

1 EASTERN INTERIOR ALASKA FEDERAL SUBSISTENCE
2 REGIONAL ADVISORY COUNCIL MEETING

3
4 PUBLIC MEETING

5
6
7 VOLUME II

8
9 Pikes Waterfront Hotel
10 Fairbanks, Alaska
11 October 23, 2015
12 9:00 a.m.

13
14
15 COUNCIL MEMBERS PRESENT:

16
17 Sue Entsminger, Chair
18 Andy Bassich
19 Andrew Firmin
20 William Glanz
21 Will Koehler
22 Rhonda Pitka
23 Virgil Umphenour
24 Larry Williams
25 Donald Woodruff
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29 Regional Council Coordinator, Eva Patton

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P R O C E E D I N G S

(Fairbanks, Alaska - 10/23/2015)

(On record)

MADAME CHAIR ENSTMINGER: Could the people on the phone identify themselves, please.

MR. SHARP: Yeah. Good morning. This is Dan Sharp with Bureau of Land Management in Anchorage.

(Pause)

MR. SHARP: And I think that might be it. When I signed on, there were two people online. I think that's you and me.

(Laughter)

MADAME CHAIR ENSTMINGER: Well, welcome. Nice to hear your voice, Dan.

Okay. Go ahead.

The next thing on the Agenda.

MR. RIVARD: Good morning, Madame Chair, Members of the Council. My name is Don Rivard. I'm a Fish Biologist with the Office of Subsistence Management, U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, based in Anchorage. I'm going to go through the 2016 Fisheries Resource Monitoring Program. And that starts in your book on page 304. We won't be following the book per se. Mostly I'm going to be doing this slide presentation for you.

Do we have -- can we do something to the lights here.

Just real quick up front, in the past we would bring this program to you -- these projects to you and there would be a list of projects with recommendations from the Technical Review Committee to either fund or do not fund. That's not happening this year. It's changed around. I'm going to explain some of the changes that have been done to the program. And when we get to the part about the projects themselves I'll further explain that. And because you've got a

1 couple of relatively new Council Members, I'm going to
2 go into a little bit of the background of this program
3 and just refresh other people's memory.

4
5 Beginning in 1999, the Federal
6 Government assumed expanded management responsibility
7 for subsistence fishing on Federal public lands in
8 Alaska under authority of Title VIII of the Alaska
9 National Interests Lands Conservation Act or ANILCA.
10 Expanded subsistence fisheries management introduced
11 substantial new informational needs for the Federal
12 system. Section 812 of ANILCA directs the Departments
13 of the Interior and Agriculture, cooperating with the
14 State of Alaska and other Federal Agencies to undertake
15 research on Fish and Wildlife and subsistence uses on
16 Federal public lands.

17
18 To increase the quantity and quality of
19 information for management of subsistence fisheries,
20 the Fisheries Resource Monitoring Program was
21 established within the Office of Subsistence
22 Management. The Monitoring Program was envisioned as a
23 collaborative Inter-Agency, interdisciplinary approach
24 to enhance existing fisheries research and effectively
25 communicate information needed for subsistence
26 fisheries management on Federal public lands.

27
28 Every two years the Office of
29 Subsistence Management announces a funding opportunity
30 for investigation plans addressing subsistence
31 fisheries on Federal public lands. It was called a
32 call for proposals, but now it's called a notice of
33 funding available. And the 2016 notice of funding
34 availability focused on priority information needs
35 developed either by strategic planning efforts or
36 subject matter specialist input followed by review and
37 comment by the Subsistence Regional Advisory Councils.

38
39
40 The Monitoring Program is administered
41 through Regions which were developed to match the
42 subsistence management regulations, as well as stock,
43 harvest, and community issues common to a geographic
44 area. The Eastern Interior is in the Yukon Region. To
45 implement the Monitoring Program a collaborative
46 approach is utilized in which five Federal Agencies --
47 the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, the Bureau of Land
48 Management, the National Park Service, the Bureau of
49 Indian Affairs, and the U.S. Forest Service work with
50 the Alaska Department of Fish and Game, Regional

1 Advisory Councils, Alaska Native organizations, and
2 other organizations. An Inter-Agency Technical Review
3 Committee consisting of Federal and State fish and
4 social science experts provide scientific evaluation of
5 investigation plans submitted for funding
6 consideration. The Regional Advisory Councils provide
7 review and recommendations and public comment is also
8 invited.

9

10 The Federal Subsistence Board takes
11 into consideration all these recommendations and
12 comments throughout the process and forwards a
13 Monitoring Plan to the Assistant Regional Director for
14 the Office of Subsistence Management for final
15 approval. And they will do so in their meeting in
16 January 2016.

17

18 Now, the Monitoring Program was first
19 implemented in 2000, with an initial allocation of
20 \$5,000,000. Since 2001 to date, a total of almost
21 \$104,000,000 have been allocated for the Monitoring
22 Program to fund a total of 431 projects, which you can
23 see on the slide and also in your book on the top of
24 page 306. And they are funded by Region. And you can
25 see this on page 307 in your book, but there's an
26 allocation guideline for each of the Regions. And
27 these are just guidelines. And then you can see in the
28 pie chart there the actual. And for example, if you
29 look at the Yukon it has a allocation guideline of
30 about 29 percent. In reality it's come out to 18
31 percent over the years. The Yukon there is the one on
32 the top there in kind of orange color.

33

34 Now, some of the guide policy and
35 funding guidelines. Projects could be funded for up to
36 four years of duration and they may be considered in
37 any year's monitoring plan. Studies must not duplicate
38 existing projects. A majority of Monitoring Program
39 funding will be dedicated to non-Federal Agencies.
40 Long term projects will be considered on a case-by-case
41 basis. And then we have certain activities that this
42 Program does not fund. Again does not fund. Is
43 habitat protection, mitigation, restoration and
44 enhancement, hatchery propagation, restoration,
45 enhancement and supplementation, contaminant
46 assessment, evaluation and monitoring, and projects
47 where the primary or only objective is outreach and
48 education. For example, science camps, technical
49 training, and intern programs rather than information
50 collection. We do and have funded things like science

1 camps, but they've done a component -- usually a pretty
2 small component of projects.

3

4 Now, the Office of Subsistence
5 Management will assist the Regional Advisory Councils
6 with priority needs development. And we've done that
7 in the past with your Council. We ask for your input
8 and you give us things that you would like to see done
9 in your Region. And the principal investigators are to
10 work with the Regional Advisory Councils to develop
11 proposals. This hasn't necessarily always been done in
12 the past, but we'd like to really kind of advocate for
13 that a little bit more now. Best to do this kind of
14 work throughout the year, not right before submission
15 due date. And we have these call for proposals every
16 two years, so there's plenty of time in between calls
17 to develop proposals.

18

19 The Office of Subsistence Management
20 provides technical assistance. And you'll get some
21 more of this -- exposure to this training and some
22 training at your upcoming winter Council meeting, where
23 all Councils are going to meet in Anchorage.

24

25 Now, the next step is proposal
26 submission. And this is really directed towards
27 principal investigators. They need to provide a
28 complete package and that it be submitted on time. And
29 it needs to follow all the conditions and
30 considerations in the notice of funding availability.
31 Now, this is really the key to these proposals, is they
32 must address all five of the specific criteria -- the
33 strategic priority or addressing a priority information
34 need or needs, the technical scientific merit of the
35 proposal, the investigator's ability and the resources
36 available to them to conduct the project, partnership
37 and capacity, and cost benefit.

38

39 Now, we prioritize high-quality
40 projects that address the five critical subsistence
41 questions that enhance the monitoring program, that
42 assure program transparency, and identify and fund
43 high-quality research projects that address priority
44 subsistence information needs and maximize funding
45 opportunities.

46

47 Now, some of the key modifications to
48 the process include that specific guidelines for
49 assessing how and whether a proposed project has
50 addressed each of the five criteria. Receiving a

1 single, consolidated review from each participating
2 Agency, requiring Agencies to recuse themselves from
3 providing reviews for projects that involve their
4 Agency.

5
6 Now, we have a tech -- the Technical
7 Review Committee is really kind of the key to this.
8 This is again a group of fisheries and social science
9 experts that are the ones that really rate all these
10 proposals. They draft a draft Monitoring Plan for each
11 Region. And again they evaluate and score each
12 proposal for those five criteria that I said before.
13 Strategic priority, technical and scientific merit,
14 investigator ability and resources, partnership and
15 capacity building, and a cost benefit analysis. The
16 final score determines the ranking of each proposal
17 within a Region.

18
19 Now, your role here is to review the
20 TRC rankings and the proposal summaries and to provide
21 comments to accompany proposals to the Federal
22 Subsistence Board, including do these proposals align
23 with priority information needs, your comments on the
24 proposal rankings and the proposal summaries and the
25 process.

26
27 Now, this is an extremely part of the
28 process. We are asking on your comments on the
29 proposals to inform the Federal Subsistence Board with
30 final project selections to the FRMP. You can make a
31 motion to move on these comments forward to the Federal
32 Subsistence Board or the Council Coordinator will
33 compile your comments and forward to the Federal
34 Subsistence Board.

35
36 The Inter-Agency Staff Committee also
37 has a role in this. They review the whole process and
38 comments and provide their recommendations as well to
39 the Federal Subsistence Board. And then the Federal
40 Subsistence Board reviews everything. They synthesize
41 the comments and they provide their recommendation for
42 the Monitoring Program. The Office of Subsistence
43 Management reviews all the comments and finalizes the
44 Monitoring Program. Our Assistant Regional Director,
45 Gene Peltola, is the one that makes the final decision
46 as he is the Federal officer who has to sign his
47 approval on how much money and where that money is
48 going.

49
50 So we're going to look at two Regions

1 for this Council, the Yukon Region and then a multi-
2 regional overview. This particular table can be found
3 on page 313 in your book. Since the inception of the
4 Monitoring Program in 2000, 106 projects have been
5 undertaken in the Yukon Region for a total of nearly
6 \$19,000,000. Of these the State of Alaska has
7 conducted 20 of these projects. The Department of
8 Interior, 51. Alaska Native Organizations have
9 conducted ten projects and other organizations have
10 conducted 25 projects. And then for the multi-regional
11 you can see that as well. Since the inception 16
12 projects have been undertaken in the multi-regional
13 category for a total of nearly \$2,000,000.

14
15 So now we're going to go to the actual
16 projects that have been proposed, that we've gotten
17 from our principal investigators for the Yukon Region.
18 And you can see the list here and it's also on page 316
19 of your book if you want to be able to see it up close.

20
21
22 Now, Madame Chair, I propose two
23 things. You can either make some comments now on these
24 projects or if you would like I can give a short
25 summary of each and then you can have your discussion.
26 What would you prefer to do.

27
28 MADAME CHAIR ENSTMINGER: Council, what
29 do you prefer to do.

30
31 MR. BASSICH: Brief summary.

32
33 MADAME CHAIR ENSTMINGER: Brief summary
34 requested.

35
36 MR. RIVARD: Okay. Very good. We'll
37 start off with I'm going to do this by the way they
38 were ranked here in this table. Okay. And so the
39 first one is -- that was ranked as number one by the
40 Technical Review Committee is 16-256. And that can be
41 found on page 317. And Pippa's going to give the
42 summary of this.

43
44 MS. KENNER: Hi. I'm Pippa Kenner.
45 I'm the anthropologist at OSM and within your Region.
46 And yeah, we're going to present these by ranking. And
47 they follow in ranking order after the list on page
48 316.

49
50 Project 16-256 is the In-Season Salmon

1 Management Teleconferences on the Yukon. You might all
2 be familiar with that. The principal investigators
3 requesting four years of funding for continuing the
4 weekly teleconferences conducted during the salmon
5 fishery season from June to August. This project
6 addresses a listed priority information need by
7 providing a forum for subsistence users in the Yukon
8 River Drainage in the United States and Canada to come
9 together once a week and provide information concerning
10 the state of the salmon fisheries in their area, with
11 special emphasis on the Chinook salmon fishery.

12
13 The Technical Review Committee
14 justification for the ranking of number one was that
15 the project has operated for 15 years and has become a
16 fixture of in-season salmon management along the Yukon
17 River. The study design is appropriate for involving
18 local subsistence users and providing them a voice to
19 participate in the management of the Chinook fishery.
20 The budget and project duration are reasonable for the
21 proposed work and to accomplish project objectives.
22 The investigators are highly qualified and fully
23 capable of addressing and achieving the objectives and
24 reporting results in a timely manner. This is a
25 project through YRDFA. And so I'm done with that one.
26 And I continue to number two if there aren't any
27 comments.

28
29 MADAME CHAIR ENSTMINGER: Any
30 questions.

31
32 (No comments)

33
34 MADAME CHAIR ENSTMINGER: And that was
35 the short version, right?

36
37 MS. KENNER: (Nods affirmatively)

38
39 MADAME CHAIR ENSTMINGER: Okay.
40 Thanks.

41
42 MS. KENNER: Okay. The second project
43 is related to the first. It's 16-255 and is -- the
44 project summary is on page 317 of your books. This
45 project involves ten communities -- Alakanuk, Marshall,
46 Russian Mission, Holy Cross, Kaltag, Huslia, Galena,
47 Nenana, Fort Yukon, and Eagle. And this four-year
48 project requests funding for continuing the in-season
49 surveys in these ten rural villages which harvest fish
50 in Federal waters under the subsistence priority. This

1 project addresses the need to monitor the harvest of
2 Chinook in the Yukon Region. The project will address
3 priority information needs by documenting subsistence
4 fisher observations and their customary and traditional
5 ecological knowledge related to their decreasing
6 harvest of Chinook salmon and increasing harvest of
7 other available species. The ten villages chosen for
8 the project are spread out over a large area of the
9 Alaska Yukon Drainage area.

10

11 And the justification the Technical
12 Review Committee gave for their ranking of number two
13 for this project -- the project addresses the need for
14 inclusive in-season management for Chinook salmon
15 fisheries in the Yukon River. During the Chinook
16 salmon season, YRDFA will hire community surveyors in
17 ten villages who will expand communication with fishers
18 in the communities about important fishery information
19 and will gather information from their fishermen that
20 will provide managers with weekly information about
21 fishers' concerns, observations, and ability to harvest
22 salmon throughout the Alaska portion of the Yukon River
23 Drainage. The project will encourage community members
24 from the ten villages to be surveyed to become involved
25 with the in-season teleconferences focused on gathering
26 information in-season about the Chinook salmon fishery.
27 This project has the potential to involve many
28 subsistence users at a minimal cost. Objectives are
29 clear, measurable, and achievable.

30

31 MADAME CHAIR ENSTMINGER: Any
32 questions.

33

34 (No comments)

35

36 MR. RIVARD: Okay. Madame Chair, the
37 next project was rated as number three out of nine by
38 the Technical Review Committee. This is Project 16-
39 204. It's Abundance and Run Timing of Adult Salmon in
40 Henshaw, Creek, as submitted by the Tanana Chiefs
41 Conference. The principal investigator is requesting
42 three years of funding starting in 2017 for continuing
43 the operation of the Henshaw Creek weir to monitor
44 salmon escapement. The current project 14-209 funds
45 this project through 2016.

46

47 The justification on this is that the
48 proposal addresses one of the Yukon River priority
49 information needs listed in the 2016 Notice of Funding
50 Availability. Information and data collected from the

1 project will be applied to management of important
2 subsistence salmon fisheries resources. The proposed
3 investigation plan is technical sound and the project
4 objectives are clear, measurable, and achievable. The
5 Tanana Chiefs Conference investigator has successfully
6 led and managed this weir project funded by the Office
7 of Subsistence Management under previous Projects 12-
8 202 and 14-209 within the past four years. This
9 project is an example of how a rural Alaska Native
10 Organization has increased its capacity in subsistence
11 management. The Tanana Chiefs Conference serves as the
12 primary investigator and hires and trains local
13 residents as technicians on the project.

14

15 Thank you, Madame Chair.

16

17 The next one? Okay. The TRC,
18 Technical Review Committee's, fourth ranked project is
19 Project 16-205. This is Burbot population assessments
20 in lakes of Upper Yukon River Drainage. This was
21 submitted by Dave Sarafin of the Park Service. The
22 principal investigator is requesting four years of
23 funding to acquire baseline Burbot abundance and
24 population characteristics data for lakes of the Upper
25 Tanana River and Upper Yukon River Drainages that lie
26 within the northeast portion of the Wrangell-St. Elias
27 National Park and Preserve and are known to support or
28 have the potential of supporting subsistence Burbot
29 fisheries.

30

31 The justification is that this project
32 directly addresses one of the Yukon River priority
33 information needs listed in the 2016 Notice of Funding
34 Availability and it also addresses an immediate
35 conservation concern. The objectives are clear,
36 measurable, and achievable. The methods have a
37 rigorous sampling design that includes clear data
38 collection, compilation, analysis, and reporting
39 procedures. These methods have been successfully
40 utilized for Burbot abundance projects in the area and
41 the cost of the project is reasonable to accomplish the
42 objectives.

43

44 MS. KENNER: I'll introduce Project 16-
45 251, which is ranked fifth. The project title is
46 Characterization of Seasonal Habits, Migratory Timing
47 and Spawning Populations of Mainstem Yukon River Burbot
48 and their Subsistence Use in the Communities of Pilot
49 Station, Galena, and Fort Yukon.

50

1 The principal investigator is
2 requesting four years of funding to characterize the
3 scale of Burbot migrations for those fish captured and
4 tagged from the Lower and Middle Yukon River. In
5 addition, this project will document the traditional
6 ecological knowledge of Burbot life history and harvest
7 and use practices in three mainstem Yukon River
8 communities. This project has Burbot are harvested for
9 subsistence use throughout the Yukon Drainage and their
10 value for Federally qualified subsistence users may
11 increase as salmon runs decline.

12
13 The Technical Review Committee's
14 justification for its ranking include the
15 interdisciplinary nature of this project is notable and
16 the technical and scientific merit is high, as is
17 investigator capacity. In addition, while not
18 required, there is a significant match in funding in
19 existing resources that improves the cost benefit of
20 the project. The partnership and capacity building
21 portion of the project is low and there are no other
22 partners listed in the investigation plan. The project
23 will contract local research assistants and proposes
24 the hire of an ANCEP or college intern.

25
26 MADAME CHAIR ENSTMINGER: Yeah. Andy.

27
28 MR. BASSICH: Thank you. Yeah. I just
29 have a comment. We don't really have a detailed
30 outline of what the plan will be covering and I'm just
31 wondering if in review this, is there any attempt to
32 study the -- or look at the mercury content in Burbot
33 in this when they're doing their collections? I think
34 -- the reason I'm bringing that up is because I think
35 there may not be a really good baseline for that and
36 there are a lot of indications now that as the Arctic
37 is thawing, it's releasing more mercury into the side
38 streams, which is going to begin to affect especially
39 some of these bottom feeding fish. So it might be a
40 really good thing if they can incorporate something
41 like that into their project. It would begin to create
42 a baseline that we can monitor in long term. It's just
43 a suggestion.

44
45 MADAME CHAIR ENSTMINGER: Uh-huh.

46
47 Virgil.

48
49 MR. UMPHENOUR: It doesn't say who the
50 principal investigators are on these last two.

1 MS. KENNER: Thank you. I think an
2 Appendix A for the Yukon which begins on the next page,
3 on page 323, you'll see what we call an executive
4 summary of each of these projects. And it does give
5 you a little bit more information. It gives you who
6 the investigators are and the yearly budget. So for
7 the one we just talked about -- it's going in number
8 order -- it is -- it begins on page 337 for Project 16-
9 251. And so the principal investigator is Klaus
10 Wuttig, with Fish and Game, and Caroline Brown, with
11 Fish and Game. So it's on page 337.

12
13 MADAME CHAIR ENSTMINGER: I just looked
14 at the clock, guys. It's 9:00 o'clock and we're
15 supposed to have a teleconference. So.....

16
17 MS. KENNER: Should we take a break?

18
19 MADAME CHAIR ENSTMINGER: Yeah. I
20 think so because we made a commitment for 9:00 o'clock.

21
22
23 MS. KENNER: Sure.

24
25 MADAME CHAIR ENSTMINGER: So if this --
26 turn our lights back on, I guess. And do you have to
27 make a phone call or is he calling in?

28
29 MS. PATTON: He's calling in.

30
31 MADAME CHAIR ENSTMINGER: Okay. I
32 suppose we could wait till he calls in and just keep
33 moving along.

34
35 MR. RIVARD: Do you want to see if
36 they're on the.....

37
38 MADAME CHAIR ENSTMINGER: We would have
39 heard it, wouldn't we?

40
41 Mitch Ellis, are you on?

42
43 MR. ELLIS: I am, Madame Chair. This
44 is Mitch Ellis, with the U.S. Fish and Wildlife
45 Service, calling in.

46
47 MADAME CHAIR ENSTMINGER: All right.
48 Thank you. I didn't hear the little ring. So we're
49 going to -- we were just talking with another subject
50 on the Agenda, so we'll move into this one. We need to

1 bring the other person to the table.

2

3 MR. RIVARD: Thank you, Madame Chair.
4 We won't need this anymore. We'll follow out of the
5 book. There's only another slide, but we can do it out
6 of the book. So thank you.

7

8 (Pause)

9

10 MADAME CHAIR ENSTMINGER: All right.
11 This table has changed to different presenters. If you
12 can introduce yourself, please.

13

14 MS. TONNESON: Good morning, Madame
15 Chair, Members of the Council. My name is Heather
16 Tonneson and I'm the Regional Refuge Ecologist for the
17 U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service in Alaska.

18

19 MR. HAWKALUK: And good morning, Madame
20 Chair, Members of the Council. I'm Nathan Hawkaluk,
21 Deputy Refuge Manager with the Yukon Flats National
22 Wildlife Refuge.

23

24 MS. TONNESON: And as you heard, we
25 also have Mitch Ellis, who is the Chief of Refuges for
26 Alaska, on the line.

27

28 Before we get started, I just would
29 like to mention that the Council should have some
30 handouts if they'd like to follow along with. There's
31 the fact sheet with the color picture on the front.
32 That's a good one that outlines all the different
33 components of what I'm going to go through. And then
34 there's also the FAQ sheet as well that has some
35 specific questions and answers on it.

36

37 Before I get started, I'd also like to
38 mention that in my talk I am going to be talking about
39 the big animal. I do realize that there may be some
40 cultural sensitivities so I just want to apologize in
41 advance for that.

42

43 So as you're all aware, the U.S. Fish
44 and Wildlife Service is in the process of updating the
45 regulations governing the non-subsistence take of
46 wildlife and closure procedures for Alaska National
47 Wildlife Refuges. These regulations are found in
48 chapter 50, part 36, of the Code of Federal
49 Regulations. The U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service is
50 mandated to conserve fish and wildlife populations and

1 habitats in their natural diversity and to maintain
2 biological integrity, diversity, and environmental
3 health on Refuges in Alaska. The U.S. Fish and
4 Wildlife Service is also required to conserve species
5 and habitats on Refuges for the long term, benefitting
6 not only the present but also future generations. And
7 in Alaska, this includes ensuring the opportunity for
8 continued subsistence uses of fish, wildlife, and
9 plants.

10
11 The Alaska National Interest Lands
12 Conservation Act requires that Federal Agencies manage
13 wildlife consistent with the conservation of healthy
14 populations of fish and wildlife. The legislative
15 history defines this phrase as maintenance of fish and
16 wildlife resources in their habitats in the condition
17 which assures stable and continuing natural populations
18 in species mix of plants and animals. We strongly
19 support the sustainable harvest of fish and wildlife
20 and manage these activities to ensure consistency with
21 Refuge mandates.

22
23 We've been talking with folks in local
24 communities across the State over the last year through
25 Tribal consultation, conferences, and various other
26 meetings such as these RACs about the proposed
27 regulatory changes that we are considering and have
28 heard a lot of helpful feedback so far. We are also
29 consulting with the State of Alaska on this matter.

30
31 So the proposed Refuge regulations that
32 we are considering can be broken into three main
33 components, with the first component pertaining to
34 clarifying of our existing mandates under ANILCA and
35 the National Wildlife Refuge System Improvement Act in
36 relation to predator control. Specifically, predator
37 control is only allowed on Refuges in Alaska if it is
38 determined necessary to meet Refuge purposes, Federal
39 laws or policy, and is consistent with our mandates to
40 manage for natural and biological diversity, biological
41 integrity, and environmental health. The need for
42 predator control must be based on sound science in
43 response to a significant conservation concern and
44 demands for more wildlife to harvest cannot be the sole
45 or primary basis for predatory control on Refuges in
46 Alaska.

47
48 During the scoping period we did hear
49 some feedback on the language that we originally had on
50 this part and as you can see we have modified it in

1 response to that feedback received to try and make it
2 more clear.

3

4 The second component of the proposed
5 rule pertains to the prohibition of particularly
6 effective methods and means for the non-subsistence
7 take of predators due to the potential for cumulative
8 effects to predator populations and the environment
9 that are inconsistent with our mandates to conserve
10 natural and biological diversity, integrity, and
11 environmental health on Refuges in Alaska.
12 Specifically, the following methods and means for
13 predator harvest would be prohibited on Refuges in
14 Alaska under the proposed rule -- the take of brown
15 bears over bait, the take of bears using traps or
16 snares, the take of wolves and coyotes during the
17 spring and summer denning season from May 1st to August
18 9th, the take of bears from an aircraft or on the same
19 day as air travel has occurred. I do want to point out
20 that same day airborne take of wolves and wolverines is
21 already prohibited under existing Refuge Regulations.
22 And lastly, the take of bear cubs or sows with cubs.
23 And I do want to point out on this one that we're
24 proposing to allow an exception for resident hunters to
25 take black bear cubs or sows with cubs under customary
26 and traditional use activities at den site October 15th
27 through April 30th in specific Game Management Units in
28 accordance with State Regulations.

29

30 Originally, we were considering a much
31 longer list of potential prohibited wildlife harvest
32 methods and means for inclusion in these proposed
33 Regulations, but after hearing concerns that were
34 brought up we have reduced the list that we are
35 considering from sixteen to these five listed here.

36

37 So within the area under the purview of
38 the Eastern Interior RAC, these proposed Regulations
39 would apply to the Tetlin, Yukon Flats, and a portion
40 of the Arctic National Wildlife Refuges within Game
41 Management Units 12 and 25. The proposed Regulations
42 we're considering would result in the following
43 substantive changes to current general hunting and
44 trapping regulations on these Refuges. The first being
45 harvesting brown bears over bait. Excuse me. It's
46 harvesting brown bears over a registered black bear
47 bait station is legal in Game Management Units 12 and
48 25D under current State Regulations. Under the
49 proposed rule, harvesting brown bears over bait would
50 be prohibited under State General Hunting Regulations

1 on Refuges in Alaska. However, since these proposed
2 regulatory changes would not apply to Federal
3 subsistence regulations, brown bear baiting in Game
4 Management Unit 25D under Federal subsistence
5 regulations would still be allowed on Refuges in
6 Alaska.

7
8 Secondly, under currently State
9 Regulations black bears in Game Management Units 12,
10 25A, B, and D, and brown bears in Game Management Units
11 12 and 25D can be harvested at a registered black bear
12 bait station the same day you have flown as long as the
13 hunter is 300 feet from the airplane. And under this
14 proposed rule, the take of brown bears or black bears
15 from an aircraft or on the same day you have flown
16 would be prohibited on Refuges in Alaska.

17
18 MADAME CHAIR ENSTMINGER: May I
19 interrupt?

20
21 MS. TONNESON: Sure.

22
23 MADAME CHAIR ENSTMINGER: Are you open
24 to taking questions as we go through?

25
26 MS. TONNESON: Yes, Madame Chair. That
27 would be fine.

28
29 MADAME CHAIR ENSTMINGER: I have a
30 question. Yeah.

31
32 MR. UMPHENOUR: Okay. What you're
33 going through are regular regulations of the State of
34 Alaska right now. And if you go back to what are the
35 proposed changes part one, it says predator control is
36 not allowed on Refuges in Alaska unless it is
37 determined it is necessary to meet Refuge purposes, et
38 cetera, et cetera. What you're saying that the Service
39 wants to eliminate is not predator control programs
40 that are -- what they are is regular regulations passed
41 through the public process for methods and means of
42 hunting.

43
44 Now, we heard yesterday that any one --
45 that the Refuges were set aside for all citizens of the
46 United States. And then each Refuge has its purposes
47 and its mission. Okay. So if all Refuges are set
48 aside for all the people of the country, in the State
49 of Alaska -- and I don't know about other states. But
50 I know that in the State of Alaska we have regular

1 methods and means of taking and hunting. And then
2 totally separate from that it goes through a very
3 extensive public process. We have actual predator
4 control programs. What you're going through is not
5 part of a predator control program. You're going
6 through the standard methods and means of hunting or
7 take that's open to all citizens of our country. So I
8 don't even understand why we're sitting here. Because
9 your definitions do not make sense. They defy the
10 English language. Predator control is a specific plan
11 that goes through a specific process so that it's
12 courtroom-approved by Federal judges before it can go
13 forward. They're plans. And you say right here
14 predator control. We're not even talking -- you're not
15 talking about eliminating predator control. You're
16 talking about eliminating regular methods and means
17 open to all citizens of our country. So why are we
18 even here. That's my question. Why are we even
19 addressing this.

20

21 MS. TONNESON: Yes. This is Heather
22 Tonneson, through the Chair. We specifically are
23 trying to separate out the three components of the
24 proposed rule. So the first part that you're referring
25 to that I went over is the part that deals with the
26 predator control and when it would and would not be
27 allowed on Refuges in Alaska. And the second part that
28 we went through -- oops. Excuse me. Talks about the
29 proposed prohibited methods and means. Now while we do
30 realize that there is some overlap there, some of these
31 methods and means have been authorized by the State of
32 Alaska specifically in intensive management areas for
33 predator control purposes, we do not necessarily think
34 that these are predator control per se in the way that
35 we are defining it. The reason that we are proposing
36 to prohibit these specific methods and means is because
37 of the concern over the potential for cumulative
38 impacts which would be inconsistent with managing for
39 natural diversity, biological diversity, integrity, and
40 environmental health.

41

42 MR. UMPHENOUR: Thank you. I didn't
43 quite comprehend what you said just before impact.

44

45 MS. TONNESON: I'm trying to remember
46 exactly what I said, but essentially these proposed
47 prohibited methods and means -- the reason why they're
48 being considered for prohibition on Refuges in Alaska
49 is because of the concern for the potential for
50 cumulative impacts that would be inconsistent with

1 managing for natural diversity, biological diversity,
2 integrity, and environmental health.

3

4 MR. UMPHENOUR: If you're going to say
5 that, then any methods and means for harvesting any
6 animal could cause the same thing. So why the concern
7 over bears and wolves?

8

9 MADAME CHAIR ENSTMINGER: And ditto
10 from me. Thank you, Virgil, for helping me out.

11

12 MS. TONNESON: So this is Heather
13 Tonneson, Madame Chair, and through the Chair to
14 Virgil. These specific methods and means as I have
15 mentioned have been authorized by the State of Alaska
16 specifically in intensive management areas for reasons
17 of predator control, depressing predator populations to
18 increase prey populations. So there is definitely a
19 link there. But specifically these five proposed
20 prohibited methods and means, as I mentioned we
21 consider these to be particularly efficient or
22 effective. And therefore there is the potential for a
23 conservation concern that is inconsistent with our
24 mandates.

25

26 MADAME CHAIR ENSTMINGER: Who is
27 determining that? I'm going to cause him to lose his
28 train of thoughts.

29

30 MR. UMPHENOUR: Okay. What you just
31 said is the State of Alaska in intensive management
32 areas has authorized these methods and means. Okay.
33 You just mentioned Unit 12 and 25A. I don't -- I need
34 to look in this -- read the codified regulations to
35 make sure, but I damn sure know that Unit 24 in the
36 Koyukuk Refuge is not an intensive management area.
37 And you plan on doing it there as well. And I don't
38 think 25 is either. Is 25 in an intensive management
39 area?

40

41 MS. TONNESON: Quoting Nathan Hawkaluk,
42 this is Heather Tonneson again, we do not believe that
43 it is an intensive management area. And I do
44 understand why there would be some confusion. These
45 methods and means are also as you pointed out
46 specifically authorized under general hunting and
47 trapping regulations, so it's not just specific to
48 intensive management areas. I was just simply pointing
49 out that there is a link that many of these methods and
50 means have also been authorized in intensive management

1 areas specifically for predator control purposes by the
2 State of Alaska.

3
4 MR. UMPHENOUR: Right. I believe that
5 most predator control management plans are in intensive
6 management areas, but we're not talking about intensive
7 management areas here. So why is that even in the
8 conversation? You're saying that you're -- the big
9 justification is because of what the State has done in
10 intensive management areas because there are serious
11 conservation problems especially with the survival of
12 moose calves or caribou calves because of predation,
13 where it's been as high as -- and at times 95 percent
14 or even higher. And the State has done predator
15 control plans in those areas, such as the Lower
16 Kuskokwim where they went and killed in one year about
17 110 bears. And the survival rate went on moose calves
18 from practically zero in that small area to way more
19 than 50 percent. Because the moose population was
20 seriously in trouble. We're not talking about those
21 kind of areas. That was an intensive management --
22 that was a predator control plan to promote survival of
23 calves that were killed by bears.

24
25 We're not talking about that here.
26 You're just talking about the areas where you want to
27 do away with these various methods and means open to
28 all citizens of the United States, including the Lower
29 48, is not in predator management areas, intensive
30 management areas. These are just standard methods and
31 means. So I'll have more to say later, but thank you.

32
33 MADAME CHAIR ENSTMINGER: Well, I do
34 want to say.....

35
36 MR. ELLIS: Madame Chair, this is Mr.
37 Ellis. Do you mind if I jump in?

38
39 MADAME CHAIR ENSTMINGER: Well, I'm not
40 sure, Mitch. But go ahead.

41
42 MR. ELLIS: Okay. Again, thank you for
43 allowing us to give you that update. And Council, I
44 appreciate your patience with this matter. We have
45 talked about this with the Council before and there
46 will be future opportunities to weigh in on this as
47 well.

48
49 I just wanted to clarify that the first
50 part of the Rule really -- well, it doesn't deal with

1 methods and means. It's speaking more to the Fish and
2 Wildlife Service's mandate with respect to how we
3 manage wildlife populations on all of our Refuge lands
4 in Alaska.

5
6 So the clarification with regard to
7 justify to the predator control to implement a
8 government-sponsored predator program on a National
9 Wildlife Refuge in Alaska. It needs to be clarified
10 because there was a lot of pressure from within our
11 agency, with the State programs that had been put in
12 place, and the requests from the public. They are a
13 number of I would say requests or expressions of
14 interest that we implement predator control. Not
15 everywhere, but certainly in some parts of the State.
16 The State's laws and constitution of course dictate,
17 and are -- are clear, everybody, I think, understands
18 that with regard to the Federal statutes that guide
19 management on Alaska's Refuge, I think really what
20 we're trying to do is clarify that. So I understand
21 why there's a little bit of confusion because really
22 the first part of this proposed rule package would be
23 clarifying -- okay. Here is -- we have the predator
24 populations on Refuges.

25
26 The second part, there's five very
27 specific methods and means between -- it is a little
28 bit confusing trying to -- because it's now switched to
29 talking about general hunting, which really has nothing
30 to do with some predator management programs put in
31 place by the State or the Federal government.

32
33 So Heather was trying to explain the
34 reason the five methods and means were in there was
35 really because we're trying to address cumulative
36 impacts. The potential over time for very efficient
37 methods and means to depress populations of animals
38 below what their natural diversity might be.

39
40 So I hope that helps a little bit.

41
42 But it is a little bit confusing the
43 way the way the rule is laid out. But you're right.
44 The first part really speaks to how we manage programs
45 on Refuges. The second part is very specific methods
46 and means related to general hunting regulations.

47
48 Thank you, Madame Chair.

49
50 MADAME CHAIR ENSTMINGER: Andy. Then I

1 have a question.

2

3

MR. BASSICH: Thank you. Yeah.

4 Looking through your handout here, on page three, the
5 very top slide, second paragraph, it says these
6 proposed regulations would not apply to Federally
7 qualified subsistence users hunting or trapping under
8 Federal subsistence regulations. So I just wanted to
9 bring that out. That it's not a total prohibition. If
10 I'm reading this correctly, it's not a total
11 prohibition for these methods and means within Refuges.
12 It's simply going to require that you're a Federally
13 qualified subsistence user to be able to use those
14 methods and means on Federally -- on these Refuges.

15

16

So I just wanted to bring that up
17 because I think that's going to come up in our
18 discussion. And I wanted to drive that point right
19 now. It's not eliminating it. It's just restricting
20 it to Federally qualified persons.

21

22

MADAME CHAIR ENSTMINGER: And I am
23 concerned as a user out there and being the Chair of
24 this RAC and going to the Federal Subsistence Board.
25 When I hear that it does not affect subsistence, I say
26 it does. Because when the Fish and Wildlife Service
27 head person in Alaska and the Park Service head person
28 in Alaska and the Forest Service head person in Alaska
29 votes against our bear baiting proposal on 25D for bear
30 baiting, red flags are flying. I mean let's get real.
31 The fact is that's what's happening. So we don't have
32 a strong trust here. We don't have a trust that we --
33 you know, when I look at this whole thing, I -- okay.
34 We're up against the brick wall once again. They're
35 going to go through this whole presentation and then
36 we're going to be glazed over and unable to participate
37 in our real feelings here. And that's why I like to
38 see questioning go on first.

39

40

So I want you to know I think it's a
41 pretty bloody, big issue here. And I -- the thing that
42 I see that's a point I want to drive home, why is this
43 a statewide thing. These Refuges in Alaska are very
44 different. It's brown bears on the Coast and it's
45 grizzly bears in the Interior. Total different
46 situation. And I don't see any of that clarified here.
47 When I see the government just put brown bears down,
48 everybody's brain is thinking of a Coastal bear period.

49

50

1 And I'm a little offended by this. I'm
2 just going to be up front with you. I'm not happy
3 about what I see happening here. You -- and it's not
4 to be against anybody personally. It's what's
5 happening. And when you see it happen -- I've been in
6 the State 42 years and I've seen this happen over and
7 over and over again. And it's the most frustrating
8 thing. To take all your time -- your personal,
9 dedicated time and watch our government take away our
10 rights. And to just go oh, by the way, this doesn't
11 affect subsistence. Well, it does. It does in many
12 ways. And I just don't feel like anyone listens. They
13 don't care.

14
15 Council, do you have any other
16 questions right now.

17
18 Rhonda.

19
20 MS. PITKA: I do. I was just curious
21 about who sets natural diversity. How is that -- I
22 guess how does that come about. If one of the goals is
23 natural diversity, then I'd really like to see the
24 definition of it.

25
26 MS. TONNESON: Through the Chair, I put
27 up a slide here. So as I mentioned earlier, natural
28 diversity is what is defined as a Refuge -- one of our
29 Refuges purposes under the ANILCA, Alaska National
30 Interest Lands Conservation Act. And we do have a
31 Congressional record that is pretty informative and
32 does tell us Congress' intent, if you will, when they
33 put together ANILCA and put in natural diversity. And
34 so that is our guiding piece that we go by as far as
35 how we think of natural diversity. So I put that up on
36 the slide here, if that helps. I can read it if you'd
37 like.

38
39 MS. PITKA: I can read fine. Thank
40 you. I appreciate that. It doesn't say a number. It
41 just has this very vague definition about natural
42 diversity. So I think the answer is -- is that the
43 Fish and Wildlife sets is; is that correct?

44
45 MS. TONNESON: Yes. I would say --
46 through the Chair. Excuse me. This is Heather
47 Tonneson. But given this guiding definition or
48 directive on how we think about natural diversity, from
49 there it is managed in specific areas depending on the
50 situation. It is obviously locally dependent on what's

1 going on in the area.

2

3 MS. PITKA: I think that's my other
4 concern, is that there are very huge Regional
5 differences in our Regions and in the Refuges
6 themselves. In our Region we have people that live
7 within the Refuge, that have lived there for millions
8 of years. I mean when you say natural diversity,
9 that's why I want to get it pretty clear. Is because
10 that means something entirely different to the people
11 that actually live there.

12

13 MADAME CHAIR ENSTMINGER: And I just
14 want to add when I hear that you're already mandated to
15 do bio-diversity, so why double regulate and put it in
16 CFRs. A common, ordinary person has no concept why the
17 government has to double-do all this stuff.

18

19 MS. TONNESON: Madame Chair.....

20

21 MADAME CHAIR ENSTMINGER: I'm sorry.
22 You want to answer that?

23

24 MS. TONNESON: Madame Chair, I'll just
25 give a quick clarification. And I do understand the
26 concern there. It's actually to avoid some confusion
27 because oftentimes people do not go to the Legislative
28 Acts to look for this stuff, but people do often refer
29 to the CFRs and as well internally our staff uses the
30 CFRs on a daily basis. So we're simply trying to put
31 it in one place so that everybody can refer to that in
32 the one place.

33

34 MADAME CHAIR ENSTMINGER: That might
35 should logical and sensible, but it doesn't always come
36 across that way.

37

38 So did I miss you, Don?

39

40 MR. WOODRUFF: Yes.

41

42 MADAME CHAIR ENSTMINGER: Don, then
43 Virgil.

44

45 MR. WOODRUFF: Yeah.

46

47 MADAME CHAIR ENSTMINGER: Sorry, Don.

48

49 MR. WOODRUFF: Thank you, Madame Chair.
50 The five or six that you're trying to prohibit or

1 change, I would like the whole list of the sixteen that
2 you considered and that you deleted. Because I can see
3 that next year or the next year they're going to be on
4 our forefront. Because this doesn't seem like it's
5 stopping. We talked with the Park Service about brown
6 bear baiting and now -- and they said they didn't like
7 it. Now they've cancelled black bear baiting. And it
8 just seems like it's just a continuous encroachment on
9 people's rights. Thank you.

10

11 MADAME CHAIR ENSTMINGER: Thank you,
12 Don.

13

14 Virgil.

15

16 MR. UMPHENOUR: What is hard for me to
17 understand -- when you talk about natural diversity
18 intent, what you're do -- what the Service proposes to
19 do is make a broad sweeping rule change in their
20 Regulations. It encompasses all Refuges in the State.
21 And Sue already brought up part of this. You talk
22 about brown bears. Well, brown bears are on the Coast.
23 We don't have brown bears here. We have ursus arctos
24 horribilis, not just plain, old ursus arctos. The
25 horrible guy. That's not a lard, but set him at the
26 mouth of a salmon stream on his butt, eating salmon
27 coming up the river, that gets big and fat. These are
28 hardcore bears that run around and catch moose and eat
29 them. What they do in the spring when they first come
30 out of their dens is they go down in the Valleys.
31 Because they den right at the last vegetation line, is
32 where they den. On the sides of mountains. They get
33 on moose tracks.

34

35 (Phone interruption)

36

37 MADAME CHAIR ENSTMINGER: My goodness.

38

39 MR. UMPHENOUR: And they -- and once
40 they get on a set of moose tracks, that moose is dead.
41 Because that grizzly bear is going to follow in its
42 tracks. It's breaking through the crust, the moose is,
43 in the snow, in the spring, in April. And the moose is
44 going to get tired. The bear's going to catch it. And
45 there's not much of a struggle there.

46

47 We tracked down one big grizzly one
48 year down by Kaltag. They killed two cow moose, ate
49 the fetuses, and then went on. We tracked him down and
50 killed him. But anyway, that's what they do. So we're

1 talking about two different animals here.

2

3 But there again, that brings you back
4 to why -- that when I asked you, it says to consider
5 fish and wildlife population and habitats in their
6 natural diversity. Natural diversity is something that
7 you could get two scientists or a half a dozen
8 scientists here and every one of them is going to have
9 a different opinion of what natural diversity is.
10 Because it's going to vary. And so if you really are
11 worried about natural diversity and you have a
12 conservation problem with one species or another -- but
13 of course you're saying you're not going to manipulate
14 wildlife populations to benefit another species -- then
15 why do you make a broad, sweeping thing.

16

17 And I want to remind you that your
18 Service on the East Coast I know went out and killed
19 five -- I read somewhere 5,000 to 10,000 seagulls
20 because they're eating the eggs in some Refuge of some
21 endangered species bird. So there you violated your
22 own thing. What I -- I just -- it goes back to what
23 Congressman Don Young told me about ten years ago,
24 maybe eight years ago. He said none of our problems is
25 the Department of the Interior and specifically the
26 Fish and Wildlife Service has been infiltrated by
27 people that would like to disarm the American public.
28 Do away with the Second Amendment and stop all hunting
29 and owning of firearms in the country.

30

31 But -- so do you have an answer? My
32 question -- specific question is why not do this on a
33 Refuge by Refuge basis? And why throw in all this
34 stuff about predator management when we're not talking
35 about predator management. We're talking about methods
36 and means. Because the State does have predator
37 management programs for a very specific reason and it
38 goes through an extremely elaborate, complicated and
39 long public process before it's ever authorized with
40 specific guidelines and goals and ways to measure those
41 goals, whether the goals are even reached. There's
42 specific plans. So you're not talking about -- that,
43 to me, is predator control or predator management.
44 What you're talking about is claiming methods and means
45 that's going to affect Joe Shmuck that lives in
46 Florida, Texas or wherever he lives. He won't be able
47 to hunt anymore basically using these methods and
48 means.

49

50 So my question -- specific question is

1 why doesn't the Service do this on a Refuge by Refuge
2 basis and not the way they're trying to do this.

3
4 MS. TONNESON: Through the Chair, this
5 is Heather Tonneson. And the answer to that is because
6 -- again, as I mentioned, this is based on our mandates
7 under ANILCA primarily. And ANILCA applies to all
8 Refuges and all Federal Lands in Alaska. And so
9 because of that, we want to be consistent throughout
10 the State because we're clarifying our existing
11 mandates under ANILCA, which applies to all Refuges.
12 And as we talked about a little bit earlier, there
13 still is some flexibility in there to determine exactly
14 what natural diversity looks like at a specific
15 location. So that still does allow the flexibility
16 because we do understand that certain locations are
17 obviously very different throughout the State of
18 Alaska. It's a very diverse State. So there is some
19 flexibility built into that to allow for that. Thank
20 you.

21
22 MADAME CHAIR ENSTMINGER: Andy.

23
24 MR. BASSICH: Thank you, Madame Chair.
25 I have two things I wanted to speak to. The first
26 thing is are we going to be taking action on this or is
27 this just an informational presentation that we're
28 going to be hearing here. You can -- maybe someone can
29 answer that after I'm done.

30
31 The second thing is I'm sitting here
32 and I'm reflecting back to the previous two meetings
33 that we had. And I remember sitting here about a year
34 ago when National Park Service came in here and gave us
35 their presentation and pretty much told us that they
36 were going to do this and there wasn't really much we
37 could do about it. And then the Fish and Wildlife
38 Service came in and gave a presentation and pretty much
39 from what I remember sought a lot of our comments and
40 concerns.

41
42 And from my perspective right now, what
43 I'm seeing is that they went back. They listened to
44 what some of the concerns were for Federally qualified
45 people within their Refuges and this is what they've
46 come up with. And the compromise that I see coming
47 from all of the discussions that we had in the previous
48 years over this is that the compromise is that they're
49 willing to leave that -- these methods and means open
50 to Federally qualified people, which will still allow

1 people living in these Regions and people that are
2 Federally qualified to use these methods and means.
3 And so my personal take on this, although I understand
4 Virgil and Sue's concerns, and they certainly have been
5 involved in this a lot longer than I have and have a
6 much greater track record, but I see this a very, very
7 small victory in a very, very big ocean of bureaucracy
8 for Federally qualified people. And if it's codified
9 and then CFRs -- it takes quite a process to change
10 that or to add that.

11
12 And so that's the perspective I just
13 wanted to give, that I'm looking at this through. And
14 certainly it could have gone the other way and they
15 could have come back and said sorry, we're just going
16 to do what the Park Service did and that's it. And so
17 that would have really affected a lot of people --
18 Federally qualified people in a negative way. So
19 that's my perspective.

20
21 But I would like an answer are on we
22 taking action on this or is this informational.
23 Because I can see this is a very contentious issue and
24 I don't want to see our meeting get wrapped around this
25 for the next three hours and then have to rush through
26 everything else. We have a lot of Board of Fish
27 proposals to look at, which directly affect our people,
28 too.

29
30 MADAME CHAIR ENSTMINGER: Yes. I
31 agree, Andy. But I also feel that we have to drive our
32 points home. An answer to your question, you're here
33 just to give us a report and you've going to move
34 along. Do we have -- personally, for me, I feel like
35 we don't have much say, even if we do say.

36
37 MS. TONNESON: Madame Chair, and to
38 address Andy's question on taking action or not, that
39 is up to the Council. I mean this is just an
40 informational presentation; however, if the Council
41 decides that they would like to draft a letter, we will
42 be opening our public comment period soon and we would
43 consider those comments during that time. So you're
44 welcome to do that. And certainly the record -- the
45 transcript will -- and all the comments that we've
46 received from the past as well as today will be
47 considered as well.

48
49 MADAME CHAIR ENSTMINGER: So I know we
50 interrupted you into the presentation, but I guess to

1 make it short, give me this timeline that you're
2 talking about when this would actually be published.
3 Because I think from what I'm understanding from other
4 RACs that we will not have a -- once this comes out for
5 us to publicly comment on it, our meeting cycle -- you
6 guys will -- let me see if it's on there. March, April
7 review from the public. Finalize -- okay. What you
8 publish now would be what.

9

10 MS. TONNESON: Madame Chair, Heather
11 Tonneson.

12

13 MADAME CHAIR ENSTMINGER: From this
14 meeting.

15

16 MS. TONNESON: So we are gearing up to
17 publish a proposed rule as well as an environmental
18 assessment. So that's our NEPA document that analyzes
19 specifically the proposed prohibited methods and means
20 part. So that would be published we anticipate
21 sometime by late November. As you're all aware, our
22 timeline has gone out considerably farther than we
23 initially anticipated, but that's actually a good
24 thing. It's allowed for us to have additional time to
25 scope and to do Tribal consultation as well.

26

27 So we would be going out for a public
28 comment period as soon as the proposed rule publishes.
29 We'll be having hearings in specific locations around
30 the State in January and February -- early February.
31 And then we would close the public comment period and
32 we would be analyzing the comments received at that
33 point.

34

35 MADAME CHAIR ENSTMINGER: So I think we
36 would want to have some -- a letter here. Yeah.

37

38 Bill. Rhonda. Virgil.

39

40 Bill.

41

42 MR. GLANZ: Yeah. I keep hearing this
43 CFR. Well, CFR is what created this. But you're like
44 the EPA. A bunch of bureaucrats get together and make
45 up all these rules and regs. And the CFR, they don't
46 go to Congress to get approval. That's in their
47 original founding. That's just wrong with our country,
48 but that's just my opinion, I guess this stuff, too.
49 But anyway.

50

1 MADAME CHAIR ENSTMINGER: Rhonda.

2

3 MS. PITKA: I was just going to ask you
4 what is the Tribal consultation going to look like. Is
5 it going to be a letter that goes out to our over-
6 burdened Tribal Offices? Or is it actually going to be
7 a physical place where people can come to comment?

8

9 MS. TONNESON: Through the Chair, this
10 is Heather Tonneson. So we initially sent letters out
11 to all the Tribes in Alaska that are within and around
12 the Refuges on September 24th, 2014 -- or yeah. 2014,
13 yes. And we have sent out two follow-up letters since
14 then, one in February and one in May of this year. And
15 we will be sending out another letter as we gear up for
16 publication to give Tribes notice that we will be
17 publishing in the very near future, likely two weeks
18 before we publish. And so there has been that. There
19 has also been some opportunities in the past to call in
20 to a Tribal teleconference. We had three of those with
21 the Regional Director and the Chief of Refuges, as well
22 as other Staff and Refuge Managers. And we can
23 certainly set up more of those, as well as do the in-
24 person consultations, which would be preferable if the
25 Tribes would like that. We would recommend that you
26 would contact your local Refuge Manager and we'd be
27 happy to set up a meeting with you.

28

29 MS. PITKA: Yes. We would prefer that.
30 And then also I feel like the Refuges miss a big
31 opportunity when large conferences like the Alaska
32 Federation of Natives Conference happen and, you know,
33 there's no opportunity for public comment there.

34

35 And also BIA Providers conference is
36 going to happen in December in Anchorage. And after
37 that Tanana Chiefs Conference will happen in the
38 spring.

39

40 MS. TONNESON: Through the Chair, this
41 is Heather Tonneson again. We did have some folks at
42 AFN. We were unable to give an actual talk at that
43 one, but at the Providers Conference I've been told
44 that we will likely be giving a talk on this. A
45 discussion, I should say. A time for questions and
46 answers as well on December 2nd. So look for that on
47 the agenda. And we would be happy to look into the
48 Tanana Chiefs Conference as well if that would be
49 preferable. So.....

50

1 MS. PITKA: I think that would be.
2 Thank you. I think it would solve a lot of the in-
3 person consultation issues.

4
5 MADAME CHAIR ENSTMINGER: Virgil.

6
7 MR. UMPHENOUR: Okay. Now, you have to
8 understand that I have -- a long time ago I was in the
9 military. And I was a field grade officer. And so
10 I've worked on general staff at division and corps
11 level. This had to come from somewhere. It was a
12 directive. In the military, the corps commander's
13 going to tell a division commander what he wants done.
14 The division commander's going to tell the brigade or
15 regimental commander, who's going to tell the battalion
16 commander, on down to the company commander to do
17 whatever it is -- do whatever it is they're going to
18 do. So who did this come from.

19
20 MS. TONNESON: I can answer that, but
21 Mitch Ellis, if you're still on the line, would you
22 like to address that question? Otherwise I'll go ahead
23 and address it.

24
25 MR. ELLIS: Sure. I can speak to that.
26 This is Mitch Ellis. I'm Chief of Refuges. Through
27 the Chair, I appreciate the question. Yes. There were
28 discussions probably two or three years ago between
29 high level folks in the Department of the Interior, in
30 the Fish and Wildlife Service and the Park Service
31 regarding the issue of predator management in Alaska.
32 And both -- clarifying both through the Park Service
33 and the Fish and Wildlife how we will address that. So
34 the answer is it wasn't Refuge Managers. It wasn't any
35 single Staff person in the Regional Offices in
36 Anchorage. It was a number of people. Regional
37 Directors, myself, Park Service, Regional Directors.
38 So it wasn't any one person. It was really a group of
39 senior level Park Service and Fish and Wildlife Service
40 individuals.

41
42 It didn't -- it wasn't prompted by
43 special interest groups or any environmental
44 organizations or anything like that. It was basically
45 high level Park Service and Fish and Wildlife Service
46 officials trying to address a little bit of confusion,
47 we needed to make sure there was consistency in how we
48 approached predatory management in Parks and Refuges.

49
50 Thank you, Madame Chair.

1 MR. UMPHENOUR: Where were these people
2 located? In the headquarters of Washington, D.C. for
3 the Department of the Interior or were they in Alaska?

4
5 MR. ELLIS: Through the Chair, this is
6 Mitch Ellis again. Primarily in Alaska. In Anchorage
7 and in, you know, with input from superintendents and
8 Refuge Managers of course. But mainly in Anchorage.

9
10 MR. UMPHENOUR: They were all in
11 Anchorage.

12
13 MR. ELLIS: Through the Chair, this is
14 Mitch Ellis again. Almost, but not all. Some of our
15 local superintendents and Refuge Managers were heavily
16 involved in discussions on how we would address this
17 and what was needed and how we would go about it. So
18 it wasn't just Regional Directors and Division Chiefs
19 in Anchorage. It was we also recruited input from
20 Field Managers as well.

21
22 Thank you.

23
24 MR. UMPHENOUR: Thank you.

25
26 MADAME CHAIR ENSTMINGER: Okay. I
27 think we've been going through this stuff a lot. And I
28 believe our comments are warranted, so Council Members,
29 do you want to discuss it now what we would put forth
30 as our comments. And then these guys are online and
31 here right now, so would you like to -- each of you
32 address some of the comments that we would put forward.

33
34 MR. FIRMIN: I have a question.

35
36 MADAME CHAIR ENSTMINGER: Andrew has a
37 question.

38
39 MR. FIRMIN: I have a question that is
40 what does the Park Service in light of they have
41 anything to do with the National Wildlife Refuge.

42
43 MR. ELLIS: Madame Chair, this is Mitch
44 Ellis. If I could answer that. They don't have
45 anything to do with management of National Wildlife
46 Refuges. The only reason that we were discussing these
47 issues at a high level with them is because we
48 understood that they had similar concerns. And we
49 wanted to have a little bit of consistency that made
50 sense within the Department of the Interior. National

1 Parks -- National Wildlife Refuges have very specific
2 purposes and many times wildlife management and other
3 very specific management programs in Parks and Refuges
4 -- they differ from Bureau of Land Management or Forest
5 Service programs. We all defer to the State Fish and
6 Game Agency as long as there's consistency with our
7 purposes but clearly Parks and Refuges have more
8 authority to regulate wildlife management than BLM or
9 the Forest Service does. So (indiscernible) to the
10 Parks because they had similar concerns. But they
11 don't have any jurisdiction over National Wildlife
12 Refuges. It would just be in the form of a discussion.

13

14 Thank you.

15

16 MR. FIRMIN: But they're input in the
17 decision and that's what bothers me. And why has this
18 only gone to predator control. And as Virgil mentioned
19 earlier, it's methods and means. And if you want to
20 talk predator control, why was there no thought given
21 to biological diversity in your cumulative impacts.
22 Well, how about the cumulative impacts of a line of
23 airplanes and hunters sitting between the Sheenjek and
24 Coleen Rivers and the people in Arctic Village having
25 to wait an extra month to hunt caribou from their
26 normal dates this year because they're all piled up
27 there in one spot with a bunch of hunters shooting them
28 out of airplanes.

29

30 And yet that's not -- I don't see any
31 biological diversity mentioned in here about low moose
32 populations. Why isn't there anything in there about
33 pulling hunting seasons on the State level or adding
34 Tier II systems or -- all you're doing, it seems to be
35 is attacking predator management and yet the biggest
36 predator in the wild is human beings. And this is all
37 this is doing is taking methods and means from people.

38

39 And I just think that that's kind of
40 odd that the Park Service is influencing major
41 decisions and yet you're only focusing on predators
42 when there's many other problems in the Refuge that are
43 in effect having cumulative impacts on the natural
44 diversity. It kind of -- natural diversity I guess
45 goes back to like the Izembek Refuge, where they'd
46 rather watch the folks in Cold Bay and King Cove go
47 through their natural diverse problems instead of
48 trying to help them out.

49

50 MADAME CHAIR ENSTMINGER: I think I

1 heard a question.

2

3 MR. ELLIS: Madame Chair, this is Mitch
4 Ellis. Again, I would agree that we do share a little
5 bit what our mandates related to natural diversity
6 don't just rest with aggressive predator control.
7 You're absolutely right. There are a lot of things
8 that affect natural diversity, biological integrity,
9 managing the landscape. Every Refuge in Alaska has
10 this broad purpose of maintaining natural diversity.
11 This statewide rule is this package addresses those
12 that apply to all Refuges. The specific issue on
13 certain rivers, that are Refuge specific, are more
14 appropriately handled on a Refuge by Refuge basis.

15

16 So for example, Kenai National Wildlife
17 Refuge just published some draft regulations that only
18 apply to their Refuge. So when you do have issues like
19 what you just pointed out as an example, those would be
20 addressed at the Refuge level.

21

22 Thank you.

23

24 MADAME CHAIR ENSTMINGER: So Mitch, if
25 you're doing it Refuge by Refuge in those cases, why is
26 this not Refuge by Refuge? And it doesn't even need an
27 answer. It's just a lot for you guys to think about.
28 It doesn't look good.

29

30 Virgil had one more question.

31

32 MR. UMPHENOUR: And my question is
33 we're in the now part of the timeline. Continue the
34 outreach and scoping, internal review of proposed rule.
35 So is it possible that the input you're getting from
36 our Council right this minute might cause some changes
37 to what's going to happen next month when you finalize
38 the rule -- or the proposed rule?

39

40 MS. TONNESON: This is Heather
41 Tonneson, through the Chair. We are already pretty far
42 along in the process of having this be reviewed
43 internally up the chain. So at this point in time we
44 are not likely to make any changes until after the
45 public comment period, but there still is definitely
46 opportunity during that public comment period to
47 consider these comments and to make any additional
48 changes. And I believe as Andy pointed out, you know,
49 we have considered a lot of the input that we've
50 received in the past and made a number of changes

1 already. So thank you.

2

3 MR. UMPHENOUR: Thank you. Madame
4 Chair.

5

6 MADAME CHAIR ENSTMINGER: I just have
7 one more thing to be very, very concerned about. Black
8 bear baiting has been allowed for many years. Many
9 years. And the concern about conditioning bears to
10 food -- first of all, it's not legal to use human food.
11 And second of all, the Park Service told us that it
12 didn't affect subsistence. And yet -- and I don't
13 remember anything when they did theirs about black
14 bear. And if you're working at the Park Service, if we
15 see black bear added to that list, your trust level for
16 Fish and Wildlife Service is really going to go
17 downhill bad.

18

19 So moving along. Any other questions.

20

21

22 (No comments)

23

24 MADAME CHAIR ENSTMINGER: I really
25 believe that each one of us has identified a lot of
26 things that we think about. And I just think that this
27 process is going too fast. It needs to be slowed down.
28 And I'm just saying that I just want it slowed down. I
29 don't think you're working with us in a level that
30 people feel trust. And this came up at our SRC
31 meeting. We decided that -- and the Park Service was
32 working on compendiums and the Park Service was working
33 on proposed -- like the Wilderness Backcountry Plans.
34 When they start spanning and scoping that they include
35 the Subsistence Resource Commission. And it makes me
36 feel that we should have some contact with the Fish and
37 Wildlife Service. Even though we're used up as
38 volunteers, these are things that affect the future.
39 And I have family that I feel very strongly I'd like to
40 see -- that I'm protecting their future. And I don't
41 feel good about this. And I think there should be some
42 way to interact with people as you write these plans,
43 not sit in an office in Anchorage.

44

45 And maybe -- how long have you lived in
46 Alaska, Heather?

47

48 MS. TONNESON: Madame Chair, Heather
49 Tonneson. I have been in Alaska four years now.

50

1 MADAME CHAIR ENSTMINGER: Four years.
2 There's no way for you to feel our pain. There just
3 isn't. And some interaction with the people -- like
4 Rhonda described, with the people in her area and the
5 Native people. And it has to be to other people and
6 interacting with us as it's being written is so vital.
7 So that's my comments.

8
9 Now, Council Members, do you feel that
10 we have covered a lot of the things we're concerned
11 about.

12
13 (Council nods affirmatively)

14
15 MADAME CHAIR ENSTMINGER: And these
16 notes could go in a letter. I'd need a motion.

17
18 MR. GLANZ: I'd like to make a motion
19 to have all these comments put into a letter and
20 addressed to the Department of the Interior and the
21 Secretary of Agriculture and voice our total dismay at
22 this stuff.

23
24 MADAME CHAIR ENSTMINGER: Do I have a
25 second.

26
27 MR. UMPHENOUR: Second. And I -- but I
28 want to -- after he speaks to his motion, I want to
29 speak to the motion.

30
31 MR. GLANZ: Go ahead and speak. Go
32 ahead then.

33
34 MR. UMPHENOUR: I think really what
35 should happen is we've got a court recorder over there
36 and she's going to make a transcript of this whole
37 thing. This -- the entire transcript of this thing
38 should go to the Department of the Interior and the
39 Department of Agriculture -- the Secretaries.

40
41 MADAME CHAIR ENSTMINGER: So is that an
42 amend -- do you want to.....

43
44 MR. GLANZ: Well, I'd like to make that
45 an amendment, if possible. Okay.

46
47 MADAME CHAIR ENSTMINGER: Or withdraw
48 your motion to make it.....

49
50 MR. GLANZ: All right. Just withdraw

1 that and we'll make.....
2
3 MADAME CHAIR ENSTMINGER: The second
4 concur.
5
6 MR. GLANZ:
7
8 MADAME CHAIR ENSTMINGER: Okay.
9
10 MR. GLANZ: All right.
11
12 MR. UMPHENOUR: All right. I concur.
13
14 MADAME CHAIR ENSTMINGER: Okay. Make
15 the motion. Virgil, do you want to do it?
16
17 MR. GLANZ: That the court recordings
18 be sent to the Secretary of the Interior and the
19 Secretary of Agriculture, along with State -- the
20 commanders of the Fish and Wildlife Service and Park
21 Service and, you know, and that's that. The whole
22 group. And I'd like to also see some sent to
23 Congressman Young, Senator Murkowski, and Senator
24 Sullivan. They were talking CFRs, so I'd like to see
25 it done that way.
26
27 MADAME CHAIR ENSTMINGER: If we can do
28 that. I know we've been told we can't lobby. So.....
29
30 MR. GLANZ: I'm not lobbying. Just
31 send them a letter of protest.
32
33 MADAME CHAIR ENSTMINGER: The process
34 is probably good. I think Don Rivard's got some
35 information for you to.....
36
37 MR. GLANZ: Okay. We can all call our
38 own Congressmen and Senators then. That sounds better
39 yet.
40
41 MADAME CHAIR ENSTMINGER: Yeah. You
42 remember how we went through this before.
43
44 MR. GLANZ: Yes. You're right. I'm
45 sorry.
46
47 MADAME CHAIR ENSTMINGER: Yeah. Uh-
48 huh.
49
50 MR. GLANZ: Yeah. Yeah.

1 MADAME CHAIR ENSTMINGER: Yeah.
2
3 MR. GLANZ: Yeah. I've been on it ten
4 years and every time I do something we find out oops,
5 can't do that.
6
7 MR. UMPHENOUR: Maybe I can clarify.
8
9 MADAME CHAIR ENSTMINGER: Did you
10 second it?
11
12 MR. UMPHENOUR: (Nods affirmatively)
13 Yeah.
14
15 MADAME CHAIR ENSTMINGER: Oh. You did?
16
17 MR. UMPHENOUR: Yeah.
18
19 MADAME CHAIR ENSTMINGER: Okay.
20
21 MR. UMPHENOUR: Okay. I think I can
22 clarify maybe our intent a little bit better. We would
23 like that our -- and we'll vote on it in a minute.
24 What we really want to do is send this through the
25 chain of command of the Department of the Interior and
26 the Department of Agriculture. All affected parties
27 that have anything to do with this, which would be Fish
28 and Wildlife Service, Park Service, BLM, other. The
29 Agencies that manage lands and Fish and Wildlife. Have
30 anything to do with it in the State of Alaska. Does
31 that sound more appropriate.
32
33 MADAME CHAIR ENSTMINGER: He did second
34 it.
35
36 REPORTER: Yeah. He did with a nod.
37
38 MADAME CHAIR ENSTMINGER: Yeah. It
39 wasn't verbal, but he says -- probably didn't hear him
40 because he said yeah, I second it.
41
42 MR. GLANZ: Yes. He did.
43
44 MADAME CHAIR ENSTMINGER: Yeah. Okay.
45 I think just a short clarification. I think most of us
46 know this.
47
48 MS. PATTON: Madame Chair and Council,
49 as you noted, it is not possible for the Council to
50 lobby others. The Council can direct a letter to the

1 Federal Subsistence Board expressing their concerns and
2 request the Board to share those concerns with the
3 Secretary of the Interior. So the letter can be
4 addressed to the Board and that request can be made to
5 share that information.

6

7 Also, this is a proposed Rule that is
8 coming up. And so to make sure that the Council's
9 letter is directed at the proposed Rule and able to be
10 submitted as a comment when that is announced on the
11 Federal Register would be important to be able to
12 capture here, too, in the motion.

13

14 MADAME CHAIR ENSTMINGER: I'm going to
15 recognize the intent of the proposal to do it
16 correctly. And you're going to keep us straight, Eva.

17

18 MS. PATTON: Okay.

19

20 MADAME CHAIR ENSTMINGER: So -- and I
21 had the second. Any other discussion.

22

23 Will.

24

25 MR. KOEHLER: Yeah. I'm not so sure
26 that I agree that it's a good idea to have a record of
27 the court report sent as opposed to a statement.
28 Because I guess my thoughts would be that if with the
29 amount of material that we as a volunteer have to go
30 through, I can't imagine how much material someone
31 that's actually paid for it has to go through.

32

33 (Laughter)

34

35 MR. KOEHLER: And so I would think that
36 a stronger statement would be made by a short letter,
37 rather than a court report that contains a lot of kind
38 of what I had called satellite arguments against this
39 proposed Rule instead of the main point that I'm
40 hearing that people in this Council want to make. Not
41 that we want to slow this process down. That's not
42 what I understand from -- from what I understand from
43 the people in my area.....

44

45 MADAME CHAIR ENSTMINGER: Uh-huh.

46

47 MR. KOEHLER: And the people from --
48 you don't want to slow this process down. You don't
49 agree with the direction of this process, period,
50 because it feels like we do not have any say in the

1 direction that these Refuge and Park lands are going to
2 be limited -- the hunting is -- we feel like this is a
3 sliding slope toward a direction where if you are a
4 non-subsistence user, you have to -- all methods and
5 means short of a bow and arrow and a breach cloth will
6 be prohibited. And we, as subsistence users, may not
7 be able to get anything through the Subsistence Board.
8 So we may not be able to do any using either.

9
10 You know, it says -- I understand what
11 Andy is saying. That it might be a really good thing
12 for subsistence users, but that only is true if we can
13 get something through the Subsistence Board saying that
14 we want to bait bears or something in a certain area.
15 And if the Subsistence Board is made up of the same
16 people that are very adamantly against these practices,
17 I think a clearer statement just saying that we are
18 opposed to the direction that Refuges and Parks are
19 taking in this way, we are opposed to this direction
20 toward limited use, more limited use, more limiting
21 access, more limited methods and means. And that would
22 be -- a simple statement saying that I think might be a
23 lot more powerful. But I may be wrong.

24
25 MADAME CHAIR ENSTMINGER: No. I don't
26 think you are wrong. You're right on.

27
28 Rhonda, then Virgil.

29
30 MS. PITKA: I agree with everything he
31 just said. I was just thinking about how long a court
32 transcript could be versus, you know, a short, targeted
33 letter making our main points.

34
35 MADAME CHAIR ENSTMINGER: And
36 misinterpreted. Yeah.

37
38 Virgil.

39
40 MR. UMPHENOUR: My intent when I kind
41 of -- my intent was that this would have a cover letter
42 explaining why we were sending the transcript. But all
43 these Directors and et cetera, the high ranking people
44 have a staff that reads all this stuff and advises
45 them.

46
47 MADAME CHAIR ENSTMINGER: Absolutely.

48
49 MR. UMPHENOUR: And if it's something
50 that's going to really bite them in the butt if they're

1 not really knowledgeable of it, they're going to get
2 knowledgeable of it. That's called leadership. I
3 assume all these people are going to demonstrate the
4 appropriate amount of leadership because there will be
5 lots of hell raised and lots of mad people if this
6 passes throughout the whole State. It's going to be a
7 big deal. I mean a heck of a big deal. Now, all these
8 people -- our Council here, we've got -- we have all
9 participated in the State process. Some of us more
10 than others. Some of us quite extensively. The Board
11 process, the Advisory Committee process. You've got
12 former Board Members sitting at this table. AC,
13 Advisory Committee Chairs sitting at this table that
14 have been involved in the process -- the State process,
15 which this State has the best process of any State. I
16 used to be a representative at the Western Association
17 at Fish and Wildlife Agency Meetings. And I was a
18 Board Member. And we have a lot of experience.

19
20 I guarantee that if this Rule gets
21 passed the way it's proposed to us, that there's going
22 to be a lot of frustration. There's going to be a lot
23 of big, gigantic repercussions coming from all
24 directions at the Fish and Wildlife Service. I
25 guarantee you that.

26
27 Anyway, I didn't mean just send them a
28 copy of the damn transcript. It has to have a cover
29 letter explaining why we're doing it. I don't think we
30 need to do anything else other than vote on the motion,
31 Madame Chair.

32
33 MR. KOEHLER: That's understood and
34 clear.

35
36 MADAME CHAIR ENSTMINGER: Any other
37 discussion on the motion.

38
39 MR. GLANZ: Call for the question.

40
41 MADAME CHAIR ENSTMINGER: Okay. I'm
42 sure that Eva understands that we're going to have a
43 cover letter. And I have to approve it, so it should
44 be well done.

45
46 All in favor of the motion, say aye.

47
48 IN UNISON: Aye.

49
50 MADAME CHAIR ENSTMINGER: Anyone

1 opposed.

2

3

(No opposing votes)

4

5 MADAME CHAIR ENSTMINGER: Okay. The
6 motion passes. And thank you for coming to our
7 meeting. And thank you for listening to our
8 frustration. And I hope and pray that the best thing
9 comes out for Alaska and not a bunch of regulations
10 that hurt people.

11

12 MS. TONNESON: Thank you, Madame Chair.
13 And I just do want to also say that I believe it was
14 Donald that asked for a list of the 16 original
15 proposed prohibited methods and means. We do have
16 that, so I'd be happy to discuss with you off line or
17 however you want to deal with that. I can get that to
18 you.

19

20 MR. WOODRUFF: Could you share that
21 with the Council?

22

23

MS. TONNESON: Yes.

24

25 MADAME CHAIR ENSTMINGER: Yeah. A
26 break has been called for, so we're going to take a 15-
27 minute break.

28

29 (Off record)

30

31

(On record)

32

33 MADAME CHAIR ENSTMINGER: So if we
34 could take our seats and get back into session. Go
35 ahead. I'm just going to be here for -- step behind
36 the table for like a second.

37

38

(Pause)

39

40 MS. PATTON: And we'll be beginning
41 here shortly. Maybe we'll -- we just have a moment
42 here. Can we check in and see who has joined us online
43 this afternoon or this morning.

44

45 MR. JOLY: This is Kyle Joly with the
46 National Park Service.

47

48

MS. PATTON: Good morning.

49

50

MR. JOLY: Hi.

1 MR. JENKINS: Wayne Jenkins, Yukon
2 Fisheries.
3
4 MS. PATTON: Good morning, Wayne.
5
6 MADAME CHAIR ENSTMINGER: Andy.
7
8 MR. BASSICH: Yeah. I guess I just
9 want to clarify something for my own mind here for Don.
10 We're looking at all these proposals for the Fisheries
11 Monitoring Program and I wondered, is the funds
12 available currently going to be able to fund all of
13 these or are you looking at to have to knock some of
14 these off the table for full funding for the upcoming
15 cycle.
16
17 MR. RIVARD: Well, we've got more
18 projects than we do money I think this year, but that
19 whole process will be determined once the whole thing
20 is done here. They'll process right up to the Federal
21 Subsistence Board. That's when we get -- the final
22 package is done in our office and approved by our
23 Assistant Regional Director. And that's where we
24 decide -- it has to be decided which -- where's the
25 funding line. How much do we have available and what
26 are we going to fund.
27
28 MR. BASSICH: So, Madame Chair, if I
29 may. I guess what I want to clarify for the Council is
30 what you're looking for -- what you're looking for from
31 us is maybe to give you our top priorities for funding
32 for this -- or what. I mean I'm just trying to
33 understand what is it we're trying to decide as a
34 Council here through your presentation.
35
36 MR. RIVARD: Madame Chair, Don Rivard
37 with OSM. We're looking for your comments. And if you
38 have certain projects you really would like to see
39 funded, you should let us know that. Okay. They may
40 be the same -- in the same priority as what you see on
41 page 316 or they may not be. So that's what we're
42 looking for is your feedback.
43
44 MADAME CHAIR ENSTMINGER: Rhonda.
45
46 MS. PITKA: Oh, I'm sorry. I just had
47 one unrelated comment that I needed to make really
48 quickly.
49
50 I'd like to thank Lisa Maas for her

1 work yesterday summarizing so succinctly and briefly
2 all of those proposals in this three hundred and some
3 page book. We were able to get through our meeting
4 remarkably fast and I'd like to thank her.

5
6 Thank you.

7
8 MADAME CHAIR ENSTMINGER: Thank you.
9 Those little, sweet things are nice once in a while.
10 Appreciate it.

11
12 So I don't know if that's a hint.

13
14 (Laughter)

15
16 MS. PITKA: Can we all model after her.

17
18
19 MADAME CHAIR ENSTMINGER: Yeah, Don, if
20 we can do that, that would be nice.

21
22 Where were we and where are we going.

23
24 MR. RIVARD: Okay, Madame Chair. Don
25 Rivard. We were doing the Fisheries Resource
26 Monitoring Program 2016 project summaries and stuff.

27
28 So if you go to your book on page 316,
29 that's the list we were working off of. We've already
30 provided you with a brief project summary of the first
31 five ranked projects. And I'll start now with the
32 number six ranked project and we'll finish that up.
33 And then we've got a couple more to do with the multi-
34 Region. So.....

35
36 MADAME CHAIR ENSTMINGER: Just before
37 you do that, can you -- maybe I didn't hear everything
38 just a second ago. So of these projects, there's nine.
39 And this is their ranking. And you're looking for us
40 to come up with our ranking and probably some of them
41 won't go through.

42
43 MR. RIVARD: We're looking for what you
44 -- what your comments on whatever way you want to
45 comment.

46
47 MADAME CHAIR ENSTMINGER: All right.

48
49 MR. RIVARD: Just comments that you
50 make or official motion. You don't necessarily have to

1 re-rank these. You could just say, you know, these
2 two, three, four are -- really report to us. We'd
3 really like to see them done.

4

5 MADAME CHAIR ENSTMINGER: Okay.

6

7 MR. RIVARD: You don't have to get into
8 the process of re-ordering all these. You could if you
9 so chose, but you don't have to get into that. That
10 would probably take a lot of time.

11

12 MADAME CHAIR ENSTMINGER: So do we want
13 to hear the rest of them.

14

15 (Council nods affirmatively)

16

17 MADAME CHAIR ENSTMINGER: Yes.

18

19 MR. WOODRUFF: Yes.

20

21 MADAME CHAIR ENSTMINGER: Okay. Let's
22 go.

23

24 MR. BASSICH: Briefly.

25

26 MADAME CHAIR ENSTMINGER: Briefly.

27

28 MR. RIVARD: These will be fairly
29 brief.

30

31 Okay. So the sixth ranked project from
32 the Technical Review Committee is Project 16-203. The
33 summary I'm going to read off is on page 320. This is
34 -- the project title is the Bering Cisco Spawning
35 Abundance in the Upper Yukon Flats. This is a project
36 that's been proposed by the Alaska Department of Fish
37 and Game with a co-investigator with the Fish and
38 Wildlife Service.

39

40 The principal investigator is
41 requesting funds to conduct a two-year study to
42 estimate abundance and sex, age, and length
43 compositions of Bering Cisco in the Upper Yukon Flats
44 area of the Yukon River, utilizing two-event Petersen
45 mark-recapture techniques for a closed population.
46 This project addresses both a specific recommendation
47 for Bering Cisco research as outlined in the Office of
48 Subsistence Management Whitefish Strategic Plan and the
49 priority information need from the Yukon area in the 26
50 Notice of Funding Availability.

1 The TRC's justification is that this
2 project addresses both a specific recommendation for
3 Bering Cisco research from the Whitefish Strategic Plan
4 and a priority information need. The objectives are
5 clear, measurable, and achievable. The mark-recapture
6 methods have a proved ability to achieve the expected
7 technical results. There is a rigorous sampling
8 design. The project addresses important Bering Cisco
9 subsistence and conservation issues and is responsive
10 to past Technical Review Committee recommendations.

11
12 There was a project that was put in two
13 years ago I think only by the Fish and Wildlife Service
14 and it was recommended at that time that ADF&G be
15 involved because ADF&G is allowing for some commercial
16 harvest of Bering Cisco at the mouth of the Yukon
17 River. And they've have pressure to continue to up
18 that harvest.

19
20 And that's all I have for 16-203.

21
22 MADAME CHAIR ENSTMINGER: Bill.

23
24 MR. GLANZ: Yes, Don. They're talking
25 whitefish. Are they talking sheefish or the candle
26 fish or what. What do they consider whitefish.

27
28 MR. RIVARD: This is just the Bering
29 Cisco. So this is one specific whitefish here.

30
31 MR. GLANZ: Oh, okay. All right.

32
33 MR. RIVARD: Just Bering Cisco.

34
35 MR. GLANZ: I know what a Cisco is. I
36 didn't know if they had it confused saying whitefish
37 like.

38
39 MADAME CHAIR ENSTMINGER: Rhonda.

40
41 MS. PITKA: Oh. I just had a couple of
42 questions. Number one, is this Bering Cisco in any way
43 related to any local needs or is this a priority for
44 local people. And then my next question is the
45 opportunity to work with local, rural communities was
46 not fully developed. So I think that that means that
47 on the project they were going to partner with CATG,
48 but they wanted us to haul fuel for them. So I wanted
49 that kind of noted I guess.

50

1 MR. RIVARD: Yes. That's correct.
2 What they have -- the local organization CATG is kind
3 of helping to provide logistics, like you say, hauling
4 fuel and that. But that's a start. Sometimes when
5 you're in a -- the first time you're in an area doing
6 something and you want to work with the local
7 organizations, you know, if this project were to
8 continue for a number of years it might get more and
9 more involved. Like fish weirs, where you -- where I'm
10 going to talk a little bit about -- well, I've already
11 talked about the Henshaw Creek one where the local
12 Tribal organization ended up taking the whole thing
13 over and managing it themselves.

14
15 MS. PITKA: So my question about local
16 people. Do they have any say in these projects or
17 priorities I guess.

18
19 MR. RIVARD: The priority information,
20 that has been -- that was developed about a year ago
21 with your Council. I think it was probably with Trent,
22 came and talked to you guys about developing priority
23 information needs. And the Bering Cisco one is --
24 again, it came out of first of all, the Strategic Plan
25 that OSM funded a few years ago. And so this is one of
26 the research items that came out of that.

27
28 And then the importance -- because
29 there is a commercial Bering Cisco that's going on in
30 the mouth of the river, this is one of the studies to
31 see where, you know, the population estimates are and
32 how much that's been harvested. Can it sustain that
33 kind of a harvest.

34
35 MS. PITKA: I understand that. I think
36 that I should just make a point that the local people
37 have no interest in Bering Cisco.

38
39 MS. KENNER: This is Pippa Kenner with
40 OSM. And through the Chair to Member Pitka, one of the
41 reasons -- you might notice that this project was
42 ranked sixth out of nine.

43
44 MS. PITKA: Uh-huh.

45
46 MS. KENNER: And one of the reasons why
47 is because it probably scored very weak in local
48 partnership and capacity building. And so probably
49 that is likely to be true in the remaining, the lower
50 scoring projects. One of the reason is quite likely

1 because they scored low in that area.

2

3 MR. RIVARD: Okay. For the next one,
4 the Technical Review Committee ranked this next project
5 seven out of nine. It's 16-206, Abundance and Run
6 Timing of Adult Salmon in the Nulato River.

7

8 The principal investigator is
9 requesting four years of funding for the purchase,
10 delivery, and operation of a resistance board weir to
11 monitor salmon escapement in the Nulato River. The
12 weir will be operated to determine daily escapement,
13 run timing, and age, sex, and length composition of
14 adult salmon. This project addresses two of the Yukon
15 River priority information needs listed in the 2016
16 Notice of Funding Availability.

17

18 The TRC's justification is that the
19 project, while it addresses both of these two priority
20 information needs and information and data collected
21 from the project will be applied to management of an
22 important subsistence salmon fisheries resources.

23

24 The proposed investigation plan is
25 technically sound and the project objectives are clear,
26 measurable, and achievable. The TCC investigator has
27 successfully led and managed a similar salmon weir
28 project funded by the OSM within the past four years.
29 Both the principal investigator and co-investigator are
30 from Alaska Native Organizations. The cost of the
31 project is reasonable to achieve the objectives and
32 comparable to the cost of other OSM-funded weir
33 projects in the Yukon Region. The investigation plan
34 does not address the selected type of weir and the
35 justification for its use, which is contrary to the
36 recommendation from a 2010 feasibility study that was
37 funded by OSM.

38

39 This is a new weir project with a high
40 start-up cost, requiring extended funding for return in
41 investment. The project is not using the correct type
42 of weir. The TRC recommends a more efficient weir for
43 the project's needs.

44

45 Thank you, Madame Chair.

46

47 MR. BASSICH: Yeah. Thank you. I was
48 just wondering if Doc -- maybe we could call Dr.
49 Schmidt up, who's our in-season manager. I'd just like
50 to find out what the value of this additional

1 information would be as far as how it would contribute
2 to management decisions and information. So if it's
3 possible, if we could call her up and just get that
4 brief answer.

5

6 MADAME CHAIR ENSTMINGER: Okay.

7

8 MR. BASSICH: So maybe I'll just
9 repeat. Dr. Schmidt, what I'm interested in knowing is
10 the value of a project like this and how it would
11 either benefit or how you would use this information in
12 your management of the summer season.

13

14 DR. SCHMIDT: I can't say that I've
15 actually read this proposal in its detail and so I
16 can't, you know, speak to it on that kind of level.
17 But I will say that any kind of biological information
18 we can get about Bering Cisco is essential right now.

19

20 MR. RIVARD: It's not that project.

21

22 DR. SCHMIDT: Oh, sorry.

23

24 MR. RIVARD: This is the Nulato weir.

25

26 DR. SCHMIDT: The Nulato weir. This is
27 actually a very essential project for us because we've
28 lost any assessment on the Nulato. We haven't had that
29 for a while, but we know that it's a contributor. And
30 we -- the Department has been trying to find ways that
31 we could possibly shift projects over there and haven't
32 been able to within our current budget. And so because
33 we know that this is a relatively important contributor
34 to the population, and we don't have a consistent
35 monitoring program there, I would say that this is a
36 good project.

37

38 MR. BASSICH: So this is a four-year
39 funding, which would give us four years of data. Is
40 that a useful thing? Because it's very possible that
41 -- I would assume after four years this project might
42 fall to the wayside. And so I'm wondering the cost
43 benefits of gathering data for four years -- run timing
44 data for four years, but not being able to carry it
45 into the future because of the high cost of running a
46 project like this.

47

48 I'm really in favor of weirs. I think
49 they're probably the best tool we have. But they are
50 expensive and really in my mind they need a long data

1 set to be really useful.

2

3 DR. SCHMIDT: Through the Chair, in
4 terms of that funding cycle, it's very rare for us to
5 be able to find a funding source that's going to give
6 you funding in perpetuity or give you funding that will
7 last and guarantee for a full, you know, life cycle or
8 a couple of life cycles. At this point, I would say
9 that some data are better than no data at all. And
10 what you can hope for is that the project proponents
11 would continue to seek out funding either through this
12 source or through another source to keep it going or
13 perhaps the Department discovers that this becomes an
14 essential system for us to be monitoring and we are
15 able to direct some of our funding toward it as well.
16 But I think data there are better than no data at all
17 at this point.

18

19 MR. BASSICH: Thank you.

20

21 MR. RIVARD: Madame Chair, if I may.
22 Don Rivard. I'd like to add a little bit to that
23 discussion, Andy. We've had these internal discussions
24 and the Technical Review Committee had the same type of
25 discussion about long term commitments and do you start
26 up a project if you know -- if you're not real sure
27 whether you're going to be able to do it long term.
28 And a weir obviously needs to probably -- probably at a
29 minimum ten years to get some kind of useful data and
30 trends and all that kind of stuff that may be going on
31 in a particular river system.

32

33 So that's one of the things that they
34 really have been talking about. And that's probably
35 one of the reasons that it ranks a little bit lower is
36 because are they willing to make that kind of
37 commitment, you know.

38

39 MR. BASSICH: Thank you.

40

41 MR. RIVARD: A new start-up. And one
42 of the criteria, as I showed you, is cost benefit. And
43 what the program is now trying to do is yeah, we might
44 be able to start something up, as Stephanie kind of
45 mentioned here, and if the project starts getting
46 really expensive, then it's going to be -- they're
47 going to get a lower and lower rating as they go
48 through the years. But the way they can do it -- keep
49 it kind of as a high rating at least for OSM -- is if
50 it's -- say it's a \$200,000 a year project, but they

1 only come to us and ask for half of that because
2 they've got another \$100,000 that's going to be shared
3 somehow or another. Then that bumps it right back up
4 as being high. Because not only is it cross benefit,
5 but it also -- now you probably have a partner or two
6 involved with it. So it really kind of keeps it up
7 high in the rankings.

8

9 MR. BASSICH: Thank you.

10

11 MR. RIVARD: Okay. The next one is the
12 eighth ranked project by the TRC, is 16-201. And that
13 is assisting a Radio Telemetry Investigation of the
14 Distribution of Coho Salmon in the Yukon River
15 Drainage. This was submitted by the Fish and Wildlife
16 Service Fairbanks Office.

17

18 The principal investigator from the
19 U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service is requesting four years
20 of funding to assist the Alaska Department of Fish and
21 Game in a Drainage-wide Coho salmon radio telemetry
22 project. Staff from the Fairbanks Fish and Wildlife
23 Field Office would participate in the radio tagging
24 operations in the Lower Yukon River, as well as
25 logistical and telemetry flight support in the Upper
26 Yukon River. The project's main focus will be to
27 identify Drainage-wide migratory distribution patterns,
28 run timing, and spawning areas of Yukon River Coho
29 salmon.

30

31 The TRC justification. The proposal
32 appears to be incomplete and in draft form and not
33 ready to rate. The proposal is tied to and dependent
34 on the results of an ADF&G funding proposal to the
35 Alaska.....

36

37 MS. KENNER: Sustainable Salmon Fund.

38

39 MR. RIVARD:Sustainable Salmon
40 Fund. Thank you. The principal investigator should
41 have included the copy of the 2015 ADF&G proposal to
42 this fund, but was unable to do so because the ADF&G
43 proposal was not fully written at the time of
44 submission to OSM.

45

46 The TRC believes the investigators have
47 the capacity to conduct this proposed portion of the
48 project; however, there are no immediate subsistence or
49 conservation concerns regarding Coho salmon in the
50 Yukon River Drainage. The ADF&G is currently

1 conducting a Yukon River summer chum salmon radio
2 telemetry project without U.S. Fish and Wildlife
3 Service participation.

4

5 That's it for that project.

6

7 Okay. And the final one for the Yukon
8 Region, the one that was ranked nine out of nine by the
9 Technical Review Committee is 16-202. Fall chum
10 Spawner and Habitat Monitoring. And this was submitted
11 the University of Alaska Fairbanks as the principal
12 investigator.

13

14 The principal investigator is
15 requesting four years of funding to accomplish the
16 following -- map historic and current thermal refugia
17 within fall chum salmon spawning areas and Yukon River
18 tributaries, the Chandalar, the Sheenjek, and the
19 Tanana. Two, to validate and calibrate Forward-Looking
20 Infrared remote sensing imagery through measurement of
21 in situ physicochemical conditions within Core salmon
22 spawning areas. Three, quantify spatiotemporal
23 relationships between salmon spawning locations and
24 thermal refugia and upwellings. And finally, to
25 develop an integrated adult salmon and spawning habitat
26 monitoring plan to determine changes in the number of
27 spawners and distribution of spawning habitats through
28 time.

29

30 The TRC's justification for their
31 ranking was that this project was ranked low due
32 primarily to the lack of partnerships and capacity
33 building and high cost of operation. In addition, the
34 investigator ability was difficult to assess because
35 the PhD candidate was not identified. The
36 investigators have no track record with a monitoring
37 program, though other principal investigator expertise
38 was evident and easy to assess.

39

40 Thank you, Madame Chair.

41

42 MADAME CHAIR ENSTMINGER: Okay,
43 Council.

44

45 Andy.

46

47 MR. BASSICH: Yeah. I'll get the ball
48 rolling here. The first question I have is what's the
49 annual funding for all of these projects. Just a hard
50 number.

1 MR. RIVARD: Well, there's -- I think
2 we've got that marked here somewhere.
3
4 MR. BASSICH: Yeah. I didn't find it.
5
6 MR. RIVARD: The figures are -- there's
7 going to be 2.7 available -- 4.7 million available in
8 2016, but about half of that or so is already basically
9 been committed to ongoing projects that started in
10 2014.
11
12 MR. BASSICH: Okay. That's for the
13 State, right?
14
15 MR. RIVARD: No. No. This is just for
16 this Region.
17
18 MR. BASSICH: Okay.
19
20 MR. RIVARD: Yeah.
21
22 MR. BASSICH: Thank you. Thank you.
23
24 I guess, Madame Chair.....
25
26 MR. RIVARD: Excuse me. I was wrong.
27 It is State-wide.
28
29 MS. KENNER: It's State-wide.
30
31 MR. BASSICH: State-wide. That's what
32 I thought. Yeah. Okay. Thank you.
33
34 As far as priorities go for me, one of
35 the ones I'd like to see bumped up a little bit is 16-
36 203, the enumeration of Bering Cisco. It may not
37 really be as important to some of the up-river
38 communities, but one of the things that I noticed this
39 year for the first time -- I've been operating a fish
40 wheel for almost 30 years and this is the first year I
41 caught very few Cisco in my wheel. And I'm not sure
42 why that is. We did have a little bit higher water
43 than normal, but I know my fish wheel was fishing
44 extremely efficiently. And I was quite shocked at the
45 low numbers of Bering Sea Cisco. Actually, whitefish
46 as well. And very few large sheefish. One or two.
47
48 So I do have a lot of concerns about
49 the commercial fisheries that are being prosecuted and
50 their impacts. We do know that Bering Sea Cisco have a

1 long life cycle as far as their spawning. They're slow
2 to recover. And I'm kind of getting a tingling gut
3 feeling that we may be doing some damage to them. So I
4 think this is a fairly high priority project and should
5 be -- should definitely be funded until we can
6 determine a little bit more about what's happening to
7 the Bering Sea Cisco. And I'm seeing Andrew's head
8 nod, too, so maybe his Region saw the same thing. So I
9 would like to see that moved up.

10

11 And then I'd like to just reiterate my
12 comment on the 16-251, which is the Burbot one. I'm
13 beginning to learn more and more about the effects of
14 climate change in the Upper Arctic and the release of
15 mercury. And that really concerns me because Burbot is
16 a very important subsistence food in the Yukon River
17 for people. Especially now that salmon is declining,
18 more and more people are turning to that. And I think
19 it's incumbent upon us to understand the impacts of
20 possibly higher mercury levels being consumed by people
21 living in these Regions. So if that could be noted.

22

23 I think the rest of the rankings to me
24 look quite appropriate and I'm in support of actually
25 all of these. I'd really like to see the last one do a
26 better job. I think in the future the fall chum one
27 would be a very important one for us to understand a
28 little bit more, but it's also very expensive and it
29 sounds like it wasn't well-written. But maybe in
30 future years that might be one that we'll want to
31 revisit.

32

33 Thank you, Madame Chair.

34

35 MADAME CHAIR ENSTMINGER: Thank you,
36 Andy.

37

38 Will, then Virgil.

39

40 MR. UMPHENOUR: Yeah. Don.....

41

42 MADAME CHAIR ENSTMINGER: Will's first.

43

44 MR. UMPHENOUR: Oh, sorry.

45

46 (Laughter)

47

48 MR. KOEHLER: And maybe I should -- I
49 should maybe talk to Sue about this first, but it kind
50 of seems to me that this Burbot project on the Upper

1 Tanana, Upper Yukon Drainage -- I know that it wouldn't
2 save us a ton of money if it was marked lower on the
3 list because it's one of the -- it's the second
4 smallest project there on the funding list. But it
5 would be my impression that the Burbot are quite stable
6 in our Region and the use is fairly consistent and with
7 few exceptions relatively light in our Region. So it
8 seems to me that with all of the real crisis in
9 fisheries in our Region as is on the Yukon River and
10 specifically with King salmon that it would be kind of
11 my thoughts that I would like every little bit of
12 funding to be prioritized in that direction. But I may
13 be wrong.

14
15 MS. KENNER: Ms. Chair, for me. Hi.
16 Our presentation -- I just want to remind Council
17 Members and the Chair that our presentation isn't quite
18 over. There were two projects that fit into what we
19 called the Multi-Regional category because they
20 straddle both the Kuskokwim and the Yukon. And I
21 wanted to give a quick overview of those two, if the
22 Council wishes.

23
24 MADAME CHAIR ENSTMINGER: Go ahead.

25
26 MS. KENNER: Okay. I would like you to
27 turn to page 349 you'll see the Technical Review
28 Committee ranking one and two for these two projects.
29 And again the reason why they're in a different
30 category is they straddle both the Kuskokwim and Yukon
31 Region. Both of these projects, the proposals came in
32 very well-written and complete, with all the necessary
33 materials.

34
35 The first ranked project is 16-752.
36 And the name of that project is the Yukon-Kuskokwim
37 Delta Coast Communities Non-Salmon Fish Harvest and Use
38 Pattern. And the summer of the project begins during
39 the three-year project investigators will collaborate
40 with five study communities -- Scammon Bay, Mekoryuk,
41 Toksook Bay, Kipnuk, and Quinhagak to document their
42 harvest and uses of non-salmon fishes for subsistence.

43
44
45 The summary of the Technical Review
46 Committee's justification for the ranking is the
47 project addresses priority information needs.
48 Investigators are qualified to conduct the work. The
49 budget is reasonable and partnership and capacity
50 building will be collaborating with five participating

1 communities in hiring five to ten local assistants to
2 help with the research and to provide Yup'ik-English
3 language interpretation.

4
5 The second project is the Meaning and
6 Context of Sharing within the Subsistence Fisheries of
7 the Kuskokwim and Yukon River Drainages. This three-
8 year study -- through this three-year study,
9 investigators will document traditional and
10 contemporary practices of sharing and other forms of
11 exchange in seven Kuskokwim and Yukon River communities
12 -- Marshall, Nulato, Fort Yukon, Tuntutuliak, Kwethluk,
13 Aniak, and McGrath, with particular attention to
14 understanding the nature and scope of sharing and its
15 role in a larger continuum of exchange practices.

16
17 And the summary of the Technical Review
18 Committee's justification is the project addresses
19 priority information needs. The study is well thought
20 out. Investigator ability and resources are highly
21 rated. The cost is reasonable for the work being done
22 and the proposed partnership and capacity building will
23 be collaborating with seven participating communities
24 and hiring seven to fourteen local assistants to the
25 project.

26
27 Thank you.

28
29 MADAME CHAIR ENSTMINGER: Okay.
30 Virgil, are you ready now?

31
32 MR. UMPHENOUR: Don, how much money do
33 you think the Yukon will get then? Do you think half
34 of these proposals might get funded? Or less than
35 half? Or more than half, or what? Just a rough guess.

36
37 MR. RIVARD: Well, let's go back a few
38 pages here to our funding guideline on page 307. And
39 so we've had the Yukon with a funding allocation
40 guideline of about 29 percent. And the reality has
41 been about 19 percent over the years, so that's
42 probably.....

43
44 MS. KENNER: That's about 300,000.

45
46 MR. RIVARD: That's probably a pretty
47 guideline, which would be about 300,000 this year if it
48 holds true.

49
50 I talked with Andrew during the break.

1 I don't think you need to get too wrapped up with the
2 amount of money that's available. I think you just
3 need to tell us what you would like to -- what are your
4 priorities, if you have them, that are different than
5 what you're seeing on page 316. You know, the merits
6 and the importance as far as you're concerned for your
7 Region. Those are more important that we hear that. I
8 wouldn't get too worried about well, if this one
9 doesn't get funded. This one -- you know, this one
10 does. This one doesn't.

11
12 MS. KENNER: I gave Don some
13 misinformation. This is Pippa. Actually, if there
14 were \$2,000,000 available, the Yukon has a general
15 allocation of 30 percent. So that would be more like
16 around \$600,000. Thank you.

17
18 MADAME CHAIR ENSTMINGER: Rhonda.

19
20 MS. PITKA: Okay. I was just going to
21 say for our Region, we prioritize salmon studies.

22
23 MADAME CHAIR ENSTMINGER: Andrew.

24
25 MR. FIRMIN: I just -- I would like to
26 just point out that the -- along with Andy, I do like
27 the Bering Cisco spawning abundance. That was
28 something that we put forth when -- maybe in '90-ish,
29 when they opened a commercial fishery on the Bering
30 Cisco and they had no idea where they spawned. Oh,
31 somewhere in the Yukon Flats was their answer. And
32 then the following year they upped the -- I think they
33 started out at 20,000 pounds of fish was their initial
34 commercial entry. The following year they upped it an
35 extra 10,000 pounds. And again they said oh, I don't
36 know. Somewhere in the Yukon Flats those fish spawn.

37
38 A lot of dog mushers in the Yukon
39 depend on those fish. And I eat them. I know a lot of
40 people that run weirs eat them. They're actually a
41 pretty rich, little fish. And I think that now that
42 Andy mentioned it, there was a lack of whitefish in
43 general in the weir this year, including I don't even
44 think I saw any Burbot this fall. And very few white
45 -- sheefish. And even the broad -- the other regular
46 whitefish there, there was a low amounts of those
47 throughout the summer. And that was something that I
48 know this Council put forward and requested. And
49 that's something I'd like to see funded just because
50 they're commercial fishing on them and they have no

1 clue where or what they do.

2

3 MR. WOODRUFF: Or how many.

4

5 MR. FIRMIN: Or how many. And yet
6 they're making allocation. There's allocations being
7 made and raised on those populations of fish.

8

9 Also, the 16-251 is another project
10 that I'd like to see funded and on our list because
11 that's something that Frank Gergtler was one of the
12 regional ones that brought this up. And that's another
13 Burbot. That is a fish that -- and then I've had this
14 Council pushed on some of these and myself included
15 because basically a lot of those fish that are not
16 being utilized probably as much as they used to in the
17 past and there are no real studies being done on them
18 and what they're eating, what they're doing, what are
19 they absorbing. And that was another thought to see
20 what -- you know, let's get some more data on those
21 fish as well. Because they might have a -- play a key
22 part in other salmon abundance.

23

24 And the top three projects, they are
25 long-running projects that have been going for a long
26 time and have merit. And I like all the top three
27 also. But I do especially like the Burbot 16-251 and
28 the Bering Cisco 16-203.

29

30 Thank you.

31

32 MS. KENNER: Thank you, Mrs. Chair.
33 Miss Chair.

34

35 MADAME CHAIR ENSTMINGER: Yeah.

36

37 MS. KENNER: Hi. This is Pippa Kenner.
38 Thank you. This is Pippa Kenner again. Again, I want
39 to remind the Council that all your comments are being
40 noted. And we are going to write them up and they will
41 be delivered to the Subsistence Board as this Council's
42 comments. And also I am reminded that two years ago
43 when we were developing the priority information needs
44 with the Council, the Bering Cisco and whitefish issue
45 did come up from the Council. And that is why that
46 priority information -- one of the reasons why the
47 priority information need is there. So thank you.

48

49 MADAME CHAIR ENSTMINGER: I feel like I
50 need to respond to you, Will, on the Burbot. I

1 understand. You're right about the salmon versus the
2 Burbot. But I guess we put this forward on the Burbot,
3 so on the number 16-205, is that our -- that's been
4 going on one, two years now? Or one? And it's a
5 three-year?
6

7 MS. KENNER: Thank you for that
8 question, Mrs. Chair. This is Pippa Kenner with OSM.
9 This project actually has not started yet. It has been
10 -- they have been doing work on the Kuskokwim and
11 working on best methods and ways of getting
12 information. So this will be the beginning of this
13 project.
14

15 And also Bur.....
16

17 MADAME CHAIR ENSTMINGER: Okay. I'm a
18 little bit confused because it says Upper Tanana and
19 Upper Yukon.
20

21 MS. KENNER: I am going to correct
22 myself. I thought we were speaking about 251. Don is
23 going to speak to this.
24

25 MR. RIVARD: Madame Chair, if you have
26 a specific question on 205, we have the -- this is
27 unusual. We don't usually have this. But we do have
28 the principal investigator here, who could answer any
29 technical questions. But you are right. There's been
30 some preliminary studies that have been done in these
31 Upper Drainage lakes. And this is the first time that
32 OSM is being asked to fund some other studies. There's
33 been some conservation concerns and issues going on
34 with these Upper Lakes in the Wrangell-St. Elias Park
35 and Preserve. And so if you wanted some specific
36 details on that, Dave Sarafin could address those.
37

38 MR. ELLIS: I was just trying to help
39 in priorities with Will. And the only confusion I have
40 is that this is within Drainages within the boundaries
41 of the Wrangell-St. Elias Park. But maybe I'm not
42 letting my water run properly, but Upper Yukon River
43 is.....
44

45 MR. RIVARD: Madame Chair, I had that
46 same question. And I had to talk with Dave Sarafin.
47 And I actually have had him send me maps. There are
48 indeed tributaries of the Yukon River and the Copper
49 River they -- they are real close together. There's
50 just a little ridge that kind of separates the

1 Drainages. And indeed the lakes that Dave would be
2 investigating are on the Yukon -- are in the Yukon
3 Drainage. So it's really interesting when you look at
4 maps. And I had the same questions.

5
6 MADAME CHAIR ENSTMINGER: Okay.

7
8 MR. RIVARD: But I got it clarified.
9 And now I'm convinced.

10
11 MADAME CHAIR ENSTMINGER: Okay.
12 So.....

13
14 MR. KOEHLER: All our stuff drains to
15 the Yukon.

16
17 MADAME CHAIR ENSTMINGER: Yeah. I know
18 it drains in the Yukon, but your brain thinks it's some
19 lakes up on -- somewhere else.

20
21 But anyway, this has not started.
22 That's all I need. It has not started.

23
24 MR. RIVARD: That's correct. It has
25 not started as any OSM funding has gone for these
26 projects.

27
28 MADAME CHAIR ENSTMINGER: Okay.

29
30 MR. RIVARD: Dave has done some
31 preliminary work on these lakes.

32
33 MADAME CHAIR ENSTMINGER: Yes.

34
35 MR. RIVARD: And it was the basis for
36 his proposal to us.

37
38 MADAME CHAIR ENSTMINGER: I'm aware of
39 that. And it'll come up in our -- one of the proposals
40 today to the Board of Fish.

41
42 Andy.

43
44 MR. BASSICH: Briefly, I'd just like to
45 share this with Will.

46
47 From my perspective anyway, Will,
48 salmon is a top priority, but salmon is also getting a
49 lot of money through the State, through AYKSSI monies,
50 and numerous other different types of monies. Just

1 sharing my own perspective. This is a program that in
2 my view allows a lot of funding to non-salmon species
3 that would might otherwise not take place because of
4 the difficulty for them to find funding. And that's
5 why from my perspective I really like to see some of
6 these non-salmon species, important food sources for
7 subsistence, be maybe addressed a little bit more here
8 because they're going to have a difficult time finding
9 that funding more than likely in other avenues. So
10 just to share that perspective with you.

11

MR. KOEHLER: Thank you.

12

MADAME CHAIR ENSTMINGER: Don.

13

14
15
16 MR. RIVARD: And if I may, Will. If
17 you go on page 314 is the list of the priority
18 information needs. And you'll see the number one,
19 reliable estimates of salmon escapement. That's been
20 kind of the number one for the Yukon for -- since 2000.
21 So it's still very high up there. It's just that now
22 we're diversifying a little bit more.

23

24 MS. KENNER: And a lot of the -- this
25 is Pippa Kenner with OSM. And just to let you know, we
26 fund every two years. And so next two years a lot of
27 the funding for those salmon projects will be coming up
28 for renewal.

29

30 MADAME CHAIR ENSTMINGER: So does the
31 Council feel we've given enough of our priorities to
32 the.....

33

MR. WOODRUFF: I feel we have.

34

35
36 MADAME CHAIR ENSTMINGER: So we don't
37 need a motion.

38

(Council nods affirmatively)

39

40
41 MADAME CHAIR ENSTMINGER: Okay. Thank
42 you, guys.

43

44 MR. RIVARD: Thank you, Madame Chair.
45 Thank you, Council Members. Thank you for your
46 comments. They're very useful to us.

47

48 MADAME CHAIR ENSTMINGER: The next
49 thing on the agenda is we're going to take up Proposal
50 70, I think it is.

1 MS. PATTON: 60.
2
3 MADAME CHAIR ENSTMINGER: No. 60. 60.
4
5
6 MR. UMPHENOUR: What page.
7
8 MADAME CHAIR ENSTMINGER: 114 on our
9 books. It's the Chisana caribou in Unit 12. And then
10 we go to Board of Fish Proposals, so.....
11
12 MR. BASSICH: What's the page number
13 again.
14
15 MADAME CHAIR ENSTMINGER: 114. The
16 analysis has already been presented. We've been
17 through all of that. And we were waiting to see if we
18 would hear from Northway.
19
20 And the answer is.....
21
22 MS. PATTON: Madame Chair and Council,
23 as you recall, yesterday Ben Stevens read into the
24 record the letter that was addressed to the Council
25 from Northway. I did call Jamie Marunde and left a
26 message. And then also sent an email. I haven't heard
27 anything back. Maybe we can just check online to see
28 if anyone from the community of Northway has joined us.
29
30 Anyone on teleconference from Northway.
31
32
33 (No comments)
34
35 MADAME CHAIR ENSTMINGER: I'm going to
36 also reiterate. Is there anyone online from Northway
37 that would like to speak to this proposal, Proposal 60,
38 Unit 12 caribou.
39
40 (No comments)
41
42 MADAME CHAIR ENSTMINGER: Okay. We
43 have given ample time. So we need a motion. Because
44 we've gone through the whole process.
45
46 MR. UMPHENOUR: You need the motion?
47
48 MADAME CHAIR ENSTMINGER: Uh-huh.
49
50 MR. UMPHENOUR: Okay. Move to adopt

1 Proposal 16-60.
2
3 MADAME CHAIR ENSTMINGER: You didn't
4 have you mic on.
5
6 MR. UMPHENOUR: Yeah. Move to adopt
7 Proposal 16-60.
8
9 MR. WOODRUFF: Second.
10
11 MADAME CHAIR ENSTMINGER: Okay.
12 Discussion. And I'm going to remind the Council we had
13 -- actually, Northway was the only opposition. And
14 with them not here for me to be able to ask questions,
15 I think there might have been a misunderstanding.
16
17 What this proposal does is just allow
18 three small communities to be C&T. It actually takes
19 out an 804 where it just gives certain communities C&T.
20 Now it just gives who the C&T in the book, which is
21 just three small communities added. Dot Lake, Healy
22 Lake. I forget the other one now. My brain's fried.
23
24 MR. KOEHLER: And Tanacross.
25
26 MADAME CHAIR ENSTMINGER: And
27 Tanacross. Which Park Service told the SRC that it's
28 just a little over 200 people added. And the people
29 that qualify now is over 1,800 people. So this would
30 only add another 200 people that qualify. And the
31 likelihood of that increasing the data that we're
32 seeing now is probably -- maybe one other person might
33 go hunting. Maybe zero.
34
35 MR. KOEHLER: Likely.
36
37 MADAME CHAIR ENSTMINGER: Likely. Uh-
38 huh. So I don't want to debate anything but the
39 proposal. Adding those communities.
40
41 Andrew.
42
43 MR. FIRMIN: Well, I was just sort of
44 curious as to the -- let's not forget about the
45 modification of OSM's recommendation.
46
47 MADAME CHAIR ENSTMINGER: So that would
48 mean an amendment to the motion, which supports to
49 retain the delegation authority of Superintendent of
50 Wrangell-St. Elias and Preserve to set the number of

1 permits, which is currently done now.

2

3 MR. KOEHLER: So we need Virgil to
4 withdraw his current motion then.

5

6 MADAME CHAIR ENSTMINGER: No. He can
7 just do an amendment.

8

9 MR. KOEHLER: Okay.

10

11 MADAME CHAIR ENSTMINGER: Or withdraw
12 the second. Whatever works for you guys.

13

14 Virgil.

15

16 MR. UMPHENOUR: Okay. To clarify my
17 motion, that would be move to support the Proposal with
18 modification made by OSM.

19

20 MADAME CHAIR ENSTMINGER: Does the
21 second concur.

22

23 MR. WOODRUFF: Second concur.

24

25 MADAME CHAIR ENSTMINGER: Okay. The
26 motion before us is to support the Proposal with the
27 modification as I read before. Does everybody
28 understand.

29

30 (Council nods affirmatively)

31

32 MADAME CHAIR ENSTMINGER: Okay.

33

34 Andy.

35

36 MR. BASSICH: Yes. Do you want me to
37 go through the justification or.....

38

39 MR. KOEHLER: Hang on. I would like to
40 just say one thing to it.

41

42 MADAME CHAIR ENSTMINGER: Okay. You
43 guys need to turn your mics on like good boys.

44

45 MR. BASSICH: Sorry. Sorry. Yeah.

46

47 (Laughter)

48

49 MADAME CHAIR ENSTMINGER: Okay. Right
50 now Will would like to speak to it.

1 concerns. It does improve access to subsistence users.
2 And I don't see any problem with it. It's just that
3 the hunt itself is not extremely useful the subsistence
4 users that are in a position to utilize this resource.

5
6 MADAME CHAIR ENSTMINGER: Andy.

7
8 MR. FIRMIN: Okay. I think Will
9 actually hit a lot of these justification points. It's
10 not a -- doesn't appear to be a conservation concern.
11 It is something that is hunted traditionally, although
12 probably many, many, many years ago when people lived
13 maybe a little more nomadically. It will be beneficial
14 to subsistence users by opening this up to more
15 individuals in the area and doesn't seem like it will
16 restrict any other users, so I'm in support of this. I
17 think it's a good proposal. And it doesn't appear that
18 the quotas are being hit hard. In fact, they haven't
19 even reached the quotas. So I think this is a good
20 proposal. We should support it, Madame Chair.

21
22 MADAME CHAIR ENSTMINGER: Any other
23 discussion.

24
25 (No comments)

26
27 MR. GLANZ: Call the question.

28
29 MADAME CHAIR ENSTMINGER: Question's
30 been called for. All in favor, say aye.

31
32 IN UNISON: Aye.

33
34 MADAME CHAIR ENSTMINGER: Anyone
35 opposed.

36
37 (No opposing votes)

38
39 MADAME CHAIR ENSTMINGER: Okay. The
40 motion passes as amended. The motion passes with the
41 amendment. Okay.

42
43 All right. The next thing on the
44 Agenda is Board of Fish Proposals. And I think I heard
45 that Virgil had one. Who all has -- you guys have
46 other ones.

47
48 What number is yours, Virgil?

49
50 MR. UMPHENOUR: I have to find it.

1 MADAME CHAIR ENSTMINGER: He has to
2 find it. Does anyone else have a.....
3
4 MR. UMPHENOUR: One.
5
6 MADAME CHAIR ENSTMINGER: He says one.
7
8
9 Does anyone else have any Board of Fish
10 proposals. We are -- I think it's on our Agenda. Let
11 me look at this.
12
13 Okay. Donald wants to look at 114.
14
15 MS. PATTON: Here's 135.
16
17 MADAME CHAIR ENSTMINGER: And I think
18 there's one in there -- I thought it was on our Agenda.
19 So forgive me. I'd have to sit here and read and I'm
20 not that fast of a reader.
21
22 135 is one.
23
24 And just a quick nod of the head, was
25 that going to be taken up when you guys come up or now.
26 Now. Okay.
27
28 So 135 is the one I'm requesting that
29 comes up.
30
31 Did Virgil find his?
32
33 MR. UMPHENOUR: I'm not sure.
34
35 MADAME CHAIR ENSTMINGER: Anyone else.
36 Did you have any. Did you guys look at them to see if
37 there was any that you wanted to take up.
38
39 Why don't we start with 114. And then
40 Virgil will have his number.
41
42 MR. UMPHENOUR: 184.
43
44 MADAME CHAIR ENSTMINGER: 184?
45
46 MR. UMPHENOUR: Uh-huh. (Affirmative)
47
48 MADAME CHAIR ENSTMINGER: What Region
49 is that?
50

1 MR. UMPHENOUR: That's Alaska
2 Peninsula.
3
4 MADAME CHAIR ENSTMINGER: Why are we
5 taking up Alaska Peninsula? I don't think we need to
6 do that.
7
8 MR. UMPHENOUR: Because at times they
9 catch more of our fish. The reason to take up the
10 Alaska Peninsula is because all the fish coming to the
11 Yukon have to migrate past there. And they harvest
12 lots of them. Even when we don't even get to fish,
13 they do.
14
15 MADAME CHAIR ENSTMINGER: Well, that's
16 probably good justification. We'll let you take it up,
17 Virgil. 184.
18
19 So we'll start with 114. Unless
20 somebody wants to take a short break. Are you guys --
21 I see you zipping around here. Let's take a short
22 break and we'll be right back.
23
24 (Off record)
25
26 (On record)
27
28 MADAME CHAIR ENSTMINGER: Dr. Schmidt
29 has told me that she has to leave on a plane at 1:30.
30 So anything that concerns any of these proposals that
31 she needs to be here for -- plus they're here to give
32 that report, right. And I'm wondering if you guys want
33 to hear that report before she has to leave. And then
34 go into any fish proposals that she needs to be here
35 for.
36
37 MR. UMPHENOUR: Who's going to give the
38 report. Stephanie?
39
40 MADAME CHAIR ENSTMINGER: Yeah.
41 Stephanie and Fred, right.
42
43 MR. UMPHENOUR: Okay. Yeah.
44
45 MADAME CHAIR ENSTMINGER: So what do
46 you want to do. Is it you want to hear the report.
47
48 MR. UMPHENOUR: Yeah.
49
50 MADAME CHAIR ENSTMINGER: Hear the

1 report. We're going to hear the report and then go
2 into any fish proposals that pertain to both of them.

3

4 MR. BUE: Yeah. Thank you, Madame
5 Chair. Thanks for shifting things around. My name is
6 Fred Bue, U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, Yukon River
7 Fisheries Management. Next to me is Stephanie Schmidt,
8 Alaska Department of Fish and Game Area Management
9 biologist for the summer season.

10

11 I think in your packet -- maybe Eva's
12 sent it out -- we've produced an early summary. A lot
13 of the fisheries information is pretty early when you
14 get your booklets and so it's not in your booklets.
15 And so we have to -- as very little is complete. And
16 so this is kind of a -- still a -- we're in the
17 process. But anyways, there's a brief summary there.

18

19 MADAME CHAIR ENSTMINGER: It's in the
20 back of your books under supplemental materials.

21

22 MS. PATTON: So in the binders. It was
23 mailed out with the meeting book. But for those of you
24 that have picked up another book here, we have
25 printouts, too. But it's in the back of your binder
26 under the supplemental materials. And I'll go grab the
27 extra copies, too.

28

29 MR. BUE: Okay. And then more recently
30 Stephanie put out a season summary for Fish and Game
31 which covers a few more elements and it's a lot more
32 detail.

33

34 For the -- just to try to speed this
35 up, I'm going to really paraphrase a lot of this. And
36 then let you folks ask the questions and see where your
37 interests are.

38

39 So with that, I guess again it's not --
40 a lot of this information is new to you. Many of you
41 are very involved in the Yukon fisheries and it's an
42 everyday thing in your life, so I will spare you a lot
43 of the details.

44

45 Again, the 2015 summer season was
46 challenged by the typical wide disparity between the
47 Chinook and summer chum salmon. That's a big
48 management concern or difficulty for us, especially in
49 the lower river where's mixed stocks. Both stocks come
50 in together and they're going a lot of different

1 directions, but they all come through one bottleneck.

2

3 Efforts to conserve Chinook were
4 initiated at the beginning of the season in the lower
5 river and implemented chronologically. Up-river
6 districts as the run progressed. And due to the
7 anticipated poorer Chinook run, conservative management
8 strategies were maintained throughout most of the
9 summer season in all areas of the Drainage.
10 Essentially, the entire summer season all fishing for
11 Chinook was closed in most districts and fish and gear
12 restrictions were applied to districts to direct
13 harvest towards other species.

14

15 Sportfishing and personal use fishing
16 were closed and a lot of amount of commercial fishing
17 opportunity for summer chum was foregone. These
18 management actions submitted limited subsistence access
19 to the abundant summer chum; however, in the lower and
20 middle river sections dipnets were allowed to harvest
21 summer chum, while releasing the Chinook back into the
22 river. Also fish wheels requiring live release of
23 Chinook were allowed District Four. Many lower river
24 fishermen took advantage of these gear opportunities
25 and were successful in meeting summer chum needs.
26 These opportunities were not provided in District Five
27 as few fishermen in the upper section of the river
28 harvest summer chum due to the low abundance or poor
29 flesh quality there.

30

31 Up-river fishermen were left with
32 harvesting other fish species or waited for the fall
33 chum, when flesh quality was better. Verbal reports
34 and anecdotal information indicate many fishermen
35 voluntarily avoided Chinook in the subsistence in the
36 2015 season. So as expected, subsistence salmon
37 harvest information collected in-season indicated that
38 most fishermen did not meet their needs or goals for
39 Chinook. Generally, fishermen reported lack of
40 opportunity or having to fish later in the season or to
41 fish for other species. This was expected and in light
42 of the current trend of Chinook low abundance and the
43 extreme management actions we took.

44

45 Based on the assessment projects,
46 particularly of the Eagle sonar, the 2015 total run
47 appears to be close to average and above the high end
48 of the pre-season outlook range. Because of the
49 uncertainty around productivity in recent years,
50 management approached this season very cautiously, with

1 implementation of exceptionally conservative management
2 actions that restricted Chinook subsistence harvest and
3 somewhat higher expected return of Chinook, most Alaska
4 escapement objectives were attained and the U.S.,
5 Canada treaty agreement was met.

6
7 Likewise, summer chum run came in an
8 average size and all escapement goals were met. Fall
9 season stocks provided liberal opportunities for
10 subsistence harvest and a surplus for commercial
11 harvest. Fall chum are expected to meet or exceed
12 escapement objectives and Coho salmon escapement is
13 expected to be sufficient. We're still monitoring, you
14 know, those final runs on the spawning grounds.

15
16 It's recognized that the sacrifices of
17 the Yukon River subsistence community are heavily
18 relied upon for assistance in conserving these Chinook
19 runs. To sustain this important resource, fishermen
20 incurred a significant hardship through reduced harvest
21 and using and shifting to any fish and gear types.
22 Given the trend in Chinook runs in recent years, we
23 will continue to work with fishermen, interested
24 parties to develop conservative strategies with the
25 primary goal to provide for escapement needs and
26 subsistence priorities during these low runs. And we
27 continue to look ways to accommodate fishing
28 opportunities in your area.

29
30 Additional notes here is that --
31 particularly to this RAC or this Council is that pre-
32 season we had a meeting going to Drainage-wide
33 participate stakeholders. We tried to convene in
34 Anchorage as we have in the last few years and tried to
35 see if people have ways that we can tweak how we apply
36 rules throughout the season that would benefit them or
37 impact them the least and still conserve fish. One of
38 them was the acceptance by many stakeholders to allow
39 District 5 to fish a little bit prior to the first
40 pulse, still in regulation. We do need to protect the
41 first pulse of Chinook, but wherein the lower river we
42 closed subsistence fishing on Chinook right from the
43 first fish when they started entering we closed, Up-
44 river we allowed them to catch a few prior to that
45 first pulse. And then also in-season when there was --
46 in between. I think there was twice in between
47 significant pulses, we did allow a brief opportunity
48 with six-inch nets to catch something in there. And so
49 there was a Drainage-wide acceptance. Your fishermen
50 counterparts in other parts of the river supported some

1 additional fishing in the upper river. And partly that
2 was in recognition that they're getting some acceptance
3 to target summer chum and they cannot help avoid
4 harvesting some Chinook in that process. So it's a
5 give and take. And I think we've worked well
6 throughout the Drainage. It's not just your area.
7 It's a shared resource. And so it's important to work
8 with them.

9
10 We also tried another thing this year,
11 was the 5A. Some of you may or may not be familiar,
12 but District 5 is divided into many -- into four
13 different sub-districts. 5A and 5B is right around the
14 community of Tanana. On the north bank is 5B. We
15 think that commonly the fish swimming on the south bank
16 are bound for the Tanana River. That stock can
17 tolerate just a slight, little bit more harvest of
18 Chinook than we're thinking the main stem stocks bound
19 for Canada can. And so there was some opportunity that
20 we opened 5A to allow people in that area to fish just
21 briefly and get some opportunity there, where was none.

22
23
24 Well, there's many different things we
25 did. We tweak a lot of the different things trying to
26 work with people throughout the community. But again
27 the ASL information, I think Stephanie can speak to
28 that. And then the Porcupine closure, I think Andrew
29 mentioned that, for fall chum was another big thing
30 that we did. Many of you on the Yukon River Panel
31 understand that the Porcupine has been falling short in
32 their fall chum runs in recent years. And we're not
33 certain why that is, but I think that we're left with
34 trying to protect that in some way. Doing what we can
35 because they are falling quite a bit short of their
36 goal. And so one thing was to close the Porcupine
37 River. Fish and Game did go up there in the season,
38 trying to work with -- meet with the community at Fork
39 Yukon. And that area the -- the river is particularly
40 braided. And so we wanted to close the Porcupine
41 River, but we worked with the communities trying to
42 identify recognizable locations where you could --
43 there's at least three miles to the Porcupine and
44 understanding and demarking where those closure areas
45 would be, work was important.

46
47 We also left the tributaries -- the
48 Black River and the Coleen and the other ones we did
49 not close. We left those open. And also allowed them
50 -- people out there to use four-inch nets or less in

1 that area just so that they did have something. We
2 weren't leaving them completely stranded.

3

4 So Stephanie, anything else?

5

6 DR. SCHMIDT: Thanks, Fred.

7

8 I'll try and keep this brief. I have
9 three points that I want to make. And one is what Fred
10 referred to. And I think Virgil maybe had a concern
11 about this in his opening comments yesterday, was about
12 the quality of escapement of those fish that are making
13 it out into the spawning grounds, in particular those
14 king salmon that are headed to Canada.

15

16 This year we had -- we estimated that
17 of those fish that passed the sonar project near the
18 border, six percent were age four fish, 35 percent were
19 age five fish, 57 percent were age six fish, and then
20 two percent were age seven. Of the fish sampled, 44
21 percent of them are female. I'll note that the
22 percentage of age six and the percentage of female that
23 did cross the border this year are higher than average.
24 And so we did have slightly better quality of
25 escapement this year than what we had last year. I
26 know that was a big concern last year because there
27 were a lot of five-year olds and more males than we
28 were anticipating. So I'll make that point.

29

30 And then I want to end on two positive
31 notes. Following up a bit on what Fred said with our
32 pre-season planning meeting, when the participants of
33 that meeting from up and down the river came together
34 and made a decision and agreed to allow some fishing
35 for especially Sub-District 5D on the front end of the
36 king salmon run. And at that meeting they talked about
37 -- we called that part of the run the tricklers. The
38 first fish that are kind of trickling in. It's not a
39 big group of fish. They're just slowly starting to
40 come in. It's before the first pulse. And at that
41 meeting it was decided to allow 5D to have some
42 opportunity on those fish, recognizing that they would
43 likely be closed for the rest of the season and they
44 don't have another species summer chum salmon to
45 target. And I felt that was really a tremendous and
46 noteworthy decision, an accomplishment, because it
47 recognized that we need to take a whole river approach.
48 We can't just think about our own section, but think
49 about people up-river, down river. How this is -- how
50 all of these decisions and regulation affecting

1 everyone as a whole. And I just want to commend the
2 fishermen for that.

3

4 And people didn't catch a lot on that
5 front end. I talked with Rhonda and I spoke with
6 Andrew and they caught a couple here and there. It was
7 enough to have dinner. But people were really
8 appreciative of having an opportunity on that front
9 end. And I bring that up just in light because we are
10 facing a Board of Fish year. And I've found in my very
11 short time with the Department that Board of Fish years
12 tend to polarize us. And I want everyone to head into
13 discussion of proposals and this Board of Fish meeting
14 coming up in January that let's try and take a whole
15 river approach to this and think about how we can work
16 together on addressing these -- the low Chinook salmon
17 population that we're seeing.

18

19 And then lastly I want to end on a
20 little bit of a positive note as well. That, you know,
21 there's concern of how many Chinook salmon did go
22 across the border into Canada. It was well above the
23 upper end of the escapement objective. We had
24 approximately 84,000 Chinook salmon make it across the
25 border. And that means that those are Chinook salmon
26 that Alaska fishermen didn't harvest. And I absolutely
27 recognize that that's a lost opportunity for many
28 subsistence people up and down the river. And it's
29 quite unfortunate that that happened. Assessment in
30 the lower river indicated a very weak run and so we had
31 to maintain a conservative approach. And then it's
32 1,000 miles in between our sonar project down in the
33 lower river up to our sonar project at the border.
34 That's our next look at how this run is doing. And
35 it's very difficult to figure out what's happening in
36 between there.

37

38 Once we did discover that the run was
39 better than anticipated, we tried to provide as much
40 opportunity as we could especially again in Sub-
41 District 5D to harvest the remaining Chinook salmon in
42 whatever quality you could find moving through that
43 area.

44

45 The positive note of this is despite --
46 you know, even though we couldn't get people fishing on
47 those fish more, there are more Chinook salmon that
48 came back this year than we anticipated. And that's a
49 good thing. That's a good sign that things are
50 starting to turn around slowly. I don't want us to

1 move into next summer and say it's going to be all out,
2 gun slinging, we're going to catch everything that's
3 there. But I want us to recognize and be hopeful that
4 we're out of the dark days of 2012, 2013. And
5 hopefully this means good things in the future. Of
6 course getting fish on the spawning grounds is always
7 good. Meeting those goals is always good. It means
8 we're going to hopefully see better returns from those
9 fish that are spawning.

10

11 And we're seeing more juveniles in the
12 Bering Sea. More juvenile Chinook salmon. And so far
13 the correlation between the number of juveniles that we
14 see in the Bering Sea is correlating really well to how
15 many adult Chinook salmon are returning. And so the
16 fact that we're seeing more juveniles hopefully means
17 then we'll see more adults coming back to the Yukon
18 River in the next three to four years.

19

20 So I want to kind of leave you with
21 that ray of hope, that hopefully, you know, we can
22 start to put more Chinook salmon on your fish racks in
23 the coming years.

24

MADAME CHAIR ENSTMINGER: Thank you.

26

Any questions.

27

28

Rhonda.

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MADAME CHAIR ENSTMINGER: Virgil.

1 Donald next.

2

3 MR. UMPHENOUR: Again my question is to
4 Stephanie. Dr. Schmidt, which sonar do you think is
5 not working correctly, Pilot or the border.

6

7 (Laughter)

8

9 DR. SCHMIDT: Through the Chair, thanks
10 for putting me in the hot seat, Virgil.

11

12 If you speak with our sonar staff, we
13 have much more reliability in the estimates that are
14 provided at the sonar project near the border. The
15 bottom of the river is much more stable there. We have
16 more confidence in the ability for the sonar to be able
17 to count all the fish that are moving through there.
18 You don't have issues of multiple species moving by and
19 then you have to apportion out that. And so there is a
20 lot more confidence. There are less variable at the
21 sonar project near the border that would create a lot
22 of data uncertainty. And so if you speak to our sonar
23 staff, they would say that the sonar project at the
24 border was more accurate.

25

26 MR. UMPHENOUR: That leads me to one
27 final question. What do you think the confidence
28 interval is for the sonar at Pilot Station. And has
29 anyone ever tried to figure that out.

30

31 DR. SCHMIDT: Through the Chair, we
32 actually -- the sonar project does provide estimates 90
33 percent confidence intervals on those cumulative
34 passages estimates each day. And so that was one of
35 the things that we looked at this summer, is that --
36 not just the midpoint range that you get in your report
37 that gets emailed to you. But we look at the range --
38 the 90 percent confidence interval range. That low
39 end, that high end.

40

41 Now, we went into the season thinking
42 that we would be at the low end of our pre-season
43 outlook. And so we were looking more at that lower to
44 middle range. And what likely happened is -- and what
45 did happen is we were at the upper end of that range
46 most likely.

47

48 MR. UMPHENOUR: Thank you.

49

50 Madame Chair.

1 MADAME CHAIR ENSTMINGER: Donald.

2

3 MR. WOODRUFF: Thank you, Madame Chair.

4

5

6 This is just informational. That, you
7 know, Eagle has been voluntarily not fishing for like
8 five years. Since 2009 or so. And this year I
9 contacted -- when I first saw the first opening, I
10 contacted the fishers. And for the most part, they
11 were still on board with not fishing. They didn't put
12 their fish wheels in. And I put a net out and used a
13 five and a half inch mesh. And I caught some nice
14 jacks. Small fish. And I was really appreciative of
15 that. And I think that worked very well. But there
16 were also people that were putting seven and a half
17 inch mesh in. And I think that if you're going to make
18 a six-inch mesh restriction, then enforcement needs to
19 check. And I'm not the cops, so I'm not going to do
20 that. I have to live there. I can't turn my neighbors
21 in.

22

23 (Laughter)

24

25 MR. WOODRUFF: So if you're going to
26 put a six-inch mesh in, which I think worked very well,
27 and we did get some fish for the table, then
28 enforcement needs to come up and do some checking.
29 Thank you.

30

31 MADAME CHAIR ENSTMINGER: Andy.

32

33 MR. BASSICH: Thank you.

34

35 I just wanted to commend Dr. Schmidt.
36 I really thought from what I saw and the long history
37 we have with trying to get people to work together
38 along the river, I thought we had a very good year of
39 managing the fisheries. And quite frankly, I don't see
40 a problem with fish above our goals -- our escapement
41 goals into Canada. Going above those escapement goals
42 at this point in time and trying to rebuild, I don't
43 see that as a negative. I see that as banking for the
44 future. And since we have people on board right now
45 river-wide doing the conservation, I think that's a
46 positive. That should not be looked at as a negative.
47 In the past, we always look at maximum sustained yield.
48 And I think that contributed to why we're in the
49 position we're in right now in this fisheries.

50

1 And so just my personal view. I think
2 you should be proud for doing the job of getting the
3 fish to the people to the extent that you were able to,
4 meeting escapement goals, and actually going a little
5 bit above that. Because there are a lot of
6 uncertainties still on quality of escapement and
7 there's still an awful lot of uncertainty about what is
8 the proper escapement goal into Canada. We don't know.
9 And so we're playing -- this year you did a great job
10 of playing it on the safe side.

11
12 I think you did an excellent job and I
13 think that -- while I'm speaking right now, I want to
14 say the same thing about the fall chum as well. I
15 think the managers did a very good job. And it's a
16 very tough job to do that. It did impact us up in the
17 upper river a little bit time-wise, but same thing.
18 They got fish to the people. If you wanted to get out
19 and work and get the fish, you got it. And they met
20 escapement goals.

21
22 And so I just wanted to put that on the
23 record, Madame Chair. Thank you.

24
25 MADAME CHAIR ENSTMINGER: All right.
26 Any other questions. Comments.

27
28 (No comments)

29
30 MADAME CHAIR ENSTMINGER: Okay. Thank
31 you.

32
33 Now, I just have a question of the
34 Council. Any of these Board of Fish proposals involve
35 Stephanie Schmidt. That you would want her here.
36 Because 1:30, she is on a plane out of here.

37
38 114 was yours. And do you -- would you
39 like to take that up right now, while they're here. Or
40 does it not involve -- I haven't looked at it. Turn
41 your mic on, Don.

42
43 MR. WOODRUFF: Okay. Thank you, Madame
44 Chair.

45
46 This has to do with subsistence fishing
47 permits in Area 5. And the proponent states that he
48 wants fishing permits for the whole district. And all
49 the road accessible district already has fishing
50 permits. And he wants a community type of permit. And

1 for me, that only causes conflict in the community.
2 How are you going to get the chief to delegate these
3 kind of fish and where the permits -- who's going to
4 get the permits. And where are they going to go in the
5 freezer. And who's going to get them.

6
7 It's a very divisive method in the
8 community and I don't see this as a valid proposal. I
9 think it's a destructive proposal. Thank you.

10
11 MADAME CHAIR ENSTMINGER: So do you
12 want to take that proposal up right now?

13
14 MR. WOODRUFF: Yes.

15
16 MADAME CHAIR ENSTMINGER: Okay. Do I
17 hear a motion then.

18
19 MR. WOODRUFF: I make a motion that we
20 adopt.....

21
22 MADAME CHAIR ENSTMINGER: Uh-huh.

23
24 MR. GLANZ: Second.

25
26 MR. WOODRUFF:number 114.

27
28 MR. GLANZ: I'll second it.

29
30 MADAME CHAIR ENSTMINGER: Okay. Now,
31 discussion. And we have people here that can speak to
32 that.

33
34 Okay. Go ahead, Stephanie.

35
36 DR. SCHMIDT: I can simply provide more
37 information on the proposal for Council Members if they
38 want to hear it. If you haven't had a chance to read
39 the proposals.

40
41 MADAME CHAIR ENSTMINGER: Donald, do
42 you just want to speak to the motion a little further?

43
44 MR. WOODRUFF: Beg your pardon?

45
46 MADAME CHAIR ENSTMINGER: Did you want
47 to speak to the motion any more?

48
49 MR. WOODRUFF: No.

50

1 MADAME CHAIR ENSTMINGER: Okay. So do
2 you have a question of anyone. It kind of was, I
3 guess. Do you have a question, to ask them who's going
4 to administrate it?

5
6 MR. WOODRUFF: Stephanie, if you can
7 enlighten us a little bit on this proposal.

8
9 DR. SCHMIDT: Sure. I can simply,
10 through the Chair, tell you what this proposal would
11 do. As you say, it would require subsistence salmon
12 fishing permits in all of District 5 in the Yukon area.
13 And it would also set permit limits for king salmon
14 during times of king salmon conservation.

15
16 Just so folks know, the current
17 regulations require subsistence salmon permits in
18 certain areas of the Yukon River, as Don alluded to.
19 And they're all road system areas. No subsistence
20 salmon permits are required in the remainder of the
21 Yukon area. If this proposal were to be adopted, all
22 subsistence salmon fishermen in District 5 would be
23 required to obtain a subsistence salmon fishing permit.
24 It would allow implementation of subsistence king
25 salmon permit limits in District 5 during low king
26 salmon runs. It would allow closer and more adaptive
27 management in an area subject to more subsistence
28 fishing restrictions in recent years of low king salmon
29 run sizes. Permit limit stipulations would need to be
30 defined during times of king salmon conservation.

31
32 I believe the proponent here -- what he
33 was trying to do. And, you know, I'll put myself in
34 his shoes. Perhaps what the proponent was trying to do
35 here is recognize that District 5 gets restricted all
36 the time when we have low king salmon runs. It's our
37 last chance to ensure that more fish are headed across
38 the border and so oftentimes ends up getting restricted
39 the most. The intent of this, what he was looking for
40 was to in those -- during those times, instead of just
41 closing all of District 5, saying use this permit.
42 Each person who has a permit gets -- and the limit
43 would be set. Either the Board is going to set that or
44 the Department. They could give the Department ability
45 to set it by emergency order. Let's say it's set at 30
46 king salmon. And then that way, that's a way to allow
47 District 5 some harvest during low king salmon runs, as
48 opposed to you're just closed.

49
50 MADAME CHAIR ENSTMINGER: Andy.

1 MR. BASSICH: Yeah. Thank you. Thank
2 you for clarifying that. Because I think a lot of
3 people are misinterpreting that. I see this as a
4 proposal that's actually going to give the managers and
5 the Department the ability to actually allow limited
6 harvest during conservation times. So in effect it's
7 not closing us. It's allowing the Department to
8 recognize that small harvests could be prosecuted in
9 various Villages at various times in the run.

10
11 Basically, what it's doing is
12 essentially doing what the Department did early this
13 year in allowing some fishing prior to the main pulses
14 coming in. So I see this as a positive thing for
15 people to be able to obtain a few salmon. But the way
16 it's written, it can very easily be misinterpreted.
17 But this is actually a very positive thing for people
18 in 5Y. Because in the past, they wouldn't -- they --
19 it's such a large district. It was very difficult to
20 try and manage it as a district. It had to be broken
21 down. This would allow them to break it down by
22 community and by individual.

23
24 It's not creating community quotas.
25 There's nothing in my regulations, to my understanding,
26 that would allow for community quotas. This is
27 allowing individuals some harvest.

28
29 MADAME CHAIR ENSTMINGER: Right.

30
31 MR. BASSICH: Madame Chair.

32
33 MADAME CHAIR ENSTMINGER: Fred had
34 something to add.

35
36 MR. BUE: Yeah. I think Andy's last
37 point was -- between Don and Andy, I think it was a --
38 Gene had sent out some options. Either a community
39 quota or a permit. But I think that just to add more
40 thought to it -- I'm not taking a position or anything.
41 We have no official positions at this time. But it
42 does require some allocative decision-making. You need
43 to know ahead of time when you're issuing permits prior
44 to the season what sort of surplus you may have
45 available. What level of harvest you may be allowable.
46 Even if the run comes in before you have confidence in
47 the assessment, you're issuing a permit. So that's an
48 element to think about.

49
50 And then like I said, sometimes you

1 don't always know you even have a surplus available.
2 And so issuing a permit is -- people would still have
3 to be aware that we could close it off. Even though
4 you have a permit, it still potentially could get
5 closed. And I guess I'll just leave it at that.

6

7 Thanks, Madame Chair.

8

9 MADAME CHAIR ENSTMINGER: Don -- or
10 Bill.

11

12 MR. GLANZ: Yes. When we had that Tri-
13 Salmon Council and there was nine of us that went down
14 and had the meetings. And we were all for it. And
15 everybody from Circle down through it out. They didn't
16 want nothing to do with the reporting. Because their
17 biggest question was who's going to fill them out.
18 When are they going to fill them out. Daily, weekly,
19 monthly, yearly? And I mean there was nine of us in
20 that meeting and we all agreed 100 percent, but not one
21 Village supported that issue when we put it out there.

22

23

24 So it's a fine idea, but it is not
25 going to work. They won't even report one dall sheep
26 harvest up there in the Village. I know they're not
27 going to report salmon. I mean, you know, I've been
28 with this, like I say, ten years on this and it's just
29 the way it is, guys. The minute you bring up -- where
30 I used to work, be a big accident. And I'd pull up on
31 them and they'd say yeah, this guy did this and this
32 guy did that. And I'd go and what's your name. Who
33 was I talking to, you know.

34

35 So I just got to -- I know it's a fine
36 idea. I just don't think it's going to work. Because
37 you're not going to get end reports. That's about all
38 I got.

39

40 MADAME CHAIR ENSTMINGER: Any other
41 discussion.

42

43 Andrew.

44

45 MR. FIRMIN: I see Andy's point on the
46 merits of this, but I'm with Bill. I mean you'd have
47 to pay people to come pick these up and pay them again
48 to fill them out and drop it off. And I think you'd
49 probably start a riot if you tried to make everybody do
50 on in the Yukon Flats.

1 But -- and just for that reason I'm
2 going to oppose it. But I do see the merits and I do
3 like the idea of it though. Because it does have fine
4 points to it, but it just will never happen in the
5 short term.

6
7 MADAME CHAIR ENSTMINGER: I just have a
8 quick question. You were able to do that this past
9 season without the permit. Or was I misunderstanding.

10
11 DR. SCHMIDT: The way that we allowed
12 some small harvest in Sub-District 5D this season is it
13 was agreed upon at that pre-season meeting by fishermen
14 up and down the river, to allow them to have access to
15 those tricklers.

16
17 MADAME CHAIR ENSTMINGER: So it did
18 happen. Yes.

19
20 DR. SCHMIDT: Uh-huh. (Affirmative)

21
22 MADAME CHAIR ENSTMINGER: Thank you.

23
24 Virgil.

25
26 MR. UMPHENOUR: This proposal has been
27 before the Board many times and written in different
28 ways. And it would have to be -- the Board will have
29 to decide on this proposal if they want to re-write the
30 proposal. I think it's possible. I know -- but
31 Subsistence Division, it's too bad that we don't have
32 Caroline here. Because.....

33
34 (Phone interruption)

35
36 MR. UMPHENOUR: On this issue -- I
37 think maybe three years ago. I'm not sure. Because
38 the Fairbanks AC put in a proposal. We've done it a
39 couple of times. To require people to just turn in
40 their catch calendars. To fill out their catch
41 calendar every day, which everyone gets anyway. And I
42 know that the guys from Eagle were for it because they
43 have to have a permit. And at the places where people
44 have to have permits, they were for it. But the other
45 people didn't want to do it. And so this has been
46 around and around a number of times, this same exact
47 issue. So I guess this just puts it before the Board
48 again in a different form.

49
50 Madame Chair.

1 MADAME CHAIR ENSTMINGER: Andrew.
2
3 MR. FIRMIN: I'd just like to add that
4 this kind of goes back towards some testimony we heard
5 earlier on the mistrust of research and how the data
6 will be used after that. Because later on down the
7 line, there are people that -- somebody's going to say
8 in one of these analysis, they're going to say well,
9 look. You got by with only ten fish for how many
10 years. That's all you ever need now. There's your
11 quota. And they're going to sign off on it and turn it
12 into a regulation. And that's another reason why I
13 don't want to see that. I just wanted to add that.
14 And with that, I'd call for the.....
15
16 MADAME CHAIR ENSTMINGER: Rhonda.
17
18 MS. PITKA: My question is.....
19
20 MADAME CHAIR ENSTMINGER: Oh, I'm
21 sorry. You called for the question.
22
23 MS. PITKA: Oh, sorry.
24
25 MADAME CHAIR ENSTMINGER: He did. Uh-
26 huh.
27
28 MS. PITKA: I'm sorry. My question is
29 who would pass out the permits. Like who would be the
30 person that does that. Would that be you guys or
31 somebody else.
32
33 DR. SCHMIDT: Through the Chair, the
34 way that our permit system is currently managed is it
35 goes through our Fairbanks office. We have Staff who
36 travel to some of the communities and hand out permits
37 or they get mailed out. But we try and travel to the
38 communities and hand them out. And tell people about
39 the permit stipulations.
40
41 (Phone interruption)
42
43 MADAME CHAIR ENSTMINGER: Somebody out
44 in the online land needs to press star six. Because
45 you're making a lot of noise.
46
47 (Phone interruption)
48
49 MADAME CHAIR ENSTMINGER: Thank you.
50

1 (Laughter)

2

3 DR. SCHMIDT: So it would be
4 administered through the Department of Fish and Game.
5 It's a costly process to administer permits. I will
6 say that. The Department is developing their comments
7 on all of these proposals, so I can't give a definitive
8 stance one way or another. It's still going through
9 review. But that is a concern, is the cost of
10 something like that.

11

12 MADAME CHAIR ENSTMINGER: Andy, then
13 Andrew.

14

15 MR. BASSICH: So given the earlier
16 discussion about how we were able to open up this year,
17 do you foresee that in this next coming fishing season,
18 if you foresee in your projections a harvestable
19 surplus, that you might be able to initiate something
20 similar to like what you did this year in 5YD, as far
21 as allowing communities -- would you be able to break
22 it up into sub-districts or would you do it by
23 community. I know you can divide 5D into sub-
24 districts. That has been established, those borders.
25 So would you be able.

26

27 I guess what I'm asking is would you be
28 able to do something similar this upcoming year without
29 the permit system. And what advantage would the permit
30 system have. Is it just more surgical or is it more to
31 control the total number of fish that would be
32 harvested. That's the way I see it.

33

34 DR. SCHMIDT: Through the Chair, if the
35 run size comes in like it did this past year, I would
36 definitely anticipate we could implement something
37 similar in this coming year. We'll have our pre-season
38 run projections, you know, just after the start of the
39 year. Kind of right when Board of Fish is starting up.
40 And so we'll know then. Kind of start developing a
41 management plan at that time.

42

43 And then your second question about is
44 this more surgical or is it more about just knowing how
45 many fish are going to be harvested. I think it's a
46 little bit of both in this case. I think that's what
47 the intent of the proposal is.

48

49 MADAME CHAIR ENSTMINGER: Andrew.

50

1 MR. FIRMIN: I'd like to call for the
2 question.
3
4 MADAME CHAIR ENSTMINGER: Okay. The
5 question has been called for. All in favor of the
6 Board of Fish Proposal 114, say aye.
7
8 IN UNISON: Aye.
9
10 MADAME CHAIR ENSTMINGER: I hear two
11 ayes. All opposed.
12
13 IN UNISON: Aye.
14
15 MADAME CHAIR ENSTMINGER: And I don't
16 think we really need a roll call though. Oppose wins.
17
18 All right. Do we have anything else to
19 take up before lunch. Let's call it lunch break and be
20 back at 1:30.
21
22 (Off record)
23
24 (On record)
25
26 MADAME CHAIR ENSTMINGER: Council, we
27 have a couple people missing, but a proposal we put in
28 on the Board of Fish proposals was Proposal 110. And
29 then there was -- and that's in the handout from Board
30 of Fish Proposals.
31
32 And also there was a request for 184
33 and 135. So if we could -- I have one, two, three,
34 four, five, six of us here. Missing one, two, three.
35
36 Well, 110 would be fairly easy for us
37 to do right now, I believe. We're just going to call
38 the meeting back. I have a quorum of six. And three
39 will probably be in here shortly.
40
41 So.....
42
43 (Pause)
44
45 MS. PATTON: And Andy would really be
46 the best to speak to this. He.....
47
48 MADAME CHAIR ENSTMINGER: Oh. But
49 Andy's the best to speak to it.
50

1 MS. PATTON: Yeah. He developed the
2 language for it.
3
4 MADAME CHAIR ENSTMINGER: So if he
5 developed the language for it, I believe that he'd
6 probably vote for it. So let's just move along.
7
8 Will you guys be presenting the
9 proposal.
10
11 MR. BUE: Thank you, Madame Chair.
12 Fred Bue, Fish and Wildlife Service. I don't know what
13 to present. I guess we're interested in hearing what
14 you had to say, but I guess one thing -- piece of
15 information you may not be aware of was that Fish and
16 Game submitted an Escapement Goal Report or memo to the
17 Board of Fish just recently. It was brought up at the
18 work session earlier this week. And so it does lay out
19 the new BEG or recommendation for the BEG. This
20 proposal is going to be -- is built around that BEG
21 with thresholds. And so I don't know if -- what you
22 want to hear about that or recognize that that is a
23 little bit of a moving target.
24
25 Oh, excuse me. This actual proposal is
26 for fall chum. I was speaking to summer chum, was the
27 proposal.
28
29 MADAME CHAIR ENSTMINGER: Oh. So
30 disregard.
31
32 MR. BUE: But so disregard.
33
34 MADAME CHAIR ENSTMINGER: Okay.
35
36 MR. BUE: That was for 109. Sorry.
37
38 MADAME CHAIR ENSTMINGER: All right.
39
40 MS. PATTON: So Andy, we're up on
41 the.....
42
43 MADAME CHAIR ENSTMINGER: 110.
44
45 MS. PATTON:fall chum Management
46 Plan Proposal for the Board of Fish. 110.
47
48 MADAME CHAIR ENSTMINGER: Do we have
49 any presentation for the proposal from the Department.
50

1 MS. GLEASON: Hi. This is Christy
2 Gleason, Yukon Area Assistant Manager for Fall Season.
3 Since the Eastern Interior RAC submitted this Proposal,
4 we don't have any preliminary positions for the
5 Department right now. But we can answer questions.
6
7 MADAME CHAIR ENSTMINGER: Okay, Andy.
8 We realize that you helped write this. So do you want
9 to take it up and see.....
10
11 MR. BASSICH: Well, Madame Chair, I
12 think -- I don't think we have to spend a lot of time
13 on it. If it's a Proposal that we drafted from this
14 RAC, I think we're in support of it. And I think we
15 can just move along pretty quickly by just supporting
16 all of the Proposals that this RAC drafted and
17 submitted.
18
19 MADAME CHAIR ENSTMINGER: That sounds
20 like a motion.
21
22 MR. BASSICH: So be it. Motion to
23 approve Proposal 110.
24
25 MR. GLANZ: Second.
26
27 MADAME CHAIR ENSTMINGER: Do we need
28 any other.....
29
30 MR. BASSICH: Reference my earlier
31 comment.
32
33 MADAME CHAIR ENSTMINGER: Yeah. Do we
34 need any other discussion.
35
36 (No comments)
37
38 MR. UMPHENOUR: Question.
39
40 MADAME CHAIR ENSTMINGER: Question's
41 called for. All in favor of 110.
42
43 IN UNISON: Aye.
44
45 MADAME CHAIR ENSTMINGER: Anyone
46 opposed.
47
48 (No opposing votes)
49
50 MADAME CHAIR ENSTMINGER: Passes.

1 So did we have.....

2

3 MR. UMPHENOUR: Move to adopt Proposal
4 184.

5

6 MR. WOODRUFF: Second.

7

8 MR. UMPHENOUR: Okay. You have
9 Proposal 184 in front of you; however, when they
10 printed it in the book -- I don't know how they did
11 this, but they got the dates wrong. It says south of
12 Unimak and Shumigan Island June Salmon Management Plan,
13 repeal the current south Unimak and Shumigan Islands
14 June Management Plan, and re-adopt the Management Plan
15 in place during 2003 to 2004. That should have been
16 2001 to 2003, as follows. Refer to the regulation
17 found in Register 166 of Alaska Fish and Game Laws and
18 Regulations, 2001 to 2003 for 5AAC 09.365 south to
19 Unimak and Shumigan Island June Salmon Management Plan.
20 What is the issue you would like the Board to address
21 and why. Fishing on stocks of concern when the harvest
22 of discrete stocks are unknown. Proposed by the
23 Fairbanks Fish and Game Advisory Committee.

24

25 What I have here is the plan that the
26 Board adopted in January of 2001. And in that plan,
27 first a little bit of history on the -- how many here
28 on our Council even know what that is. The June
29 Fishery in the south -- south of Unimak and Shumigan
30 Islands. Okay. Some people don't know where it is.

31

32 Okay. The majority of the chum salmon
33 especially -- or lots of them come up from the Gulf of
34 Alaska and they go around the Alaska Peninsula. And
35 they go around the south. They go through the Shumigan
36 Islands and then they go around Unimak Island, which is
37 the first big island off the end of the Alaska
38 Peninsula. And then they make the turn. And then they
39 go up into Bristol Bay. They go up to Kuskokwim, up
40 the Yukon, into Norton Sound, and up to Kotzebue.

41

42 I'll just read the first paragraph of
43 this Management Plan. The South Unimak and Shumigan
44 Island June fisheries harvest both sockeye salmon and
45 chum salmon and they mix stock fishery. These stocks
46 of salmon are bound for Bristol Bay and the Arctic
47 Yukon-Kuskokwim Region, as well as other areas across
48 the North Pacific Ocean. These salmon stocks have
49 historically been intercepted in significant numbers
50 along the Alaska Peninsula. To ensure that none of

1 these salmon stocks are over-harvested, it is necessary
2 to restrain the intersection of these stocks as
3 provided in the Management Plan in this section. And
4 consistent with the policy for the management of
5 sustainable salmon fisheries and policy for the
6 management of mixed stock salmon fisheries. And then
7 it goes on to outline the plan.

8
9 The important part of this is I have --
10 and this is an appendix from the Annual Management
11 Report for that fishery. South Unimak and Shumigan
12 Islands June Fisheries Commercial Salmon Harvest by
13 Species in year 1970 to 2012. I'm going to just give
14 you some highs and lows. But they also harvest Chinook
15 salmon there. And many people thought that the Chinook
16 salmon that go up the Yukon do not go into the Gulf of
17 Alaska; however, when the analysis or the study and
18 analysis of ichthyophonus took place on the Yukon River
19 king salmon or Chinook salmon done by Drs. Hershberger
20 and Kocan. Hershberger was I think either from USGS or
21 from Oregon State University. I know that Dr. Kocan
22 was from Washington -- University of Washington.

23
24 But anyway, one of the things they did
25 was they were trying to determine where our Chinook
26 salmon for the Yukon River were getting infected with
27 ichthyophonus. And so salmon normally contract
28 ichthyophonus from eating infected herring. Because
29 herring carry ichthyophonus. And so one of the things
30 they did was they sampled the herring in the Bering
31 Sea. And they could find no ichthyophonus in the
32 herring in the Bering Sea. And so their conclusion was
33 -- and this is written in the -- we had this giant
34 meeting when they started the AYKSSI Project. And you
35 had these scientists from all over the place that
36 attended that thing. It was a two-day seminar. I
37 think maybe Fred was there.

38
39 Were you there, Fred? They weren't
40 there. Okay. But I was there.

41
42 Anyway, and the Director of Comm Fish
43 and a number of people from Comm Fish and Sport Fish as
44 well were at this thing, this big meeting they had.
45 Well, one of the things that came out of that meeting
46 was -- and I wish -- in fact, Fred gave me a copy of
47 this just after we came back from Whitehorse in April
48 about the bear issue. It just so happened that on one
49 of those studies that was in the AMR, it actually
50 pointed that out about the ichthyophonus being -- that

1 the king salmon could not getting ichthyophonus in the
2 Bering Sea. They were probably getting it in the Gulf
3 of Alaska. And I know that in that study -- I don't
4 remember which year it was, but I think it was in '99
5 or 2000, somewhere in there, over 50 percent of the
6 female king salmon caught in District 5 had
7 ichthyophonus. So anyway, their conclusion was that
8 they were going south of the Alaska Peninsula to
9 contract ichthyophonus.

10

11 So I'll go through some of the harvest
12 of Chinook salmon in 1995. Now, we're talking about
13 this fishery takes place starting around the 10th of
14 June and it runs through the end of June. Prior to
15 this Management Plan in 2001, the way they were
16 regulated is they were allowed to catch -- or they had
17 a quota or allocation of 8.3 percent of the Bristol Bay
18 forecast of sockeye salmon. And that's what the
19 fishery was based on. All the chum salmon, Chinook
20 salmon were all by-catch.

21

22 And so they had calculated out how many
23 chum salmon it would take for them to meet their 8.3
24 percent. And they did this based over what historical
25 catches were. And so in -- there was -- our fall chum
26 salmon on the Yukon crashed in '82 really bad. And
27 this was right after -- and you have to understand a
28 little history. Limited entry in Alaska took place in
29 1975, '76, in that time period. And what they did is
30 people that had a history of harvesting salmon
31 commercially, they had to have fish tickets. Then you
32 got awarded points by year in order to get commercial
33 fishing license, so a limited entry permit to
34 commercial fish for salmon.

35

36 And so what ended up happening is
37 people in some areas, Like Area M, fished multiple gear
38 during different times of the year. So some of them
39 fished with a set net. Then they would fish with a --
40 well, first they mainly fished with drift gill nets off
41 their tapes. I know. This is the short version, but
42 you've got to understand the history. So they would
43 fish with multiple gear -- set net, seine, and drift
44 net. But then Alaska got all kinds of money. Mucho
45 dinero. And so they decided no, we're going to create
46 economic development. So what they did is they gave
47 all these people giant loans to buy giant boats. So a
48 guy that had a 24-foot boat with a hand purse seine and
49 a 40-horse kicker on it to fish in bays got to go out
50 and buy a 58-foot limit seiner that killed 200,000

1 pounds of fish in his boat. Got to fish with a big,
2 giant purse seine 2,400 feet long and 119-feet deep.
3 He was just happy as a pig in crap. And he also had
4 though a drift gill net and a set net permit.

5
6 But then we had the boat decision from
7 the Treaties in the 1850s with the Indians in the
8 Pacific West. So Judge Bolt decided well, the United
9 States has to live by that Treaty. Half these salmon
10 belong to the Indians. They don't belong to you white
11 folks. You white folks can't commercial fish anymore.
12 So we've got all these guys down there in Washington
13 and Oregon that can't fish anymore. But they're
14 hardcore fishermen. So what do these guys in Area M
15 do? Well, hell. I'm going to sell my drift gill net
16 permit. I can get a couple hundred grand for it. So
17 he gets a couple hundred grand for his drift gill net
18 permit.

19
20 So then these guys come up from
21 Washington and Oregon and they're hardcore fishermen.
22 They're out there fishing to beat hell. So what ended
23 up happening? Then you can look at these harvest
24 figures to figure it out. The numbers of fishermen
25 fishing more than doubled in Area M. They're
26 harvesting all these migrating socks heading for AYK
27 Region. So we had a big crash of fish in '82. So
28 people got to raising hell. So the Board of Fisheries,
29 what they did. And one thing that happened, the entire
30 Board of Fisheries actually resigned at once over this
31 issue. No. This was in the middle '90s that this --
32 or, yeah. No. The '80s. The middle '80s. I was on
33 the Board in the middle 90's.

34
35 Anyway, so what ended up happening is
36 they put a chum cap on. If you catch 600,000 chums,
37 then we're going to shut your fishery down. So what
38 did they start doing? They started chum chucking,
39 pitching the chums overboard.

40
41 MADAME CHAIR ENSTMINGER: chum
42 chucking.

43
44 MR. UMPHENOUR: chum chucking. That's
45 correct.

46
47 (Laughter)

48
49 MR. UMPHENOUR: That's what they were
50 doing. Because if they made 600,000 or more, it closed

1 the fishery down. So they had two things. 8.2 percent
2 of sockeye or 600,000 chums. Then they get a big
3 forecast for the 1991 fishery. And so they hold this
4 Board of Fish meeting and add a proposal to up their
5 chum cap to 900,000. Well, I went to that Board of
6 Fish meeting in November of '91, I think it was. It
7 was '92 they were going to have this giant amount of
8 sockeye come back.

9
10 Anyway, the Board went ahead and
11 approved that. So a bunch of us were unhappy. People
12 up at Norton Sound were unhappy. People on the Yukon-
13 Kuskokwim were unhappy and Bristol Bay unhappy. So I
14 petitioned the Board. Well, the Board didn't accept my
15 petition, so I said the hell with this. I got with the
16 president of Tanana Chiefs, president of the Kawerak
17 and we over 10,000 signatures on our petition. We gave
18 it to the governor. Well, then the governor the
19 commissioner of Fish and Game to have a special meeting
20 to hear our petition. So about 85 or 90 of us went to
21 Juneau and we did spend a week there and did that.

22
23 Anyway, I got put on the Board of
24 Fisheries right after that happened.

25
26 (Laughter)

27
28 MR. UMPHENOUR: And so one of the
29 things I wanted was I wanted the catch or the harvest
30 of the commercial fishermen by discrete fishermen. And
31 the Department can run off a printoff of that. And
32 they just have the number. So the only person that can
33 really identify them is the Department. So it took me
34 I think about five years. Finally, the Attorney
35 General made a decision that they should give that to
36 the Board, so the Board could see if their management
37 plans are working.

38
39 Anyway, we got that. We had it on the
40 record, out for the public to see it for two days.
41 Then the attorney -- a guy named Mike Stanley from
42 Juneau for concerned Area M fisherman.....

43
44 (Phone interruption)

45
46 MADAME CHAIR ENSTMINGER: Hey.

47
48 MR. UMPHENOUR: I thought I turned it
49 off.

50

1 MADAME CHAIR ENSTMINGER: That person's
2 telling you the short version. So.....

3
4 MR. UMPHENOUR: Okay. I'm almost done.

5
6 (Laughter)

7
8 MR. UMPHENOUR: Anyway, so what happens
9 is he threatened to sue the Board.

10
11 (Phone interruption)

12
13 MADAME CHAIR ENSTMINGER: It's still
14 singing.

15
16 (Laughter)

17
18 MR. UMPHENOUR: And the State because
19 he said it was confidential information. Anyway, so
20 the State caved under. But I'm going to give you an
21 example. And I still have the -- I have about three
22 copies of that whole thing. It's about this thick.
23 Ten years worth of fish ticket data.

24
25 One fisherman -- a drift gill net
26 fisherman in the south Unimak fishery in two weeks
27 caught over 8,400 sockeye and zero chums, that he sold.
28 Other fishermen fishing the same stat area at the exact
29 same time caught more chums than sockeye. So the Board
30 passed this Management Plan. What it did is reduced
31 them. It did away with all these allocations. 8.3
32 percent, the chum cap, all that other meaningless stuff
33 that there was no way to enforce it, did away with all
34 that and gave them three sixteen-hour fishing periods a
35 week instead of seven days a week, twenty-four hours a
36 day and lie about how many fish you catch or throw them
37 overboard, the ones that aren't worth as much money.

38
39 So I'll give you some -- I'm going to
40 just give you some ranges and the years that these fish
41 were caught.

42
43 MADAME CHAIR ENSTMINGER: Short.

44
45 MR. UMPHENOUR: Just real quick. Okay.
46 First, I'll go to Chinook salmon. In 1983 -- and we're
47 talking about the last two weeks of June -- 13,456.
48 1990, 10,332. 1995, 14,747. We'll get down. I'll
49 just do the last few years. 2009, 38,036. 2010,
50 31,018. '11, 34,064. 2012, 6,371. That's Chinook

1 salmon. That's not counting the chum salmon. The chum
2 salmon range from -- well, in 2010 they reported
3 271,000. But there's other years where they've caught
4 over 1,000,000. And so what this proposal would do is
5 just go back to what the Board did in 2001, which only
6 lasted two years -- three years that Management Plan
7 was in effect.

8

9
10 And then the composition of the Board
11 changed. I got off the Board in 2002. Dr. White got
12 off the Board same time I did and so did Dan Coffey.
13 And we were the guys that pushed that Management Plan
14 through and got it passed. But we did it with science
15 and we did it with allocation. And that is what should
16 happen again. Because it's totally ridiculous for
17 people -- and what they did when they did away with the
18 Management Plan is they increased the fishing time by
19 285 percent over what it was with three sixteen-hour
20 periods a day, is what they did. And these are fishing
21 on stocks of unknown because they're all migratory
22 stocks. None of them are local stocks. Every bit of
23 them, they're fishing on fish heading someplace. And
24 they don't know the stock status of those fisheries.
25 And in our case where we're closed and can't even catch
26 one to eat.

26

27 Madame Chair.

28

29 MADAME CHAIR ENSTMINGER: There went my
30 memory.

31

32 MR. UMPHENOUR: I was speaking to a
33 motion.

34

35 MADAME CHAIR ENSTMINGER: I was trying
36 to get some help from Eva, but she didn't help me
37 there. Do we have a motion on the floor? All right.

38

39 Thank you, Virgil, for the short
40 version.

41

42 (Laughter)

43

44 MADAME CHAIR ENSTMINGER: Is there any
45 other speaking to the motion.

46

47 (No comments)

48

49 MR. WOODRUFF: Call for the question.

50

1 MADAME CHAIR ENSTMINGER: Question's
2 been called for. All in favor of Proposal 184 by the
3 Fish Board.
4
5 IN UNISON: Aye.
6
7 MADAME CHAIR ENSTMINGER: Anyone
8 opposed.
9
10 (No opposing votes)
11
12 MADAME CHAIR ENSTMINGER: Okay.
13
14 You're our historian, Virgil.
15
16 Okay. The next one.....
17
18 MR. UMPHENOUR: Okay. We have a list
19 of proposals that have been run off for us.
20
21 MADAME CHAIR ENSTMINGER: Yeah.
22
23 MR. UMPHENOUR: And maybe we should
24 just run through all of them real quick. And.....
25
26 MADAME CHAIR ENSTMINGER: Uh-huh.
27
28 MR. UMPHENOUR:if we're going to
29 take action on them, we can. And if not, we can just
30 skip over them.
31
32 MADAME CHAIR ENSTMINGER: Well, I would
33 just assume we don't go through all of these one at a
34 time. I think that it would be better -- we already
35 voted on 110, which was our Proposal. Does anyone have
36 any other proposals that they want to take up for the
37 Board of Fish. We have one more that was asked, 135,
38 which is a separate piece of paper.
39
40 MR. UMPHENOUR: 135?
41
42 MADAME CHAIR ENSTMINGER: Yes. So 135
43 is season bag limits, method and means, Tanana River
44 area. Prohibit the set lines at Grizzly Lake and Jack
45 Lakes for burbot set lines.
46
47 MR. UMPHENOUR: Okay. Move to adopt
48 Proposal 135.
49
50 MADAME CHAIR ENSTMINGER: I have a

1 motion to approve.
2
3 MR. WOODRUFF: Second.
4
5 MADAME CHAIR ENSTMINGER: And a second.
6 So now discussion.
7
8 MR. UMPHENOUR: I think we have a
9 Staff.....
10
11 MADAME CHAIR ENSTMINGER: We have some
12 people that would like to speak to this from the Park
13 Service. Because this is a Park Service proposal.
14
15 MR. UMPHENOUR: I believe State people
16 want to speak to it, too.
17
18 MADAME CHAIR ENSTMINGER: So they can
19 all come up.
20
21 MR. UMPHENOUR: Audra, don't you want
22 to be up here?
23
24 MS. BRASE: I just want to -- I want to
25 hear what the Park Service has to say.
26
27 MR. UMPHENOUR: You just want to
28 eavesdrop?
29
30 (Laughter)
31
32 MADAME CHAIR ENSTMINGER: Okay. I'll
33 have you present the proposal.
34
35 MR. SARAFIN: Hello. My name is Dave
36 Sarafin. I'm a fish biologist with Wrangell-St. Elias
37 National Park. And, yeah, this is Proposal 135, which
38 would add Grizzly Lake and Jack Lake to the list of
39 waters where Burbot set lines may be used in the Tanana
40 River Drainage.
41
42 And I have -- I think you have the
43 Proposal in front of you. And I also have a short
44 update that has a map included with it, which will help
45 -- and it should be in.....
46
47 MADAME CHAIR ENSTMINGER: Is that the
48 one that we had at the SRC?
49
50 MR. SARAFIN: Yes. It is.

1 MADAME CHAIR ENSTMINGER: Yeah. Did
2 you give to Eva first?
3
4 MR. UMPHENOUR: We have it.
5
6 MADAME CHAIR ENSTMINGER: Or do we
7 have.....
8
9 MR. UMPHENOUR: Yes.
10
11 MADAME CHAIR ENSTMINGER: Is it in this
12 packet right here?
13
14 MR. SARAFIN: It should be in the
15 packet.
16
17 MADAME CHAIR ENSTMINGER: Okay.
18
19 MS. PATTON: Madame Chair, Virgil, it's
20 a separate -- that NPS packet had like four separate
21 pieces of paper, so it's one of the white pieces of
22 paper that was in the NPS packet. It's the one with
23 the map. Sue just kind of -- I saw Sue had it open to
24 the map there.
25
26 MADAME CHAIR ENSTMINGER: Yeah.
27 Because mine was clipped together.
28
29 MS. PATTON: Yeah. We clipped them all
30 together originally, but they could have become
31 unclipped.
32
33 MADAME CHAIR ENSTMINGER: It's a map
34 like this.
35
36 MR. SARAFIN: That looks like it.
37
38 MADAME CHAIR ENSTMINGER: Do you guys
39 have this one. Yeah. Here. Look at mine.
40
41 Go ahead.
42
43 MR. SARAFIN: Okay. So this is a short
44 update. It was proposed by NPS. And primary reason is
45 for conservation concerns we had for the Burbot
46 population in Grizzly Lake.
47
48 Grizzly Lake is a relatively small lake
49 with surface area about 250 acres. It's accessible by
50 winter trail from a fishery at Tanana Lake. But

1 extending the trail about 12 miles up to get to
2 Grizzly, so it's kind of a remote. Either snowmachine
3 in from the Nabesna Road or fly in.

4
5 And the concerns stem from fishing that
6 occurred mainly in 2014, where we heard really
7 unprecedented reports of high levels of fishing in the
8 lake. And a lot of the information spread after we had
9 done an initial population estimate in the lake in 2011
10 and people started to hear about the Burbot in the
11 lake. And that became a popular destination at least
12 during that year. And so we went back in 2014, in the
13 summer after that occurred, and repeated the study.
14 And our population estimate was about 50 percent less
15 number of fish than in 2011. So that's primary reason.

16
17 Secondary reason is in looking at that
18 -- and if you look at the map, the access -- there's a
19 groom trail that runs -- first goes to Jack Lake. Runs
20 along that. So Jack Lake's in the Tanana Drainage and
21 it would be a lake that allows unattended set lines.
22 It then cross -- the groom trail crosses on the way to
23 Tanana and Copper Lake, which are Copper River
24 Drainage. And then there's a trail going up that is
25 passable to Grizzly Lake. Not all years, but different
26 years you can get in there. We don't know the
27 frequency of that. So we're trying to -- yeah. That
28 trail, again, you know, by the time you get to Grizzly,
29 you then cross to where you could use unattended lines.

30
31 So trying to make consistent
32 regulations for this one area, those five lakes. The
33 five lakes that we know have Burbot and Burbot
34 fisheries in them. To avoid public confusing theirs is
35 also a reasoning.

36
37 And I've got some extra details
38 provided on the history. I won't go through all of
39 them, the background support of studies we have on it.
40 Just the highlights. You know, the baseline abundance,
41 2,147 fish. Really high catch per unit effort that
42 year. And then slowly through the next couple of years
43 hearing slightly more reports. We shared the results
44 of the study also. And then in 2014 was the -- when
45 staff of Wrangell-St. Elias and the local Fish and Game
46 office had received reports of substantial high level
47 of Burbot harvest from sportfishermen, including one
48 report of 15 people going in and harvesting 180 Burbot
49 in three days. And yes, also hearing of selectively
50 trying to harvest the larger fish, some of which were

1 aged at over 20 years.

2

3 So it's a small lake and Burbot are
4 relatively long-lived and could be exploited easily
5 from small water bodies. And then yeah, that summer we
6 went in and repeated the study and found that -- came
7 up with a preliminary estimate of 1,068 fish, which was
8 just about 50 percent less.

9

10 Last spring our -- that area didn't
11 receive much snow at all and when it did get snow, the
12 winds blew it kind of clean to the Valley, so we don't
13 know of anyone being able to snowmachine in that year,
14 so we believe that was pretty limited pressure, if at
15 all, from anyone flying in, if they did.

16

17 We went back up last summer just for
18 one trip in we had funding for and just for -- to get
19 length compositions and catch per unit effort data.
20 And then we have a -- in 2016 we plan to revisit with a
21 two-trip mark and recapture for a population abundance
22 estimation there. And on the back, there's a -- this
23 is a length -- a chart by length category for all three
24 years. And one key thing that does stand out on that
25 is there's the big reduction seen between 2011 and
26 subsequent years and the larger fish over 750
27 millimeter. And then the table shows the abundance
28 estimates and kind of summarizes all those findings.

29

30 And I think that's pretty much what I
31 have to present on that, other than what's in the
32 wording of the proposal. So.....

33

34 MADAME CHAIR ENSTMINGER: I would like
35 to point out that the 15 snowmachines were local
36 people, not necessarily sportfish. We would qualify as
37 being a local, rural resident.

38

39 MR. SARAFIN: The report we believe
40 would be they were -- we don't know for sure, but we
41 believe they may not have qualified for rural -- or for
42 Federal subsistence in the Tanana Drainage. They may
43 have been for Copper River Drainage, so there's
44 different qualifying residences.

45

46 MADAME CHAIR ENSTMINGER: Yeah. You
47 might want to make sure. May doesn't work. You need
48 to be sure.

49

50 Okay. I hear questions.

1 Virgil.

2

3 MR. UMPHENOUR: So that -- well, I
4 don't really have much of a question. I know this
5 happened to lake trout as well. It happened all along
6 the Haul Road with lake trout back in the -- after they
7 opened the Haul Road up. Truck drivers would go sit
8 out their set lines on the way to Prudhoe Bay and then
9 check their set lines on the way back. And they wiped
10 out the lake trout in the Galbraith Lake and some of
11 the other lakes, but -- so you're with the Park
12 Service, correct?

13

14 MR. SARAFIN: Yes. I am. I'm a local,
15 rural hire there at the Park Service. I live in
16 Tazlina.

17

18 MR. UMPHENOUR: Thank you.

19

20 MR. ELLIS: Fisheries biologist.

21

22 MR. SARAFIN: Yes. Fisheries.

23

24 MR. UMPHENOUR: Well, I don't really
25 have a question. This is just compelling to me that
26 it's a serious conservation issue that needs to be
27 addressed.

28

29 Madame Chair.

30

31 MADAME CHAIR ENSTMINGER: Any other
32 questions.

33

34 (No comments)

35

36 MADAME CHAIR ENSTMINGER: I'm sorry
37 that Will's not here. I just spent -- this was a
38 subject at our SRC meeting. And the SRC didn't take
39 any action based on the short amount of data. It seems
40 like it would be better -- this is the SRC decided that
41 they would have liked to wait and see if this is just a
42 knee jerk reaction or if -- and there was other means
43 to change regulations if it continued.

44

45 I need to bring this up. Because I
46 remember it and I tried to get it -- this -- the
47 reminder. Okay. Could you please tell us what this
48 is. This was at one of the trail heads.

49

50 MR. SARAFIN: Yes. After we became

1 aware of the issue in April of 2014, that was
2 temporarily posted. It's a clarification of existing
3 Federal Regulations which would apply to the National
4 Park Service lands, which would not allow unattended
5 set lines to be used. So yes, it was placed up. And
6 then decisions were made to back off of posting that
7 and it was then removed. But that was up for a short
8 period of time.

9

10 MADAME CHAIR ENSTMINGER: This was
11 provided to me and then I handed it out to people I
12 know that use that area. And this is something that's
13 been occurring. There wasn't really much snowmachine
14 use in that area until recently. Probably after you
15 did your survey and told everybody there's big Burbot
16 in there. So you might have hurt the situation by that
17 report.

18

19 But 36CFR2.3D1. I'm just going to read
20 it. Because this is what's in regulation. And if I'm
21 hearing you correctly, it was put up and then it was
22 told to bring down. Just to take a chill pill for a
23 minute. In my world, that's how we talk. Fishing in
24 fresh waters in any manner other than by hook and line
25 with rod or reel being closely attended is prohibited.
26 This includes lakes employing waters of the Tanana
27 River Drainage that are within the Park Preserve
28 boundaries. Waters of the mainstream Copper River
29 upstream of the confluence with the Indian Creek and
30 flowing waters east bank of the Copper River
31 Tributaries. All lines fished for Burbot must be
32 closely attended. So that's a Park Regulation,
33 correct?

34

35 MR. SARAFIN: Yes.

36

37 MADAME CHAIR ENSTMINGER: Uh-huh. So
38 the way I'm interpreting that is in an effort to make
39 things consistent, that Grizzly Lake is right next to
40 all these other lakes in the Upper Copper, it would be
41 managed the same. So anybody that doesn't have a --
42 anybody up there fishing with an unattended line would
43 have been illegal anyway by Park Regulations. By State
44 Regulations they were legal. By Park Regulations they
45 would not have been.

46

47 MR. SARAFIN: That's correct. And yes,
48 instead of pushing the issue and bringing that out, we
49 had this concern that what was happening at this small
50 lake and concerns that that could expand as more

1 information spread on it, given good conditions for
2 access it could be a problem. So we chose to go
3 through the State process to pursue State Regulations
4 to recognize these concerns, too. And match the
5 Regulations for that.

6

7 MADAME CHAIR ENSTMINGER: You know,
8 just to further that, did you look at any other lakes
9 in the Park and Preserve that this would qualify,
10 besides Grizzly? In the northern part there in Unit
11 12? Like Turnagain or.....

12

13 MR. SARAFIN: The Board of Fishery
14 Proposal or the Park Service Rule.

15

16 MADAME CHAIR ENSTMINGER: You, the Park
17 Service Rule. How many other lakes would this affect.

18

19 MR. SARAFIN: It would -- well, the
20 existing Park Service Rule was in place for all the
21 lakes within the Park. All the waters within the Park.

22

23 MADAME CHAIR ENSTMINGER: But in Unit
24 12, how many other lakes would this affect. Without a
25 good map, I can't see it or I would know the answer to
26 that.

27

28 MR. SARAFIN: I do.....

29

30 MADAME CHAIR ENSTMINGER: That would be
31 more, wouldn't there. That.....

32

33 MR. SARAFIN: Yes. I do have a.....

34

35 MADAME CHAIR ENSTMINGER: There would
36 be some more.

37

38 MR. SARAFIN: I do have a map of the
39 Park with me that I could present to show spe.....

40

41 MADAME CHAIR ENSTMINGER: So this could
42 become an issue in the future for the other lakes.

43

44 MR. SARAFIN: There is potential when
45 -- since there is a difference in regulations Federally
46 to State, issue could arise, yes. I don't know. I
47 don't know the likelihood of it.

48

49 MADAME CHAIR ENSTMINGER: Yeah.

50

1 MR. SARAFIN: Or what happens with
2 that.
3
4 MADAME CHAIR ENSTMINGER: So that's why
5 the SRC took no action. You wanted to wait and see
6 what happens.
7
8 Virgil.
9
10 MR. UMPHENOUR: Are there lake trout in
11 those lakes as well?
12
13 MR. SARAFIN: We were not able to find
14 any in Grizzly Lake. And I am not familiar enough with
15 what was in Jack Lake in past -- in any lake databases
16 or anything. We have.....
17
18 MADAME CHAIR ENSTMINGER: I could
19 probably safely yes to Jack.
20
21 MR. SARAFIN: Okay.
22
23 MADAME CHAIR ENSTMINGER: Because I
24 think I caught some. Yeah. It's been a long time ago.
25
26
27 Any further questions.
28
29 Will.
30
31 MR. KOEHLER: I don't really have a
32 question so much as a statement. It's fairly well
33 known that there are a number of small details like
34 this in Park Regulation at least in Wrangell-St. Elias
35 our managed by the Park or in the past have been
36 managed very, very loosely, giving a lot of slack to
37 the locals that are there. An example that I can
38 definitely cite is the use of bear containers within
39 the Park has been in general I feel managed by the
40 Rangers very, very wisely in situations where -- in
41 hunting situations where a hunter doesn't have all his
42 things in a bear container and yet he's packed a sheep
43 off the hill and he's got a blood trail coming down to
44 his camp. And obviously he's not going to fit a sheep
45 into a bear container. And so I feel that the Rangers
46 in those situations, at least in the little experience
47 that I've had and the experience I've had with people
48 around me have been -- that I've heard from of people
49 around me, the Rangers have managed that pretty well in
50 that they're willing to be pretty lax on some of that

1 stuff where it kind of makes -- where it doesn't really
2 make sense to enforce that regulation.

3
4 And it's been a very -- it's a very
5 well known practice of people going out and setting set
6 lines for Burbot in this Region. And leaving those set
7 lines, coming back and pulling them up a few hours
8 later or even a day later. And so I would say that
9 from my perspective, the way I understand the issue,
10 I've kind of -- it's kind of always been my
11 understanding that there are some really strict rules
12 that the Park Service has. And for Park Rangers that's
13 a tool in their toolbox to deal with a situation of
14 real abuse. You know, if there's a real problem
15 they've got the tools to deal with it.

16
17 But in this really large, remote Park
18 where, you know, the impacts of one or two people might
19 not be as big as the impacts of a dozen people, they've
20 been willing to manage this more loosely. And that has
21 worked really, really well, I think. And I know from
22 my point has really gone a long way for me, personally,
23 to having, you know, respect for some of the -- respect
24 and trust for the Agency and the way it's managed.
25 It's really -- I think it's really helped heal a lot of
26 old wounds. I think it's been a really wise choice in
27 policy.

28
29 And what I see here is with this State
30 proposal making the areas in the Park with this
31 additional -- if this was to go through, the additional
32 regulation would certainly make the -- what was
33 happening there, it would certainly cease some activity
34 that I don't think in general is a major threat to the
35 resource. Because in general most of this -- most set
36 line fishing is done quite responsibly, from my
37 observation.

38
39 So I guess that's kind of -- I didn't
40 speak that very -- I didn't say that very well, but I
41 think my point is -- is that this seems to be crossing
42 maybe a precedent that we -- kind of a loose policy and
43 crossing into a more strict policy that -- I guess the
44 question is, is it really necessary, would be my
45 question. And I honestly don't know the answer to
46 that. And I'm asking, is this really necessary for the
47 amount of use. I understand that in this particular
48 situation there may have been an issue of -- there may
49 have been an issue of genuine abuse of the resource.
50 But is a broad-reaching regulation that covers this

1 whole area -- is that really necessary. Thank you.

2

3 MR. SARAFIN: Well, to answer that
4 question -- just to clarify, this is -- the Proposal in
5 discussion is not a broad reaching regulation. It's
6 only for Jack Lake and Grizzly Lake, which are right in
7 the same area as Copper, Tanana, and Sheep Lake. And
8 out of concerns, the State back in I think it was '92
9 passed regulations for all lakes within the Copper
10 Basin Drainage to be -- you know, you had to closely
11 attend your line. So it seems like a prudent
12 management step to me, given the same user groups. And
13 why have the one advantage to target two small lakes
14 with set lines go over and fish another lake while your
15 set line's soaking in the other. So it's concerns with
16 what happened the year and that that could happen again
17 and potentially at a higher level. So.....

18

19 MR. KOEHLER: I think I see an area
20 where I've had a misunderstanding. Is that -- I see
21 now, but -- and I remember that now that -- for a
22 moment I forgot and I thought it was for the whole
23 area. But for the two lakes I can see. I'm sorry
24 about that.

25

26 MADAME CHAIR ENSTMINGER: The proposal
27 is just for the two lakes, but the CFR is Park Rule.

28

29 MR. KOEHLER: But that has existed for
30 a long time and has been managed -- and has not been
31 actively enforced for a long time, if I understand it.
32 I mean in my experience.

33

34 MADAME CHAIR ENSTMINGER: Yes. But
35 given what we are frightened about oftentimes, yeah.
36 That's an issue.

37

38 MR. KOEHLER: But are we talking about
39 the proposal or are we talking about the CFR.

40

41 MADAME CHAIR ENSTMINGER: Right now the
42 proposal is what's before us. And this is just
43 information of what it means elsewhere.

44

45 So Virgil.

46

47 MR. UMPHENOUR: Well, I'd like Audra to
48 sit up there because I need to ask her a couple of
49 questions.

50

1 MADAME CHAIR ENSTMINGER: Uh-huh. So
2 it's not other people's Region and they're starting to
3 get weary. But I'm going to allow this.

4
5 MR. UMPHENOUR: Okay, Audra. In the
6 proposal it says that the Upper Copper River Drainage
7 and Tanana River Drainage. Then it says Copper,
8 Tanana, and Sheep Lakes in the Copper River Drainage.
9 And that you can't fish for Burbot with a set line
10 there. That's correct, right?

11
12 MS. BRASE: Correct. Yeah. For the
13 Upper Copper for Susitna, I'm not exactly sure when it
14 happened, but they did remove set lines from
15 Regulation. They -- you know, lines have to be closely
16 attended; however, the over-harvesting -- there was
17 also a higher limit on Burbot back in the day. You
18 could keep 15 fish out of the lakes. So they did two
19 things. They reduced the limit out of the lakes to
20 five fish per day in most lakes. Some it's more strict
21 than that. And they also removed set lines. There was
22 quite a bit of abuse happening in lakes throughout the
23 Drainage. I don't think Tanana and Copper were ones
24 they had huge concerns about. I think they were more
25 like Crosswind, lakes that are on the road system.

26
27 In the Tanana we do have a couple of
28 lakes that we do not allow set lines in. It would be
29 the entire Tangle Lakes system, Fielding Lake, and
30 Harding Lake. And also a very small lake called Tea
31 Lake, which is in the middle of nowhere. We have those
32 stricter regulations on the lakes that are on the road
33 system. That would be Harding, Fielding, and Tangles
34 because we know there's a higher potential for impact
35 there. This lake -- these two lakes, Jack Lake and
36 Grizzly Lake, are both very remote. Well, Jack's not
37 quite as much. But Grizzly is definitely remote.
38 Until recently nobody ever fished there. They didn't
39 know there were Burbot there. And maybe a couple of
40 individuals did. But when the Park Service went in and
41 did their survey, you know, the word got out. Oh,
42 there's these big Burbot there. I was there this last
43 summer -- or this summer with Dave.

44
45 And as somebody who has done work on
46 Tangle Lakes and Fielding Lake, looking at the Burbot
47 populations there, the Burbot population in Grizzly
48 Lake is in great shape. There are beautiful fish.
49 They're big. There's a lot of them. You go to Tangles
50 and Fielding, it's a very situation. You've got a huge

1 different size class. You've got small fish, big fish.
2 Whereas pretty much consistently the fish in Grizzly
3 are all big fish.

4
5 So this is -- you know, this is
6 obviously a Park Service proposal. The State has not
7 dealt a final word on it yet, but, you know, that's why
8 I'm here. To hear what you guys have to say about it.

9
10 MR. UMPHENOUR: So the State -- does
11 the State -- they haven't -- of course you haven't made
12 up Staff comments for the proposals yet, correct?

13
14 MS. BRASE: Correct. We're working on
15 that right now.

16
17 MR. UMPHENOUR: So you can't really say
18 what the State's position might be then.

19
20 MS. BRASE: Correct.

21
22 MR. UMPHENOUR: Thank you.

23
24 MADAME CHAIR ENSTMINGER: Now, I want
25 to remind Council Members. I don't fish the Yukon
26 River. I don't know much about the Yukon River and I
27 rely heavily on you guys for the Yukon River. This is
28 a heavily used area by people in my area that -- people
29 -- not heavily used. But it's -- I know people that
30 utilize these lakes. And they go out and they go
31 fishing. So sometimes it's important to just be a
32 little patient and deal with us on this. And I really
33 appreciate that you do that.

34
35 So I would -- I'm telling you all the
36 info -- we've got all the information. And I'm telling
37 you what the SRC did. So now we have a motion in front
38 of us to adopt the proposal. How do we want to
39 proceed.

40
41 MR. UMPHENOUR: Well, we have to go
42 through that process.

43
44 MADAME CHAIR ENSTMINGER: No. We
45 don't. Not for Fish Board.

46
47 MR. KOEHLER: One more question.

48
49 MADAME CHAIR ENSTMINGER: Yes.

50

1 MR. KOEHLER: I guess my feeling is
2 right now -- and I very much appreciate your comments
3 and clearing up my understanding of the issue. But if
4 my understanding is correct that it's -- if this has
5 been a single incident -- it sounds -- it's my
6 understanding that it was kind of one bad incident that
7 kind of brought this to our attention. And if we're
8 still seeing some good caliber fish in that lake, I
9 think I would probably push to oppose this proposal for
10 now. It doesn't -- it sounds like it might be a good
11 thing to consider for the future. I'm just not sure
12 that maybe one instance is really enough really to say
13 that we should put this restriction unnecessarily
14 forward.

15
16 So that would be my position at this
17 point.

18
19 MADAME CHAIR ENSTMINGER: Anyone else.

20
21 Don.

22
23 MR. WOODRUFF: I'd just like to point
24 out that in the abundance survey in 2011 an estimated
25 50 percent less fish were there. And I want to
26 reiterate that for this Council in their deliberation
27 of this proposal.

28
29 Thank you.

30
31 MADAME CHAIR ENSTMINGER: Yes. But
32 that's not what I heard you say. You said it was
33 healthy. The population was healthy.

34
35 MS. BRASE: In my opinion, it's -- I
36 mean looking -- I've done a lot of Burbot work on a lot
37 of different lakes. And looking at the Tangle Lakes
38 compared to Grizzly Lake, it's a totally different
39 situation. I mean there's a lot more fish, in my
40 opinion, looking at Grizzly Lake. When you look at
41 those population estimates, you know, there's a range
42 on there. And there's a lot of things that can
43 influence it. It's not necessarily just harvest.
44 There could be problems with your survey. There could
45 be other issues -- catchability. So and it's a five-
46 fish limit going up to Grizzly Lake, so it's kind of
47 doubtful 200 people went there and took that many fish
48 out of there. So it's -- I wouldn't say it was 1,000
49 fish were just removed by the sportfishermen.

50

1 MADAME CHAIR ENSTMINGER: Council.
2
3 Virgil.
4
5 MR. UMPHENOUR: I don't necessarily
6 think we need you to take action on this right now;
7 however, I do know from my own personal experience that
8 some of these lakes such as Fielding Lake -- I have
9 personal experience what it was like pre-Pipeline and
10 then after Pump Station 10 was right next to it. And
11 those guys went out and set lots of set lines. And I
12 know that some of the lake trout lakes on the Haul
13 Road, the same thing happened there. And so I think
14 it's a good thing to keep an eye on it. And maybe this
15 might be appropriate in the near future, but not
16 necessarily right now.
17
18 Madame Chair.
19
20 MADAME CHAIR ENSTMINGER: Okay. The
21 motion is to approve it. So how do you want to
22 proceed.
23
24 MR. BASSICH: Call the question.
25
26 MADAME CHAIR ENSTMINGER: The question
27 is called for. All of those in favor of the motion,
28 say aye.
29
30 (No aye votes)
31
32 MADAME CHAIR ENSTMINGER: All of those
33 opposed.
34
35 IN UNISON: Aye.
36
37 MADAME CHAIR ENSTMINGER: Okay. Motion
38 fails. Thank you.
39
40 MR. UMPHENOUR: Sue, I want to say
41 something.
42
43 MADAME CHAIR ENSTMINGER: Go ahead,
44 Virgil.
45
46 MR. UMPHENOUR: Okay. One thing that a
47 lot of people might not think about, that if the Park
48 Service does see a real problem -- I don't know whether
49 the Park Service has emergency order authority like the
50 State does. But I know they could go to the State and

1 they could close it by emergency order. I do know
2 that.

3

4 Madame Chair.

5

6 MADAME CHAIR ENSTMINGER: Okay. I'm
7 sure they don't really want to do that.

8

9 But anyway, we're going to move along
10 with the Agenda. We have the Sheep Work Group. Is
11 there a presentation or do you want a break.

12

13 MR. BASSICH: So we're done with fish?

14

15 MADAME CHAIR ENSTMINGER: What did I
16 miss. What did I miss.

17

18 MS. PATTON: Madame Chair and Council,
19 I do believe other Council Members have additional
20 Board of Fish Proposals.....

21

22 MR. FIRMIN: There's a big stack of
23 Board of Fish Proposals. Yeah.

24

25 MS. PATTON:that they wanted to
26 address.

27

28 MADAME CHAIR ENSTMINGER: Oh. I
29 thought we were going to take up what we wanted to.

30

31 MR. FIRMIN: Well, we're going to dig
32 up 112, I'd like to bring it up.

33

34 MADAME CHAIR ENSTMINGER: Okay. This
35 didn't get relayed to me. How come you didn't tell me
36 that when I asked three times before. Give me the
37 numbers. What are they. 112 is first.

38

39 MR. BASSICH: Yep.

40

41 MADAME CHAIR ENSTMINGER: Okay. What's
42 the rest of them.

43

44 MR. BASSICH: 15, 16, 20, and 126.

45

46 MADAME CHAIR ENSTMINGER: So that's why
47 Virgil wanted to take them all at once.

48

49 MR. BASSICH: Well, they're all very
50 different. They're all pretty important, too.

1 MADAME CHAIR ENSTMINGER: Uh-huh. All
2 right. 112.
3
4 MR. UMPHENOUR: Okay. Move to adopt
5 Proposal 112.
6
7 MR. GLANZ: I'll second it.
8
9 MADAME CHAIR ENSTMINGER: Discussion.
10
11 (No comments)
12
13 MADAME CHAIR ENSTMINGER: No
14 discussion.
15
16 Andrew.
17
18 MR. FIRMIN: I think this is just
19 something that's been pushed around and across the
20 river. And there's -- and I think it's just like a --
21 I don't know -- a fairness issue. And I kind of feel
22 that Tanana, Rampart, and Manley, they're AC -- if they
23 have 15 different ways to commercially harvest salmon
24 in the lower river, but I'm just stuck with my four-
25 inch mesh net, I feel that's highly unfair. If I can't
26 go drift net or beach seine or dip net or can't even --
27 you know, what's the deal here. Then I feel this is
28 something that yeah, it might work in my area. If I
29 want to try it, I should be able to. And if I -- you
30 know, there's no reason why I shouldn't be able to do
31 if they can commercially harvest salmon in the lower
32 river, well then it should be allowed in the rest of
33 the river also for subsistence if a person so desires
34 to do so.
35
36 MADAME CHAIR ENSTMINGER: Anyone else.
37
38 Virgil.
39
40 MR. UMPHENOUR: That kind of addresses
41 the problem. I know these -- most of the people in
42 that AC. And what they have done for this Board cycle
43 is thrown out different things. And some of the
44 proposals they've thrown out are proposal that -- or
45 put forward are proposals that we've actually put
46 forward in the past or our RAC has discussed in the
47 past.
48
49 In the Lower Yukon, they commercial
50 fish with a 300-foot long drift gill net. And so if

1 they're out there harvesting fish in 300-foot long
2 gillnet, why are we restricted to a 60-foot gillnet or
3 150-gillnet up-river. That's the question for
4 subsistence. That's the question. Like drift
5 gillnetting. In the Middle Yukon, you're allowed 150-
6 foot long net, while the Lower Yukon a 300-foot long
7 net. And up here you can't fish with a drift gillnet
8 period.

9

10 So what's good for the goose is good
11 for the gander. That's the philosophy they're taking.
12 And they want the Board to address that. Why is it
13 that some people get to fish with a super efficient
14 piece of gear in the lower river where there's a lot
15 more fish to catch and then it would be easier to catch
16 when that's not their traditional way they used to
17 fish. They used to fish with set net. So why the hell
18 can't they fish with the set net now. Why do we have
19 to fish with the set net and they get to fish with the
20 drift gillnet. That's the issue that they want the
21 Board to look at and think about.

22

23 Madame Chair.

24

25 MADAME CHAIR ENSTMINGER: Anything
26 else.

27

28 MR. BASSICH: Question.

29

30 MADAME CHAIR ENSTMINGER: Question's
31 been called for. All in favor of the Proposal 112, say
32 aye.

33

34 IN UNISON: Aye.

35

36 MADAME CHAIR ENSTMINGER: Anyone
37 opposed.

38

39 MR. GLANZ: Aye.

40

41 MADAME CHAIR ENSTMINGER: One opposed.

42

43

44 What's the next one. 113.

45

46 MR. BASSICH: Make a motion to adopt
47 Proposal 115.

48

49 MR. FIRMIN: Second.

50

1 MR. BASSICH: So this one's prepared by
2 the Fairbanks Fish and Game Advisory Committee. And
3 it's to allow for the retention of king salmon less
4 than 25 inches in length in the Yukon River area fish
5 wheel subsistence fisheries. And Virgil could probably
6 speak to this briefly better than I could, but I think
7 it's a good thing. It's basically just trying to allow
8 for people to be able to retain Jack salmon, which are
9 primarily -- or almost 99 or 100 percent male small
10 fish.

11
12 MR. UMPHENOUR: Okay. This proposal
13 put forward by the Fish and Game Advisory Committee in
14 Fairbanks was put forward also so that fish wheel
15 fishermen that don't have a gillnet would be able to
16 fish. Because they can fish with their fish-friendly
17 fish wheel for chum salmon; however, they can't keep
18 any king salmon. In the Yukon River main stem, where
19 they don't have fish wheels, they let them fish with a
20 six-inch mesh gillnet to harvest chum salmon. And any
21 incidental caught king salmon they get to keep for
22 subsistence purposes.

23
24 And so like Andy just said, 95 percent
25 or so of those under 25-inches long are going to be
26 males, which are counterproductive to the spawning
27 grounds because the study done by the University of
28 Washington, when you take one of those small males and
29 fertilize eggs from a large female, 75 percent of the
30 fish that come back are going to be small males. So
31 they're counterproductive to the spawning grounds. We
32 need to kill those genes anyway.

33
34 Madame Chair.

35
36 MADAME CHAIR ENSTMINGER: Any other
37 discussion.

38
39 (No comments)

40
41 MR. WOODRUFF: Question.

42
43 MADAME CHAIR ENSTMINGER: Question's
44 called for. All in favor, aye.

45
46 IN UNISON: Aye.

47
48 MADAME CHAIR ENSTMINGER: Anyone
49 opposed.

50

1 (No opposing votes)
2
3 MADAME CHAIR ENSTMINGER: Next is 116.
4
5 MR. BASSICH: Yes, Madame Chair. 116.
6 Make a motion we approve Proposal -- or support
7 Proposal 116.
8
9 MR. GLANZ: I'll second.
10
11 MR. BASSICH: So as I understand, this
12 proposal -- and Fred, you might be able to help me a
13 little bit. But basically what they're trying to do
14 here is eliminate live boxes from wheels in the lower
15 river. There is a mandate to release king salmon and I
16 think the concern here is that if live boxes are on the
17 fish wheels, we know from other studies that live boxes
18 can severely impact salmon that are held in them. So I
19 think what they're trying to do here is make sure that
20 no king salmon are retained in live boxes and that
21 either they be removed as they're being caught or that
22 there are shoot on the wheel that allow the king salmon
23 to not be retained for any length of time.
24
25 And Fred, maybe you can chime in a
26 little.
27
28 MADAME CHAIR ENSTMINGER: Virgil.
29
30 MR. UMPHENOUR: Okay. A lot of people
31 don't realize this, but that Management Plan is for the
32 Anvik River. Anvik River Management Plan -- the Board
33 -- I'm not sure when they passed it, but I was on the
34 Board when they passed it.
35
36 Anyway, the Anvik River is the largest
37 producer of summer chum salmon in the Yukon River
38 Drainage. And so there's been times when we had
39 serious conservation problems with chum salmon in the
40 Upper Yukon -- this is summer chums, but the Anvik
41 River still had a good run. And so what the Board did
42 is they made a special Management Plan for the Anvik
43 River where they could just beat seines down at the
44 mouth of the Anvik River. And then they had to -- but
45 that was -- at that time, that was a row fishery. And
46 there was a buyer there that bought just the eggs and
47 made caviar.
48
49 Anyway, that's just a little bit of
50 history on that fishery. And then I go along with what

1 Andy said. What they want to do is -- it's been
2 proven. There's been research done by Fish and
3 Wildlife Service that has shown that it's detrimental
4 for salmon to be held in a live box. If they -- that
5 really diminishes the percent of them that are going to
6 make it onto the spawning grounds if they're held in a
7 live box.

8

9 And I see Fred wants to respond to
10 that.

11

12 Madame Chair.

13

14 MADAME CHAIR ENSTMINGER: Fred.

15

16 MR. BUE: Madame Chair, yeah. This
17 proposal is actually for both the Anvik Management Plan
18 and the gear. One is a commercial regulation and one
19 is a subsistence. The commercial is -- already
20 restricts their fish wheel to live, immediate release
21 operation. They specified the fish wheels for
22 commercial. This also proposes to make it similar for
23 the subsistence gear. Essentially, the fish wheel that
24 commercial fishes, also subsistence fishes. And it
25 would make the gear consistent across both fisheries.

26

27 MADAME CHAIR ENSTMINGER: Any other
28 discussion.

29

30 MR. WOODRUFF: Call for question.

31

32 MADAME CHAIR ENSTMINGER: Question's
33 been called for. All in favor, say aye.

34

35 IN UNISON: Aye.

36

37 MADAME CHAIR ENSTMINGER: Anyone
38 opposed.

39

40 (No opposing votes)

41

42 MADAME CHAIR ENSTMINGER: What's the
43 next number, you guys.

44

45 MR. BASSICH: Madame Chair, I believe
46 it's 120.

47

48 MADAME CHAIR ENSTMINGER: 120.

49

50 MR. BASSICH: I'm trying to locate it

1 here.

2

3 MADAME CHAIR ENSTMINGER: Page 100 of
4 that handout.

5

6 MR. BASSICH: Oh, yeah. It's on page
7 100.

8

9 Motion to support Proposal 120.

10

11 MR. FIRMIN: Second.

12

13 MR. FIRMIN: Okay. Speaking to the
14 motion, this is to allow subsistence fall chum salmon
15 fishing seven days per week in District 5 of the Yukon
16 area, once fall chum salmon commercial fisheries is
17 opened, as follows. And I think the intent behind this
18 is that maybe as a measure to try and prevent oops
19 management in the future. And although our Managers
20 are doing a great job now and I expect them do a great
21 job in the future, there is laws that protect
22 subsistence fisheries as a priority over commercial
23 fisheries. And in the past we've had situations where
24 commercial fisheries were prosecuted and then
25 subsistence fisheries were severely restricted or
26 closed farther up river. And so this -- I believe the
27 intent is to ensure that that will not happen in the
28 future.

29

30 Madame Chair.

31

32 MADAME CHAIR ENSTMINGER: Any other
33 discussion.

34

35 (No comments)

36

37 MR. UMPHENOUR: Question.

38

39 MADAME CHAIR ENSTMINGER: Question's
40 called for. All in favor, say aye.

41

42 IN UNISON: Aye.

43

44 MADAME CHAIR ENSTMINGER: Anyone
45 opposed.

46

47 MR. WOODRUFF: Opposed.

48

49 MADAME CHAIR ENSTMINGER: One opposed.
50 I didn't hear a lot of ayes either.

1 Is that an abstention from Andrew.
2
3 MR. WOODRUFF: That's what he said.
4
5 MR. FIRMIN: Yes.
6
7 MR. WOODRUFF: Andrew abstained.
8
9 MADAME CHAIR ENSTMINGER: And I don't
10 think I heard any ayes over here.
11
12 You're an aye. Okay.
13
14 Was there any other abstentions.
15
16 (No comments)
17
18 MADAME CHAIR ENSTMINGER: Okay. So
19 there was one abstention and one against.
20
21 Next one.
22
23 MR. BASSICH: Thank you, Madame Chair.
24 The final one that I have is Proposal 126. I make a
25 motion that we support 126.
26
27 MR. WOODRUFF: I'll second.
28
29 MADAME CHAIR ENSTMINGER: 126. There
30 was a second. There must be another. We have three of
31 these, so this would be the last one. Uh-huh.
32
33 MR. BASSICH: All right.
34
35 MADAME CHAIR ENSTMINGER: So we have --
36 did we have a second.
37
38 MR. WOODRUFF: I did.
39
40 MADAME CHAIR ENSTMINGER: Okay.
41 Motion's first and second.
42
43 And speak to the motion.
44
45 MR. BASSICH: Okay. Speaking to the
46 motion. This is a Yukon River summer chum salmon
47 management plan. Add purse seine gear as allowable
48 commercial salmon fishing gear to target summer chum
49 salmon in Districts 1 through 3 in the Yukon River
50 during times of king salmon conservation, as follows.

1 And it's my feeling that there still has not been
2 enough research done on the effects of purse seine on
3 by-catch or incidental caught fish. So what they want
4 to do is use purse seines in the lower river to catch
5 summer chum -- abundant summer chum; however, there
6 still needs to be some more research done on the
7 impacts of incidentally caught Chinook salmon.

8
9 The other issue that I have with this
10 is that to become a purse seiner, it's going to take
11 pretty big bucks. And it's going to be extremely
12 efficient as opposed to other means such as drift --
13 I'm sorry -- as other means such as dip netting and
14 even the beach seining. So I believe this will create
15 a lot of competition and I think it's going to hurt the
16 little guy out in the Village who just wants to get out
17 and catch a few commercial fish to help feed his
18 family. Because I think -- I can see in the future
19 this could be something that would dominate the
20 fisheries in the lower river and it would squeeze out a
21 lot of the small family operations there.

22
23 And my understanding of the social
24 demographics down there is that many people are not big
25 commercial fishermen. That oftentimes it's just one or
26 two members in a family that are trying to catch a few
27 commercial fish to get a few bucks to pay for some gas
28 so that they can go out and subsistence fish or do
29 other subsistence activities. And I think this has the
30 potential if instituted in the long range of severely
31 impacting that ability of those people.

32
33 So I'm very much opposed to this. And
34 I think maybe in the future with more research it might
35 be something that could be adopted, but at this point
36 in time I think it's premature.

37
38 Madame Chair, thank you.

39
40 MADAME CHAIR ENSTMINGER: More
41 discussion.

42
43 Virgil.

44
45 MR. UMPHENOUR: Yes. I agree with
46 Andy. And just to put things in perspective, they said
47 150 fathoms long. That's 900 feet. And to put things
48 further in perspective, I look at the new report I get
49 every day from the Department on the computer of the
50 harvest. And it tells how many fishermen fished. And

1 in District 1 and 2, the two of them combined there's
2 approximately 700 commercial fishermen. The number
3 that are fishing now in each District -- District 1 and
4 2 -- on average -- I don't think it averages 100 per
5 District. That's 200. So there might be 200
6 commercial fishermen now commercial fishing that have
7 permits in the Lower Yukon. That goes along with what
8 Andy just got through saying.

9
10 And you can imagine if you've got a
11 900-foot long net, you're going to have to have pretty
12 big boats. And they're out there dragging that thing
13 around and pushing those fish up. The king salmon even
14 if they do get released allegedly unharmed, I feel
15 there's a darn good chance they're going to be severely
16 harmed and they're probably not going to make it up the
17 river. Because they're going to be thrashing around
18 with all the other chum salmon in there and Burbot and
19 everything else they've got in that net. And you can't
20 -- it would really be hard to convince me that that's
21 not going to hurt those king salmon.

22
23 I know there have been studies done on
24 this by the Canadians down in British Columbia. I
25 don't know what the results of all of those studies
26 are, but I did look at some of that data. But it's
27 been years ago that I looked at it. And I know that
28 there is fairly fair amount of harm done to those fish.
29 So I'm definitely opposed to this proposal.

30
31 Madame Chair.

32
33 MADAME CHAIR ENSTMINGER: Okay. Anyone
34 else.

35
36 Andy.

37
38 MR. BASSICH: Yeah. I'd just like to
39 add to what Virgil was saying. The studies that are
40 done in Canada are all done on fairly short terminal
41 fisheries. So those fish, when they are released from
42 those purse seines down there, don't have a far
43 distance to go to reach their spawning grounds. And
44 that's -- in my opinion, that's one of the main
45 differences between comparing those studies to what
46 might happen here. I think those studies need to
47 actually happen on the Yukon River, whether it's a
48 telemetry project or something like that, to get really
49 good, hard science on what are the impacts to salmon
50 that then have to swim another 1,300 or 1,400 miles to

1 reach their spawning streams.
2
3 So that's a big concern of mine.
4
5 Madame Chair.
6
7 MADAME CHAIR ENSTMINGER: Any other
8 discussion.
9
10 Bill.
11
12 MR. GLANZ: All we have to do is look
13 at the Pollock industry and the by-catch out there in
14 the sea to know we should all vote no on this one.
15
16 (Laughter)
17
18 MADAME CHAIR ENSTMINGER: Anything
19 else.
20
21 (No comments)
22
23 MR. FIRMIN: Question.
24
25 MADAME CHAIR ENSTMINGER: The
26 question's called for. All in favor of creating a
27 seine fishery in the Lower Yukon -- that might help to
28 know how to vote.
29
30 (Laughter)
31
32 MADAME CHAIR ENSTMINGER: Proposal 126.
33 Say aye.
34
35 (No aye votes)
36
37 MADAME CHAIR ENSTMINGER: Anyone
38 opposed, say aye.
39
40 IN UNISON: Aye.
41
42 MADAME CHAIR ENSTMINGER: I'd say
43 that's unanimous.
44
45 MR. BASSICH: One more.
46
47 MADAME CHAIR ENSTMINGER: One more.
48 What number.
49
50 MR. BASSICH: 127, the next one.

1 MADAME CHAIR ENSTMINGER: 127.
2
3 MR. BASSICH: If I may, make a motion
4 to support Proposal 127.
5
6 MADAME CHAIR ENSTMINGER: Motion to
7 support.
8
9 MR. FIRMIN: Second.
10
11 MADAME CHAIR ENSTMINGER: Second.
12
13 MR. BASSICH: Speaking to the motion,
14 one of the concerns I have with this is this is going
15 to create a fisheries offshore, is my understanding.
16 And Fred, please correct me if I'm wrong. But it's
17 basically going to be expanding the Y1 District out
18 into the coastal regions a little bit more.
19
20 The concern that I have with this is
21 that if large numbers of salmon are caught in that, in
22 my mind that's almost not any different than the
23 Pollock fleet catching those fish out in the open
24 ocean. Those fish would not have been basically
25 counted as fish that were -- I shouldn't say this. I
26 find it hard to quantify how the Department is going to
27 estimate those numbers of salmon that would have come
28 into the river if they're being caught in the offshore
29 fisheries like that.
30
31 And I think with the Chinook salmon in
32 the position that they're in right now, I think this is
33 a little bit premature. Needs a little bit more time
34 to really be vetted. So I'm a little bit concern that
35 this fisheries might be expanding at this point in
36 time.
37
38 MADAME CHAIR ENSTMINGER: Virgil.
39
40 MR. UMPHENOUR: Not only that. This
41 violates the Board's policy for mixed stock fisheries.
42 And the Board is not supposed to create new fisheries
43 when the fishery resource is fully allocated. I will
44 be opposing it as well.
45
46 MADAME CHAIR ENSTMINGER: Any other
47 discussion.
48
49 Question.
50

1 MR. WOODRUFF: Call for question.
2
3 MADAME CHAIR ENSTMINGER: Question was
4 called for. All in favor of expanding commercial
5 fishing in the Yukon, Proposal 127, say aye.
6
7 (No aye votes)
8
9 MADAME CHAIR ENSTMINGER: All opposed,
10 same sign.
11
12 IN UNISON: Aye.
13
14 MADAME CHAIR ENSTMINGER: Okay. Passes
15 unanimous.
16
17 Was there any other ones that we needed
18 to take up.
19
20 Andrew.
21
22 MR. FIRMIN: Andy, did you want to take
23 128, too? We should have done that one and 127
24 together, eh?
25
26 MR. BASSICH: Yeah. You can go for it
27 if you want to.
28
29 MR. FIRMIN: Motion to adopt Proposal
30 128, Fishing Districts and Sub-Districts.
31
32 Go ahead.
33
34 MR. WOODRUFF: Second.
35
36 MADAME CHAIR ENSTMINGER: Speaking to
37 the motion.
38
39 MR. FIRMIN: This another extending the
40 District 1 into -- to go three miles offshore instead
41 of two and a half. And I'd like to refer to Andy's
42 comments on Proposal 127 for the same reasons.
43
44 MADAME CHAIR ENSTMINGER: Okay. Any
45 other discussion.
46
47 Virgil.
48
49 MR. FIRMIN: And Virgil's comments.
50

1 MR. UMPHENOUR: Yeah. I reference my
2 comments on Proposal 127 and I will be voting against
3 it.

4
5 MADAME CHAIR ENSTMINGER: Okay. Any
6 other discussion.

7
8 MR. WOODRUFF: I'll call for the
9 question.

10
11 MADAME CHAIR ENSTMINGER: The
12 question's called for. All in favor of that Proposal
13 128, extending the three miles, say aye.

14
15 (No aye votes)

16
17 MADAME CHAIR ENSTMINGER: Opposed, same
18 sign.

19
20 IN UNISON: Aye.

21
22 MADAME CHAIR ENSTMINGER: Motion
23 passes.

24
25 Any other fisheries proposals that we
26 need to take up.

27
28 MR. FIRMIN: I had thought I discussed
29 this with the other Council Members, but I thought
30 Proposal 125, that we were going to take that one up
31 because there's a -- it concerns the opening of another
32 fishery in Districts 1 to 3 on pink salmon, but there's
33 no science behind it, which is what concerns me.

34
35 MADAME CHAIR ENSTMINGER: Is there a
36 motion.

37
38 MR. UMPHENOUR: Second.

39
40 MADAME CHAIR ENSTMINGER: Okay.
41 Speaking to the motion.

42
43 MR. FIRMIN: Well, as I said before, I
44 would like to give the guys on the lower river their
45 opportunities to commercial fish. However, this -- as
46 I read this earlier, this is to establish a directed
47 pink salmon fishery. However, it says right in here
48 that they have been selling them and incidentally
49 caught ones. However, they're going to be using four-
50 inch or less mesh sizes and there's no -- I'm trying to

1 find where I read it. There has been no assessments of
2 the stock assessments and there's no -- they're unsure
3 of abundance of numbers. And there are apparently
4 small numbers in the lower river fisheries. But I just
5 don't feel right about yee-hawing up another new fish
6 -- new commercial fishery on the Lower Yukon when we
7 have other stocks of concern going on. And this is
8 another one they have little information about at this
9 time.

10

11 And for that reason I would like to
12 oppose this proposal.

13

14 MADAME CHAIR ENSTMINGER: Anyone else.

15

16 Is that a pencil or a hand?

17

18 MR. UMPHENOUR: A hand.

19

20 MADAME CHAIR ENSTMINGER: Okay.

21 Virgil.

22

23 MR. UMPHENOUR: I think the Department
24 -- they can fish with a four-inch mesh anyway. If you
25 open up the fishery for maximum of six-inch gillnets
26 and they want to go catch pink salmon with four-inch,
27 they can go fish for pink salmon with four-inch; isn't
28 that correct?

29

30 MR. BUE: Was that directed at Fish and
31 Game?

32

33 MADAME CHAIR ENSTMINGER: These

34 poor.....

35

36 MR. BUE: Yeah. Virgil is right. It's
37 six inches or less. And so you use whatever gear makes
38 sense to you as a fisherman.

39

40 MR. UMPHENOUR: That's what I thought.
41 I don't know why they even put the proposal forward.
42 I'll be opposed to it. The Department -- they can
43 already go fish with the four-inch mesh gillnet if they
44 want and catch pink salmon.

45

46 Madame Chair.

47

48 MADAME CHAIR ENSTMINGER: Andy.

49

50 MR. BASSICH: Yeah. I may be

1 interpreting it a little bit different, but it says it
2 can close the fishing season and immediately re-open
3 the season during which a person may take salmon only
4 with a gillnet that has a mesh of four inch or less.
5 So I think it actually is trying to create a commercial
6 season for pink salmon, which I understand the
7 abundance of that and, you know, I'm not opposed to
8 people catching those. I guess where I have some
9 concern is that four-inch mesh with also incidentally
10 catch Chinook king salmon.

11

12 So yeah, that's it.

13

14 MADAME CHAIR ENSTMINGER: So noted.

15

16 Virgil.

17

18 MR. UMPHENOUR: I wish Dr. Schmidt was
19 here. Because -- no. Because she's the manager. If
20 the processor went and told her, I would ask her this
21 question. If the processor went and told you they'd
22 like to have some pink salmon, we already have a
23 regulation where they can go out and fish with a dip
24 net and release all the king salmon. Then could they
25 fish with a dip net and release all the salmon, except
26 for pink salmon. I'm sure they would let them do that.
27 I think the Department has the authority to do that
28 right now. So my question is that. Do you think the
29 Department has the authority to do that right now if
30 they wanted to.

31

32 MADAME CHAIR ENSTMINGER: Can anyone
33 present answer that.

34

35 MS. KLEIN: This is Jill Klein on the
36 teleconference. I can just take that note down,
37 through the Chair. Virgil, if you'd like, and pass it
38 on to Stephanie.

39

40 MR. UMPHENOUR: Sounds good. Because
41 what I think they want to do is like the fishermen in
42 the Kenai wanted to do. They wanted to have a pink
43 salmon fishery when I was on the Board allegedly. So I
44 told them well, I wouldn't be opposed to it if you use
45 dip nets. And I know you can catch lots of pink salmon
46 that way and just release all the sockeye and coho.
47 That's not what they wanted. They wanted to catch
48 those sockeye and coho as incidental catch in their
49 four-inch mesh gillnets, is what they wanted to do,
50 just like the fishermen in the Copper River with their

1 five-inch gillnets. They're catching the hell out of
2 the king salmon.

3

4 Madame Chair.

5

6 MADAME CHAIR ENSTMINGER: Well, at
7 least we're smiling.

8

9 (Laughter)

10

11 MADAME CHAIR ENSTMINGER: Okay.
12 Anything else.

13

14 Andy.

15

16 MR. BASSICH: I was just going to say I
17 think we can vote on this. Looking around, I think
18 most people are nodding their heads like they have a
19 decision to make, Madame Chair. So I'll call question.

20

21

22 MADAME CHAIR ENSTMINGER: Question is
23 called for. All in favor of 125, directing pink salmon
24 for commercial fishery, say aye.

25

26 (No aye votes)

27

28 MADAME CHAIR ENSTMINGER: All opposed,
29 same sign.

30

31 IN UNISON: Aye.

32

33 MADAME CHAIR ENSTMINGER: Okay.

34 Passes.

35

36 Any other proposals that we need to
37 take up.

38

39 MR. BASSICH: Just a quick comment,
40 Madame Chair. I know we were trying to save time, but
41 I think it actually sometimes kind of shoots us in the
42 foot when we start skipping around. And from my
43 perspective as a Council Member, I really like the way
44 the book is laid out in order. And when we get these
45 types of handouts, it really helps me a lot more if we
46 can just start at -- and I think, as we demonstrated
47 here right now, if we know that we're going to go
48 through them and there's a lot of them that we've
49 already discussed in the past, we can move through
50 those pretty quickly.

1 MADAME CHAIR ENSTMINGER: Okay. Well,
2 let me apologize. Because I understand that we weren't
3 going to take all of them up.

4
5 MR. BASSICH: Yeah.

6
7 MADAME CHAIR ENSTMINGER: And I was
8 asking which ones we want to take up. And I had
9 actually done that several times. So I didn't mean to
10 go against the book process. I just thought we were
11 going to speed it up in that direction. Okay.

12
13 MR. BASSICH: Right. Yeah. That was
14 why my comment -- I think in the -- we thought maybe we
15 could speed it up, but actually I think it slows us
16 down. And we miss things when we do the skipping.

17
18 MR. UMPHENOUR: Okay. Move to adopt
19 Proposal 108.

20
21 MR. FIRMIN: Second.

22
23 MADAME CHAIR ENSTMINGER: Virgil
24 speaking to the motion.

25
26 MR. UMPHENOUR: Proposal 108 seeks to
27 lower the triggers for when commercial fishing can take
28 place in the Lower Yukon. And what that wants to do if
29 you look at it, summer chum Management Plan, reduce it
30 from 600,000 to 400,000.

31
32 Anyway, if you look all through it,
33 every one of those numbers, they're reducing it by a
34 substantial amount. All those were put in there -- all
35 those triggers were put in there for conservation
36 purposes to ensure that we wouldn't have oops
37 management. I'm totally opposed to that because we've
38 had some severely depressed runs in recent history.
39 And that Management Plan was put in there to prevent
40 those type of things from happening, so we shouldn't --
41 that would be going backwards. That's why I'm opposed
42 to it.

43
44 Madame Chair.

45
46 MADAME CHAIR ENSTMINGER: Any other
47 discussion.

48
49 Oh, Fred.
50

1 MR. BUE: Now I'm back to my very first
2 comment again. This is a Management Plan built around
3 a BEG. And I think what we're going to find at the
4 Board of Fish is the escapement goals were reviewed for
5 AYK and this -- the summer chum escapement goal -- the
6 new proposed escapement goal be 500,000 to 1,200,000 is
7 the range around it. And so they're going to be
8 crafting these Management Plans around this new range.
9 And so these -- the actual numbers in here may be
10 shifted one way or the other depending on how the
11 discussion goes.

12

13 Madame Chair.

14

15 MADAME CHAIR ENSTMINGER: Virgil.

16

17 MR. UMPHENOUR: So the Department is
18 going to present to the Board at the meeting when we
19 have our AYK meeting new BEGs?

20

21 MR. BUE: Proposal 109, essentially I
22 took as a placeholder. That was the Department's
23 proposal. And it had the range 600,000 to 1,000,000
24 was what they were proposal for Drainage-wide.
25 Previously, they never had a Drainage-wide BEG.
26 They've had for certain tributaries stocks, but not
27 Drainage wide. To create a Drainage-wide you had to
28 come up with a run reconstruction. And it is a pretty
29 big process. So they had to do a run reconstruction
30 and then an analysis to come up with the appropriate
31 BEG range.

32

33 And so that's what will be presented
34 also at this Board of Fish. It doesn't make it into
35 the proposal book, but it's information that the
36 Management Plans will be built around. And so that's
37 important for you to understand.

38

39 Madame Chair.

40

41 MADAME CHAIR ENSTMINGER: Donald.

42

43 MR. WOODRUFF: Thank you, Madame Chair.

44

45

46 It just seems to me over the course of
47 time -- you know, and I got a five-year award last
48 season. And it just seems to me that the Management
49 Plan numbers are going down steadily over the course of
50 time. And I don't understand that. I think it's bad

1 management. And we wouldn't all be here and we
2 wouldn't have co-management if the fisheries wasn't a
3 problem. And so I think I'm very much opposed to
4 lowering these BEGs over and over and over again.
5 Thank you.

6
7 MADAME CHAIR ENSTMINGER: Talk there,
8 Virgil, there, right?

9
10 MR. UMPHENOUR: Just for a second.

11
12 MADAME CHAIR ENSTMINGER: Just for a
13 second. That's pretty short.

14
15 (Laughter)

16
17 MADAME CHAIR ENSTMINGER: Go for it.
18 Keep it short.

19
20 MR. UMPHENOUR: Okay. Just I haven't
21 seen this until this morning. But just looking at it,
22 I can see that this Proposal 108 would be in conflict
23 with Proposal 109. Anyway, and I will be going to that
24 meeting. Of course I'll be -- and I'll be representing
25 the Fairbanks Fish and Game Advisory Committee
26 probably.

27
28 Anyway, a person has to sit down and
29 analyze this stuff before he can really speak
30 intelligently about it. But I'm still opposed to
31 Proposal 108. And it's going to take analysis to be
32 able to speak intelligently about those proposals,
33 except that that one is lowering the trigger. Proposal
34 108 is. And so I'm totally -- and it's lowering it by
35 a considerable amount, so I'm totally opposed to that.

36
37
38 Madame Chair. We need to vote Proposal
39 108 down.

40
41 MADAME CHAIR ENSTMINGER: Okay. All in
42 favor of 108, say aye.

43
44 (No aye votes)

45
46 MADAME CHAIR ENSTMINGER: All opposed,
47 same sign.

48
49 IN UNISON: Aye.

50

1 MADAME CHAIR ENSTMINGER: Passes.
2
3 MS. PATTON: Fails.
4
5 MADAME CHAIR ENSTMINGER: Oh, I'm
6 sorry.
7
8 MS. PATTON: That's okay. I got it.
9
10 MADAME CHAIR ENSTMINGER: Fails
11 unanimously.
12
13 Are there any others. But I really
14 apologize because I really thought that we were trying
15 to just minimize what we were going to take up.
16
17 I have a quick question for you guys.
18 We don't have anyone that represents us for this -- at
19 the Board of Fish meetings as a RAC member, do we.
20
21 MR. UMPHENOUR: I've done it before.
22
23 MR. BASSICH: So have I, in the past.
24
25 MADAME CHAIR ENSTMINGER: Okay.
26
27 MR. UMPHENOUR: We've done it. Andy
28 and I both have done it in the past.
29
30 MADAME CHAIR ENSTMINGER: Okay.
31
32 MR. UMPHENOUR: And so we should.....
33
34 MADAME CHAIR ENSTMINGER: Where do we
35 stand on that.
36
37 MR. UMPHENOUR: We should talk about
38 that, too.
39
40 But we should put Proposal 111 on the
41 -- I want to move to adopt Proposal 111.
42
43 MADAME CHAIR ENSTMINGER: All right.
44
45 MR. FIRMIN: Second.
46
47 MADAME CHAIR ENSTMINGER: Virgil.
48
49 MR. UMPHENOUR: Okay. I'll speak to
50 the Proposal. This is Kwik'Pak Fisheries again.

1 That's the commercial fishing entity in the Lower
2 Yukon, at the mouth of the river. They want to do away
3 with the guideline harvest numbers and make it a
4 percentage. Anyway, I don't think we really need to be
5 doing that right now. Especially they want to -- and
6 this is on the king salmon. Why they want to address
7 the king salmon, I don't know. They wiped them out
8 down there. But I don't think we need to be worrying
9 about how many king salmon they're going to get to
10 catch commercially at a point in time when we can't
11 even catch one to eat.

12

13 Madame Chair.

14

15 MADAME CHAIR ENSTMINGER: Yeah. I'll
16 tell you what. I feel sorry for being a Fish Board
17 Member.

18

19 Any other discussion.

20

21 MR. GLANZ: Question.

22

23 MADAME CHAIR ENSTMINGER: Question's
24 been called for. All in favor of -- it was 111, right.

25

26 MR. GLANZ: Yes.

27

28 MADAME CHAIR ENSTMINGER: 111. Say
29 aye.

30

31 (No aye votes)

32

33 MADAME CHAIR ENSTMINGER: All opposed,
34 same sign.

35

36 IN UNISON: Aye.

37

38 MADAME CHAIR ENSTMINGER: Fails.

39

40 MS. PATTON: Madame Chair and Council,
41 and just to speak to the question both Andy and Virgil
42 had on representation at the Board of Fish and Board of
43 Game meetings, we have -- George Pappas was hoping to
44 be here or be online today. He's been overlapping with
45 Board of Fish meetings as well. We draft up the
46 Council's recommendations in a formal letter that's
47 submitted as the comments to the Board of Fish. And
48 then George is there representing all of the Council's
49 positions and submitted comments on Board of Fish
50 proposals.

1 And then what we have done in the past,
2 if a Council Member is not able to be supported for
3 their travel to attend the Board of Fish's -- often
4 many of you wear multiple hats and so we arrange for
5 testimony from a Council Members representing the
6 Eastern Interior RAC at the Board of Fish meeting.
7 So.....

8
9 MADAME CHAIR ENSTMINGER: Because
10 they're there.

11
12 MS. PATTON: Because they're there.

13
14 MADAME CHAIR ENSTMINGER: Uh-huh.

15
16 MS. PATTON: And have that ability to
17 do that. So we'll network on that as well. But we do
18 have George who is there representing the Council's
19 positions to present that to the Board.

20
21 MADAME CHAIR ENSTMINGER: Okay. Virgil
22 had a quick one, I think. And Andy.

23
24 MR. BASSICH: Virgil will probably say
25 the same thing.

26
27 MR. UMPHENOUR: Okay. The Board of
28 Fish process, they have a Committee process. And I
29 know they've been doing Committees as a whole, some,
30 but, anyway, in the Board of Fish process, when they
31 form Committees after all the testimony -- the Staff
32 reports, then the testimony by individuals and by
33 organizations, then they form Committees. And if you
34 have additional input, you can put it in. And if
35 there's some type of a compromise that possibly could
36 be reached, then the people that get appointed to these
37 Committees by the Board, then they have the opportunity
38 to at times negotiate. And so -- and they allow their
39 representative from each Fish and Game Advisory
40 Committee to be on there and our RAC -- or the RACs
41 have that opportunity as well.

42
43 And so if want to be effective at the
44 Board of Fish -- in the Board of Fish process, it's
45 good that George is there. But we need to have someone
46 there. And we need to take a vote to delegate that
47 that person can represent us in negotiations, if that
48 happens, to act in the best interest of our Council.

49
50 And so my question is this. Do we have

1 the funds to send one of us to the Board of Fish
2 meeting.

3

4 MS. PATTON: Madame Chair and Council,
5 I will be making that recommendation. And we'll have
6 to submit justification and analysis because of the
7 budget restrictions, but I will work on that when I get
8 back and get back to you on that.

9

10 MADAME CHAIR ENSTMINGER: So in the
11 meantime we can just pick somebody.

12

13 MR. UMPHENOUR: We're lucky that this
14 upcoming Board of Fish is going to be in Fairbanks, I
15 think, right.

16

17 MR. BUE: (Nods affirmatively)

18

19 MR. UMPHENOUR: Yep. So -- but we
20 still need -- so it won't cost a whole gob of money --
21 for someone to be there. So we need to at least take
22 the vote here today and give that person authority to
23 negotiate and serve on Committees representing our RAC.

24

25

26 MADAME CHAIR ENSTMINGER: Okay.

27

28 MR. UMPHENOUR: We need to do that
29 that. So I make that motion that whoever we decide to
30 represent us.

31

32 MR. KOEHLER: I second that because I
33 was going to go.

34

35 MADAME CHAIR ENSTMINGER: Oh. Well,
36 we'll send somebody. But maybe we should talk about
37 who.

38

39 MR. KOEHLER: Well, obviously it should
40 be Virgil.

41

42 MADAME CHAIR ENSTMINGER: Yeah. Well,
43 if there's funding. And Virgil, you're wearing another
44 hat. So you'd be wearing two hats. And it's more
45 effective to have another person, correct?

46

47 MR. FIRMIN: And that will give him
48 twice as much time to talk.

49

50 (Laughter)

1 MADAME CHAIR ENSTMINGER: Oh, my gosh.
2
3
4 (Laughter)
5
6 MR. UMPHENOUR: Okay. I will be at the
7 meeting; however, I'm the Chairman of the Fairbanks
8 Fish and Game Advisory Committee and we have a Fish
9 Committee Chairman as well. And what we normally do is
10 the Chairman does not necessarily represent the AC at
11 these meetings because we have these sub-committee
12 chairs. And usually the sub-committee chair represents
13 the AC at the meeting. If it's a fisheries meeting, at
14 the fisheries sub-committee chair. If it's a game
15 meeting, the game sub-committee chair.
16
17 MADAME CHAIR ENSTMINGER: And.....
18
19 MR. UMPHENOUR: And so.....
20
21 MADAME CHAIR ENSTMINGER:you are?
22
23 MR. UMPHENOUR: I'm the Chair.
24
25 MR. KOEHLER: So you need to be there.
26
27 MR. UMPHENOUR: Oh. I'll be at the
28 meeting.
29
30 MADAME CHAIR ENSTMINGER: As the Chair
31 of the Fisheries.
32
33 MR. UMPHENOUR: No. I'm the Chair of
34 the AC. I -- it depends on whether the Chair of the
35 fisheries sub-committee has the time to be -- to sit
36 there for the whole darn meeting, which I'm sure he
37 doesn't. But I probably will sit there for the
38 majority of it.
39
40 So is there anyone else on our Council
41 that wants to be at the Board of Fisheries meeting.
42
43 MR. KOEHLER: What is the date. And
44 I'm not recommending myself.
45
46 (Laughter)
47
48 MR. UMPHENOUR: The dates are January
49 12 through 17.
50

1 MADAME CHAIR ENSTMINGER: Is there
2 anyone else that would do it. Because I just heard a
3 request for funding. And that means that maybe
4 somebody from another place could come. Anyone else.

5
6 MR. FIRMIN: I may attend in another
7 capacity, but I was also wondering when is the Federal
8 Subsistence Board Meeting in Anchorage at that time.
9 They normally meet the same week. Or is it the
10 following.

11
12 MADAME CHAIR ENSTMINGER: It's usually
13 later, isn't it.

14
15 MS. PATTON: There will be a work
16 session in January. And I have to double check to
17 confirm.

18
19 MADAME CHAIR ENSTMINGER: Oh.

20
21 MS. PATTON: Madame Chair and Council,
22 sorry. The Federal Subsistence Board will hold a work
23 session in January. And I'll have to re-confirm the
24 dates for that. The actual Board Meeting to take up
25 the wildlife proposals happens in the spring. They
26 have shifted that wildlife cycle back, so that will
27 happen in April.

28
29 We'll have to double check the work
30 session dates.

31
32 MADAME CHAIR ENSTMINGER: And normally
33 -- yeah.

34
35 MS. PATTON: And typically we have --
36 that's by teleconference. So.....

37
38 MADAME CHAIR ENSTMINGER:
39 Teleconference. Not by presently -- being in the
40 present.

41
42 So Andy.

43
44 MR. BASSICH: Can I just make a
45 recommendation maybe that we -- instead of identifying
46 a person directly right now from our Council, just that
47 we would like to send a representative. And that would
48 allow Eva to do it. And then maybe amongst us, we can
49 come up with a person that can do it.

50

1 MADAME CHAIR ENSTMINGER: Okay. That's
2 actually the motion. So.....
3
4 MR. BASSICH: I think that would be
5 best.
6
7 MADAME CHAIR ENSTMINGER: The motion is
8 to send somebody.
9
10 MR. BASSICH: I mean I'm interested in
11 doing it. I just don't know if I can get away at those
12 dates.
13
14 MADAME CHAIR ENSTMINGER: Yeah. So we
15 can talk about that on email.
16
17 MR. KOEHLER: I'll call the question.
18
19 MADAME CHAIR ENSTMINGER: Question's
20 been called for to send somebody and request.....
21
22 MR. UMPHENOUR: Okay. Let me clarify
23 the motion.
24
25 MADAME CHAIR ENSTMINGER: Oh. Well, I
26 thought it was pretty clear.
27
28 MR. UMPHENOUR: I'd like the motion
29 clarified because it's kind of a two-part motion. One,
30 is that we would like to have a representative there
31 that's -- funding to have a representative at the
32 meeting. And then the second part of the motion is is
33 whoever is representing us at the meeting needs a
34 delegation of authority to participate in the Committed
35 process and represent to the best of their ability our
36 Council's interests.
37
38 MADAME CHAIR ENSTMINGER: Do we need
39 all that, Virgil?
40
41 MR. UMPHENOUR: Yes. You have to have
42 that.
43
44 MADAME CHAIR ENSTMINGER: You have to
45 have delegation of authority?
46
47 MR. UMPHENOUR: Yes. To -- yes. You
48 have to have it.
49
50 MADAME CHAIR ENSTMINGER: So the.....

1 MR. UMPHENOUR: The Chairman of the
2 Board will ask. If you say well, it's the opinion of
3 our Council that this is what we want.....
4
5 MADAME CHAIR ENSTMINGER: Okay.
6
7 MR. UMPHENOUR:then you have to
8 have the authority to say that.
9
10 MADAME CHAIR ENSTMINGER: So the motion
11 doesn't say that.
12
13 MR. UMPHENOUR: No.
14
15 MADAME CHAIR ENSTMINGER: We need it to
16 say that.
17
18 MR. UMPHENOUR: Well.....
19
20 MADAME CHAIR ENSTMINGER: So why
21 doesn't somebody withdraw the second and state it
22 correctly, please.
23
24 Who made the second. You, Virgil.
25
26 MR. KOEHLER: I think I did. So I'll
27 withdraw my second.
28
29 MR. UMPHENOUR: Okay. I withdraw the
30 motion. And I'll re-make the motion and try to make it
31 clearer. Okay. My motion is that we request funding
32 to have a representative at the AYK Board of Fisheries
33 meeting. And regardless of whether we get funding or
34 not, if we have someone representing our Council at the
35 meeting, that person will have the authority to
36 represent the Council in the Committee process to the
37 best of that person's ability. To be able to negotiate
38 and maybe change various proposals and participate in
39 making management plans or whatever decisions are made.
40
41
42 MADAME CHAIR ENSTMINGER: We're just
43 giving them authority, right?
44
45 MR. UMPHENOUR: Right.
46
47 MADAME CHAIR ENSTMINGER: Yeah. Okay.
48
49
50 MR. UMPHENOUR: They need the authority

1 to be able to do that.

2

3 MADAME CHAIR ENSTMINGER: To
4 participate in the Committee process.

5

6 MR. UMPHENOUR: In the Committee
7 process.

8

9 MADAME CHAIR ENSTMINGER: That's
10 enough.

11

12 MR. UMPHENOUR: Madame Chair.

13

14 MADAME CHAIR ENSTMINGER: You took a
15 short motion and made it long. But I think we
16 understand the short motion.

17

18 MR. UMPHENOUR: The short motion is
19 participate in the Committee process if we get funded.

20

21 MADAME CHAIR ENSTMINGER: Okay.

22

23 MR. UMPHENOUR: And even if we don't
24 get funded, if we have someone here.....

25

26 MADAME CHAIR ENSTMINGER: Okay. Okay.

27

28 MR. UMPHENOUR:on their own.....

29

30 MADAME CHAIR ENSTMINGER: I need a
31 second.

32

33 MR. UMPHENOUR:then they would
34 have that authority.

35

36 MR. KOEHLER: Second.

37

38 MR. FIRMIN: Question.

39

40 MADAME CHAIR ENSTMINGER: Question has
41 been called for. All in favor of the authority and

42 sending someone and asking for funding, aye.

43

44 IN UNISON: Aye.

45

46 MADAME CHAIR ENSTMINGER: Okay. Anyone
47 opposed.

48

49 (No opposing votes)

50

1 MADAME CHAIR ENSTMINGER: All right. I
2 betcha I'm hearing a break again, right.

3
4 MR. UMPHENOUR: Yeah. We need a break.

5
6
7 MADAME CHAIR ENSTMINGER: Okay. Before
8 we go to break, I just want to have Eva distribute the
9 Park Service final rule. I want you to look at it when
10 you come back and tell me if you want a report from the
11 Park people that are here. If you don't want a report,
12 you'll have that information and we'll go on with the
13 meeting.

14
15 Okay. We'll call for a short break.

16
17 (Off record)

18
19 (On record)

20
21 MADAME CHAIR ENSTMINGER: I want to
22 call the meeting back to order. I've got six here.
23 So.....

24
25 (Pause)

26
27 MADAME CHAIR ENSTMINGER: The next
28 thing on the Agenda is the Sheep Work Group. And we
29 have a letter in front of us from Kristy Tibbles,
30 Alaska Board of Game Executive Director requesting
31 someone participate from the Council. It's Regional
32 Councils interested in participating are asked to
33 please send me an email indicating who the selective
34 representative is and their contact information. We
35 appreciate your interest. And I think we are
36 interested in that.

37
38 (Pause)

39
40 MADAME CHAIR ENSTMINGER: And who am I
41 missing. Bill, Virgil. And I think Virgil told me he
42 -- I didn't get a sense if he was the representative
43 from the AC or if it was someone else.

44
45 MR. KOEHLER: I think we should elect
46 Virgil before he gets back.

47
48 (Laughter)

49
50 MADAME CHAIR ENSTMINGER: Yeah. I'd be

1 willing to do it.

2

3 MR. FIRMIN: Will the sheep be
4 providing funding for traveling to their Sheep Meeting?

5

6 MADAME CHAIR ENSTMINGER: I believe so.
7 Is there any Fish and Game people in the room that can
8 say yes or no to that.

9

10 But I listened to the -- they had two
11 work sessions already and I listened to the last work
12 session. The first one was right before sheep season.
13 Not possible for me to listen to. But in the second
14 one, it sounded like it's coming from Fish and Game.
15 Yes. I believe so.

16

17 Did you get that sense?

18

19 MS. PATTON: Madame Chair and Council,
20 that was my understanding, was that they were creating
21 the Work Group and they were asking for
22 representatives. And -- and that.....

23

24 MADAME CHAIR ENSTMINGER: Yes.

25

26 MS. PATTON: And that travel would be
27 supported. But I'll have to reconfirm that because I
28 am not positive.

29

30 MADAME CHAIR ENSTMINGER: That was what
31 I remember in listening to it. And also that they
32 didn't want a second -- it was asked that they -- they
33 hired some guy from Canada who goes all over the world
34 and is a mediator. And he said he did not want fill-
35 ins. They want the same person to stick with it. And
36 it's going to be a finished project in a few months and
37 be done.

38

39 MR. FIRMIN: He must not be from
40 Alaska.

41

42 (Laughter)

43

44 MADAME CHAIR ENSTMINGER: He is not
45 from Alaska. He is from Canada.

46

47 (Laughter)

48

49 MADAME CHAIR ENSTMINGER: So he says he
50 has no, as you and I would say, dog in the fight. So

1 -- and he's done lots of things all over the world for
2 mediating. And he's mediating this. And he said he
3 doesn't -- he won't take a fill-in. He wants the same
4 person to stay with it. Because it's just going to be
5 a short process because they were going to have a
6 report to the Board of Game for March.

7

8 MR. KOEHLER: That I feel is another
9 reason to send Virgil. He can really put this mediator
10 to a test.

11

(Laughter)

12

13 MS. PATTON: Madame Chair and Council,
14 if I'm not mistaken, it's the same excellent individual
15 who helped negotiate the wood bison project.

16

17 MR. MCKEE: That's correct.

18

19 MS. PATTON: Yeah.

20

21 MR. MCKEE: Alister Bath.

22

23 MS. PATTON: And even Chris was
24 impressed. And, you know, he's sort of a.....

25

26 (Laughter)

27

28 MADAME CHAIR ENSTMINGER: You mean he's
29 hard to impress?

30

31 (Laughter)

32

33 MS. PATTON: Yeah. That was really
34 positive feedback from everyone. You know, that that
35 really gathered people from many walks. So.....

36

37 MADAME CHAIR ENSTMINGER: So -- and I
38 think it is also my understanding that this goes out to
39 the RACs who are interested. And it might be -- they
40 want to keep it to a 30 group. 30 -- they don't want
41 to go over that. So there might be some -- you know,
42 if it's over 30 invites, they're going to choose who
43 they are.

44

45 So Virgil, are you already on it for
46 AC?

47

48 MR. UMPHENOUR: No.

49

50

1 MADAME CHAIR ENSTMINGER: So should we
2 arm wrestle?

3

4 MR. UMPHENOUR: Okay. The Fairbanks AC
5 is going to send Mike Kramer to be our rep on this
6 working group. But our RAC has a fair amount of
7 sheephunting experience on it. And our RAC has a lot
8 of sheephunting area in our RAC. And so I think we
9 should send a representative myself if they'll -- I
10 think we have a better -- or it's an important thing to
11 us, is sheep. I mean look how many times we've
12 addressed Red Sheep Creek.

13

14 MR. FIRMIN: And we've already narrowed
15 it down to you or Sue. We're asking if you want to go
16 or not. Or do you want to nominate Sue.

17

18 MR. UMPHENOUR: Well, if Sue wants to
19 do it, that's fine with me. She's got lots of
20 sheephunting experience. And this whole issue, it
21 really aggravates me that we're even having this thing.
22 Because it's just been caused by people that have put
23 forward proposals that.....

24

25 MADAME CHAIR ENSTMINGER: A few
26 individuals.

27

28 MR. UMPHENOUR: It's just a few
29 individuals. And it's a group of people from
30 Fairbanks. And what they are is they're -- a majority
31 of them are Super Cub owners that want to be able to
32 fly around in a Super Cub. Of course the Board made
33 that illegal now, but that doesn't mean they won't
34 still do it. Is fly around. Find sheep. Land. Get a
35 good night's sleep. Climb up on the mountain, shoot
36 your sheep, and be back at your Super Cub before dark.

37

38 MADAME CHAIR ENSTMINGER: Okay. We
39 don't need to go into any detail.

40

41 MR. UMPHENOUR: Okay.

42

43 MADAME CHAIR ENSTMINGER: We're just
44 choosing somebody.

45

46 MR. UMPHENOUR: Well, anyway, that's
47 what caused all this.

48

49 If you can't do it, I'll do it. But I
50 would rather you did it, Sue.

1 MADAME CHAIR ENSTMINGER: Okay.
2
3 MS. PITKA: I think I heard a
4 nomination.
5
6 MADAME CHAIR ENSTMINGER: Okay. Well,
7 let's do it that way and then have Virgil as the
8 alternate. Okay.
9
10 MADAME CHAIR ENSTMINGER: All in favor
11 of that -- do we need a motion. Let's make -- okay.
12 Did you make the motion.
13
14 MR. FIRMIN: I'll do it.
15
16 MADAME CHAIR ENSTMINGER: Okay. Go for
17 it, Andrew.
18
19 MR. FIRMIN: Move to send Sue -- and to
20 nominate Sue Enstminger as our representative at the
21 ADF&G Sheep Working Group, with Virgil Umphenour as the
22 alternate.
23
24 MR. KOEHLER: Second.
25
26 MADAME CHAIR ENSTMINGER: Okay. Any
27 other discussion.
28
29 (No comments)
30
31 MR. BASSICH: Question.
32
33 MADAME CHAIR ENSTMINGER: Question's
34 been called for. All in favor, say aye.
35
36 IN UNISON: Aye.
37
38 MADAME CHAIR ENSTMINGER: Anyone
39 opposed.
40
41 (No opposing votes)
42
43 MADAME CHAIR ENSTMINGER: Okay. We
44 dealt with that. So now we're on to the Agency
45 Reports. But I did tell you I had this passed out.
46 This is the Report. If anybody wants a report from
47 some Park Service personnel that are here, we can do
48 that. If you want to just move along, that's fine,
49 too.
50

1 Will.
2
3 MR. KOEHLER: It seems like reading the
4 first line here, the robust public process has already
5 ran its course. So I don't think there's -- and we've
6 commented and talked about this subject in past
7 meetings quite a bit before. I think it would be
8 better to move on.
9
10 MADAME CHAIR ENSTMINGER: Okay. Is
11 that okay Council.
12
13 (Council nods affirmatively)
14
15 MADAME CHAIR ENSTMINGER: All right.
16 2014 Yukon River In-Season Salmon Management Review.
17 Do we have more on that.
18
19 MS. PATTON: No. That was it. Fred
20 and Stephanie gave their update.
21
22 MADAME CHAIR ENSTMINGER: We have it
23 done. Okay.
24
25 Now we're going to the Native
26 Organizations Tanana Chiefs Fisheries.
27
28 (Phone interruption)
29
30 MADAME CHAIR ENSTMINGER: Sounds like a
31 jet flying by.
32
33 MR. GLANZ: It sounds like we're at the
34 ocean actually.
35
36 MADAME CHAIR ENSTMINGER: Oh, the
37 ocean. Yeah.
38
39 Actually, there might be someone that
40 needs to push star six. We're hearing some background
41 noise.
42
43 MR. MCKENNA: Good afternoon, Madame
44 Chair, Members of the Board. My name is Brian McKenna.
45 I'm the Partners Fisheries Biologist with the Tanana
46 Chiefs here in Fairbanks. This is just going to be a
47 pretty quick presentation on a couple of the different
48 projects that we operated this summer.
49
50 So I just want to start with the first

1 project here. It was a genetic stock identification
2 project. This project is funded through the Yukon
3 River Panel Restoration and Enhancement Fund. And it's
4 an ongoing and joint effort between TCC, Alaska
5 Department of Fish and Game, and Department of
6 Fisheries and Oceans Canada. And the main goal of this
7 project is to complete a genetic baseline map for the
8 entire Yukon Drainage for spawning locations of Chinook
9 salmon.

10
11 So this is a map that was pulled from a
12 2011 publication by Nick DeCovich, ADF&G. And it
13 basically shows all of the baseline collections that we
14 have right now, so representation on all the spawning
15 stocks of Chinook salmon on both sides of the border.
16 And you can see that we have pretty good coverage right
17 now, but there are still data gaps and that's what
18 we're working on each year. And the red square there
19 represents where we focused our efforts on this year.
20 And this falls right near your guys' Region.

21
22 So the two rivers that we worked on
23 this year were the Draanjik and the Teedraanjik. And
24 for anyone that's not familiar with those Native names,
25 the Draanjik is the Black River and the Teedraanjik is
26 the Salmon Fork River. So that's where we focused our
27 efforts this year.

28
29 We started by chartering a Cessna 185.
30 And we flew three individuals to the Salmon Fork of the
31 Teedraanjik at the border. We anticipated landing as
32 close to the border as possible. We ended up missing
33 about seen right miles it was, so it was the closest
34 place we could safely get in. And from there we
35 floated the entire stretch of the Teedraanjik within
36 Alaska. There was three of us again. We used a Pro
37 Pioneer SOAR inflatable and then also an inflatable
38 kayak. And we did that between June -- or sorry --
39 July 23rd and 29th. So it was six days on the river.
40 Approximately floated about ten miles a day while
41 actively looking for Chinook salmon to catch and
42 sample. And then at the conclusion of that trip we
43 were picked up by a former chief of Chalkyitsik, Jonas
44 Carroll, Sr. And from there we headed back to
45 Chalkyitsik.

46
47 Now, on that float we were able to
48 collect 18 samples. And let's see. I think I have a
49 pointer here. So the Tetthajik Creek here is one of
50 the main tributaries here. And we did get six samples

1 from the Tetthajik Creek. And that was noteworthy
2 because going into the Project, we looked at the
3 Anadromous Waters catalog and that creek there -- that
4 tributary had never been documented before as having
5 spawning king salmon. So that was pretty interesting.
6

7 At the conclusion of the float, we had
8 three more days of funding for helicopter surveys. So
9 we drove to Circle and we based out of there for three
10 days. It was the best place logistically. And then we
11 had three days of helicopter work. So on the first day
12 we wanted to focus our efforts on the Upper Draanjik.
13 And I'll just kind of show you our flight pattern here.
14 I believe that is VanHatten Creek there. So we
15 surveyed most of VanHatten Creek and then from there we
16 went over to the Wood River. We surveyed that as well.
17 And then up to Bull Creek. And finally on to the
18 Grayling Fork and also Mountain Creek before we headed
19 back.

20

21 So we did all that on the first day.
22 And as you can see from the photo there -- it's not the
23 best photo, but you can definitely tell that visibility
24 is pretty minimal. We weren't able to see through the
25 water. And we weren't surprised. It was high water.
26 And as the name suggests, Black River is pretty black.
27 So needless to say, we didn't see or sample any
28 Chinooks on that day. So we didn't feel that any more
29 time needed to be spent on the Draanjik, so we
30 refocused our last two days of flying back on the
31 Teedraanjik.

32

33 So on the second day of flying, we
34 wanted to focus our efforts on the four main
35 tributaries -- Kevinjik, Tetthajik, Runt Creek, and
36 Drifting Snow Creek. Because we weren't able to sample
37 those locations while floating the river. Obviously,
38 you can't go up-river, only down.

39

40 So we started day two and we hit Runt
41 Creek right away. And here's a photo kind of showing
42 what the water looked like in the entire Salmon Fork or
43 Teedraanjik Drainage. It was a clear water system.
44 The water level was good. Visibility was great. So we
45 were pretty hopeful that we'd be able to locate and
46 sample some salmon. So we flew all of Runt Creek and
47 Drifting Snow Creek. And this is just a little side
48 note. That's the U.S., Canada border right there. I
49 didn't know that they did a clear cut, but apparently
50 they do that the entire length of the border.

1
2 We didn't find any -- we didn't observe
3 any king salmon spawning in either Runt Creek or
4 Drifting Snow. The habitat looked ideal, but we didn't
5 observe any. And the anadromous waters catalog also
6 has never -- no one has observed fish in those two
7 creeks as of yet.

8
9 So from there we went to a spot on the
10 Main Stem that we marked on the GPS during our float
11 where we had seen congregations of king salmon. So we
12 landed there and we were able to get some samples.

13
14 From there we then shifted northward to
15 the two tributaries in the north. This is the
16 Tetthajik Creek where we had previously sampled six
17 king salmon. But that was within the first mile of
18 that creek, so it wasn't too far up. And then so we
19 flew north on that tributary there and we did spot two
20 more king salmon about six miles up. So we think that
21 there's a good chance that there's some fish spawning
22 in that tributary.

23
24 And then from there we headed over to
25 the Kevinjik Creek and we flew most of that on our way
26 south, back to the Main Stem. We didn't observe any
27 spawning Chinook salmon in that creek. And then before
28 heading home on day two, we collected more samples from
29 a known spot where we saw congregations during the
30 float. So on the last day we just wanted to get some
31 more samples. Our recon work was finished. We had hit
32 the Upper Black and not found anything. We had
33 surveyed the main tributaries to the Teedraanjik. So
34 we just wanted to go out and get as many samples as
35 possible on the last day, so we flew back to the Main
36 Stem and we hit almost every spot that we had marked on
37 the GPS during our six-day float where we had saw king
38 salmon. And we just kind of worked our way up to the
39 border fishing. And we did fairly well on that last
40 day.

41
42 We didn't take any age, sex or length
43 on these salmon, but just general observation. These
44 looked like pretty big salmon. We didn't see a lot of
45 little salmon up there. And that's just based off my
46 previous experience working at Henshaw Creek weir and
47 also the East Fork, Andraefsky River weir where you
48 kind of see full range of sizes. But again that's
49 probably due to us targeting these fish with hook and
50 lines, so.....

1 So the results, you know, we didn't see
2 -- we weren't able to see any fish in the Draanjik, so
3 we didn't get any samples from that system. In the
4 Salmon Fork we were able to get 50 samples. And just
5 speaking with people from the area and also reading
6 past reports, you know, traditional local knowledge
7 suggests that most are all salmon in the Black River
8 are migrating into the Salmon Fork River.

9

10 I already mentioned that.

11

12 So we didn't find any other -- we
13 didn't observe any Chinook salmon in any of the other
14 Drainages, tributaries, except for the Tetthajik. And
15 just a side note, we did observe a couple different
16 smaller groups of summer chum salmon spawning both from
17 the Main Stem, Salmon Fork, and also the Kevinjik
18 Creek.

19

20 So yeah, just looking back on what we
21 did this summer on those two systems, aerial surveys
22 aren't going to be an adequate tool if we're going to
23 determine whether or not Chinook salmon are using the
24 Upper Draanjik. And floating -- catching samples
25 during floating wasn't productive as aerial sampling.
26 So we had 32 total samples during the three days of
27 helicopter work and 18 samples over the seven days on
28 the river.

29

30 It did bring to mind some future ideas
31 and, you know, it just comes down to cost benefit
32 whether or not -- how much this information is worth to
33 individuals. But putting a weir and doing a summer
34 project up there, we could get population abundance on
35 this population. We could also get ASL demographics to
36 explain the population. Run timing trends. And we
37 could also do additional telemetry work to determine
38 what percentage might be spawning in Alaska versus
39 Canada. And just determine where they're spawning in
40 the whole system.

41

42 So with that, I'll just kind of open it
43 up for questions on this project. And then I've got a
44 couple quick slides on the Henshaw this year.

45

46 MADAME CHAIR ENSTMINGER: Okay. Any
47 questions.

48

49 Andrew.

50

1 MR. FIRMIN: You mentioned -- you just
2 said just summer chum. Did you see any other species
3 of fish or is there other species known that spawn in
4 that area.

5
6 MR. MCKENNA: There is sheefish in the
7 area. We hook and lined a few of those and past
8 reports have said that there's a couple of different
9 sheefish holes along the Main Stem Salmon Fork.
10 Grayling were all over the place. It was difficult to
11 keep the grayling off the road and reel while sampling.

12
13
14 MR. FIRMIN: I mean salmon-wise.

15
16 MR. MCKENNA: Oh, salmon. Chinook
17 primarily. Fall chum are in the area, but not during
18 the time we were there. The summer chum was a
19 surprise. And I believe coho also use the Salmon Fork
20 and Kevinjik Creek.

21
22 MR. FIRMIN: Coho must have been the
23 one I -- because my family has a trap line on Kevinjik.
24 And I remember going up there in the late '80s. And
25 when it was 40 below, those rivers or creeks are still
26 wide open and they don't freeze. And from a Super Cub
27 you can see them full of fish, so I was just curious as
28 to whether those are chum or cohos or how come those
29 still aren't observed. It would be nice to fly a late
30 fall one and when there's -- I imagine you guys ran
31 into a lot of -- because there was a lot of highwater
32 events in the Flats over the summer. And it would be
33 interesting to see it done later in the fall at some
34 point.

35
36 MR. MCKENNA: Yeah. It's a good point.
37 I have heard that from other individuals at well. And
38 that could have been fall chum or coho or maybe both.
39 And this project kind of spawned from another project
40 we did. We also did a weir feasibility study on the
41 Salmon Fork this fall that CATG and TCC did together.
42 And that was specifically designed for fall chum. To
43 enumerate fall chum in that region.

44
45 MADAME CHAIR ENSTMINGER: Rhonda.

46
47 MS. PITKA: Oh. I just have more of a
48 comment. I'm really glad to hear your use of
49 traditional ecological knowledge. Our knowledge of the
50 area is that it is sort of a breadbasket for the whole

1 Flats. So I appreciate that. Thank you.

2

3 And thank you for using language
4 correctly.

5

6 (Laughter)

7

8 MR. MCKENNA: Glad it was correct.

9

10 (Laughter)

11

12 MADAME CHAIR ENSTMINGER: Bill.

13

14 MR. GLANZ: Yes. Years ago some of my
15 friends had -- they worked a weir up there at the
16 Salmon Fork. Is that all just right out of there then
17 or -- I know they had a fish counting station or
18 something up there for the bears. And I can't remember
19 all the different. I was up there working summers.
20 But.....

21

22 MR. MCKENNA: Yeah. If my memory
23 serves me correctly, I believe there was a weir that
24 was installed, but maybe not operated in the '90s. I
25 think due to flooding for a few years.

26

27 MR. GLANZ: I know that they spent
28 months up there. So I mean I thought maybe there
29 should be some records of what they found up there. It
30 wasn't just one year. It was like three or four years
31 they worked that weir. Or that -- whatever that place
32 -- the counting area.

33

34 MR. BASSICH: U.S. Fish.

35

36 MR. GLANZ: Okay. It was Fish and
37 Wildlife, he said. Okay.

38

39 MR. MCKENNA: Was that on the Main Stem
40 Black River or Salmon Fork.

41

42 MR. GLANZ: It was on the Salmon Fork.
43 That's where we used to land anyway. You know,
44 sometimes. And they were right there. So I'm assuming
45 it was the Salmon Fork. That's where it looked like
46 they were at, you know.

47

48 Andy, do you have anything on that.

49

50 MR. BASSICH: I know that they worked

1 there.

2

3 MR. MCKENNA: I was not aware of that,
4 but I would really like to learn that information.

5

6 MADAME CHAIR ENSTMINGER: Okay. Any
7 other questions.

8

9 (No comments)

10

11 MR. MCKENNA: So most everyone here is
12 familiar with the Henshaw Creek weir. It's an ongoing
13 project since 2000. It's funded through OSM, the FRMP.
14 It's currently funded through 2016 and there's a
15 proposal in right now to seek funding for 2017 through
16 2019.

17

18 This summer the weir was operational.
19 Between June 24th and August 5th we had the first
20 Chinook salmon arrive on June 29th and the first chum a
21 little bit before that on June 25th. And this is the
22 results for the life of the project. You can see the
23 top figure there is Chinook salmon in red. In 2015 we
24 had nearly 2,400 Chinook salmon return. And that was
25 the highest on record. And it more than doubled the
26 historical annual average of roughly 1,000 fish per
27 year. So it was a really good return for king salmon
28 in that system. Probably no doubt in light of not
29 fishing. So.....

30

31 And then the chum salmon also return
32 was quite well again this year. The total summer chum
33 salmon was 238,000. And you can see that's on par with
34 the five-year average between 2009 and 2013. And, you
35 know, quite a bit above the early years. But yeah. So
36 16 years of data here and only two years it was funded
37 out. So that's all I have on Henshaw.

38

39 MADAME CHAIR ENSTMINGER: Virgil.

40

41 MR. MCKENNA: If you guys have any
42 questions.

43

44 MR. UMPHENOUR: Yeah. Did you do ASL
45 on those Chinook salmon?

46

47 MR. MCKENNA: Yes. We did for the
48 Henshaw Creek weir. We have not received the results
49 back yet.

50

1 MR. UMPHENOUR: Do you know how many of
2 them you actually sampled?
3
4 MR. MCKENNA: I don't have that
5 information on hand, but I can get it to you.
6
7 MR. UMPHENOUR: Thank you.
8
9 (Phone interruption)
10
11 MADAME CHAIR ENSTMINGER: I need to
12 remind those online, someone is still making a lot of
13 background noise. If they would please star six, we
14 would really appreciate it. It's pretty loud in here.
15
16 MR. MCKENNA: Virgil, I can't say it
17 was the most Chinook samples that we've ever had.
18
19 MADAME CHAIR ENSTMINGER: Any other
20 questions.
21
22 Did I see your hand, Rhonda. I'm
23 sorry.
24
25 MS. PITKA: No. I was stretching
26 myself.
27
28 MADAME CHAIR ENSTMINGER: Okay.
29
30 (Laughter)
31
32 MADAME CHAIR ENSTMINGER: It looks like
33 that's it. Thank you.
34
35 MR. MCKENNA: Thanks for your time.
36
37 MADAME CHAIR ENSTMINGER: Uh-huh.
38
39 So what's going on. Oh, okay. Next on
40 the Agenda -- do you want to speak to this? Because I
41 don't think we had this added.
42
43 MS. PATTON: Madame Chair and Council,
44 under Tribal Governments, we had originally had
45 Northway. And I don't believe Jamie has come or is
46 online yet for.....
47
48 MADAME CHAIR ENSTMINGER: What about
49 this. ADF&G. Does she have a time certain.
50

1 MS. PATTON: Yeah. She was going to.
2
3 MADAME CHAIR ENSTMINGER: Okay.
4
5 MS. PATTON: And this is actually --
6 Kelda works with a non-profit CATG. Tribal non-profit.
7 And do you want to give.....
8
9 MS. BRITTAN: (Indiscernible)
10
11 MS. PATTON: I'm sorry.
12
13 MADAME CHAIR ENSTMINGER: You have a
14 time certain.....
15
16 MS. PATTON: Yeah. It was under --
17 like it was under Tribal Governments. And she has to
18 go at 4:00. She has time for a brief report.
19
20 MS. BRITTAN: Thank you, Madame Chair
21 and respective.....
22
23 MADAME CHAIR ENSTMINGER: Oh. You need
24 to press the mic.
25
26 MS. BRITTAN: Oh, okay.
27
28 MADAME CHAIR ENSTMINGER: That might be
29 helpful.
30
31 MS. BRITTAN: Thank you, Madame Chair
32 and respective Council Members. My name is Kelda
33 Brittan. And I work for the Council of Athabaskan
34 Tribal Governments as the natural resource director.
35 And I reside in Fort Yukon. And I really appreciate
36 the time today to be here. And I wanted to extend
37 gratitude to Rhonda and also to Eva for allowing me the
38 opportunity -- and to all of you.
39
40 I would just like to take a moment to
41 update you all on what we've been doing with CATG. As
42 all of you know, the Council of Athabaskan Tribal
43 Governments is a consortium of ten Gwich'in and Koyukon
44 Athabaskan communities. And I just wanted to basically
45 introduce myself. I know a lot of you don't know me by
46 face yet, so I'm really thankful for the opportunity to
47 come and attend the RAC meetings. I feel as though
48 working in Fort Yukon, you know, our -- I'm thankful
49 for Andrew to be here and to represent, but I wish that
50 we had more Village consultation. And so I just wanted

1 to encourage your Council, if there are any action
2 items, if you could please let CATG know. We would
3 like to be directly involved and also for our Member
4 Tribes to be involved in the Tribal consultation
5 process.

6
7 Currently, we have an Annual Funding
8 Agreement with the Yukon Flats U.S. Fish and Wildlife.
9 And in April of this year, we had a Moose Management
10 Meeting in Fort Yukon. And I believe that Steve
11 Berendzen is going to highlight that in his Refuge
12 Report. This was a successful meeting. And I think
13 that we are taking active steps as far as co-
14 management, but we still have a lot of work to do.

15
16 So I just wanted to really let you know
17 all know that we support the Inter-Tribal Fish
18 Commission and their efforts and we also partner with
19 -- as Brian McKenna was saying, with TCC with their
20 project. And I wanted to also encourage any other Fish
21 and Wildlife and also State Agencies, if there is
22 research that needs to be done, we do have the
23 scientific merit to conduct some of that research. So
24 I really appreciate the opportunity to be actively
25 involved. And I will be meeting with our Chiefs in two
26 weeks and I'm going to take information that I learned
27 at this meeting back to them. So I really just wanted
28 to open up the dialogue and encourage more consultation
29 with our Member Villages. Thank you.

30
31 MADAME CHAIR ENSTMINGER: Yes. Thank
32 you. Just for your information, we're the volunteers
33 and Eva has to do a lot of our legwork for the
34 consultation. So reaching out here is perfect. Thank
35 you.

36
37 Any other questions.

38
39 (No comments)

40
41 MADAME CHAIR ENSTMINGER: It's nice to
42 meet you. Okay.

43
44 MS. BRITTAN: Thank you, Madame Chair.

45
46 MADAME CHAIR ENSTMINGER: Thank you.

47
48 Okay. Now, next on the Agenda is
49 reports from Alaska Department of Fish and Game. And
50 the first there is Subsistence Division. And then Jeff

1 wanted to present some Fortymile caribou. Jeff Gross
2 from the Tok Fish and Game. So.....

3

4 Yeah. You're getting into the second
5 seat. Perfect.

6

7 (Laughter)

8

9 MADAME CHAIR ENSTMINGER: Okay. Go
10 ahead.

11

12 MS. TRAINOR: Good afternoon, Madame
13 Chair and Members of the Council. For the record, my
14 name is Alida Trainor. I'm a Subsistence Resource
15 Specialist. Primarily conduct research in the Yukon
16 River. I would like to give you a brief update on
17 several projects that my colleague Caroline Brown and I
18 am working on. It looks like Eva's passing out my
19 Power Point presentation now.

20

21 The first is a project that relies
22 entirely on the local and traditional ecological
23 knowledge held by people in St. Mary's, Anvik, Huslia,
24 Allakaket, and Fort Yukon. This project explores the
25 spawning and migration patterns of king salmon in the
26 freshwater system of the Yukon River. We have been
27 conducting extensive mapping interviews that are
28 documenting changes in the environment and landscape
29 that could be impacting king salmon. We feel that this
30 project is a fundamental addition to the biological
31 research currently being conducted on the Yukon River.
32 As we analyze the data, we plan to work with other
33 research staff to possibly explore these observations
34 further.

35

36 For the second project, we are
37 partnering with Catherine Moncrieff, an anthropologist
38 at YRDFA, to document the historic and contemporary
39 exchange practices of salmon in the Upper Yukon River
40 Region. This includes sharing, barter, and customary
41 trade. We are conducting household surveys in Manley
42 Hot Springs, Stevens Village, Fort Yukon, and Arctic
43 Village pending approval. This should help document
44 the scope and local nature of barter and customary
45 trade and we hope to conduct ethnographic interviews to
46 improve our understanding of how the decline in king
47 salmon and increased restrictions might be changing
48 these customary and traditional practices. This
49 project is funded by OSM.

50

1 For our third project, we are working
2 to understand the historic patterns and trends in Yukon
3 River salmon fishing. We are taking household level
4 harvest data collected over the past 26 years in post-
5 season surveys back to individual households and
6 interviewing them about the reasons for their harvest
7 fluctuations over time. We are working in Alakanuk,
8 Marshall, Nulato, Galena, Beaver, and Eagle. This
9 project will improve Managers' understanding of the
10 complexity surrounding household and community harvest
11 patterns and help the Board of Fisheries and Federal
12 Subsistence Board explore alternatives for salmon
13 fishing regulations.

14
15 Finally, I'd like to give you a brief
16 update on some very preliminary results from our Alaska
17 LNG Comprehensive Subsistence Project. Our Division
18 intends to conduct household surveys in every community
19 along or near the proposed LNG route, 17 in total. We
20 are documenting the contemporary patterns and uses in
21 all subsistence resources and recording traditional
22 knowledge about these resources. Last year, our office
23 in the Northern Region surveyed Anaktuvuk Pass, Barrow,
24 Nuiqsut, Rampart, Stevens Village, Tanana, and Healy.
25 We collected 37 ethnographic interviews and estimate
26 that over 185,000 square miles of land were used for
27 subsistence in 2014.

28
29 The last page of your handout has a
30 table and a graph that shows some early results from
31 last year's study. You can see that in total over
32 4,000,000 edible pounds were harvested for subsistence,
33 equal to about 426 pounds per person in each studied
34 community. We have not yet reviewed these results with
35 studied communities or reviewed the data analysis
36 internally, so the numbers may change slightly. You
37 can see at the top of the table a high rate of
38 households reporting using subsistence resources, 81
39 percent. And high rates of sharing, 75 percent of
40 households reported receiving wild foods from others,
41 while 55 percent reported giving wild foods to other
42 households. Those are just some examples of the types
43 of results that come out of this type of work.

44
45 We plan on presenting this RAC more
46 dynamic results at your next meeting. Thank you for
47 your time. And I'd be happy to take any questions at
48 this point.

49
50 (Phone interruption)

1 MS. PATTON: For folks that are on
2 teleconference, we've got someone that there's quite a
3 bit of background noise. If you can please hit star
4 six on your phone, that will mute the background noise
5 and helpful to the Council. Thank you.

6
7 MADAME CHAIR ENSTMINGER: Questions.

8
9 Andy. Then Virgil.

10
11 MR. BASSICH: Thank you. Thank you,
12 Alida. I was just wondering on another topic. Do you
13 have any updates on any preliminary work you've been
14 doing on in-season harvest collection for salmon? Is
15 there any updates on progresses or that you can share
16 with us on that?

17
18 MS. TRAINOR: Sure. Through the Chair,
19 Council Member Bassich, I led research in Grayling two
20 years ago to address the conversation and discussion
21 that Virgil was bringing up earlier about the
22 feasibility of an in-season monitoring project. What
23 we did was I hired and trained local research
24 assistants to conduct door-to-door household surveys
25 every week at the close of each fishing period. And
26 then the intent was for them to record those numbers
27 and fax them into our Fairbanks office with enough time
28 to turn them around and send them to Stephanie and
29 other Managers in the hopes that they could make --
30 they would be able to use that data to make in-season
31 decisions. What we found was that it was quite
32 difficult to get those numbers in in a timely fashion
33 in a way that was usable for Stephanie. Also, there
34 seemed to be some confusion over the administration
35 processes. And it took quite a bit of effort and time
36 on my part to travel back to Grayling and continue the
37 training throughout the season.

38
39 The following year we worked in
40 Marshall, Nulato, and I want to say Anvik, with varying
41 results. It really seems to boil down to local
42 capacity on whether or not an in-season monitoring
43 project is feasible. And I think that local capacity
44 is something that can build over time and really takes
45 commitment from Tribal Council and buy-in from local
46 fishermen.

47
48 So our report on those two projects
49 should be out within the next year.

50

1 MR. UMPHENOUR: My question is on the
2 per capita column that's on the next to the last page
3 on marine mammals. It says 228.2. So -- and then I'm
4 looking at the Villages. The only two that might have
5 marine mammals would be Barrow and Nuiqsut. So that
6 was how many pounds per capita for those two places?

7
8 MS. TRAINOR: Through the Chair, I
9 requested this data to be put together the night before
10 your meeting started yesterday from our IM Staff in
11 Anchorage. And while I don't believe that this is an
12 error, if I'm to understand it correctly, this is
13 apportioned over all of the study communities. So it's
14 228 pounds per person in seven Villages.

15
16 Does that answer your question?

17
18 MADAME CHAIR ENSTMINGER: Is that
19 person or household?

20
21 MS. TRAINOR: Well, we have the mean
22 per household. That's 902 pounds. And per capita it's
23 228.

24
25 MR. UMPHENOUR: You must have counted
26 whales in there.

27
28 (Laughter)

29
30 Any other questions.

31
32 Rhonda.

33
34 MS. PITKA: Oh. I was just going to
35 say this would be a really good opportunity to partner
36 with CATG for their harvest studies. We have a proven
37 track record of doing harvest studies in our
38 communities. I feel like -- well, Andrew used to do
39 them all the time. But, you know, we have capacity.
40 So.....

41
42 MS. TRAINOR: Through the Chair. Thank
43 you, Council Member Pitka for that suggestion. I have
44 personally had great experience working with the Tribal
45 Councils in the Yukon Flats Region. I have found that
46 they are, as you know, very interested in cooperating
47 and participating giving input in these types of
48 projects. When we were working on the Exchange
49 Practices Project that covers barter and customary
50 trade, the Fort Yukon Tribal Council actually edited

1 them throughout and then re-wrote our interview
2 protocol. And it was -- it's very -- I believe it's
3 very high-quality. And we wouldn't have been able to
4 conduct this type of research without them. We've also
5 hired local research assistants in all the study
6 communities for all the projects that I discussed.

7
8 MS. PITKA: Yeah. We do appreciate
9 that in Beaver. Thank you. And thank you for that
10 data.

11
12 MADAME CHAIR ENSTMINGER: Any other
13 questions.

14
15 MR. GLANZ: I have one. Yeah.

16
17 MADAME CHAIR ENSTMINGER: Bill.

18
19 MR. GLANZ: So that's where my kitty
20 went, they're eating feral animals, what is that?

21
22 MS. TRAINOR: Through the Chair. That
23 typically refers to reindeer that have went feral in
24 different parts of the State.

25
26 MR. GLANZ: Okay.

27
28 MS. TRAINOR: That have a history of
29 hurting.....

30
31 MR. GLANZ: I was just making a joke,
32 but okay.

33
34 (Laughter)

35
36 MADAME CHAIR ENSTMINGER: Any other
37 questions.

38
39 (No comments)

40
41 MADAME CHAIR ENSTMINGER: Just a quick
42 one. All of this is done for the year they're -- one
43 year, right? I guess one of the things that's happened
44 in our Region when that was done is it oftentimes if
45 somebody wasn't harvesting that year, a year is a loss
46 of data. And that's a concern of mine that there's a
47 loss of data. So -- because that happened. Somebody
48 got sick or somebody -- something happened and they
49 weren't out much in a year. And it does not reflect
50 their past use. And it's really missing data.

1 MS. TRAINOR: To respond, Chairwoman,
2 that is a concern of ours. We don't just see that in a
3 loss of harvest in the actual, you know, final total
4 numbers. But we also see that when trying to look at
5 harvest patterns and primary resources that are used by
6 subsistence users, particularly if there's a bad berry
7 year. That's a really good example. Berries might not
8 contribute a large amount of edible weight, but they
9 are very important in the harvest and use practices and
10 cultures in these areas. And one way that we try to
11 compensate for that is by conducting thorough
12 ethnographic interviews that do cover all species, all
13 seasons, and try to collect a lifetime of knowledge and
14 expertise. So that can kind of get us to a better
15 understanding of those patterns.

16
17 MADAME CHAIR ENSTMINGER: So that is
18 happening now, the lifetime? Because it wasn't
19 happening a few years ago, I don't think.

20
21 MS. TRAINOR: Madame Chair, in all of
22 our comprehensive studies, we couple our quantitative
23 survey with ethnographic interviews. So what we'll do
24 is we'll -- our survey is systematic and we'll go door-
25 to-door. If it's a smaller community we'll shoot for
26 100 percent. If it's a larger community, we try for 75
27 to 80. But then once we actually arrive, we'll start
28 talking to the Tribal Council. We'll start identifying
29 knowledgeable elders and active hunters and fishers to
30 give that lifetime perspective that will contextualize
31 the study year. And that's something that we've always
32 done for these comprehensive surveys.

33
34 MADAME CHAIR ENSTMINGER: Good. I
35 don't want to see it lost. Thank you.

36
37 Any other questions.

38
39 (No comments)

40
41 MADAME CHAIR ENSTMINGER: Thank you
42 very much.

43
44 Jeff is next.

45
46 MR. GROSS: Thank you, Madame Chair.
47 For the record, my name is Jeff Gross. I'm the Alaska
48 Department of Fish and Game Area Biologist in Tok. And
49 I had just requested to give a brief overview of this
50 fall's Fortymile caribou herd hunt and kind of where

1 we're at now.

2

3 I apologize for not being here
4 yesterday. I was not feeling real well yesterday and I
5 guess just I would say avoid the ribs at Fred Meyers.

6

7 (Laughter)

8

9 MS. PITKA: Thank you for that.

10

11 MR. GROSS: And anyway, but thank you
12 very much for having us here today.

13

14 This fall's Fortymile hunt saw a few
15 unusual things. Just a real quick breakdown. I think
16 most of you are familiar with the zones. And I had
17 given a handout. Hopefully everybody's got that.
18 There's some more back on the back table there if
19 people want to go rush over there and grab one.

20

21 Starting on this side of the world, in
22 Zone 1, along the Steese Highway we didn't have a lot
23 of Fortymile caribou along the highway during the fall
24 hunt this year. Ended up with about 55 caribou
25 harvested on this end of the world. This is kind of
26 preliminary data. We may end up with a few more
27 reports, but it should be close.

28

29 In the roadless area in between the
30 Steese and Taylor Highway basically, where access is
31 pretty much limited to aircraft or boats going up a few
32 of the rivers, we had 134 animals reported harvested.
33 And actually four of those were by Federally qualified
34 hunters. I haven't broke those out. Likely people
35 going up the Charley in boats or something along those
36 lines. But that was actually a smaller harvest than we
37 normally have seen in that remote area.

38

39 And then the place with the majority of
40 the caribou this year was in Zone 3, over along Taylor
41 Highway. We had a fair harvest initially during the
42 State opener on August 30th this year. There was some
43 limited Federal harvest prior to that. But we had
44 about 200 animals taken in the first few days of the
45 season and then as some of you especially from Eagle
46 and so on probably know, the herd actually did kind of
47 a big loop and came back and hit the Taylor Highway
48 about halfway up the Taylor Highway near the Y area or
49 near the Fortymile River bridge. And did something
50 that was kind of unusual. I haven't seen before at

1 that time of year during the moose season, they ended
2 up hitting the road. Actually crossing the road. And
3 we actually saw more moose hunters this year than we've
4 -- I've -- we'd ever seen in the past. You know,
5 1,000.

6
7 And they -- we weren't really sure how
8 long it was going to take them to react, but we learned
9 this year is they can react pretty quickly, which isn't
10 a big surprise. But the caribou cooperated really
11 well. They went across the highway in large numbers.
12 Paused for a few minutes. Turned around and came back
13 across the highway during the time that -- during about
14 a four-day period there. And they took about 300
15 animals during that four-day period. We generally try
16 to hold that harvest to about 340. With the off season
17 being as late as it was and the lack of harvest in
18 other units, we didn't take a real conservative tact
19 and shut it down quickly. Decided to leave it open for
20 a couple of days. And then after just two days we
21 decided to close it. So we did end up with a little
22 bit of excess harvest there. We still came in under
23 our overall fall quota of 750 animals. We came in at
24 about 700. So we're going to actually add a few
25 animals to the winter quota. So the winter hunt will
26 take place as scheduled and the harvest quota will be
27 slightly higher. And that will be further broken down
28 between the Steese and Taylor sides once we get closer
29 to the hunt.

30
31 I guess one thing I'd add. We had some
32 discussions about this at the last Upper Tanana,
33 Fortymile Advisory Committee meeting and I haven't had
34 a chance to meet with the Eagle Advisory Committee yet,
35 but we did document a number of wasted animals near the
36 highway. We did have one local resident come to our
37 Advisory Committee in Tok and provide some testimony
38 about what he's seen in the past and so on. And I
39 don't want to expand on that too much. I think he'll
40 hopefully get a chance to come talk to you folks in the
41 future.

42
43 Other than that, the process worked.
44 We were able to control the harvest and so on. And
45 make sure there's going to be a winter hunt. So with
46 that, I'd be happy to entertain any questions.

47
48 MADAME CHAIR ENSTMINGER: Any
49 questions.
50

1 Donald.

2

3 MR. WOODRUFF: Thank you, Madam.

4

5 Jeff, what was the success rate of the
6 youth hunt in the early season? That's August 10th or
7 thereabouts.

8

9 MR. GROSS: Well, through the Chair, it
10 was really good. It was pretty much 100 percent for
11 folks that participated. There were a few animals --
12 there were enough animals around the Steese Highway.
13 Even hunters up there were successful. I guess I would
14 characterize that youth hunt as a real success. The
15 families were going out with the children. They were
16 having uncrowded hunting conditions and being able to
17 take their time. And we heard nothing but compliments
18 from the lucky few that were able to participate.

19

20 And I really haven't received any kind
21 of negative comments about folks feeling like it's
22 stepping on, you know, later hunts or anything like
23 that. So it was really good.

24

25 MADAME CHAIR ENSTMINGER: Bill.

26

27 MR. GLANZ: Did you have to wanton
28 waste what was the cows that they shot inadvertently
29 and left them to rot? Or was it.....

30

31 MR. GROSS: Through the Chair, it was
32 -- actually, we documented and took photos of 12
33 separate animals that were shot and left. Most of them
34 were poor shots. You know, that they were probably
35 just incidental. But five of those were bulls. So
36 five of those were legal animals. A couple of them
37 were shot and they were just uphill from another gut
38 pile, so probably passed through or something along
39 those lines. It was -- the caribou were crossing on
40 the Taylor Highway in a few areas that just lend
41 themselves to only being able to kill a caribou if you
42 shoot it on the road, which is -- you know, we observed
43 and there were some tickets handed out for that.

44

45 So anyway, we were just able to kind of
46 document some more of that than I have in the past.
47 And it's something I'm planning on talking to the
48 Harvest Manager Coalition about in their next meeting
49 hopefully later this winter. Because I do think it's
50 -- it's probably more than we thought it was in the

1 past or I could confirm. And so I'll just provide the
2 facts as I know them and let the Harvest Management
3 Coalition kind of gnaw it over and decide maybe what
4 they want to do.

5

6 MR. GLANZ: Thank you.

7

8 MADAME CHAIR ENSTMINGER: Andy.

9

10 MR. BASSICH: Thank you.

11

12 Jeff, did I hear you say that there was
13 more moose hunters along the highway this year? Did I
14 mishear you? Or.....

15

16 MR. GROSS: Through the Chair. No.
17 There were -- I should actually clarify that there were
18 more permits handed out in RM865, which is the area
19 along the Taylor Highway and along the Yukon River. I
20 would say throughout the hunt area there was probably
21 more hunters or more reports of hunters than we've seen
22 in the past. I kind of based my observations on how
23 many rigs I see parked at different key parking lots.
24 And certainly I saw more rigs at a number of parking
25 lots in the lower end of the Taylor Highway than I've
26 ever seen before. So.....

27

28 MR. BASSICH: So I know you guys
29 monitor that hunt very closely. I'm just wondering
30 what your perceptions are on anything that would
31 increase more participation in that in the future. Any
32 regulation changes or anything that would increase
33 potential participation in the hunt along the Taylor
34 Highway Zone 3?

35

36 MR. GROSS: Through the Chair. I think
37 that the one thing that I've noticed through field
38 contacts and both me and my Staff both in the field --
39 contacts in the field and in our offices has been
40 comments about the any bull bag limit. And that
41 there's not a lot of places in the State that still
42 exists. We haven't seen any kind of conservation issue
43 there. Bull/cow ratio seems to be hanging on fine.
44 Success rates have gone up some -- actually quite a
45 bit. While we've seen some increase in hunter numbers,
46 the overall harvest is more indicative -- or the
47 increase in harvest is more indicative of higher
48 success rates than more hunters per se. But the number
49 of hunters has a little bit to do with it. So as far
50 as in the future and what things might -- are you

1 thinking to draw more hunters to that area? Just
2 additional antler restrictions elsewhere. Restrictions
3 that, you know, kind of encourage people to come to
4 places that have a lot of good State access or State
5 land fair access and a liberal bag limit.

6
7 MR. BASSICH: I guess what I'm thinking
8 of is are you feeling like that hunt is becoming
9 saturated. You know, it's an incredi -- it's like a
10 parking lot up and down the highway. So I'm just
11 wondering from your perspective as a biologist, you
12 know, how you -- I guess some of it goes towards
13 quality of hunt, but some of it also goes towards
14 hunter safety and also just making a reasonable hunt
15 along that Taylor Highway.

16
17 I don't really know how to phrase this,
18 but it just seems like it's getting to the point where
19 it's pretty close to saturation, like it was in the
20 '70s. And that created a lot of problems after that.
21 And I know you guys are doing a great job of monitoring
22 it and the bag limits. And the Coalition has set up
23 some very strict guidelines and everything, but I guess
24 I'm just asking for some personal observations on your
25 point of what you've seen and on as far as how that's
26 grown. How that hunt has grown over the last five or
27 six years or eight years or so.

28
29 MR. GROSS: Through the Chair. I guess
30 for clarification, are you referring to the caribou
31 hunt or moose hunt or both. Or.....

32
33 MR. BASSICH: Well, both. Because
34 they're tied together.

35
36 MR. GROSS: Yeah.

37
38 MR. BASSICH: Generally, what's
39 happening is group -- people -- hunters group up. One
40 has a caribou tag. One has a moose tag. That's
41 essentially what has happened out of that permit hunt
42 now.

43
44 MR. GROSS: I guess what I'd offer is
45 the density of hunters especially in the road corridor
46 has certainly increased. Saturation really starts
47 getting into allocation and so I've got to kind of take
48 a step back there, which you know certainly affects the
49 quality of the hunt. Certainly, there has been some
50 comments especially from the person that -- Dave Likens

1 was the person that came to the Advisory Committee
2 meeting and discussed his safety concerns and his hunt
3 quality concerns. The same things I think you're
4 talking about. So certainly those things are becoming
5 more prevalent. And certainly our observations is the
6 densities are increasing and.....

7
8 MADAME CHAIR ENSTMINGER: And these
9 things will be taken up by the AC's and the working
10 group? Yeah. It's ongoing? Yeah.

11
12 Will.

13
14 MR. KOEHLER: I'd just like to remind
15 people that it's a -- this is an area where -- this is
16 what were talking about earlier. Different values and
17 different regions.

18
19 MADAME CHAIR ENSTMINGER: Uh-huh.

20
21 MR. KOEHLER: Where different values
22 clash. Because when you talk about quality of hunt,
23 there's certain people -- there's a large group of
24 people from a different region that come up and hunt
25 that area, that this is a really high-quality hunt.
26 Like a year like this. Because, you know, frankly they
27 don't come up to hunt caribou for meat. They come up
28 to shoot caribou. And they want it to be a war zone.
29 They want it to be competition. And those -- and that
30 is the language that they use. And that's the language
31 they used when we were in the Coalition. And so it's a
32 fine line that Jeff has to walk. And I think he does a
33 pretty good job of keeping both sides just a little
34 irritated.

35
36 (Laughter)

37
38 MR. GLANZ: One more comment. Like you
39 said there during our Coalition meetings, some people
40 from the Kenai, they didn't -- we just want to come up
41 and hunt. We don't care. We don't care if we just get
42 up for one afternoon. We're going to shoot a caribou
43 and go back. That's -- might as well go out and get
44 somebody an Angus cow and shoot it. They'd get more
45 meat. But anyway.....

46
47 MR. KOEHLER: It's not about the meat.

48
49
50 MADAME CHAIR ENSTMINGER: Well, it

1 better be about the meat. Because that's what they
2 have to take home. You know, I would say that the
3 people that don't care about meat is -- I would hope
4 and pray it's few. I think the people do care about
5 the meat, but they do also care about hunting
6 opportunity.

7
8 MR. GLANZ: Yeah. They do. But I've
9 been in -- I don't even want to go into it.

10
11 MADAME CHAIR ENSTMINGER: No.

12
13 MR. GLANZ: But I've seen them come in
14 carrying caribou in the back of their truck. Threw it
15 in the dumpster. What are you guys doing? All he said
16 is the meat has to be removed from the field.

17
18 MADAME CHAIR ENSTMINGER: Same happened
19 years ago, Frank tells me. During the.....

20
21 MR. GLANZ: It was still happening.....

22
23 MADAME CHAIR ENSTMINGER: It's still
24 happening.

25
26 MR. GLANZ:when I retired six
27 years ago. Yeah.

28
29 MR. KOEHLER: Now they just leave them
30 in the ditch, it sounds like.

31
32 MADAME CHAIR ENSTMINGER: Like my
33 husband says, wherever there's a road and caribou that
34 intercept, there's tons of issues that are pretty tough
35 to deal with.

36
37 So okay. That was a report. We're not
38 really going to do anything right now. You guys are
39 going to continue to be on the group, I think. The
40 ones from the RAC and our AC. So thanks, Jeff. Is
41 there anything else.

42
43 You're looking at me odd.

44
45 (Laughter)

46
47 MR. GROSS: Madame Chair, no. Nothing
48 else.

49
50 (Laughter)

1 MADAME CHAIR ENSTMINGER: Well, if
2 there's no action items, then -- yeah.
3
4 Okay. We have made another question
5 come about.
6
7 MR. UMPHENOUR: Okay. Are you going to
8 be involved in this shoot working group thing?
9
10 MR. GROSS: Through the Chair. I sure
11 hope not.
12
13 (Laughter)
14
15 MR. GROSS: No. I don't think I'll be
16 directly involved. Certainly as a biologist that helps
17 in the sheep surveys, we may end up providing technical
18 help. But that's about it.
19
20 MADAME CHAIR ENSTMINGER: Okay.
21
22 MR. WOODRUFF: I've got one question.
23
24 MADAME CHAIR ENSTMINGER: We've got
25 more questions.
26
27 MR. WOODRUFF: Jeff, you did a photo
28 survey of the Fortymile caribou herd this year?
29
30 MR. GROSS: Through the Chair. Yes.
31 We did. And we've just started poking around with the
32 photographs. And we ended up having to shoot the herd
33 with handheld cameras. There was the Beaver and the
34 206 that are equipped with -- with large format cameras
35 weren't able to make it on the one particular day the
36 herd came together. So there's no guarantees yet, but
37 I'm sure hopeful. Looking at the photographs, I think
38 there's hopefully a 51 percent chance that it's going
39 to work. So -- but as soon as we know that, hopefully
40 if you folks have another meeting this winter,
41 hopefully we'll have it done and be able to talk some
42 more with you about that.
43
44 MR. WOODRUFF: Thank you.
45
46 MADAME CHAIR ENSTMINGER: Will, did you
47 have another -- you went like this. So I saw the --
48 okay.
49
50 MR. KOEHLER: No.

1 MADAME CHAIR ENSTMINGER: All right.
2 All right. Anything else.
3
4 (No comments)
5
6 MADAME CHAIR ENSTMINGER: Thanks, Jeff.
7
8 MR. GROSS: Thank you.
9
10 MADAME CHAIR ENSTMINGER: Okay. The
11 next thing on the Agenda.
12
13 MS. PATTON: YRDFA.
14
15 MADAME CHAIR ENSTMINGER: Is YRDFA?
16
17 MS. PATTON: Brief update.
18
19 MADAME CHAIR ENSTMINGER: Brief update.
20
21
22 MS. PATTON: Do we have Wayne Jenkins
23 online yet?
24
25 MR. JENKINS: I am online.
26
27 MS. PATTON: Thank you, Wayne, for
28 hanging in there. So you're up next. And we have your
29 handout here for the Council. I will pass this out if
30 you want to start.
31
32 MR. JENKINS: Good afternoon, Madame
33 Chair, and Eastern Interior Federal Regional Advisor
34 Council Members. My name is Wayne Jenkins. I'm the
35 new Director for the Yukon River Drainage Fisheries
36 Association, also known as YRDFA. We appreciate this
37 opportunity to provide informational reports to you on
38 some of YRDFA's projects.
39
40 The first project I'd like to share
41 information on is the Pre-Season Salmon Fishery
42 Preparation Meeting. This year the Pre-Season Yukon
43 River Fishery Meeting was hosted by YRDFA on April 29th
44 in Anchorage. The meeting rotates its location on an
45 annual basis between Fairbanks and Anchorage. The 2015
46 pre-season followed directly upon YRDFA's annual Board
47 Meeting and YRDFA Board and Alternates, that is
48 commercial and subsistence fisheries from the full
49 length of the Alaska Yukon were able to attend.
50

1 This meeting was funded by the Yukon
2 River Panel Restoration Enhancement Fund. It's a one-
3 day meeting for fishermen to meet with fisheries
4 managers and biologists for the Alaska Department of
5 Fish and Game, and also the U.S. Fish and Wildlife
6 Service to prepare for the upcoming fishery season.

7
8 The Fishery Managers share their
9 preseason outlook, as well as stock status updates.
10 And time was spent in open discussion, talking about
11 specific scenarios to anticipate and plan for in in-
12 season fishing on the Yukon River.

13
14 Despite the weak condition of the king
15 salmon run and the subsequent need for severe
16 conservation measures for a second year, it was clear
17 that attendants understood the gravity of the situation
18 and intended to target other salmon species for meeting
19 subsistence needs . The sacrifice of Alaskan Yukon
20 fisheries resulted in meeting most escapement goals for
21 Alaskan Yukon River tributaries. And going over the
22 goal for the Yukon River Agreement Canadian escapement
23 target.

24
25 The second report I'd like to share is
26 the in-season Yukon River salmon teleconferences.
27 YRDFA has hosted in-season salmon management
28 teleconferences for 12 years. I expect many of you
29 know about these and some of you participate in them.
30 They're funded by both the Office of Subsistence
31 Management Fisheries Resources Managing Program and the
32 Yukon River Panel Restoration Enhancement Fund. YRDFA
33 hosted the calls every Tuesday beginning June 2nd, 2015
34 and went through the last week of August. The calls
35 followed an agenda each week, opening with subsistence
36 fishing reports from Alaska Yukon River Managers and
37 fishers and First Nations reports from Yukon Canada.
38 And then reports from State and Federal Fisheries
39 Managers on their test fisheries results, assessments,
40 and management strategies. And also hearing from the
41 Department of Fisheries and Oceans in Canada. These
42 calls are an open forum for members of the public to
43 call in and hear weekly fisheries updates. And also a
44 place to ask questions about the salmon fishery in-
45 season. Managers gain valuable information from Yukon
46 River fisheries as to river conditions and how well
47 people are getting their subsistence needs.

48
49 Fisheries calls reflected many
50 challenging issues facing Yukon River fisheries and

1 managers. While striving to meet subsistence needs,
2 fishers faced delayed initial runs of king and summer
3 chum salmon, high water conditions, wildfires which
4 threatened some villages and pulled some fishermen out
5 of the communities for fire duties and lack of proper
6 fishing gear in some communities. All the while,
7 managers and fisheries worked to avoid harvesting king
8 salmon and targeting other fish species. It was a
9 tough year. But as mentioned previously, the choices,
10 actions, and sacrifice made by Alaska Yukon River
11 fisheries enabling most Canadian, Alaskan escapement
12 goals to be met. In some cases exceeded. YRDFA
13 proposals for next year's teleconference program are in
14 process and we look forward to continuing this
15 important work.

16
17 The third program I'd like to share is
18 the (indiscernible) educational exchange. The
19 educational exchange developed by YRDFA is funded by
20 the Yukon River Panel through its Restoration
21 Enhancement Fund for the past 12 years. After the
22 Yukon River Salmon Agreement was signed by U.S. and
23 Canadian governments. This exchange trip is for people
24 from Alaska and Canada that reside in Yukon River
25 Villages or who work with Yukon River salmon fisheries
26 to learn from each other in Fisheries Management
27 Agencies about issues pertaining to Canadian origin
28 chinook and fall chum salmon fisheries. Some key
29 topics for sharing are management approaches and goals,
30 Yukon River cultures, and people who rely on salmon,
31 and the goals of the Yukon River Salmon Agreement. A
32 group of five people travel across the border to the
33 neighboring each summer. And State and Federal Agency
34 personnel, Yukon River Panel Member, elders, youth,
35 fish processors and guides (indiscernible) at various
36 stops. The goal of the exchange is to foster cross-
37 border collaboration and acts to a bridge to greater
38 understanding, dialogue, and cooperation along the
39 length of the Yukon River.

40
41 This year's Alaskan group represented
42 the Yukon River Villages of Marshall, Huslia, Galena,
43 and (indiscernible), the First Nations are Klondike,
44 Gwitch'in in Dawson City, (indiscernible) in the very
45 headwaters of the Yukon River. They also met with
46 Canadian Department of Fisheries and Oceans Management
47 given the two restoration projects in the Whitehorse
48 area. Our post-trip evaluation indicates that our
49 guests found the experience very informative,
50 beautiful, and deeply moving, as they gained a greater

1 understanding of the salmon decline situation river-
2 wide and the long sacrifice that Yukon Territory First
3 Nation Communities have been making. Some communities
4 have not -- have chosen to not harvest king salmon for
5 more than 17 years. Alaskan visitors saw and heard how
6 First Nations are working to uphold their culture and
7 educate the youth as their fish camps sat idle.
8 Alaskans shared their culture while gaining more
9 understanding of the critical importance of Alaskan
10 salmon conservation for meeting escapement goals to
11 rebuild the king run and for healing Native cultures in
12 the Upper Yukon headwaters.

13

14 But now I'd like to turn the call over
15 to Catherine Moncrieff to report on a couple of her
16 projects.

17

18 Catherine, are you there.

19

20 MS. MONCRIEFF: Yes. I am. Can you
21 hear me?

22

23 MR. JENKINS: Yes.

24

25 MADAME CHAIR ENSTMINGER: Yes. We can
26 also.

27

28 MS. MONCRIEFF: Okay. Great. Well,
29 Madame Chair and Council Members, for the record, my
30 name is Catherine Moncrieff. And I'd like to report on
31 two of our projects. A third one I was going to report
32 on, I think Alida already did and covered the points
33 that I was going to make.

34

35 So the first is our in-season harvest
36 survey program, which is run by YRDFA. It's an
37 important assessment tool that qualitatively informs
38 Managers how fishers in key locations throughout the
39 Drainage are doing in-season, enabling Managers to make
40 timely decisions, allowing the maximum of fishers to
41 meet their subsistence needs. The in-season harvest
42 survey compliments the quantitative post-season survey
43 conducted by the Alaska Department of Fish and Game by
44 providing an explanation of fishing success, such as
45 high water, debris, and other adverse effects that
46 influence fishing success.

47

48 Beginning in 2002, the in-season
49 harvest interviewers have been hired in each year in
50 select communities along the Yukon River to ensure

1 consistent participation and reporting each week
2 regarding subsistence harvest and observed abundance on
3 the teleconferences. These in-season interviews were
4 begun to assist in meeting the mandates set forth in
5 the Alaska National Interest Land Conservation Act, or
6 ANILCA, and State of Alaska Statutes, both of which
7 require a priority for subsistence over other
8 consumptive uses. In-season interviews provide
9 Managers inside on subsistence harvest progression
10 within multiple Villages located on the Yukon River for
11 use in fisheries management decision making.

12
13 For the 2015 season, YRDFA was at the
14 end of our cooperative agreement with the Fish and
15 Wildlife Service Fisheries Resource Monitoring Program.
16 They allowed us to extend our agreement and we operated
17 the season on reduced funds. With these reduced funds,
18 we were able to hire surveyors in four communities
19 instead of our usual ten. We chose Marshall, Russian
20 Mission, and Fort Yukon to operate this year because we
21 had good, effective surveyors on board already in these
22 communities. We added Ruby as a new community this
23 year at the request of the Managers because they were
24 seeking more information about why the fishers in Ruby
25 did not meet their needs in 2014. Selection of these
26 four communities gave us a pretty good spread along the
27 river and the surveyors did a good job of interviewing
28 and participating.

29
30 Results for the 2015 season include
31 interviews with 46 households in four communities for a
32 total of 133 interviews. And information was reported
33 on 14 YRDFA teleconferences. We held our annual review
34 of the program with the Managers and collected feedback
35 from the surveyors prior to the start of the season.
36 With this input, we decided not to make any changes to
37 our survey form for 2015.

38
39 Although this program is Chinook or
40 king salmon focused, with the anticipated closures on
41 Chinook this year we agreed to again collect
42 information on chum salmon harvest efforts, fishers
43 ability to access allowable gear types, their success
44 using the new gear, and what fishers were doing instead
45 of harvesting Chinook salmon. As planned, the survey
46 ran for six weeks in each participating community while
47 the king salmon were migrating through the part of the
48 river. This benefitted the goal of learning about
49 fishing activities during the Chinook salmon season,
50 but did not allow for assessments about chum salmon

1 harvest needs me, which is outside of the scope of this
2 project.

3
4 And I think that there's a handout that
5 hopefully you have in front of you. And if you do, you
6 can see the table in the handout which shows progress
7 towards meeting Chinook salmon harvest goals by
8 community. And they were generally zero or very low
9 due to the king salmon fishing closure. And Fort Yukon
10 you can see is the exception as there was an effort in
11 2015, as I know you heard from Stephanie's report, to
12 allow them to harvest some Chinook salmon due to the
13 lack of chum salmon in their area. The table in the
14 handout shows the number of households interviewed, the
15 total number of interviews, and the percentage of
16 harvest completion by community over the past three
17 years. So that's it for that project.

18
19 And the other project I wanted to
20 update you on is the value of Salmon Project, which I
21 previously reported to you. This is funded by the
22 North Pacific Research Board. And I just want to give
23 you an update. This project, the goal of it is to
24 describe how people of the Yukon River value salmon
25 through case study in three communities. And these
26 communities are Russian Mission, Nenana, and Fort
27 Yukon.

28
29 So as an update, I have completed now
30 the ethnographic interviews in all three communities.
31 I most recently finished Russian Mission and we're
32 transcribing those interviews now. I visited Nenana
33 this summer and gave them -- presented the preliminary
34 results, which they approved. And I just drafted their
35 chapter, which I've sent back to them so they can read
36 it again. And then next I'll be doing that with Fort
37 Yukon and then following with Russian Mission.

38
39 And I'll continue to update you on this
40 and other projects at each of your meetings. And I
41 don't know if Wayne has more to report or if you want
42 to pose questions. Thank you.

43
44 MR. JENKINS: This is the end of our
45 presentation. And we -- either of us can take
46 questions if you have any for us.

47
48 MADAME CHAIR ENSTMINGER: Any
49 questions.

50

1 Donald.

2

3 MR. WOODRUFF: Thank you.

4

5 Wayne, I've got a question on the
6 participation in the North Pacific Management Council.
7 Do you have a Staff on the Technical Committee still?

8

9 MR. JENKINS: Through the Chair. No,
10 sir. We do not. Becca has gone on to another position
11 with another non-profit and we do not have the funding
12 to have a person there.

13

14 MR. WOODRUFF: And my second question
15 is that by-catch issues seem to have been resolved
16 somewhat. Is there still some issues in Western Alaska
17 on the chum and their by-catch there?

18

19 Thank you.

20

21 MR. JENKINS: Through the Chair. I
22 don't think I'm familiar enough with what issues you
23 are referring to. Could you describe them a little bit
24 better?

25

26 MR. WOODRUFF: Yes, Wayne. When I was
27 in Nome at the North Pacific Management Council meeting
28 some years ago and I testified for this Council on
29 Chinook, at the time there were local folks testifying
30 that they weren't getting their chum needs met and that
31 they were looking at the by-catch for chum salmon in
32 that area in the Western Alaska.

33

34 Thank you.

35

36 MR. JENKINS: Through the Chair. I
37 think if you're asking about general concerns, I think
38 there's concern up and down the river. I think it's
39 highest in the upper river, but I think the numbers
40 remain large when you look at them. And with more
41 focus on the dependency of chum to meet subsistence,
42 but also the commercial harvest, but -- so there is
43 increasing concern. I think we see increasing focus by
44 State Managers and Federal Managers on trying to gather
45 data and information about that run.

46

47 MADAME CHAIR ENSTMINGER: Thank you.

48

49 Any other questions.

50

1 (No comments)

2

3 MADAME CHAIR ENSTMINGER: All right.
4 Thank you, guys, for your report.

5

6 MR. JENKINS: Thank you very much.

7

8 MADAME CHAIR ENSTMINGER: You're
9 welcome.

10

11 Next thing will be, yeah, Tribal
12 Governments. And we covered it. Is there any other
13 Tribal Governments that want to speak.

14

15 (No comments)

16

17 MADAME CHAIR ENSTMINGER: Okay. Next
18 is Fish and Wildlife Service. And Tetlin National
19 Wildlife Refuge is first. And then Yukon and Arctic.

20

21 MR. HILL: Good afternoon, Madame
22 Chair, Members of the Council. My name is Jerry Hill.
23 I'm the Deputy Refuge Manager for Tetlin National
24 Wildlife Refuge. First, Sean, sends his apologies he
25 couldn't be here today. He'd like to attend every one
26 of these if he could, but he's on a detail in
27 Anchorage.

28

29 I'll be brief. I'll just cover a few
30 things. And Nate will cover the biological update for
31 the Refuge.

32

33 First is -- of course it's a high fire
34 season across Alaska. And that's something that hit
35 the Refuge pretty hard this year with two major fires.
36 One was a Chisana 2 fire in the Southeastern corner of
37 the Refuge, which was a 38,000-acre fire. A little
38 over 10,000. That was on Refuge lands.

39

40 I guess the one that involved
41 Management more than that was the Long Lake and Moose
42 Creek fires that were just on the outside in Northway,
43 which were full protection fires. Burnt 27,000 acres
44 of Alaska Native Corporation and Refuge lands. It cost
45 \$6 million to suppress. So that took up a lot of
46 Management's time, affected the biological program a
47 little bit as far as logistics goes.

48

49 So with that, the next thing is we
50 actually have a unique program down in Northway this

1 year. It's something that's been wanting to be done in
2 quite some time. Northway is a site that had a
3 significant military presence in the past. So research
4 out of Fish and Wildlife Service field offices in
5 cooperation with Alaska Department of Fish and Game
6 Subsistence Division, with assistance from the Refuge,
7 we're looking at contaminants in subsistence resources
8 used by the Northway Tribe in and around Northway.
9 This included sampling of Indian potato, whitefish,
10 muskrats. Different resources that were consumed or
11 used in the past. So it's a unique project. It's
12 something that's been wanting to be done for a long
13 time. I think there's future plans in the upcoming
14 years to do more. Just waiting on preliminary results
15 which will be presented to Northway Tribal Council.
16 And maybe once we get along in the project, we'll come
17 present them here as well, if interested.

18
19 Last thing, just a personnel update.
20 We've had a lot of turnover at Tetlin in the last two
21 or three years, including both Manager positions. But
22 finally getting back on Staff. We've got four vacant
23 positions. One is administrative, which will be a
24 local hire out of the Tok area. The other two will
25 help the biological program, which one of which is a
26 wildlife biologist position that's vacant, as well as
27 an airplane position, which might be a wildlife
28 biologist pilot hopefully. Dual function to help our
29 biological program and hunting program be able to do
30 more.

31
32 The last one is the one that will be
33 posted here shortly and recruited. And that's our
34 environmental education specialist. With that
35 position, there are two Refuge technicians out of
36 Northway. One of our goals is spend more time in all
37 the Villages surrounding Tok doing outreach and
38 environmental education, both in schools and in the
39 communities in general.

40
41 We do have another RIT position, Refuge
42 Information Technician, potentially in the future. So
43 we're going to try and hit all villages around Tok,
44 whether it's Dot Lake, you know, Tanacross, Northway,
45 Tetlin. Even as we can, go all the way up to Eagle.
46 We're going to do a trapping clinic in Eagle. A
47 furbearer management clinic next October in Eagle if
48 weather permits.

49
50 So it's a focus of ours. It was a

1 focus of ours when Sean and I were in McGrath. And I
2 know it meant a lot to the Villages and a lot to the
3 Council there. So I just wanted to give you guys some
4 information on that.

5
6 And with that, I'll turn it over to
7 Nate.

8
9 MR. BERG: Madame Chair, Members of the
10 Council, my name is Nate Berg and I am the subsistence
11 biologist at Tetlin. And what I have here is just a
12 brief summary of some of our projects from this past
13 summer, as well as some harvest data.

14
15 For our winter subsistence hunt, I'll
16 start on that with caribou. We had a total of 47
17 caribou harvested between last November and April the
18 5th. The one thing that was a little bit interesting
19 there for me is that we had a lot more cows than bulls
20 harvested. Usually it's the opposite. But the number
21 that were harvested was about average.

22
23 Our moose season, we have a winter
24 moose hunt that goes from November 1st until February
25 the 28th. And there were three bull moose reported
26 harvested in that, which is about average. We don't
27 have a high harvest rate on that hunt. The highest
28 that we've had is five. And before about five years
29 ago it was basically no harvest or, yeah, no harvest
30 during that hunt. And we've extended the season and
31 now we're getting a little bit of harvest.

32
33 We do moose population surveys on the
34 Refuge approximately every three years. And on the
35 backside of the first page I have a table that gives
36 you the results of those surveys. We have a low
37 density, but stable to slightly increasing moose
38 population. And we'll get started on this year's
39 survey next month as long as we get some snow. So
40 everybody cross your fingers and hope for some snow.

41
42 And just moving on, we also do some
43 snowshoe hare abundance work. During the summertime,
44 we count snowshoe hare poop. And it actually works
45 really good. Correlates really well to an abundance of
46 snowshoe hares. And I've got a few graphs, too, on
47 here that you can take a peak at. We've been doing
48 this since year 2000. And we are coming out of the low
49 now finally and the hares are on the upswing. And
50 we're hoping the lynx will shortly follow.

1 And just to give you a little update on
2 some lynx work that we're doing, last winter we started
3 our lynx project and we captured three males and three
4 female lynx and collared them with aridium -- ATS
5 aridium satellite collars and we're tracking their
6 movements. And what we're looking at with this project
7 is a long term project that's going to go over ten
8 years, as long as the funding holds out. But it is
9 movements of lynx in relationship to the ten-year cycle
10 of the snowshoe hare. And we've got a variety of folks
11 participating in this. We have a study area at Tetlin.
12 There's also a study area at Bonanza Creek here in
13 Fairbanks. One at Koyukuk, Nowitna. Kanuti and Yukon
14 Flats are joining in. And Gates of the Arctic is as
15 well, as well as Kluwani field station in Yukon.

16
17 So there's been quite a bit of interest
18 in this. And since people began putting GPS collars on
19 these lynx, we're finding that they can really book.
20 On occasion, not always. But some of these cats will
21 move upwards -- it has been recorded over 1,000 miles.
22 So it will be interesting to see what we document at
23 the end and see if we end up documenting what a lot of
24 trappers are already telling us. That they think the
25 lynx are moving and following the snowshoe hares.

26
27 So with that, I will turn it back over
28 to the Chair and open it up to questions.

29
30 MADAME CHAIR ENSTMINGER: Any
31 questions.

32
33 (No comments)

34
35 MADAME CHAIR ENSTMINGER: I'm not
36 hearing any. One quick thought. I attend most of the
37 Fish and Game Advisory Committee meetings at the Upper
38 Tanana-Fortymile and these kind of reports you should
39 be bringing to them. They're really helpful. I know
40 the guys like to see that, so just a suggestion. And
41 maybe some more attendance. I know Nate goes. And
42 Sean has been there a couple of times. But oftentimes
43 it would be nice to have you guys there more often.

44
45 MR. BERG: You bet.

46
47 MADAME CHAIR ENSTMINGER: Okay. Thank
48 you.

49
50 All right. Next is Yukon Flats.

1 MS. PATTON: Council Members, there's a
2 nice color packet summary that was mailed out. It's in
3 your supplemental materials on your binders. And we've
4 got extras, too.

5
6 MADAME CHAIR ENSTMINGER: Go ahead.

7
8 MR. BERENDZEN: Thank you, Madame Chair
9 and Council. My name is Steve Berendzen, Refuge
10 Manager for Yukon Flats National Wildlife Refuge. And
11 yes, if you have the handout summary of activities for
12 the Refuge, that would be very helpful I think because
13 that's what I will be just highlighting a few projects
14 and activities out of that.

15
16 MADAME CHAIR ENSTMINGER: For the
17 Council Members that have the binder, it's the sec --
18 after supplemental materials, you go to the next tab.
19 Okay. Thanks.

20
21 MS. PATTON: And there's plenty of
22 copies up at the front table, too, for everybody
23 attending.

24
25 MR. BERENDZEN: So Madame Chair, if we
26 could go to page three, at the top of the page, moose
27 population survey scheduled for November. And we're
28 also anxious for snow -- adequate snow cover to do a
29 moose survey this year. We've had poor snow conditions
30 the last four or five years, preventing us from doing
31 fall surveys. And we're very hopeful we can do that to
32 get sex and age composition with this survey. So we'll
33 see how that works out.

34
35 Page four, a couple corrections I'd
36 like to make to the moose monitoring description. We
37 have some updated numbers from recent flights that --
38 about halfway down through that verbiage we've got, it
39 says during 2015 calf production was much higher with
40 128.1 calf -- or whatever that said. I scratched it
41 out. But anyway, the accurate number now is 147 calves
42 per 100 cows. And a twinning rate of .57 percent. So
43 those numbers have increased with more calves that
44 we've detected in recent flights. And it's really
45 complicated with the heavy vegetation that they're in,
46 trying to do those calf surveys or assess the twinning
47 and -- or the calving and the twinning numbers when
48 they're doing the flights. So every time they fly
49 through the summer, they're trying to update that and
50 add more numbers to that to confirm what the calving

1 actually was. And so these are just updates on that.

2

3 But what we've seen this year is we
4 think very good calf production with the parturition
5 rate or the calve -- for 32 cows that are -- we were
6 tracking, the parturition rate was I think 85 percent.
7 And much better results this year. Don't have an
8 explanation for that, but -- unless Mark has some
9 thoughts on that.

10

11 MR. BURCHAM: Part of it just might be
12 the second year we had -- for some reason we had better
13 sightability on the moose when we were looking at them.
14 So I mean we were able to -- probably a little more
15 experience with the observers also. But it does seem a
16 little -- I was a little -- I am a little surprised
17 that the twinning rate is as high as it is. So it also
18 means that we've got pretty good survival rate by the
19 calves. So I'll take that as a good sign that the
20 predators aren't as successful as they have been in the
21 past.

22

23 MADAME CHAIR ENSTMINGER: Quick
24 question.

25

26 MR. BERENDZEN: Sure.

27

28 MADAME CHAIR ENSTMINGER: What time of
29 year is that done for the twinning rate -- to get the
30 twinning rate?

31

32 MR. BERENDZEN: As soon as they start
33 dropping calves in the early summer, May, we're doing
34 surveys. And we're doing monthly surveys all summer up
35 until snow on the ground and really good visibility to
36 confirm the numbers of calves.

37

38 MR. BURCHAM: Yeah. It starts in May.
39 Right at calving. What's raising my eyebrows is that
40 it takes the better part of the summer and into the
41 fall before we were actually able to see every cow out
42 there. And so as they're dropping calves, you know,
43 they're losing calves. But in spite of that, over
44 about a four-month period we still have about a 50
45 percent twinning rate, which is really good. So it
46 just shows that the calves are not getting hammered as
47 much in the spring as you might -- as we would expect.

48

49 MADAME CHAIR ENSTMINGER: Okay.

50 Thanks.

1 MR. BERENDZEN: So if there are no
2 other questions on that topic, I'd like to go to page
3 six. And just mention briefly the trail camera
4 monitoring. We set up some trail cameras last winter
5 just as kind of a test or in effort to see how the
6 cameras function in those winter conditions. And
7 fortunately they had enough memory to take lots of
8 photos and enough battery power to work even down to
9 the coldest temperatures. Lasted all winter and we did
10 get a lot of good photos. And as Virgil mentioned
11 earlier, we understand this could be very useful for
12 monitoring bears.

13

14 Kanuti Refuge is using trail cameras to
15 monitor bears from what I understand and they have
16 already detected a lot of -- or had a lot of
17 documentation of both black bears and grizzly bears in
18 their efforts. So we're hoping to do something similar
19 to that in the future. But we did this past winter was
20 more of a test. We've just purchased more cameras. We
21 intend to put those out this winter as well and see
22 what we can learn from that.

23

24 Also, we would like to do it throughout
25 the year so we could monitor species during the --
26 this, you know, entire year rather than just winter.

27

28 Any questions on that one.

29

30 (No questions)

31

32 MR. BERENDZEN: Okay. I'd like to move
33 on to page seven. And the moose management that Kelda
34 Britton mentioned earlier, we thought that was a very
35 successful meeting. We did have a lot of really good
36 input and attendance from all the Villages on Yukon
37 Flats. And from that a smaller sub-team was formed.
38 We need to get together again and follow through with
39 some of the proposals that were offered -- ideas that
40 were offered and come up with some action items and
41 prioritize those and follow through with some of those
42 actions. But I thought it was a very good meeting and
43 that will guide -- we intend to have that guide the
44 moose management in the Yukon Flats in the future.

45

46 And then the last three pages, 8, 9,
47 and 10, just to highlight some of the different
48 outreach activities that we had. We're trying to work
49 cooperatively or collaborate with the Villages for
50 outreach and environmental education to youth and

1 provided -- also provided some hunter safety training.

2

3

4 So that's pretty much it. If there are
5 any questions that anybody has, we'd be happy to
6 entertain those.

7

8 MADAME CHAIR ENSTMINGER: Council
9 Members, any questions.

10

(No comments)

12

13 MADAME CHAIR ENSTMINGER: Page seven
14 was sheep. And I think you might have missed that.
15 It's to talk to.....

16

17 MR. BERENDZEN: I'm sorry. Page.....

18

19 MR. BURCHAM: Page five.

20

21 MR. BERENDZEN: Page five was the
22 sheep?

23

24 MADAME CHAIR ENSTMINGER: Seven it is
25 on mine.

26

27 MR. BERENDZEN: Oh, okay. Anyway, the
28 sheep survey -- I don't think it's anything
29 significantly different than the past. And I'd
30 actually defer that one to Mark if he's got some
31 comments on it.

32

33 MR. BURCHAM: YEAH. The sheep survey
34 is something we do annually in collaboration with BLM
35 and ADF&G. And it's just a standard annual survey we
36 do each year. The sheep populations range from 350 up
37 to about 700. That was back in 2000 it was about 700
38 sheep. This year it was about 350. So it varies. But
39 the population is fairly stable around 350 to 400
40 animals.

41

42 MADAME CHAIR ENSTMINGER: I apologize.
43 I was looking at Arctic.

44

45 MR. BURCHAM: Oh, okay.

46

(Laughter)

48

49 MADAME CHAIR ENSTMINGER: We get a lot
50 of tabs. But they weren't -- or they're not named.

1 Okay. Thank you.

2

3 Any questions.

4

5 (No comments)

6

7 MR. BERENDZEN: Thank you, Madame Chair
8 and Council.

9

10 MADAME CHAIR ENSTMINGER: Thank you.

11

12 Then next would be Arctic. No. Yes.

13

14 MS. FOX: Good afternoon, Madame Chair
15 and Council Members. My name is Joanna Fox and I'm the
16 Deputy Refuge Manager for Arctic National Wildlife
17 Refuge.

18

19 I'm going to go through a handout that
20 I believe was also mailed to you with your supplemental
21 materials. And there are lots more copies here in the
22 back if others are interested.

23

24 I wanted to start out today by talking
25 a little bit about some of our recent Staffing changes,
26 particularly those that I think will be of most
27 interest to you. And I'm pleased to introduce our new
28 Supervisory Wildlife Biologist Dr. Steven Arthur. He
29 comes to us most recently from Denali National Park and
30 Preserve and spent 15 years with Alaska Department of
31 Fish and Game here in Fairbanks prior to that. So
32 we're very pleased to have him on board.

33

34 We also have a new position on our
35 Staff. We have an Environmental Education Specialist,
36 Eliza Morris. And she intends to do a lot of work in
37 the schools out in the Villages. She has worked with
38 Kanuti National Wildlife Refuge as an intern for
39 several years and she does great work in the Village
40 schools. So we're very happy to have her on our staff
41 as well.

42

43 I think I'm going to start today by
44 sharing with you some of the results of our caribou
45 work. And most of the porcupine caribou herd did
46 overwinter in Alaska in 2014 and '15. They mainly
47 wintered southwest of Arctic Village, in the Chandalar
48 Lake Region. And they moved into the east fork of the
49 Chandalar River for a month or so before heading back
50 into Canada in May. They again mixed with caribou of

1 the Central Arctic herd on their winter range.

2

3 We are currently maintaining
4 approximately 60 traditional VHF and 60 GPS Iridium
5 satellite collars on the porcupine caribou herd. And
6 we are doing telemetry flights to monitor those on a
7 pretty regular basis. Most of the herd calved in
8 Alaska this year, but some of them remained in the
9 Yukon Territory between the border and the Babbage
10 River. Nearly all of the cows moved into Alaska by
11 June and most all of them were between the Najago (ph)
12 and the Hulahula Rivers. Most of the bulls segregated
13 and remained in Canada within the Richardson Mountain
14 area, where they spent the summer.

15

16 So after calving in the Refuge in late
17 June, there was a subsequent rapid and direct movement
18 of caribou across the Divide and up into the upper east
19 fork of the Chandalar and Sheenjek Rivers. Most of the
20 porcupine caribou herd eventually moved back into
21 Canada by mid to late July.

22

23 We did attempt to do a photo census
24 again this year, but we were unsuccessful due to the
25 herd not aggregating enough. There was minimal insect
26 harassment this year and that generally causes them to
27 aggregate. So we do plan to try again in the summer of
28 2016.

29

30 Most recently, during the first couple
31 of weeks of September, the satellite collared caribou
32 have moved back into Alaska, with the leading groups
33 already south of Arctic Village.

34

35 Moving on to the moose work that we
36 did, we did conduct a survey on the North Slope River
37 Drainages of Game Management Unit 26C in April of this
38 year. We flew all of the river corridors that had
39 moose habitat in them and we observed only 31 adult
40 moose and five short-yearlings within the entire area.
41 Most of the moose were observed in the Kongakut
42 Drainage. And our previous surveys indicate that calf
43 survival is relatively low in this system, but it was a
44 little higher this year compared to last year, when we
45 observed no young of the year.

46

47 The mild winter was good for moose and
48 other wildlife on the North Slope this year, but the
49 population does still remain lower than our long term
50 average. It's about 50 moose right now. And we

1 requested another special action to the Federal
2 Subsistence Board to close moose hunting in Game
3 Management Unit 26C for the 2015 and '16 year. The
4 season is closed now and it's recommended that it
5 remain closed until the population increases.

6
7 On the south side of the Brooks Range
8 we did not have adequate snow conditions to conduct
9 surveys in Game Management Unit 25A in November, last
10 fall. However, we did conduct a moose survey in March.
11 And we surveyed the same area that we completed in 2012
12 in the Sheenjek Corridor. I think what we observed in
13 those studies -- you're missing I think a critical
14 paragraph that for some reason didn't get printed in
15 the book. But it showed that the population is still
16 low, but relatively stable.

17
18 And if you would like, I can see that
19 you were all mailed the missing information out of that
20 portion of the booklet. If you have questions about
21 that, I do have a little more information.

22
23 (No comments)

24
25 MS. FOX: Okay. Muskox. We did not
26 survey muskox in 2015. We plan a North Slope range-
27 wide survey for 2016 and we intend to collaborate with
28 the Canadians and with the Alaska Department of Fish
29 and Game.

30
31 Muskox numbers in the Refuge do remain
32 very low, but several groups were observed throughout
33 the summer this year. And it's believed that they are
34 mostly spending some summer months in the Refuge and
35 then moving back into Canada in the winter.

36
37 Moving on to our sheep work, in June we
38 did conduct ground based dall sheep sex and age
39 composition surveys in the Hulahula River Drainage. We
40 observed a total of 364 sheep and a ratio of 33 lambs
41 to 100 ewes, which is quite a bit better than what we
42 saw the last couple of years. It's actually double
43 what we saw last year. So it appears that the lamb
44 crop is good, though sheep numbers are still down from
45 the long term trends.

46
47 We also conducted an aerial sheep
48 survey in the northwestern portion of the Arctic
49 Village Sheep Management area. And we suspected that
50 the population had declined from the 2013 winter,

1 spring weather events, which would have been consistent
2 with other areas of the Brooks Range. And what we
3 suspected was actually true. We observed that there
4 were about 50 percent fewer rams across all age classes
5 compared to the 2012 survey. But again we did observe
6 a strong lamb crop here with 34 lambs per 100 ewes,
7 which is higher than the 2012 estimate.

8
9 With dall sheep becoming more of a
10 concern across the Refuge and across the entire Brooks
11 Range, we do intend to start increasing our efforts to
12 monitor and research them in the Refuge.

13
14 We also have included in our booklet
15 some work that we're doing on eiders on the Beaufort
16 Sea barrier islands. This is a species of concern and
17 a priority species in Region 7 Refuges. We conducted
18 some pilot work in 2014 that suggested that the
19 population of eiders that are nesting on the Barrier
20 Islands may be increasing in some areas and decreasing
21 in others. So this year we had Staff in partnership
22 with the University of Alaska Fairbanks and with the
23 Wildlife Conservation Society begin a multi-year study
24 to determine the demographics and the limiting factors
25 of Pacific Common eiders along the Beaufort and Chukchi
26 Sea.

27
28 We also did some small mammal work this
29 summer and some of the results were just I noticed
30 mentioned in an article in the Alaska Dispatch
31 yesterday. We had a crew of four people out collecting
32 small mammal specimens from five sites on the Canning
33 River. And they noted that species diversity was low,
34 as they expected for the Region. But they did document
35 some species that they didn't expect to see, including
36 the northern most lesser pygmy shrew.

37
38 And in 2017, we do plan to continue
39 this kind of work on the Sheenjek and the east fork of
40 the Chandalar Rivers.

41
42 Finally, I'm going to touch on our law
43 enforcements this year. We have one law enforcement
44 officer and he is nearly completed with the pilot
45 training that allows him to go out and land on strips
46 in the Refuge on his own. He spent a fair bit of time
47 with our former law enforcement officer Hollis
48 Twitchell this year. They started working in early
49 August. And they worked through the month of
50 September. There was a special emphasis this year

1 placed on checking the big game hunting guides because
2 we had several new guides this year and wanted to
3 ensure that they were operating within the guidelines
4 of their permits.

5
6 We also patrolled the Red Sheep Creek
7 Drainage heavily to ensure compliance with the Arctic
8 Village Sheep Management Area closure. And overall the
9 majority of the hunters that we encountered on the
10 Refuge this season were in compliance. And those who
11 weren't were either cited or they are being
12 investigated.

13
14 And I think that wraps up my report for
15 you. We do have some of the outreach activities that
16 we did in Arctic Village described and in the Village
17 of Kaktovik.

18
19 Any questions.

20
21 MADAME CHAIR ENSTMINGER: Are there any
22 questions.

23
24 Andy, then Virgil.

25
26 MR. BASSICH: Thank you. Just a brief
27 on. I'm sure you're doing also a lot of studies on
28 climate change and the effects in the higher Arctic
29 with the climate change. And I think it would be
30 really nice at the next time you guys present here to
31 maybe have a little bit of information on what you're
32 finding out and what it's impacts to the western
33 caribou herd might be, if any, or the porcupine herd.

34
35 MS. FOX: We'll do that.

36
37 MR. BASSICH: And maybe some
38 projections of what you might think might impact
39 subsistence activities in the future due to that.
40 Thank you. Good report.

41
42 MS. FOX: Thank you.

43
44 MADAME CHAIR ENSTMINGER: Virgil.

45
46 MR. UMPHENOUR: And so you say that the
47 50 percent fewer rams in the Arctic Village Management
48 area, you think it's because of the bad winter and late
49 -- well, the late winter, you know, cold spring of
50 2013?

1 MS. FOX: I think it was 2012. '12 and
2 '13.
3
4 MR. UMPHENOUR: What happened to
5 Hollis?
6
7 MS. FOX: Hollis is still on our Staff,
8 but he is no longer a credentialed law enforcement
9 officer. He turned his credentials in.
10
11 MR. UMPHENOUR: Thank you.
12
13 MADAME CHAIR ENSTMINGER: Yeah. Just
14 making sure. So all of that data there on sheep, the
15 50 percent fewer rams, that's all in that Arctic
16 Village Sheep Management area? That next to the last
17 paragraph, that you observed 363 sheep?
18
19 MS. FOX: Yeah. That was within the
20 northern portion of the Arctic Village Sheep Management
21 area.
22
23 MADAME CHAIR ENSTMINGER: So just those
24 two drainages maybe?
25
26 MS. FOX: Yes.
27
28 MADAME CHAIR ENSTMINGER: Yes. Okay.
29 Red Sheep and Cane Creek, right?
30
31 MS. FOX: Yes.
32
33 MADAME CHAIR ENSTMINGER: Uh-huh. Okay.
34 Any other questions.
35
36 (No comments)
37
38 MADAME CHAIR ENSTMINGER: Hearing none,
39 thank you very much.
40
41 MS. FOX: Great. Thank you.
42
43 MADAME CHAIR ENSTMINGER: Next is the
44 Park Service. Wrangell-St. Elias.
45
46 MS. CELLARIUS: Thank you, Madame
47 Chair, Members of the Council. Again, it's Barbara
48 Cellarius. I'm the subsistence coordinator for
49 Wrangell-St. Elias National Park and Preserve. We've
50 already talked about a number of the things that were

1 in the handouts that we provided to you. The Chisana
2 caribou herd, the work that Dave is doing. And so I
3 won't talk any more about them unless there are
4 questions.

5
6 Just to mention quickly, you already
7 heard from Fish and Game Subsistence Division that
8 they've -- about some community harvest surveys that
9 they've been doing. I've been working with them on a
10 harvest survey of Northway. And like the other
11 projects, we've hired local research assistants to
12 assist with those projects. The PI and I -- or not the
13 PI. But the lead researcher and I plan to go to
14 probably the November Council meeting and present the
15 preliminary results to the Northway Tribal Council.

16
17 I would just mention that Tetlin Refuge
18 mentioned a contaminant study in Northway. So
19 essentially at the same time that they are doing that
20 contaminant sampling, we've been surveying residents of
21 Northway about what resources they're harvesting. So
22 there's a nice tie-in between those two projects.

23
24 You'll see in the handout that I've
25 been working in the Upper Tanana communities doing some
26 oral history interviews in cooperation with University
27 of Alaska at Fairbanks. We post these interviews on
28 the web on something called Project Jukebox. There's a
29 link in the handout. And I want to thank Sue and Frank
30 Enstminger for doing a great interview with us. They
31 were one of the -- a couple of the people we
32 interviewed for that project.

33
34 I also this summer worked with the
35 Copper Basin Migratory Bird Committee, which is a part
36 of the Alaska Migratory Bird Co-Management Program.
37 And they actually wanted to hold their culture camp
38 this summer in Unit 12, in the Park. So I worked with
39 them on just helping them with sort of the -- sort of
40 as a liaison between the folks organizing the camp and
41 the Park. And then some of us went out one day and did
42 a couple of presentations for the camp participants.

43
44 The last thing I'll mention is in your
45 handouts. And there's -- the Park is working a
46 Backcountry and Wilderness Stewardship Plan. Right now
47 we're in the public scoping stage. There's a handout
48 about the public scoping in your actual printed Council
49 book. And if you are interested as we get a little
50 further along in the process, I could have the Staff

1 who are working on that plan come and talk to you about
2 that planning process.
3
4 And I'll stop there unless there's
5 questions.
6
7 MADAME CHAIR ENSTMINGER: Any
8 questions.
9
10 (No comments)
11
12 MADAME CHAIR ENSTMINGER: Okay.
13
14 MS. CELLARIUS: Thank you.
15
16 MADAME CHAIR ENSTMINGER: Thank you,
17 Barbara.
18
19 And next will be Yukon Charley.
20
21 MR. JOLY: Madame Chair, this is Kyle
22 Joly with the Gates of the Arctic, I'm on the phone.
23
24 MADAME CHAIR ENSTMINGER: Okay.
25
26 MR. JOLY: Is Marcy there?
27
28 MADAME CHAIR ENSTMINGER: Yep. She's
29 here.
30
31 MR. JOLY: Then if Marcy's not around,
32 I'll just talk sheep and moose for a second.
33
34 MS. OKADA: Okay. I'll just introduce
35 myself real quickly. My name is Marcy Okada. I'm the
36 Subsistence Coordinator for Yukon-Charley Rivers
37 National Preserve.
38
39 And I guess Kyle is going to give the
40 moose, caribou, and dall sheep updates; is that right,
41 Kyle?
42
43 MR. JOLY: Yes. I can do that.
44
45 Madame Chair, my name is Kyle Joly.
46 I'm a wildlife biologist with Yukon-Charley. And you
47 guys were talking yesterday about moose in the Yukon-
48 Charley. The last estimate that we had was .3 moose
49 per square mile. That was back in 2012. Through about
50 the last 20 years, the moose density has hovered around

1 that range. We're planning on doing a moose survey in
2 about two weeks hopefully if we get some snow.

3

4 We were able to do a sheep survey this
5 summer in July. We do one every four or five years.
6 The last one was 2009. There was 333 sheep back then
7 in the core of the Preserve. This year there was only
8 173, so nearly a 50 percent decline. There was a fair
9 amount of lambs, so that's a good sign. There's about
10 45 per 100 ewes. But the yearlings were down. And
11 we're not exactly sure what the cause of the decline
12 is, but it's similar to other areas in Alaska. You
13 just heard from Joanna and up in the Gates of the
14 Arctic we've seen similar declines as well.

15

16 For caribou we were able to collect
17 some fecal samples to do some diet work that we're
18 working with Jim Herriges at BLM on. And hopefully
19 we'll get those results probably to you next year.

20

21 That's all I've got, but I'm happy to
22 take questions.

23

24 MADAME CHAIR ENSTMINGER: Okay. Thank
25 you.

26

27 Any questions, Council. I've got two.
28 Andy, and then Virgil.

29

30 MR. BASSICH: Yeah. Thank you. In
31 regards to your moose population densities, are those
32 surveyed throughout the entire Preserve or are those --
33 from what I recall from previous presentations, you
34 pick certain areas on certain years to do that. So is
35 that .3 representative of the entire Preserve or is
36 that what you surveyed this year.

37

38 MR. JOLY: We try and survey the same
39 areas. And we've been doing it about every three
40 years, so the last one was 2012. We did it in '09,
41 '06, '03. So we -- it's generally the same area. It's
42 not the entire Preserve. But we try and capture what
43 we think is most or if not all of the good moose
44 habitat in the Preserve.

45

46 MR. BASSICH: Okay.

47

48 MADAME CHAIR ENSTMINGER: Virgil.

49

50 MR. UMPHENOUR: My question is on the

1 sheep. Do you have a population estimate for the
2 sheep? And how many did you count?

3

4 MR. JOLY: We counted 173 in the core
5 area of the Preserves, so that's Cirque Lake, Diamond
6 Fork Area, Copper, Mount Sorensen. Kind of the central
7 area of the Preserve. So it's about a 48 percent
8 decline from the previous population estimates. We've
9 got estimates going back quite a ways. And they hover
10 around 300. You know, just a little more than 300. So
11 it's a pretty substantial decline.

12

13 MR. UMPHENOUR: Thank you.

14

15 MR. JOLY: You're welcome.

16

17 MADAME CHAIR ENSTMINGER: Any other
18 questions.

19

20 (No comments)

21

22 (Phone interruption)

23

24 MADAME CHAIR ENSTMINGER: There's the
25 ocean again.

26

27 Okay. Thank you very much.

28

29 MR. JOLY: Thank you. Have a good
30 evening.

31

32 MADAME CHAIR ENSTMINGER: All right.
33 You, too.

34

35 MS. OKADA: Madame Chair, I'll just
36 quickly go through the remaining update. Park Service
37 continues to do long term vegetation and habitat
38 surveys within Yukon-Charley. And then there's also
39 ongoing vegetation, mapping, and fire ecology studies
40 within the Preserve.

41

42 Like you folks already know, this past
43 season was the second largest fire season in Alaska's
44 history. There were two fires. One was on Trout
45 Creek, south of the Yukon River, and the other one was
46 near Weshrinarin Creek, within Yukon-Charley.

47

48 Lastly, the hunting season within the
49 Preserve was fairly quiet during the beginning of the
50 season, which was late August to September 10th.

1 Patrols during September 10th to September 30th saw an
2 increase in hunters during that time period. But
3 overall there necessarily weren't more hunters than
4 usual. It was just hunters were coming in later in the
5 season.

6

7 Also like to share that we have a new
8 chief for the Ranger Division. Scott Sample was
9 appointed as our new chief. And that's just a quick
10 update.

11

12 MADAME CHAIR ENSTMINGER: Thanks,
13 Marcy.

14

15 Is there any questions.

16

17 MR. GLANZ: So Mark retired. And your
18 other chief ranger, he retired? Youngblood? Or what.

19

20 MS. OKADA: So Mark retired and went
21 back to the Lower 48. And then Gary Youngblood retired
22 and went back to the Lower 48 as well.

23

24 MR. GLANZ: So we've got two rangers up
25 there all less than. Just Scott and Nick, it looks
26 like.

27

28 MS. OKADA: Yeah. So Nick Thompson
29 will continue to do patrols within Yukon-Charley. And
30 Ranger Division hopes to be back up to full staff by
31 next season.

32

33 MR. GLANZ: Okay. Yeah. I noticed
34 there was a great increase in hunting pressure this
35 year up there later. Usually everybody goes home the
36 15th or the 20th of September. You go up there the
37 25th and it was still loaded with lots of people in
38 camps. Yeah. Yeah. I know. And they don't start
39 coming out till late. Thank you, Marcy.

40

41 MADAME CHAIR ENSTMINGER: Any other
42 questions.

43

44 (No comments)

45

46 MADAME CHAIR ENSTMINGER: Okay. Thank
47 you.

48

49 MR. GLANZ: I have one question.

50

1 MADAME CHAIR ENSTMINGER: Oh. One more
2 question.
3
4 MR. GLANZ: One more question.
5
6 They banned set lines in these other
7 places. Yukon-Charley don't ban set lines, do they?
8 Do you know? I mean do I have to ask Blake -- for
9 Burbot?
10
11 MS. OKADA: Not that I know of.
12
13 MR. GLANZ: Oh, okay. Because I know a
14 bunch of locals set lines for them all the time. I was
15 thinking man, I hope they didn't ban it. Okay. Good.
16 That's good news.
17
18 MADAME CHAIR ENSTMINGER: I think
19 there's more information on that that we might have
20 come to the Council in the future.
21
22 Thank you.
23
24 MADAME CHAIR ENSTMINGER: Next is
25 Denali.
26
27 She heard hat.
28
29 MS. CRAVER: Good afternoon, Madame
30 Chair and Members of the Council. For the record, my
31 name's Amy Craver and I oversee cultural resources and
32 subsistence for Denali National Park and Preserve.
33
34 And Steve was our lead wildlife
35 biologist until last week. So I -- and he was the one
36 that -- I think that Eva passed out -- we have a
37 wildlife report. And that was done by Steve and his
38 staff, Pat Owen and Bridget Bort.
39
40 And then there's also -- at the last
41 RAC meeting, I presented one of our briefings on this
42 women oral history project that we've been kind of
43 working on. And there's Abby Joseph and I think Sue
44 and Rhonda both requested to receive the rest of the
45 profiles of women. And I hope that you enjoy it. It's
46 really nice reading. And one of the motivations for
47 this series was Denali really -- we emphasis a lot
48 about wilderness and untouched -- and that what's
49 interesting is that we have these people that have --
50 Abby Joseph and her family, in the Birch Creek area.

1 And there was somebody from Nenana here that are
2 descendants from Abby Joseph. And part of it, we're
3 trying to kind of preserve this history of the human
4 presence in Denali. And this is the Native presence.
5 It's mining. It's doing concessions.

6
7 And anyway, so we're going to continue
8 with this project, but it's pretty -- it's really
9 interesting to think about these women that were -- and
10 Florence Collins is -- she was one -- some of you might
11 know Florence Collins. She was one of the original SRC
12 Members on the Chair of the Denali Commission. And she
13 came up to Denali or Lake Minchumina back in the '50s
14 as a pilot and a geologist. And did a lot of really
15 interesting geological work in the Minchumina area,
16 along with Celia Hunter. So there are just like
17 incredible -- I mean there are just some incredible
18 people. So anyway, we're going to continue with that.

19
20 So that -- you have that. Eva passed
21 that out. And then you've got the wildlife update.
22 And I know that people are probably getting sort of
23 tired, so I don't want to like belabor anything. And
24 if you have questions about wildlife issues, here's our
25 expert. I don't know if you want like a really brief
26 overview. And I can tell you a little bit just about
27 our SRC activities real briefly.

28
29 MADAME CHAIR ENSTMINGER: A brief
30 report would be great.

31
32 MS. CRAVER: For wildlife?

33
34 MADAME CHAIR ENSTMINGER: I believe so.
35 Yes.

36
37 MR. ARTHUR: Okay. As Amy mentioned,
38 my name is Steve Arthur and until recently I was the
39 supervising biologist at Denali Park. And just to run
40 through this really quickly since you have it in front
41 of you. I'd be more than happy to give you more
42 details, but I'd prefer to let you ask me rather than
43 waste your time with stuff that you don't need to hear.

44
45
46 Basically, we have an ongoing grizzly
47 bear research program. The focus over the last couple
48 of years has been on the northern boundary. The
49 primary goal of that work was to document the relative
50 amount of time that bears spend inside the Park versus

1 outside the Park. Part of this is quite frankly just
2 trying to learn more about the bears in Denali. We've
3 found over the years -- we have studied bears in three
4 different regions so far. We've found some surprising
5 differences in things like body size, food habits,
6 habitat use. So that's kind of our long term interest.
7 But specifically the northern boundary study was aimed
8 at looking at the relative vulnerability of bears that
9 live in the Park, that might wander outside the Park
10 and be subject to human harvest.

11
12 That project is about done. The
13 collars were due to be retrieved this fall. Due to
14 some logistical problems and some bad weather, we were
15 unable to retrieve all of them. So we hope to get the
16 rest of them back in the spring. These are GPS collars
17 that store all of the data onboard the collar, so in
18 order to get that data we have to get the collar back.

19
20 The next plan then will be to move that
21 project down to the south side. Basically the south --
22 extreme southwestern corner where there's Preserve
23 land. And that's basically the last piece of the Park
24 that we haven't looked at bears in yet. So that will
25 begin probably next spring.

26
27 There's a listing of bear management
28 issues. Basically, we keep track of their human
29 interactions. I won't go through the details there
30 because it's all listed in that report. Nothing very
31 unusual to report in terms of that for this year.

32
33 Moving on, in moose we had a -- on our
34 schedule was to -- our plans were to conduct a moose
35 survey this past year, 2014. Our plans call for doing
36 that every three years and so 2014 was the cycle. The
37 snow conditions never developed last fall, so we were
38 unable to do that survey. So we instead used that
39 money to do a sheep survey this past July, which was
40 not scheduled. Fortunately, we were able to come up
41 with the funding for 2015 so the moose survey, instead
42 of waiting another three years, it's actually going to
43 happen this year, assuming that snow conditions do
44 develop.

45
46 The caribou work is an ongoing project.
47 It's now I believe in its 29th year. Dr. Lane Adams
48 with the USGS in Anchorage is conducting that work.
49 It's a really unique project in that it's one of the
50 very few long term studies of caribou in North America.

1
2 Again, the results are listed there.
3 It appears that caribou population is on a period of
4 slow increase that has been underway since about 2007
5 or so, I believe. We think there's somewhere between
6 -- well, getting close to 3,000 caribou in that herd
7 now. Maybe slightly less than that. But it's still
8 quite a bit below the historical highs that were
9 documented in the late '80s, but it's the highest we've
10 seen, as I said, since about the -- since the -- there
11 was a huge crash in the late '80s, early '90s. So
12 since then, this is the highest it's been.

13
14 The other thing that Lane has noticed
15 is the last several winters we've had relatively low
16 snow cover in the area where the caribou herd has been
17 wintering. And this has led to extremely high
18 overwinter survival of the caribou cows. Basically,
19 most of the herd has been wintering outside of the
20 park, just along the northeastern boundary. It's a
21 very, very windy area and the snow tends to be
22 windblown there even in a normal year. And with the
23 light snowfall that we've had in the last couple of
24 winters, the caribou have had a pretty easy time of it.

25
26
27 Conversely, the wolf population -- and
28 this is probably related to that. The high caribou
29 survival has also corresponded to relatively low wolf
30 production or productivity. Our population has been
31 hovering right around 50 wolves or so in the Park.
32 This is the number of wolves in the packs that we
33 monitor intensively in the Park. We know that that's
34 not every single wolf, but we think that it's a pretty
35 good estimate of the number of wolves that use the
36 Park, although they do of course stray outside the
37 boundaries. Particularly in that northeastern corner
38 where the caribou go in the wintertime, we see several
39 of our packs that move outside of the Park into that
40 area following the caribou.

41
42 We've seen a period of relatively low
43 productivity in that the pack -- the litter sizes tend
44 to be fairly small. Several packs have not produced in
45 the last couple of years. But I wouldn't say that this
46 is anything too surprising given the fact that wolf
47 population dynamics do vary from year to year. In
48 other words, it's -- I don't view it as a crisis
49 situation. It's just kind of a low point in the wolf
50 population.

1 We can go on and on about that, but I
2 don't think we want to spend too much time. But if
3 people have specific questions, I'd be happy to address
4 those.

5
6 Another focus of research in the Park
7 has been the viewing rates. A lot of people come to
8 Denali specifically to see wildlife. Bears, moose,
9 wolves, caribou. These are very, very popular. So
10 beginning in 2010, we began -- one of our Staff Members
11 began a graduate research project measuring the
12 different factors that might influence the probability
13 of seeing a wolf on the Park road on the bus tours.

14
15 We saw a big decline between 2010 and
16 2013, dropping from about a .45 sighting rate down to
17 .04. That came up a little bit in 2014. We don't have
18 the data analyzed yet for this past summer. My guess
19 is it might be just a little bit higher than that.
20 This is Bridget Bort's work. She finished her PhD
21 research this summer and her final papers are being --
22 under review. Being prepared. But it's basically the
23 gist of her results are that there are several things
24 that affect wolf sightings, one of which is whether a
25 breeding adult gets killed during the spring, right
26 before the summer season when most viewing occurs.
27 Other things that are very important are the size of
28 the wolf pack and how far the pack dens away from the
29 road. Because most of our sightings occur on the Park
30 road. And if you have a relatively large pack that
31 dens close to the road, we tend to have higher sighting
32 rates for that pack.

33
34 Okay. We have another graduate project
35 that just finished looking at mesocarnivore response to
36 both wolf presence and prey abundance and snow
37 conditions. This was Kelly Sivi's work. She was a
38 Masters student at University of Alaska Fairbanks. She
39 is just in the final stages of finalizing her thesis.
40 Basically, she compared populations and distribution of
41 middle sized carnivores -- this would be coyotes,
42 foxes, lynx, martin, wolverine. How they are affected
43 by a presence or abundance of wolves and snow cover.

44
45 Basically, she found that all of these
46 middle sized carnivores are more abundant or heavily
47 used carrion, which is provided to them by wolves. And
48 therefore on a spacial basis you tend to see higher
49 rates of occurrence of these middle sized carnivores in
50 places where you find wolves. But on a larger scale,

1 she compared one area that has -- Denali, which has a
2 naturally regulated wolf population with the Susitna
3 Basin, where wolves have been artificially reduced by
4 State wolf control programs. And she found that
5 overall there were higher abundances of these middle
6 sized carnivores in areas where there were fewer
7 wolves. That's kind of the bottom line. It's not a
8 simple case, but that's kind of the gist of it.

9
10 Finally, I'd like to talk a little bit
11 about the sheep population surveys. Denali has been
12 doing productivity surveys for some time now. We
13 noticed for the last three years very, very low
14 productivity. That means our lamb, ewe ratios in early
15 June were very, very low. This coincided with similar
16 results from around Alaska and even in the Yukon. Not
17 everywhere, but many areas of Alaskan Yukon saw this
18 result the last couple of years. This year though,
19 2015, our rates were right back up there where we like
20 to see them in the mid-30s. So we feel pretty good
21 about that.

22
23 The other thing that we did was we
24 repeated our range-wide aerial survey of dall sheep
25 abundance. This was last done in 2011. Up until that
26 time, folks had always -- had seemed to think that the
27 sheep population was pretty stable. And the numbers
28 from that survey suggested that that was true. But
29 between 2012 and 2014, we began to see a significant
30 drop in just the numbers of sheep that people were
31 seeing along the road. Our results from our
32 productivity survey, even though it wasn't designed to
33 estimate population abundance, we were just seeing
34 lower numbers of sheep. So we sort of suspected that
35 the sheep population had declined.

36
37 So we did a survey this year. We don't
38 have the data analyzed yet. Just off the cuff it looks
39 like there was in fact a slight decline in sheep
40 numbers. The big thing that we noticed was a very,
41 very low abundance of young rams. Those rams in the
42 half curl and less category, which would be the one,
43 two, three-year old rams were very, very scarce. So
44 that supports our findings from the last couple of
45 years where our lamb ratios were very low.

46
47 But it looks like productivity was back
48 up again this year, so whatever it was that was
49 happening over the last few years, it appears to be
50 maybe -- maybe it's passed.

1 So that's it in a nutshell. And like I
2 said, I would be happy to give you more details if
3 you'd like.

4
5 MADAME CHAIR ENSTMINGER: Any
6 questions.

7
8 (No comments)

9
10 MADAME CHAIR ENSTMINGER: Thank you.
11 That was a great report.

12
13 Okay.

14
15 MR. UMPHENOUR: I have one question.

16
17 MADAME CHAIR ENSTMINGER: His mind is
18 working.

19
20 MR. UMPHENOUR: Okay. My question is
21 are you still doing that -- keeping track of the radio
22 collared wolves when they die, to go find out what
23 killed them and then examine their bones using the
24 isotopes to see what their diet was?

25
26 MR. ARTHUR: We are -- I guess the
27 answer is yes and no. We have an ongoing monitoring
28 program which involves radio collaring at least two
29 wolves from each pack. Many of those -- in fact all
30 but one of those are wearing GPS collars right now, so
31 we have actually pretty good data on their movements.
32 So we do try and keep tabs on all the wolves in every
33 pack. Whenever we are able to do so, we investigate
34 the mortalities. And this includes both radio collared
35 wolves and the occasional one that we find that is not
36 radio collared.

37
38 This year we were actually able to get
39 into a lot of those mortalities fairly quickly and got
40 pretty good data on the cause of death. That's not
41 always the case. It's just of hit or miss whether we
42 have helicopters available and the funding and
43 whatever, you know, to go investigate.

44
45 In terms of investigating the diet
46 analysis, we have been collecting the samples from our
47 captured animals and stockpiling them. But we haven't
48 had the funds to do the analysis. We're hoping to do
49 that, but that's sometime in the future.

50

1 MR. UMPHENOUR: Thank you. And just
2 briefly, what has been the highest cause of mortality
3 recently.

4
5 MR. ARTHUR: Natural causes are by far
6 the most common thing. Many, if not most of those, are
7 other wolves. There are a lot of cases where you just
8 simply can't assign the cause of death definitively to
9 anything in particular, so that's a big complicating
10 factor. But of the times when we can actually identify
11 the cause, it's usually another wolf or several that
12 was the cause.

13
14 Over the last couple of years, we've
15 actually seen a number of cases of either wolves that
16 either starved or died of old -- just old age.
17 Probably starvation or some other factor was the
18 approximate cause, but these were very old animals that
19 were on their last legs anyway.

20
21 So over the last year or two, that
22 actually has been something that we've seen, which
23 wasn't really observed very commonly previously. I
24 don't know that I would necessarily say that's a
25 change. It's just something, you know, that happens.
26 Something that we've observed more commonly in the last
27 couple of years.

28
29 MR. UMPHENOUR: Thank you.

30
31 Madame Chair.

32
33 MADAME CHAIR ENSTMINGER: Okay. Thank
34 you very much.

35
36 Any other questions.

37
38 (No comments)

39
40 MADAME CHAIR ENSTMINGER: Thanks.

41
42 Amy, you must.

43
44 MS. CRAVER: Just real quick. I think
45 this might be of interest to the RAC. So we -- our SRC
46 met in Nikolai on August 5th. And one of the things we
47 talked about was developing a Memorandum of Agreement
48 between the Tribe and the Park. And I think this is
49 kind of exciting. We talked a lot about upcoming
50 logistics for a community winter sheep hunt into the

1 Preserve. So this is a proposal that the Federal
2 Subsistence Board approved back in 2014. And so people
3 in Nikolai were very excited about this. This is
4 something that happened that they were -- if they
5 couldn't get caribou in the past, they mainly would
6 sort of rely on doing a spring sheep hunt. And so when
7 I was in Nikolai, I was listening to the elders and
8 they talked about how much they love sheep meat and how
9 much they enjoyed this traditional activity. But
10 basically -- I don't know. It was like when -- then
11 they started thinking that the Park Service was like
12 regulating them out of the Preserve.

13

14 So anyway, so now we have this winter
15 community sheep hunt in the Preserve for three sheep.
16 And one of the things that the people in Nikolai
17 requested from the Park Service was to help facilitate
18 elders and youth coming together in an expedition from
19 Nikolai into the Preserve using our kennel dogs and
20 using -- there's a team of dogs in Nikolai. And so
21 we're working on the logistics this year in terms of --
22 and we also have a place name project. And a lot of
23 those place names are -- they correlate with where they
24 used to go traditionally into the Park.

25

26 And so we're going to work with local
27 folks in Nikolai to basically brush out those trails.
28 And then next year is Denali's Centennial. And then
29 that's when we're going to work with elders and youth
30 to actually do this expedition into the Park to hunt
31 sheep. And then go back to Nikolai and have a
32 potlatch.

33

34 So it's kind of exciting I think. And
35 it's part of our -- what we're trying to do for the
36 Centennial. The Park Service in general this year --
37 next year, in '16, it's the Centennial for the Park
38 Service. And then '17 is Denali's Centennial. And
39 part of what we're trying to do is really doing
40 outreach with our communities, like such as Nenana and
41 Nikolai. And we're trying to work on local hire and
42 really try to embrace the youth, to get them more
43 involved in the Park Service.

44

45 So anyway, I just wanted to share that
46 as a highlight.

47

48 So that's all, Madame Chair.

49

50 MADAME CHAIR ENSTMINGER: Thank you.

1 Anything else. Questions.
2
3 (No comments)
4
5 MADAME CHAIR ENSTMINGER: All right.
6 Thank you.
7
8 Bart from BLM.
9
10 MS. PATTON: Madame Chair and Council,
11 we don't have anyone from BLM today. Jeannie Cole
12 wanted to alert the Council. They have been working on
13 setting up a public hearing for a Section 810 hearing
14 for continuing on with the Eastern Interior Management
15 Plan for BLM. She anticipated to have those letters
16 today, but said if not, she will email them to me so I
17 will distribute them to you. They're anticipating -- I
18 think we just lost Andrew -- to hold that meeting in
19 Fort Yukon to start with. So we'll make sure those
20 letters get out to you and to the communities. And
21 they're also contacting the Tribes.
22
23 And then the next report is a brief
24 report from OSM. Very brief. And then we're on
25 to.....
26
27 MADAME CHAIR ENSTMINGER: The
28 calendar.....
29
30 MS. PATTON:final dates and
31 then.....
32
33 MADAME CHAIR ENSTMINGER: The calendar.
34
35
36 MS. PATTON: I know you are all -- long
37 day. Good work. Thank you.
38
39 Chris.
40
41 MR. MCKEE: For the record, once again
42 I'm Chris McKee with OSM. Like Eva said, a brief
43 update. I figure I maybe need two hours max, so I'll
44 try to be quick.
45
46 (Laughter)
47
48 MR. MCKEE: First off is just a quick
49 staffing update with -- for OSM. As many of you know
50 I'm sure, in the past -- in the recent past we were

1 pretty under-staffed. I think we were short some 13 or
2 14 positions. We've been aggressively trying to fill
3 those positions and the Wildlife Staff was able to hire
4 a couple of new biologists recently and I'm going to be
5 hiring -- I'm trying to hire yet another one here in
6 the next few months. Robin Levine was -- recently
7 joined OSM in October of last year as one of our
8 anthropologists, so that Division is -- has that recent
9 hire. And also we're going to be trying to hire one
10 other anthropologist or social scientist. And I think
11 many of you met Amy Howard. She is a recent hire. She
12 came to us in July of this year. She's our new policy
13 coordinator. And that was a position that had been
14 vacant for quite some time, so we're very, very happy
15 to have her on Staff again.

16
17 So as you can see on that update, it's
18 -- I think this is on page 360 of your booklet, we're
19 still short a couple of anthropologists, several people
20 in the Fisheries Division, which is actually quite
21 under-staffed right now. But we do have several of
22 those positions either actively being advertised now or
23 soon to be advertised. And then several administration
24 and IT specialists as well. But like I said, we're
25 trying to aggressively do those hires. And as you may
26 suspect, the hiring process in the Federal system can
27 be rather slow sometimes, but we're doing our best to
28 do what we can to get those positions hired as quickly
29 as possible.

30
31 And next just a quick update on the
32 North Pacific Fisheries Management Council. They met
33 in Anchorage in April of this year and took some
34 actions to reduce both -- by-catch of both Chinook and
35 chum salmon in the Bering Sea. And among some of the
36 -- those actions are in years of low Chinook salmon
37 abundance, the hard cap was reduced to 45,000, with a
38 performance standard of 33,318 Chinook. So these
39 actions were put in place by the Council to further
40 reduce by-catch in all times of abundance and to ensure
41 that periods of low Chinook salmon abundance, the
42 Pollock fishery would be limited to a lower level of
43 by-catch. So I think that's a reduction of some 30
44 percent in the hard cap. I'm not sure what the
45 reduction is from the performance standard.

46
47 The Fish and Wildlife Service and the
48 Alaska Native Science and Engineering Program, ANSEP,
49 were awarded a National Fish and Wildlife Foundation
50 Grant to help reestablish a lost connection between

1 Federal resource managers and rural communities in the
2 Yukon-Kuskokwim Region. The funds for this grant have
3 been used to expand the Refuge Information Technician
4 Program and also to help support ANSEP students
5 participating in biological internships within the
6 Yukon-Kuskokwim and Doyon Regions. I think the last
7 time we met there was some mention of changes to the
8 Council appointment process. OSM has submitted a
9 request to the Secretary of the Interior to make some
10 changes to the appointment process, including shifting
11 from a three-year to four-year appointment terms and
12 allowing for appointment of alternatives and approving
13 for a 120-day carry-over term for incumbents in the
14 event that appointment letters are not timely issued.

15
16 All I can tell you right now is that
17 we're still waiting to hear back from an official -- an
18 official response from the Secretary. But we're not
19 going to be able to implement any of these changes
20 during the current 2015 appointment cycle. So
21 basically just waiting to hear back from D.C. on that
22 matter.

23
24 So that's just a quick and dirty
25 update. And that's all I have for you.

26
27 Thank you.

28
29 MADAME CHAIR ENSTMINGER: Thank you.
30 Any questions.

31
32 (No comments)

33
34 MADAME CHAIR ENSTMINGER: Okay. Moving
35 on to our dates for the next meeting.

36
37 MS. PATTON: Madame Chair and Council,
38 so the next meeting is the All Council Meeting, where
39 all ten councils will be meeting in Anchorage. And on
40 page 363 is the -- there's a tentative agenda and then
41 a table of all the possible workshops. So we receive
42 feedback from the Councils and also communities and
43 Tribes in the sorts of training and workshops that both
44 public and Council would like to have. So that agenda
45 is in there tentatively and we'll be working with you
46 on finalizing that.

47
48 We'll also have breakout sessions for
49 like the three Councils that are addressing Yukon
50 fisheries issues and relevant sessions. So it's not

1 all ten Councils meeting all at once for the entire
2 meeting, but opportunities for Council Members to
3 choose the workshops and trainings that they would like
4 to attend. Individual meeting and then Regional
5 meetings to address common issues.

6

7 So that date is set already. But for
8 fall 2016, I have the current calendar with some of the
9 dates that have already been selected by the other
10 Councils. And find a date that works for all here.

11

12 And while I'm passing this out, too,
13 Fred had provided when we were covering the Board of
14 Fisheries issues, that latest information on the
15 proposed changes to the escapement goals and management
16 plan. So I'll pass this out, too. This is the letter
17 that identifies those issues that were just discussed
18 this week at the Board of Fish work session.

19

20 MADAME CHAIR ENSTMINGER: Okay. Our
21 next meeting would be in the winter March cycle. Do
22 you have anything on that besides this fall one?

23

24 MS. PATTON: Madame Chair and Council
25 Members, so the meeting date for the March meeting is
26 set already. Because all ten Councils are meeting
27 together.

28

29 MADAME CHAIR ENSTMINGER: So that's it.

30

31

32 MS. PATTON: Mid-March was identified.
33 Yeah. We had to reserve a venue that was big enough to
34 fit this many people. So.....

35

36 MADAME CHAIR ENSTMINGER: So that's our
37 March meeting.

38

39 MS. PATTON: That's the March meeting.
40 And it runs the whole week.

41

42 MADAME CHAIR ENSTMINGER: In Anchorage.

43

44

45 MS. PATTON: In Anchorage. So March
46 7th through 11th.

47

48 And then it's the fall meeting to
49 select.

50

1 MADAME CHAIR ENSTMINGER: Okay.
2
3 MS. PATTON: And also make
4 recommendations for which community you would like to
5 meet in for that fall meeting. This Council hasn't had
6 an opportunity to meet outside of Fairbanks for some
7 time.
8
9 MADAME CHAIR ENSTMINGER: So now we
10 have funding to do so? Because I remember us saying we
11 don't have funding to do travel.
12
13 MS. PATTON: Right. Funding has been
14 an issue. We now have that travel cap lifted. And we
15 have support from our Director that at least every
16 other year that there would be an opportunity for
17 Councils to meet in a rural village. And also
18 considerations for issues that come up. If a community
19 has particular issues and they want the Council to meet
20 there, please provide that feedback. And then we make
21 that request and justification.
22
23 MADAME CHAIR ENSTMINGER: Council
24 Members. I'm looking at the fall one. We've got to
25 pick some dates for fall. I'm looking at what she's
26 already passed out. I think I have mine. She hasn't
27 gone around the table yet.
28
29 MS. PATTON: Yeah. I'll get that for
30 you.
31
32 So I just got an email back.
33 Southcentral selected dates of October 18th through
34 19th. AFN is also on the calendar that same week.
35 They're going to meet in Anchorage. So.....
36
37 MS. PITKA: It's in Fairbanks next
38 year.
39
40 MS. PATTON: Oh, that's right, it's in
41 Fairbanks, sorry. Yeah.
42
43 MADAME CHAIR ENSTMINGER: I just gave
44 them that to pass around so they can see it while we're
45 talking here.
46
47 Okay. Looking at this fall Regional
48 Advisory Meeting calendar, you can see that Kodiak
49 Aleutian is the 28th, 29th. Northwest Arctic is the
50 following week. Y-K Delta is the following week. And

1 then AFN. So all of these have been chosen. So we --
2 well, Southcentral is still meeting, I guess.
3
4 Did you get anything from Southcentral?
5 They've probably picked their dates already.
6
7 MS. PATTON: Madame Chair and Council,
8 yes. Southcentral RAC selected October 18th and 19th.
9
10 MADAME CHAIR ENSTMINGER: Okay.
11
12 Okay. Any suggestions.
13
14 MS. PITKA: October 8th through the
15 14th is our NCAI meeting.
16
17 MADAME CHAIR ENSTMINGER: October 8th
18 to when?
19
20 MS. PITKA: Through the 14th.
21
22 MADAME CHAIR ENSTMINGER: That's a
23 pretty long meeting.
24
25 MS. PITKA: Yeah. It's the main
26 meeting. Oh, sorry. Sorry about that. Okay. Yeah.
27 NCAI is meeting October 8th through the 14th. It's the
28 main meeting that they have every year.
29
30 MADAME CHAIR ENSTMINGER: So that would
31 be a conflict for you. Yeah.
32
33 MS. PITKA: It will be in Phoenix.
34
35 MADAME CHAIR ENSTMINGER: It'll be in
36 Fairbanks. Do you guys meet all day, too, all those
37 days?
38
39 MS. PITKA: No. It will be in Phoenix.
40 That's why I'm saying.....
41
42 MADAME CHAIR ENSTMINGER: Oh. I
43 thought I heard Fairbanks.
44
45 MS. PITKA: No. No. Phoenix, ma'am.
46
47 MADAME CHAIR ENSTMINGER: Oh, okay.
48 That's a little ways away.
49
50 Okay. So let's assume that week's not

1 available.

2

3

Time frame, Andrew?

4

5

6

MR. FIRMIN: Well, I was going to ask
Andy when him and Don thought they felt best. Maybe
AFN week.

7

8

9

10

MR. WOODRUFF: I propose the 18th and
19th.

11

12

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MADAME CHAIR ENSTMINGER: We try not to
do it exactly the same dates because they share a lot
of the same people. I think it's worked -- like this
one we had -- Southcentral started Wednesday and was
Thursday. And then ours was Thursday, Friday. That can
work on the same week with Southcentral. We have a lot
of stuff that we do the same. So.....

MR. BASSICH: How about the 17th and
18th. I mean it seems like -- like this time Don and I
have to stay the weekend anyway, so whether we stay a
weekend after or come in the weekend before.

MADAME CHAIR ENSTMINGER: Well, 19th,
20th. Well, because that AFN though.

MR. BASSICH: Right.

MADAME CHAIR ENSTMINGER: Yeah.

MR. BASSICH: 17, 18 would work. Or we
can't schedule along with Bethel, right? 13, 14? Or
no. That's right.

MADAME CHAIR ENSTMINGER: That's week
that she's gone.

MR. BASSICH: You have that problem.

Okay.

MADAME CHAIR ENSTMINGER: Okay.

MR. KOEHLER: It seems like we have an
issue every year of these other councils meeting before
us. So they get to pick their dates first. Maybe we
should have it in August. And then we can get to pick
our own dates the year after.

MADAME CHAIR ENSTMINGER: Oh, come on

1 now. You're not going to be there in August. I know
2 I'm not going to be there in August. The window opens
3 August 22nd. Which week of sheep season do you want to
4 have. Okay.

5
6 MS. PATTON: And we have two Councils
7 that can meet per week. That's how many, you know,
8 Staff that we can support for both meetings. So all of
9 these weeks are open. It's just other obligations that
10 are going on for folks.

11
12 MADAME CHAIR ENSTMINGER: So the week
13 of the -- nothing is in there the 24th through the
14 28th. Is that.....

15
16 MS. PITKA: I wouldn't mind meeting
17 that week. That would be fine by me.

18
19 MADAME CHAIR ENSTMINGER: What about
20 the rest of you.

21
22 MR. KOEHLER: That would be fine for
23 me.

24
25 MS. PITKA: I would vote for that
26 Monday and Friday.

27
28 MADAME CHAIR ENSTMINGER: We go through
29 this ice thing, huh.

30
31 MR. BASSICH: It's mainly me, you know.
32 Yeah. It's mainly an issue for me to get out. But,
33 you know, I think I've just come to the point where,
34 you know, you guys schedule your meetings. If it
35 works, then I make it. I make it. And if I don't, I
36 don't. And springtime is certainly an easier meeting
37 for me to attend, but it's just a tough issue we've
38 been dealing with for ten years.

39
40 MADAME CHAIR ENSTMINGER: Uh-huh.

41
42 MR. BASSICH: And we can't seem to get
43 around it. So I don't foresee we're ever going to get
44 really around it. And so.....

45
46 MR. BASSICH: The third week is fine
47 with me.

48
49 MADAME CHAIR ENSTMINGER: Yeah. Me,
50 too, actually. So the 25th, 26th we're looking at.

1 MR. GLANZ: That's what I -- because
2 they can fly in the 24th.
3
4 MADAME CHAIR ENSTMINGER: Right.
5
6 MR. GLANZ: And they can get out on
7 that Thursday.
8
9 MADAME CHAIR ENSTMINGER: Okay. Okay.
10 We're tentatively scheduling it October 25th and 26th.
11 And we have to pick a place, Council Members.
12
13 MR. BASSICH: Eagle.
14
15 MADAME CHAIR ENSTMINGER: We did that
16 once, remember?
17
18 MR. BASSICH: Oh, yeah. We'll never do
19 that again I'll bet.
20
21 MADAME CHAIR ENSTMINGER: You had to
22 drive everybody home, as I recall.
23
24 MR. BASSICH: Half of them.
25
26 MADAME CHAIR ENSTMINGER: Yeah. Half
27 of them.
28
29 MR. BASSICH: Eva got to ride in the
30 back of a pickup truck.
31
32 MADAME CHAIR ENSTMINGER: There was
33 lots of places to eat as I remember, too.
34
35 Okay.
36
37 MR. KOEHLER: I can extend a welcome to
38 my community.
39
40 MADAME CHAIR ENSTMINGER: I want to go
41 there. Bring a tent. Use the down sleeping bag.
42
43 MR. KOEHLER: Bring your own tent.
44
45 MADAME CHAIR ENSTMINGER: We could go
46 to Ptarmigan. Maybe Irvin would let us stay there.
47 Okay. We're getting really crazy here. But.....
48
49 MR. GLANZ: Delta, years ago, Tanana,
50 Fort Yukon.

1 MADAME CHAIR ENSTMINGER: Is that mic
2 on over there.
3
4 MR. GLANZ: What's that.
5
6 MADAME CHAIR ENSTMINGER: Mic.
7
8 MR. GLANZ: I was just trying to look
9 at where we might.....
10
11 MADAME CHAIR ENSTMINGER: Just leave it
12 on.
13
14 MR. GLANZ: Yeah. Right.
15
16 MADAME CHAIR ENSTMINGER: Yeah. Uh-
17 huh. Where are you reading at. I guess I'm missing
18 it. Where we've been in the past?
19
20 MS. PATTON: Oh. You.....
21
22 MR. GLANZ: I was just going on that --
23 we've met in Delta, Arctic Village, Fort Yukon.....
24
25 MR. BASSICH: Allakaket.
26
27 MR. GLANZ:and Tok. Where?
28
29 MR. BASSICH: Allakaket.
30
31 MADAME CHAIR ENSTMINGER: What's on our
32 agenda that fall. Is it fisheries proposals.
33
34 MS. PATTON: Yes.
35
36 MADAME CHAIR ENSTMINGER: I can tell
37 you that fisheries proposals are more in the Yukon.
38
39 MR. GLANZ: Exactly. Yeah.
40
41 MADAME CHAIR ENSTMINGER: So Tok would
42 probably not be a good place for it.
43
44 MR. BASSICH: Then Fort Yukon.
45
46 MADAME CHAIR ENSTMINGER: Fort Yukon
47 sounds good.
48
49 MR. GLANZ: They've got enough to take
50 care of us. We was there before.

1 MADAME CHAIR ENSTMINGER: I like
2 hanging out there. Actually, I think three of us got
3 stuck there.
4
5 MR. GLANZ: Yeah. Because of the
6 weather.
7
8 MADAME CHAIR ENSTMINGER: For three or
9 four days. Or a couple of days. Okay. That's fine.
10 Let's tentatively used Fort Yukon. Does everybody
11 agree.
12
13 MR. GLANZ: Okay.
14
15 MADAME CHAIR ENSTMINGER: What did you
16 say. Oh, yep. That's what I heard now.
17
18 MR. GLANZ: Yes.
19
20 MR. UMPHENOUR: Are we allowed to go
21 somewhere else now.
22
23 MADAME CHAIR ENSTMINGER: Yep. We just
24 found out that there's funding to go somewhere else
25 now.
26
27 MR. GLANZ: Wow. That's amazing.
28 Cool.
29
30 MADAME CHAIR ENSTMINGER: Uh-huh. Is
31 that okay? Any opposition to Fort Yukon?
32
33 MS. PITKA: I'm good.
34
35 MADAME CHAIR ENSTMINGER: Uh-huh.
36
37 MR. KOEHLER: Really it does work.
38 It's so far for me to come out. It does actually work
39 very well for me to come to Fairbanks. Because then at
40 the end of the meeting I can be in Fairbanks and get a
41 few things done. But, you know, I guess I would be
42 coming back. If we did Fort Yukon, I'd be coming back
43 through Fairbanks anyway. So.....
44
45 MADAME CHAIR ENSTMINGER: We just fly
46 -- it's not that long of a flight actually. That's the
47 nice thing.
48
49 MR. KOEHLER: And it would be neat to
50 see new country.

1 MADAME CHAIR ENSTMINGER: Yeah. You
2 would enjoy.
3
4 MR. KOEHLER: So I'm.....
5
6 MADAME CHAIR ENSTMINGER: Okay. And if
7 there's any problem. I don't think there will be any
8 problems on this one. So all in agreement.
9
10 IN UNISON: Yes.
11
12 MADAME CHAIR ENSTMINGER: So what else
13 do we got to deal with.
14
15 MS. PATTON: Madame Chair and Council,
16 then we have just a.....
17
18 MR. GLANZ: Annual letter.
19
20 MS. PATTON:reiterate annual
21 report topics. And I can let you know. So there's
22 been a lot of discussion throughout the meeting. Some
23 of the report topics were brought up specifically and
24 others just, you know, the concerns and requests that
25 you've raised. So we had again hunter education and
26 outreach. Specifically to generate a commitment from
27 OSM and the Federal Subsistence Program in conjunction
28 with a letter that Eastern Interior is working on from
29 the collaborative discussion with Western Interior at
30 the last round.
31
32 A lot of the recommendations were
33 specific to the Tribal consultation and public process
34 around the Regional Advisory Council meetings and
35 regulatory cycles. So we had a number of
36 recommendations for changes to the Tribal consultation
37 process outreach and participation. Again, public and
38 Tribal engagement in the regulatory process and RAC
39 meetings specifically. Meeting and engaging in the
40 communities themselves. The use of traditional
41 knowledge in the wildlife analyses, specifically to
42 engage with the communities and the Tribes and the
43 local experts, so that that information is part of the
44 analysis process. And also there was some discussion
45 both by the Council and some of our public participants
46 to include community interviews and elder experts
47 through that process.
48
49 So those are some of the topics picked
50 up on throughout the meeting. Do we have other

1 requests or concerns -- issues you'd like to bring to
2 the attention of the Federal Subsistence Board or
3 recommendations.

4

5 MS. PITKA: I was just going to say
6 follow through with the recommendations. I mean.....

7

8 MADAME CHAIR ENSTMINGER: I actually
9 had an additional one. I mentioned it at the meeting
10 with Heather Tonneson regarding the proposed rule.
11 After dealing with some things with the Park Service
12 and the SRC on that ORV, having this working group and
13 having -- working together with the planners, there was
14 a lot of really good input that occurred there. So I
15 suggested -- I briefly suggested it at the meeting, but
16 I talked to her at length at lunch and said I think it
17 would be very important to mention that when the
18 government starts going into these kinds of huge, wide-
19 reaching issues and they don't have planning and
20 scoping, that somebody is a contact person from the
21 Regional Advisory Council to -- or have a working group
22 that works with them in the process so we're not so
23 blind-sided when these things happen. And she seemed
24 pretty open to that. She'd take it to the top. So I
25 would like to have it in the annual report.

26

27 Anything else.

28

29 MR. FIRMIN: I've just got my little
30 list here. I want to make sure they're all -- that was
31 for the proposed rule on the Refuges?

32

33 MADAME CHAIR ENSTMINGER: It was.

34

35 MR. FIRMIN: Okay. The caribou front
36 runners. Not enough being developed now. I know it
37 was in our last report, but there's still like no
38 caribou proposals on at least our side anyway. There
39 was like -- oh, yeah. We heard about it. That was the
40 end of it. You know, there needs to be something more
41 done than that. Like we'll put our biologists on it to
42 see what kind of -- I want to see like Fish and Game or
43 Fish and Wildlife develop a proposal for us like they
44 do on the Board of Fish or the Board of Game. When
45 they see something wrong, they try to fix it, you know.
46 So I just haven't seen any action from any of the
47 Agencies. I mean don't -- let's not wait for me and
48 Larry to put something in or you to put something in.
49 You know, let's get our Agencies to do a little bit.

50

1 And the other one I wanted was the
2 Porcupine River closures and how that -- I think we did
3 -- did we get that one read? That was the only other
4 one that I had in my notes, I think.

5
6 MS. PATTON: No. We hadn't discussed
7 that one yet. So.....

8
9 MR. FIRMIN: That was just.....

10
11 MS. PATTON: To discuss the.....

12
13 MR. FIRMIN: Something in there on
14 the.....

15
16 MS. PATTON: The Fisheries Management
17 and the closure.

18
19 MR. FIRMIN: Yeah. The fall chum and
20 how they closed it. And they did speak with, you know,
21 the community members there, but afterwards I think it
22 kind of took effect. Like hey there's something more
23 needs to be done or there needs to be like subsistence
24 permits for people -- individuals that live on the --
25 you know, they're living out in the middle of nowhere
26 and you're going to take their only resource away from
27 them? I mean that's what they feed their dogs. That's
28 what they trap with. That's -- and they're living off
29 the Porcupine River. I mean there was alternatives
30 available for them. So when you're six-inch mesh net,
31 but do you really think somebody's 50 or 100 chum
32 salmon out in their trapline is really going to affect
33 escapement on the fishing grounds. I kind of highly
34 doubt it. So I just wanted to maybe get something in
35 there along those lines. With something to help those
36 people that do live out there in the country so they're
37 not -- I'm pretty sure all of them have whitefish nets
38 still, but like a special permit for them or something
39 along those lines so there is a pass for them.

40
41 And those are the only three I saw in
42 my notes, I guess.

43
44 MS. PATTON: Absolutely. We'll include
45 those. And then we'll get the draft back to the
46 Council for your review. And then we'll have the
47 opportunity to finalize it at the next meeting as well.

48
49
50 MADAME CHAIR ENSTMINGER: Okay.

1 Anything else.

2

3 Closing comments. Any closing comments
4 from the Council Members.

5

6 Donald.

7

8 MR. WOODRUFF: Thank you, Madame Chair.

9

10 I want to thank all the Agency folks
11 for being here and giving us such good data and
12 testimony. And all the Council Members that come to
13 these meetings regularly and spend their time to review
14 this material thoroughly.

15

16 And one thing that's somewhat
17 bothersome for me is that if we have a contentious
18 issue -- and today we were talking to the Refuge people
19 a little bit about this final rule -- it's not a
20 personal issue with us. It's we're looking out for our
21 constituents. The people that we represent. And I
22 think that we both respect each other's point of view.
23 And respect is where it comes from for complete
24 communication back and forth. It's not animosity
25 towards anyone or any outfit. And I want to reiterate
26 that. That we respect you folks. And if you guys
27 respect from our point of view, then we'll all work
28 together to solve some of these issues. Thank you.

29

30 MADAME CHAIR ENSTMINGER: Thank you,
31 Donald. That's important.

32

33 Andy.

34

35 MR. BASSICH: Yeah. I just wanted to
36 say I thought you did a great job running this meeting,
37 Sue. We went through an awful lot. We had a lot to
38 handle. And we stayed pretty much on task. And I
39 thought you did a great job.

40

41 MADAME CHAIR ENSTMINGER: Well, thank
42 you very much.

43

44 MR. GLANZ: Yes. I'd also like to
45 thank Eva. And I'd like to thank our leadership on our
46 Council, too. Thank you, guys. You all did a good
47 job. Members also. I mean you guys keep it together.
48 Thank you.

49

50 MADAME CHAIR ENSTMINGER: Well, thank

1 you. We really appreciate that. Yes.

2

3 Anything else, Council. Anything you
4 want to bring out.

5

6 Okie dokie.

7

8 MS. PITKA: I'm really glad that we'll
9 be taking up Tribal consultation at the winter meeting.
10 If it wasn't on there, then I would definitely have
11 suggested it. Thank you.

12

13 I really appreciate Denali's cultural
14 outreach. That document is really, really interesting.
15 And I like that kind of work. It really shows an
16 interest in a community -- communities and the people
17 that live in Parks. Thank you.

18

19 MADAME CHAIR ENSTMINGER: Uh-huh. All
20 right.

21

22 Andrew.

23

24 MR. FIRMIN: I just want to say I'm
25 glad we're going to move the meeting back to the
26 Village. You know, it's been a long time since we've
27 done that. But I know that's one thing we always
28 seemed like -- you know, we have a lot more testimony
29 on different stuff or we see from a whole different set
30 of people. And regardless of the Village or the rural
31 area we go to, I was going to suggest earlier that if
32 we're not going to do it in the Villages or off out in
33 Fairbanks anymore, we should have plenty of money to
34 send people to Federal Subsistence Board. Saving all
35 that dough from going out to the Village. But.....

36

37 MADAME CHAIR ENSTMINGER: And I'm not
38 so sure they save all that money.

39

40 MR. FIRMIN: No. Me neither. But I
41 was just thinking that. More of a logistics thing.

42

43 MADAME CHAIR ENSTMINGER: Yeah.

44

45 MR. FIRMIN: But I'm glad to see it
46 going back to the Village. And I think it was a -- we
47 had a pretty good meeting this time and for the two
48 inches of paperwork we went through.

49

50 MADAME CHAIR ENSTMINGER: Yeah.

1 MR. GLANZ: I, myself, like going to
2 the villages because we get yelled at real good.
3
4 (Laughter)
5
6 MADAME CHAIR ENSTMINGER: Yeah.
7
8 MR. GLANZ: And thanks to all the Staff
9 out there for showing up, man. Thanks, you guys.
10
11 MADAME CHAIR ENSTMINGER: Yeah. All
12 right. I want to thank all you guys, too, for hanging
13 in there. And really appreciate all the time and
14 effort that the Council Members put into this. It's a
15 lot of work and thank you for support.
16
17 And we entertain a motion for adjourn.
18
19 MR. BASSICH: Move to adjourn.
20
21 MR. GLANZ: I'll second that one.
22
23 MADAME CHAIR ENSTMINGER: All in favor,
24 say aye.
25
26 IN UNISON: Aye.
27
28 MADAME CHAIR ENSTMINGER: Okay. None
29 opposed.
30
31 (Off record)
32
33 (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)

I, Salena A. Hile, Notary Public in and for the state of Alaska and reporter for Computer Matrix Court Reporters, LLC, do hereby certify:

THAT the foregoing pages numbered 197 through 417 contain a full, true and correct Transcript of the EASTERN INTERIOR FEDERAL SUBSISTENCE REGIONAL ADVISORY COUNCIL MEETING taken electronically on the 23rd day of October 2015;

THAT the transcript is a true and correct transcript requested to be transcribed and thereafter transcribed by under my direction and reduced to print to the best of our knowledge and ability;

THAT I am not an employee, attorney, or party interested in any way in this action.

DATED at Anchorage, Alaska, this 10th day of November 2015.

Salena A. Hile
Notary Public, State of Alaska
My Commission Expires:09/16/18