'd like to hear first.

12

13 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: We're working down
14 through the list. We'll have Koyukuk/Nowitna come up
15 on their report. We did Kanuti -- well, we can go with
16 BLM, I see BLM is here.

17

18 MS. JULIANUS: Good morning, Mr. Chair,
19 members of the Council.

20

21 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Good morning.

22

23 MS. JULIANUS: For the record my name
24 is Erin Julianus. I'm a wildlife biologist for the BLM
25 Central Yukon Field Office. We have both the Central
26 Yukon Field Office here and the Anchorage Field Office,
27 Bruce Seppi. So I'll be giving my brief report first
28 and then Bruce will go ahead, and feel free to chime in
29 at any time, certainly. And I did -- you should all
30 have a copy of our Central Yukon report, but on the
31 back I did include a map that shows our field office
32 boundaries in relationship to the Western Interior
33 region.

34

35 So I'm mainly going to talk about --
36 give you an update on our planning effort, but also
37 some of our wildlife survey activities that we did this
38 year.

39

40 So for the Central Yukon Resource
41 Management Plan, the planning effort that began in 2013
42 and is currently ongoing. We're starting to get actual
43 stuff done so scoping was completed this past year, the
44 scoping report is available. I have a couple of copies
45 that should be on the back table and also some CD
46 copies for you to take with. I was part of the crew
47 that went through all of the letters and reviewed them,
48 so that was pretty informative for me. We got a lot of
49 good scoping comments, so that's great.

50

1 The AMS, which is the analysis of the
2 management situation is being finalized. There should
3 be a draft available soon for -- or a final copy
4 available soon for that. And in the planning effort,
5 the analysis of the management situation really forms
6 the basis for the affected environment chapter of the
7 plan, so it's kind of a -- you know the condition of
8 the resource and BLM lands currently. So I would
9 expect early 2016 that will be available.

10
11 BLM, the Central Yukon Field Office has
12 evaluated all of the areas of critical environmental
13 concern, ACEC nominations that we received. We had a
14 lot of nominations and what we were required to do with
15 all of those nominations was to evaluate each one based
16 on defined relevance and importance criteria and see
17 whether they were -- we could pass them forward as
18 legitimate nominations. I thought that draft was going
19 to be finalized in time for this meeting and a report
20 was going to be available, but I think within the next
21 month it should be, so I would encourage the Council to
22 review that when it comes out. And also with the
23 ACECs, you know, there's been a lot of talk about
24 ACECs, I think, with both with the Central Yukon plan
25 and with the BSWIR plan that Bruce is working on, and,
26 you know, people can kind of wrap their head around
27 this idea of an ACEC, but I would encourage the Council
28 and members of the.....

29
30 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Would you like to
31 tell the Council what an ACEC is.

32
33 MS. JULIANUS: The definition of an
34 ACEC, an area of critical environmental concern. It's
35 an area that's nominated for a certain value or set of
36 values that requires special management. So an ACEC
37 can be nominated and established for wildlife values,
38 special wildlife values so we have a couple for caribou
39 calving areas or mineral licks for sheep. We have
40 ACECs for cultural values. What are the -- there's
41 five, right, cultural, wildlife, I can't remember all
42 of them.

43
44 MR. SEPPI: Wild and scenic.

45
46 MS. JULIANUS: Yeah, wild and scenic
47 values, visual resources, so -- but ACECs are required
48 to have some sort of special management associated with
49 them. So apologies for that.

50

1 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: I just wanted the
2 Council to be aware of that acronym.

3
4 MS. JULIANUS: Yeah, areas of critical
5 environmental concern.

6
7 So just would encourage everyone to,
8 you know, these ACECs are a good thing but they're not
9 the only way that we can protect the areas in the
10 planning area.

11
12 As far as other -- did you have
13 something, Bruce.

14
15 MR. SEPPI: Well, only the term; area
16 of critical environmental concern sounds like a
17 complete preserve and it's not. It still allows all
18 the things that BLM permits within them but it's just
19 scrutinized a lot closer and is designed to protect
20 that resource that it was set up for but it isn't an
21 area where everything stays out of. And a lot of
22 people here ACEC and they think, you know, it's like a
23 national park and it isn't like that.

24
25 MS. JULIANUS: Yeah, the experience
26 that the Eastern Interior region is having with their
27 -- they're finalizing their resource management plan
28 and it's been really, really hard for them to get
29 ACECs established, like at the Washington level, so
30 that's why I say it's not the only tool in the toolbox.

31
32 Next year -- early next year we'll --
33 we're kind of at the beginning of alternative
34 developments so we'll probably be having a couple of
35 workshops for alternative development with our
36 cooperators. And I don't know at this point in time if
37 we're going to have scoping meetings after we've
38 developed our draft alternatives. But in early 2016 we
39 should have a better idea.

40
41 So that's kind of the planning update.

42
43 Would just remind the Council that we
44 did have a boundary change that took effect about a
45 year ago so the Central Yukon Field Office used to
46 manage the Eastern Nulato Hills area and lands around
47 Kotzebue and Unit 23 and all of that land has been
48 transferred to Anchorage. So a lot of the activities
49 we used to do associated with the Western Arctic
50 Caribou Herd and, you know, issues in the Squirrel

1 River have been transferred to the Anchorage Field
2 Office.

3

4 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: So Bruce has all
5 those headaches.

6

7 MS. JULIANUS: So Bruce has like four
8 Regional Advisory Councils to go to. I have one.

9

10 For education and outreach. Visitation
11 was up slightly this year at the Arctic InterAgency
12 Visitor's Center in Coldfoot. And BLM, we put in a
13 trail and a foot bridge to access the visitor center
14 from Coldfoot Camp and I think there's a YouTube video
15 available on line of that construction, kind of as an
16 outreach thing.

17

18 For recreation. We have 24 special
19 recreation permits in the Central Yukon Field Office,
20 active permits. 10 of these SRPs are hunting guides
21 and six of these guides are permitted in the vicinity
22 of the Dalton Highway Corridor with their primary focus
23 being sheep and bears. And we did get a go ahead to do
24 a programmatic sheep special recreation permit
25 environmental assessment this winter. I know that's
26 something that the Council has been really interested
27 in as far as our sheep permitting in the corridor.

28

29 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: That was an annual
30 report topic for this.....

31

32 MS. JULIANUS: Yeah.

33

34 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF:Council, was to
35 -- for the BLM to develop a guide permitting process or
36 to get this -- these commercial guides under control
37 for dall -- especially dall sheep.

38

39 MS. JULIANUS: Uh-huh. Yeah, yep, and
40 I think that that, you know, NEPA is really how we can
41 do that. So we did get the go ahead. The EA that
42 we're working under now was signed in 2012 and, you
43 know, quite a few things have changed since then. That
44 was before I came on and before the recent decline. So
45 I think it'll be a good thing to work on this winter.
46 I would encourage the Council to, you know, consider,
47 brainstorm a range of alternatives that we can consider
48 and analyze in this EA, and I did provide a copy --
49 there's copies of the EA on the table. So they should
50 still be there.

1 For reality.
2
3 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: The EA for the
4 recreational permitting system.
5
6 MS. JULIANUS: Yeah, for the sheep
7 guide.....
8
9 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: It's back there?
10
11 MS. JULIANUS: Yep.
12
13 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Okay.
14
15 MS. JULIANUS: Yep. Yep. For reality.
16 We have a number of right-of-way applications that we
17 are working on, or have been submitted. Two fiber
18 optic lines from Coldfoot to Prudhoe Bay. The Alaska
19 StandAlone Gas Pipeline is -- has submitted permits for
20 drill hole, bore hole testing that we're working on. A
21 number of applications for the Tuluk Research Station,
22 both for specific projects and for the research station
23 as a whole. Continue to get a number of applications
24 for tourism, photography and filming along the Dalton
25 Highway. We did have our first application that
26 requested the use of a drone in association with
27 filming, so trying to figure out how to properly permit
28 that.
29
30 We had five diesel spills along the
31 Dalton Highway this year. Clean up has been fairly
32 involved with that and expensive.
33
34 And we're reauthorizing the Bettles
35 road right-of-way. There's a reroute that -- so in
36 2012 we had a number of wildfires in the area and in
37 2013 there were land slides that affected the road and
38 the right-of-way so we're working on that with the city
39 of Bettles right now with the intention of being able
40 to get that trail opened this winter.
41
42 So for mining. We continue to have a
43 large mining workload. 40 placer mines in the Dalton
44 Highway Corridor. 10 I think in the greater Central
45 Yukon region. We were able to -- we've been kind of
46 chronically understaffed in our -- with our mining
47 compliance Staff but we were able to hire two new
48 permanent mining compliance folks and one term
49 position, so I think we're up on step with the mining
50 program and Staffing, so that's good.

1 Wildlife. This year we were pretty
2 busy. We helped out the Park with the Gates of the
3 Arctic survey. In March they did a spring moose GSPE
4 survey and I printed out the report. It should be
5 available on the table in the back. Hopefully going to
6 start a moose survey for Unit 24, the Kanuti Flats next
7 week. It sounds like -- or heard this morning we have
8 75 percent -- 75 percent of the Refuge looks good for
9 snow so they'll probably start that soon. We'll be
10 helping out with that, I'll be an observer.

11

12 And.....

13

14 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Are you going to fly
15 the trend areas in the Middle Fork Valley?

16

17 MS. JULIANUS: Yeah. So the BLM will
18 be flying that next week as well. So I'll be -- I'll
19 do the Middle Fork trend count area and then -- which
20 has enough snow now, it sounds like, and then help out
21 the State and Kanuti with the Kanuti survey.

22

23 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Thank you.

24

25 MS. JULIANUS: And the last time that
26 was done was before I got here, so it's been a couple
27 years since the Middle Fork has been done.

28

29 I went to the Koyukuk check station
30 this fall to help out the State with their moose check
31 station. Since I've been here I've really -- you know,
32 I've always focused a lot on Unit 24 and I think I've
33 been remiss in not focusing on Unit 21 as much so it
34 was really good to get out on the river, the lower
35 river and just see the -- I mean the density in the
36 moose are so much different down river. So that was a
37 really good experience for me.

38

39 The radio telemetry study for moose in
40 Unit 24 was completed in 2013. Vince mentioned that
41 yesterday. And there are two papers that are out now,
42 that were published in Elsees (ph) and one Park Service
43 report, so I included those on the table in the back
44 and there's also one habitat selection paper associated
45 with that collaring study that is going to come out
46 soon.

47

48 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: So there's a suite
49 of papers. I just.....

50

1 MS. JULIANUS: Yeah.
2
3 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF:got one of
4 them.
5
6 MS. JULIANUS: Yeah.
7
8 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: I guess I got to
9 look for the rest of those.
10
11 MS. JULIANUS: Yeah, hopefully, they
12 might have -- might have ran out, but, yeah.
13
14 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: I would like to get
15 all of those.
16
17 MS. JULIANUS: Okay.
18
19 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: The one I was
20 reading was a habitat use.
21
22 MS. JULIANUS: Uh-huh.
23
24 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: And I was like this
25 is pretty brief.
26
27 MS. JULIANUS: Yeah.
28
29 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: So, okay.....
30
31 MS. JULIANUS: This was a big study,
32 yeah.
33
34 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Yeah.
35
36 MS. JULIANUS: Yeah, so two papers, one
37 forthcoming and then a Park Service internal report
38 that's available as well.
39
40 We -- the Central Yukon Field Office
41 also helped out with the collaring effort at Onion
42 Portage this year. It was a really good year. I think
43 they finished in three days. Bruce was going to go out
44 but they finished before he had a chance. So -- and as
45 I said, you know, with a lot of this Western Arctic
46 Caribou Herd activities, and the working group,
47 Anchorage Field Office is going to be taking over a lot
48 of that work. We'll probably still go to the December
49 meeting but Anchorage is the primary BLM
50 representative.

1 Dall sheep surveys. We helped out the
2 State with minimum counts this year in the Central
3 Brooks Range and we did do a transect based survey so
4 it should have estimates for all of the BLM lands, the
5 Dalton Highway Corridor this year, and continue to
6 spend, you know, a lot part of our budget on sheep in
7 the Central Brooks Range.

8

9 And as I said, planning on redoing the
10 sheep EA for the guides along the Dalton Highway.

11

12 And other than that, I have a section
13 here, fire management, of course, it was the second
14 largest fire season on record in the Western Interior
15 Region. We had 164 fires that were greater than 100
16 acres. So BLM, the fire service, was really pretty
17 busy this year and I was able to go out on a fire
18 assignment to Galena and spend some time in Ruby and
19 Nulato this year and it was good to kind of get exposed
20 to that effort.

21

22 So that is all I have for the Central
23 Yukon Field Office report.

24

25 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Okay. Does the
26 Council have any questions on that.

27

28 Don.

29

30 MR. HONEA: Thank you, Mr. Chair.
31 Erin, I have a question. On the ACECs, and I don't
32 want to, you know, get into some long discussion about
33 it, but you said that Eastern Interior had submitted
34 something there and according to what I know about the
35 ACECs was handed out to villages and it seems like is
36 it -- is it up to this RAC to consider areas of
37 critical concern for our regions, also other than doing
38 it on a village basis, because I believe that we were
39 all given notice that -- of that, you know, sometimes
40 in the past and maybe -- maybe we have even picked out
41 some of those areas, you know, looking back and talking
42 to Wayne about it, that we had already did this
43 previous, a number of years ago and all of a sudden
44 this came up. And also, my question's doubled, is
45 there a timeline to submit those.

46

47 Thank you.

48

49 MS. JULIANUS: Thank you. Through the
50 Chair. I don't think that, you know, it's necessarily

1 up to the RAC to necessarily nominate certain areas,
2 and I don't think, and, Bruce, correct me if I'm
3 wrong, but, you know, we did have a period where the
4 nomination period was open and that per -- you know we
5 got a bunch of nominations in and have sense collated
6 all of them and gone through all of them, but I don't
7 -- I don't think that, you know, if you had an area
8 that you wanted to nominate, that it's necessarily too
9 late. It's just that the ACEC report is done and it's
10 going to be sent out. But we're still, you know,
11 probably not even halfway through the planning process.
12 So there's still, certainly, time.

13

14 MR. HONEA: Okay, that covers that.
15 But I mean, but why did the Eastern Interior submit an
16 ACEC plan, I mean do we have.....

17

18 MS. JULIANUS: Oh.

19

20 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: I think you're
21 confused, Don, by.....

22

23 MS. JULIANUS: Yeah.

24

25 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF:saying Eastern
26 Interior. That's the Eastern Interior office of the
27 BLM, not the RAC.

28

29 MR. HONEA: Oh.

30

31 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Not Eastern Interior
32 RAC.

33

34 MS. JULIANUS: Yeah. Sorry, I should
35 have clarified. We have a Central Yukon Field Office
36 and an Eastern Interior Field Office, so I should have
37 clarified.

38

39 MR. HONEA: Thank you.

40

41 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Tim.

42

43 MR. GERVAIS: Thank you, Mr. Chair.
44 Erin, so how many potential ACECs are in the Western
45 Interior RAC region?

46

47 MS. JULIANUS: We -- through the Chair.
48 We had over -- currently we have 34 ACECs in the
49 Central Yukon region, not all of them are in the
50 Western Interior RAC region. And we had over -- I

1 think we had over 35 nominations. I don't remember how
2 many were in the Western Interior region, but for our
3 planning area, as a whole, we had over 30.

4

5 MR. GERVAIS: And then just a followup.
6 So and these nominations, they're specifically only for
7 BLM land, they have no control over adjacent parcels or
8 anything?

9

10 MS. JULIANUS: Correct. Yeah. Yeah.
11 But we did have nominations on both BLM unencumbered
12 land and BLM, you know, State selected land. So any
13 land managed as BLM land right now could be nominated.

14

15 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: The State is 20
16 percent over selected so there can be overlaps, not
17 that they would actually be given those lands.

18

19 Other questions.

20

21

22 (No comments)

23

24 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: I think that covers
25 it. Erin, thank you.

26

27 Bruce.

28

29 MR. SEPPI: Good morning, Mr. Chair,
30 and members of the Council. Bruce Seppi with Anchorage
31 Field Office, BLM. We are also in the process of doing
32 a land use plan, new, it's called the BSWIR, Bering Sea
33 Western Interior region. The overall area includes 62
34 million acres, but the actual BLM land, unencumbered
35 BLM is 13.4 million acres and it's in this RAC area.
36 It includes the lands south of the Central Yukon
37 watershed, to the southern boundary of the Kuskokwim
38 River watershed and all lands west of Denali National
39 Park and Preserve, all the way to the coast.

40

41 Our Staff, our planning process is a
42 little bit ahead of Central Yukon but it is
43 essentially, we started in 2013, we've done a scoping
44 report. We went out to communities in the area, if I
45 remember, about 15 communities and presented what we
46 were going to do and got input. We also did an ACEC
47 report and got a lot of nominations, I believe over 30
48 nominations for ACECs from a lot of different
49 organizations and people in villages, and the report
50 has been done on that.

1 Like we said before that there is sort
2 of a high bar for an ACEC, and if I was king of the
3 World I'd really have a lot of ACECs but it doesn't
4 work that way and there's a system that -- it's called
5 relevance and importance and a lot of these things are
6 very relevant, like subsistence, but subsistence areas,
7 a lot of villages said, well, let's nominate an ACEC
8 for our hunting areas, our hunting and trapping areas
9 and wood gathering areas, and those were found to be,
10 of course, very relevant but not important in relation
11 to BLM management. And I hate to tell people,
12 subsistence users, that their issues aren't important,
13 but it's the criteria that an ACEC really isn't the
14 right tool to protect subsistence areas, the .810
15 analysis really is. So any time we have something
16 going on in an area, we, Staff, me, or wherever it is,
17 has to do an .810 analysis to analyze those impacts to
18 subsistence. So an ACEC really isn't the right
19 mechanism to do that. So it was kind of a hard sell to
20 go back to the places and tell people that but we did
21 get a lot of input about ACECs.

22
23 So that we've developed, also, in the
24 process of developing our alternatives and that's a
25 whole range of things that would be allowed in this
26 land use plan. Land use plans are a little different,
27 in that, we can't say specifically what we're doing, we
28 don't have a project in mind, it's what we'll allow
29 over the next 20 years in these plans. And so some of
30 the alternatives are very conservative and some of them
31 allow a lot of things and then there's ones in the
32 middle that allow some things but not the others, and
33 so that's why we lay out a whole range of alternatives
34 and we're in the process of bringing that out to the
35 public now and getting comment on that.

36
37 All of this is on line. I did not
38 bring those scoping reports or those ACEC reports, it's
39 on BLM Anchorage Field Office, Bering Sea Western
40 Interior website so you can find anything on there.
41 It's never too late to comment, in fact, we want --
42 there were comment deadlines on ACECs and scoping
43 reports but -- and the reports have been done but it's
44 never too late to comment. The draft of this thing,
45 the draft of the Bering Sea Western Interior will be
46 out in about a year and that's when we really want
47 comments, but -- and then some time after that it'll be
48 finalized, but it's probably going to be another three
49 to four year process before this plan is done. So.....
50

1 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: I'm wondering about,
2 in the Anchorage office, RMP, if -- what's the status
3 of guide use and concession permits on the BLM lands in
4 the scoping process so far.

5
6 MR. SEPPI: Yeah.

7
8 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: This is a big issue
9 statewide on the BLM lands, State lands and private
10 lands. Is there any -- there's significant areas that
11 could have conflict with overlapping guides and I'm
12 wondering about that in the scoping so far.

13
14 MR. SEPPI: We're still in the same
15 boat on that. I wish I had a better answer for you on
16 that. At one point the State was going to have those
17 concession areas and we were going to work closely with
18 that and then the budget crises came in the State and
19 that kind of just went away and it doesn't look like
20 it's going to come back any time soon. So one thing
21 about guides and outfitters and SRPs for guides and
22 outfitters is they are completely discretionary, we do
23 not have to approve them. So we take them on a case by
24 case basis and if there's input to show that there's
25 conflict, we listen to that, and we have denied guides
26 and outfitters. Not many, because we have to really
27 have justified reasons to deny somebody. We have
28 denied them for conflicts with subsistence. But they
29 are discretionary so as of right now we have, I
30 believe, 8 SRPs within the Western Interior RAC and
31 they are moose and bear hunts.

32
33 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: My problem is that,
34 like the Dalton Highway Corridor, the allocation is
35 almost entirely to the guiding industry. I mean the
36 guiding industry gets the lion's share of the harvest
37 and so.....

38
39 MR. SEPPI: Yeah.

40
41 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF:I would like
42 for the -- in these RMPs to look at limitations.
43 Because the competition among guides is what's going to
44 kill all the -- they will compete with each other to
45 the point where they'll kill the resource off.

46
47 MR. SEPPI: Uh-huh.

48
49 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: If you have one
50 guide, then they don't feel compelled to do that. They

1 can reserve that animal for next year, let it mature,
2 let it be part of the breeding pop -- but that's not
3 what happens when you have high competition for guides.

4

5 MR. SEPPI: Yeah.

6

7 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: And that's what the
8 guide selection process is supposed to move away from
9 that, the State system has failed, the BLM Regional
10 Director in 2004 promised this Council that they would
11 implement a guide concession permit system if the State
12 system failed, well, the State system's failed.

13

14 MR. SEPPI: We have not -- I'm sorry to
15 say we have not. And.....

16

17 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: And so this Council
18 requested in our annual report to the Federal
19 Subsistence Board, we got a response that the EA -- or
20 the assessments are going to change but, you know, that
21 doesn't address what the -- Henri Bisson said that they
22 were going to go to a guide selection process on the
23 BLM lands, just like the Fish and Wildlife and just
24 like the Park Service said, your sister agencies, and
25 so you don't have to reinvent the wheel, there's
26 already those processes in place. And that should be
27 part of the RMPs that they're going to develop guide
28 use areas for single guides on areas. We can't have
29 these overlapping guides because it's detrimental to
30 the resource that the subsistence users and the general
31 public also is in use of also.

32

33 So if you're still taking comments,
34 take that back to your offices, this is the letter of
35 response to the annual report did not satisfy me. The
36 Regional Director said that if the State system failed
37 that they were going to implement a guide selection
38 process on the BLM lands. Well, the State system's
39 failed, and it's not going to change this winter and
40 it's not going to change any time soon.

41

42 MR. SEPPI: Uh-huh.

43

44 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: So that needs to be
45 incorporated into the RMPs, period.

46

47 You can -- it's all transcribed, you
48 can get the record.

49

50 Is the Council in agreement with that.

1 (Council nods affirmatively)
2
3 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: I see affirmatively
4 here.
5
6 Darryl.
7
8 MR. VENT: I just have something to add
9 to that. You know, we're starting to see more
10 transporters in our areas. What I'm concerned about is
11 where they can come from, you know, they can come from
12 down in the States, they can have a friend, or they
13 know someone or something and they go up into these
14 Federal areas and they float down through the river
15 system and maybe they portage through some lakes and
16 stuff but they know our area up there pretty well so
17 they've been going up there for quite a few years. I
18 don't know whether they've been inviting friends or
19 anything, but we don't have any kind of information on
20 them, we just, you know, want to know how affective
21 they are, that's all what I'm worried about.
22
23 So maybe add it on to his comment there
24 about maybe giving some information on -- or finding
25 some information on that.
26
27 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Well, transporters
28 are always an issue, overuse.....
29
30 MR. SEPPI: Yeah.
31
32 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF:too many
33 transporters transporting way too many hunters. Again,
34 it's the competition factor, you know, they can't --
35 they don't feel that they -- they have to saturate
36 otherwise their competition is going to take over.
37 It's like a feeding -- it's literally an economic
38 feeding frenzy. So the more guides, the more
39 transporters there are, they drive themselves to
40 compete with one another and they wipe the resource
41 out. They know they're going to do it, they'll admit
42 that they'll do it. I've had guides for the Dalton
43 Highway Corridor tell me they would like to cut back
44 but they don't feel that they can because of the
45 competition will kill the resource, and so it's a big
46 problem.
47
48 But as far as the guide concession
49 issue, that issue is not going to go away. The RMP
50 should be reflecting that there's a need for a guide

1 concession permit on the BLM land. That's -- this has
2 occurred recently since the process has started. The
3 RMPs were started before the budgetary constraints of
4 the State and the failure. And so the RMPs need to
5 open up on that issue because this is a recent
6 occurrence, the failure of the State in the last year
7 is a recent occurrence, and so the RMPs need to reflect
8 the need for this guide selection process.

9

10 (Council nods affirmatively)

11

12 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: And I see the
13 Council is in agreement with what I'm saying -- I want
14 that brought back to both of your offices that this
15 issue has not gone away. The response from the BLM and
16 the Federal Subsistence Board to the Council did not
17 address that issue. It just sort of like, it'll help
18 the EA process, but it's not going to fix the problem.
19 We need this guide selection process on the BLM lands
20 especially where there's high economic incentive for
21 moose. Moose hunts are \$15,000. Dall sheep hunts are
22 15 to \$20,000. When you have those species on the BLM
23 lands you are going to have high competition for
24 guiding. Period. It's an economic incentive.

25

26 And so the -- if I had quorum here I'd
27 get a letter back to the Regional Director about
28 opening the RMP process back up on this guide selection
29 process but I'm a little short on quorum at this
30 moment.

31

32 MS. BURKE: Jack, I'll take a note and
33 when James calls in, hopefully in about 45 minutes, we
34 can add that to the list of action items we'll quickly
35 cover.

36

37 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Okay. But I just
38 wanted to say that on the record while we've got the
39 BLM here.

40

41 So continue Bruce.

42

43 MR. SEPPI: Thanks. Mr. Chair, thanks.
44 And it would be very good if you wrote that letter, in
45 fact, far more effective than me bringing that word
46 back if this RAC wrote a letter to that effect.

47

48 Incidentally, in Unit 23 is the only
49 unit out of this region, but it's the only unit where
50 we do permit transporters. We do not in these units in

1 this RAC area. So that's something that we're very
2 interested in and we know that transporters -- because
3 they have a huge effect and they're undocumented and
4 unpermitted, so that's a factor that we're well aware
5 of. These land use plans are a great time to deal with
6 that.

7

8 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Go ahead, Tim.

9

10 MR. GERVAIS: Bruce, is that -- there's
11 no transporters permitted because you never received
12 applications or it's not allowed?

13

14 MR. SEPPI: It's not that it's not
15 allowed, it's not -- they're not using -- they're
16 landing on BLM, but the people that they're bringing in
17 are just paying them for a ride, they're a taxi. And
18 there's a fine line between if a transporter provides
19 any kind of services other than transportation to them,
20 if they -- you know, if they give them tents or outfit
21 them in any way, then that gets our attention and say
22 what a minute you're not just a transporter, you're a
23 guide, you're an outfitter so then they would have to
24 be permitted. So when these guys come in and -- and
25 they don't even have to tell us when they're
26 transporting in, they can dump as many people as they
27 want into an area and that's what we're worried about
28 and that's what is a huge factor. They have impacts to
29 the resources but we're not permitting them.

30

31 So we're very much aware of that.

32

33 MR. GERVAIS: Okay. So you're not
34 permitting them based on your regulation, on how you're
35 set up.

36

37 MR. SEPPI: No. And like I say, Unit
38 23 is the only area that we do require permits for
39 transporters.

40

41 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Okay. Continue with
42 your report.

43

44 MR. SEPPI: Quickly, I've just got a
45 few other things.

46

47 I'll be doing a GSPE, so we're helping
48 Fish and Game actually in Unit 21E this winter,
49 providing we get snow again and in 22A, out of
50 Unalakleet, just out of this RAC region, doing moose

1 census. They were supposed to be done last year and
2 just the complete lack of snow later in the winter just
3 didn't allow us to get them done, so hopefully we'll
4 get some conditions in February and March we'll get 21E
5 and 22A done. I plan to have an airplane and a pilot
6 and be an observer in both of those.

7
8 And then finally the Western Arctic
9 Caribou Herd Working Group meeting will be happening in
10 Anchorage on December 15th through 17th of this year.
11 I was tasked with writing the contract to get that
12 together to plan the logistics to get everybody in and
13 get a venue and all that. It's still coming together.
14 The venue looks like it's going to be the Captain Cook
15 Hotel, but the contractor's still working on that.
16 There is some issues with some of the Working Group
17 members have passed away from Northwest Arctic, and so
18 they're looking for alternatives for those people but
19 we still have time to get people together. I don't
20 have anything more to report in this, just to let this
21 RAC know that that meeting will happen in Anchorage,
22 December 15th through 17th.

23
24 Mr. Pollock is a member.

25
26 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Pollock is on that.

27
28 MR. SEPPI: Mr. Simon. So that's all I
29 have. Any other questions on things.

30
31 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Any questions or
32 comments for the BLM report.

33
34 (No comments)

35
36 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: And we will write
37 that letter.....

38
39 MR. SEPPI: Yeah.

40
41 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF:about these
42 RMPs including the guide selection process when we get
43 quorum. So thank you for your presentation.

44
45 MR. SEPPI: Very good, thank you.

46
47 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: So do we have
48 Koyukuk/Nowitna Staff here now. Come on up Jeremy.

49
50 MR. HAVENOR: Thank you, Mr. Chair and

1 Council members. My name is Jeremy Havenor. I'm the
2 Refuge subsistence coordinator for
3 Koyukuk/Nowitna/Innokko National Wildlife Refuge.

4
5 And I just want to apologize, I am
6 losing my voice so I'm going to get through this as
7 good as I can. I have a quick Refuge update that I
8 want to cover with you, and then also we have a couple
9 Staff members here too. If anybody wants to hear any
10 moose biology, we have Brad Scotton, our wildlife
11 biologist here. And then I think Kenton had some stuff
12 to present as well.

13
14 Real quick I'll start off, I just want
15 to introduce some of our new Staff that we have since
16 our last meeting. So first is Ken Chase, he's our new
17 RIT out of Anvik. And he's in here, if you could stand
18 up and wave so everybody can see him.

19
20 Thanks, Ken.

21
22 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Everybody knows Ken.

23
24 (Laughter)

25
26 MR. HAVENOR: Exactly. Also we have a
27 new Deputy Refuge manager, his name is Bob Rebarchik,
28 and I don't think he's here this morning. He's been
29 here the last couple of days. And he was actually --
30 he was an FMO out here back in the '90s so he's back
31 again and we're glad to have him.

32
33 And then, finally, we also have a new
34 law enforcement officer. His name is Brett Nigus, and
35 unfortunately he couldn't be here today due to some law
36 enforcement training. But hopefully at one of these
37 meetings you guys will get to meet him.

38
39 And, okay, I gave a handout to
40 everybody, it's this one if you guys could follow along
41 with that.

42
43 The first one I want to update you on
44 is one of our biological projects we have going on on
45 the Koyukuk Refuge. It's a distribution of abundance
46 of Koyukuk River chum salmon and this is the second
47 year of the study we just finished up. And in the
48 study we sampled fish with four inch mesh drift
49 gillnets in the Nikolai Slough area on the Koyukuk
50 River, which is about 30 miles from the mouth. And in

1 this project we used two boats that we were sampling,
2 from roughly late June and I think it went through
3 early August. And in this project fish were
4 immediately taken out of the net once caught and we had
5 them placed in holding tanks where we measured the sex
6 -- or we determined the sex and measured length. All
7 the salmon that we caught, we gave them spaghetti tags
8 where they were later used for recapture abundance
9 estimates at the Gisasa weir and the Henshaw Creek
10 weir. Also one in every six salmon roughly that were
11 caught we gave them a radio tag, it's an esophageal tag
12 to do telemetry in determining a spawning distribution
13 on the Koyukuk River drainage.

14
15 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: And you flew the
16 entire drainage to track those tags, those telemetry
17 tags?

18
19 MR. HAVENOR: Yes, I believe we did and
20 actually we do have our primary investigator of this
21 project here so if you guys have any questions on that
22 he should be able to answer those for you.

23
24 And then on Page 3, if you guys can
25 turn to that, you can see, it's just kind of a map of
26 the area and in the blue circle there, that's our
27 tagging location and on the bottom left corner. And
28 then the red little cross-hatches are the two weirs,
29 the Gisasa River and Henshaw Creek. And then the black
30 little crosshatch are the fixed station receiver sites.
31 And I think there was an addition this year from last
32 year's results, we did add a fixed station receiver up
33 the Huslia River and Billy Hawk Creek area.

34
35 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: I see you have one
36 receiver on the mainstem of the Koyukuk below the Hog
37 River?

38
39 MR. HAVENOR: Yeah, that's correct.

40
41 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Okay.

42
43 MR. HAVENOR: And on Page 4, I
44 apologize the number, for some reason did not show up
45 on this page, this shows year's data that we collected.
46 We're still putting stuff together for a report, but
47 this is the locations that we determine where the fish
48 are spawning. And, I'll kind of go through this real
49 quick, but you can see on the Gisasa River there was
50 about eight percent of the tags went there that we

1 issued out. And we actually issue out a total of 206.
2 On the Kateel River we had 2.4 percent. On the Dulbi
3 River it was one percent. And this is one we're really
4 interested in, is the Huslia River, Billy Hawk Creek
5 area, we had roughly 28.6 percent of our tags went to
6 that drainage. On the Dakli River Creek it was about
7 10. Hog River was 9.2 percent. Indian River was 1.9
8 percent. Hughes Creek was a half a percent. Alatna
9 River was one percent of our tags. Henshaw Creek
10 received about 12 percent. And the Koyukuk River had
11 23.8 percent.

12

13 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Koyukuk downstream
14 of Henshaw, I don't see any tags above Henshaw on the
15 South Fork.

16

17 MR. HAVENOR: Yeah, that is correct.

18

19 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Did you -- are you
20 missing tags, I mean are all the tags accounted for?

21

22 MR. HAVENOR: I think they were, and,
23 maybe Frank could come up here and address some of this
24 stuff.

25

26 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Are those -- there's
27 a signi -- you know, good spawning populations of
28 summer chum on the South Fork drainage also. I don't
29 see any dots there, you may be missing a component
30 somehow.

31

32 MR. HARRIS: Yeah, there were -- none
33 of our tags were found on South Fork, nothing was found
34 above Henshaw Creek. There were tags that were not
35 found, they're not listed on there. We had a total of
36 249 radio tags that were put out, and those are the
37 ones that were tracked to spawning locations, others
38 were captured, mortality, backed out, or just not found
39 again, and probably about 10 fish maybe that were just
40 never found again, put the tags out and.....

41

42 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Did you fly the
43 upper drainage of the South Fork drainage?

44

45 MR. HARRIS: Yep. All the way up to and
46 past the Haul Road.

47

48 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Oh. Hum. Jim River
49 drainage.

50

1 MR. HARRIS: Yep.
2
3 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: I'm -- yeah, there's
4 components -- well, I guess it gives you a -- it could
5 be where you're putting the telemetry in, you know, or
6 the timing of when the telemetry is deployed, maybe the
7 upper drainage fish passed by before you actually
8 deployed or something to that effect.
9
10 MR. HARRIS: That is a possibility
11 because we try to match our deployment when the weirs
12 are in operation because we're trying to do an
13 abundance estimate and we need the recapture data.
14 I've been talking with the State, they're doing a Yukon
15 drainage-wide chum study and I've seen their data and
16 they -- either last year they only had one in the South
17 Fork or this year they only had one, but there's not
18 been many radio tags found above Henshaw.
19
20 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: There's not as many
21 summer chum. There's a bunch of fish that go into the
22 South Fork in August all the way through late
23 September, but they're not genetically marked as fall
24 chum, but there's a significant number of fish that go
25 in the Alatna River and the South Fork that are present
26 that -- but you would never capture them when they're
27 deploying so -- and the State has never actually
28 captured any of those either. So there's two different
29 chum runs. There's the summer chum, the true summer
30 chum that goes into the Henshaw and some of the South
31 Fork drainages and mainly the upper drainages like Jim
32 River. Then there's the main stem South Fork that has
33 thousands and they had a weir on the South Fork, the
34 Fish and Wildlife, up to 30,000 one time that were in
35 the South Fork drainage.
36
37 So there's a component of chum that are
38 moving up the Koyukuk. What I'm saying is there's a
39 component of chum that aren't actually being captured
40 in the data. I'm just stating that for the record. So
41 that's what I was wondering about.
42
43 So go ahead with your presentation.
44
45 Any comments on this chum thing on the
46 Koyukuk.
47
48 (No comments)
49
50 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Go ahead, Jeremy --

1 or Darrel, go ahead.

2

3 MR. VENT: I see that, you know, this
4 Billy Hawk Creek and the Dakli area, the reason I was
5 mentioning about the transporters, they do get up in
6 these areas and I noticed recently that they've been
7 using jet units to get in the shallow areas. Now these
8 are spawning grounds there and I'm just wondering if
9 you guys have any data on the -- is there any
10 disturbance in the areas or do you guys notice anything
11 in there.

12

13 MR. HARRIS: We have no data and have
14 not noticed anything really. I believe most of those
15 are up there after the primary summer chum spawning,
16 but I've heard there's coho in those locations. I
17 don't know. It's one of the things we want to look at.

18

19 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Okay, thanks. Keep
20 going.

21

22 MR. HAVENOR: Next I want to update our
23 subsistence hunts that we had this year.

24

25 The first one is the Federal moose
26 hunt, FM21-04 and FM21-05, which is in GMU 21E. And
27 this hunt ran from February 15th through March 15th,
28 2015. We issued a total of 24 permits for both of
29 those hunts and there were three moose harvested, two
30 cows, and one bull. And this year we had Ken Chase, he
31 was a big help for this Federal hunt in issuing out
32 permits, and, we, for the first time, received 100
33 percent of harvest reporting, which was excellent. And
34 I want to really thank, you know, the subsistence
35 hunters and Ken Chase as well.

36

37 On Page 6 and 7 I have a couple of
38 graphs showing just the harvest history for both of
39 these hunts and I guess I could describe, FM21-04 is
40 the southern portion of 21E, south of the Paimiut
41 Slough area and FM21-05 is the rest of 21E. And one
42 thing I want to point out, in 2012, is when they split
43 up the two permits so in 2010 and 2011 they just had
44 the FM21-04 and then in 2012 they created the FM21-05.

45

46 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: And harvest decline
47 is from snow depth and, you know, there's not that many
48 moose being killed, is it -- there was shallow snow and
49 the moose didn't come to the river or they killed lots
50 of moose in the fall and they didn't need the.....

1 MR. HAVENOR: That's a good question.
2 I don't have a specific answer for that one. But,
3 yeah, like you said, overall harvest is relatively low
4 on those hunts.

5
6 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Okay.
7

8 MR. HAVENOR: Next, on Page 8, is the
9 Federal moose hunt FM21-01, which is in GMU 21B and
10 this is in the Nowitna River area. And this hunt, it
11 goes from September 26th through October 1st. This
12 year we issued out seven permits, five to Ruby, two
13 from Tanana and nobody from Galena and two bull moose
14 were harvested and they were in really good condition
15 this year, which I thought was really surprising. And
16 both the bulls that were shot were around 50 inches and
17 very good quality. The other thing, too, is we had
18 excellent harvest reporting for this hunt and everybody
19 turned in harvest reports in a timely matter.

20
21 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: So those moose
22 killed in the end of September were still really fat?
23

24 MR. HAVENOR: Yeah, they appeared to
25 be. So I was really -- it was nice to see that.
26

27 MR. HAVENOR: Then on Page 9 is harvest
28 data and permit data from FM21-01 since it started in
29 2007 and you can see it kind of fluctuates up and down.
30 In 2012 we had a pretty high year for number of permits
31 and obviously harvest too, and that kind of carried
32 over into 2013 as well. We've kind of seen a decline
33 in the number of hunters the last couple of years and
34 harvest.

35
36 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: That correlates to
37 success rate earlier in the season?
38

39 MR. HAVENOR: Yeah, I think that would
40 definitely have an impact on that. I know this year,
41 just talking with folks around the area, a lot of
42 people had their moose this year, it was a good hunting
43 season for most folks.

44
45 (Telephone interruption)
46

47 MS. BURKE: Who's just joined us on the
48 teleconference, please, is that you James?
49

50 UNIDENTIFIED VOICE: Oh, I'm sorry, I

1 forgot to hit my mute.

2

3 MS. BURKE: Okay, thank you.

4

5 MR. HAVENOR: On the next page, Page
6 10, this is our residency permit data and it's just
7 showing what villages that are, you know, determined --
8 or, you know, that have a customary and traditional use
9 determination for this hunt, are using the hunt area.
10 And it kind of fluctuates year after year. And as you
11 can see, this year, nobody from Galena used this
12 permit.

13

14 And then on Page 11, the Nowitna River
15 checkstation, which, I think we set up this year around
16 September 3rd and then we went until October 1st, but
17 this is the results for the State season from September
18 5th through the 25th. Overall, harvest and hunters
19 increased this year. We saw 117 hunters and we saw 47
20 bulls that were harvested, which was up from our 10
21 year average. It was a 42 percent increase from our
22 average of -- our 10 year average of 33 moose. So
23 everybody that I talked to coming out, they saw a lot
24 of moose, a lot of calves and overall were very happy.

25

26 They saw -- or hunters that were up the
27 Nowitna saw very few bears this year and we didn't have
28 any harvested that came through the checkstation. And
29 there was one wolf harvested. And one thing I wanted
30 to point out, too, on the Nowitna River checkstation,
31 it's -- you know, it's only getting hunters that are
32 going in and out with their boats or, you know, we've
33 had planes stop in there too and check in, but there is
34 some harvest that we're not getting on this from guides
35 that are hunting, you know, in the upper Novi and just
36 other people that might have hunted in the early season
37 as well, too. Because there's also a season from
38 August 22nd through August 31st.

39

40 And the next page, Page 12, is our data
41 from 1988 with harvest data and number of hunters, and
42 you can see 2015 the jump in harvest and in hunters.

43

44 On Page 13 I have included the
45 preliminary local harvest report for the area. And I
46 don't want to touch too much on this, I haven't really
47 had a chance to talk to Glenn too much, but I just
48 wanted to include it so you guys have it and you can
49 see in the Galena area, harvest was up this year, and a
50 lot of folks did pretty good.

1 MR. GERVAIS: Question.
2
3 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Go ahead, Tim.
4
5 MR. GERVAIS: The preliminary local
6 resident, that's just for all of 21, Jeremy?
7
8 MR. HAVENOR: This is including the --
9 I believe it's the RMA34 permit because you can see
10 Allakaket, which is not in GMU 21, and also Huslia as
11 well, and Hughes, those are GMU 24.
12
13 MR. GERVAIS: What's the permit number
14 that this data's coming off of?
15
16 MR. HAVENOR: I believe it should be
17 the RMA34 and there's also, I forgot to mention the
18 RMA32, which is inside the Koyukuk Controlled Use Area.
19 That's -- I mean that's my guess, I would have to talk
20 to Glenn to get the specifics on this.
21
22 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Go ahead, Tim.
23
24 MR. GERVAIS: And then on your Nowitna
25 checkstation, do you do any residency data from those
26 hunters?
27
28 MR. HAVENOR: I do keep track of that,
29 and if you're interested in it, I obviously don't have
30 it here with me today but I could definitely get you
31 that information if you're interested in that.
32
33 MR. GERVAIS: Okay, yeah, I'd like to
34 know, like what percent's local and what percent's not
35 local and what percent's non-Alaska resident.
36
37 MR. HAVENOR: Yeah, off the top of my
38 head, I think we roughly had 100, 99 non-local and 18
39 local hunters check in.
40
41 And then, finally, I just wanted to
42 give a quick update on Refuge fires. And as Erin
43 mentioned earlier in her presentation it was an
44 extremely busy fire year this summer. I think every
45 day we were smoked in here in Galena, and I'm sure it
46 was the same in a lot of villages, in Ruby and Koyukuk,
47 Nulato, Kaltag.
48
49 As you can see there was 1.5 million
50 acres of fire on National Wildlife Refuge lands in

1 2015. And of those 1.5 million acres, we had 980,000
2 on our three Refuges alone. So once again, an
3 extremely busy year and you can see the stats below on
4 how many acres and the status of those fires on each
5 Refuge.

6

7 MR. GERVAIS: Question, Mr. Chair.

8

9 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Go ahead, Tim.

10

11 MR. GERVAIS: Jeremy. So, do you guys
12 have kind of just a general feeling, like how well
13 burned these Refuges are, are they right where they
14 need to be or they're too burned or they're not burned
15 enough?

16

17 MR. HAVENOR: Through the Chair.

18 That's a very good question, and I'm sure, you know, if
19 we talked with our FMO we could get a good idea on the
20 feel the that are out there and maybe Kenton has an
21 answer for that so I'll leave it to him here.

22

23 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Go ahead, Kenton.

24

25 MR. MOOS: Mr. Chair. For the record,
26 my name is Kenton Moos, Refuge Manager for Koyukuk,
27 Nowitna and Innoko.

28

29 Our strategy towards fire management
30 is, when possible, we try to let natural processes
31 occur. So as far as, you know, targeting number of
32 acres and so forth, we don't do that. What we do is we
33 identify our response to fire through management
34 actions by a number of different things. One is
35 obviously life and property is the highest priority.
36 So areas around villages are what are considered
37 critical management for fire and basically -- like for
38 instance, Nulato, this year had a fire that came up
39 right to it, we will through everything, including the
40 kitchen sink at those because life is our primary
41 focus. As you get into different scenarios, like for
42 instance, Native allotments and tribal corporation
43 lands, we do afford a protection level to those areas
44 that have been identified and when resources are
45 available we will take suppression actions, if
46 appropriate. A great example of this this year is we
47 have some folks who live on the Refuge, the Actualies,
48 as you know, when the fires came close, even though
49 they are in an area that is what we would normally let
50 burn, but because life and the safety of that family

1 was there we took action on that.

2

3 So -- but we do not, necessarily target
4 number of acres or anything like that. We try to let
5 the natural processes occur. So I hope that answers
6 your question.

7

8 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Are you going to do
9 a severity inventory, like this next year, to see how
10 deep -- like Kanuti's doing?

11

12 MR. MOOS: Yes, Mr. Chair, absolutely.
13 We've identified -- actually there's a couple areas
14 that we've identified as we're hoping to do some
15 monitoring. We had a lot of acres burn this year and
16 there are -- were some areas that were very severe
17 burns, fairly deep and other areas that were actually
18 not so deep, provided a good mosaic on the landscape
19 which we really like to see, but in particular up on
20 the Koyukuk, around the Sand Dunes, that's an area of
21 particular interest for us. Our habitat biologist, Amy
22 Rockhill, put in some plots that she will be monitoring
23 in the future to see -- in that particular instance we
24 have dunes that we've -- we've got active dunes and
25 then we have some that are inactive that have
26 vegetative cover on them. Those areas did burn so it's
27 of interest. I mean the question is, will they be
28 reactivated. I think it's a very interesting scenario
29 right there and we're going to keep an eye on it.

30

31 So, yeah.

32

33 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Yeah, Darrel.

34

35 MR. VENT: I got a question here. I
36 see on your preliminary local resident report, moose
37 harvest, it shows Huslia as the light blue and it's
38 showing that the harvest has been increasing every
39 year. I got some reports from the State saying that
40 their number of populations are not -- remaining stable
41 so I got some conflicting -- this is showing all the
42 moose that's being harvested in our area or is this
43 just showing on the Federal lands?

44

45 MR. MOOS: Mr. Vent, through the Chair.

46

47 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Go ahead.

48

49 MR. MOOS: This information is coming
50 from the State, and what it is identifying is

1 permitholders from those communities. So if you are
2 from Huslia and received a permit and harvested, that's
3 -- and Glenn is coming up with these numbers, this is
4 preliminary and the reason for that is there are still
5 some permits that are out. So he wants to capture as
6 many permits as he can, possibly, before providing a
7 final report. So that's where this information is
8 coming from, it's actually your residents is what is
9 identified on this graph. So Galena, if you're a
10 resident of Galena and you report taking a moose, he
11 puts that -- a check basically for that village, so
12 that's where this is coming from.

13

14 MR. VENT: So -- excuse me, Chairman.

15

16 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: No, please, go
17 ahead, Darrel.

18

19 MR. VENT: So that means that you're
20 not getting any of the reports back from the
21 checkstations and that -- that I'm interested in.

22

23 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Go ahead, Kenton.

24

25 MR. MOOS: Through the Chair. Some of
26 this information is coming from the checkstation. So
27 residents of Galena who go through the checkstation and
28 get that RMA32 registration moose hunt, they will check
29 through and that's the way Glenn gets a lot of this
30 information. So, again, this is State information and
31 I think -- I mean I think it would be better served to
32 get an explanation from the State. I don't want to put
33 too many words -- but that's where this information is
34 coming from. It is coming from the checkstation. It's
35 coming from the licensed vendor in Huslia, the license
36 vendor in Hughes as well. That's where the information
37 is coming from.

38

39 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Yeah, understand
40 that. Do you have an idea how many total non-local
41 hunters, did Glenn give you an idea about that at all?

42

43 MR. HAVENOR: No, I did not get that
44 information this year.

45

46 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Hum. I'm wondering
47 if that number -- I see the Nowitna's up 40-some
48 percent, I wonder if the Koyukuk was up something like
49 that.

50

1 (Cell phone interruption)
2
3 MR. MOOS: Again, these are
4 preliminary.
5
6 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Yeah.
7
8 MR. MOOS: We don't have a whole lot of
9 information. And right now, I mean it is a busy season
10 for us, Glenn as well, as you mentioned.
11
12 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: I saw him flying,
13 yeah, I know he's busy.
14
15 MR. MOOS: And typically our biologist
16 would be out flying right now too other than we don't
17 have the snow cover, so.
18
19 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Right. Okay. Any
20 other -- Jeremy.
21
22 MR. HAVENOR: Yeah, there's just a
23 couple of things I wanted to touch on real quick, too,
24 that I forgot to mention.
25
26 The Federal hunt in GMU 21E, this fall,
27 I talked with the area biologist down there and he just
28 indicated preliminary information, that he does not
29 believe that there was any Federal hunters using that
30 permit this year. So I wanted to include that.
31
32 And then also I just wanted to talk a
33 little bit about our Refuge reporting and just wanted
34 to let you know for our Refuge, a full report works
35 best for us in the spring. That way we, you know, it
36 gives us time from our busy summer season and then
37 moose season, to get all our reports put together and
38 then have complete data to present to you. So I just
39 wanted to have that on record.
40
41 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Yeah, that's
42 understandable.
43
44 Tim.
45
46 MR. GERVAIS: Thank you, Mr. Chair.
47 Ken, could you -- we've talked about this topic a
48 little bit in previous meetings, could you update us or
49 refresh our knowledge on the process that the Refuge
50 uses to permit the transporters and how many

1 transporters are working on the Refuges.

2

3 MR. MOOS: Mr. Gervais, through the
4 Chair. Transporters, although we do -- transporters
5 are required to be permitted for the Refuge system.
6 There is not a competitive system like for our guides.
7 So if somebody has the business license, the insurance
8 that is required and has all the FAA requirements and
9 requests a permit, we do issue them a permit. With
10 that being said, if there are law enforcement issues
11 that do occur, we can revoke those permits and we can
12 then reject into the future as well, if there is
13 issues. But we have to have, obviously, sound
14 reasoning for that.

15

16 This is one concern I know that --
17 we're pretty fortunate. We don't have very many
18 transporters so we haven't had too many issues with
19 that. Illegal transporting might be a -- you know,
20 non-permitted transporters might be -- are a little bit
21 of an issue for us and we will hopefully be addressing
22 those, especially with our new law enforcement officer.
23 But I know there are other Refuges that have a lot of
24 concerns over this. And there has been some talk about
25 having a competitive process for transporters as well
26 as the guides, but at this point it has not happened.
27 And, yeah, so.....

28

29 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Go ahead, Tim.

30

31 MR. GERVAIS: Yeah, so in a lot of our
32 public comments we heard residents were concerned that
33 there was illegal transporting and some transporters,
34 some guide conflict interfering with local hunting and
35 stuff and I was wondering -- I've been trying to figure
36 different ways to handle it and stuff, and was curious
37 if the Refuge had considered any methods or means to
38 get your guide hunters and your transported hunters
39 just some knowledge base, kind of explaining that moose
40 hunting here is part of a local economy and it's not
41 just a sport thing and if -- try to show -- get some
42 cultural awareness or understanding amongst people
43 coming in, that they may just not know it because
44 they're not from rural Alaska, some way that the Refuge
45 could get some kind of education or information out to
46 these hunters coming in that they -- although not
47 required by law, it would definitely add a lot of good
48 will to be more culturally aware on how they're
49 conducting their hunts.

50

1 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Go ahead.

2

3 MR. MOOS: Through the Chair.

4 Absolutely.

5

6 Our guided -- our guided permittees --
7 or our guides who are permitted for the Refuge have to
8 put forth a perspective, and in many of the guide
9 perspectives that I received, at least for our Refuges,
10 the guides, part of their operation is they educate
11 people on the area that they're going to hunt, whether
12 it's on the Refuge -- if it's on the Refuge. So give
13 information about the Refuge and so forth. Some of
14 them have and do provide other information, local
15 information as well. A lot of it is by word of mouth.

16

17 Last year I know we took a lot of heat
18 over transporter issues, guide issues, and so forth.
19 And we did make a concerted effort this year, with law
20 enforcement, the State of Alaska -- unfortunately they
21 pulled their brown shirt out of Galena but they had a
22 very good presence here during the moose season. BLM
23 law enforcement was here in Galena this year. We
24 worked down -- the Innoko Refuge, checked on all of our
25 identified camps down there, guided camps down there,
26 stopped in, chatted with them and so forth. And that
27 includes chatting with the clients as well. So through
28 our law enforcement we are also trying to do that
29 educational outreach as well. And I think we've done a
30 pretty darn good job trying to address some of these
31 things.

32

33 Another thing we're going to be doing
34 is all of our transporters and guides, we're going to
35 recommend that they -- if they donate meat that the
36 paperwork is also in their reporting so we can see it.
37 Because one of the issues that we were told about was
38 the distribution to the villages of sour meat and, you
39 know, one of the -- I think one of the ways we want to
40 address that is if whoever receives meat signs off that
41 they received that meat, that they are saying that that
42 meat is edible when they receive it. So that will have
43 to be voluntary, can't be mandatory. But we are trying
44 to work with the transporters and our guides to ensure
45 that meat that comes back to the village, if it's
46 distributed, that it's quality meat and it covers their
47 butt as much as anybody else's, and I think they
48 realize that. And we've had a -- we've got a really
49 good program here in Galena, as well as I believe in
50 Huslia, Virgil and Sean Huffman donate meat there as

1 well to the locals. And the meat that has been
2 received from those -- I have not received any reports
3 of sour meat. So it's been very good this past year,
4 in particular.

5
6 Now, there was a guide who came in who
7 was not on Refuge lands who distributed some not so
8 good meat. But that's -- unfortunately wasn't a Refuge
9 issue so -- but I actually did talk with some people
10 about it and hopefully that guide gets the message as
11 well.

12
13 But we are trying to do some outreach,
14 absolutely.

15
16 Most of our guides are transporters out
17 here as well so it's -- we don't have a lot of
18 transporters that we need to distribute that
19 information because we just don't have very many out
20 here to be quite honest. The Controlled Use Area very
21 much limits that.

22
23 MR. GERVAIS: Why can't the meat
24 distribution reporting be required as part of the guide
25 or the transporter permit?

26
27 MR. MOOS: Through the Chair.
28 Actually, to be quite honest it is by State regulation,
29 I believe, if you transfer meat there has to be that
30 form, so it -- there is State -- under State regulation
31 you have to do that.

32
33 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: I think what Tim
34 means is -- or what I would like to see, is that, if
35 it's taken on Refuge lands and then transferred that
36 that's recorded, that that meat was actually
37 transferred, to the Refuge system.

38
39 MR. MOOS: Through the Chair, the only
40 -- I agree. A lot of the meat that does come in though
41 is not from Refuge lands so it's -- it would be -- I
42 would only get partial reporting because -- yeah.

43
44 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Another question I
45 have for -- since you got Refuges all around Galena,
46 and there's all this State land in between, what's your
47 opinion about guides using the State lands use, like in
48 the Yuki and other areas around here, what -- do you
49 got an idea, you got Staff going back and forth across
50 all these Refuges, do you have a concentration of

1 increasing guiding pressure or any guiding pressure; or
2 what's your feeling on that?

3

4 MR. MOOS: Mr. Chair. I guess some of
5 our other Staff, too, might be able to address some of
6 this, but we do not see a whole lot of guiding pressure
7 around this area. The Kaiyu, we did not have a guide
8 permit down there. Now, anecdotally we know there's
9 some guiding that occurs and our law enforcement, as
10 well as State law enforcement have not caught them.
11 And, you know, it's -- until we catch them, you know,
12 actually in the act, I mean we're out there, we're
13 trying, we will try, if there's any illegal guiding
14 going on. But on State land there -- well, the one
15 individual I will refer to has been up the Molesey as
16 Jeremy just pointed out, there is some guiding going on
17 up there, again, it's out of our jurisdiction. BLM, I
18 think would have jurisdiction and I know there was a
19 citation issued through BLM for guiding up there
20 without a permit this past year, this past fall. But
21 Yuki, I don't -- I hunt up Yuki, I don't see any
22 guiding going on up Yuki, as far as I've seen.

23

24 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: I'm just trying to
25 get a pulse on what we're actually -- I can see what
26 kind of prices they're getting for moose hunts, that
27 that could become a problem at some point. Especially
28 if you're flying out on the State lands outside of
29 Controlled Use Areas, it could just mushroom cloud, and
30 so I was just wondering, just asking.

31

32 MR. MOOS: In my opinion, there's not a
33 huge -- currently there is not a lot of guiding going
34 on off the Refuge in this area, from what I've seen.

35

36 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Good to hear.

37

38 Any -- Darrel.

39

40 MR. VENT: I got maybe one question
41 here. It's showing that, you know, every year we've
42 been increasing on moose hunting and the way the State
43 operates, it's set at a sustained yield, but it
44 operates on a different level. I think it's, you know,
45 when they hunt up in our area we notice the difference
46 and we're getting a lot of hunting pressure up there.
47 Our moose population, we, you know, don't have a -- you
48 got part of the information I'm looking for, the State
49 got part of the information I'm looking for, we know
50 that there's a lot of hunting going on. There's -- you

1 know, the Dalbi River area is getting hit pretty hard
2 and it's getting low, low population there, but when we
3 keep getting these trend area surveys, it's including
4 the areas around our area, but it's not showing the
5 difference between what's happening down around the
6 Dalbi area, it's treating all the areas as the same so
7 we don't know if it's, you know, becoming a problem.
8 But we know that it's becoming a problem because we're
9 starting to see more predators, especially grizzly
10 bears, we're -- there's a high number of grizzly bears
11 down in these areas.

12

13 And it's been told to us by the, you
14 know, people flying there, you know, like Darryl
15 Hildebrand, he said he's seen quite a bit of grizzlies
16 coming up when he's doing, you know, he checks in the
17 area. So that information and all the people in our
18 areas reporting that they're, you know, starting to see
19 a lot more tracks in the -- when these moose coming out
20 of the woods they're always looking back now, they're
21 not, you know, just sitting there browsing on the bars
22 anymore, they're worried because there's calves that's
23 with them, you know, we're wondering, you know, if
24 we're going to be able to sustain all these hunting
25 because we don't have the information.

26

27 And that's important to us to have this
28 information. We need those counts. We need to know,
29 you know, how much people are hunting in the area, are
30 we still at max -- operating at maximum level. That I
31 asked Glenn before, the last two years, and we haven't
32 been able to get a count but we have been having a lot
33 of hunting pressure. And my concern is, you know,
34 we're not the only hunters out there. These grizzlies
35 are doing a really effective job on these moose out
36 there, especially the calves. And they're also taking
37 the, you know, the adult moose now. They're getting so
38 many in our area we're getting concerned.

39

40 And Sidney mentioned that these
41 grizzlies they're really becoming effective hunters and
42 if we don't take care of that problem, like I suggested
43 to you, if we don't get it early, later on, you're
44 going to be spending more money trying to fix the
45 problem. So if we try to catch it early enough and
46 take care of some of these problems, maybe, you know,
47 we wouldn't be worrying about that later on.

48

49 But that's just my suggestion.

50

1 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: I wanted to point
2 out to you, in this paper you just got there, Darrel,
3 Koyukuk did this composition work last fall for us and
4 so there's actually the numbers of calves per hundred
5 cows in -- no, not on that one, in this one here.

6
7 MR. VENT: Uh-huh.

8
9 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: You got it laying
10 right there.

11
12 MR. VENT: Yeah.

13
14 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: So you should look
15 through that, and it shows the difference along the
16 Yukon and then up in the Koyukuk.

17
18 And in reality, if we're going to cut
19 to the chase here, the brown bear harvest along the
20 Yukon and down here is much higher than up on the
21 Koyukuk, and the difference -- black bears will kill
22 moose calves but they don't typically take that many
23 adults or no adults and they rarely kill bulls, whereas
24 large grizzlies, this time of year, post-rut, those
25 bulls wandering around, they're kind of distracted and
26 grizzlies go after bull moose this time of year, big
27 time, and they see it in the survey a lot. When
28 they're surveying moose they see bears laying on moose.
29 And so these big grizzlies are a problem. And, of
30 course, the Refuge can't do predator control so I
31 always encourage local people to take more bears. Take
32 more bears. You're out, you see a bear, shoot it. And
33 skin them out. And take more bears. Because
34 everybody's got to do their part.

35
36 That's what Sidney's talking about.
37 You guys -- well, we can't make the government do it,
38 but the local hunters -- all these communities got to
39 start talking about, you see a great big griz --
40 especially a big one, those big ones are the worst ones
41 for killing moose. Shoot it. Take it home.

42
43 We can help the -- one bear can save
44 150 moose calves in the spring. One bear could kill a
45 lot of moose calves in five weeks. And adult moose.
46 There's bears on the North Slope that killed off the
47 muskox in the Arctic National Wildlife Refuge. They
48 ate them. They killed them and ate them. There's not
49 one muskox left. There were 400 muskox, there are no
50 muskox left in the Arctic Refuge. Big grizzlies are

1 very predacious. So if you shoot -- if you're
2 concerned about it, they're not going to fix the
3 problem, you got to talk about that at Huslia and Ruby
4 and various places. You got to start killing some more
5 of these bears.

6
7 I take bears occasionally when I see a
8 bear, I take that bear, take it home, got bear meat and
9 you got -- it fixes the problem too. The government is
10 not going to control bears. People are going to have
11 to get it through their head, they have to help the
12 problem themselves. All of the villages.

13
14 Down river, Kaltag, Nulato, they've
15 been killing a lot of grizzlies in the Nulato Hills.
16 Look at all those moose calves, they got 44 moose
17 calves per 100 cows, what's that about, that's because
18 they shot those bears down there. That's what that is.
19 It's nothing more than -- all's your seeing is the
20 benefit of brown bear harvest.

21
22 And so I'll get off my high horse on
23 that one.

24
25 (Laughter)

26
27 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Any other questions,
28 we got to keep moving along here.

29
30 Tim.

31
32 MR. GERVAIS: Yeah, I did have a
33 comment about government controlling bear harvest. So
34 we -- earlier in the meeting we were talking about
35 these proposed regulatory changes for the Refuge,
36 restricting methods and means on predator harvest,
37 bears, wolves, snares, over -- bears over bait; as
38 Refuge manager, do you -- what's your intent. Like you
39 have control over your guide concessions and stuff like
40 that, can you -- I don't know what your ratios are -- I
41 would like to get the information, I would like the
42 WIRAC to request from the Refuge to see what are the
43 guides harvesting bears relative -- or predators
44 relative to prey. It's hard to have a conversation
45 unless we know what that is. And then once we know
46 this information, if it is bias just towards moose and
47 caribou, is there -- do you have any interest in
48 recommending or suggesting to your permittees that they
49 need to do some predator harvest to be a balanced
50 harvesting thing rather than just have a guide come in

1 and only harvesting moose.

2

3 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Go ahead.

4

5 MR. MOOS: Through the Chair. First of
6 all, you mentioned the change in regulations, I
7 strongly encourage you to look at those changes in
8 regulations and to provide comment.

9

10 I'll leave it at that.

11

12 But please look at that proposed rule
13 and provide comments.

14

15 As far as the guides, we -- some of our
16 guides to provide for bear hunting opportunity. Mr.
17 Umphenour and Mr. Huffman, both do provide not only
18 fall bear hunting opportunity but also in the spring.
19 So they do do that.

20

21 I'll be honest with you, as far as our
22 guides, the competitive -- it is a competitive process,
23 I had one guide apply for each of the areas this past
24 year, that was it, with the exception of one guide use
25 area. And other than that there was very little
26 competition. So can I encourage them to hunt bears and
27 so forth, absolutely, but in the perspectives, if
28 you're only considering one guide and all he wants to
29 do is hunt moose, I -- you know, it is what it is.
30 But, you know, we do encourage them, absolutely.

31

32 At the checkstation, one of the things
33 that we do is we always encourage people to take bears
34 if they see them.

35

36 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: So you can bring
37 that -- maybe those bear harvests to our spring meeting
38 and we'll continue this conversation then. We're
39 getting -- we got a lot of agenda to cover here and we
40 got some letters to cover, so I think we've covered
41 Koyukuk/Nowitna fairly -- just a very brief comment,
42 Darrel.

43

44 MR. VENT: Yep. Well, the thing that
45 -- why I was bringing that up was, you know, we always
46 took care of these problems all the time, but when the
47 problems start increasing and we can't keep up, there's
48 -- you know, there's an issue, we didn't create the
49 problem but we sure try to help every time it comes
50 around and the predation, you know, especially in our

1 area -- that's why I mentioned that, was because we --
2 you know, sometimes we just can't keep up with all the
3 pressure that's being put on us. I mean it cost money
4 to go down there, it cost fuel -- you got to buy fuel
5 if you want to go hunt these predators and that's some
6 of the issues that we're having a problem with. It's
7 costly for us. I mean it's always been but we just
8 never mentioned it before.

9

10 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Okay. And so did
11 Robert come on line there.

12

13 MS. BURKE: I believe so, Mr. Chair.
14 James, you're there, right, James Walker.

15

16 MR. J. WALKER: Yes, I am.

17

18 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: I just wanted to
19 make sure who was on the phone, thanks James.

20

21 Does Koyukuk have any final comments.

22

23 MS. BURKE: We can have them come back
24 up too when we're done with this if you have anything
25 else.

26

27 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: You're done.

28

29 MR. HAVENOR: Yeah, we're done, thank
30 you.

31

32 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Okay. Appreciate
33 it.

34

35 MS. BURKE: What about Robert, Robert
36 are you on the line.

37

38 (No comments)

39

40 MS. BURKE: Robert should be joining us
41 in just a couple of seconds, Robert and James are both
42 -- I'm sorry, Robert and Raymond both have roles at the
43 big school board convention that's happening in
44 Anchorage and so Robert's going to join us for a
45 minute. I'm going to get the PowerPoint projector set
46 up, Mr. Chair, so we can get this letter finished up.

47

48 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Okay. Yeah, we've
49 got a letter typed up about the Donlin Creek thing,
50 James, and so Melinda will read it so you can hear it,

1 plus we're going to be looking at it on the wall, and
2 hopefully Robert calls in and can be listening in to
3 the reading about it.

4
5 MR. J. WALKER: Excuse me, Jack, did
6 you.....

7
8 MS. BURKE: He said the phone was.....

9
10 MR. J. WALKER: Hello.

11
12 MS. BURKE: You're breaking up, James,
13 but can you hear what we're saying okay.

14
15 MR. J. WALKER: Yes, I can.

16
17 MS. BURKE: Okay, it sounds like it's
18 coming a little.....

19
20 MR. J. WALKER: It's a phone issue out
21 here this morning, it's pretty bad.

22
23 MS. BURKE: All right, you're coming
24 through -- you're coming through well. I'm going to
25 get this letter on the screen and I'll read what I have
26 slowly and we'll work through it here together. Just
27 one sec.

28
29 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: It's also the way I
30 use the mic, if I have my mic on then it kind of breaks
31 the phone up so when I stop talking, you can speak.

32
33 MR. J. WALKER: Thank you, Chief.

34
35 (Laughter)

36
37 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: I hope you're
38 feeling better and we do have a quorum right now.

39
40 MR. J. WALKER: Yes, thanks.

41
42 MS. BURKE: All right, if the Council
43 can sit wherever you need to to see these words here up
44 on the screen.

45
46 The first paragraph is our usual
47 boilerplate language, Mr. Chair, outlining the
48 Council's authority in ANILCA, et cetera, et cetera,
49 and so that's the one that is generally left at the top
50 of all of the letters.

1 The Council met in Galena November 3
2 through 5, 2015 and among the topics discussed and
3 commented -- among the topics discussed and commented
4 on at this public meeting was the Donlin Gold project
5 environmental impact statement project update.
6

7 The Council is extremely concerned with
8 the projected permanent negative effects on subsistence
9 resources, users and the future generations who rely on
10 these irreplaceable resources for their physical,
11 cultural and traditional well being.
12

13 (Telephone interruption)
14

15 MS. BURKE: Is that you Robert.
16

17 MR. R. WALKER: Yes.
18

19 MS. BURKE: Okay, great, we just got
20 through the first paragraph. And this is the letter
21 commenting on the Donlin Mine update that I talked to
22 you about on the phone.
23

24 The next paragraph, the Council
25 appreciates the summary of comments and work of Bruce
26 Seppi, subsistence coordinator for the Bureau of Land
27 Management and echoes the sentiment summarized in his
28 recently written .801 analysis reviewing the EIS
29 environmental impact statement which we understand is
30 quite extensive. There are irreversible ramifications
31 in this project which are not being discussed at this
32 point. The Council is encouraged by and appreciates
33 the planned BLM .810 meetings to gather information and
34 comment from the villages along the Kuskokwim River,
35 which would be directly affected by the proposed mining
36 plans and activity.
37

38 Stop me at any time if anyone would
39 like to make any edits.
40

41 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: It looks good.
42

43 MS. BURKE: The Council wishes to
44 express extensive concerns discussed about the mine
45 itself, transportation and handling of materials such
46 as fuel and byproducts and the potential drainage of
47 countless gallons of toxic water left behind as a
48 result of -- oh, that sounds funky, we can fix that --
49 of foreseeable natural occurrences, such as seismic
50 activity, which would result in a wave of toxic

1 material infiltrating the Kuskokwim River.

2

3 This Council does not comprehend how
4 anyone finds it acceptable to propose a toxic leech
5 site to exist in perpetuity in the Western Interior
6 Region. The treatment plan, as described, does not
7 seem workable and longlasting impacts will fall on the
8 residents and the resources they depend on long after
9 the mine and current staff are gone.

10

11 The Council also discussed at length
12 serious concerns about potential negative impacts
13 barging on the Kuskokwim River will have on residents
14 using the river, subsistence or otherwise, and on the
15 crucial fisheries present in the river. Proposed barge
16 size and associated loads of fuel carried are not
17 responsibly realistic for travel on the Kuskokwim. The
18 huge continuous wake action alone will cause hardship
19 for setnet fisheries and a spill would wipe out
20 phenomenal amounts of fish. This traffic will damage
21 fish and wildlife habitat as well as the health of the
22 river and the people who depend on the resources it
23 provides.

24

25 We are adamantly opposed due to the
26 lack of assurance to protect the resources and the
27 people of the region. The costs anticipated and
28 unintentional are far too high. Negatives far outweigh
29 the few temporary economic benefits.

30

31 Our opinion is to take no action on the
32 alternatives.

33

34 The Council members strongly recommend
35 that these activities do not go forth and no action is
36 taken to move these plans forward. We want no action
37 taken as this is detrimental to the short and long-term
38 resources of the people of the Western Interior region.
39 People of the Lower Kuskokwim should not have to endure
40 the long-term negative impacts in exchange for short-
41 term economic and employment benefit. It is just not
42 worth it.

43

44 Impact to subsistence resources and
45 users are far greater than what the benefits of the
46 project are. Future generations of Alaskans, plants
47 and animals are going to have to pay for these
48 activities.

49

50 And, Mr. Chair, the last paragraph is

1 also boilerplate language.

2

3 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: So is there any edit
4 comments from the Council.

5

6 MR. J. WALKER: Yes, Jack, I have one.

7

8 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Go ahead, James.

9

10 MR. J. WALKER: Who is this?

11

12 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Excuse me, would you
13 say that again?

14

15 MR. J. WALKER: Who was the letter
16 from?

17

18 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: The letter is from
19 the Western Interior Regional Advisory Council to the
20 Corps of Engineers Draft -- or EIS, and it has to do
21 with they're going to want these comments after the
22 30th of November and we won't meet before their process
23 is completed so we need to have this letter submitted
24 from this Council in a timely manner and so that's why
25 we needed to have quorum.

26

27 MR. J. WALKER: Okay, sorry, Jack, it
28 was kind of broke up there when she was reading it.

29

30 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Okay. I think that
31 the language needs to be strengthened on the 1,650 feet
32 toxic pond that's going to be behind a dam that in 50
33 years the company will be long gone, this huge amount
34 of toxic waste will be implemented and sit there
35 forever and if there was a seismic event, that would
36 then be a wash of toxicity flying down the Kuskokwim
37 River destroying various fishery resources along its
38 way.

39

40 And so the bonding that needs to be in
41 place would be phenomenal and which would economically
42 preclude the project, so somebody's going to have to
43 pay for the cleanup and the people of Alaska, and
44 especially the people of the Kuskokwim River drainage
45 are going to pay the price.

46

47 And so that's -- the language needs to
48 be slightly strengthened on this, on the size of this
49 pond. It's going to take 50 years for it to fill, it's
50 going to be 1,650 feet deep or something to that

1 effect, and it would have to be continuously treated
2 after that point until there's a seismic event, like
3 the 1964 earthquake would just completely breach it.
4 And so this project and the people of Alaska hardly
5 know anything about the project, this is all obscure in
6 the news and this Council, being a subsistence Council,
7 and worried about the users and the users needs to have
8 this letter in place to at least comment to the Corps
9 of Engineers.

10

11 MR. R. WALKER: Jack, this is Robert.

12

13 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Go ahead, Robert.

14

15 MR. R. WALKER: As I was listening too,
16 it didn't state nothing about the people that live on
17 the Kuskokwim River, some of those people utilize that
18 for drinking water, do they, that river.

19

20 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Yeah, we're talking
21 about the people of the Kuskokwim River, the impacts --
22 adding that -- Robert's right, you know, the filtration
23 into the aquifer system will affect the.....

24

25 MR. R. WALKER: Right.

26

27 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF:wells in local
28 communities.

29

30 MR. R. WALKER: Right. Okay.

31

32 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Any other comments
33 from you two fellows, or the Council.

34

35 (No comments)

36

37 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Hearing none, the
38 Chair will entertain a motion to transmit this letter
39 to the Corps of Engineers on the EIS and that each
40 issue be broken up, this will be a cover letter, but
41 each issue will be broken up because they count each
42 issue in a separate category, so we don't want one
43 comment, we want a comment on every issue that we're
44 bringing up. The toxic pond, the aquifer issues, the
45 resource issues, and all of these various issues need
46 to be enumerated to be categorized in the EIS.

47

48 MR. HONEA: I so move.

49

50 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Moved by Don.

1 MR. GERVAIS: I'll second.
2
3 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Seconded by Tim.
4 Any further comments or discussion from the Council.
5
6 MR. R. WALKER: Yes, I have a question.
7
8 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Go ahead, Robert.
9
10 MR. R. WALKER: Is this motion made to
11 approve the letter with the additions you put in there?
12
13 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Yes, the motion is
14 to transmit the letter.....
15
16 MR. R. WALKER: Okay.
17
18 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF:as read and
19 edited, but then to break out each comment into
20 separate comments because they categorize that in the
21 EIS and so we don't want one comment.....
22
23 MR. R. WALKER: Okay.
24
25 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF:it would be
26 stuffed into one cubbyhole, we want each category
27 plugged.
28
29 MR. R. WALKER: Okay.
30
31 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Further discussion.
32
33 MR. J. WALKER: Question.
34
35 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Question's called.
36 Those in favor of the letter on the Donlin Creek EIS
37 signify by saying aye.
38
39 IN UNISON: Aye.
40
41 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Opposed, same sign.
42
43 (No opposing votes)
44
45 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Unanimous consent of
46 the letter.
47
48 When we were in the discussion with the
49 BLM presentation just before you two guys called in, it
50 was identified that the Central Yukon and the other,

1 the Anchorage Office or in the RMP process, and what
2 the resource -- I'm drawing a blank here, what's the
3 exact, resource management plan -- resource management
4 plan.

5
6 MR. GERVAIS: Can you have them mute
7 their phones or.....

8
9 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Your phone is
10 echoing back, Robert, if you could mute it, star six,
11 while I'm talking, that would help us out here, we're
12 getting an echo.

13
14 So the resource management plans, we
15 want to write a letter to the Regional Director,
16 there's been a failure in the State of Alaska to
17 develop a guide use areas for Alaska, BLM, State and
18 private lands. And at this point the -- in 2004 the
19 Regional Director had promised that if the State system
20 failed, they would implement a guide use area and so
21 since they're in the resource management planning
22 process on an extensive area in Alaska, I would like
23 the Council to write a letter to the Regional Director
24 of the BLM, Bud Cribley, to state that the resource
25 management plans of Alaska, and especially within the
26 Western Interior region be opened to including a guide
27 selection process that would mirror or be in very
28 similarity to the Federal Wildlife Refuge or the Park
29 Reserve lands that have guide selection processes.

30
31 Is that acceptable to the Council.

32
33 MR. VENT: Yes.

34
35 MR. GERVAIS: Yes.

36
37 (Council nods affirmatively)

38
39 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Is that acceptable
40 to Robert and James.

41
42 MR. J. WALKER: Yes, this is James.
43 Yes, it is Jack.

44
45 MR. R. WALKER: Yes.

46
47 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Robert.

48
49 MR. R. WALKER: Can you hear me?

50

1 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Yeah, go ahead.
2
3 MR. R. WALKER: Okay. Yes, that's
4 acceptable.
5
6 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Okay. The Chair
7 will entertain a motion to write a letter to the
8 Regional Director of the Bureau of Land Management, Bud
9 Cribley, in regards to the need to open the RMP process
10 to state-wide, and especially on the Western Interior
11 regional lands to a guide selection process since the
12 State of Alaska lands are -- guide selection process
13 has failed in the Legislature.
14
15 Do I have a motion to that effect.
16
17 MR. HONEA: I move.
18
19 MR. GERVAIS: Seconded.
20
21 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Moved by Don,
22 seconded by Tim. Further discussion on the letter to
23 the Regional Director.
24
25 MR. VENT: You know, I guess, you know,
26 transporting's been a little bit of a problem too but I
27 don't know how we'd address it. It's -- how would you
28 address it with the guide process.
29
30 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: The guide selection
31 process is a horse of a different color than the
32 transporter/permitting process so we don't want to mix
33 apples and oranges. So this is strictly about the
34 guide selection process on BLM lands.
35
36 Any further comments on the letter from
37 the Council.
38
39 (No comments)
40
41 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Robert and James.
42
43 MR. J. WALKER: No, not at this time,
44 Jack.
45
46 MR. R. WALKER: I'm good with that,
47 Jack. Robert.
48
49 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Okay. Could we get
50 a question here.

1 MR. GERVAIS: Question's called.
2
3 MR. HONEA: Question.
4
5 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: The question's
6 called. Those in favor of the letter to be transmitted
7 to the Regional Director of the BLM signify by saying
8 aye.
9
10 IN UNISON: Aye.
11
12 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Opposed, same sign.
13
14 (No opposing votes)
15
16 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Motion carries.
17 Thanks so much.
18
19 Melinda, go ahead.
20
21 MS. BURKE: Thank you, Mr. Chair. It
22 was my mistake yesterday while we had Mr. Collins here
23 in the room and while we had quorum to take care of one
24 more housekeeping item. On Page 5 of the meeting book
25 are the minutes from the March 3rd Western Interior
26 Council meeting, which took place in Fairbanks. One
27 correction that needs to be made is on the top of Page
28 6, I identified Mr. Bruce Seppi as working for ADF&G,
29 which was my mistake and any other edits or corrections
30 to the minutes I'd love to take care of this action
31 item while we have a quorum, Mr. Chair.
32
33 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Any edits or
34 corrections from the Council on the minutes from our
35 March meeting.
36
37 MS. BURKE: It's a quite shorter set of
38 minutes since we met jointly with the Eastern Interior
39 Council so it's quite shorter than our original meeting
40 minutes.
41
42 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Don.
43
44 MR. HONEA: Yeah, Mr. Chair, as a --
45 since we have a quorum now, isn't this an action item,
46 I don't believe we even took a motion to accept these.
47
48 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Yeah, that's why
49 we're taking it up right now is because we missed it
50 earlier in the meeting.

1 We need to adopt these minutes as part
2 of this process.
3
4 MR. HONEA: Okay. Then since we have a
5 quorum I make a motion to adopt.
6
7 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Darrel's got a
8 comment. We're taking any edits or adjustments before
9 the motion.
10
11 MR. VENT: You have written down here
12 Charlie Wright from Tanana Chiefs Conference, that's
13 actually Charlie Wright from Tanana.
14
15 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Robert and James, do
16 you have any comments on the minutes from the March
17 meeting.
18
19 MR. R. WALKER: No, I don't Jack.
20
21 MR. J. WALKER: No, Jack, not at this
22 point.
23
24 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Further comments.
25
26 Tim.
27
28 MR. GERVAIS: (Shakes head negatively)
29
30 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Then we need a
31 motion to adopt the minutes of the March 2015 -- March
32 3rd, 2015 winter meeting. The Chair will entertain a
33 motion to adopt.
34
35 MR. HONEA: Move to adopt.
36
37 MR. VENT: Second.
38
39 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Moved by Don,
40 seconded by Darrel. Can you call the question Pollock.
41
42 MR. SIMON: Question.
43
44 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: The question is
45 called on the minutes. Those in favor of adopting the
46 minutes, as edited, signify by saying aye.
47
48 IN UNISON: Aye.
49
50 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Those opposed, same

1 sign.

2

3 (No opposing votes)

4

5 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Okay. The minutes

6 are adopted.

7

8 MR. GERVAIS: Mr. Chair.

9

10 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Tim, go ahead.

11

12 MR. GERVAIS: Yeah, I had one question,

13 I don't know if, while we have a quorum, I don't know

14 how we -- the Council's stance yesterday on whether we

15 wanted to provide comment to Fish and Wildlife Service

16 about the sporthunting regulations or not. I would

17 like this Council to make a recommendation but I

18 understand that it's affecting sport regulations and

19 not subsistence regulations so if you guys choose not

20 to bring up -- my concern is less with the actual

21 regulations but it's the precedent of the US Fish and

22 Wildlife Service diverging from the accepted State

23 regulations and I feel like there should be extreme

24 efforts made by both the Fish and Wildlife Service and

25 Fish and Game to respect each other's regulatory

26 development process and I feel that even though these

27 current predator practices that the US Fish and

28 Wildlife Service is stating is against Fish and

29 Wildlife Service's policies, I think that the Fish and

30 Wildlife Service should not defer from those

31 regulations based on -- try and develop a working

32 relationship with this comanagement regime we have.

33

34 Is that making any sense?

35

36 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Your concern is

37 about elimination of sporthunting of brown bears and

38 wolves to.....

39

40 MR. GERVAIS: No, my concern is we saw

41 it with the National Park Service on the National

42 Preserves, they published a rule that said that they

43 were subverting the regulations that are being put out

44 by Board of Game and now we have US Fish and Wildlife

45 Service taking the same action by saying, yeah, these

46 are -- these State regs, which are developed through

47 the Board of Game process are against US Fish and

48 Wildlife Service policies, so therefore we're

49 disallowing them on the Refuge and I feel that that's a

50 bad precedent for these Federal agencies to go off

1 track and not adopt the Alaska hunting regulations even
2 if they -- yeah, they're controversial but they
3 probably won't always be in place and I don't think
4 it's healthy for the National Park Service or in this
5 particular incidence the US Fish and Wildlife Service
6 to say we're not going to accept these regs even though
7 they were developed through a standard public process
8 for rulemaking for wildlife management.

9

10 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Well, if you would
11 like to make a motion to -- for WIRAC comment to that
12 effect, you can state the motion as pretty much along
13 the line of what you just said and we'll vote it up or
14 down.

15

16 MR. GERVAIS: Okay. I would like to
17 make a motion that the WIRAC writes a comment to the US
18 Fish and Wildlife Service in regard to their proposed
19 statewide regulatory changes encouraging them to not
20 subvert the State of Alaska hunting regulations in
21 regards to the taking of brown bears and cubs, brown
22 bears over bait, bears with traps and snares, taking of
23 wolves or coyote during spring and summer denning
24 season and taking of bears with aircraft on the same
25 day, not -- and the reason is that I would encourage US
26 Fish and Wildlife Service to accept these regulations
27 that are made by the Board of Game as part of their
28 standard public process even though they violate -- or
29 contrary to US Fish and Wildlife Service policy, I feel
30 the more significant factor is that the Alaska hunting
31 regulations should be left intact as they apply to the
32 Refuge system.

33

34 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: I feel that there
35 should be at least one sentence that says if they do
36 not jeopardize subsistence resources.

37

38 MR. R. WALKER: Yes, that's what my
39 question would have been too, Jack.

40

41 MR. GERVAIS: That's fine as amended.

42

43 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Further discussion
44 on the motion -- or correction, we need a second.

45

46 MR. HONEA: Second.

47

48 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Seconded by Don.
49 Discussion on the motion.

50

1 MR. R. WALKER: Okay, this is Robert.

2

3 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Okay, go ahead,

4 Robert.

5

6 MR. R. WALKER: Okay. That was what I
7 was going to ask the very first what you just asked,
8 Jack, about the subsistence issue here, if it's going
9 to affect how and will it be added to that, too, I
10 would convey that.

11

12 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Well, my concern is
13 that the State of Alaska has affected, not necessarily
14 with these regulations, but they have affected
15 populations with State regulations that have affected
16 like the Mulchatna Caribou Herd, 19A moose, State
17 regulations have gone too far. I feel that it's in the
18 prerogative of the Federal managers to close or
19 restrict and the Federal Board to close and restrict
20 regulations that are affecting resources. But what Tim
21 is talking about in the proposed rule is at some point
22 maybe the State regulations are too extreme on wolves
23 or bears and so if it's affecting the subsistence
24 resources then they should -- the Federal managers
25 should be able to restrict the State regulations.
26 That's where my line of thought was.

27

28 Tim.

29

30 MR. GERVAIS: Yeah, let me clarify and
31 I apologize for not making a clear statement.

32

33 I'm saying that I feel the US Fish and
34 Wildlife Service should accept these State of Alaska
35 hunting regs as developed and I'll accept your
36 amendment so it doesn't affect the subsistence users,
37 but I'm -- I don't think it's healthy for the US Fish
38 and Wildlife Service and the Park Service and the Board
39 of Game to all have their own separate set of
40 regulations and this is an incidence where the Fish and
41 Wildlife Service could accept those -- choose not to
42 prohibit these particular methods and means for the
43 sake of keeping -- have the regulations be more
44 standardized.

45

46 I guess it's like a question of the US
47 Fish and Wildlife Service overruling regulations that
48 were put in place by the Board of Game.

49

50 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Yeah, the proposed

1 rule is talking about maintaining healthy populations.
2 I feel that if on National Wildlife Refuge lands,
3 populations of prey ungulate or predators are being
4 threatened by State regulations, I feel that the
5 Federal system should be able to start to modulate or
6 control that. I've seen too many times where I've seen
7 the Federal government sat back and watched the State
8 of Alaska violate recognized scientific principles and
9 wipe out caribou herds and moose populations.

10

11 And so I want our comment to be clear
12 that it's in regards to that they maintain the healthy
13 populations, which they're under statutory limitation,
14 the Federal managers -- all Federal managers, BLM, Park
15 Service, the Refuges, under mandate to maintain healthy
16 populations of fish and wildlife using recognized
17 scientific principles, that's congressional language.
18 And so if the State of Alaska violates that then the
19 Federal managers, it's incumbent to control that.

20

21 But having said that, your letter -- or
22 your motion is to stay with State regulations unless it
23 is detrimental to subsistence resources for the users
24 and that's the language that I would like to have
25 inserted, and I'm clarifying this on the record. I'm
26 talking loud on the record but it's all transcribed.

27

28 Is that clear Tim.

29

30 MR. GERVAIS: Yes. Would it be
31 preferred if I just withdraw that motion and this rule
32 is not going to get published for another month and
33 then we have another 60 days -- 30 or 60 days to
34 comment on it if we're going to do this, we can cover
35 this letter sometime via email or teleconference later
36 on in the year.

37

38 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: What's the timeframe
39 Vince.

40

41 MS. BURKE: Hey, Robert, can you mute
42 yourself, star six, I'm sorry, for just a second. It's
43 becoming really bad here.

44

45 MR. MATHEWS: Vince Mathews, Refuge
46 subsistence specialist for Kanuti, Arctic and Yukon
47 Flats. I was involved in the proposed rule so the
48 question before the Council is it's going to be a 90
49 day comment period. We're looking at releasing the
50 proposed rule in November or December, so you can do

1 the math from there.

2

3 Through the Chair, could I ask Mr.
4 Gervais a question that might help.

5

6 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Go ahead, Vince.

7

8 MR. MATHEWS: Tim, is your -- is the
9 motivation of your discussion on this because you feel
10 that the Fish and Wildlife Service did not participate
11 in the Board of Game process that developed regulations
12 that, I think Jack laid out that may not match the --
13 I'll use the words, mission or mandates, of Refuges.

14

15 MR. GERVAIS: Well, I don't know if
16 they did or didn't participate in it. My main
17 motivation in bringing this up is apparently under my
18 understanding that the regulations, hunting regulations
19 developed by the Board of Game or Board of Fish are
20 valid on Wildlife Refuges and now we have a system
21 where there's some controversial issues that got
22 approved in the last few years and the Fish and
23 Wildlife Service is saying we don't agree with these,
24 we are -- we're going to make up our own set of
25 regulations and I don't -- I don't feel like that's
26 going to help the situation. So it's more of a
27 principle deal, like I'd like to see the Fish and
28 Wildlife Service accept the Board of Game regulations
29 except for instances such as Jack is bringing up, that
30 there's incorrect management decisions made or
31 something. But I don't feel like these particular
32 issues are significant enough for US Fish and Wildlife
33 Service to create a whole new regulatory change
34 subverting the State regs.

35

36 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Go ahead, Vince.

37

38 MR. MATHEWS: Just for the record, Fish
39 and Wildlife Service does participate in the Board of
40 Game process and without going through all the details,
41 because I don't have the files here, they did have
42 concerns about Board of Game actions and did share
43 those with the Board of Game. So they're in the
44 process -- I recognize your concern, I just wanted it
45 to be clear on the record that Fish and Wildlife
46 Service, through various Staff interact with the Board
47 of Game process.

48

49 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Okay. Further
50 discussion on the motion.

1 (No comments)
2
3 MR. VENT: Question.
4
5 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Pollock just stepped
6 out, do we need him?
7
8 MS. BURKE: You still have two on the
9 phone.
10
11 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: We've got two on the
12 phone, okay. So the premise of the letter was stated
13 on the record by Tim. I put my edit in there, the
14 caveat, unless it is -- the State regulations are
15 affecting the health of the resource and that it's
16 violating healthy resources and that they're not using
17 recognized scientific principles then I feel otherwise,
18 and so that will be incorporated into the letter.
19
20 Question's called. Those in favor of
21 that letter of comment to the proposed rule, US Fish
22 and Wildlife proposed rule signify by saying aye.
23
24 IN UNISON: Aye.
25
26 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Robert.
27
28 MR. R. WALKER: Aye.
29
30 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Okay. So the motion
31 carries for comment on the proposed rule.
32
33 Melinda.
34
35 MS. BURKE: While we're on a roll here
36 with our quorum, I wasn't sure if the Council has had
37 any time to think about the Board of Fish proposals.
38 This Council regularly comments on Board of Fish
39 proposals. We do have -- I don't think Robert and
40 James have copies of those, but I do have copies here
41 in the room and if there's any of the Council who would
42 like to summarize or comment on them while we have a
43 quorum, Mr. Chair, I'll leave that up to you.
44
45 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Okay. Did you,
46 Robert and James, have a chance to look at Board of
47 Fish proposals and have any burning issues about those.
48
49 MR. J. WALKER: No, I don't, Jack.
50

1 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Okay.
2
3 MR. R. WALKER: I don't either, Jack.
4
5 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Okay. There are --
6 Melinda's passed out a list of a few here.
7
8 Tim, did you have any proposals that
9 you feel the Council should comment on.
10
11 (No comments)
12
13 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Any of Eastern
14 Interior's actions on these, Melinda.
15
16 MS. BURKE: Yes, Mr. Chair, let me get
17 those pulled out really quick. I didn't think we were
18 going to get to these. Excuse me just one second.
19
20 MR. GERVAIS: Yeah, this 127, 128 about
21 expanding the size of the fishing districts are
22 significant.
23
24 (Pause)
25
26 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Yeah, I have
27 concerns about those two proposals because it actually
28 would allow commercial harvest in the marine system
29 that may have more affect on inshore return of chinook
30 salmon moving through those areas. And so I was a
31 little bit concerned about those myself.
32
33 MR. GERVAIS: Then this 120- or
34 standby.
35
36 MS. BURKE: What number was the one you
37 were just discussing, Mr. Chair.
38
39 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: 127 and 128, they're
40 proposals to expand the districts into the marine
41 system waters. This is -- these are Kwik'Pak proposals
42 and so these district expansions would be beneficial to
43 the commercial fishery and I'm concerned about
44 increasing areas in the marine system that would allow
45 possible commercial openings in the marine waters when
46 the Yukon River is closed for chinook conservation.
47 And so I don't feel that at this time with the
48 conservation concerns we've had for chinook and our
49 building concerns for coho, that these district
50 expansions are warranted.

1 And so I would like comments from the
2 Council on that issue.
3
4 Tim.
5
6 MS. BURKE: Do you want to hear how the
7 Eastern Interior.....
8
9 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Yes, I'd like to
10 know what Eastern did with those.
11
12 MS. BURKE: Mr. Chair. Council. For
13 Number 128 the Council voted to oppose the proposal,
14 that was unanimous and that is the same situation for
15 Proposal 128 [sic], Mr. Chair.
16
17 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: 127.
18
19 MS. BURKE: Yes, 127 and 128.
20
21 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Yeah, so I got a bad
22 feeling about these.
23
24 Tim.
25
26 (Pause)
27
28 MR. GERVAIS: Excuse me. Yeah, I feel
29 at this time without any better information about the
30 significance or the detriment of opening, expanding
31 these fishing areas, I don't feel this Council should
32 support expanding these harvest areas for -- excuse me,
33 for 127 and 128 proposals.
34
35 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: So you make a motion
36 to adopt Proposal 127 and 128 with the intention to
37 oppose.
38
39 MR. GERVAIS: Roger. Yes.
40
41 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Do we have a second.
42
43 MR. VENT: Second.
44
45 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Motion to adopt
46 State Board of Fish Proposals 127 and 128.
47
48 Further discussion.
49
50 We have Tim that motioned and Darrel

1 that seconded.

2

3 Discussion on that. Justification. Go
4 ahead, Tim.

5

6 MR. GERVAIS: Yes. Based on our time
7 to evaluate these proposals and our lack of knowledge
8 of these specific areas, I think it would be
9 irresponsible for this Council to approve expansion of
10 these fishing areas without a better understanding of
11 why it's necessary and what the detrimental effects of
12 increased harvest down in that district would be.

13

14 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: And with the stocks
15 of concern for chinook on the -- in the Yukon River and
16 I would like to voice the WIRAC's concern for
17 increasing harvest of coho in conjunction with the fall
18 chum harvest. These proposals are unwarranted.

19

20 Any other comments.

21

22 (No comments)

23

24 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Justifications.

25

26 (No comments)

27

28 MR. VENT: Question.

29

30 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Question's called.

31 Those in.....

32

33 MR. HONEA: Excuse me.

34

35 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Don.

36

37 MR. HONEA: Before we call the
38 question, I'd just like to reiterate that also, I mean
39 in -- in a time of critical concern for specified
40 chinook, I don't think we should be expanding any
41 commercial areas.

42

43 Thank you.

44

45 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Thanks, Don. And so
46 question is called. Those in favor of Proposal 127 and
47 128 signify by saying aye.

48

49 MR. HONEA: Aye. Oops.

50

1 (Laughter)
2
3 (No aye votes)
4
5 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: That's in the
6 positive.
7
8 Those opposed to Proposals 127 and 128
9 -- the proposal is -- the motion is to adopt and so
10 when you vote against these proposals, those opposed to
11 Proposals 127 and 128 signify by saying aye.
12
13 IN UNISON: Aye.
14
15 MR. J. WALKER: Aye.
16
17 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Are you there
18 Robert.
19
20 MR. R. WALKER: Aye.
21
22 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Did you say aye,
23 Robert.
24
25 MR. R. WALKER: Yes, I said aye.
26
27 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Okay. Okay. Motion
28 carries.
29
30 MR. GERVAIS: Mr. Chair. I make a
31 motion to adopt Proposal 126.
32
33 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Okay. Do you want
34 to read an outline of it, Tim.
35
36 A second to adopt Proposal 126.
37
38 (No comments)
39
40 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Who -- is anybody
41 going to second that.
42
43 MR. HONEA: Second.
44
45 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Okay, Don. Go
46 ahead, Tim.
47
48 MR. GERVAIS: Okay. This is a proposal
49 to add a new gear type in Districts 1 through 3, purse
50 seine gear, total length, not to exceed 150 fathoms,

1 that's a 900 foot net with no depth restriction on it.
2 That's really extreme fishing gear. Purse seine gear
3 is used in a lot of areas of the state and they have --
4 when you look at a regulation book for these other
5 purse seine areas, they have pages and pages of other
6 restrictions on the net to cater a different area and
7 so at this time it would be not advisable for this
8 Council to adopt this regulation as it doesn't have
9 enough restriction on the net. It's putting in an
10 entire new gear type that has the harvesting power
11 that's a magnitude higher than the current gear types
12 and it potentially could have really detrimental
13 affects on subsistence and commercial users in other
14 parts of the system, or other districts of the system.
15 So it's not -- in my opinion it's -- I'm open to hear
16 what they're saying, they're -- apparently they're
17 using beach seine gear down there now but to have a 900
18 -- or excuse me 300 -- or yeah 900 foot net with
19 unrestricted depth is -- to allow that into regulation
20 is not responsible management.

21

22 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: The permit holders
23 for the Yukon are allowed 50 fathoms of drift gillnet
24 and 150 fathoms for a permit holder is a three times
25 increase in gear effectiveness, and the depth of the
26 net, everybody knows that chinooks run deep in the
27 water column and so the net -- a 200 mesh depth net or
28 100 mesh dept net would have a -- would be very
29 effective at catching a majority of chinook salmon and
30 then they would be subjected to handling and in the
31 seine. And if you choked them off, you've seen before,
32 you choked them off in the money bag you could have
33 higher mortalities and so I -- this seining proposal
34 was before the Board before but this even seems to be
35 more lax than the previous proposal.

36

37 So what did the Eastern Interior
38 Regional Council do on Proposal 126.

39

40 MS. BURKE: Mr. Chair. The Council
41 voted to oppose the proposal. Rationale was concern
42 from some Council members about possible fatal harm
43 being done to chinook salmon while in purse seine nets.
44 Research needs to be done on the Yukon to reach
45 definitive conclusions to this matter. Unanimous
46 opposed.

47

48 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Eastern's stating
49 the same thing, they're worried about mortalities. I
50 mean you found up 1500 chums and you're brailing and

1 these kings are all wound together within this big mass
2 you can have a large mortality factor.

3
4 So I'm opposed to Proposal 126. The
5 motion's on the floor, any further discussion.

6
7 MR. J. WALKER: Question.

8
9 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Question's called.
10 Those in favor of Proposal 126 signify by saying aye.

11
12 (No aye votes)

13
14 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Those opposed to
15 Proposal 126 signify by saying aye.

16
17 IN UNISON: Aye.

18
19 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Unanimous opposition
20 for 126.

21
22 Any others Tim.

23
24 MR. GERVAIS: Mr. Chair. I make a
25 motion to adopt Proposal 125, gillnet specification and
26 operation.

27
28 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Go ahead, Tim.

29
30 MR. GERVAIS: Okay. Do I have to wait
31 for it to be seconded or.....

32
33 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Okay.

34
35 MR. GERVAIS: Or I make a motion to
36 adopt Proposal 125.

37
38 MR. VENT: Second.

39
40 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Okay. Seconded by
41 Darrel. Go ahead, Tim.

42
43 MR. GERVAIS: Okay. This proposal
44 proposed by Kwik'Pak is for the establishment of a
45 directed pink salmon fishery in the Yukon River,
46 gillnets four inches or less or no more than 50 meshes
47 in depth.

48
49 I don't know why they -- if they want
50 to establish a new fishery why they don't include the

1 other districts into that and make it a drainage-wide
2 fishery. I would need some information from Department
3 of Fish and Game or from the Federal managers on what
4 the potential effects of allowing this fishery to be
5 created. So without -- if we have that information,
6 fine, if we don't I feel it's irresponsible for this
7 Council to approve this proposal without better
8 information about its -- the effects of creating it.

9

10 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: How did Eastern
11 Interior act on Proposal 125.

12

13 MS. BURKE: Mr. Chair. In the meeting
14 notes I do not see that the Council discussed -- oh,
15 I'm sorry, it's on the second page. The Council voted
16 unanimously to oppose this proposal. There's not any
17 rationale written down but they voted to oppose.

18

19 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: I'm opposed to the
20 proposal because it -- the pink runs and coho runs
21 overlap and if the Department becomes under drive to
22 harvest fall chum and coho and then we'll have
23 subsequent pink openings in Districts 1 through 3 they
24 might get into higher coho bycatch, and four inch gear
25 will catch coho.

26

27 So with the building harvest rates for
28 coho salmon, the lower -- pink salmon primarily spawn
29 on the Lower Yukon River that's why it's one and three,
30 that's -- and they're fatter down there and I don't
31 know -- I've never heard of very many pinks going into
32 above District 3, personally. And I think that's why
33 it is for Districts 1 and 3. But I'm opposed to
34 expanding any additional fisheries when we have these
35 suppressed or maximized use of coho on the Yukon River.

36

37 So that's why I am opposed to Proposal
38 125.

39

40 Further discussion.

41

42 MR. HONEA: Question.

43

44 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Question is called
45 on Proposal 125, State Board of Fish Proposal 125.
46 Those in favor of Proposal 125 signify by saying aye.

47

48 (No aye votes)

49

50 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Those opposed, same

1 sign.
2
3 IN UNISON: Aye.
4
5 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Okay. Unanimous
6 opposition.
7
8 Any other proposals that the Council
9 would like to look at.
10
11 MR. GERVAIS: I would like to talk
12 about Proposal 123 if we had somebody from the
13 Department that could explain their stand on that.
14
15 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: I haven't heard any
16 -- are there Department fishery Staff, I don't think
17 they're listening to us today.
18
19 MS. GARCIA: Through the Chair. This
20 is Sabrina Garcia with the Department of Fish and Game.
21
22 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Okay, well, good.
23 Go ahead, Sabrina.
24
25 MS. GARCIA: We're currently in the
26 process of finalizing our Department comments, so I can
27 answer any questions on what the current regulations
28 are and what the proposal would be at this time.
29
30 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Go ahead, Tim, ask
31 those questions.
32
33 MR. GERVAIS: Okay. Thank you,
34 Sabrina.
35
36 What is the current regulation for the
37 length of beach seine gear and the depth and mesh size?
38
39 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Sabrina.
40
41 MS. GARCIA: So currently we don't have
42 any specifications, which is why this proposal was
43 submitted to the Board.
44
45 MR. GERVAIS: How about, there's some
46 beach seines in operation in the lower river, what size
47 nets are they currently using?
48
49 MS. GARCIA: Are you referring to
50 commercial or subsistence?

1 MR. GERVAIS: Commercial.
2
3 (Pause)
4
5 MS. GARCIA: I'm just pulling those up,
6 give me one second.
7
8 MR. GERVAIS: Okay. Just interrupt
9 when you have some information, Sabrina, in the issue
10 of time here I want to talk to the Council about this.
11
12 MS. GARCIA: Sure.
13
14 MR. GERVAIS: So, once, again, here
15 we're seeing a net 150 fathoms in length. That's real
16 serious net for catching fish. I don't know, I could
17 potentially see where you could have a -- what are they
18 using this for, chums, yeah, I could see where they
19 could have a 40 or 50,000 pound set with that type of
20 gear during the max part of the run. So I would like
21 -- I don't -- just the issue where we're not familiar
22 with that fishery down there and how it was prosecuted
23 and I would rather get more information from the
24 commercial fishermen or from Fish and Game as to why
25 they feel that that 150 fathom length is appropriate.
26 That's just a hell of a net to put out.
27
28 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Did you get that
29 information about current beach seine use, Sabrina?
30
31 MS. GARCIA: I did. So the only
32 regulation we have for commercial beach seine gear is
33 that the mesh size cannot exceed four inches, stretch
34 measure, but there is currently no specification on
35 length and depth.
36
37 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: And there's no --
38 they have been using beach seines and nobody knows how
39 long they've been using 300 fathoms or.....
40
41 MS. GARCIA: Yeah, I don't have
42 information on what the current fishermen are using but
43 I can tell you that in this past season in District 1
44 there were 13 beach seine fishermen and in District 2
45 there were two beach seine fishermen.
46
47 MR. GERVAIS: Mr. Chair, I have a
48 comment.
49
50 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Go ahead, Tim.

1 MR. GERVAIS: Due to this -- it's kind
2 of a new gear type for this area, currently District 1
3 commercial drift gillnet length is 50 fathoms?

4
5 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: They're 50 fathom
6 drift gillnet, aren't they, Sabrina?

7
8 MS. GARCIA: Yes.

9
10 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Yeah, they got 50
11 fathoms of gear and why does the Department propose 150
12 fathoms for each permit, that's like a three times
13 magnitude of harvest capacity per permit?

14
15 MS. GARCIA: Yeah, I think from -- I
16 don't see a justification for that length or that
17 depth. I do know that anything larger than 150 fathoms
18 does get to be a little too unweildly but I don't see
19 anything as to how this -- the 150 was selected.

20
21 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: I am concerned about
22 giving each permit, multiplying their harvest capacity
23 by three since we have a limited entry permit system
24 for the Yukon River with a specific amount of gear
25 that's been allocated to that fishery, that increasing
26 -- if Kwik'Pak and the Department are proposing
27 proposals of increasing harvest capacity to 150
28 fathoms, what gives -- what assurance do I have that in
29 three years when the chinooks come back that the
30 fishermen are going to be asking for 150 fathom drift
31 gillnet, and -- and 150 fathom beach seines, and I --
32 and 100 fathom -- or 100 mesh, you're getting deep into
33 the water column with a beach seine like that and
34 you're going to be catching in -- incidental capture of
35 chinook. And so I feel that the proposal should be 50
36 fathoms of three and a half inch and 35 -- or
37 correction, 45 mesh so that you catch chums off the top
38 of the water column and you're not sucking the kings
39 off of the bottom.

40
41 And so that's my comment.

42
43 So here's Tim's comment, go ahead, Tim.

44
45 MR. GERVAIS: Okay. My comment, along
46 a similar line is I -- I support the Department and
47 fishermen along the river going for these alternate
48 gear types in the name of conservation, however,
49 current gillnet specification, I believe, requires the
50 gillnet to be set perpendicular to the beach and so

1 there is some -- some amount of fish that will just
2 bump or sense a gillnet and swim around the side. Now,
3 you're operating a beach seine, you anchor that one end
4 of the net on the beach and then you're able to hold
5 the other end of the net at a hook at whatever level
6 you want, so you have extra containment capacity for
7 the fish.

8

9 So at this point in time I would
10 propose to support this proposal if they have an
11 overall length restriction that was reduced from 50
12 fathoms to 30, 35 or 40 because of the extra catching
13 power because of the way the fishermen is able to
14 manipulate the end of his net and form hooks and stuff.
15 It gives the beach seine more catching power than a
16 gillnet that's set off at a perpendicular direction.

17

18 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Yeah, basically you
19 can hold the gear in the water column to where you
20 basically accumulate, instead of the net moving with
21 the fish drifting you're actually accumulating fish
22 into the gear type. And then if they try to move out
23 of it, they sense the net and they start to go in a
24 circle, you know, that's what all most seiners and so
25 forth do. And so I don't think that -- my personal
26 opinion is that the Department's proposal requests far
27 too much gear, in fact, Tim's asking even a reduction
28 in the current 50 fathom allocation for drift gillnet,
29 be reduced to 30 or 40 but the proposal -- I'm not
30 opposed to the beach seining methodology, I'm opposed
31 to the gear size and the depth of this regulation.

32

33 And so I would like to see a motion to
34 adopt Proposal 123 with an amendment to reduce the
35 length of the net and the depth of the net to 40 -- I
36 don't feel 45 mesh, three and a half is unreasonable,
37 to avoid catching chinook off the bottom and basically
38 disturbing the chinook that are passing through the --
39 with -- in conjunction with the chums.

40

41 Tim.

42

43 MR. GERVAIS: Okay. So you're
44 recommending 40 fathoms and 30 mesh deep -- 40 fathoms
45 in length, 30 mesh deep?

46

47 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: 40 -- this is three
48 and a half inch gear, so they're -- they can fish six
49 inch 45 mesh -- isn't it 45 mesh, six inch gear that
50 you've been in a directed fishery, Sabrina?

1 MS. GARCIA: Yes, that's correct, Mr.
2 Chair.

3
4 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: So 45 mesh of three
5 and a half, and no more than 50 fathom for beach seine.
6 But Tim prefers 40 fathom, nowhere's even close to 150
7 fathom.

8
9 MR. GERVAIS: I would like this Council
10 to put some specifications out there because if it goes
11 on unregulated then they can be out there with a 150
12 fathom seine. So even though we're not -- have good
13 information I feel like we can make a recommendation,
14 and I suggest 40 fathoms but I'll -- if you guys prefer
15 50 fathoms I would go with that. And then how you
16 propose it, that it sunsets in two years, because this
17 is a whole new gear type and we need some reporting on
18 how they're catching and what the effects are, it's --
19 I don't really want to put in a permanent regulation
20 when we're -- we don't -- nobody on this Council has
21 the experience in how that's fishing, we're not getting
22 reports from Fish and Game or the fishermen or Kwik'Pak
23 about how they're catching and what their catch rates
24 are compared to the gillnets.

25
26 Although I do want the record to show
27 that I support them trying to use alternate or modified
28 gear types for the sake of king salmon conservation. I
29 think that's an excellent gesture on their part. It's
30 complicated, we don't want to get into regulation some
31 type of gear type that supersedes the harvesting power
32 of those limited entry permits.

33
34 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: So the Chair will
35 entertain a motion.....

36
37 MR. R. WALKER: Mr. Chair.

38
39 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Go ahead.

40
41 MR. J. WALKER: I got a couple
42 questions. First off, I am totally not in favor of
43 this motion. Based on the fact that if there's any
44 resource (indiscernible) and how it would affect the
45 fishery, as you mentioned, or as Tim mentioned, it
46 would have an impact, a definite impact as far as
47 subsistence users and it does not reflect or consider
48 Districts 2 and 1 and how it's going to affect the
49 fisheries in those areas.

50

1 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Well, the Department
2 -- if you can hear me, James, currently there's a beach
3 seine fishery so they're already fishing and they could
4 be fishing -- it's my impression that they may be
5 fishing of 150 fathoms, 900 feet of gear and they're
6 fishing 100 meshes at four -- four inch right now. And
7 so there needs to be a specification put on the beach
8 seine fishery, that's the problem. If we just oppose
9 the proposal then the Board of Fish goes ahead and
10 adopts the Department's language we have to -- I feel
11 that we should make amended language for the Board to
12 consider. Orville Huntington is on that Board.

13
14 MR. J. WALKER: Okay, Jack, I
15 understand that. However, Anvik had a beach seining
16 fishing there in prior years, and I believe Robert
17 would know something on the lengths of the gear that
18 they used.

19
20 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: You still there,
21 Robert.

22
23 MR. R. WALKER: Yeah, Jack, this is
24 Robert.

25
26 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Go ahead.

27
28 MR. R. WALKER: Yes, we did have a
29 beach seine fishery in the Anvik River, not on the
30 Yukon, it was the Anvik River and it was a set program
31 with the State, I guess you could exceed the -- I think
32 it was 180 feet, 60 to 80 to 100 feet, with, I think it
33 was like 16 feet -- 16 feet deep and it was like three
34 inch mesh, two and a half inch mesh, something like
35 that. But it first started by the State on the Anvik
36 River only, closed it for the Yukon.

37
38 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Yeah, 100 feet is
39 like less than 15 fathoms or something, it's around 15
40 fathoms.

41
42 MR. R. WALKER: But obviously it wasn't
43 that -- not that wide.

44
45 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Yes. But this 900
46 feet net, if you're going to shoot a moose at 300
47 yards, that's how long this net's going to be, that's a
48 long net. And so I'm real concerned about the size of
49 this gear that the Department's proposing.

50

1 And I don't feel that the permitholder
2 should be allocated additional net lengths in a limited
3 entry fishery. They have 50 fathom restriction.
4 That's like a fisher in any district wanting -- I have
5 150 fathoms in Bristol Bay, I want 300 fathoms, no, no,
6 that's way too much net. I don't feel that the
7 Department's proposal is a realistic as to the harvest
8 capacity of each permitholder. So if a permit has 50
9 fathoms currently that should still be restricted to 50
10 fathoms or less. And then the mesh, the depth is --
11 should be still constrained to 45 meshes, that's in
12 regulation for drift and it should still be in
13 regulations for the beach seine.

14
15 Are you taking notes on this Sabrina?

16
17 MS. GARCIA: I sure am. I also wanted
18 to clarify that the 50 fathom restriction is for drift
19 gillnet but for setnet, the length restriction is 150
20 fathom.

21
22 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Aggregate length?

23
24 MS. GARCIA: We currently have a
25 proposal in to make it an aggregate length.

26
27 MR. GERVAIS: Ask her to define.....

28
29 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Tim.

30
31 MR. GERVAIS: Sabrina, can you define,
32 I'm not understanding this term aggregate length,
33 opposed to length.

34
35 MS. GARCIA: That would mean that if
36 someone was using two gillnets that are 75 fathoms in
37 length, they could do so as long as the sum of those
38 two nets does not exceed 150 fathoms.

39
40 MR. J. WALKER: I have a question on
41 that Jack.

42
43 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Go ahead, James.

44
45 MR. J. WALKER: Are you saying that you
46 could tie both ends and use 900 on the river, or are
47 you saying that they could have three separate
48 settings?

49
50 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Can you answer that

1 Sabrina?

2

3 MS. GARCIA: I'm sorry, could you
4 repeat that question.

5

6 MR. J. WALKER: Yes. I'm asking if, is
7 that (phone breaking up) tied end to end, do you have
8 (indiscernible) or is that eight per site.

9

10 MS. GARCIA: That would be per site.

11

12 MR. J. WALKER: That's still not clear
13 to me, are you saying that they could stretch 900 feet
14 on one site?

15

16 MS. GARCIA: It just would allow a
17 fisherman to use multiple nets in the one site so that
18 the total length of the, however many nets he's
19 fishing, does not exceed 150 fathom.

20

21 MR. J. WALKER: Okay, that's
22 (indiscernible - breaking up) but the question is, if
23 you're tying it end to end and you're stretching 900
24 feet of gear across the Yukon that's a definite problem
25 that I can see.

26

27 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Well, that's the --
28 the setnet is already allowed 150 but I feel that 150
29 aggregate, I would be opposed to that, that stretches
30 the gear way out, each setnet is limited to -- how many
31 current fathoms can be set on each site, Sabrina?

32

33 MS. GARCIA: For set gillnets it's 150
34 fathom.

35

36 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: That's a lot of net.
37 So, but, clarify for me the beach seine allowances for
38 the drift permits and the setnet permits, both, can use
39 beach seine currently or only setnets are allowed to
40 use beach seine or who's allowed to use this beach
41 seine gear currently?

42

43 MS. GARCIA: Whoever has a permit to
44 fish in the Lower Yukon commercial fishery can fish a
45 beach seine. But as I pointed out, if you look at
46 Table 1 in the summer season summary that Gerald handed
47 out yesterday, in District 1 there's only 13 fishermen
48 that are using a beach seine and only two fishermen in
49 District 2 that are using a beach seine. So it's not a
50 very common gear type.

1 MR. HUNTINGTON: Yeah, Jack, I don't
2 know if I really have a question, this is Orville.

3
4 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Go ahead, Orville.

5
6 MR. HUNTINGTON: Yeah, I just wanted to
7 say (indiscernible - distortion) so I just wanted to
8 let you know that they can only fish those with the
9 commercial permits right now, all the Department wants
10 to do is put in some regulations in place to limit the
11 length. And that's fine if you want to amend it. I've
12 tried some different discussions, I wish I could talk
13 to Robert Walker personally because I'm pretty sure
14 that Anvik (indiscernible - distortion) gravel and out
15 on the Yukon they're fishing in mud and it's pretty
16 hard to (indiscernible - distortion). And really
17 whether this Board is in favor of this, that's in the
18 Board's purview.

19
20 I also have two more comments on
21 Proposals 142 and 144 when we get to them, those are
22 Koyukuk River proposals.

23
24 Thank you.

25
26 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Okay, Orville. So
27 Tim where do you want to go here.

28
29 MR. GERVAIS: Okay. I would like to
30 make a motion for an amended length specification for
31 -- let me get the right proposal, Proposal 123, just
32 for the sake of time, I'm understanding James has some
33 issues with the whole beach seine situation but for
34 now, for Board of Fish we got to get some -- we got to
35 make a statement as a Council.

36
37 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: So are you going to
38 make that motion with an amendment.

39
40 MR. GERVAIS: Okay. I make a motion to
41 adopt Proposal 123 with the amendment to restrict the
42 beach seine length to 50 fathoms in length and 40
43 meshes in depth for fishermen that are possessing a
44 commissioner's permit. And can I put a sunset in this
45 proposal for two years worth of validity.

46
47 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Okay. The motion's
48 on the table, those in favor -- I got a second.

49
50 MR. VENT: Second.

1 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Seconded by Darrel.
2 Further discussion.
3
4 MR. HONEA: Mr. Chair.
5
6 MR. J. WALKER: Question.....
7
8 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Go ahead, Don.
9
10 MR. HONEA: Yeah, Mr. Chair, thank you.
11 Before we even vote on this I would like to know what
12 the actions of the Eastern Interior took on this
13 particular one.
14
15 Thank you.
16
17 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Melinda.
18
19 MS. BURKE: Mr. Chair. I do not see
20 Proposal 123 as being discussed by the Eastern Interior
21 region, let me just take a quick look over the State
22 proposals.
23
24 I don't see Proposal 123 as being
25 discussed by that Council, Mr. Chair.
26
27 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Okay. That answers
28 your question Don.
29
30 MR. J. WALKER: I have a question,
31 Jack.
32
33 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Okay, question on
34 the motion with amended language to 50 fathoms with 40
35 mesh with a two year sunset for specification. All in
36 favor of that.....
37
38 MR. J. WALKER: Wait.....
39
40 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF:signify by
41 saying aye.
42
43 IN UNISON: Aye.
44
45 MR. J. WALKER: Jack, I had one.....
46
47 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Oh, you got another
48 question.
49
50 MR. J. WALKER: Yes, I had one, I guess

1 it's not going through there.

2

3 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Yeah, there was a
4 motion on the table, seconded, the discussion, we
5 missed the discussion part, you had a comment.

6

7 MR. J. WALKER: Yes, I did. Is that 50
8 fathoms in length and (indiscernible) deep what size
9 mesh, Tim, did you specify?

10

11 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: The Department's
12 proposal is for three and a half inch mesh size so we
13 didn't amend that.

14

15 MR. J. WALKER: Okay, thank you.

16

17 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: And how did you vote
18 on that.

19

20 MR. J. WALKER: I voted in favor of the
21 amendment.

22

23 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: And, Robert.

24 Robert.

25

26 MR. R. WALKER: Yeah, I had a question
27 also, like is this in Federal water or State water?

28

29 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: This would be under
30 State regulations when they have a.....

31

32 MR. R. WALKER: Under State
33 regulations.

34

35 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF:commercial
36 openings and so forth.

37

38 MR. R. WALKER: State regulations for
39 Federal waters.

40

41 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Sabrina.

42

43 MS. GARCIA: Mr. Chair. I believe that
44 this would be in State waters, this would be in
45 District 1, 2 and 3 of the Lower Yukon.

46

47 MR. R. WALKER: Well, my question would
48 be that, Jack, that Y1 and Y2 and Y3, are lot of them
49 are Federal waters through there, so I thought we were
50 just talking about the State waters over there, right?

1 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Well, if the
2 Federal government hasn't closed the Federal waters
3 then the State commercial fisheries operate in the --
4 within what's considered Federal waters and so these
5 would be applicable to the State fisheries openings.
6

7 MR. R. WALKER: Well, I would have a
8 question on that when we're looking at utilizing gear
9 to fish and also we're talking about the chinook salmon
10 that's going to be possibly a bycatch for that, so
11 you're looking at the whole big picture here that our
12 elders are dying not even eating their food they were
13 raised on and we're arguing about depth and we're
14 arguing about size and we're -- I mean look at all
15 these regulations we've had over the years. It changed
16 from an eight inch mesh to a seven inch mesh to a six
17 inch mesh down to a four inch mesh and now we're
18 talking about putting another regulation here, Jack, I
19 mean my question for you is we're just beating the
20 horse to death here, and all these people that do work
21 and do live on the river here, are they jeopardized
22 with more and more regulations. Every time we have a
23 meeting here we kind of like telling these people that
24 we got new regulations for you, you know, I mean you
25 wonder why they get so irate when it's time to go
26 fishing because a lot of them don't have the money to
27 buy the gear. A lot of the communities don't have the
28 resources to even -- and they're so afraid to go out
29 and (indiscernible) because the State will immediately
30 go after them and take their resources and take what
31 few dollars that they have in court.
32

33 I mean do we need this, that would be
34 my question.
35

36 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: There is a
37 significant number of summer chums and the Board of
38 Fish has implemented a beach seine fishery to basically
39 avoid chinook harvest, to release chinook during the
40 commercial chum fishery. That's what this is all
41 about. There is a beach seine fishery already
42 occurring but there is no specification. This proposal
43 is to basically set in regulation what the beach seine
44 is going to look like. So our proposal is to reduce
45 the Department's -- if we say nothing on this proposal,
46 then there can be -- if the proposal fails, there's
47 going to be an unlimited amount of beach seine when
48 they open it. So the Department's asking for a
49 definition or amending that definition to what we feel
50 is appropriate.

1 MR. R. WALKER: Well, didn't the State
2 just have a regulation last year stating that we got to
3 use dipnets, you know, whatever happened to that
4 regulations, is that -- dipnets are going to sit on the
5 bank now?

6
7 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Sabrina, they are
8 fishing the dipnets also, right?

9
10 MS. GARCIA: Yes, they are, Mr. Chair.
11 And, just, again, just to let you know, District 1
12 there were 207 dipnet fishermen compared to 13 beach
13 seine fishermen. And in District 2 there were 154
14 dipnet fishermen and two beach seine fishermen. And
15 just to clarify what you were saying, Mr. Chair, there
16 is currently no specification for the length of a beach
17 seine, so although fishermen can use beach seines in
18 the commercial fishery, because there is no regulation
19 currently they could use any length and any depth, and
20 this proposal just seeks to put a regulation in the
21 books.

22
23 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Was that clear
24 Robert?

25
26 MR. R. WALKER: Yes, it is, but I'm
27 still not a happy camper with all these regulations
28 here that we're proposing and enforcing and putting on
29 the book, that's just.....

30
31 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: The Council voted
32 and so I had five members here at the table that voted
33 for the motion and James, you voted for the motion to
34 reconfirm that?

35
36 MR. J. WALKER: Yes, I did.

37
38 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Okay, Robert, are
39 you opposed?

40
41 MR. R. WALKER: Yes, I am.

42
43 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Okay. Register one
44 opposition to the motion.

45
46 Tim.

47
48 MR. GERVAIS: Do we need to reiterate
49 for the record the reason why we did what we did.

50

1 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: No, the record is --
2 or the transcript will be clear about justification
3 about the depth of the net contacting chinook salmon in
4 the water column and the length of the gear,
5 effectiveness is unacceptable.

6
7 And so then Orville had comments on two
8 other proposals, did you want -- which proposals were
9 those Orville.

10
11 MR. HUNTINGTON: Yeah, I had some
12 comments on Proposal 142 written by Jack Reakoff and
13 144 written by Jack Wholecheese.

14
15 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Go ahead, Orville.

16
17 MR. HUNTINGTON: As far as I can see,
18 TCC is in support of 142 and 144. They're both well
19 written proposals.

20
21 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Okay. 142 is my
22 proposal to allow small mesh gear use outside of when
23 salmon are present on Upper Middle Fork and Koyukuk
24 River for subsistence use. Currently I can't fish a
25 gillnet after June 30, the season would close from June
26 30 to August 15th and then would reopen again for
27 subsistence for like whitefish and so forth.

28
29 That's what 142 is.

30
31 I don't have 144 in front of me. Can
32 you read that for us Orville.

33
34 MR. HUNTINGTON: Okay. 144 is just
35 like you said, 144 was written by Jack Wholecheese out
36 of Huslia. It addresses the cultural and traditional
37 use of nets across the majority of non-salmon spawning
38 sloughs and creeks where we've always fished.

39
40 Thank you, Mr. Chair.

41
42 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: And TCC is favoring
43 144?

44
45 MR. HUNTINGTON: That's correct.

46
47 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Okay. So the Chair
48 will entertain a motion to adopt Proposal 142.

49
50 MR. GERVAIS: So moved.

1 MR. VENT: Seconded.
2
3 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Moved and seconded
4 by Tim and Darrel. Discussion on that proposal for
5 additional subsistence opportunity for it'd be
6 primarily whitefish and after August 15 the upper
7 Middle Fork Koyukuk and the South Fork drainage.
8
9 Discussion.
10
11 MR. VENT: Question.
12
13 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Question's called.
14 Those in favor of Proposal 142 signify by saying aye.
15
16 IN UNISON: Aye.
17
18 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: And then Proposal
19 144 as described by Orville to allow the net to cross
20 sloughs and drainages that are non-salmon in the areas
21 within the Koyukuk Refuge.
22
23 Orville.
24
25 MR. HUNTINGTON: Yes, Mr. Chair, it's
26 just Koyukuk River.
27
28 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Within the Koyukuk
29 River. The Chair will entertain a motion to adopt
30 Proposal 144.
31
32 MR. HONEA: Motion to adopt.
33
34 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Motion to adopt, do
35 I have a second.
36
37 MR. VENT: Second.
38
39 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Seconded by Darrel.
40 Discussion on the proposal.
41
42 Tim.
43
44 MR. GERVAIS: Thank you, Mr. Chair.
45 Orville is this -- 144, is that stating that the net
46 can go entirely across the slough?
47
48 MR. HUNTINGTON: Traditionally it's
49 always been all the way across the slough but no one
50 does that anymore, (indiscernible) across the majority

1 of the slough, what's happening is people are having
2 their subsistence (indiscernible) by the State, it's
3 probably (indiscernible) subsistence users.

4
5 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: This is a State
6 proposal though?

7
8 MR. HUNTINGTON: That's correct. We'll
9 be taking these up at the AYK meeting in January.

10
11 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Okay.

12
13 MR. VENT: Can I comment a little on
14 that.

15
16 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Darrel wants to
17 comment on it, go ahead, Darrel.

18
19 MR. VENT: Yeah, I think the reason why
20 they had this proposal put in there was because we, you
21 know, culturally use the nets to catch pike during the
22 springtime and what was happening was they were putting
23 it across the creeks but it was only three-quarters of
24 the way across but when the water drops it was
25 considered all the way across and that's why the nets
26 were being taken. What we're traditionally trying to
27 do is just trying to get rid of the pike, you know,
28 they were really causing a lot of problems in our area
29 and they still currently are causing a lot of problems
30 in our area. So that was the main reason why we used
31 that in the springtime, you know, that was our main
32 objective there.

33
34 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Does that clarify
35 it, Tim.

36
37 MR. GERVAIS: Yes, thank you.

38
39 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: So any further
40 discussion on State Proposal 144.

41
42 (No comments)

43
44 MR. SIMON: Question.

45
46 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Question's called.
47 Those in favor of Proposal 144 signify by saying aye.

48
49 IN UNISON: Aye.

50

1 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: James.
2
3 MR. J. WALKER: Aye.
4
5 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Okay. Motion
6 carries.
7
8 I think that's -- is that all the State
9 proposals we wanted to cover.
10
11 Tim.
12
13 MR. GERVAIS: Yeah, I just had a
14 question. Did we ever get a determination, are the
15 Federal RACs going to be considered on equal footing
16 with the State RACs in the Board of Fish or Board of
17 Game meetings, as a viable entity?
18
19 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Did you get Tim's
20 question, Orville.
21
22 MR. HUNTINGTON: Yeah. I'm pretty sure
23 the State's pretty good about (indiscernible).
24
25 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Okay. Got a State
26 Board of Fish member assuring you.
27
28 MR. GERVAIS: Okay.
29
30 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: So I think that's
31 all the fisheries proposals, thanks so much Sabrina and
32 Orville for being on there.
33
34 And is that all the business that we
35 need for James and Robert?
36
37 MS. BURKE: Yes, Mr. Chair. And we
38 would love for them to stay on as long as they can but
39 as far as voting go, I believe that does conclude all
40 of the action items for this meeting, Mr. Chair.
41
42 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Okay. Appreciate
43 you being on the call James and Robert, you're welcome
44 to stay on. We needed that quorum.
45
46 MR. J. WALKER: Okay, Jack, thank you.
47 I really appreciate that and sorry about not being able
48 to attend.
49
50 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Appreciate all you

1 could give us here.

2

3 MR. R. WALKER: Thank you, too, Jack.
4 (Indiscernible - distortion). The travel agency didn't
5 (indiscernible) I'm here at a different meeting in
6 Anchorage now.

7

8 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Okay. So we're
9 going to go to the YRDFA.....

10

11 MR. JENKINS: I have an action item.

12

13 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Oh, you have an
14 action item. I -- Wayne has got an action item from
15 YRDFA, go ahead Wayne.

16

17 MR. JENKINS: Thank you, Mr. Chair.
18 I'll just make this short and sweet. The request is
19 for a letter of support from the Holy Cross Tribe on
20 ACEC nominations and we have a small packet here for
21 you. But you remember, I think it was at your October
22 28th, 29th, 2014 meeting where you approved a letter of
23 support to BLM for support of Holy Cross -- I mean of
24 Koyukuk and Louden Tribes, ACEC nomination requests.
25 So it's the same request except for it's for Holy Cross
26 Tribe.

27

28 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Your phone is
29 echoing again, Robert, can you mute us temporarily.

30

31 MR. R. WALKER: Sure.

32

33 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Yeah, this is
34 similar to what we've looked at before and Holy Cross
35 has requested these ACECs for their area and the BLM
36 has told us earlier in the meeting that they will still
37 take comments.

38

39 So the Chair will entertain a motion to
40 support Holy Cross' areas of critical environmental
41 concern near their communities.

42

43 MR. HONEA: I so move.

44

45 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Moved by Don. Do we
46 have a second.

47

48 MR. VENT: Second.

49

50 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Seconded by Darrel.

1 And Robert and James, do you have
2 comments on this ACEC proposal for Holy Cross.
3
4 MR. R. WALKER: No, I don't, Jack, this
5 is Robert.
6
7 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: James.
8
9 MR. J. WALKER: Yes, Jack.
10 (Indiscernible).
11
12 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Have you seen these
13 ACEC requests?
14
15 MR. J. WALKER: No.
16
17 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: You want to give a
18 brief overview of these Wayne, James hasn't seen this
19 document.
20
21 MR. JENKINS: So, James, I'm not sure
22 if you remember back in October of 2014, the requests
23 that were made for Louden Tribe and also Koyukuk, but
24 these are areas that the Holy Cross Tribe has
25 identified as important for traditional harvest of
26 fish, moose, small furbearers, bear, berries, and those
27 areas were then connected through watershed maps with
28 BLM lands. In some cases they overlap and in some
29 cases they connect because they line the same
30 watershed. And so the Holy Cross Tribe is requesting
31 that BLM look at these areas as very important for
32 their traditional use and protecting their culture into
33 the future.
34
35 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: I'll read those
36 areas.
37
38 Traditional watersheds containing
39 harvest lands and waters used by the
40 Native community of Holy Cross along
41 the Yukon River extending down the
42 river to Paimiut Slough and up to the
43 Innoko River. The (indiscernible)
44 River deer hunting slough, Styouk
45 River, Reindeer, Albert, Stevens Lakes
46 and tributaries.
47
48 And you know where those are at, James?
49
50 MR. J. WALKER: Yes, I do. Yeah, I do

1 remember that. I just thought that maybe it was
2 something else.

3

4 So, thank you.

5

6 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: So there's a -- we
7 need a motion, we have a motion on the floor.

8

9 MR. VENT: Yes, we do.

10

11 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Motion on the floor
12 to adopt, support Holy Cross Tribe on these areas of
13 critical and environmental concern near their
14 community.

15

16 Discussion.

17

18 MR. HONEA: Excuse me, Jack.

19

20 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Yes, Don.

21

22 MR. HONEA: Yeah, under discussion. I
23 find it kind of -- I have a question, Wayne, here, you
24 know, I have nothing against voting on this or
25 including it or whatever, but I just want to protocol.
26 I mean, you know, say up to the next village, I mean
27 like we mentioned, ACEC areas of critical concern this
28 morning, here, you know, I mean why is it coming before
29 the Western Interior. So if I went back and we picked
30 out areas of critical concern in our respected villages
31 then does it have to come up before this body again, or
32 -- I appreciate your answer.

33

34 Thank you.

35

36 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Go ahead, Wayne.

37

38 MR. JENKINS: Through the Chair. Don.
39 The only reason to bring it before the appropriate RAC
40 for that area is to show wider support for protecting
41 subsistence and traditional use areas. So, you know,
42 the -- one would hope that just the sharing from the
43 tribal level would be enough and that BLM would
44 recognize the critical importance of these areas, but
45 having wider support and sharing this information, and
46 the RAC knowing this is happening at the tribal level
47 and with BLM, is felt to be pretty useful.

48

49 But, yes, if, let's say you go back to
50 Ruby, Ruby goes through a process of identifying

1 traditional use areas and wants to share those with
2 BLM, if they wanted to they could then request from
3 Western Interior RAC a letter of support to BLM.

4
5 MR. HONEA: Thank you, Mr. Chair. I
6 guess that's protocol and that's what we do. I
7 appreciate an answer. I mean I just didn't -- it's
8 like any proposals that has clout to it that we can add
9 to it.

10
11 Thank you.

12
13 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: The resource
14 monitoring plans are in progress right now and these
15 proposals have been made, all they're looking for is
16 support for these areas of critical environmental
17 concerns. We've done this for the other communities as
18 well.

19
20 Do we have a question on the motion.
21 We need to move on this agenda.

22
23 MR. HONEA: Call the question.

24
25 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Question is called.
26 Those in favor of supporting the areas of critical
27 environmental concern near Holy Cross as enumerated in
28 the record signify by saying aye.

29
30 IN UNISON: Aye.

31
32 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Okay. I heard the
33 Walkers. So that's the last action item we have.

34
35 And so we're coming down on 11:30 and
36 we need to move on to these other -- we have other
37 agency reports. We have.....

38
39 MR. JENKINS: Thank you.

40
41 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF:Yukon River
42 Drainage Fisheries Association. We got National Park
43 Service. We got Marcy hanging on the phone here. And
44 then we have Seth Wilson's update on the Allakaket and
45 the State update. And so we still have a lot of agenda
46 items and I want to start accelerating this meeting
47 along, we've been bogging up a little bit here.

48
49 And so Seth's been patiently waiting
50 here, come on up to the table Seth.

1 MR. WILSON: Thank you, Mr. Chair.
2 Seth Wilson, Alaska Department of Fish and Game,
3 Division of Subsistence. And what I have is more of a
4 -- it's just an informational update on all the
5 projects that we've been working on with regard to the
6 area covered by this Council. It includes an update
7 for the Allakaket/Alatna big game survey that I do
8 every year.

9
10 But mostly this will be brief, I don't
11 have any findings to discuss.

12
13 So, again, I'll just restate that I
14 work for the Division of Subsistence. And I think for
15 the benefit of those in the room I'll read our mission
16 statement. It's to scientifically quantify, evaluate
17 and report on the information about customary and
18 traditional uses of Alaska's fish and wildlife
19 resources. I find that I can't really state that
20 enough.

21
22 So I think you have the PowerPoint
23 slides that I gave to Melinda.

24
25 The first page is a project we've been
26 working on funded by the Chinook Salmon Research
27 Initiative. The slide is titled LTK Freshwater Chinook
28 Spawning and Migration. What this project entails is
29 working with local fishermen in five communities
30 throughout the drainage. The objectives of this
31 project are to document their perspectives on chinook
32 salmon spawning and habitat within their specific areas
33 of use. And then to just take it a step further and
34 discuss with them kind of what changes the local
35 fishermen have noticed in the aquatic habitat and
36 landscape. And we're specifically focusing on areas in
37 the drainage where we've had or have had salmon
38 enumeration projects, weirs, things like that.

39
40 The second slide, Exchange Practices in
41 the Upper Yukon River region. This is a project
42 involving Fort Yukon, Stevens Village, Manley Hot
43 Springs, and I think we're still trying to reach Arctic
44 Village. And what we are doing is using ethnographic
45 interviews and structured surveys to sort of describe
46 and document the types of exchanges involving salmon in
47 the drainage. And with specific focus on customary
48 trade, which is documenting the exchange of salmon for
49 cash. Our ultimate goal is to help clarify some of the
50 regulations involved with the exchange of salmon.

1 I'll continue on.

2

3 The third slide is a project called
4 Patterns and Trends in the Yukon River Salmon Fishery.
5 It's kind of what brought me here to Galena last week.
6 What we are doing is it's a project sort of to describe
7 the harvest of families, how salmon harvest is
8 structured within communities over the past 25 years.
9 And what this project is sort of entailing is that we
10 have conducted the post-season salmon harvest survey
11 for about 25 years now, it's turning into a pretty
12 large data set. And we've selected about 30 fishermen
13 in about five communities and we've put together their
14 harvest history and I'm sitting down with these
15 fishermen, showing them what we've put together, what
16 they've pretty much told us over the past 25 years and
17 discussing their household's fishing practices with
18 them. And, you know, the ultimate goal is just to
19 brainstorm and discuss new alternatives to some of the
20 regulations that fishermen now face today. It's been
21 an interesting project because I get to sit down with
22 people, show them data that we've collected from them,
23 specifically their household and their community, and
24 it kind of forces them to sort of reflect on their
25 practices.

26

27 Continuing on.

28

29 This March I did a comprehensive
30 harvest survey in the community of Hughes on the
31 Koyukuk River. This was a project funded by the
32 National Park Service to provide up to date information
33 on subsistence harvest and uses. We did our, you know,
34 typical methodology of structured surveys, contextual,
35 ethnographic interviews and land use mapping. And I
36 talked to -- surveyed about 77 percent of the
37 households in Hughes, which is a small community, it
38 was about, you know, 26 or 24, 25 households.

39

40 I'm working on a project partnered with
41 UAF funded by the Forest Service. It's on the slide
42 titled, Consequences of a Changing Climate for Alaska's
43 Boreal Forests. Documenting change with the help of
44 local hunters. And this -- the University is kind of
45 interested in, I guess, what they would term ecosystem
46 services and how those are changing with the changing
47 climate. And by ecosystem services, I just mean
48 people's ability to get out, use the land. So what
49 we've been doing is we've picked three communities,
50 Allakaket, Nulato, Tanana and Nenana, four communities,

1 and we're picking just two or three hunters in each
2 community. We're assigning them each GPS devices and
3 so they're going out, they're mapping the trail systems
4 that they use to access different resources during
5 different times of the years. And they're specifically
6 documenting parts of the landscape that they've noticed
7 changing due to wildfire activity. So it's kind of
8 been interesting. It's one with -- I've been working
9 specifically with Allakaket and the tribe and they've
10 really started steering this project, it's been kind of
11 cool to see because they recognize they need to start
12 collecting this sort of data and it's a way that they
13 can sort of direct research and show the world how, you
14 know, their community is changing.

15

16 Okay.

17

18 Lastly, last month I went up to
19 Allakaket and Alatna to do the fifth year, and last
20 year of the big game harvest survey. This is a harvest
21 survey for moose documenting harvest effort -- hunting
22 effort and harvest of moose in Allakaket and Alatna and
23 it was designed to go along with the predator control
24 project that's currently being conducted by Wildlife
25 Conservation. You know, this year talked to about 75
26 percent of the households. As Member Simon said, the
27 harvest was definitely higher this year than previous
28 years, as it has been with most communities this year.

29

30 So if the Council has any questions I'm
31 all ears.

32

33 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Council questions on
34 Seth's presentation.

35

36 (No comments)

37

38 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: There's several good
39 projects there, Seth. This exchange practice for the
40 Upper Yukon, I think that's a great project. How the
41 resources are used on the Yukon River for families, how
42 they spread out. These are issues that come up with
43 customary trade, with this Western Interior region at
44 various times and so those are going to be very useful
45 for this Council in the future.

46

47 The Allakaket numbers are very
48 interesting. The cost per trip seem to be increasing
49 exponentially annually. And so the cost benefit this
50 year was much higher than previous years when there

1 were lower harvest rates.

2

3 And then this estimate of harvest,
4 that's -- Allakaket, I see Allakaket harvest 12,
5 estimate 20, that's household survey 20 and is 12
6 harvest ticket or is it -- I'm looking at estimated
7 harvest in yellow, 20, at the bottom, 2014, and then I
8 see 12 harvest by harvest reports, so they're still
9 staying in this fudge factor of about 40 percent,
10 approximately. That's my question on that.

11

12 MR. WILSON: I think I get what you're
13 saying. The 20 refers to, you know, estimated harvest
14 of 20 moose as documented through household surveys.
15 The 12 is the documented harvest per ticket returns.

16

17 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Right. The Koyukuk
18 River Moose Hunting Plan is we used -- Subsistence
19 Division basically stated that there was a 40 percent
20 under reporting and so I keep telling everybody it's
21 best to report because the Board of Game will
22 reallocate towards other users than subsistence, so I
23 keep wanting to point that out to people. If there's
24 an under reporting, that really should not be
25 happening. It's in the best interest of people in
26 villages to report their harvest because there's a
27 subsistence -- State priority subsistence need, and if
28 the Board of Game doesn't think that that -- that the
29 users are using that resource, they're going to
30 allocate that, or they're going to think that there's
31 moose to give away to hunting guides or other users,
32 and so I keep saying this, and so I'll say it again.

33

34 But I appreciate all the work you're
35 doing.

36

37 Any other questions for Seth.

38

39 Pollock.

40

41 MR. SIMON: Thank you, Mr. Chair. I
42 just wanted to comment on the impacts of last summer's
43 wildfire on -- Allakaket, Alatna and Hughes were
44 impacted greatly by the fire. The fire burned up all
45 the berry bushes and chased all the wildlife away in
46 Hughes, especially where it burned both sides of the
47 river. The hunters have to go further out for moose
48 that's chased away by the wildfire. In Allakaket the
49 fire wasn't that close but the trail between Allakaket
50 and Tanana, there was three big fires in the area and

1 it burned over the trees, which caused the trees to
2 fall over so there's some hardships, you have to be off
3 of the trail. So I just wanted to mention that.

4

5 Thank you, Mr. Chair.

6

7 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Thanks, Pollock.
8 Any other -- Darrel.

9

10 MR. VENT: Yeah, I guess I had -- I
11 worked with you when you were over in Huslia and you
12 had the fortune to meet the late George Attla. Yeah, I
13 think he had a little bit of fun with you over there.

14

15 (Laughter)

16

17 MR. VENT: It was good working with you
18 over there.

19

20 (Laughter)

21

22 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Melinda's handing
23 out this publication that OSM has created for why it's
24 important. And I feel that these -- this document
25 should be sent out, should be handed out in
26 communities, all over, all over the Western Interior
27 region; why it's important to report harvest. And so
28 I'm happy that OSM has developed this document.
29 Basically it's what I have been saying for a long time.

30

31 And so thanks so much, Seth. We have a
32 lot of agenda here and I appreciate you sitting through
33 the length of this meeting.

34

35 So I'll bring National Park Service up,
36 you want to come up Jeff, and are you still on the
37 phone there, Marcy.

38

39 MS. KLEIN: Jack, this is Jill,
40 actually, with Alaska Department of Fish and Game.
41 And, we, if you wanted -- I know you're tight on time,
42 but there was that request for genetic information from
43 the Area M fisheries and we have Eric Volk who's been
44 listening in if you did want to hear a brief update on
45 that.

46

47 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Tim did request
48 that, excuse me. You want to go over that real quick,
49 Jill.

50

1 MS. KLEIN: I want to check, Eric, are
2 you on line.
3
4 MR. TEMPLIN: Yes, Bill Templin and
5 Eric Volk are here in Anchorage for any questions the
6 Council might have, Mr. Chairman.
7
8 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Tim.
9
10 MS. KLEIN: Well, Eric, did.....
11
12 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Go ahead.
13
14 MS. KLEIN: Did you want Tim to ask
15 questions first or did you just want to give a brief
16 overview of the project.
17
18 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: What would you like
19 Tim?
20
21 MR. GERVAIS: Well, I'm just going to
22 ask the same questions I asked in the email. I'd just
23 like to know the numbers, the locations and the genetic
24 make-up of those king salmon that were harvested in
25 Area M in the commercial fishery this summer.
26
27 MR. VOLK: Would you like me to respond
28 to that, Mr. Chairman?
29
30 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Yes, I would. Go
31 ahead.
32
33 MR. VOLK: Again, Eric Volk, here,
34 Alaska Department of Fish and Game. I can give you
35 some information.
36
37 As you all are probably aware there was
38 an unusually large incidental harvest of king salmon in
39 Area M, and this -- we did send somebody out there to
40 take some samples, mostly to look to see if we had a
41 lot of maturing fish or whether or not these were all
42 small fish and we collected two sets of samples. One
43 from Shumigan Islands in the third week of June. And
44 then we conduct our State test fishery out in that area
45 as well on the -- that was on the 8th and 9th of July.
46 Almost all of those fish were small fish, less than
47 eight pounds. Their average size was much less than
48 550 millimeters, which means they are one or two ocean
49 fish. And so these were sampled at processing plants
50 at King Cove and Sand Point.

1 And that's the information that we have
2 on those fish.

3
4 We have the numbers, which were
5 somewhere in the 53,000 range, which was much larger
6 than any previous incidental harvest we've had in that
7 fishery. And we went and measured a couple of hundred
8 fish from each of those sampling dates just to see what
9 kind of size range we were looking at.

10
11 Mr. Chairman.

12
13 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Wow. That's a huge
14 bycatch.

15
16 Tim.

17
18 MR. GERVAIS: Okay. The second
19 question is what's the status of the research program
20 are you doing genetic sampling for Kodiak, Chignik and
21 Area M commercial salmon fisheries, could we get some
22 data from that, send an email to this Board and what's
23 the future of that project that, I believe, began in
24 2014.

25
26 MR. VOLK: Yeah, through the Chair.
27 Thank you for the question. The Chinook Salmon
28 Research Initiative, which was -- which provided money
29 to the Department through the Parnell Administration
30 was originally targeted at \$30 million and a number of
31 us in collaboration with many stakeholders, the
32 University got together and talked about a research
33 plan on how to use these dollars and laid out a plan,
34 which included three years of sampling the commercial
35 fisheries in Kodiak, Chignik and Area M for chinook
36 salmon. Unfortunately with the fall in the price of
37 oil and a lot of budget reprioritization, that dollar
38 figure of \$30 million was cut to \$15 million and so our
39 research team needed to get together and reprioritize
40 our efforts because we simply didn't have enough money
41 to carry out the plan that we had originally laid out.

42
43 Sampling in Area M is very expensive.
44 To put people out there in King Cove and Sand Point to
45 systematically sample that fishery is really expensive.
46 This is one of the projects that we cut.

47
48 However, we did complete the sampling
49 in 2014 and it was a good sampling effort. And we have
50 proposed that we will provide some analysis of those

1 samples later next year when we complete our analysis
2 of the three years of data in Kodiak. But I want to
3 put a caveat on those analysis because we are extremely
4 reluctant to report in detail on data that is only
5 collected from one year's sampling. We always require
6 that we have at least three years of sampling so that
7 we understand what the temporal variation of those
8 stock compositions would be in those fisheries.
9 However, we realize, though, that there is some
10 interest in finding out a little bit about what we can
11 from one year of data.

12

13 As a little bit of background, you
14 probably -- a lot of people are probably aware that we
15 are seeing a great number of Columbia River and
16 Northern British Columbia fish in our waters these
17 days, and that's borne out by tag recoveries that we've
18 already processed from the 2014 samples, so we have
19 that data. All of those coded-wire tag recoveries come
20 from the Pacific Northwest or British Columbia, and we
21 also have similar coded-wire tag information from
22 Kodiak and lots of information, of course, from
23 Southeast Alaska. So from many different sources,
24 including bycatch analysis in the Gulf of Alaska, we
25 know that there are lots of non-local fish swimming
26 around in our waters so we thought it was reasonable to
27 determine whether or not these 2014 samples reflected a
28 similar pattern that we're seeing from other data sets.
29 So we are proposing that we will analyze at least
30 samples from four different strata in -- we'll sample
31 them in proportion to the harvest in Area M, and we
32 will get stock proportions for four broad reporting
33 groups and we will generate a memo that will go with
34 those stock composition estimates that we will formally
35 report from the Kodiak area.

36

37 Mr. Chairman.

38

39 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Okay, thank you. We
40 got to move along, Tim, so another question?

41

42 MR. GERVAIS: So just regarding,
43 backing up to the Area M 53,000 kings this summer, you
44 have -- you don't have any genetic information on those
45 fish or is it.....

46

47 MR. VOLK: Through the Chair, thanks
48 for the question. No, we don't. And I think it's
49 important to realize that these fish were sampled on --
50 they're very much a snapshot of what occurred on a

1 single day. Basically we sent somebody out there and
2 sampled some fish from the top of a tote, so the
3 problem there is, is that the sample is highly biased.
4 It can frankly be from a single boat. So we really
5 don't have any confidence in what sort of question
6 those samples could answer, in terms of genetic
7 analysis so we don't intend to analyze the limited
8 number of samples that we do have. Because the samples
9 were not collected designed around any kind of
10 question, all we did -- in fact we didn't really even
11 need the samples but some enterprising folks did sample
12 them, but what we're really wanting to know, is are we
13 looking at a whole lot of mature fish that were being
14 captured incidentally in these fisheries which would
15 have alarmed us greatly. It's bad enough that there's
16 some, you know, 50,000 juvenile fish that are in this
17 incidental harvest, but we strongly believe that they
18 are probably tied to the kinds of patterns we're seeing
19 in terms of maturing, feeding (ph) chinook salmon from
20 distant waters in our areas.

21

22 Mr. Chairman.

23

24 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Okay. That sounds
25 like it answers a lot of questions and I really
26 appreciate that data. That's alarming for me. But the
27 stock mixing like that, it's somewhat diluted for the
28 impact to individual river systems in the AYK.

29

30 So thanks so much for bringing that up
31 for us at Tim's request.

32

33 So I have to move along on this agenda,
34 so we're going to move to the National Park Service.
35 Jeff and Marcy's on the phone also. Go ahead, Jeff.

36

37 MR. RASIC: Hi, thanks. Again, I'm
38 Jeff Rasic, the Chief of Resources for Gates of the
39 Arctic National Park. I think we lost Marcy, she's in
40 Anaktuvuk Pass right now doing double duty with the
41 North Slope RAC meeting so she's in and out.

42

43 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Okay. Go right
44 ahead.

45

46 MR. RASIC: I do think we have Kumi
47 Rattenbury who is one of our wildlife biologists and a
48 sheep expert so she's on in case questions arise about
49 that topic.

50

1 I've handed out a brief for you to read
2 and I won't read it to you, but I can hit the
3 highlights of the highlights here.

4
5 You can see that we're engaged in
6 moose, caribou, dall sheep and grizzly bear research.
7 We try hard to articulate these research and monitoring
8 projects with regulatory actions in front of bodies
9 like this one here.

10
11 So a good example is recent moose
12 survey completed in March in the Upper Koyukuk. That
13 was information relevant to the Proposal 16-42 that was
14 discussed here on Tuesday. So we think we're doing an
15 adequate job tying in these projects with management
16 issues and these regulatory concerns.

17
18 A moose collaring project was also
19 completed in recent years, in 2013 and publications are
20 out now on that about moose movements in the Upper
21 Koyukuk. So those are available here as handouts and
22 you can read those and followup with other questions,
23 if you have any.

24
25 We're intensively involved in caribou
26 research and management, particularly the Western
27 Arctic Caribou Herd, one of the Park Service's vital
28 signs in their monitoring program is the Western Arctic
29 Caribou Herd. We participate in the collaring
30 operation at Onion Portage every fall and are
31 maintaining -- we aim to maintain 40 GPS collars within
32 that herd. Publications come out regularly as a result
33 of that work. We're following closely the population
34 numbers there and we participate in the Western Arctic
35 Caribou Herd Working Group as part of the technical
36 committee there.

37
38 We have a grizzly bear project that's
39 been going on on the southern flanks of the Central
40 Brooks Range in Gates of the Arctic and surrounding
41 lands. This is closest to Alatna and Allakaket, the
42 community of Kobuk and the Upper Kobuk communities.
43 This was partly designed in response to plans to build
44 an industrial road from the Dalton Highway through this
45 area, crossing Park lands. I can talk a little bit
46 more about that in a second.

47
48 In terms of dall sheep we completed a
49 massive survey across the Central Brooks Range and
50 extending into the Western Brooks Range last year. We

1 do an annual intensive survey in areas around Anaktuvuk
2 Pass and the Killik Preserve and every four years a
3 broader survey across the entire Park and into Noatak
4 Preserve. Sheep are still in tough shape across the
5 Brooks Range but there are some signs of recovery in --
6 especially in that north eastern corner of Gates of the
7 Arctic. Some lambs were observed so it's a good sign.
8 And Jack probably knows way more about this than I do
9 or -- Kumi is available also to provide details if you
10 have other questions about that work.

11
12 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: I think we've
13 covered quite a bit of sheep discussion at this
14 meeting.

15
16 MR. RASIC: Yeah. There's a great
17 resource brief that I handed out to the Commission
18 Members and it includes contact information if you do
19 have other questions.

20
21 The one item that isn't on this brief
22 that I'd like to bring up is I mentioned earlier the
23 Ambler Road project. This was a -- the plan is to
24 build an industrial road from the Dalton Highway some
25 200-plus miles close to the village of Kobuk on the
26 Upper Kobuk River. We received word from the State of
27 Alaska just a few days ago from the Alaska Industrial
28 Development Export Authority, that they plan to move
29 ahead with an EIS process. So it was interesting to
30 see the Donlin report here. We're probably -- two
31 years from now, if this plays out, we'll be sitting at
32 the very same juncture we are with Donlin, so it hasn't
33 officially started. The Park Service has -- nor any of
34 the other Federal agencies that would be involved with
35 this EIS process have received an application yet, but
36 we've been told that an application is on the way very
37 soon, and once that application is received, it will
38 trigger a massive formal process that will be a
39 juggernaut and will not stop until it ends,
40 particularly for the Park Service. There is very
41 explicit direction in ANILCA for Gates of the Arctic
42 National Park to issue a right-of-way, if one is
43 requested. If we receive a permit we must issue a
44 right-of-way for this road. We have some say in the
45 routing of the road and it's design. We're certainly
46 going to evaluate impacts. But in the end, a no action
47 alternative is not an option for the National Park
48 Service so it's a responsibility we take seriously.
49 We're reaching out vigorously to communities and bodies
50 like this one to let you know that that process is

1 about to start. There is opportunity to make your
2 concerns heard and the Park Service is very strongly
3 involved in that process.

4
5 It's important to understand that the
6 larger EIS will unfold in parallel with a process that
7 the Park Service is -- will do independently. So we
8 issue our own right-of-way. There's also a larger EIS
9 that will encompass the broader route across other land
10 management units.

11
12 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Thanks, Jeff.

13
14 Does the Council have questions on the
15 Park Service's presentation.

16
17 Darrel.

18
19 MR. VENT: Yeah. You just mentioned
20 that you put some radio collaring on the caribou. I'm
21 kind of curious, you know, we haven't seen them for a
22 couple years so I'm wondering where have you tracked
23 them to, toward, like I mentioned earlier, maybe they
24 went up in the Kobuk Mountains. I'm not too sure what
25 your information will provide there.

26
27 MR. RASIC: Yeah. These are members of
28 the Western Arctic Caribou Herd, they're collared at
29 Onion Portage. We have good -- we've been involved
30 with this. They're GPS collars, so we have daily,
31 minute -- every few minutes we have a location on
32 these. Thousands and thousands of locations have
33 accumulated over the past five years. So we have a
34 good understanding of where the calving grounds are on
35 the North Slope and the migration routes through the
36 Brooks Range, especially particular portions of the
37 Noatak and Kobuk Rivers. And then the wintering
38 grounds, which are pretty tightly focused on the Seward
39 Peninsula. There's other scattered individuals around.
40 And there's a report on the table over here that has a
41 good series of maps that show these movements and we're
42 available to provide more information if you'd like.

43
44 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Thanks, Jeff.

45
46 Other questions.

47
48 (No comments)

49
50 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Thanks so much.

1 Appreciate all the work the Park
2 Service is doing. I mean there's a lot of nice
3 projects there and this Ambler Road's going to be a big
4 deal. I was hoping it was stopped but apparently it's
5 not.

6
7 MR. RASIC: No.

8
9 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: So we covered the
10 Park Service. I think we finished ADF&G. And the OSM
11 report. Oh, we have the YRDFA report also. YRDFA's,
12 Wayne, where did he go -- oh, there he is. So YRDFA
13 wants to give us a report and then we'll go to OSM and
14 we'll be coming down close to the end of this meeting.

15
16 MR. JENKINS: Good afternoon. Actually
17 it's still morning. Chairman Reakoff and Western
18 Interior Federal Regional Advisory Council members. My
19 name is Wayne Jenkins. I'm the new director for the
20 Yukon River Drainage Fisheries Association, also known
21 as YRDFA.

22
23 We appreciate this opportunity to
24 provide informational reports to you on some of YRDFA's
25 projects. And we also thank you for inserting that
26 action item earlier.

27
28 The first project I'd like to share
29 information on is the Pre-Season Salmon Fishery
30 Preparation Meeting. This year the Pre-Season Fishery
31 Meeting was hosted by YRDFA on April 29th in Anchorage.
32 The meeting rotates its location on an annual basis
33 between Fairbanks and Anchorage. The 2015 pre-season
34 followed directly upon YRDFA's annual Board Meeting and
35 YRDFA Board and Alternates, that is commercial and
36 subsistence fishers from the full length of the Alaska
37 Yukon were able to attend.

38
39 This meeting is funded by the Yukon
40 River Panel Restoration Enhancement Fund. It's a one-
41 day meeting for fishermen to meet with fisheries
42 managers and biologists for the Alaska Department of
43 Fish and Game, and also the U.S. Fish and Wildlife
44 Service to prepare for the upcoming fishery season.

45
46 The Fishery Managers share their
47 preseason outlook, as well as stock status updates.
48 And time was spent in open discussion, talking about
49 specific scenarios to anticipate and to plan for in-
50 season fishing on the Yukon River.

1 Despite the weak condition of the king
2 salmon run and the subsequent need for severe
3 conservation measures for a second year, it was clear
4 that attendees understood the gravity of the situation
5 and intended to target other salmon species for meeting
6 subsistence needs . The sacrifice of Alaskan Yukon
7 fisheries resulted in meeting most escapement goals for
8 Alaskan Yukon River tributaries. And going over the
9 Yukon River Agreement Canadian escapement target for
10 2015.

11
12 The second report I'd like to share
13 with you is the in-season Yukon River salmon
14 teleconferences. YRDFA hosted in-season salmon
15 management teleconferences, we've done that for 12
16 years now. We expect many of you know about these in-
17 season calls. They're funded by both the Office of
18 Subsistence Management Fisheries Resources Managing
19 Program and the Yukon River Panel Restoration
20 Enhancement Fund. YRDFA hosted the calls every Tuesday
21 beginning June 2nd, 2015 and running through the last
22 week of August. The calls follow an agenda each week,
23 opening with subsistence fishing reports from Alaska
24 Yukon River villages and fishermen and First Nations
25 reports from Yukon Canada. Then reports from State and
26 Federal Fisheries Managers on their test fisheries
27 results, assessments, and management strategies. And
28 also hearing from the Department of Fisheries and
29 Oceans in Canada. These calls are an open forum for
30 members of the public to call in and hear weekly
31 fisheries updates. And also a place to ask questions
32 about the salmon fishery in-season. Managers gain
33 valuable information from Yukon River fishers as to
34 river conditions and how well people are getting their
35 subsistence needs.

36
37 This years calls reflected many
38 challenging issues facing Yukon River fishers and
39 managers. While striving to meet subsistence needs,
40 fishers faced delayed initial runs of king and summer
41 chum salmon, high water conditions, wildfires which
42 threatened some villages and pulled some fishermen out
43 of the communities for fire duty and lack of proper
44 fishing gear in some communities. All the while,
45 managers and fishers worked to avoid harvesting king
46 salmon and targeting other fish species. It was a
47 tough year. As mentioned previously, the choices,
48 actions, and sacrifice made by Alaska Yukon River
49 fishers enabled all Canadian and Alaskan escapement
50 goals to be met. In some cases exceeded. YRDFA

1 proposals for next year's teleconference program are in
2 process and we look forward to continuing this
3 important effort.

4

5 The third program I'd like to share is
6 the YRDFA's educational exchange. The educational
7 exchange trip was developed by YRDFA and is funded by
8 the Yukon River Panel through its Restoration
9 Enhancement Fund, we've done this for the past 12
10 years. And this came, of course, out of the Yukon
11 River Salmon Agreement which was signed by U.S. and
12 Canadian governments. This exchange trip is for people
13 from Alaska and Canada that reside in Yukon River
14 Villages or who work with Yukon River salmon fisheries
15 to learn from each other and fisheries management
16 agencies about issues pertaining to Canadian origin
17 chinook and fall chum salmon fisheries. Some key
18 topics for sharing are management approaches and goals,
19 Yukon River cultures, and people who rely on salmon,
20 and the goals of the Yukon River Salmon Agreement. A
21 group of five travels [sic] -- traveled across the
22 border from Alaska Yukon to the neighboring country
23 each summer and State and Federal Agency personnel,
24 Yukon River Panel Member, they can be elders, youth,
25 fish processors and guides augment the group along
26 their trip at various stops. The goal of the exchange
27 is to foster cross-border collaboration and acts as a
28 bridge to greater understanding, dialogue, and
29 cooperation along the length of the Yukon River.

30

31 This year's Alaskan group -- excuse me
32 -- represented Yukon River Villages of Marshall,
33 Huslia, Galena, and Minto. We visited three Yukon
34 Territory First Nations are Klondike, Gwitch'in in
35 Dawson City, Little Salmon Carmacks in Carmacks and
36 Teslin Tlingit at Teslin in the very headwaters of the
37 Yukon River. We also met with Canadian Department of
38 Fisheries and Oceans Management and visited two
39 restoration projects in Whitehorse. Our post-trip
40 evaluation indicated that our guests found the
41 experience informative, beautiful, and deeply moving,
42 as they gained a greater understanding of the salmon
43 decline situation river-wide and the long sacrifice
44 that Yukon Territory First Nation Communities have been
45 making. Some communities have chosen to not harvest
46 king salmon for more than 17 years. Alaskan visitors
47 saw and heard how First Nations are working to uphold
48 their culture and educate the youth as their fish camps
49 sat idle. Alaskans shared their culture while gaining
50 more understanding of the critical importance Alaskan

1 salmon conservation for meeting escapement goals to
2 rebuild the king run and for healing Native cultures in
3 the Upper Yukon headwaters.

4
5 So I have a couple of reports for the
6 work that Catherine Moncrieff, our Staff anthropologist
7 works on that I'd like to just share with you briefly.

8
9 The harvest survey -- the in-season
10 harvest survey program run by YRDFA is an important
11 assessment tool that qualitatively informs managers how
12 fishers in key locations throughout the drainage are
13 doing in-season enabling managers to make timely
14 decisions, allowing the maximum of fishers to meet
15 their subsistence needs. The in-season harvest survey
16 compliments the quantitative post-season survey
17 conducted by -- conducted by ADF&G by providing an
18 explanation of fishing success, such as high water,
19 debris, other adverse effects that influence fishing
20 success.

21
22 Beginning in 2002 in-season harvest
23 interviewers have been hired each year in select
24 communities along the Yukon River to ensure consistent
25 participation and reporting each week regarding
26 subsistence harvest and observed abundance on the
27 teleconferences. These in-season interviews were begun
28 to to assist in meeting the mandates setforth in the
29 Alaska Native Interest Lands Conservation Act, ANILCA,
30 and the State of Alaska statutes, both of which require
31 a priority for subsistence over other consumptive uses.
32 In-season interviews provide managers insight on
33 subsistence harvest progression within multiple
34 villages located in the Yukon River for use in
35 fisheries management decision-making.

36
37 For the 2015 season YRDFA was at the
38 end of our cooperative agreement with U.S. Fish and
39 Wildlife Fisheries Resource Monitoring Program, they
40 allowed us to extend our agreement and we operated a
41 season on reduced funds. With these reduced funds we
42 were able to hire surveyors in four communities instead
43 of our usual 10. We chose Marshall, Russian Mission,
44 Fort Yukon to operate this year because we had good
45 effective surveyors on board already in those
46 communities. We added Ruby as a new community at the
47 request of managers because they were seeking more
48 information about why fishers in Ruby did not meet
49 their needs in 2014. Selection of these four
50 communities gave us pretty good spread along the river

1 and the surveys -- surveyors did a great job.

2

3 Results for the 2015 season include
4 interviews with 46 households in four communities for a
5 total of 133 interviews and information reported on 13
6 YRDFA teleconferences.

7

8 We held our annual review of the
9 program with the managers and collected feedback from
10 the surveyors prior to the start of the season. With
11 this input we decided not to make any changes to our
12 survey form for 2015, although the program is chinook
13 king salmon focused with the anticipated closures on
14 chinook, we agreed to, again, collect information on
15 chum salmon harvest efforts, fishers ability to access
16 allowable gear types, their success using new gear and
17 what fishers were doing instead of harvesting king
18 salmon.

19

20 As planned, the survey ran for six
21 weeks in each participating community, while the
22 chinook salmon were migrating through their part of the
23 river. This benefited the goal of learning about
24 fishing activities during the chinook salmon season but
25 did not allow for assessment about chum salmon harvest
26 needs met, which is outside the scope of the project.
27 As you can see by the table in the handout, progress
28 toward meeting chinook salmon harvest goals by
29 community were generally zero or very low due to
30 chinook salmon fishing closures.

31

32 Fort Yukon was the exception, as there
33 was an effort in 2015 to allow them to harvest some
34 chinook salmon due to lack of chum salmon in their
35 area. Table in the handout shows the number of
36 households interviewed, total number of the interviews,
37 and the percentage of harvest completed by community
38 over the past three years.

39

40 The next report I would like to share
41 is a project on customary trade, the Upper Yukon River.
42 As you probably recall from previous reports this
43 project is funded by the FRMP and is a partnership
44 project with ADF&G Subsistence Division. The project
45 examines historic and contemporary customary trade of
46 harvested salmon in the Upper Yukon and Tanana Rivers.
47 We're using ethnographic interviews to describe how
48 customary trade practices fit within the overall
49 subsistence use of salmon and a survey on barter and
50 exchange practices to document the scope and local

1 nature of customary trade.

2

3 And I'll move forward to the next one,
4 I think you got some earlier information on the
5 villages and other details from ADF&G and I know your
6 time is short.

7

8 So the next project I'd like to share
9 is the Koyukuk Traditional Place Names. As most of you
10 know from previous reports, we're working with the
11 communities of Koyukuk, Huslia and Hughes document and
12 record traditional place names and the stories that go
13 with them for the Koyukuk River -- from Koyukuk to
14 Hughes. Additional partners include language expert
15 Eliza Jones; Yukon Koyukuk School District Native
16 Language Coordinator Susan Paskvan; U.S. Fish and
17 Wildlife Service Koyukuk National Wildlife Refuge and
18 USGS. To-date we have completed our interviews with
19 local elders, presented maps and received community
20 approvals to share the data. Currently we're seeking
21 funding to publish a book with places and stories.
22 Additionally we're working with ELOKA or the exchange
23 of local observations and knowledge of the Arctic to
24 post an interactive map with place names, sound bytes
25 and stories on the internet for everyone to access.

26

27 And I believe this is my last report,
28 Value of Salmon. This project has been previously
29 reported on as well. The goal of this project is to
30 describe how people of the Yukon River value salmon
31 through case studies in three communities; Russian
32 Mission, Nenana and Fort Yukon.

33

34 As an update I have completed -- this
35 is Catherine -- the interviews in all three
36 communities. For the most recent one, Russian Mission,
37 we are currently transcribing those interviews.
38 Catherine revisited Nenana over the summer to present
39 the preliminary results, which they approved, and she
40 is working on drafting their chapter, which we will
41 share with them to gather their comments before we
42 share it outside of their community. The same will
43 happen with the other two communities. This project is
44 set to wrap up in December of 2106.

45

46 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Thanks Wayne.

47

48 MR. JENKINS: And that is -- that's it.

49

50 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Does the Council

1 have questions on the presentation.

2

3 Don.

4

5 MR. HONEA: Thank you, Chair. No, no
6 questions. I just want to thank you guys for the
7 teleconference that you do every.....

8

9 MR. JENKINS: Thank you.

10

11 MR. HONEA:Tuesday. I realize
12 the importance of it. I could find out where the fish
13 are, I could find out weather conditions, and the river
14 conditions. So appreciate that part, thank you.

15

16 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Pollock.

17

18 MR. SIMON: Thanks, Mr. Chair. No
19 questions, just some comments.

20

21 Around the Allakaket area where I live,
22 one fish camp is being overgrown with (indiscernibles)
23 fish racks (indiscernible) dry fish now falling into
24 the river. Peoples in the village just don't go out
25 subsistence if they can't catch king salmons and not
26 fish at all, I don't know if any of them have fish nets
27 any more, but I have fish nets because I have to catch
28 chum salmon to feed my dogs and I do pass some around
29 to my relatives who want to eat fish but it's kind of
30 difficult for, you know, we can't take king salmon,
31 which is the main fish that's for our peoples along the
32 river and we can't take king salmon, some hardships to
33 -- we tried some chum salmon but they're not that rich
34 as the king salmon so they dry too hard and a lot of
35 people in Allakaket don't go out subsistence any more.

36

37 Thank you, Mr. Chair.

38

39 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Thanks, Pollock.

40

41 Other comments on YRDFA's presentation.

42

43 MR. GERVAIS: I just got a clarify a
44 typo.

45

46 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Tim.

47

48 MR. GERVAIS: All right. I was just
49 asking Wayne about, on this Page 3 of this graph,
50 percent of harvest, harvest completion, he's got 2015,

1 2014, 2013 and I just -- they did the four households
2 in 2015 and I think they wanted to say chinook instead
3 of chum on that first column.

4
5 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Okay, yeah. Other
6 questions.

7
8 (No comments)

9
10 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Comments.

11
12 (No comments)

13
14 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Thanks so much,
15 Wayne. Appreciate all the work that YRDFA's doing.
16 Those are a lot of different projects. And the
17 teleconferences, everybody puts their hand on the pulse
18 of the run, literally on the pulse of the run and so
19 those are pretty important for people all along the
20 river to understand what the managers are thinking and
21 what people are catching and all of their comments, so
22 that's fairly important. But all of those projects are
23 very beneficial to the subsistence users in our region.
24 Appreciate that.

25
26 MR. JENKINS: Thank you, Mr. Chair and
27 thank you Council.

28
29 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: And I hear that
30 they've got some sandwich material back there. We have
31 -- how much more time do you think we have to complete
32 this meeting, Melinda.

33
34 MS. BURKE: Mr. Chair. We have Don and
35 Tim, who -- they still have an hour and 15 minutes
36 before they need to head to the airport so we have a
37 little bit of time.

38
39 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Okay. Maybe we'll
40 break for about 15 minutes and make a sandwich and come
41 back to the table and we'll finish off OSM report.
42 Chris has got a report for us. And is that our last
43 report, is the OSM report?

44
45 MS. BURKE: Yes, Mr. Chair, I believe
46 that's it. I have a couple of tiny things I'd like to
47 cover with the Council, just some small outreach
48 materials that Deb's been doing a really amazing job
49 on. But I believe that that's the last report, Mr.
50 Chair.

1 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Okay. So a 15
2 minute break.

3
4 (Off record)

5
6 (On record)

7
8 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: We're going to come
9 back to order and finish this meeting off real quick.
10 We do have Chris McKee who's going to give us OSM fall
11 2015 report, and so let's see here, we got -- yeah, we
12 got the Council back.

13
14 Go ahead, Chris.

15
16 MR. MCKEE: Thank you, Mr. Chair.
17 Again, for the record my name is Chris McKee, I'm the
18 Wildlife Division Chief for the Office of Subsistence
19 Management. I just have a really quick update for you
20 guys about a few things.

21
22 First of all Staffing, as most of you
23 know, a year or so ago we were pretty chronically
24 shortly -- short-staffed at OSM, some 13, 15 positions,
25 something like that, I forget how many, there was a
26 lot. And we've been pretty aggressive about trying to
27 hire positions, particularly in the leadership areas.
28 So we've done a good job of that. Most recently -- our
29 most recent hire is Robert LaVine -- Robbin LaVine, she
30 joined OSM in October of last year, she's an
31 anthropologist. And the other hire, in July of this
32 year, was Ameer Howard, and she is our new policy
33 coordinator. So -- but even with those new hires we
34 still have some 11 positions we're still trying to
35 fill. I'm not sure if we're going to get them all
36 filled, but like I said we're trying to be as
37 aggressive as possible on keeping them on an org chart
38 in hopes that we'll get as many of them filled as
39 possible.

40
41 I, myself, am still looking to hire
42 another biologist for my division. So -- but as you
43 can imagine the Federal hiring process does not move at
44 a very quick rate so a lot of times you put these
45 requests in it takes quite awhile to get them through
46 the whole process, but we're trying to be as aggressive
47 as possible.

48
49 Also I just have a quick update on what
50 the North Pacific Fishery Management Council did at its

1 April 2015 meeting. Basically they took a combination
2 of actions to lower the hardcaps and performance
3 standards in times of low chinook and chum salmon
4 abundance. Specifically, they lowered the hardcap to
5 45,000, which I believe is a 25 percent reduction and
6 they also lowered the performance standard to 33,318
7 chinook, which I believe is a 30 percent reduction. So
8 the hope was that these measures would help to further
9 reduce bycatch in all times of abundance and to ensure
10 that in periods of low chinook abundance the pollock
11 fishery would be limited to this lower level of
12 bycatch.

13

14 The Fish and Wildlife Service and
15 Alaska Native Science and Engineering Program, ANSEP,
16 were awarded a National Fish and Wildlife Foundation
17 grants recently and funds from these grants have been
18 used to both expand the Refuge Information Technician
19 Program throughout the state and also are helping
20 support ANSEP students participating in biological
21 internships within the Yukon, Kuskokwim and Doyon
22 regions. And these internships provide an opportunity
23 for students to experience resource, monitoring and
24 management while developing skills allowing them to
25 succeed in future years as land management and resource
26 management professionals.

27

28 And then lastly, just a report on the
29 change to the appointment process for the Regional
30 Advisory Councils. OSM submitted requests to the
31 Secretary of Interior to make changes to the
32 appointment process, namely shifting from a three year
33 to a four year appointment term and allowing for the
34 appointment of alternates and providing for a 120 day
35 carryover term for incumbents in the event the
36 appointment letters are not timely issued. But we're
37 still waiting to hear back from -- an official response
38 from the Secretary and because of that, we're not going
39 to be implement the requested changes within the
40 current 2015 appointment cycle. The process of how
41 they choose these or decide to allow somebody to be on
42 a Council or not is kind of out of our hands, it's kind
43 of a mystery in a lot of ways. You know, I sometimes
44 say you have a better chance of knowing where Jimmy
45 Hoffa is buried than figuring out where -- figuring out
46 how this process works.

47

48 (Laughter)

49

50 MR. MCKEE: But, anyway, we're trying

1 to -- we're awaiting that response from the
2 Secretaries. So other than that, that's pretty much
3 all I had for OSM. If there are any questions I'd be
4 happy to answer them if I can.

5

6 Mr. Chair.

7

8 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: I would like you to
9 inform the Council of the coordinator division hiring
10 and our -- I don't know if our -- has our Council
11 heard?

12

13 MS. BURKE: I think most of them know,
14 maybe Pollock, I don't know.

15

16 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: I would like the
17 Council to know that we're -- Melinda's taking another
18 position and I want to be on the record as stating that
19 this Council is a very active Council and needs a very
20 active Coordinator like Melinda, like Vince, we need a
21 very active Coordinator and I would like the record to
22 reflect in the review process, it was recognized by the
23 Department of Interior, that the Coordinators were very
24 important to the Councils, and since this Council is so
25 active I would like this Council at OSM to be
26 considered a high priority for an energetic Coordinator
27 to support us. We highly have appreciated Melinda's
28 diligent work and I'm very sad to see her leave. But
29 we're also happy for her because she's moving back down
30 to Southeast and where your heart is is where your home
31 is and so I do wish Melinda well. And I'm sure we -- I
32 would also like to request Melinda to be at the All-
33 Council meeting, or an invitation so that she can
34 assist in the transition, you know, passing of the
35 torch, you could call that. And so I've highly
36 appreciated working with Melinda.

37

38 But I do want OSM to be -- and, Gene,
39 in particular, and, Carl, to understand that this
40 Council was given a Coordinator that was not supportive
41 and not as energetic as we would have liked,
42 previously, I would like that to be on the record, that
43 this Council is going to require a Council Coordinator
44 that can facilitate this Council, which facilitates the
45 OSM's and the Federal Subsistence Board's management of
46 the resource and for the benefit of the resource and
47 the people, subsistence users.

48

49 So I wanted that all to be on the
50 record and so that's why I'm bringing it up.

1 Go ahead, Chris.

2

3 MR. MCKEE: Yes, it's on the record and
4 I will also personally take that message back to both,
5 Gene and Carl. I can tell you that the hiring process
6 for Melinda's replacement and the other Coordinator
7 position is going to be beginning very, very soon, so
8 that is -- we are not waiting for those lists to come
9 back so I can tell you that we'll be dealing with that
10 very, very soon.

11

12 Mr. Chair.

13

14 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Since we were on the
15 OSM update, that category was not discussed, and so I
16 wanted the Council to be aware of this issue and so
17 everybody's on the same sheet of music.

18

19 Tim.

20

21 MR. GERVAIS: Thank you, Mr. Chair.
22 Chris.

23

24 I'm working on this issue as part of
25 our -- it's one of our annual report topics, we're
26 going to try to address the -- or we're going to
27 address the Secretary of Interior and Secretary of
28 Commerce on getting the fair share of the available
29 fish in regards to the king salmon. And the research
30 I've been doing is based on this 1974 court case,
31 United States versus the State of Washington where this
32 judge said that the tribes of Washington are -- get a
33 fair share of the available fish based on their treaty
34 status with the United States. But that doesn't apply
35 directly to Federal subsistence users, and what I would
36 be requesting from OSM is some information about how
37 ANILCA guarantees the Federal subsistence users a fair
38 share of the available king salmon because we're --
39 this -- we still have 18,00 of prohibitive species
40 bycatch kings in the Bering Sea this -- this year. I
41 don't know what the Gulf of Alaska number is, but
42 significant. So as part of this annual report topic I
43 need to get some better understanding of how ANILCA
44 protects the Federal subsistence user and allows us to
45 have a fair share of the available fish instead of
46 having this bycatch going on while subsistence users
47 are restricted from targeted harvest.

48

49 MR. MCKEE: So noted. We'll make sure
50 and add that. Melinda, you've got that as well.

1 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Okay. Other
2 comments on OSM's report.

3
4 Don.

5
6 MR. HONEA: Thank you, Mr. Chair. I
7 just wanted to thank you for your report. I know we've
8 had trouble in the past when we've been reappointed
9 and, you know, maybe I guess one of the things was
10 doing maybe a longer term and I appreciate you guys
11 working on it. I know it's out of your hands and it's
12 probably the Secretary of the Interior or somebody,
13 it's at their call, it's always been kind of a thorn in
14 our sides and so at least we got part of that.

15
16 Thank you.

17
18 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Thank you, Don.

19
20 Any comments.

21
22 (No comments)

23
24 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Seeing none, thanks

25
26 so much Chris.

27
28 MR. MCKEE: Thank you.

29
30 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Any other items on

31 this -- for this meeting, Melinda.

32
33 MS. BURKE: Mr. Chair. I just wanted
34 to remind the Council members of the -- the Council
35 members who have expiring terms coming up, these seats
36 will be up in 2016 so we'll need applications submitted
37 by January. I've got here Mr. Robert Walker, Don
38 Honea, and Pollock Simon, Sr. So we'll need to get new
39 applications into the office. I want to say the
40 deadline is mid-January, but we'll make sure that they
41 get in far ahead of that time. So we'll send Council
42 members home with -- Don and Pollock we'll send you
43 home with applications today and I'll ensure that
44 Robert gets his submitted.

45
46 I wanted to also highlight we've had
47 Deborah Coble join our Staff in the last year and half
48 or so, she's our new public affairs and outreach person
49 and she's been doing a really incredible job of
50 providing information, structuring our books a little

1 bit differently and we've heard some really great
2 feedback from the Council members and the public. One
3 thing that just got printed, fresh off the presses,
4 right before our AFN Convention was this great coloring
5 book that she worked on. We had an ANSEP student who
6 worked in our office for a little while who contributed
7 to this, so that was great, and I think these types of
8 things to, you know, increase outreach to the public
9 and get the younger -- younger folks involved and
10 interested in what we're doing is really invaluable.

11
12 Facebook has been great. I'm so happy
13 that a couple of years ago the Program finally allowed
14 us to have a FaceBook page.

15
16 The dissemination of information in a
17 timely manner is really important.

18
19 We also have a lot of elders and youth
20 all across the board who are using FaceBook, everything
21 from news releases, emergency orders, meeting notices,
22 everything that comes out from our Program is
23 immediately posted to FaceBook and I think that is just
24 a new tool that rural Alaska really using. Darrel's on
25 there quite a bit.

26
27 We also have our informal Western
28 Interior Subsistence page that Mr. Reakoff has started
29 up and that's also a great place to share information.

30
31 And we also have the art contest for
32 this fall that we have out for students to submit. We
33 haven't gotten a whole lot of entries yet and the
34 deadline is December 1st, so I'd really like the
35 Council members to encourage students in your
36 communities, please team up with your teachers. We've
37 been trying to make as many calls as we can. We'd
38 really like to get a lot of entries so hopefully some
39 of the kids over break, and we can get some of these
40 submitted to the office by the deadline of December
41 1st. We'd love to see those pieces of art in our
42 regulation booklets.

43
44 Mr. Chair.

45
46 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: My question is,
47 James, Jenny and Carl's terms expire now and we're
48 waiting, have they submitted reapplication and are we
49 waiting for their reappointment?

50

1 MS. BURKE: Yes, Mr. Chair. Those
2 Council members, those incumbents have submitted their
3 applications. The panel did their work this summer.
4 The -- if things are running a little better on time
5 from DC, which we have seen this year, generally the
6 seats expire December 2nd and we always keep our
7 fingers crossed that we're going to get word the week
8 prior so hopefully that timeframe will look like it did
9 last year so we should be hearing about those incumbent
10 seats very soon.

11
12 I wanted to give another shout out here
13 in the public and kudos to Arnold Demoski. He has
14 personally gone to members and young men in his
15 community and the surrounding communities on the Yukon
16 to become interested and to submit their applications.
17 So I think that's great and folks that age advocating
18 for membership on this Council I think is a really
19 positive direction that we're seeing the public go.

20
21 So we should be hearing about those
22 incumbent members hopefully within the next four weeks.

23
24 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Okay, thank you.
25 Any comments on what Melinda was talking about.

26
27 (No comments)

28
29 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: So we're down to
30 closing comments.

31
32 MS. BURKE: I'll start, Mr. Chair. I
33 just wanted to let the Council and the public know it's
34 been a real honor to work with this group. I've
35 learned a lot. My whole career has been built on
36 subsistence and I've learned so much from each of you
37 and getting to know you and your families and I learn
38 something new everyday and I'm just so honored to be a
39 part of this group and I've enjoyed having these
40 adventures with you and being a small part of the
41 important work you do.

42
43 So thank you. I'm just down the way in
44 Juneau, please come and visit us, Kirk and I would love
45 to open our home to any Council or Staff who are
46 traveling through the area and I'm sure I'll make an
47 appearance in Anchorage here and there.

48
49 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Well, I'm going to
50 keep track of you on FaceBook Melinda.

1 (Laughter)

2

3 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: No, we really really
4 appreciated your work with us and so I'm crying inside
5 also.

6

7 Thank you.

8

9 Darrel.

10

11 MR. VENT: Yeah, she's been pretty much
12 a big help to me, you know, understanding a lot of the
13 fundamentals of how to be on this Board here so I'm
14 grateful for her helping me out in that. It's the
15 elders here that, you know, been on these Boards for
16 years, this is my first year and I learned quite a bit
17 and I'm appreciative of that. And sorry to see her
18 leave. You know it's always a sad thing to see someone
19 that's doing a good job that has to go, move on to
20 somewhere else, but, you know, that's -- you know,
21 we're just happy that we had the time to be there with
22 her.

23

24 My, you know, things that I discuss
25 here, you know, I'm straight forward with what I want,
26 you know, and I always like to get answers but that's
27 -- I guess that's just the way I'll always be. I don't
28 like the, you know, I just want an honest answer for an
29 honest question so that's the reason why I do, it's not
30 to be mean or impolite to anybody, it's just we all
31 want answers and we all, you know, try to ask those
32 questions that are hard.

33

34 I, you know, I'm slowly eventually
35 learning how to work with the Board, there's so much
36 regulations and everything that complies with the State
37 and Federal and the Natives. So I'm just grateful that
38 I'm here to help represent our people in our area.

39

40 And our main thing is to protect our
41 subsistence and that's my priority, that's why they
42 voted -- they wanted me to come here and I've been
43 trying for years, I think it was about four years I've
44 been trying to get on this Board and I eventually got
45 here. And, you know, I kept bugging people, bugging
46 people, sorry for being like that but that's just who I
47 am. And I'll always continue to be like that.

48

49 But thank you guys for welcoming me and
50 letting me be here on the Board.

1 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Well, Darrel, found
2 out about the application on FaceBook so it was like
3 within two minutes he was wanting that download for
4 that application.

5
6 (Laughter)

7
8 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: So FaceBook is
9 lightening fast and so people in rural Alaska -- more
10 and more people keep getting it, the net of people in
11 rural Alaska is getting very large.

12
13 And so I appreciate your work here. We
14 need representation from Huslia, Huslia is a very
15 active area. Koyukuk representation is important for
16 this region. Unit 24 is huge. And so I appreciate
17 your work with us.

18
19 Pollock.

20
21 MR. SIMON: Yes, I just want to make a
22 few comments. I'm happy I came down here to Galena,
23 been down here a few times and good times, it's a good
24 village to stay. And I'd also like to thank Melinda
25 for working towards that and her stuff. And I'd like
26 to thank Jack for being a good Chairman. We've been on
27 this Board for quite some time, some of us are getting
28 kind of old and like glad that Darrel has joined us,
29 he's much younger and more active and he can learn fast
30 and that's what we need to do. We need to educate our
31 young peoples to serve on the Boards for us. It's a
32 incredible thing to -- we're all on here on this Board
33 because we're concerned about our wildlife, fish and
34 wildlife and today we can still eat moose meat and fish
35 and we have to think about the future. We want to see
36 our children and their children to continue eating
37 moose meat and fish. So I guess that's why we keep
38 coming back here every year to this Board and try to
39 help each other.

40
41 All the Board members and this Board
42 does really try hard to serve.

43
44 Again, I'm glad that I keep coming
45 back, you know, I'm not young anymore but my concerns
46 are always about preserving wildlife for future use.

47
48 So, again, thank you.

49
50 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Thanks, Pollock.

1 Don.

2

3 MR. HONEA: Thank you, Mr. Chair.

4 Those are some wise words coming out there, appreciate
5 that.

6

7 I, too, would like to kind of reiterate
8 of Melinda moving on. I mean, you know, it seems just
9 like we started getting a good rhythm here and, you
10 know, I've always counted on her. I was stuck in
11 Fairbanks last year and called her up and, you know,
12 she was good enough to give us her cell number and I
13 was able to get a room and, you know, get back to Ruby
14 the next day. Those things, those little things like
15 that, you know, coming out of the office, kind of a
16 personal thing, hey, we're always there, 24/7, I mean
17 she is, she puts herself out there. I appreciate that.
18 I really do.

19

20 And I could kind of relate to what
21 Darrel is saying, and, you know, that's why, like in
22 the past when we had the two women on here, they
23 brought things to us in a down home kind of a way, you
24 know, just why come to fish camp, or whatever, I liked
25 that, I enjoyed that. They told it like it was. I
26 mean that's how we should be saying it. And, you know,
27 I appreciate the new members from the OSM, I believe
28 even in discussing, bringing up the proposals -- I
29 don't know how it went in the past but it seems like it
30 was more efficient when I -- when I attended Eastern
31 Interior, they brought the proposals back, they were
32 concise, this is what it is and stuff and I also
33 appreciate Stewart joining there. I think we should
34 take advantage of those services, the OSM, take
35 advantage. And I mentioned this in Fairbanks, Orville
36 Lind is out there, is that his name, Orville Lind is
37 out there and willing to travel to villages. He went
38 down to Nulato and, you know, and -- and, also, really,
39 you know, I mean like he said I enjoy the quarters
40 here, they always have good housing. I enjoyed Mr.
41 Sidney Huntington's talk yesterday, right on. I mean,
42 you know. You know, just exactly right on.

43

44 And I want to go ahead and thank the
45 Wildlife Refuge. It seemed like, you know, we don't
46 have time when they were up there to properly thank
47 them. But they put themselves out there in inclimate
48 weather, that last week, it could be snowing, it's
49 cold, and, you know, I just want to thank them for
50 that. Because, you know, there's not too many hunters

1 out there on that last week, maybe a few from Tanana, a
2 few from Ruby but, you know, I just wanted to properly
3 thank them.

4
5 And I will see you further down the
6 trail, thank you.

7
8 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Thanks, Don.
9 Pollock.

10
11 MR. SIMON: I forgot to say I was
12 impressed by Sidney Huntington's presence and speaking
13 to us yesterday. He's loud and booming at 101 years
14 and still concerned about the way of life. So that
15 kind of really impressed me. You know, at that age --
16 I don't know how long you and I will live but maybe not
17 quite that old but, you know, it's impressive to see
18 somebody that old still concerned about the wildlife
19 issues.

20
21 Thank you, Jack.

22
23 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Thanks for those
24 words, too, Pollock.

25
26 Tim.

27
28 MR. GERVAIS: Thank you, Mr. Chair.
29 I'd like to thank the community of Galena for hosting
30 this meeting. I enjoyed meeting the folks and the
31 facilities. And I also appreciate Sidney making the
32 effort to come in and voice his concerns.

33
34 I'd like to thank all the members for
35 their time and effort at this meeting. I know we all
36 have lots of other aspects to our lives but I think
37 overall it tends to make a big difference to
38 subsistence users of this region to be able to get some
39 -- the management issues advised on and acted on in a
40 respectable way.

41
42 I'd like to thank the agency personnel
43 for their time in the meeting and working with us as
44 members. We're professionals, what we do, and we
45 appreciate your understanding of we may not know exact
46 terminology or dogma or process involved but we
47 appreciate your consideration in helping us work
48 through these issues. And for all the subsistence
49 users in the region I'd like to thank the managers and
50 the biologists for helping to create subsistence

1 harvest opportunity for us. I would like to see the
2 OSM review their travel policy and see if we can get
3 some types of changes made so when the travel changes,
4 which are inevitable with travel into rural Alaska,
5 that the system is more flexible to allow the members
6 to adjust their travel plans to be able to make the
7 meetings.

8

9 And most importantly I'd like to thank
10 Melinda for all her hard work. She definitely went
11 beyond the call of her job duties. Your good effort in
12 trying to make things happen really inspired me to
13 work, I'll use bad language here, but it's a phrase I
14 use on our fishing boat, work more harder than I
15 normally would.....

16

17 (Laughter)

18

19 MR. GERVAIS:because I know
20 you're trying beyond the standard level and so that was
21 a good inspiration for me to work more harder and do a
22 better job.

23

24 (Laughter)

25

26 MR. GERVAIS: We wish you good luck in
27 Juneau and we hope our paths continue to cross as we
28 all get older here.

29

30 Thank you very much.

31

32 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Thanks so much, Tim.

33

34 Yeah, I, too, appreciate having
35 meetings here in Galena. We get turn out from --
36 people come to talk to us, we get people that come in
37 the back of the room and sit and listen and we've
38 always had Sidney come and talk to us in his booming
39 voice and long history in this country and his hard
40 work. He never gives up. He's always looking out for
41 the country and looking out for the resource and
42 looking out for the people. So you got to appreciate
43 that dedication that he's put into all those -- you
44 know I think he's probably been like that his whole
45 life, a hundred years of that, that's something to be
46 said.

47

48 I appreciate the cover dish that the
49 community brought out for us on the first day.

50

1 I think that some of the people that
2 came to talk to us actually, you know, Tim Bodni,
3 he.....

4
5 UNIDENTIFIED VOICE: Bodony.

6
7 (Laughter)

8
9 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Bodony, whatever.

10
11 (Laughter)

12
13 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: He highlighted that
14 coho problem and so that brought it to our attention
15 and that is what this forum, the Regional Advisory
16 Councils, under .805 of ANILCA is a forum for people to
17 have public comment so that's why we have to have
18 public comment.

19
20 And the Advisory Committees, I really
21 appreciate the Alaska Department of Fish and Game and
22 the Federal agencies, BLM, US Fish and Wildlife
23 Service, National Park Service coming and informing us
24 about projects and interacting with this Council in
25 support of all the information flow on a two-way
26 street. They tell us stuff and we tell them stuff.
27 And so I really appreciate the State and Federal
28 support for this Council. We would be talking to
29 ourselves if we didn't have them here.

30
31 I appreciate the Staff at OSM. I mean
32 this side of the room over here, we've got Lisa, she's
33 doing a great job, she just hits the ground running.

34
35 Palma's fairly new and she's also very
36 active right off the bat.

37
38 Chris is making real good headway with
39 hires and keeping the biological Staff on track.

40
41 And Stewart's doing an excellent job in
42 cleaning up this Fisheries Monitoring Program.

43
44 And so I'm really happy about the
45 progress that OSM -- OSM was sort of spinning its
46 wheels there, mired in, but now they're starting to
47 make some headway.

48
49 And so I also agree with Tim, I feel
50 that OSM, these travel agencies are not adaptable to

1 the conditions that Alaska has for travel. And I feel
2 that as soon as the Council begins to travel, that's
3 the end of the travel agency. From that point on, the
4 Coordinator should have the ability to rapidly change
5 the tickets and adjust to the conditions, weather
6 conditions and travel conditions. The Council members
7 cannot be sitting in a hotel waiting for tickets to be
8 booked because they're sleeping down wherever they're
9 at in Seattle or somewheres. That is unacceptable.
10 These are the -- the Council members are volunteers and
11 there is no need, and when we lose membership and lose
12 quorum, it affects this Council's ability -- our
13 Council's ability to perform the work that we're
14 Federally-mandated to do. And so I feel that this
15 Council should be on record as stating, once travel is
16 initiated, that's the end of the booking agents, now
17 your travel is in the hands of the Council Coordinator.
18 And so that has to be the way it is.

19

20 Melinda.

21

22 MS. BURKE: Yes, Mr. Chair, I
23 wholeheartedly agree.

24

25 And I think that this would be a great
26 topic of discussion for all of the Councils to talk
27 about during the All-RAC meeting that first day when
28 all 100 plus Council members are sitting around the
29 room talking about universal issues applicable to all
30 of the regions. I think travel is a huge portion of
31 it. I understand there's some limitations in contracts
32 and what not, but there's six weeks of the year when
33 your Coordinator should have sole say on changes that
34 are being made. I think we're pretty responsible folks
35 and I don't think we're going to go in and arbitrarily
36 make changes for no good reason and I don't believe the
37 Council members are going to request changes for no
38 good reason either.

39

40 So I would suggest that that topic be
41 discussed on the first day when all 100 plus Council
42 members are together in a room in Anchorage.

43

44 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: I would formally
45 request that. We're not off the record yet. And I
46 would like OSM to be -- put that on the agenda, you can
47 bring that back to Carl. I'm sure Melinda will bring
48 it back to Carl.

49

50 (Laughter)

1 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: But this is
2 completely unacceptable. We had Tim, we had Robert, we
3 lost valuable time waiting for people to call in and to
4 make quorum. The quorum thing is a big deal for these
5 Councils besides the input of each Council member is
6 very important for the business of these Councils.
7 This is a huge region, we need every last member to
8 make input to represent the people and the resource
9 near where they live.

10
11 So this is a problem and this needs to
12 be addressed. This is not a little problem, this is
13 getting to be a big problem. And so these -- there
14 needs to be a change and it needs to be sooner than
15 later. And so that should be on the agenda for the
16 All-Council meeting.

17
18 Now, after having said all that I think
19 we had a very productive meeting and we're only one
20 hour beyond our slated time, through 12:00 o'clock. I
21 think we had a very productive meeting, we covered a
22 lot of different subjects and I appreciate all of my
23 Council members coming out and making an effort, make
24 application and come out here to speak for the resource
25 and speak for the people.

26
27 And having said that, any final
28 comments.

29
30 Don.

31
32 MR. HONEA: Thank you, Mr. Chair. I
33 inadvertently forgot the harvest report. I thoroughly
34 agree with you 100 percent that unless we have that on
35 record and start getting data from that, if we don't
36 report this stuff there's no papertrail.

37
38 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Right.

39
40 MR. HONEA: So I was going to mention
41 that and I think it's a really vital that we get out
42 the harvest report to our villages.

43
44 Thank you.

45
46 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: That publication
47 that Deborah come up with about the importance of
48 reporting, that needs to be sent out to all the
49 boxholders in our region. People have to understand
50 this is very important, actually it's hurting your

1 ability to harvest if you don't report.

2

3 So I think we've covered all the
4 business, the Chair will entertain a motion to adjourn
5 the meeting.

6

7 MR. VENT: So moved.

8

9 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: So moved by Darrel.

10

11 MR. GERVAIS: Seconded.

12

13 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Seconded. Those in
14 favor of adjournment signify by saying aye.

15

16 IN UNISON: Aye.

17

18 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Opposed, same sign.

19

20 MR. VENT: Aye.

21

22 (Laughter)

23

24 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Thank you.

25

26 We are adjourned.

27

28 (Off record)

29

30 (END OF PROCEEDINGS)

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C E R T I F I C A T E

UNITED STATES OF AMERICA)
)ss.
STATE OF ALASKA)

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DATED at Anchorage, Alaska, this 22nd day of November 2015.

Salena A. Hile
Notary Public, State of Alaska
My Commission Expires: 9/16/18

□