MEMBERS PRESENT:

Anthony Christianson, Chairman
Charles Brower
Rhonda Pitka
Chad Padgett, Bureau of Land Management
Greg Siekaniec, U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service
Don Striker, National Park Service
Gene Peltola, Bureau of Indian Affairs
David Schmid, U.S. Forest Service

Ken Lord, Solicitor's Office

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PROCEEDINGS

(Teleconference - 4/21/2020)

(On record)

MR. DOOLITTLE: Good morning, everybody. Before I turn the meeting over to Chairman Christianson, a few housekeeping items. First off is that when we get to public comments and for the agenda item relative to public comment on non-agenda items for folks that are on the phone, please remember that before you speak you'll need to press *1 and you'll be introduced to speak in priority that you go into the queue. Again, there will be a pause, so everybody needs to be patient with that.

Again, for folks that don't want to be on the phones for eight hours to get updates on where the Board's progress is, you can get that information of where we are at on the agenda by calling 1-800-478-1456 or 907-786-3888. Those two numbers are quick ways and you'll get ahold of Tom Kron, who will answer your questions. Also you can go online to find out where progress has been made on the agenda at www.doi.gov/subsistence/board or on our Facebook page, which is www.facebook.com/subsistence Alaska. So that's some ways you can keep abreast of the issues.

At this time I will go through and see who is online. This is not an official roll call. We did that yesterday to start the meeting, so this is just the reconvening of the Federal Subsistence Board on April 21st, 2020. I'm going to check in first to see if Don Striker is on the phone.

MR. STRIKER: Yes, I am. Good morning.

MR. DOOLITTLE: Good morning, Don.

MR. C. BROWER: Tom, this is Charlie.

MR. DOOLITTLE: Hey, Charlie. Good to hear you online.

MR. C. BROWER: Can we have the speakers speak closer to the phone? It seems like you're in the distance.
MR. DOOLITTLE: Yes, we can make sure that we remind people to speak right into the speakers on their phones. Bureau of Land Management. Is Chad Padgett here?

MR. PADGETT: I am here. Thanks, Tom.

MR. DOOLITTLE: All right, Chad. Good to hear your voice this morning. Has Fish and Wildlife Service, Greg Siekaniec, made it online?

MR. SIEKANIEC: Hey, Tom. I just made it through.

MR. DOOLITTLE: See, I knew it was serendipitous this morning. I knew it would happen. Great. Thank you, Greg. Good to hear your voice this morning.

MR. SIEKANIEC: Thank you.


MR. SCHMID: Good morning, Tom. I'm on.


MR. PELTOLA: Ii-i.

MR. DOOLITTLE: Ii-i. Good to hear you, Gene. Public Member Rhonda Pitka.

(No response)

MR. DOOLITTLE: Rhonda, are you online yet?

(No response)

MR. DOOLITTLE: Okay. We'll go back. Waiting for Rhonda to get connected. Chairman Tony Christianson, are you online?

(No response)

MR. DOOLITTLE: We're still waiting for
two of our Board members at this moment. Ken Lord, are you online?

MR. LORD: I am here. Had some trouble calling in. They wanted to put me on the mute spot. Maybe the others are having the same problem.

MR. DOOLITTLE: Okay. The Operator was given the list of names this morning, so hopefully that continues not to happen. Is Mike Routhier online as well?

(No response)


MR. DOOLITTLE: Is Mike Routhier online?

(No response)

MR. DOOLITTLE: Okay. From the State of Alaska, Alaska Department of Fish and Game, is Ben Mulligan online?

MS. PITKA: Hello, this is Rhonda Pitka.

MR. DOOLITTLE: Hi, Rhonda. Welcome this morning. Thank you. Is Ben Mulligan or Mark Burch from the State of Alaska online?

MR. C. BROWER: Tom, this is Charlie. Did you do a roll call on me?

MR. DOOLITTLE: Yes, I did, Charlie. I got you and you're coming in loud and clear.

MR. C. BROWER: Thank you.

MR. DOOLITTLE: RAC Chairs, let's see who is with us this morning. Is Don Hernandez with us this morning?

(No response)

MR. DOOLITTLE: Is RAC Chair Greg Encelewski with us this morning?
MR. DOOLITTLE: Is RAC Chair Della Trumble with us this morning?
(No response)

MR. DOOLITTLE: Is Nanci Lyons from Bristol Bay with us this morning?
(No response)

MR. PELTOLA: Tom, this is Gene. You might want to check and see if they're on listen only.

MR. DOOLITTLE: Yes. Thank you. If we could see if they're on listen only. I did request this morning by names that RAC Chairs be allowed to have an open line and did not have to hit *1 to speak.

REPORTER: Tom, this is Tina. I'll contact the operator and give her the list again.

MR. DOOLITTLE: Okay. That would be very, very helpful. Okay. Getting back to the Board. Also, Tina, I'd like to make sure that Ben Mulligan and Mark Burch from Alaska Department of Fish and Game have an open line as well.

REPORTER: Okay.

MR. DOOLITTLE: Thank you very much, Tina.

(Pause)

MR. DOOLITTLE: Board members and Mr. Chair. Welcome to the morning events. I'm going to go back down through roll call just for the Board right now.

National Park Service, Don Striker, are you online?

MR. STRIKER: Good morning. Yes.

MR. DOOLITTLE: Okay. Thanks, Don.

Chad Padgett, are you online?
MR. PADGETT: I am on.

MR. DOOLITTLE: Okay, great. Greg Siekaniec, are you with us?

MR. SIEKANIEC: Take two, Tom.

MR. DOOLITTLE: All right. U.S. Forest Service, David Schmid, are you on?

MR. SCHMID: Yeah, Dave's back.

MR. DOOLITTLE: Okay, great. Bureau of Indian Affairs, Gene Peltola.

MR. PELTOLA: I-i.

MR. DOOLITTLE: Good to hear you, Gene. Rhonda Pitka, are you online?

(No response)

MR. DOOLITTLE: Waiting for Rhonda. Charlie Brower, are you online?

MR. C. BROWER: (In Inupiaq).

MR. DOOLITTLE: Ahh. Good to hear you. Chairman Christianson, are you online?

CHAIRMAN CHRISTIANSON: Yes, I'm online.

MR. DOOLITTLE: Okay. So we're waiting just for Rhonda to get back in for a bit. The morning thing with the lines, as you might have heard, I'm trying to make sure to help clear up this line a bit because we've had a few drops on it. So we're getting that remedied. Ken Lord, are you back with us online?

MR. LORD: I'm here.

MR. DOOLITTLE: Alrighty, Ken. Thanks for everybody's patience with this. We'll give a little bit of time here, take a pause for getting Rhonda online.

OPERATOR: She is online, sir.
MR. DOOLITTLE: Okay. Rhonda, are you with us?

MS. PITKA: Yes, I'm online. Can you hear me?

MR. DOOLITTLE: Yes, I sure can. Great to have you back. Okay, we have a full Board and everybody is back online and a quorum. Tony, we'll try this for a second time. Again with the reminder to make sure that our State partners Ben Mulligan and Mark Burch are connected as well and so are our RAC Chairs. I'll turn the meeting back over to you.

CHAIRMAN CHRISTIANSON: All right. We're back on the agenda. Hopefully everybody is getting patched back in again and thanks for everybody's patience in trying to do this telework here. Public comment on non-agenda items is what we're going to start the meeting off with this morning.

We don't have the little blue cards obviously on the telephone here, so I'll ask that everybody be respectful as we move forward for any of the public who wants to speak at this time. We also for the sake of time ask everybody to try to limit their presentations to around 10 minutes just to be mindful of all the other public if there is a big turnout today.

With that I will turn over the floor to Tom to ask if there's any public out there that wants to do any testimony on non-agenda items this morning.

MR. DOOLITTLE: Operator, at this time we'd like to invite the members of the public again with pressing I believe *1 so people can get into the queue to address the Federal Subsistence Board.

OPERATOR: Yes, if you would like to ask a question, please press *1. Please make sure your phone is unmuted. Thank you. The first question or comment comes from Nanci. Your line is open.

MR. DOOLITTLE: Hi, Nanci. This is Tom. Are you online with us?

MS. MORRIS LYON: Yes, I am, Tom. I was just trying to check in to let you know that I'm
here when you gave my name call in the roll.

MR. DOOLITTLE: Okay. Thank you,

Nanci.

MS. MORRIS LYON: Yeah. Thanks.

MR. DOOLITTLE: Operator, we're looking

for the next person in the line.

OPERATOR: Lorraine, your line is open.

MS. TEMPLE: Okay. Can you hear me?

MR. DOOLITTLE: Yes, we can.

MS. TEMPLE: All right. Good morning,
everybody. My name is Lorraine Temple. I'm a 36-year
resident of Alaska and I listened all day yesterday. I
really enjoyed hearing the reports from around the
State. It really broadened my understanding of the
issues regarding subsistence for sure.

Anyway, just a little bit about me. I
have properties and homes in Cooper Landing and Homer.
My businesses are in tourism, the tourism industry. I
have rentals and I do a historical tour of Cooper
Landing. I've also been a dog musher with tour
businesses in Homer. I started the Godwin Glacier Dog
Sled Tours in Seward and we had operations in Juneau on
the glaciers.....

(Reporter dropped from teleconference 3
minutes)

MS. TEMPLE: .....that many pet
encounters, but this isn't true. A lot of the
encounters, the fatalities, the injuries aren't
reported, so it's not out there. That's first.

But secondly people are deathly afraid
in the winter of going out, so they're curtailing their
activities and not fully enjoying the use of our trails
and public areas, beaches, where their dogs typically
run free.

In talking around with my neighbors and
friends in the community, one phrase keeps coming up.
They feel held hostage from hiking, skiing, enjoying
the backcountry in the winter with their dogs, so they just don't do it. Believe me, the level of community stress and anxiety is palpable with the traffic amount in November.

Of course we're always leery of illegal out-of-season traps. That's just a whole different subject. Actually an active trap was found last June within three feet of the trail head to the Russian River Falls. It's just a wonder no dog or kid stepped on it.

Anyway, with the changing face of the population of Alaska the regulations need to reflect the greater good of all, not just a select few. A good example I like to use is smoking. You know, smoking used to be totally acceptable in restaurants, but with time it was deemed unsafe, unhealthy, unfair. The majority of people moved outside to confined areas.

The same with trapping. It's become unsafe, unhealthy, unfair for the majority and should be regulated to areas further away from the general public to best reflect the use of our public land.

There is trapping utilized in the back country. We want to establish a buffer around the areas. I've been really encouraged by the communities of Juneau, Yakutat, Anchorage, but without this buffer in crafting a recreational use area. The same thing happened in Unit 7, specifically the Cooper Landing area. We, as a community -- I'm speaking for myself as a (breaking up).

I think I just got dropped.

OPERATOR: I can still hear you.

MR. DOOLITTLE: Yeah, you're still good.

MS. TEMPLE: Okay. I just heard a big sound. Anyway. So we're willing to readdress this issue with the APA and the Board of Game. But the Fish and Game regs for the trapper code of ethics include promote trapping methods that will reduce the possibility of catching non-target species and the importance of trap placement to avoid busy roads and trapping pets and potentially offending passers by with
the sight of a trapped animal.

You know, I read that. It's like, well, this code seems to be silent and ignored in a lot of areas. I'm certain this can be enforced on the State and Federal lands in our area, especially the placement caveat.

What I'm hoping to accomplish is to be the voice of reason so that a compatible, reasonable, logical solution can be met with all parties involved that will allow a safe, stress-free use of public lands year round.

You know, perhaps not asking for a mile setback as WP20-20 does, but rather maybe a 400-yard setback from designated, highly-used trails like other communities have adopted. At least 500 yards if not more. Some communities have set a mile from permanent homes. Look at the possibility of marking traps to alert pet owners of the existing danger with colored tape. There's several ways to accomplish this goal.

If there are needs to trap, (indiscernible) in the areas close to trapping. Create a request process through the appropriate channels and make sure neighbors are alerted and traps are very well marked. We can work together on this. I have the dialogue with community members who do and do not trap and they too are willing to work together on this issue.

Please, this needs to be addressed and changed for the better. Thanks for this time and your consideration. I really appreciate being able to talk today.

Thank you so much.

CHAIRMAN CHRISTIANSON: Hello. Is everybody still on the line? Thank you for that this morning. Is there any questions?

(No comments)

OPERATOR: Next commenter question comes from Walter Sampson. Your line is open.

MR. SAMPSON: Yes. Good morning. Can
you hear me?

CHAIRMAN CHRISTIANSON: Yes, I can hear you, Walt.

MR. SAMPSON: Yes. Good morning.
First of all my name is Walter Sampson and I'm originally from Noorvik. I live in Kotzebue. I'm retired and I sat on the Regional Advisory Council for a good 15 years, which has been good. I want to thank the Board for the opportunity to speak in regards to the happenings today. More so to the Advisory Councils who gave their good perspectives in regards to some of the issues that they face. I'm also a Vietnam combat veteran, so I want to thank you for your time.

As I listen to some of the concerns of the Regional Advisory Councils yesterday, I was also disappointed in regards to hearing some of the cuts that are being made to some of the Advisory Council positions. I think we need to remind ourselves that the Advisory Council are your spokesperson to the Advisory Board for Bush Alaska. If such cuts are being made to some of the positions, then you're losing some of the information that are important to the decision-making of the Federal Board. I think the Federal Board needs to make sure that the Regional office needs to be reminded that whatever they can do to give support to the Secretary to restore the funding source for....

(Reporter dropped from teleconference 7 minutes)

CHAIRMAN CHRISTIANSON: Yeah, it keeps kicking us off there. You've got to be patient with it. I think once we get through this morning. It seems like the whole day went better yesterday.

REPORTER: Okay, Tom, this is Tina.
I'm back on.

MR. DOOLITTLE: Okay.

CHAIRMAN CHRISTIANSON: Maybe, Tom, you could just make a quick check and make sure we still have a quorum.

MR. DOOLITTLE: You bet. Alrighty. Do...
this again. Don Striker.

MR. STRIKER: Holding steady. Thank you.

MR. DOOLITTLE: Chad Padgett.

MR. PADGETT: Here.

MR. DOOLITTLE: Good, Chad. Greg Siekaniec.

MR. SIEKANIEC: Take three, Tom.


MR. SCHMID: Take four for me.

MR. DOOLITTLE: Alrighty.. BIA, Gene Peltola. Gene, you on?

(No response)

MR. DOOLITTLE: No Gene. Public Member Rhonda Pitka.

MS. PITKA: Here.


MR. C. BROWER: (In Inupiaq).

MR. DOOLITTLE: Hey, Charlie. And Tony.

CHAIRMAN CHRISTIANSON: Yeah, still here.

MR. DOOLITTLE: Okay. I think we're just missing Gene right now. We do have a quorum, Mr. Chair, as Gene is trying to get back on, to listen to public comment.

CHAIRMAN CHRISTIANSON: All right.

MR. PELTOLA: I'm here, Tom.

CHAIRMAN CHRISTIANSON: Is that you,
Gene?

MR. PELTOLA: Yeah. BIA is back on after getting dumped eight times and then being allowed back on as a listen only.

MR. DOOLITTLE: Yeah, you have to really make it explicit with the Operator that you're a participant.

CHAIRMAN CHRISTIANSON: It really depends on the Operator you get.

MR. DOOLITTLE: For sure. Operator, we'd like to resume with the public comments. Begin with folks with *1.

OPERATOR: Yes, sir. I do apologize. Next one comes from Joel Jackson. Your line is open.

MR. JACKSON: Good morning. My name is Joel Jackson. I'm from the village of Kake in Southeast Alaska. My organization is the Organized Village of Kake, which I'm the president of currently.

My call-in today is concerning the emergency hunt that my organization had submitted for moose and deer on our island. Just a quick history of what we've been doing. I had a request sent to the Alaska Fish and Game. It was denied. I went to the District Ranger in Petersburg. He didn't have the authority to do it, so I went to the Juneau Regional Office. I think it was Mr. Schmid that had his staff member talk with me.

It sounded promising that they would work with us. As far as I know they (phone cutout). Sorry about that. And then the next following day I got a call from a guy in Anchorage with the Forest Service and he said he would submit the application to the Federal Board of Fish and Game.

So that's where we're at now. I submitted this because right now we're experiencing shortages on meat, chicken, eggs and a number of -- everything really. Our stores probably get in -- I didn't talk to them. It looked like they probably get in at least half their order that they submit. Maybe
even less.

So it's very concerning to me as a tribal leader that this is going on. I want to be proactive on my approach to making sure our tribal citizens have what they need. As I stated to the Forest Service employee that I talked to, I'm not asking anybody's permission. I'm merely checking the boxes.

I will do what I need to do to provide for our tribal citizens regardless of what happens. If it comes down to it, that's my stand. I would rather do this legally and not make us criminals for trying to feed our people. That's not what we are.

Many of you guys know how our little villages help each other. We share everything. Some of you that concept is probably not registering, but we share. I've been going out -- since we had a lockdown here in our village, going out, sending my nephews out to fish halibut and king salmon when it was open.

King salmon is closed around here now for two months. We got a notice from Fish and Game that there would be no closures. Sport fishing and personal use would be open to everybody to help fill their freezers and provide for their families.

So I know this king salmon closure was in place, so I called that guy that was on the paper. He said, oh, no, no, it's open everywhere. He asked me what office to call and I told him Petersburg office. He got back to me and he said, oh, I'm sorry, that area is closed for two months. Opens June 15th again.

So that statement by the Fish and Game on that flyer was highly, highly -- you know, misinformation on there. I'm glad none of our fishermen got in trouble because of that statement or that flyer. If they're going to put out anything -- and I know it's not your guys's area to say anything about it, but if they're going to put out flyers, make sure you have correct information.

Also with the Federal flyer that came out same thing. Very vague. Second time around I was more aware. So I called the guy on the paper. The only thing that's permitted in our area is steelhead
I'm passionate about fishing.

So it's very concerning to me as a tribal leader to have to beg or even ask permission, which I'm not, but a lot of people -- a lot of tribal leaders do ask. I'm not asking. I hope that you guys will be able to do the right thing and allowing this permit.

I want the tribe to be in charge of it because I don't want anybody to just go out and shoot anything out there, any moose or deer. We don't want to impact moose on our island, so I want control of that. I will control it.

So it's something that needs to happen during this time. Whether it's a one-time thing or you put a policy in place, a long-term policy, like giving the District Rangers of the Forest Service permission to grant our hunt. I hope I ain't talking to a dead phone. I should have asked if you guys could hear me, I guess.

MR. DOOLITTLE: I can hear you loud and clear, Joel. This is Anthony Christianson.

MR. JACKSON: Okay. Thank you, Tony. Those are my concerns. We're a remote village. I have to make sure our tribal citizens are getting the best food right now. There's a lot of people under stress. I want our elders to have their traditional food which is not processed because right now their immune system has to be at its peak in case anything happens. That's what I'm charged with and that's what I want to relay to you as the Board of Subsistence.

I take this very seriously and I think everybody across the state should be doing the same thing. We need to be able to provide for our tribal citizens and we don't need to jump through hoops every damn time. Excuse my language. I'm very upset right now. I'm this way because I want to emphasize to you as the Board that it is serious. As you've seen, the meat packing plants down south and the chicken factories are shutting down because of the virus.

Again, I'm sorry for my raised voice. People that know me know how I am when I get upset or I'm passionate about something, which I am both right
now. I thank you for the time. I'll hopefully hear back from you guys shortly.

Thank you.

CHAIRMAN CHRISTIANSON: Thank you, Joel. Appreciate you speaking up for the people. It's definitely a time when we need to consider all the options.

Thank you for calling in.

MR. JACKSON: Thank you, Tony.

MR. SIEKANIEC: Mr. Chair.

CHAIRMAN CHRISTIANSON: Yes, go ahead.

MR. SIEKANIEC: Mr. Chair, this is Greg Siekaniec. Hey, Joel, are you still on the line?

(No response)

MR. SIEKANIEC: He must have jumped off. I just wanted to find out a little more about that Federal flyer that he noted. I couldn't understand if he said there were mistakes that had been printed in some Federal flyer as well.

MR. JACKSON: Well, it wasn't a mistake. It just wasn't -- you know, they should have had a little more information on there. It gave the people -- if you look at it, it gave the people, an average person that reads it, saying, oh, boy, everything is open. In reality it wasn't. The same with the State one.

MR. SIEKANIEC: Okay. Thank you, Joel.

MR. JACKSON: Thank you.

OPERATOR: Our next comment comes from Louie Gohmert. Your line is now open.

MR. GOHMERT: Thank you. Appreciate that. I just want to be a voice that says we've got to open as quickly as possible. The President's instincts on this were right. I would humbly submit that we may not have ever had a government shutdown like this
because for the first time in our history Americans were willing to put up with it. I don't think they would have in prior decades.

Anyway, we do need to do something more than just try to put oil in the SPRO. What do you see could be done more to keep energy companies from going out of business? The independents have made a huge difference in making us energy independent and we're going to get back to only having a few world companies if we don't do something.

Hello?

MR. DOOLITTLE: I heard that comment.

CHAIRMAN CHRISTIANSON: Was that it? I failed to get the commenter's name. Sorry. For the record.

MR. GOHMERT: Yeah, this is Louie Gohmert.

CHAIRMAN CHRISTIANSON: Okay, Louie. Sorry about that. I just missed it when they introduced you. Appreciate your time to call in today. Is there any questions for Louie.

MR. GOHMERT: Yeah, I was asking -- we're about to lose all our independent oil and gas producers and be back to just a handful of the international companies if we don't do something besides just try to add oil to the SPRO. What else have you contemplated might be possible to get us back to energy independence more quickly?

CHAIRMAN CHRISTIANSON: That's a question we'll definitely have to forward on to the appropriate agency.

Thank you for calling in today.

MR. GOHMERT: Well, it's a huge part of getting our economy going back. Thank you.

OPERATOR: We have no additional comments in the queue at this time.

CHAIRMAN CHRISTIANSON: All right.
Well, that sounds like that concludes the public comment today. It sounds like the underlying......

OPERATOR: Excuse me. Jack has entered the meeting.

CHAIRMAN CHRISTIANSON: Excuse me? Is there another commenter?

OPERATOR: No, sir, there are no commenter on the line at this moment.

CHAIRMAN CHRISTIANSON: Okay. I heard somebody speak. So that concludes the public comment period this morning on non-agenda items. Again, this opportunity will be available at the beginning of each day.

OPERATOR: This is the operator. My apologies for interrupting. We do have one commenter in queue.

CHAIRMAN CHRISTIANSON: Okay. We'll take that then. I was just ending the session, but we'll take one more. Thank you.

OPERATOR: Our last comment comes from Courtenay. Your line is now open.

MS. CARTY: Thank you, Operator and Mr. Chair. I think we're getting dropped, so I'm glad I was able to get in at the tail end. Courtenay Carty, Curyung Tribal Council. I'm the tribal administrator for the Federally recognized tribe in Dillingham.

I just wanted to take a moment to get on the record some of the comments that our tribe made during tribal consultation yesterday. I'm not sure if our second chief Gayla Hoseth is on the line, but if she was perhaps we could open her line.

Reiterating, I guess our tribe's continued request for government-to-government consultation with Federal Subsistence Board on the Pebble issue specifically regarding our request for ANILCA Section 810 analysis to be done for the Pebble project in regards to the 17(b) land easements through BLM that do access the -- or are in the project footprint.
We do believe that that is a legitimate request and that Federal nexus exists to require the 810 analysis. We were on the record at the last Federal Subsistence Board meeting I believe in April a year ago with that same request.

The rest of my comments I will save for the agenda items.

Thank you so much.

CHAIRMAN CHRISTIANSON: Thank you for taking the time to call in today, Courtenay.

OPERATOR: No additional comments at this time.

CHAIRMAN CHRISTIANSON: All right.

We'll move on to old business. It looks like we've got no old business. So I think, Tom, that leads us into the 2020-2022 Subparts C&D proposals and closure reviews, wildlife regulations. Tribal government-to-government ANCSA consultation summary.

MR. DOOLITTLE: On the present agenda we already had -- I don't believe we need to do that part. I think we're moving right into the proposals. We did have a Wildlife Special Action. I believe it's WSA20-20 where 19 was asked to be brought off the consensus agenda. It would have been Unit 20 Southcentral all species. That one I believe it was asked to come off the consensus agenda.

If any Staff can correct me on that so we make sure that that's added into a matter of record for the Board to discuss.

MR. MCKEE: Tom, it's Proposal WP20-20 and it involves Unit 7, all species.

MR. DOOLITTLE: Thank you, Chris. I just wanted to make sure that everybody knew that that one was in line and that we're ready to go. With that,
Mr. Chair, I'll turn it over to you. There are some slides. We'll start with Region 1 in Southeast Alaska and WP20-01.

CHAIRMAN CHRISTIANSON: Tom, does one of the Staff members have a page number that would be available in the book we have.

MR. DOOLITTLE: That Staff member will be coming on and providing the analysis here shortly.

CHAIRMAN CHRISTIANSON: Okay.

MR. C. BROWER: Tom, I can't hear you very good, so speak up a little bit, please.

CHAIRMAN CHRISTIANSON: So we're on the announcement of a consensus agenda.

MR. DOOLITTLE: What I'm seeing here too, yeah, I have the most recent agenda. So, again, if we would start with -- I just got a note from Suzanne that says we missed the public comment on consensus agenda items.

CHAIRMAN CHRISTIANSON: Okay. I guess we can back up one second here and we'll open up the floor for public comment on the consensus agenda.

OPERATOR: As a reminder, if you would like to make a public comment, please press *1 from your phone. One moment as I queue up the first question. Our first comment comes from Terry Suminski. Your line is now open.

MR. SUMINSKI: I'm sorry. I was just getting in the queue for my presentation. I don't have a comment on the agenda, sorry.

OPERATOR: Our next comment will come from Suzanne Worker. Your line is now open.

MS. WORKER: Thank you, Mr. Chair. It's Suzanne Worker. I lost track of the conversation there. I wasn't sure if you needed someone to read the consensus agenda proposals or not. If you do, I can handle that. Otherwise I'll get off the line.

CHAIRMAN CHRISTIANSON: We're going to
meet here in a few minutes. We were just opening up
the floor if there was any public comments on the
consensus agenda. We did pull one proposal from there
20-20 like Chris stated. So we're just looking at
going started with the consensus agenda proposals
this morning and we were looking for any public comment
that may be related to that.

MS. WORKER: Thank you, Mr. Chair.
I'll get off the line.

OPERATOR: We have no additional
callers. Thank you.

MR. C. BROWER: Mr. Chair.

CHAIRMAN CHRISTIANSON: Go ahead,
Charlie.

MR. C. BROWER: Is that WP20-20 you
were talking about?

CHAIRMAN CHRISTIANSON: I was just
talking about the proposal yesterday that we had pulled
off of the consensus agenda.

MR. SCHMID: Mr. Chair. Dave Schmid.

CHAIRMAN CHRISTIANSON: Go ahead, Dave.

MR. SCHMID: If you recall yesterday, I
requested that we pull 20-16/17. That's regarding
wolves on Unit 2. To bring it off the consensus and
onto the non-consensus agenda. So that would be in
addition to what Tom just referenced there, 20-20.

MR. DOOLITTLE: Yeah, that's correct,
Dave. We also had WP20-16/17 coming off the consensus
agenda. So those would be the two that would need
discussion. The third was that on the non-consensus
agenda we also put on WP20-27 ahead of WP20-26 as Board
Member Siekaniec suggested.

CHAIRMAN CHRISTIANSON: Tom, I'm
looking at my thing here. It looks like the next thing
we do is announce the consensus agenda and then again
I've made it available for public comment on that as
well. Not hearing anybody jumping in I'll go ahead and
turn it over to Suzanne to announce the consensus
OPERATOR: Suzanne, your line is open.

MS. WORKER: Thank you. Thank you, Mr. Chair. Would you like me just to read through the list of proposals that are currently on the consensus agenda so that we're all on the same page?

CHAIRMAN CHRISTIANSON: Yes, I would.

Thank you.

MS. WORKER: Okay. For the record my name is Suzanne Worker and the consensus agenda is listed in your agenda, but we did make a few changes. I'll just list them out. WP20-03, WP20-04, WP20-05, WP20-08, WP20-09, WP20-10, WP20-11, WP20-12, WP20-13, WP20-14, WP20-15, WP20-16/17 was removed from the consensus agenda, WP20-18a, WP20-19, WP20-20 was removed from the consensus agenda, WP20-22a, WP20-23a, WP20-24a, WP20-28/29, WP20-31, WP20-32/33, WP20-34, WP20-35, WP20-39, WP20-48 and WP20-51.

Thank you, Mr. Chair.

CHAIRMAN CHRISTIANSON: Thank you for that, Suzanne, getting it in the record. Again I would ask anyone online that wanted to speak to the public comment I'll provide one more opportunity at this time after announcement of the consensus agenda.

(No comments)

CHAIRMAN CHRISTIANSON: Hearing none. That opens the floor for a motion so we can accept the consensus agenda presented by the staff.

MR. C. BROWER: So moved, Mr. Chair.

MS. PITKA: This is Rhonda Pitka. I second.

MR. C. BROWER: Can you hear me?

CHAIRMAN CHRISTIANSON: Yes, I heard you, Charlie. Thank you. We've got a first and a second. Any Board discussion.

(No comments)
CHAIRMAN CHRISTIANSON: Call for the question.

MR. C. BROWER: Mr. Chair.

CHAIRMAN CHRISTIANSON: Hello.

MR. C. BROWER: Mr. Chair, this is Charlie.

CHAIRMAN CHRISTIANSON: Hi, Charlie.

MR. C. BROWER: That motion I made to approve the consent agenda proposals taking off WP20-16/17 and WP20-20. That's correct.

CHAIRMAN CHRISTIANSON: Yes. And then we have Rhonda seconded. I'm just making sure. Tom, are you still on?

MR. DOOLITTLE: Yeah. Usually what we do on the vote to accept the consensus agenda comes after we deal with the non-consensus agenda items.

CHAIRMAN CHRISTIANSON: I just looked at my paper again and realized I jumped the gun. So I'd ask the maker of the motion and the second if we could back out our motion and wait until we get to that process. I jumped the gun.

MR. C. BROWER: Mr. Chair.

CHAIRMAN CHRISTIANSON: Yes.

MR. C. BROWER: With the concurrence of my seconder, I will do that.

MS. PITKA: I concur. This is Rhonda Pitka.

CHAIRMAN CHRISTIANSON: Thank you two for doing that. I appreciate that. Thank you for the clarity there, Tom. Just a little different over the phone trying to do this without my right-hand man next to me.

We'll move on to the Board deliberation and action on non-consensus items.
MR. DOOLITTLE: Okay. Terry Suminski is up.

CHAIRMAN CHRISTIANSON: Okay. He has the floor. Thank you for that clarity, Tom.

MR. SUMINSKI: Hello, Mr. Chair. Am I on?

CHAIRMAN CHRISTIANSON: Loud and clear.

MR. SUMINSKI: Thank you. Mr. Chairman, Board members, and Council Chairs. My name is Terry Suminski with the U.S. Forest Service and I manage the subsistence program for the Tongass National Forest from Sitka.

The executive summary for Wildlife Proposal 20-01 is on Page 565 of your books and the analysis begins on Page 566. WP20-01 was submitted by the Alaska Department of Fish and Game and it requests that the Federal season for moose in Unit 1C, Berners Bay be rescinded.

The proponent states that the Federal subsistence moose hunt in Berners Bay amounts to a partial closure to non-Federally qualified users, which conflicts with the Board's Closure Policy. The proponent requests that the Board rescind the Federal moose hunt in Berners Bay because there is no demonstrated conservation concern.

Prior to this last season Federally qualified subsistence users had not been provided a meaningful priority to hunt moose on the primarily Federal public lands of Berners Bay. There was no Federal season prior to 2019 even though demand for the State draw hunt by Federally qualified subsistence users has been consistently higher than the number of available State permits.

The Federal Subsistence Board adopted the Federal Berners Bay draw hunt last wildlife cycle based on a compromise on Proposal WP18-11 as recommended by the Southeast Alaska Subsistence Regional Advisory Council. There were nine applicants for two Federal moose tags in 2019. One of those tags was filled.
The OSM conclusion is to oppose this proposal. Rescinding the Federal season for moose in Berners Bay drainages in Unit 1C would remove the subsistence priority for Federally qualified subsistence users to hunt moose there. The priority harvest of Berners Bay moose on Federal public lands by Federally qualified subsistence users is consistent with Title VIII of ANILCA. The Berners Bay moose population would not be impacted by this proposal because the number of permits available would not change.

Thank you, Mr. Chair.

CHAIRMAN CHRISTIANSON: Thank you, Terry. Any questions for Terry regarding this proposal.

(No comments)

CHAIRMAN CHRISTIANSON: Hearing none. Tom, could you call the next order of business, please.

MR. DOOLITTLE: This is the public comment stage again for public comments on WP20-01.

OPERATOR: As a reminder, if you would like to provide a public comment, please press *1 from your phone.

(No comments)

OPERATOR: We have no public comments in queue at this time.

CHAIRMAN CHRISTIANSON: Next order of business, Tom.

MR. DOOLITTLE: Next order of business would be to open a summary of the written public comments.

CHAIRMAN CHRISTIANSON: Was there any written public comment on this agenda item?

MR. DOOLITTLE: The written comments will be done by Katya Wessels or Karen Deatherage.

OPERATOR: Katya, your line is now
This concludes my presentation of the Computer Matrix, LLC

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summary of the written public comments for WP20-01.

Thank you.

CHAIRMAN CHRISTIANSON: Thank you, Katerina. Any questions for Katerina.

(No comments)

CHAIRMAN CHRISTIANSON: Hearing none. We'll move on to the Regional Advisory Council recommendations, Chair or designee.

MR. HERNANDEZ: Yeah, good morning. Don Hernandez, Chair of the Southeast Regional Council.

CHAIRMAN CHRISTIANSON: Yes, Don, you have the floor.

MR. HERNANDEZ: Okay. The Council opposed this proposal. I'll read our justification here. Also there's a bit of a history that goes along with this, so I will read through that as well.

The Council had carefully considered the issues surrounding a Berners Bay moose hunt during its fall of 2017 and winter of 2018 meetings. During these meetings Council spent considerable time discussing Proposal 18-11, which requested a rural priority and the Council voted for a Federal preference on a portion of this hunt. Since there is no new information to warrant a reconsideration or lead to a change, Council feels Proposal 20-01 is not necessary as this issue was previously settled.

The Council added that at its 2017 fall meeting discussion and the Chair's testimony at the following Federal Subsistence Board meeting show the care taken in formulating its recommendation for a 25 percent subsistence priority (indiscernible – others talking) -- stated that a 25 percent priority does not unnecessarily restrict other users. Right now all rural residents in Units 1 through 5 have a customary and traditional use in Unit 1C, which includes Berners Bay.

Council thinks it is perfectly legitimate to afford a priority to rural users that want to hunt in Berners Bay as long as moose is
available. Council also requested that the previous
justification for this proposal from 2017 be
incorporated here for a reference.

Now I'll go back to that 2017 fall
meeting just....

CHAIRMAN CHRISTIANSON: Don. Don,
could I ask you to pause for a second, Don. I'm sorry.

MR. HERNANDEZ: Yeah, I hear somebody
in the background there.

CHAIRMAN CHRISTIANSON: Somebody needs
to mute their line. It almost sounds like maybe Louie.

MR. GREEN: Yeah, sorry.

CHAIRMAN CHRISTIANSON: Okay. Good
thing I recognized your voice. All right. Don, you
have the floor again.

MR. GREEN: I'm one of the top 10 now,
right?

CHAIRMAN CHRISTIANSON: Don, you have
the floor.

MR. HERNANDEZ: It's good with such a
small community we can recognize each other's voices.
That's pretty interesting.

Thank you, Tony.

So back to our 2017 fall meeting
justification. The Council decided that there needs to
be a way to address proponents' concerns, which was to
provide a Federal subsistence priority, but this
proposal couldn't be implemented to do so and at the
same time maintain a management system on this limited
population of moose.

Council felt that they could not
support this proposal based on the information analysis
given, including constitutionally of how a Federal draw
hunt might work with a State draw as well. Well,
certain specific analysis this proposal could create a
conservation concern because the moose population is so
small.
The Council stated that it would like to continue discussion in order to solve this problem in the future including entertaining a future proposal after learning how best to do this and implement the same without creating a conservation concern. That was our discussion going back to 2017, a little over two years ago.

So then at our 2018 winter meeting a little over a year ago the topic came up again. After considering biological information, local knowledge and public testimony on the matter, Council voted 11-0 for the following alternative to be presented to the Board at its April meeting. That was in the Berners Bay drainages only one moose permit may be issued per household.

A household receiving a State permit for Berners Bay drainages moose may not receive a Federal permit. The annual harvest quota will be announced by the U.S. Forest Service, Juneau Ranger District Office in consultation with ADF&G. Federal harvest allocation will be 25 percent rounded up to the next whole number of moose permits.

The Council's justification was the Council recognizes this is a complex issue, but feels like this alternative would provide for a priority for Federally qualified rural residents hunting moose in Berners Bay.

The Council further notes this is an option for providing priority access to limited moose resources on Federal public lands in the area. The Council feels that a Federal drawing hunt would be beneficial in meeting subsistence needs, but suggests delaying implementation of this alternative hunt structure until the fall of 2019 so as not to conflict with current State draw hunt.

That brings us up to the fall 2019 season where the permit was implemented and, as Terry Suminski noted, there was participation by Federally qualified users and I believe he said that one moose was harvested in Berners Bay.

That concludes our Council's actions on this proposal.
CHAIRMAN CHRISTIANSON: Thank you, Don. Any questions for Don, Southeast Chair.

(No comments)

CHAIRMAN CHRISTIANSON: Thank you, Don, for that presentation. Hearing no questions, I'll move on to tribal/Alaska Native corp comments, Native Liaison.

MR. DOOLITTLE: Orville Lind.

CHAIRMAN CHRISTIANSON: Orville, you on?

OPERATOR: Orville, your line is open. Please speak.

MR. LIND: Quyana. Thank you. Can everyone hear me?

CHAIRMAN CHRISTIANSON: Loud and clear.

MR. LIND: Okay. Good morning, Mr. Chair. Federal Subsistence Board members. My name is Orville Lind. I'm the Native Liaison for the Office of Subsistence Management. During the consultation we held on September 30th there was no comments made on WP20-01.

That's all I have, Mr. Chair.

Thank you.

CHAIRMAN CHRISTIANSON: Thank you. Any questions for Orville.

(No comments)

CHAIRMAN CHRISTIANSON: Hearing none. We'll move on to Alaska Department of Fish and Game, State Liaison.

MR. DOOLITTLE: Operator.

OPERATOR: This is the Operator. May I please have the name of the next person that's supposed to speak.
MR. DOOLITTLE: Ben Mulligan or Mark Burch. These two people will need to be available throughout the entire conference.

Thank you.

OPERATOR: I do not see a Ben Mulligan that has connected. They did dial in earlier, but it looks like they have disconnected. We are waiting for them to redial back in. Please stand by.

MR. DOOLITTLE: Thank you, Operator.

We should take a pause until Mr. Mulligan is online.

CHAIRMAN CHRISTIANSON: Take five.

MR. MULLIGAN: Hey, guys, this is Ben. Can you hear me?

Thank you, Ben.

CHAIRMAN CHRISTIANSON: There he is.

MR. MULLIGAN: Sorry about that, guys. If you guys are ready, I can start.

CHAIRMAN CHRISTIANSON: The floor is yours.

MR. MULLIGAN: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. For the record, my name is Ben Mulligan, serve as Deputy Commissioner for the Alaska Department of Fish and Game. As this is our proposal, we do support repeal of this hunt. I will keep my comments brief as we've laid them out in writing.

We support the repeal. This hunt is -- you know, as you know the history on this we've opposed it since the start, since the C&T determination for 1C was blanketed over the Berners Bay population to today. We don't feel that there's a concern involved and given the unique dynamics of the population, we feel this should be a hunt area that's open to everybody and not I would say bifurcated between a Federal hunt and a State hunt.

Thank you.

CHAIRMAN CHRISTIANSON: Thank you. Any questions for the State.
CHAIRMAN CHRISTIANSON: Hearing none. We'll move on to Interagency Staff Committee comments, ISC Chair.

MS. WORKER: Mr. Chair. Suzanne Worker.

CHAIRMAN CHRISTIANSON: Go ahead, Suzanne.

MS. WORKER: Thank you, Mr. Chair. I'm Suzanne Worker. I'm the Acting Policy Coordinator for the Office of Subsistence Management. In that capacity I serve as the Chair of the Interagency Staff Committee.

For the purposes of this meeting ISC has a standard comment, which reads: The Interagency Staff Committee found the Staff analysis to be a thorough and accurate evaluation of the proposal and that it provides sufficient basis for the Regional Advisory Council recommendation in Federal Subsistence Board action on the proposal.

There are several proposals for the non-consensus agenda for which the ISC provided the standard comment. For those comments I will simply state that the ISC provided the standard comment rather than repeating the entire comment each time. For WP20-01, the ISC provided the standard comment.

Thank you, Mr. Chair.

CHAIRMAN CHRISTIANSON: Thank you. Any questions for ISC.

(No comments)

CHAIRMAN CHRISTIANSON: Hearing none. We'll move on to Board discussion with Council Chairs and State Liaison.

(No comments)

CHAIRMAN CHRISTIANSON: Hearing none. That opens up the floor for Board action on this proposal WP20-01.
MR. SCHMID: Mr. Chair. David Schmid,

Forest Service.

CHAIRMAN CHRISTIANSON: Go ahead, Dave.

You have the floor.

MR. SCHMID: I'd like to move to adopt
WP20-01 as submitted by Alaska Department of Fish and
Game. This proposal is shown on Page 565 of the Board
book. Following a second I will explain why I intend

to oppose my motion.

CHAIRMAN CHRISTIANSON: The motion has
been made.

MS. PITKA: This is Rhonda Pitka. I
will second that motion.

CHAIRMAN CHRISTIANSON: Thank you,
Rhonda.

Go ahead, Dave.

MR. SCHMID: Thank you, Mr. Chair. We
realize this is a complex issue, but current Federal
regulation provides for a priority use and preference
for Federally qualified subsistence users for hunting
moose in Berners Bay, which is consistent with Sections
802 and 804 of ANILCA.

Federally qualified subsistence users'
need and demand for Berners Bay moose is greater than
the number of State permits available annually. The
combined Federal 25 percent and State 75 percent draw
hunt would continue to provide opportunity for
non-Federally qualified moose hunters in Berners Bay
while providing for moose conservation.

This proposal would also provide for
priority access to limited moose resources on Federal
public lands in the area. Ninety-seven percent of
Berners Bay area is Federal public lands.

Thank you, Mr. Chair.

CHAIRMAN CHRISTIANSON: Thank you. Any
other Board discussion or deliberation.

(No comments)
CHAIRMAN CHRISTIANSON: Hearing none.

We'll call for roll call, Tom.

MR. DOOLITTLE: Okay. This is Tom Doolittle, Deputy Assistant Regional Director for OSM. This is on Proposal WP20-01, requests that the Federal Subsistence Board repeal the Federal season for moose in Unit 1C Berners Bay.

National Park Service, Donald Striker.

MR. STRIKER: Oppose.

MR. DOOLITTLE: Bureau of Land Management, Chad Padgett.

MR. PADGETT: I support the WP20-01 and if I may take a moment, I'll provide you my rationale.

Section 815 of ANILCA states that nothing in this Title shall be construed as authorizing a restriction on the taking of fish and wildlife for non-subsistence uses on the public lands other than National Parks and Park Monuments unless necessary for the conservation of healthy population of fish and wildlife for reasons set forth in Section 816. Public safety administration are to ensure the continued viability of such population to continue.

It looks to me, according to Table 2 that there are high enough numbers to support close to the maximum numbers of the population. Therefore, RAC position may not be supported by substantial evidence. We should not restrict subsistence uses unless it was necessary for the conservation of a healthy population of the wildlife.

That's the end of my statement.

Thank you.

MR. DOOLITTLE: Thank you, Chad, and for the qualification.

Fish and Wildlife Service, Greg Siekaniec.

MR. SIEKANIEC: Thank you, Tom. Yes, I oppose in support of the U.S. Forest Service motion.
MR. DOOLITTLE: So that's a no?

MR. SIEKANIEC: That's correct.

MR. DOOLITTLE: Thank you.

U.S. Forest Service David Schmid.

MR. SCHMID: Yes, I oppose with the justification I gave with the motion.

MR. DOOLITTLE: Thank you, Dave.

Gene Peltola.

MR. PELTOLA: Bureau of Indian Affairs opposes as stipulated by the Forest Service in their justification in addition to as recommended to Southeast Council giving deference.

MR. DOOLITTLE: Thank you, Gene.

Rhonda Pitka.

MS. PITKA: I oppose in deference to the Regional Advisory Council and also the justification on Page 581 of the meeting book.

MR. DOOLITTLE: Thank you, Rhonda.

Charlie Brower.

MR. C. BROWER: I oppose the motion.

MR. DOOLITTLE: Alrighty, Charlie.

Last but not least Chairman Anthony Christianson.

CHAIRMAN CHRISTIANSON: I oppose in deference to the Regional Advisory Council.

MR. DOOLITTLE: Motion fails. Thank you, guys. We'll move on to the next one.

CHAIRMAN CHRISTIANSON: All right.

That brings us to WP20-02.

MR. SUMINSKI: Am I on, Mr. Chairman?
CHAIRMAN CHRISTIANSON: Yeah. Read off the analysis for WP20-02 Southeast Unit 2 deer. That's you, Terry.

MR. SUMINSKI: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Board members, Council Chairs. My name is Terry Suminski with the U.S. Forest Service and I manage the Subsistence Program for the Tongass National Forest from Sitka.

Executive summary for Wildlife Proposal 20-02 starts on Page 593 of your books and the analysis begins on Page 595. WP20-02 was submitted by the Alaska Department of Fish and Game and requests that the reduced deer harvest limit for non-Federally qualified users in Unit 2 be rescinded.

The proponent contends that the Board does not have the authority to unnecessarily restrict non-Federally qualified users, and that Alaska National Interest Lands Claim Act Section 1314 affirms the States sovereign responsibility and authority for management of fish and wildlife on all lands except as may be provided in Title VIII.

If adopted, the proposal would return the State deer harvest limit to four bucks, increasing opportunity on Federal public lands for non-Federally qualified users. This would likely increase both the number of non-Federally qualified user days hunted and encounters between Federally qualified and non-Federally qualified users, thereby decreasing harvest opportunity for Federally qualified subsistence users through increased competition. Deer taken by non-Federally qualified users would likely increase, also decreasing harvest opportunity for Federally qualified subsistence users.

In January of 2020, this Board determined that a request to reconsider WP18-01 did not meet the threshold requirements for further consideration as outlined in regulation.

The OSM conclusion is to oppose WP20-02. Current data indicate harvest is below the average of the previous ten years, from 2007 to 2016. Harvest peaked in 2015 and then declined in 2016 through 2018. Although results from recent deer pellet surveys in Unit 2 show a slight decrease in mean
pellet-group counts, they are within the high end of
the normal range, indicating populations are likely
doing well.

Other factors such as changing weather
patterns, reductions in access, changes to deer
behavior related to the presence of predators, and
competition with non-Federally qualified users may
limit harvest success.

The current harvest limit for
non-Federally qualified users affects 13 percent of
non-Federally qualified hunters that harvest more than
two deer in Unit 2 annually and will likely contribute
to greater hunting success for Federally qualified
subsistence users through decreased competition.

Thank you, Mr. Chair.
I'm available for questions.

CHAIRMAN CHRISTIANSON: Thank you,
Terry. Any questions for Terry.

(No comments)

CHAIRMAN CHRISTIANSON: Hearing none.
We'll move on to summary of public comments, Regional
Council Coordinator.

OPERATOR: This is the Operator. We do
have one public comment.

MR. DOOLITTLE: Operator, did you say
you do have one public comment?

OPERATOR: Yes, sir. Our first public
comment comes from Elizabeth Medicine Crow. Your line
is open.

MS. CROW: Hello, Mr. Chair. Can you
hear me?

CHAIRMAN CHRISTIANSON: Yes. You have
the floor, Elizabeth.

MS. CROW: Thank you. I'm calling in
on behalf of First Alaskans Institute. We've been
paying attention to the work of the Federal Subsistence
Board along with our advocates for Alaska Natives and tribal hunting and fishing rights. This one really caught my attention. I'm concerned about the prioritization of non-Federal users on a population that's already low. So I'm calling in to oppose this proposal.

I also wanted to alert you that Joel Jackson, who was on the call earlier, has been having trouble getting onto the call, as did I when I first called in. He wanted to also comment on this proposal, but he can't get back into the line. It keeps dropping him. So I wanted to bring that to your attention as I feel like that's a real impediment to giving his testimony.

Thank you.

CHAIRMAN CHRISTIANSON: Thank you for that, Elizabeth. Hopefully they'll be able to sign on here. We've been experiencing technical difficulties quite a bit. Hopefully he does get on here before the end. We'll give him an opportunity to speak.

Any other public comment.

OPERATOR: We have no additional comments at this time.

CHAIRMAN CHRISTIANSON: Thank you.
Regional Advisory Council recommendation, Chair or designee.

MR. HERNANDEZ: This is Don Hernandez, Chair of the Southeast RAC.

MR. DOOLITTLE: We need to back up, guys. We're at the summary of public comments to be provided by Katya Wessels.

CHAIRMAN CHRISTIANSON: Oh, sorry, Tom.

MR. HERNANDEZ: I'll standby.

CHAIRMAN CHRISTIANSON: Sorry about that, guys. I'm reading two agendas here, so thank you, Tom, for clarity.

MS. WESSELS: Mr. Chair. Members of
the Board. Can you hear me?

CHAIRMAN CHRISTIANSON: Yes, Katya, you have the floor.

MS. WESSELS: Thank you. For the record, this is Katya Wessels with Office of Subsistence Management. I will present the summary of written public comments on WP20-02. We received one written public comment in support from the Ketchikan Fish and Game Advisory Committee. The Ketchikan AC supports WP20-02 and says we support State managers in their assessment of the deer population and the opportunities it can support.

This concludes my summary of the written public comments.

Thank you.

CHAIRMAN CHRISTIANSON: Thank you, Katya. Now we'll move on. Thank you for that, Tom. The floor is yours, Don.

MR. HERNANDEZ: Okay. Don Hernandez, Chair of the Southeast RAC and I'm online now, correct?

CHAIRMAN CHRISTIANSON: You have the floor.

MR. HERNANDEZ: Okay. Thank you. Southeast Council opposed this proposal. The Council generated a proposal for harvest limit restrictions on non-Federally qualified users for deer in Unit 2 in 2017 after hearing local testimony and traditional ecological knowledge that people were struggling to get their subsistence needs met.

At the 2019 regulatory meeting, the Council heard testimony from the Ketchikan Indian Community and Prince of Wales Island residents that Prince of Wales rural residents were still not meeting their subsistence needs.

The Council looked closely at the data presented in the analysis and felt that out-of-balance buck-to-doe ratio, that stem exclusion inhibiting productive deer habitat and an abundance of road access almost every area on the island and that high wolf and
bear populations were potentially reasons for the limited number of deer.

The analysis showed that harvest by non-local hunters averaged less than two deer and the overall harvest is below harvested objective even though there has recently been a reduction of 1,300 hunters.

Council finds that because subsistence users are still not meeting their needs there is a conservation concern for this resource and there is the potential for a dire conservation concern in the future if action is not taken to conserve the population.

That concludes our comments on this proposal.

CHAIRMAN CHRISTIANSON: Thank you, Don. Any questions for Don.

MR. PADGETT: Mr. Chair. Chad Padgett.

CHAIRMAN CHRISTIANSON: Chad, go ahead.

MR. PADGETT: Don, can you just describe in a little bit more detail what your conservation concerns might be for me.

Thank you.

MR. HERNANDEZ: Yeah, thank you for that, Chad. Well, as we noted, there are a number of factors happening here on Prince of Wales Island. A lot of them deal with habitat concerns, extensive roading which provides to access to all areas of the island leaving little refuge for the deer to have places where they're not hunted.

We feel that there are predator situations here on the island. You're going to be taking that up in another proposal dealing with the wolf management that was taken off of the consensus agenda, so that's part of the discussion.

Prince of Wales Island is a complex island with many users. A lot of issues dealing with habitat access, predation. It's a very complicated picture and it all just seems to be coming evident to a
lot of people on the island that the situation is just not that good right now.

We pointed out to what appears to be things getting a little out of balance with the buck-to-doe ratio. With the hunt effort concentrated on bucks, we feel that there is just a lot of pressure being put on the buck population. People might note that there is a little bit of discrepancy in our stance on this. Sometimes some proposals we say there's not a conservation concern and then other times we kind of acknowledge conservation concerns.

I think the key point here in that regard is that we see some, as we put in our statement here, some dire conservation concerns in the future if action is not taken now. We don't like the direction things are headed and we're trying to take steps to kind of keep the pressure off I think would be the best description here.

I guess the one way we thought we saw we could do that without impinging on subsistence users' needs was to place some restrictions on the non-subsistence users. So that was our goal with this proposal.

MR. PADGETT: Mr. Chair. Chad again. Don, I just wanted to say thank you for that comment. That's helpful. I really appreciate it.

MR. HERNANDEZ: You're welcome.

CHAIRMAN CHRISTIANSON: Any other questions for Don.

OPERATOR: This is the Operator. We do have a public comment in queue.

CHAIRMAN CHRISTIANSON: Is that you, Joel?

MR. JACKSON: Yes, it is.

CHAIRMAN CHRISTIANSON: Okay. You have the floor, Joel.

MR. JACKSON: Okay. I just wanted to comment on people that may be opposing this emergency
moose hunt. Sorry, I had my phone on speaker and it 
don't work well. Could you guys hear most of that?

CHAIRMAN CHRISTIANSON: You're loud and 
clear.

MR. JACKSON: I just wanted to make the 
comment to those people that are maybe opposing our 
emergency moose and deer hunt here in Kake. You know, 
when it comes down and people say, well, the deer 
numbers are low, the moose numbers are low, subsistence 
should take priority over everything.

Like I stated earlier, it's not a 
subsistence issue. It's an emergency issue and that we 
may need to use in the near future. So I want to be 
proactive on getting things into place if things get 
worse. We've been faced with a lot of tough 
situations, but I think this is probably unprecedented 
to anything we've ever experienced and as much as you 
all have.

So it's very concerning to us. As I 
stated before, I don't want our people to be labeled 
criminals because of some law. I just wanted to make 
those comments because, you know, subsistence should 
take precedence over everything else because we're the 
ones that need it.

I mean we're the ones that are out 
there in remote areas without access to roads. We 
don't have a ferry system anymore. The only way in and 
out of here is fly by plane, which costs an arm and a 
leg. It's not like we can just fly stuff in. No. We 
get a weekly barge, but like I said our suppliers don't 
have what our stores are ordering.

I want you guys to consider that very 
seriously. Again that's our number one priority is 
providing for our tribal citizens and also providing 
security. I don't want to be rushing at the last 
minute trying to get something in place. I want it in 
place and we want to do it legally.

I think most, like I stated earlier, 
most remote villages in Alaska are in the same 
situation. Our people have never overharvested or 
overfished anything. We were conservationists way 
before the word was even invented because we realized a
long time ago if we overfished or overhunted, they
won't be there anymore.

So this is my comments, my feeling and
thank you again for allowing me to comment.

Thank you.

CHAIRMAN CHRISTIANSON: Thank you,
Joel. Any comments or feedback.

(No comments)

CHAIRMAN CHRISTIANSON: I thank you for
calling in and testifying today, Joel.

MS. PITKA: Hi, this is Rhonda.

CHAIRMAN CHRISTIANSON: Hi, Rhonda. Go
ahead.

MS. PITKA: I was wondering is that
testimony on 20-02 or testimony on the SAR?

CHAIRMAN CHRISTIANSON: I think that
was a combination, but I think he was talking about
Berners Bay moose and then his Special Action Request.

MS. PITKA: Okay. Thank you for that
clarification. I appreciate it.

MR. DOOLITTLE: Mr. Chair. If there
are no further comments, we're on the Tribal/Alaska
Native Corporation comments with Orville Lind.

CHAIRMAN CHRISTIANSON: There we go.
Orville, you have the floor.

MR. LIND: Chairman, can you hear me?

CHAIRMAN CHRISTIANSON: I got you.

MR. LIND: Okay. Again, thank you,
Chairman, Board members, Regional Advisory Council
Chairs. My name is Orville Lind. I'm from the Office
of Subsistence Management.

During the consultation session we had
one member from the Sealaska Corporation and her
comments were that she had hoped that someone would clarify the proposals from Southeast. She's confused on a couple of them on the changing of the harvest limit. She also hoped that Prince of Wales Island folks would get to provide input on those proposals.

She also stated that she was wondering about the vacancies on the Regional Advisory Council for Southeast. She was informed, of course, there were no vacancies at that time. She was wondering why there was limited folks online from Southeast being involved. She was interested in trying to help out getting people involved to come to these meetings. Also interested in having students get themselves involved in the Regional Advisory Council meetings. She also encouraged all agencies to keep contacts up to date.

That's all I have, Mr. Chairman.

Thank you.

CHAIRMAN CHRISTIANSON: Thank you. Any questions for Orville.

(No comments)

CHAIRMAN CHRISTIANSON: Hearing none. We'll go to Alaska Department of Fish and Game comments, State Liaison. You have the floor.

MR. MULLIGAN: Thank you, Mr. Chair. For the record, Ben Mulligan, Department of Fish and Game again. The Department, of course, supports its proposal to repeal the bag limit change. We feel that there is no evidence that hunting by non-Federally qualified hunters has resulted in a biological concern for the Unit 2 deer population or affected subsistence uses by Federally qualified hunters.

As all of you know, a majority of Unit 2, 72 percent, is Federally managed and current Federal regulations provide substantially greater opportunity to Federally qualified deer hunters compared to non-Federally qualified deer hunters.

This includes an extra 54 days when only Federally qualified users can hunt on Federal land, a higher bag limit of five deer including one doe harvest after October 15th compared to the
non-Federally qualified hunting bag limit of two antlered deer on Federal land and a season that extends through January when deer are in a low elevation or on the beach and much more vulnerable to hunters.

In conclusion, we feel that given these factors and the data we presented in our written comments about harvest hunter effort and the recent surveys that we’ve conducted on this population we are in support of this proposal.

Thank you.

CHAIRMAN CHRISTIANSON: Thank you. Any questions for the State.

(No comments)

CHAIRMAN CHRISTIANSON: Hearing none. We'll move on to Interagency Staff Committee.

MS. WORKER: Thank you, Mr. Chair. This is Suzanne Worker. The Interagency Staff Committee agrees with the Southeast Subsistence Regional Advisory Council. The Federally qualified subsistence users are still not meeting their needs in Unit 2 and there's a conservation concern for this resource.

The ISC also agrees with the Southeast Council and the Federal Subsistence Board that the existing Unit 2 deer regulation will continue to provide opportunity for non-Federally qualified deer hunters on Prince of Wales Island while providing for a subsistence priority and conservation of deer.

The ISC noted that no substantive information changes have been presented to the Board since the Board's original decision on WP18-01, which resulted in a harvest limit restriction for non-Federally qualified year in Unit 2.

Thank you, Mr. Chair.

CHAIRMAN CHRISTIANSON: Thank you, Suzanne. Any questions for Suzanne.

(No comments)
CHAIRMAN CHRISTIANSON: Board discussion with Council Chairs and State Liaison.

(No comments)

CHAIRMAN CHRISTIANSON: Hearing no discussion, we'll open up the floor for Federal Board action on WP20-02.

MR. SCHMID: Mr. Chair. Dave Schmid, Forest Service.

CHAIRMAN CHRISTIANSON: Go ahead, Dave.

MR. SCHMID: Mr. Chair. I move to adopt Proposal WP20-02 as submitted by Alaska Department of Fish and Game. This proposal is shown on Page 593 of the Board book. Again, following a second, I will explain why I intend to oppose my motion.

MS. PITKA: This is Rhonda Pitka. I'll second.

CHAIRMAN CHRISTIANSON: The floor is yours, Dave.

MR. SCHMID: Thank you. My justification is as follows: The existing regulation provides Federally qualified subsistence users a subsistence priority to this resource on Federal public lands in Unit 2. This proposal is opposed by the Southeast Subsistence Regional Advisory Council.

The Board adopted the reduced deer harvest limit for non-Federally qualified users in response to extensive testimony that Federally qualified subsistence users' needs were not being met. Under ANILCA Section 815, the Board's implementation policy, the Board may restrict the taking of fish and wildlife by non-Federally qualified users on Federal public lands if necessary to protect continued subsistence uses of those populations or for the conservation of healthy populations of fish and wildlife.

The current harvest limit for non-Federally qualified users only affects the few individuals that harvest more than two deer in Unit 2 annually and it will likely contribute to greater
hunting success for Federally qualified subsistence users through decreased competition.

The existing regulation continues to provide a priority use for Federally qualified subsistence users for deer in Unit 2.

Thank you, Mr. Chair.

CHAIRMAN CHRISTIANSON: Thank you. Any other Board discussion, deliberation.

(No comments)

CHAIRMAN CHRISTIANSON: Call for the question.

MR. C. BROWER: Question.

CHAIRMAN CHRISTIANSON: The question has been called. Do you want to do roll call, Tom, please.

MR. DOOLITTLE: Okay. This is Tom Doolittle, Deputy Assistant Regional Director for OSM. This is on Proposal WP20-02, that the reduced deer harvest limit for non-Federally qualified users in Unit 2 be rescinded.

We'll start with Rhonda Pitka.

MS. PITKA: I oppose the motion based on the OSM conclusion on Page 608 of the meeting book. Federally qualified subsistence users' needs were not being met.

Thank you.

MR. DOOLITTLE: Thank you, Rhonda.

Charlie Brower.

MR. C. BROWER: I oppose for the same reason. Thank you.

MR. DOOLITTLE: All right, Charlie.

Thank you.

Bureau of Land Management, Chad Padgett.
MR. PADGETT: I support the WP20-02 on the basis that the RAC position may not be supported by substantial evidence of a conservation concern. In fact, the statement said that the population may be doing well. So both on that basis as well as Section 1314 of ANILCA in conjunction with Title VIII I vote in support of WP20-02.

Thank you.

MR. DOOLITTLE: Thank you, Chad.


MR. SIEKANIEC: Thank you, Tom. I oppose in deference to the Regional Advisory Council and in support of the U.S. Forest Service.

MR. DOOLITTLE: Thank you, Greg.

U.S. Forest Service, David Schmid.

MR. SCHMID: Yes, thank you. I oppose again for the reasons I shared with my motion.

MR. DOOLITTLE: Thank you, Dave.

National Park Service, Donald Striker.

MR. STRIKER: I oppose for reasons already given.

MR. DOOLITTLE: Thank you, Don.

Bureau of Indian Affairs, Gene Peltola.

MR. PELTOLA: BIA opposes based on the Forest Service justification and in deference to the RAC.

MR. DOOLITTLE: Thank you, Gene.

And Chairman Anthony Christianson.

CHAIRMAN CHRISTIANSON: I oppose in deference to the RAC.

MR. DOOLITTLE: All right. It is 7
nays, 1 yea, so the motion fails. We'll be moving on
to Wildlife Proposal 20-06.

CHAIRMAN CHRISTIANSON: Tom, I'm going
to call for a 10-minute recess. Please stay on the
line. Don't hang up. I am going to call for a
10-minute break.

(Off record)

(On record)

MR. DOOLITTLE: Hey, Don, you on?

MR. STRIKER: Indeed.

MR. DOOLITTLE: Cool. Greg?

MR. SIEKANIEC: Yes, I'm on.

MR. DOOLITTLE: Alrighty, Greg. Gene,
are you back on?

DR. CHEN: This is Glenn Chen. Gene
just had to step away from his phone for just a sec,
but he's here.

MR. DOOLITTLE: Okay. Cool. Thanks,
Glenn. Are you there, Charlie.

(No response)

MR. DOOLITTLE: So Charlie. How about
you, Tony, are you back in?

CHAIRMAN CHRISTIANSON: I've been here. I
never left.

MR. DOOLITTLE: Okay. So we're just
waiting on Charlie. Ben Mulligan, are you with us?

MR. MULLIGAN: The State is here.

MR. DOOLITTLE: Alrighty. Good. We're
just waiting on Charlie.

(Pause)

MR. C. BROWER: I'm back online now.
MR. DOOLITTLE: 10-4. Thank you very much. We've got everybody back on. Mr. Chair, I will turn it back over to you for WP20-06.

CHAIRMAN CHRISTIANSON: All right. Here we go on WP20-06, Southeast. Please present the proposal.

MR. SUMINSKI: Thank you, Mr. Chair. This is Terry Suminski with the Forest Service. The executive summary for Wildlife Proposal WP20-06 is on Page 631 of your books. The analysis begins on Page 632.

WP20-06 was submitted by the East Prince of Wales Fish and Game Advisory Committee, requests reducing the season ending date for deer in Unit 2 from January 31 to December 31.

The proponent states the season reduction will prevent regulatory confusion for subsistence users while benefitting the Unit 2 deer population. The proponent believes removing January opportunity is not detrimental to subsistence users as they still have a subsistence priority to harvest deer starting on July 24, prior to the beginning of the State season on August 1.

The OSM conclusion is to oppose WP20-06. If adopted, the proposal would reduce harvest opportunity for Federally qualified subsistence users. Opportunity to harvest deer in January in Unit 2 under Federal regulations has been available since the 2016 regulatory season. The amount of deer available for future seasons would be negligible as reported deer harvest during January has been very low, ranging from 12 to 26 deer.

Reducing the season length is contrary to the continuation of subsistence opportunity for Federally qualified subsistence users. If future harvests increase or winter conditions dramatically reduce deer numbers, the delegated in-season manager can take action accordingly.

Thank you, Mr. Chair.

I'm available for questions.
CHAIRMAN CHRISTIANSON: Any questions for Terry.

(No comments)

CHAIRMAN CHRISTIANSON: All right.

Summary of public comments, Regional Council Coordinator.

MS. WESSELS: Mr. Chairman. This is Katya Wessels. Can you hear me?

CHAIRMAN CHRISTIANSON: Loud and clear.

MS. WESSELS: Thank you. Mr. Chairman. Members of the Board. I'm going to present the summary of written public comments for WP20-06. We received one written comment in support from the Ketchikan Fish and Game Advisory Committee.

The Ketchikan AC supports WP20-06 and says it supports removal of a January hunt due to small amount of harvest, reduced quality of meat and difficulty in distinguishing bucks and does.

Thank you.

That concludes the summary of the written public comments.

CHAIRMAN CHRISTIANSON: Thank you.

We'll open up the line to any public testimony.

OPERATOR: As a reminder, to make a public comment please press *1.

(No comments)

OPERATOR: I'm showing no public comments at this time.

CHAIRMAN CHRISTIANSON: We'll move on to Regional Advisory Council recommendation. Don.

MR. HERNANDEZ: Don Hernandez, Chair of the Southeast Regional Council again. The Council opposed this proposal as well. The Council believes that shortening this deer season would put more pressure on rural hunters to be able to get game in a
timely manner. Most hunters finish their hunts by Christmas, but there are still some hunting that might need to get a deer in January. A hunter may need that additional month to get his/her subsistence needs met and decreasing the hunt by a month may put undue pressure on individuals.

The Council knows that not everyone on the island has access to electricity and can use a freezer and during the winter months deer can be hung outside for a long period of time. The Council recommends maintaining the Federal rural priority and, though it recognizes that it is sometimes prudent to align with State regulations, it is not always practical, and there should not be unnecessary restrictions placed on the rural user.

That concludes our comments on this proposal.

CHAIRMAN CHRISTIANSON: Thank you. Any questions for Don.

(No comments)

CHAIRMAN CHRISTIANSON: All right. Hearing none. We'll move on to Tribal/Alaska Native corporation comments, Native Liaison. Orville.

MR. LIND: Yes, Mr. Chairman. Can you hear me?

CHAIRMAN CHRISTIANSON: Gotcha.

MR. LIND: Thank you, Mr. Chair. Board members. Regional Advisory Council Chairs. During the consultation September 30th we did not have any comments on WP20-06.

Thank you, Mr. Chair.

CHAIRMAN CHRISTIANSON: Thank you. We'll move on to Alaska Department of Fish and Game comments, State Liaison.

MR. MULLIGAN: Thank you, Mr. Chair. Ben Mulligan for the record. We are in support of WP20-06. The State has a longstanding position of supporting alignment of State and Federal regulations,
but also in this instance we'd like to point out just
given the conditions later in the winter in Southeast,
given certain snow events that pushes deer populations
down past uplands into the tidal areas, which
technically are state lands and those lands after
December 31st are closed to hunting. So this would
prevent inadvertently making criminals out of folks if
they're unknowingly hunting on those State lands.

Thank you.

CHAIRMAN CHRISTIANSON: Thank you. Any
questions or comments.

(No comments)

CHAIRMAN CHRISTIANSON: Interagency
Staff Committee comments, ISC Chair.

MS. WORKER: Thank you, Mr. Chair.
This is Suzanne Worker. The ISC offered the standard
comment for WP20-06. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

CHAIRMAN CHRISTIANSON: Thank you.
Board discussion with Council Chairs and State Liaison.
Questions or comments.

(No comments)

CHAIRMAN CHRISTIANSON: Open the floor
for Board action.

MR. SCHMID: Mr. Chair. Dave Schmid,
Forest Service.

CHAIRMAN CHRISTIANSON: Go ahead, Dave.
You have the floor.

MR. SCHMID: Thank you, Mr. Chair. I
move to adopt Proposal WP20-06 as submitted by the East
Prince of Wales Fish and Game Advisory Committee. This
proposal is shown on Page 631 of the Board book.
Following a second, I will explain why I intend to
oppose my motion.

MR. C. BROWER: Second.

CHAIRMAN CHRISTIANSON: You have the
floor, Dave.
MR. SCHMID: Thank you. My justification as follows: If adopted, the proposal would reduce harvest opportunity for Federally qualified subsistence users hunting deer on Federal public lands in Unit 2. This proposal is opposed by the Southeast Subsistence Regional Advisory Council.

Reducing the season length is not necessary for continuation of future subsistence opportunity for Federally qualified subsistence users nor for the conservation of the deer populations in Unit 2. Deer harvests during January has been very minimal, again 12 to 26 deer, and does not appear to be creating a conservation issue across the unit.

During the 2016 regulatory cycle both the Council and the Board unanimously supported the January season extension and provided thorough justifications on the record in support. Removal of the January season is unnecessarily contradictory to the Board's intent when they adopted the regulation change as recommended by the Council.

If future harvests increase or winter conditions dramatically reduce deer numbers creating a conservation concern, the delegated in-season manager can reduce the season length accordingly.

Thank you, Mr. Chair.

CHAIRMAN CHRISTIANSON: Thank you for that. Any discussion.

(No comments)

CHAIRMAN CHRISTIANSON: Call for the question.

MR. C. BROWER: Question.

CHAIRMAN CHRISTIANSON: The question has been called. Roll call, please, Tom.

MR. DOOLITTLE: Thank you, Mr. Chair.

This is Proposal WP20-06. It requests reducing the season ending dates for deer in Unit 2 from January 31st to December 31.

I'll start with Bureau of Land
Management, Chad Padgett.

MR. PADGETT: Thanks, Tom. I oppose this action and that's based on not having the conservation concern as pointed out on Page 643 of the OSM justification and that it would provide additional opportunities for subsistence harvest.

Thank you.

MR. DOOLITTLE: Thank you, Chad.

National Park Service, Don Striker.

MR. STRIKER: The Park Service opposes in deference to the RAC and in support of the Forest Service position.

Thank you.


MR. SIEKANIEC: Thank you, Tom. I oppose in deference to the Southeast Regional Advisory Council as well as for the reasons stated by the U.S. Forest Service and the continued opportunity for an additional month for subsistence users.

Thank you.

MR. DOOLITTLE: Thank you, Greg.

U.S. Forest Service, David Schmid.

MR. SCHMID: This is Dave. I oppose for the reasons I stated when offering my motion.

MR. DOOLITTLE: Rhonda Pitka.

MS. PITKA: I oppose the motion in deference to the Southeast Regional Advisory Council and based on the justification provided by the Office of Subsistence Management on Page 643.

Thank you.

MR. DOOLITTLE: Thank you, Rhonda.
MR. PELTOLA: BIA opposes based on the justification provided by the Forest Service and in recognition of deference to the Southeast RAC.

MR. DOOLITTLE: Thank you, Gene.

Public Member Charlie Brower.

MR. C. BROWER: Good morning. I oppose for the same reasons as stated by my fellow Council.

MR. DOOLITTLE: Thank you, Charlie.

And last Tony Christianson, Chair.

CHAIRMAN CHRISTIANSON: I oppose in deference to the RAC.

MR. DOOLITTLE: Unanimous no. Motion fails. If I'm correct on what I see on my sheet, Mr. Chair, it looks like WP20-16/17.

MR. MCKEE: WP20-07 is next.

CHAIRMAN CHRISTIANSON: Yeah, WP20-07. Thank you, Chris, for that.

MR. DOOLITTLE: Yeah, thank you, Chris. WP20-07. Terry, you're on deck.

MR. SUMINSKI: Thank you, Mr. Chair. This is Terry Suminski with the U.S. Forest Service. The executive summary for Wildlife Proposal WP20-07 is on Page 659 of your books and analysis begins on Page 660.

WP20-07 was submitted by the East Prince of Wales Fish and Game Advisory Committee and requests a reduction of the Federal harvest limit for deer in Unit 2 from five deer to four.

The proponent states that deer have been in decline in the unit due to growing predator population and years of increasing harvests by hunters. They also state that in addition to the recent harvest limit reduction on non-Federally qualified users, a harvest reduction to subsistence users is also
Clarification with the proponent over the word deer in the proposed language indicated that they were not seeking to change the hunt to the harvest of any deer, but were wanting to cap the harvest limit at four while retaining the opportunity to harvest a female deer. A modification of which harvest ticket is not required for tagging a female deer would be necessary.

The OSM conclusion is to oppose WP20-04. If adopted, this proposal would reduce the harvest limit for Federally qualified subsistence users hunting deer on Federal public lands in Unit 2. The percentage of users harvesting five deer is so low that the restriction would have little effect on increasing Unit 2 deer numbers. Reducing the harvest limit for Federally qualified subsistence users in Unit 2 is not necessary for conservation or for the continuation of subsistence uses.

The Craig District Ranger has been delegated authority from the Board to close or reopen Federal seasons or to adjust harvest and possession limits for deer in Unit 2 if necessary for conservation.

Thank you, Mr. Chair.

I'm standing by for questions.

CHAIRMAN CHRISTIANSON: Any questions for Terry.

(NO COMMENTS)

CHAIRMAN CHRISTIANSON: Hearing none.

We'll move to summary of public comments, Council Coordinator.

MS. WESSELS: Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

For the record, this is Katya Wessels with the Office of Subsistence Management. I will give you the summary of the written public comments for WP20-07. We received one written public comment in support from the Ketchikan Fish and Game Advisory Committee. The Ketchikan AC supports WP20-07, but does not provide any justification for their position.
Thank you.

CHAIRMAN CHRISTIANSON: Thank you. Now I'll open the floor to any public testimony.

OPERATOR: As a reminder, if you'd like to make a public comment push *1.

(No comments)

OPERATOR: I'm showing no comments in queue at this time.

CHAIRMAN CHRISTIANSON: Thank you.
We'll move on to Regional Advisory Council recommendation. Don.

MR. HERNANDEZ: This is Don Hernandez, Chair of the Southeast Regional Council. The Council also opposed this proposal. The Council mentions that two proposals, 20-03 and 20-07, both put forward by the East Prince of Wales Advisory Committee, contradict each other in a way since 20-03 proposes to harvest five antlered bucks and 07 proposed to harvest four deer and no more than one may be a doe.

The Council says that there is no conservation concern at this time and adoption of 20-07 will pose unnecessary restrictions on Federally qualified subsistence users, which is not in accordance with Title VIII of ANILCA.

Council also pointed out that in many communities high harvesters provide food to other people in their communities and unnecessary reduction of the bag limit would make the life of these communities more difficult. These proxy hunters are good providers for others and hunt legally in accordance with Federal regulations. This tradition is part of a customary and traditional life in Southeast Alaska.

That concludes our comments.

CHAIRMAN CHRISTIANSON: Thank you, Don. Any questions for Don.

(No comments)
CHAIRMAN CHRISTIANSON: Tribal/Alaska Native Corporation comments, Native Liaison.

MR. LIND: Mr. Chairman. Board members, Chair members. Orville Lind, Native Liaison for the Office of Subsistence Management. We do not have any comments on WP20-07.

Thank you, Mr. Chair.

CHAIRMAN CHRISTIANSON: Thank you.

We'll move on to the Alaska Department of Fish and Game, State Liaison.

MR. MULLIGAN: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. For the record, Ben Mulligan, Fish and Game. The Alaska Department of Fish and Game supports the proposal as we have a longstanding position of supporting any effort to better realign State and Federal regulations.

Thank you, Mr. Chair.

CHAIRMAN CHRISTIANSON: Thank you.

That moves to Interagency Staff Committee comments, ISC Chair.

MS. WORKER: Thank you, Mr. Chair. This is Suzanne Worker. For WP20-07 the ISC provided the standard comment.

CHAIRMAN CHRISTIANSON: Thank you.

Board discussion with Council Chair and State Liaison. Any questions, comments.

(No comments)

CHAIRMAN CHRISTIANSON: No Board discussion with Council Chair. Move on to Federal Subsistence Board action. I open up the floor for Board action.

MR. SCHMID: Mr. Chair. Dave Schmid, Forest Service.

CHAIRMAN CHRISTIANSON: You have the floor, Dave.

MR. SCHMID: Thank you. Mr. Chair, I
move to adopt Proposal WP20-07 as submitted by the East Prince of Wales Fish and Game Advisory Committee. This proposal is shown on Page 659 of the Board book. Following a second I will explain why I intend to oppose my motion.

MR. C. BROWER: Second.

CHAIRMAN CHRISTIANSON: The motion has been made and seconded. Dave, you have the floor.

MR. SCHMID: Thank you. If adopted, the proposal would reduce harvest opportunity for Federally qualified subsistence users hunting deer on Federal public lands in Unit 2. This proposal is opposed by the Southeast Subsistence Regional Advisory Council.

Reducing the season limit is not necessary for continuation of future subsistence opportunity for Federally qualified subsistence users nor for the conservation of the deer populations in Unit 2.

While a reduction in harvest limit may appear to make more deer available, the percentage of Federally qualified subsistence users harvesting five deer is so low that the resulting deer population increase would be negligible.

If future harvest increase or winter conditions dramatically reduce deer numbers creating a conservation concern, again the delegated in-season manager can reduce the season length accordingly.

Thank you, Mr. Chair.

CHAIRMAN CHRISTIANSON: Thank you. Any further deliberation, discussion.

(No comments)

CHAIRMAN CHRISTIANSON: Call for the question.

MR. SIEKANIEC: Question.

CHAIRMAN CHRISTIANSON: Roll call, Tom.
MR. DOOLITTLE: Alrighty. This is Proposal WP20-07, requests reducing the Federal harvest limits for deer in Unit 2 from five deer to four deer.

I'll start with Bureau of Indian Affairs, Gene Peltola.

MR. PELTOLA: BIA opposes based on justification provided by the Forest Service and also in recognition and deference to the Southeast RAC.

MR. DOOLITTLE: Thank you, Gene.

Fish and Wildlife Service, Greg Siekaniec.

MR. SIEKANIEC: Thank you, Tom. I oppose in deference to the Southeast Regional Advisory Council and for the reasons provided by the U.S. Forest Service.

MR. DOOLITTLE: Thank you, Greg.

Bureau of Land Management, Chad Padgett.

MR. PADGETT: I oppose in support of the Forest Service and in deference to the Southeast RAC. I will point out again that keeping this harvest limit also supports that there is not a conservation concern at this point. Thanks.

MR. DOOLITTLE: Thank you, Chad.

National Park Service, Don Striker.

MR. STRIKER: Park Service opposes for reasons already stated. Thanks.

MR. DOOLITTLE: Alrighty, Don. Thank you.

U.S. Forest Service David Schmid.

MR. SCHMID: Again, I oppose for the reasons I shared following my motion.

MR. DOOLITTLE: Thank you, Dave.
Rhonda Pitka.

MS. PITKA: I oppose in deference to the Southeast Regional Advisory Council and based on the justification listed on Page 672. Thank you.

MR. DOOLITTLE: Thank you, Rhonda.

Charlie Brower.

MR. C. BROWER: I oppose for the same reason I stated. Thank you.

MR. DOOLITTLE: Thank you, Charlie.

Last is Tony Christianson.

CHAIRMAN CHRISTIANSON: I oppose in deference to the RAC.

MR. DOOLITTLE: Okay. That was unanimous opposition. The motion fails. Now I believe we can move to WP20-16/17, Mr. Chair.

CHAIRMAN CHRISTIANSON: Yes. We'll ask for the analysis.

MS. MAAS: Hi, this is Lisa. Can you hear me?

CHAIRMAN CHRISTIANSON: Loud and clear, Lisa. You have the floor.

MS. MAAS: Thank you, Mr. Chair. Members of the Board. My name is Lisa Maas and I'm a wildlife biologist in the Office of Subsistence Management. I'll be presenting a summary of the analysis for Wildlife Proposal WP20-16/17, which begins on Page 267 of your meeting book.

Hang in there with me because they're a bit long. It's a complex issue. Both Proposal WP20-16 and WP20-17 were submitted by the Southeast Alaska Subsistence Regional Advisory Council. WP20-16 requests extending the sealing period for wolf trapping from within 14 days of harvest to within 30 days of the end of the season and removing language referencing a combined Federal-State harvest quota for wolves in Unit 2.
Wildlife Proposal WP20-17 requests the same sealing period extension and removal of harvest quotas for wolf hunting in Unit 2 as well as increasing the hunting harvest limit from five wolves to no limit.

The Alaska Board of Game adopted a new harvest management strategy for wolves in Unit 2 in January 2019, resulting in misalignment of State and Federal regulations. The proponent states that their intent is to align State and Federal regulations, to implement the new harvest management strategy under Federal regulations, and to increase harvest opportunity.

Of note, Unit 2 wolves are part of the Alexander Archipelago subspecies which occupy Southeastern Alaska and coastal British Columbia. In 1993 and 2011, the Alexander Archipelago wolf was petitioned to be listed under the Endangered Species Act. The U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service found the listings not to be warranted on both occasions as the range-wide population appeared stable.

In 1997, the Board of Game and the Federal Subsistence Board adopted harvest guideline levels to manage the Unit 2 wolf population with established annual harvest quotas based on wolf population estimates. Seasons would close early if quotas were expected to be met. Between 2013 and 2018, seasons closed early with reported harvest well exceeding quotas in some years.

In 2018, ADF&G submitted Proposal 43 to the Board of Game to change the harvest management strategy from using harvest management guidelines to meeting population objectives. The Board of Game adopted Proposal 43 in January 2019, establishing the Unit 2 population objective range as 150 to 200 wolves. The Board of Game also extended a State trapping season aligning Federal and State seasons.

The Southeast Council also submitted Wildlife Special Action Request WSA19-02 which requested the same changes to the sealing period and harvest management as these proposals for the 2019/20 regulatory year. In August 2019, the Board approved WSA19-02, stating that the new management strategy should help ensure a sustainable population and encourage better harvest reporting. The Board also
stated that announcing predetermined season lengths
to users and renders the
in-season sealing requirement unnecessary.

Before 2013, Unit 2 wolf abundance was
uncertain. Since 2013, a method using DNA from fur
samples has been used to generate population estimates.
Between 2013 and 2018, wolf population estimates have
ranged from a low of 89 wolves in 2014 to a high of 231
wolves in 2017.

Human harvest accounts for the vast
majority of wolf mortality in Unit 2. However wolves
are very resilient to high harvest levels due to their
high reproductive potential and ability to disperse
long distances.

The new harvest management strategy
consists of four zones as depicted in Figure 2 on Page
281. Different zones correspond to different
population levels and season lengths. Zone 3 is the
desirable zone where the wolf population is within the
objective range of 150-200 wolves and a season of up to
two months would be announced. The 2019 wolf
population estimate is 170 wolves, placing it in Zone 3
and resulting in a 2019-20 season opening for two
months, from November 15th through January 15th.

Between 1997 and 2018, total trapper
numbers in Unit 2 averaged 14.5 trappers per year.
With Unit 2 residents primarily from Klawock and Craig
harvesting 89 percent of the wolves on average. Over
this time period, catch per trapper averaged 3.4 wolves.
However, usually just two to three skilled trappers
harvest most of the wolves. Harvest primarily occurs
on non-Federal land under a combination
hunting/trapping license and little harvest occurs
before mid-November when only the Federal hunting
season is open.

Since 1997, when the harvest guideline
level was initiated, annual reported harvest has ranged
from 7 to 76 wolves averaging 50 wolves per year and
the annual harvest quota was exceeded five times. High
unreported harvest rates of 38 to 47 percent have
likely resulted in unsustainable harvest in some years.

The 2019-20 reported harvest was 165
wolves, which is the highest harvest ever recorded for
Unit 2. One reason for such a high harvest was doubling of trapping effort. Over the past 20 years about 15 trappers have sealed wolves in Unit 2 each year, but 32 trappers sealed wolves this past year. The 2019 population estimate may have been substantially higher than the 2018 population estimates used to establish this year's season length. Adopting WP20-16/17 would extend the sealing requirement, eliminate the Federal/State harvest quota and increase the hunting harvest limits. Extending the sealing requirement would align Federal requirements, the sealing requirements for the State trapping season and decreases the burden on users by allowing them to seal all of their wolf pelts at one time.

Eliminating the harvest quota and managing for a population objective provides managers with a quantitative benchmark to gauge success and mitigates disagreement between stakeholders over what is a sustainable wolf population. Additionally, harvest quotas discourage harvest reporting because of the threat of seasons closing early. Announcing season lengths ahead of time provides predictability, allowing trappers to plan and prepare for the season and, importantly, does not discourage harvest reporting.

Changing the hunting harvest limit to no season increases harvest opportunity for Federally qualified subsistence users from September 1st through November 14th and presents little conservation concerns due to low wolf harvest during this time period. The new management strategy also alleviates concerns about a legal or unreported harvest by basing management on population estimates and objectives rather than on harvest quotas and reported harvest.

While the new management strategy depends on year-old population estimates to determine season lengths, the harvest guideline level strategy also depended on year-old estimates to announce quotas. One reason a species can be listed under the Endangered Species Act is inadequacy of existing regulatory mechanisms. In response to the 2011 petition, the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service found wolf harvest regulations in Unit 2 to be inadequate in ensuring sustainable harvest especially since reported harvest well exceeded quotas in 2016 and 2017.
The Wolf Technical Committee stated that having population objectives through a public process reduces the likelihood of future litigation. While managing season lengths may initially result in more or less wolves harvested than expected, State and Federal managers can fine tune season lengths over time as patterns are established.

ADF&G states that it will use the experience gained this year when setting future season lengths, including shortening or closing seasons. However, past experiences suggest harvest is more a function of abundance rather than season lengths and is unclear whether the increased numbers of trappers this season was an exception or the new rule.

The Craig District Ranger has delegated authority to close, reopen or adjust the Federal hunting and trapping season for wolves in Unit 2, including the delegated authority to close Federal lands to non-Federally qualified users. This individual would announce season lengths in coordination with State managers after the population estimate is available.

Effective wolf management in Unit 2 depends upon coordination between State and Federal regulations, managers and importantly users. WP20-16/17 facilitates management and reduces user confusion.

The OSM conclusion is to support WP20-16/17.

Thank you, Mr. Chair.
I'm available for any questions.

CHAIRMAN CHRISTIANSON: All right. The floor is open for any questions.

(No comments)

CHAIRMAN CHRISTIANSON: All right. Hearing no questions we'll move on to the next agenda item. Summary of public comments, Regional Council Coordinator.

MS. WESSELS: Thank you, Mr. Chairman.
For the record, this is Katya Wessels with the Office of Subsistence Management. I'm going to present a summary of written public comments for WP20-16/17.

We received one written public comment in opposition from the Alaskans for Wildlife and any cooperated entities. The Alaskans for Wildlife and any cooperated entities oppose WP20-16/17 and say that it leads to spreading unrestricted wolf take everywhere. The Alaskans for Wildlife say that according to science the value of apex predators, such as wolves, is essential in maintaining ecosystem biodiversity and it is important to preserve wolf populations on public lands.

They consider these proposals a continuation of war on wolves. They also consider that lifting harvest limits and extending sealing limits are not scientifically justified and not in the interest of public. They say that no science and no national or even Alaskan public cultural norms can possibly support this permissively reckless proposal to expand wolf take without bounds.

Thank you.

This concludes my presentation of the summary of written public comments.

CHAIRMAN CHRISTIANSON: Thank you, Katya. Any questions.

(No comments)

CHAIRMAN CHRISTIANSON: I'll open the floor to any public that wants to testify.

OPERATOR: I'm showing no public comments at this time.

CHAIRMAN CHRISTIANSON: Thank you. We'll move on to Regional Advisory Council recommendation, Chair.

MR. HERNANDEZ: Thank you, Chairman Christianson. Don Hernandez, Chair of the Southeast Regional Advisory Council again. Regional Council supported both of these proposals. These proposals are the result of many years of discussion between Alaska
Department of Fish and Game, the Council and subsistence users on Prince of Wales Island.

Council supports these proposals based on information from these sources, with a caveat that the Council wants to see how the management scheme will work and how it will be implemented given that there's a year lapse in DNA sampling and incorporating traditional ecological knowledge.

It is hoped in future years, that the State and Federal programs will examine the population estimates from the DNA methods, but then will adjust the estimate up or down based on traditional ecological knowledge and reports from local hunters/trappers before setting season lengths. Wolf trapping on POW has been extremely controversial for decades and this proposal appears to be a good move forward in providing opportunities for harvest and protecting the wolf resource.

There is no conservation concern for the species, biological information in the analysis is well supported, and the Council believes these proposals will be beneficial to subsistence users and non-subsistence users as it clarifies the rules for hunting/trapping and does not restrict anyone.

The Council thinks the increase in the hunting harvest limit is necessary as it would be unfair to allow someone to trap 20 or more wolves and restrict the allowance for the hunter. Whether hunting or trapping, it should be the same harvest limit. A no limit would not create a conservation concern as it is a small number of people who engage in hunting wolves and the challenge makes it hard for hunters to be successful, making it difficult to hunt too many wolves.

Based on information presented in the analysis, the Council believes that the science is finally catching up with the traditional ecological knowledge in this area. That concludes our comments on this proposal.

CHAIRMAN CHRISTIANSON: Thank you, Don.
Any questions for Don.
(No comments)
CHAIRMAN CHRISTIANSON: Hearing none. We move on to Tribal/Alaska Native corporations.....

MS. WORKER: Mr. Chair, can I interrupt?

CHAIRMAN CHRISTIANSON: Yes, go ahead.

MS. WORKER: This is Suzanne Worker. The Northwest Arctic Council also took this up. I believe their Council Chair is not online and Zach, the Council Coordinator, was having difficulty with the line. Zach, are you on?

MR. STEVENSON: Can you hear me?

MS. WORKER: Yeah, we hear you, Zach. Go ahead.

MR. STEVENSON: I've been having difficulty with calls cutting in and out. If I get disconnected, I'll try calling back in. Can you please specify which proposal you're covering right now.

MS. WORKER: Zach, we're on WP20-16/17.

MR. STEVENSON: Thank you, Suzanne.

MS. WORKER: This is one that came off the consensus agenda.

MR. STEVENSON: I'll be right with you.

MS. MAAS: This is Lisa. I have the recommendation right in front of me if you'd like me to read it.

MR. STEVENSON: If you would, please.

MS. MAAS: Sure. The Northwest Arctic Council took no action on WP20-16/17. This proposal was brought to the attention of the Council at the request of the Chair who expressed interest in learning how other regions are addressing predator management. The Council justified its position on the proposal, noting that WP20-16/17 is strictly limited to Unit 2 and would not affect the Northwest Arctic Region.

CHAIRMAN CHRISTIANSON: Thank you. Any
other further questions or discussion.

(No comments)

CHAIRMAN CHRISTIANSON: Okay, Orville, that's you.

MR. LIND: Thank you, Chair. Board members, RAC members. Orville Lind from the Office of Subsistence Management. During the consultation session there were no comments.

Thank you, Mr. Chair.

CHAIRMAN CHRISTIANSON: Thank you.

We'll move on to Alaska Department of Fish and Game Liaison.

MR. MULLIGAN: Thank you, Mr. Chair.

Ben Mulligan, Alaska Department of Fish and Game. Our official stance on both of these proposals is to support them to bring State and Federal regulations into alignment. As previously stated, this has been a joint effort to develop this new management plan for wolves in Unit 2 and we appreciate everyone's actions.

Just a note. If during the discussion phase there's needed details, I have both Ryan Scott and Tom Schumacher, who were involved in the process, who can provide more details.

Thank you.

CHAIRMAN CHRISTIANSON: All right. If anybody has any questions, there are some Staff available to answer questions through the State.

MR. SIEKANIEC: Mr. Chair. This is Greg.

CHAIRMAN CHRISTIANSON: Go ahead, Greg.

You have the floor.

MR. SIEKANIEC: Ben, thanks for joining us. Maybe between you and the folks that are with you you can give me an idea. Is there going to be a population estimate again for this coming year where you'll be looking at studying a quota similar to what you had done this past season?
MR. MULLIGAN: Through the Chair, Mr. Siekaniec. I would like to have either Ryan or Tom come on. I believe they have to hit *1 to be recognized, correct?

MR. DOOLITTLE: That is correct.

OPERATOR: This is the Operator. We have two people for public comment. Our first public comment comes from Tom Schumacher. Your line is now open.

MR. SCHUMACHER: Hello. This is Tom Schumacher with the Alaska Department of Fish and Game. We're replying to the question about whether we'll do a population estimate for Unit 2 wolves. The 2019 population estimate has already been done. At this point the data collected are OA lab analysis and then we expect to get results back over the summer and should have a population estimate to reflect a 2019 fall population. We'll probably have that estimate by August or September.

MR. SIEKANIEC: Mr. Chair. This is Greg.

CHAIRMAN CHRISTIANSON: Go ahead, Greg.

MR. SIEKANIEC: Then just based on that population estimate you would then set again harvest quotas associated with it?

MR. SCHUMACHER: Yes, that's the plan. We would take that population estimate and probably take into account some other information that we'll also look at gathering over the summer with previous years' harvest. Of course we'll also talk with people in Unit 2.

MR. SIEKANIEC: Thank you. Mr. Chair, one more?

CHAIRMAN CHRISTIANSON: Yeah. You have the floor, Greg.

MR. SIEKANIEC: Thank you. It seems like we had quite a discussion last time around, the idea of the reporting window being I think 30 days after the season closed and there was a fair amount of
debate around giving the in-season manager a little more opportunity to put something like a 10 or a 14-day reporting window after the harvest of wolves. I'm just trying to think my way through this how we best manage this to ensure that we don't have some unsustainable case of wolves over the course of a few years.

To be frank, I'm already getting letters from various NGOs regarding what they see as a pretty substantial overharvest of wolves in this particular area. I think it was as Lisa described. We've been petitioning to list this twice as a distinct population segment. I'm just concerned that this is going to continue to raise that to a level of us being asked again to go through a review and be petitioned.

So I'm just trying to figure out if there's any kind of adjustment that needs to be made that would give the in-season manager a little bit more authority to facilitate that population harvest when you need to establish it.

Thank you, Mr. Chair.

MS. MAAS: This is Lisa. If I could clarify something.

CHAIRMAN CHRISTIANSON: Go ahead, Lisa. You have the floor.

MS. MAAS: Yeah, I just want to make sure you understand that the new harvest management strategy there's no quota associated with that. It's just a season length. The Federal in-season manager has delegated authority to close, reopen and adjust that season length.

Typically they intended to coordinate it with the State, but that doesn't have to necessarily be the case. So if the Federal side thinks, you know, the State season that's going to be announced is too long, they could shorten the Federal season and also close Federal public lands to non-Federally qualified users. Although most of the harvest does occur on non-Federal lands.

MR. SIEKANIEC: Yeah, thank you, Lisa. I probably said that wrong. I thought there was actually a harvest goal, not a quota, but that they'd
actually set a goal for numbers.

MS. MAAS: It's not a harvest goal. It's a population goal.

MR. SIEKANIEC: Okay. Thank you, Lisa.

CHAIRMAN CHRISTIANSON: Any other questions or discussions for our State Liaison.

OPERATOR: I'm sorry. Our next comment is from Ryan Scott.

CHAIRMAN CHRISTIANSON: Go ahead, Ryan. You have the floor.

MR. SCOTT: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Ryan Scott with the Alaska Department of Fish and Game. I don't have any additional comments. I was just here to help answer questions. I do want to say I appreciate the clarification on the harvest goal versus a population objective and that being the goal for managing Unit 2 goals.

CHAIRMAN CHRISTIANSON: All right. Thank you. Any further discussion with the State.

(No comments)

CHAIRMAN CHRISTIANSON: All right. Not hearing any we'll move on to ISC recommendation.

MS. WORKER: Thank you, Mr. Chair. The ISC provided the standard comment for WP20-16/17.

CHAIRMAN CHRISTIANSON: All right. Any Board discussion. Thank you, ISC. Deliberation.

(No comments)

CHAIRMAN CHRISTIANSON: All right. I'll open the floor for Board action.

MR. SCHMID: Mr. Chair. Dave Schmid, Forest Service.

CHAIRMAN CHRISTIANSON: You have the floor, Dave.
MR. SCHMID: Thank you, Mr. Chair. I move to adopt Proposals WP20-16 and WP20-17 as submitted by Southeast Alaska Subsistence Regional Advisory Council.

This combined proposal is shown on Page 267 of the Board book. Following a second I will explain why I support my motion.

MR. PELTOLA: BIA second.

MR. C. BROWER: Second.

CHAIRMAN CHRISTIANSON: Go ahead, Dave. You have the floor.

MR. SCHMID: Thank you. Effective wolf management in Unit 2 depends on coordination between the State and Federal regulations, in-season managers and users, as it's been shared before, where harvest is occurring on. A majority on State lands as well as the Federal users.

Adopting these proposals aligns Federal and State wolf management strategies, facilitating management and reducing user confusion. Eliminating the combined State/Federal harvest quota under Federal regulations clarifies in-season management as the State no longer uses harvest quotas.

Extending the sealing requirement decreases the regulatory burden on Federally qualified subsistence users and aligns Federal hunting and trapping sealing requirements with the State trapping requirements, reducing regulatory complexity.

Changes to Unit 2 wolf harvest management went into effect for the 2019-2020 harvest season following a two-year process and included public meetings and review and endorsement by both State and Federal regulatory bodies, the Alaska Board of Game and the Federal Subsistence Board as well as the Federal Southeast Alaska Subsistence Regional Advisory Council and Fish and Game Advisory Committees.

The majority of wolves harvested in Unit 2 are taken on State-managed lands, which stresses the need for coordinated management. Again, this proposal is supported by the Southeast Subsistence
Regional Advisory Council and as was previously stated
the in-season manager has the ability to close or
manage the harvest.

A reduced or closed season, I would
share, is among the options that will be considered
after looking at the population estimates this summer.

Thank you, Mr. Chair.

CHAIRMAN CHRISTIANSON: Thank you. Any
more discussion or deliberation.

(No comments)

CHAIRMAN CHRISTIANSON: Call for the
question.

MR. C. BROWER: Question.

CHAIRMAN CHRISTIANSON: Roll call, Tom.

MR. DOOLITTLE: This particular
wildlife proposal WP20-16 and its sister proposal
WP20-17 requests for hunting and trapping to extend
from 14 days at the end of harvest to 30 days of the
end of the season to hunt and trap wolves. There's
also a part of this that for wolf hunting the five wolf
limit would be changed to no limit.

Bureau of Indian Affairs, Gene Peltola.

MR. PELTOLA: BIA votes to support
based on the Forest Service justification and in
recognition and deference to the Southeast RAC.

MR. DOOLITTLE: Thank you, Gene.

U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, Greg
Siekaniec.

MR. SIEKANIEC: Thank you, Tom. I
oppose. I do not believe that we have given the
in-season manager the adequate tools in order to be
able to make adjustments during the season although I
do applaud the idea that we're trying to get aligned
with State regulations as best we can.

I'm also somewhat concerned that
changing to the no limit could put us in a fairly quickly unsustainable population scenario.

Thank you.

MR. DOOLITTLE: Thank you, Greg.

National Park Service, Don Striker.

MR. STRIKER: Park Service supports in deference to the Regional Advisory Council. Thank you.

MR. DOOLITTLE: Thank you, Don.

Rhonda Pitka.

MS. PITKA: I support in deference to the Regional Advisory Council and also based on OSM justification beginning on Page 287. Thank you.

MR. DOOLITTLE: Thank you, Rhonda.

Charlie Brower.

MR. C. BROWER: I support Southeast recommendation to support it. Thank you.

MR. DOOLITTLE: Thank you, Charlie.

U.S. Forest Service, David Schmid.

MR. SCHMID: Yes, I support. Again, given the reasons I shared following my motion.

MR. DOOLITTLE: Thank you very much, Dave.

Bureau of Land Management, Chad Padgett.

MR. PADGETT: I support both for the reasons stated by the Forest Service and in deference to the RAC.

MR. DOOLITTLE: Thank you very much, Chad.

Last, Chairman Anthony Christianson.
CHAIRMAN CHRISTIANSON: I support in
dereference to the RAC.

MR. DOOLITTLE: Thank you, Tony. The
motion passes, seven yeas, one nay. Thank you,
gentlemen and gentle lady.

CHAIRMAN CHRISTIANSON: All right.
That concludes our morning here, guys. Got through a
few of these proposals. I appreciate us being able to
clip through this in what we've got going on here.
We'll try to all get back in about an hour and a half
from now for lunch.

MR. C. BROWER: 1:30?
MR. DOOLITTLE: 1:00 or 1:30?
CHAIRMAN CHRISTIANSON: 1:30.
MR. C. BROWER: Okay, 1:30.
MR. DOOLITTLE: Okay. 1330 it is.
Thank you, Mr. Chair.

(Off record)

(On record)

MR. DOOLITTLE: Good afternoon. This
is Tom Doolittle everybody. I'm going to do a quick
check to see who's online. Gene Peltola, are you with
us?

MR. PELTOLA: Roger, roger, 10-4.
THE COURT: Good to hear your voice,
Gene. Don Striker, are you with us?
MR. STRIKER: Yes, I am. Good
afternoon.

MR. DOOLITTLE: Good afternoon, Don.
MR. SIEKANIEC: Still on, take five.
MR. DOOLITTLE: Okay. Sounds good.
Rhonda Pitka. Are you with us, Rhonda?
(No response)

MR. DOOLITTLE: Chad Padgett from BLM, are you with us?

MR. PADGETT: I am here.

MR. DOOLITTLE: All right, Chad. Good to hear your voice. Charlie Brower, are you with us?

(No response)

MR. DOOLITTLE: David Schmid.....

MS. PITKA: This is Rhonda Pitka. I'm here.


MR. SCHMID: Yes, I'm on. Thanks.

MR. DOOLITTLE: Thanks, Dave. Chairman Christianson. Tony, are you on?

(No response)

MR. DOOLITTLE: Okay. We're still waiting for Charlie Brower and Tony to get online here. While we're waiting for Tony and Charlie I was going to see if our State partner Ben Mulligan was on.

MR. MULLIGAN: Hi, Tom. We're here.

MR. DOOLITTLE: Alrighty. Good. Afternoons seem to be better than mornings for connectivity. Katya Wessels, are you on?

MS. WESSELS: I'm here, Tom.

MR. DOOLITTLE: Chris McKee and Lisa, are you guys on deck here?

MR. MCKEE: I'm here. Can you hear me, Tom?

MR. DOOLITTLE: Yes, very well, Chris. It sounds good. Greg Encelewski, are you on?
MR. DOOLITTLE: Okay. We're missing Greg from Southcentral RAC. I'll see if DeAnna Perry is on to see what his status is.

MS. PERRY: Hi, Tom. This is DeAnna. I believe Greg Encelewski is on. It might take him a moment to chime in.

MR. DOOLITTLE: Okay. Thank you very much. That's wonderful. Good to hear your voice, DeAnna. Orville Lind.

(No response)

MR. DOOLITTLE: Okay. Still waiting on Orville to connect. Suzanne Worker.

MS. WORKER: I'm on, Tom.

MR. DOOLITTLE: Okay. Good to hear your voice. So we need Charlie and Orville from what I can see right now. Greg's lined up, so we should be pretty good.

MS. PERRY: Tom, this is DeAnna. It seems like Greg is having an issue getting past the operator, so if we could ask the operator to double check his line for us. Thank you.

OPERATOR: This is the Operator.

MR. DOOLITTLE: Operator, can we make sure that Mr. Encelewski gets in. Oh, Charlie, you're on board. Good to hear your voice. Operator, I'm trying to see if we have Greg Encelewski in.

OPERATOR: We have Orville on. I'm still waiting to hear back from another operator that may have answered Greg's call.

MR. DOOLITTLE: Okay. Thank you very much.

MS. PERRY: Tom, this is DeAnna Perry again. Greg Encelewski is on. He can hear you fine, but for whatever reason he's not able to speak. If the Board wishes to move on, I can go ahead and provide the
verbal Council recommendations if we can't get Greg's line open.

Thank you.

MR. DOOLITTLE: Okay. Mr. Encelewski, that would be fine. Then we can move forward.

OPERATOR: This is the Operator.

Greg's line is now open.

MR. DOOLITTLE: Oh, good.

MR. ENCELEWSKI: This is Greg. Can you hear me now?

MR. DOOLITTLE: Yes. Perfect.

MR. ENCELEWSKI: Okay, I'm on. I couldn't get out of it. Thank you.

MR. DOOLITTLE: Okay. Thank you. All right. It looks like we have the full complement of the Board. I'm just double checking with you, Charlie, whether you're online.

MR. C. BROWER: I am online. Thank you.

MR. DOOLITTLE: Alrighty. Mr. Chair, I'm turning it back to you. We have all the folks and hopefully people that are online know that they can see where the progress of the Board meeting is by calling 1-800-478-1456 or 907-786-3888 or visit our website at www.doi.gov/subsistence/board or our Facebook page, which is www.facebook.com/subsistencealaska

Mr. Chair, I'll turn it over to you. We're at Southcentral proposals WP20-18b.

(No response)

MR. DOOLITTLE: Tony, are you on?

(No response)

MR. DOOLITTLE: I just texted the Chair to see whether he's on. Orville, if you could also check for me, that would be great.
MR. LIND: Roger. I'll do that.

(Pause)

MR. DOOLITTLE: At this time, as we're waiting for Tony, Rhonda Pitka has been designated as Vice Chair in the absence of the Chair. We still have quorum. So in the essence of time, Rhonda, if it's okay with you and the remainder of the Board, to start on Special Action WP20-18b. Does that meet with the approval of the Board?

MS. PITKA: That's fine by me. This is Rhonda. I would ask for a quick roll call though.


MR. SIEKANIEC: Yes, I'm here, Tom.

MR. DOOLITTLE: Don Striker.

MR. STRIKER: Yes, please proceed.

MR. DOOLITTLE: Gene Peltola.

MR. PELTOLA: Yes, please proceed.

MR. DOOLITTLE: Rhonda Pitka. I know you're there, Rhonda.

MS. PITKA: Yes.

MR. DOOLITTLE: Chad Padgett.

MR. PADGETT: I am here.

MR. DOOLITTLE: Charlie Brower.

MR. C. BROWER: Here.

MR. DOOLITTLE: And Dave Schmid.

MR. SCHMID: I'm here. Thanks.

MR. DOOLITTLE: Alrighty. Rhonda, you have the floor on WP20-18b.

VICE CHAIR PITKA: Okay. I'd like to start with the analysis on WP20-18b. Thank you.
MR. MCKEE: Thank you, Madame Chair.
Members of the Board. My name is Chris McKee and I'm the Wildlife Division Supervisor at OSM and I'll be giving an overview of Wildlife Proposal WP20-18b. The analysis for Proposal WP20-18b can be found on Page 687 of your Board book.

It was submitted by Michael Adams of Cooper Landing and requests that a goat season be established in Unit 7 with a harvest limit of one goat by Federal registration permit, with a quota of two goats, a season of August 10 to November 14, and a prohibition on the taking of nannies with kids.

The proponent also requests that the Seward District Ranger be given authority to close the season when the harvest quota is reached, and that a hunter be eligible for a permit three years after harvesting a billy goat, and five years after harvesting a nanny.

The proponent states that mountain goat populations have increased and that establishing a Federal subsistence season in Unit 7 will provide for a reasonable subsistence opportunity for Cooper Landing residents. Mountain goats typically occur throughout the eastern Kenai Peninsula in isolated areas with little interchange with other populations.

The Alaska Department of Fish and Game has monitored goat populations on the Kenai Peninsula through aerial surveys since the 1970s. The Peninsula is divided into 17 count areas in Unit 6 with one count area number 352 being divided up between Units 7 and 15. A map of these count units can be found on Map 1 on Page 692 of the analysis. Goat harvest is allowed to occur in any count area with fewer than 50 goats and ADF&G attempts to survey each count area every three years.

Mountain goat populations have decreased from the 100-s to 2006, but have rebounded in recent years to numbers not seen since the 1990s. Each goat population varies with some increasing, some stable and others decreasing. You can take a look at this on Table 1, which can be found on Page 694 through 695 of the analysis.

Predation by wolves, severe winters,
heat stress during warm summer days and human
disturbance can all affect goat survival and
recruitment. There has never been a Federal
subsistence season for mountain goats in Unit 7. The
majority of Federal public lands in Unit 7 are Forest
Service lands. It should be noted that Park Service
Lands and Kenai Fjords National Park are closed to
subsistence.

Mountain goats are susceptible to
overharvest in localized areas due to groups site
fidelity, their low reproductive rate, and the
difficulty of hunters being able to distinguish between
males and females.

Currently there are two seasons for
goats in Unit 7 under State regulations and early
season August 10 through October 15, which requires
obtaining a drawing permit and a late season running
from November 1st to November 14th, which is by
registration permit.

This late season is only offered if not
all quotas are filled during the early drawing hunt
season. The number of permits issued annually is
dependant on a number of factors including harvest
rates, sex and age structure of the harvest, population
size and trends, ease of access and habitat.

From 2009 to 2018 approximately 355
mountain goats were harvested with an annual harvest of
33 goats during the drawing hunt and two goats during
the registration hunt. You can see this on tables 2
and 3 on Pages 697 and 698 of the analysis.

The majority of the harvest occurs in
September and since 2009 the majority of mountain goats
have been taken by Alaska residents living outside of
Unit 7. Rural residents from Unit 7 took approximately
1 percent of the harvest from 2009 to 2018 as evidenced
on Table 4 on Page 698 of the analysis. From 1980 to
1990 only four of 961 goat hunters or 0.4 percent
listed Cooper Landing as their mailing address and of
those only two goats were harvested.

If WP20-18b is adopted, it would
establish a Federal subsistence season for mountain
goats in Unit 7. Mountain Goat populations are small
and vulnerable and even at optimal population levels
the harvest of even a few extra mountain goats could result in a population decline. For these reasons mountain goat populations have to be closely monitored.

If adopted, this proposal would provide additional opportunity for Federally qualified subsistence users in Unit 7. Providing this opportunity is consistent with Section 804 of ANILCA, which allows for the priority consumptive use of fish and wildlife populations by rural Alaskans. The Seward District Ranger would have to work with ADF&G to manage and monitor the goat harvest in Unit 7.

Drawing hunts versus registration hunts will allow for better harvest management by controlling the number of hunters in the field and delegating authority to the Seward District Ranger would allow for hunt management flexibility through in-season adjustments and a more timely response to changes in the population, hunting conditions and hunter access.

The OSM conclusion is to support Proposal WP20-18b with modification to establish a drawing hunt for mountain goat in Unit 7 and delegate authority to the Seward District Ranger to close the season, set any needed sex restrictions, set harvest quotas, the number of permits to be issued, and permit conditions.

I should also state that the requirement of setting harvest quotas was left out of the analysis in error, so I just wanted to be sure the Board was made aware of the fact that we are delegating authority to the manager to set these harvest quotas. Though not explicitly stated in our modification, OSM is not recommending limiting eligibility after a successful harvest of a billy or nanny goat as requested by the proponent as it is not a relevant criteria for implementing a priority under Section 804 of ANILCA.

With that, that ends my overview of the analysis. I'd be happy to answer any questions.

Thank you, Madame Chair.

ACTING CHAIR PITKA: Does anybody have questions on the analysis.
MR. C. BROWER: Madame Chair.

ACTING CHAIR PITKA: Yes.

MR. C. BROWER: Just a question. So you said there's more outside hunters than the Cooper Landing residents, is that right?

MR. MCKEE: Correct, yes.

MR. C. BROWER: Okay. Thank you.

MR. SIEKANIEC: Madame Chair, this is Greg.

ACTING CHAIR PITKA: Yes, Greg.

MR. SIEKANIEC: Hey, Chris, you probably said it, but say it again. What page is the OSM modified motion on or the recommendation on?

MR. MCKEE: I'll say it again because I did say a lot there when I stated our conclusion. We're supporting it with modification to establish a drawing hunt for mountain goats in Unit 7 and delegate authority to the Seward District Ranger to close the season, set any needed sex restrictions, set harvest quotas, the number of permits to be issued, and permit conditions.

MR. SIEKANIEC: Okay. What page was that on? I'm just trying to get my bearings.

MR. MCKEE: The conclusion can be found on Page 699 of the Board book.

MR. SIEKANIEC: Thank you.

ACTING CHAIR PITKA: Thank you. Are there any other questions.

(No comments)

ACTING CHAIR PITKA: Hearing none. I'd like to go with summary of public comments. Thank you.

MS. WESSELS: Thank you, Madame Chair.

This is Katya Wessels with OSM. We have not received any written public comments on Proposal WP20-18b.
Thank you.

ACTING CHAIR PITKA: Thank you, Ms. Wessels. At this time I'd like to open the floor to public testimony on WP20-18b.

OPERATOR: As a reminder, if you'd like to make a public comment please press *1 from your phone. We have one public comment. It comes from Willow Hetrick. Your line is open.

MS. HETRICK: Hi. Good afternoon Chairman, Board and the Regional Advisory Council members from Southcentral. My name is Willow Hetrick. I am the executive director of Chugach Regional Resources Commission. We are an intertribal organization serving seven tribes in the Chugach Region including Port Graham, Nanwalek, Chenega and Tatitlek. We also serve Qutekcak Native Tribe in Seward, Cordova, which is the Eyak, and also Valdez Native Tribe.

I am testifying today on behalf of the Chugach Regional Resources Commission with permission from our board chairman Mr. Patrick Norman, who is also the chief of the Port Graham Village Council, to support the Federal Subsistence Board amending Proposal 20-18b to include residents of Port Graham, Nanwalek, Chenega and Tatitlek to participate in the Federal draw hunt for goats in all of Unit 7.

This provides additional opportunity to those existing for Port Graham and Nanwalek, in particular in the Brown Mountain hunt area. However, we would like to suggest additional amendments for your consideration.

The first is that we strongly urge the Federal Subsistence Board to align with current State of Alaska hunting timeframes as follows: The hunt commencing August 10th through August 15th with a break, recommencing November 1st through November 14th to reduce conflict with enforcement. This will allow the goat population to also have a break during critical mating times as designed by the State of Alaska system.

The second is per the State of Alaska Department of Fish and Game comments. Unit 7 currently contains 19 different hunt areas. Since 2011 the Fish
and Game has managed goat hunting on the Kenai Peninsula through a lot of drawing -- a combination of drawing and registration hunts. Limiting hunts to those 19 different areas based on population availability. This allows for the subpopulation within an area because only a few animals may be harvested from each subpopulation without causing a decline.

As stated in your packet, due to the low population numbers as determined by minimum counts, eight of these areas were closed in 2019 and we feel that it's very important to exercise the Department's ability to close certain subunits. Opening all of Unit 7 could negatively impact and affect other hunters because managers would take a more cautious management approach, including limiting total number of permits issued in Unit 7.

We concur with this conclusion by the Department and recommend that the Federal Subsistence Board mimic hunting subunits as outlined by the Department. Furthermore, we suggest limiting qualified subsistence users in the communities of Cooper Landing, Hope and Ninilchik to those State of Alaska subunits on the Kenai Peninsula only where their communities are located and not within DG347, DG351, DG352, DG363, DG364, DG365, DG362 and DG361 to reduce conflict potential with residents of Port Graham and Nanwalek. We also request to limit those communities to not be able to hunt in subunits east of the Seward Highway to reduce conflict with Chenega and Tatitlek.

The third is that we strongly suggest the Federal Subsistence Board have restrictions placed on the hunter based on the sex harvested to mimic those of the State to disinsentivize the hunter from harvesting a nanny as they are crucial to the success of population and Game Management Unit 7 for reasons I don't need to state.

As written and further amended currently, Chugach Regional Resources Commission cannot support WP20-18b. There is insufficient harvestable surplus, the potential for an increase in competition for our coastal roadless residents in Port Graham, Nanwalek, Chenega and Tatitlek coupled with a historically low goat population in Unit 7.

Thank you.
ACTING CHAIR PITKA: Thank you, Ms. Hetrick for your comments.

OPERATOR: Our next public comment comes from Michael Adams. Your line is open.

MR. ADAMS: Mr. Chair and Members of the Board. Thank you for the opportunity to voice my support for this proposal. Restrictive hunting regulations have all but eliminated Unit 7 goat hunting opportunity for rural residents in Cooper Landing.

The goat population is healthy enough to support hunting pressure from nonrural users from other communities with the existing draw hunts offered by the State, yet no meaningful priority currently exists for subsistence harvest. Rural use is small and can be successfully integrated into management practice while allowing for a meaningful rural preference.

I do support the proposal as amended, although I would prefer the hunt not be a drawing hunt. I do understand the concerns outlined by the Office of Subsistence Management, but the Seward Ranger District has brought authority to manage the hunt for conservation purposes.

Thank you for your time and I would like to encourage the Board to vote in favor of Proposal 20-18b.

ACTING CHAIR PITKA: Thank you, Mr. Adams, for your comments. Do we have any further public comments.

MR. C. BROWER: Madame Chair, I have a question for Mr. Adams.

ACTING CHAIR PITKA: Yes, Charlie.

MR. C. BROWER: Just a question. When you refer rural, are those Federally recognized qualified users or rural means anyone living there in that rural designated area?

MR. ADAMS: The community of Cooper Landing has been recognized as having a subsistence priority and the proposal was initially written for Cooper Landing residents, but during the customary and
traditional use portion it has been broadened to include residents of the communities of Chenega Bay, Hope, Nanwalek, Ninilchik, Port Graham, Seldovia and Tatitlek. So I would support all eligible users from those communities being able to participate in the hunt.

MR. C. BROWER: Thank you.

ACTING CHAIR PITKA: Thank you very much. Do we have any further public comment.

OPERATOR: At this time I'm showing no public comment.

ACTING CHAIR PITKA: Thank you very much. Not hearing any. I'd like to go to Regional Council recommendation.

MR. ENCELEWSKI: Through the Chair, Rhonda, this is Greg Encelewski, Chairman of Southcentral Regional Advisory Council. Our recommendation is to support the proposal with modifications to include the OSM modifications but also include the proposed restrictions on nanny and billy goat harvest as proposed in the original proposal and to have these restrictions in regulation.

I believe that was a unanimous support by our Council.

ACTING CHAIR PITKA: Thank you, Mr. Encelewski.

MR. ENCELEWSKI: You're welcome.

ACTING CHAIR PITKA: I'd like to go to the Tribal/Alaska Native corporation comments. Orville Lind.

MR. LIND: Thank you, Madame Chair. Board members, RAC Chairs. Orville Lind, Native Liaison for Office of Subsistence Management. During the consultation session held on September 23rd we had no comments on Wildlife Proposal 20-18b.

Thank you, Madame Chair.

ACTING CHAIR PITKA: Thank you, Mr.
Lind. Now we're at Alaska Department of Fish and Game comments.

MR. MULLIGAN: Thank you. This is Ben Mulligan, Alaska Department of Fish and Game. As you may have seen in your packet, we were originally opposed to the concept of the unit-wide open hunt for mountain goats in Unit 7, but it looks like given the modifications that we're almost there.

As you heard previously, we would prefer to also see the alignment of the season dates and the hunt areas take place given the nature of mountain goat populations and their susceptibility and need for careful management to prevent overharvest.

Thank you.

ACTING CHAIR PITKA: Thank you very much, Mr. Mulligan. Now we are at Interagency Staff Committee comments.

MS. WORKER: Thank you, Madame Chair. Interagency Staff Committee agrees with the Southcentral Subsistence Regional Advisory Council that establishing a Federal subsistence goat season in Unit 7 would provide additional opportunity for Federally qualified subsistence users.

The ISC agrees with OSM's conclusion to support Proposal WP20-18b with modification to establish a Federal drawing permit for goat and delegate authority to the Seward District Ranger to close the season, set any needed sex restrictions, set the number of permits to be issued, and establish permit conditions via delegation of authority letter only.

Due to the small size of the goat populations, habitat limitations, susceptibility to over hunting, and the intensive State management, the Federal manager would need to work closely with the State to monitor harvest under both State and Federal hunts if this proposal is adopted by the Board.

The ISC asked for legal counsel clarification related to the proponent's and the Southeast Regional Subsistence Advisory Council's request to limit eligibility following a successful
hunt. The proposal specifies that a hunter be ineligble for a permit until three years after harvesting a billy goat, and five years after harvesting a nanny. Legal counsel responded as follows:

Per ANILCA Section 804, subsistence uses can be restricted only when it is necessary to restrict the taking of populations of fish and wildlife on such lands for subsistence uses in order to protect the continued viability of such populations, or to continue such uses. Even where this threshold is met, any restrictions on subsistence uses must apply the following priority criteria:

Number one, customary and direct dependence upon the population as the mainstay of livelihood; two, local residency; and three, the availability of alternative resources.

Since past permit drawing and/or hunting success is not a relevant criteria for implementing a priority, a rule that attempted to restrict subsistence uses on that basis would violate Section 804.

The ISC concluded that the component of the proposal that restricts subsistence use is not permitted under ANILCA Section 804.

Thank you, Madame Chair.

ACTING CHAIR PITKA: Thank you very much. I appreciate the comments. Now we're at Board discussion with Council Chairs and State Liaison. I'd like to open the floor for Board discussion.

MR. PELTOLA: Madame Chair. This is BIA. Clarifying question for OSM.

ACTING CHAIR PITKA: Absolutely. Go ahead.

MR. PELTOLA: Thank you, Madame Chair. So when Mr. McKee was giving a presentation and it highlighted something for us here at BIA. If you look on Page 699 of the Board book, it stipulates the modified regulation should read, and it says: 1 goat by Federal drawing permit. Nannies accompanied by kids may not be taken. The harvest quota is up to two goats.
Although when it's mentioned about the
delegation of authority it stipulated that the
in-season manager among other things would set the
harvest quota. Does it mean that the delegation of
authority to the District Ranger could establish a
quota beyond the two that's written in the regulation
or just within the two limitation?

MR. MCKEE: I can respond. I think the
purpose of our modification, the intent of OSM was to
allow as much flexibility for the in-season manager to
manage these populations. So there on our part was not
to add the quotas under the delegation of authority
instead of in regulation. So that's a good question.
Just given to how highly managed these populations need
to be, we want to give maximum flexibility to the
in-season manager. I hope that clarifies it.

MR. PELTOLA: Madame Chair, I'll follow
up. If that is the case, if the in-season manager
could only determine the quota up to two goats, then do
we want to have that stricken from the delegation
letter potentially because there's a cap on the amount
of quota or let it remain a delegation because I think
that may cause more confusion.

In addition too, I hear the State
mention earlier that they were concerned about
potential overharvest. So if we remove that from the
delegation, it might be clear to all. Hence the
regulation would cap the harvest quota at two.

MR. MCKEE: We'll be happy to go along
with whatever the Board thinks is best. I would like
to add one matter. The Federal manager would have
broad discretion under his delegation of authority as
how best to manage this hunt. The Federal lands that
are relevant to the proposal are all Federal public
lands in the Chugach National Forest in Unit 7 within
the Seward Ranger District.

So the managers can also limit the hunt
to specific count areas if he feels that's appropriate
under management. So the manager has the ability to
limit the area anywhere within the Federal public lands
within Unit 7. So it's not like he's stuck with only
managing in all of Unit 7. He can limit it to specific
count areas if he feels that's necessary under his
authority as an in-season manager.
MR. PELTOLA: Madame Chair. I do appreciate that explanation, but I fail to see where that addresses a quota of two. I understand the in-season manager has the discretion to geographically address a harvest, but it still leaves in question the total number of the quota. That will be in conflict with the regulation.

Thank you, Madame Chair.

I'll end with that comment.

MR. MCKEE: Member Peltola is right and it would need to either be in the delegation of authority or in the actual regulation. Usually in the past we've taken a lot of those specific numbers out of regulation because if something changes with the available quota or if the population increases, then the manager is kind of stuck with a quota of up to two goats. So not having any regulation would allow more flexibility to respond to changes in the population. An increase or a decrease.

ACTING CHAIR PITKA: Did that address your concern, Member Peltola?

MR. PELTOLA: Yes and no. Because, one, if it is pulled from regulation, we wouldn't have the conflict with the delegation letter. If it remains in regulation, it still does create a conflict. Having it in regulation also addressed potential concerns from those who may be worried about a potential overharvest. So I guess it would need to be appropriately addressed by the agency making a motion, whether it be retained in regulation or the delegation.

ACTING CHAIR PITKA: Thank you very much for those comments. Is there any further Board discussion.

MR. C. BROWER: Madame Chair.

ACTING CHAIR PITKA: Yes, sir.

MR. C. BROWER: When we're approving this, where does the modification come in to include the other villages that were named throughout the presentation or the request? Are they in the modification already or when someone makes a motion to
include those other villages?

MR. MCKEE: Madame Chair, I can answer that question.

ACTING CHAIR PITKA: Yes, please.

Thank you.

MR. MCKEE: So there were two proposals put in there relevant to this unit and species, so we had this proposal that wanted to establish an actual hunt and then there was a previous proposal WP20-18a that requested the establishment of a customary and traditional use determination. That is on your consensus agenda. That was supported with modification. So that modification language is Unit 7 Brown Mountain hunt area.

The C&T is residents of Nanwalek and Port Graham. For Unit 17 remainder, rural residents of Chenega Bay, Cooper Landing, Hope, Nanwalek, Ninilchik, Port Graham, Seldovia and Tatitlek. So that's on the consensus agenda. Assuming it stays on there then that will be adopted with those modifications. So I hope that answers the question.

MR. C. BROWER: Thank you. Just one more question. So this additional two for this proposal is for Cooper Landing only when you have non-residents harvesting over 160 compared to two. Is that what's being said here?

MR. MCKEE: I'm not certain I understand the question, Charlie.

MR. C. BROWER: I mean Alaska residents not in Unit 7 usually gets about 140, 180 and residents in Unit 7 barely gets one. So there seems to be a pretty good high number difference. I mean I'm just looking at the paper.

MR. MCKEE: Yeah, so the opportunity for Federally qualified subsistence users in terms of the amount they've been able to harvest in the past has been fairly limited. Currently there is no existing hunt under Federal regulations. So these two proposals are establishing a C&T and a hunt for mountain goats in this area.
MR. C. BROWER: Thank you.

ACTING CHAIR PITKA: Is there any further Board discussion.

(No comments)

ACTING CHAIR PITKA: Hearing no further Board discussion, we're at Federal Subsistence Board action for WP20-18b.

MR. SCHMID: Madame Chair. Dave Schmid, Forest Service.

ACTING CHAIR PITKA: Yes.

MR. SCHMID: Thank you. I move to adopt WP20-18b with OSM modification to establish a Federal drawing permit for goat and delegate authority to the Seward District Ranger to close the season, set any needed sex restrictions and determine the number of permits to be issued and establish permit conditions via delegation of authority letter only and would ask for clarification to remove the two goats from the regulation.

This proposal is shown on 687 of the Board book. Following a second I will explain why I will support the modified proposal.

MR. C. BROWER: Second.

ACTING CHAIR PITKA: The motion has been seconded by Member Brower.

MR. SCHMID: Thank you. Establishing a Federal subsistence goat season in Unit 7 would provide additional opportunity for Federally qualified subsistence users. Providing this opportunity is consistent with Section 804 of the Alaska National Interest Lands Conservation Act (ANILCA), which calls for the priority consumptive use of fish and wildlife populations by rural Alaska residents.

This subsistence opportunity is supported by the Southcentral Subsistence Regional Advisory Council. Due to the small size of the goat populations, habitat limitations and susceptibility to overhunting, the Federal manager would need to work
closely with the State to monitor harvest under both State and Federal hunts.

Establishing a Federal drawing permit hunt would allow for better harvest monitoring while delegating authority to the Seward District Ranger will allow for hunt management flexibility through in-season adjustments and a more timely response to changes in population status, hunting conditions or hunter access while maximizing harvest opportunities for Federally qualified subsistence users.

Thank you, Madame Chair.

ACTING CHAIR PITKA: Thank you very much.

MR. C. BROWER: Question.

ACTING CHAIR PITKA: Thank you. The question has been called.

MR. MCKEE: Madame Chair. This is Chris.

ACTING CHAIR PITKA: Yes.

MR. MCKEE: Yeah, I just want to step in here to get some clarification on the motion that was made by the Forest Service. I didn't notice whether they wanted to include being able to delegate authority to the Federal in-season manager to determine quotas. I know they took it out of regulation, but there wouldn't be any method for the manager to make quota determinations if it's not also included in the delegation. So just asking for some clarification there.

MR. SCHMID: Yes. Madame Chair. This is Dave Schmid. You are correct. When I inserted taking out of regulation. So, yes, that should be taken out, the quota.

MR. MCKEE: No, I mean if it's not in regulation, it would need to be delegated to the Federal manager to determine quota.

MR. SCHMID: Correct.
MR. MCKEE: Okay. Thank you.


MR. DOOLITTLE: Also right now I just had a text that Rhonda has lost connection, but I believe, Tony, you're back online as Chair?

CHAIRMAN CHRISTIANSON: Yes, I'm here again. I've been in half of the discussion. Thank Rhonda for being able to fill in. If she's back on, I'd just let her finish. If not, I'm ready to continue.

MR. DOOLITTLE: We'll give it a couple minutes for Rhonda to get back on if that's okay, Tony.

CHAIRMAN CHRISTIANSON: Yeah, that's fine. I think she's doing a fine job.

MR. C. BROWER: Oh, Rhonda got lost?

MR. DOOLITTLE: Yes, Charlie.

(Pause)

MR. SIEKANIEC: Tom, while we're waiting, this is Greg. Can I ask a question.

MR. DOOLITTLE: Yeah, go ahead, Greg.

MR. SIEKANIEC: I'm still after the last discussion about quotas maybe just a little bit confused. It's specifically going to say in the letter of delegation that the quotas may be set by the in-season manager? I think that's what I'm hearing from Mr. Schmid.

MR. SCHMID: Yes, Greg.

MR. SIEKANIEC: And then what I didn't hear was any discussion about nannies with kids in the actual regulation. Is that something that was supposed to be in there as well?

MR. DOOLITTLE: Greg, this is Tom. My understanding would be now the regulation would -- other than the letter of delegation authority, would be one goat by Federal drawing permit. Nannies
accompanied by kids may not be taken.

MR. SIEKANIEC: Okay. Okay.

MR. DOOLITTLE: And the season dates
would be August 10 through November 14.

MR. SIEKANIEC: Okay. Thank you.

OPERATOR: Rhonda has rejoined.

MR. DOOLITTLE: Board Member Pitka has
rejoined.

MS. PITKA: Yes. Thank you. I
apologize. I'm here.

MR. DOOLITTLE: Hi, Rhonda. They just
finished Board discussion.

MR. C. BROWER: Question. Mr. Chair or
Madame Chair.

MS. PITKA: Yes, what was your
question?

MR. C. BROWER: On the motion.

MS. PITKA: Yes. Sorry, I was cut off,
so I didn't know where we were at. Okay. May we have
a roll call vote, please.

MR. DOOLITTLE: Thank you, Madame
Chair. This is to support the OSM with modification on
Proposal WP20-18b to establish a Federal drawing permit
for goat and delegate authority to the Seward District
Ranger to close the season, set any needed sex
restrictions, provide for a quota, the number of
permits to be issued and permit conditions via
delegation of authority letter only. The regulation
would be clarified by stating Unit 7 goat, one goat by
Federal drawing permit. Nannies accompanied by kids
may not be taken. The season dates would be August 10
through November 14.

I'm going to start with BLM, Chad
Padgett.

MR. PADGETT: Tom, can you come back to
me. I'm just rolling something around in my head, please.


MR. SIEKANIEC: Thank you, Tom. I support in deference to the Southeast Regional Advisory Council and the U.S. Forest Service in its very detailed justification and accompanied by the customary and traditional use that had been expressed in the public comment.

Thank you.

MR. DOOLITTLE: Thank you, Greg.

Bureau of Indian Affairs, Gene Peltola.

MR. PELTOLA: BIA supports, echoing justification provided by the Forest Service in their motion.

MR. DOOLITTLE: National Park Service, Don Striker.

MR. STRIKER: National Park Service supports for the reasons previously given.

MR. DOOLITTLE: Thank you very much, Don.

U.S. Forest Service, David Schmid.

MR. SCHMID: Yes, we support for the justification I shared with the motion.

MR. DOOLITTLE: Rhonda Pitka.

MS. PITKA: I support for the justification provided by the Forest Service.

MR. DOOLITTLE: Thank you very much.

Charlie Brower.

MR. C. BROWER: I support with the modifications as recommended by the Southcentral RAC.

Thank you.
MR. DOOLITTLE: Thank you very much, Charlie.

Bureau of Land Management, Chad Padgett.

MR. PADGETT: I support as modified. Thank you.

MR. DOOLITTLE: Thank you, Chad. Last, Tony Christianson, Chair.

CHAIRMAN CHRISTIANSON: I support in deference.

MR. DOOLITTLE: Alrighty. Thank you. That's WP20-18b passed with modification of some clarifications relative to quota and assuring that nannies accompanied by kids may not be taken and season dates by one goat by Federal drawing permit.

Mr. Chair. The next one would be WP20-20.

CHAIRMAN CHRISTIANSON: All right. Thank you, Tom. I appreciate you guys picking it up while I was cut off. I lost service there. Thank you, Rhonda, for doing a great job there. I appreciate that.

We'll move on to 20-20. We'll call for the Staff analysis.

MS. MAAS: This is Lisa. Can you hear me?

CHAIRMAN CHRISTIANSON: Loud and clear.

MS. MAAS: Thank you, Mr. Chair.

Members of the Board. For the record my name is Lisa Maas and I'll be presenting a summary of the analysis for Wildlife Proposal WP20-20, which begins on Page 356 of your meeting books.

Wildlife Proposal WP20-20 was submitted by Robert Gieringer and requests that hunting and trapping in Unit 7 be prohibited within one mile of roads and trails, and that trap sites be marked with brightly colored tape. The proponent states that
serious injuries to pets have occurred near popular trails, and that trail use is increasing due to an expanding human population.

Cooper Landing has a history of conflicts between local residents and trappers primarily over pets getting caught in traps. In 2014, the Federal Subsistence Board rejected Proposal WP14-01, which requested requiring trapper identification tags statewide and it was opposed by all 10 Councils.

In 2015, the Alaska Board of Game rejected Proposal 180, which proposed prohibiting trapping within 250 yards of public roads and trails in the Cooper Landing area. The Board of Game noted concerns about the enforcability of such a proposal and stated trappers and local residents need to work together to find a mutually agreeable solution or compromise.

In 2016, the Board of Game rejected Proposal 80, which proposed prohibiting trapping along roads and trails in urban areas. Twenty-six ACs opposed the proposal and the Board of Game commented this type of restriction would be better handled through city or borough ordinances.

Wildlife Proposal WP20-08, which is currently on the consensus agenda, requests implementing a statewide requirement that traps and snares be marked with either the trapper's name or State identification number.

Adopting Proposal WP20-20 would decrease opportunity for Federally qualified subsistence users because they would have to spend more time accessing trapping/hunting areas and in marking traps.

Adopting this proposal would result in misalignment of Federal and State regulations and in Federal regulations being more restrictive than State regulations.

Federally qualified subsistence users can trap on Federal public lands under State regulation. They could avoid the Federal restrictions by simply trapping under State regulations. Therefore,
the Federal restrictions proposed by WP20-20 would be ineffective.

Marking trap sites with flagging tape could have the unintended consequence of drawing people's attention to the area, resulting in their investigation of the trap site.

User conflicts between recreationists and trappers in the Cooper Landing area would likely be better addressed in other than Federal Subsistence Board, such as city ordinance, Federal land managers or the State Board of Game.

The OSM conclusion is to oppose WP20-20.

Thank you, Mr. Chair.

I'm available for questions.

CHAIRMAN CHRISTIANSON: I'm here. It just takes me a second to unmute the phone. Thank you for that. We'll move on to the next part, which is any questions for Lisa.

(No comments)

CHAIRMAN CHRISTIANSON: Hearing none.

Summary of public comments, Regional Council Coordinator.

MS. WESSELS: Thank you, Mr. Chair.

Members of the Board. For the record, Katya Wessels with OSM. We had not received any written public comments for Proposal WP20-20.

Thank you.

CHAIRMAN CHRISTIANSON: Thank you, Katya. At this time we'll open up the line to public testimony on this proposal.

OPERATOR: All lines are currently open for public comment.

MS. TEMPLE: Hello. Am I on?

MR. DOOLITTLE: Yes, you are.
MS. TEMPLE: Good afternoon, everybody. I did speak this morning. This is Lorraine Temple. I live in Cooper Landing and I have a home in Homer as well. I was the one advocating rediscussing WP20-20 on my behalf. However, there was a consortium of people that met in November, community members, that got together to discuss this issue.

It comes out of a very emotional place of over years hearing neighbors, community members just very nervous, scared to go out and walk their dogs. They had all year prior. I mean very, like just over the top. The anxiety and stress was gripping in our community. I feel I can probably speak for other small communities as well in Unit 7.

The truth is -- and I brought this up this morning -- that there's .4 percent of the Alaska population that has trapping licenses. That leaves 99.6 percent of the population that does need to, you know, recreate under this very oppressive type of regulations.

I say oppressive in that the traps are able to be set right next to trails. There have been dogs that have been maimed and killed within six feet of a very highly used trail. I think responsible trappers wouldn't do that. I do have trapper friends and they are also appalled by that.

So this issue when talking with my trapper friends in our community and we're trying to figure out what can we do and this buffer. Again, I brought this up this morning how other communities have instituted, you know, Yakutat and Juneau and Anchorage, these very healthy buffers. The Board of Game suggests that we go to our city, our municipality. Unfortunately Cooper Landing isn't a municipality. We don't have a city. I suppose the next step would be to go to the Borough.

I have been in contact with the Seward Ranger District, with the Forest Service. Further dialogue does need to happen. I think we're at a tipping point now where there are enough interested people and enough willingness to work in coordination with our fellow trappers and the recreational users to make this a workable -- you know, come up with something that works for both sides.
I think the most obvious, the best recommendation is the quarter-mile buffer. I know WP20-20 suggests a mile. I think that is extreme myself and I know that is probably asking for too much. We are looking at compromises and we're also not looking to take away from trappers the amount of land to trap.

When I was reading through all this and it said it's going to decrease the area that trappers can trap in. I'm thinking to myself, my God, there's the entire backcountry. What recreational users are looking for to be a safe area is very finite, very small in comparison to the huge backcountry that's available for trappers to do their trapping in.

The enforcement issue. That was another negative or reason why the proposal didn't pass, how do they enforce it. I've also heard this more recently. That is an issue. I will say and let you know that Cooper Landing -- actually we put upon ourselves to have signs put up just asking please keep this areas -- and the areas we're asking for were rather small -- please keep this trap free in this area. Just in these small areas. It was brought to my attention this was not enforceable.

What I think our hope and aspiration is is that with enough years and time of sort of self-establishing, self-regulating, self-imposing, you know, small areas that we can just -- kind of like a dog park in a big city, you know. There's a little small area you can keep the dog and let them run around and please don't trap in that area. It should become a little more established, a little more established, until we can finally get together with the Board of Game, the Alaska Trapping Association.

The Alaska Trapping Association actually came out and put up their own signs along some of the areas that we were looking at to be safe trail areas and asked politely -- the Trapping Association the sign said please don't trap in this area and pet owners please keep your dogs on leashes. That was great. That was a step in the right direction to come into a good common goal here.

The outset of this is that I do hope there can be some further dialogue. I would encourage
and ask for a quarter mile buffer zone from our trails. I think that's much more reasonable. A mile from permanent homes. That seems to be a standard. Five hundred yards would be good. A mile would be better.

To look at these things more critically in the light of this changing face of Alaska, the subsistence trapping that's done in Unit 7 I don't see it as being a necessity for food or for clothing, the traditional uses such as that. I know it's something that is in favor for some people. They do like to trap and I get that. People like to do things I don't like to do and I do things people don't like to do, so I get it.

With this increasing desire to recreate safely and truly wanting to establish more of a winter business, a winter destination down on the Kenai Peninsula that it is contrary economically as people are afraid if they pull out on the roadside that their dog might go off the roadside to go pee and get trapped.

It's just time. It really is time for change on all this. I know I can speak for everybody in Unit 7. I've had a few other communities calling me and say, hey, you know, this isn't just for Cooper Landing. This is for everybody down there. I would put that out there too to the Board to consider this very strongly so we can have a safer area to recreate.

Thanks so much for your time.

CHAIRMAN CHRISTIANSON: All right. Thank you for that. Any questions from the Board.

(No comments)

CHAIRMAN CHRISTIANSON: I appreciate your public comment and calling in on this proposal. Definitely appreciate that you've taken the time to do that.

MS. TEMPLE: Thank you.

CHAIRMAN CHRISTIANSON: Any other public testimony on 20-20.

(No comments)
CHAIRMAN CHRISTIANSON: All right.
Hearing no more. We'll go to the Regional Advisory Council recommendations, Chair or designee.

MR. ENCELEWSKI: The Council felt that this proposal would make regulations more complex, would be difficult to enforce, and users trapping under State regulations do not have such restrictions. Although the Council appreciates an attempt to de-conflict pet owners and trappers, it felt this proposal was over the top. It specifically noted that smaller buffers are more consistent with what is normally done and effective, marked traps would be more susceptible to disturbance by people and that it wouldn't stop illegal trapping.

We know it's a social issue, but we oppose it.

CHAIRMAN CHRISTIANSON: Thank you, Greg. Any questions for Greg.

(No comments)

CHAIRMAN CHRISTIANSON: Hearing none from the Board. We'll move on to Tribal/Alaska Native corporation comments. Orville.

MR. LIND: Thank you, Chair. Can you hear me?

CHAIRMAN CHRISTIANSON: Loud and clear.

MR. LIND: Mr. Chair. Board members, RAC Chairs. Orville Lind, Native Liaison for Office of Subsistence Management. During the consultation session we did not have any comments.

Thank you, Mr. Chair.

CHAIRMAN CHRISTIANSON: Thank you, Orville. Alaska Department of Fish and Game comments, State Liaison.

MR. MULLIGAN: Hello. Ben Mulligan for the Alaska Department of Fish and Game. We are neutral on this proposal.

CHAIRMAN CHRISTIANSON: Thank you. Any
questions for the State from the Board.

(No comments)

CHAIRMAN CHRISTIANSON: Hearing none.

We'll open up the floor for Board discussion with Council Chairs or the State Liaison.

(No comments)

MS. WORKER: Mr. Chair.

CHAIRMAN CHRISTIANSON: Yes, Rhonda.

MS. WORKER: This is Suzanne. I would just like to add that the ISC provided the standard comment for WP20-20.

CHAIRMAN CHRISTIANSON: Oh, yeah. Thank you. My eyeballs are fading here. I appreciate that.

MS. WORKER: No worries. Thank you.

CHAIRMAN CHRISTIANSON: Yeah. Hearing no Board discussion with Council Chairs or State Liaison. We'll move on to Federal Board action on 20-20.

MR. SCHMID: Mr. Chair. Dave Schmid, Forest Service.

CHAIRMAN CHRISTIANSON: Go ahead, Dave.

You have the floor.

MR. SCHMID: While I also appreciate the efforts to de-conflict between pet owners and trappers, I'm going to move to adopt Proposal WP20-20 as submitted by Robert Gieringer of Cooper Landing. This proposal is shown on Page 356 of the Board book. Following a second, I will explain why I intend to oppose my motion.

MR. PADGETT: Second. This is Chad.

CHAIRMAN CHRISTIANSON: Motion has been made and second. You have the floor, Dave.

MR. SCHMID: Adoption of Proposal
WP20-20 would decrease hunting and trapping opportunity for Federally qualified subsistence users. Marking traps with brightly-colored tape could result in attracting more people to the trap and possibly pets.

The mixture of Federal and non-Federal lands bordering roads and trails would create user confusion over where hunting and trapping could occur and preclude achieving the proponent's intent of reducing user conflicts.

Federal regulations would become more restrictive than State regulations, violating the rural subsistence priority mandated by ANILCA. All users would still be able to hunt and trap without restrictions under State regulations, further decreasing this proposal's effectiveness.

Thank you, Mr. Chair.

CHAIRMAN CHRISTIANSON: Thank you, Dave. Any other Board discussion.

(No comments)

CHAIRMAN CHRISTIANSON: Hearing no Board discussion. We'll call for the question.

MR. C. BROWER: Question.

CHAIRMAN CHRISTIANSON: The question has been called. We'll do a roll call vote on this, Tom. Thank you.

MR. DOOLITTLE: Mr. Chair. This is Proposal WP20-20. Request that hunting and trapping in Unit 7 be prohibited within one mile of roads and trails and that traps be marked with brightly-colored tape.

We'll start out with U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, Greg Siekaniec.

MR. SIEKANIEC: Thank you, Tom. I oppose in deference to the Southcentral Regional Advisory Council and the justification provided by the U.S. Forest Service. I also do not believe it is appropriate to implement ineffective regulations as noted by Lisa Maas, Staff of OSM.
However I do sense the need for these types of discussions to be had in local community-type areas, especially with, as I agree, the changing face of Alaska's recreational user, but I don't believe the Federal Subsistence Board would provide an effective means of satisfying that.

Thank you.

MR. DOOLITTLE: Thank you very much, Greg.

Bureau of Land Management, Chad Padgett.

MR. PADGETT: I oppose as well for the reasons already stated and in deference to the RAC. In addition, I'd like to also encourage that the communities get together and work these kind of things out as Greg stated.

Thanks.

MR. DOOLITTLE: Thank you very much, Chad.

Bureau of Indian Affairs, Gene Peltola.

MR. PELTOLA: Bureau of Indian Affairs opposes based on justification provided by the Forest Service in addition to the recommendation from the Southcentral Regional Advisory Council. In addition, we also echo similar concerns expressed by the Fish and Wildlife Service.

MR. DOOLITTLE: Thank you very much, Gene.

Rhonda Pitka.

MS. PITKA: Yes, I oppose in deference to the Regional Advisory Council and I do understand the need for further discussions in the communities.

MR. DOOLITTLE: Thank you very much, Rhonda.

Charlie Brower.
MR. C. BROWER: I oppose. Likewise as stated. Thank you.

MR. DOOLITTLE: Alrighty, Charlie. Thank you.

U.S. Forest Service, David Schmid.

MR. SCHMID: Yes, I oppose for the reasons I shared with my motion and also would invite the communities to invite the Seward District Ranger, the Forest Service, there into any of their collaborative efforts that may help de-conflict some of these conflicts there.

Thank you.

MR. DOOLITTLE: Thank you much, Dave, on that.

National Park Service, Don Striker.

MR. STRIKER: Park Service is opposed for reasons already given. I will say that I really appreciate the public comment on this topic. The Park Service is very sensitive to the non-consumptive user concerns and very well aware of the changing economics of outdoor use.

But I just flat think that this wouldn't work largely because of the differing State regulations. I guess my recommendation would be that user communities start by working jointly with the Forest Service and the State on a joint regulation that may actually prove to be more effective.

Thank you.

MR. DOOLITTLE: Thank you much, Don.

And Chairman Anthony Christianson.

CHAIRMAN CHRISTIANSON: I oppose in deference to the RAC.

MR. DOOLITTLE: All right. We'll call on the analyst to present that to us. Thank you.

MR. MCKEE: Thank you, Mr. Chair. Members of the Board. Again for the record my name is Chris McKee and I'll be presenting an overview of Proposal WP20-22b, which can be found on Page 712 of your meeting materials book.

Wildlife Proposal WP20-22b was submitted by the Ninilchik Traditional Council and requests that an August 10 to October 10 caribou season be established in Unit 15 with a harvest limit of one caribou by Federal registration permit. The proponent also requests that the Kenai National Wildlife Refuge Manager be given authority to open and close the season in consultation with the Alaska Department of Fish and Game and the Chair of the Southcentral Alaska Subsistence Regional Advisory Council.

The proponent states that the requested changes will provide opportunity for rural residents Unit 15 to engage in subsistence caribou hunting and provide for a meaningful subsistence preference.

Endemic woodland populations of caribou existed on the Kenai Peninsula but were nearly extirpated by 1912 due to a combination of overhunting and habitat loss due to human-caused fires.

Four caribou populations currently occur on the Kenai Peninsula. The Kenai Mountain Herd, which is in primarily Unit 7, and will not be further discussed for purposes of this analysis.

The Kenai Lowlands Caribou Herd, which is near Soldotna, Kenai and Sterling in Units 15A and 15B. The population is slow growing and consisted of only 91 animals as of 2018, which is below the State management objective of 150 caribou.

The Killey River Caribou Herd in the Kenai National Wildlife Refuge, primarily in the Funny and Killey River drainages north to Skilak Lake in Unit 15B. It consisted of 413 animals as of 2018, which is within the State management goal of 400 to 500 caribou. Avalanches between 2001 and 2004 killed at least 191 caribou, most of the mortalities being cows and calves.
Then the Fox River Caribou Herd has the smallest range between the Tustumena Glacier and the upper Fox River and Truly Creek. In 2017 a minimum of 59 caribou were counted from this herd and in 2018 zero caribou were counted and it's thought that these animals most likely joined the Killey River Caribou Herd.

Habitat limitations, predation and the effects of climate change such as snow availability and depth, icy conditions and the advance of treeline have allowed a harvest under State regulations from only two of the three available caribou populations in Unit 15 in recent years. That is the Killey and Fox River Herds.

There's never been a Federal subsistence season for caribou in Unit 15 and the Alaska Department of Fish and Game has managed caribou hunting using a drawing hunt. Only the Killey River Caribou Herd has a viable population that currently can sustain a hunt from 2014 to 2018 an average of 24 bull caribou have been harvested annually.

Rural residents have taken approximately 3 percent of the harvest from 1995 to 2018. Nonrural residents living in Unit 15 account for most of the harvest, about 59 percent, followed by Alaska residents living outside of Unit 15 at 27 percent and nonresidents at 10 percent.

If no caribou were observed during the 2018 survey of the Fox River Caribou Herd, no hunt should occur for conservation concerns until this herd reaches 80 caribou. Because of the relatively unstable and fluctuating caribou populations in Unit 15 any Federal permits issued should fall within the same regulatory framework established by the State for those hunts to prevent overharvest.

Establishing a Federal subsistence caribou hunt in Unit 15 will provide an additional opportunity for Federally qualified subsistence users. Providing this opportunity is consistent with Section 804 of the Alaska National Interest Lands Conservation Act, which allows for a priority consumptive use of fish and wildlife populations by rural Alaska residents.
Since the demand for caribou is greater than the harvestable surplus a drawing permit is recommended so that harvest is limited by restricting the number of permits issued thus minimizing the threat of overharvest. Delegating authority to the Kenai National Wildlife Refuge Manager will allow for hunt management flexibility through in-season adjustments and a more timely response to changes in population status, hunting conditions, or hunter access while maximizing harvest opportunities for Federally qualified subsistence users.

The OSM conclusion, which can be found on Pages 725 and 726 of your Board book, is to support Proposal WP20-22b with modification to establish a Federal drawing permit hunt for caribou in Unit 15, with a season of August 10th to September 20th, establish three new hunt areas and delegate authority to the Kenai National Wildlife Refuge Manager to close the season, set the harvest quota, and set any needed permit conditions.

With that that's the end of my analysis.

I'd be happy to answer any questions.

Thank you, Mr. Chair.

CHAIRMAN CHRISTIANSON: Thank you, Chris, for that. Any questions for Chris from the Board.

MR. SIEKANIEC: Mr. Chair. This is Greg.

CHAIRMAN CHRISTIANSON: Yes, Greg, you have the floor.

MR. SIEKANIEC: Chris, would setting permit conditions mean that they could set either cow or bull harvest?

MR. MCKEE: No, that has more to do with some things like a reporting period or how long they have to report to the manager after harvest in the field. For something like that I think you're talking more of setting sex restrictions.
MR. SIEKANIEC: Right. So would that then need to be stated in the delegation letter?

MR. MCKEE: Yeah, if that's something you wanted included, yes, that would need to be explicitly stated in the delegation letter.

MR. SIEKANIEC: Okay. Thank you.

MR. MCKEE: I should also note that as part of our modification I didn't explicitly state during my presentation that we shortened the proposed season dates from August 10th to October 10th to August 10th to September 20th because most of the harvest has previously occurred before September 20th and also to reduce the stress to bulls from hunting activity during the rut which begins around mid September.

CHAIRMAN CHRISTIANSON: Thank you. Any further questions for Chris.

(No comments)

CHAIRMAN CHRISTIANSON: Hearing none. We'll move on to summary of public comment, Regional Council Coordinator.

MS. WESSELS: Thank you, Mr. Chair. For the record this is Katya Wessels with the Office of Subsistence Management and we did not receive any written public comments for the Proposal WP20-22b.

Thank you.

CHAIRMAN CHRISTIANSON: Thank you. We will move on to public testimony. Operator, please make their line available.

OPERATOR: At this time I'm showing no one standing by.

CHAIRMAN CHRISTIANSON: Thank you. We'll move on to Regional Advisory Council recommendation.

MR. ENCELEWSKI: Tony, this is Greg Encelewski, Chair of Southcentral. We supported this proposal as the original proposal. The Council stated that there needs to be opportunity for harvest by
Federally qualified subsistence users and to date the majority of harvest has been by non-Federally qualified users.

The Council noted that caribou populations move around and that they didn’t want restrictions as to where Federally qualified subsistence users could hunt. In addition, the Council noted that evidence supporting the recommendation would be beneficial to subsistence users without necessarily placing restricting other users.

That was our support and recommendation.

CHAIRMAN CHRISTIANSON: Thank you, Greg. So that's different than what was presented by the ISC here in that there was dates established, Greg?

MR. ENCELEWSKI: Yeah, they added a whole bunch on there, all kinds of stuff. We supported it as originally. We didn't agree to the add-ons that came later. So the RAC supported the original proposal.

CHAIRMAN CHRISTIANSON: Is there any questions from the Board for Greg.

(No comments)

CHAIRMAN CHRISTIANSON: Hearing none.

Tribal/Alaska Native corporation comments. Orville.

MR. LIND: Thank you, Mr. Chair. Orville Lind, Native Liaison for Office of Subsistence Management. During the consultation on September 23rd we did have a request from the Seldovia tribe just to review the wildlife proposals and we'd done so and there was no further comments after the proposals were reviewed.

That's all I have, Mr. Chairman.

CHAIRMAN CHRISTIANSON: Thank you, Orville. Any questions from the Board for Orville.

(No comments)

CHAIRMAN CHRISTIANSON: Hearing none.
We'll move on to the Alaska Department of Fish and Game comment, State Liaison.

MR. MULLIGAN: Thank you, Mr. Chair. For the record, Ben Mulligan, Alaska Department of Fish and Game. The Department is neutral on the eligibility and requirements for the Federal Subsistence Program, however, as written, the Department is opposed to the proposal.

If the Board does choose to enact a Federal season, Alaska Department of Fish and Game recommends the modifications that the hunt should be limited to the boundaries of the Killey River and Fox River Herds since these are the only animals available for harvest under State regulations and the season dates should align with the current State season dates of August 10th through September 20th.

Thank you.

CHAIRMAN CHRISTIANSON: Thank you, Mr. Mulligan. Any questions for the State from the Board.

(NO comments)

CHAIRMAN CHRISTIANSON: Thank you.

We'll move on to Interagency Staff Committee comments, ISC Chair.

MS. WORKER: Thank you, Mr. Chair. This is Suzanne Worker. The Interagency Staff Committee (ISC) agrees that creating this Federal hunt will provide a new meaningful preference for Federally qualified users by ensuring an allocation of caribou permits to qualified rural users.

The ISC agrees with OSM's modification for WP20-22b. The three primary Kenai caribou herds in Unit 15 are small, vulnerable to overharvest and slow growing. Consequentially, they require conservative and careful management.

The modification by OSM to align Federal season dates and hunt management boundaries with the State framework is appropriate to reduce regulatory confusion and ensure successful administration of a hunt with limited permits that will be co-administered by Federal and State offices.
To avoid overharvest, proactive, frequent and timely coordination between Federal and State agencies will be crucial, along with timely harvest reporting from permitted hunters. To increase the season length beyond September 20th, as requested by the Southcentral Subsistence Regional Advisory Council, could further stress these small populations by disturbing bulls during the critical rut period, which initiates in mid-September.

Creation of Federal hunt areas that align with State boundaries is imperative to reduce regulatory confusion and to ensure that caribou are harvested from only those populations that have a harvestable surplus. The ISC concurs with OSM that only the Killey River Herd has a population that can currently sustain harvest. Harvest from the Kenai Lowlands and Fox River Herds should remain closed until minimum population objectives are met.

The Federal Manager will have authority to modify seasons, quotas, etcetera, via special action if necessary to improve hunting opportunities or restrict harvest when quotas are met. The recent Kenai fires may have caused negative impacts to caribou habitat and create yet another factor that managers need to consider in setting future harvest quotas.

If proposals WP20-23b and WP20-24b are passed by the Board, there will be three new Federal hunts established that will all require significant time and coordination commitments by the Kenai National Wildlife Refuge staff to administer. Reducing regulatory complexity between Federal and State hunts to ensure successful implementation may be important to consider when evaluating this proposal.

Thank you, Mr. Chair.

CHAIRMAN CHRISTIANSON: Thank you. Any questions for ISC from the Board.

(No comments)

CHAIRMAN CHRISTIANSON: Hearing none. We'll move on to Board discussion with Council Chairs and State Liaison. At this time would the Board like to ask any questions?
(No comments)

CHAIRMAN CHRISTIANSON: Hearing none.
We'll open up the floor for Federal Board action
20-22b.

MR. SIEKANIEC: Mr. Chair. Greg
Siekaniec with Fish and Wildlife Service.

CHAIRMAN CHRISTIANSON: Yes, Greg, you
have the floor.

MR. SIEKANIEC: Mr. Chair. I'd like to
move to adopt Proposal WP20-22b as modified by Office
of Subsistence Management.

The Office of Subsistence Management
modified the proposal shown on Page 726 of the Board
book. Following a second I will explain why I intend
to support my motion.

MR. C. BROWER: Second.

CHAIRMAN CHRISTIANSON: Go ahead, Greg.

MR. SIEKANIEC: Establishing a Federal
subsistence caribou season in Unit 15 in support of the
Southcentral Regional Advisory Council request will
provide additional opportunity for qualified
subsistence users to harvest a caribou and is
consistent with Alaska National Interest Lands
Conservation Act Section 804.

Given the small and relatively unstable
and fluctuating caribou herd sizes, variable permit
numbers and vulnerability to overharvest it is
important for a Federal draw hunt to fully align with
State harvest seasons and hunt area boundaries as
identified in this modification.

A modified closure date of September 20
will align with the State closure date and is necessary
to reduce stress on bulls during the rut which begins
in mid September. As most caribou are harvested before
September 20, this should not reduce success rates, as
was also mentioned in the ISC comment.

Delegating the authority to the Kenai
National Wildlife Refuge manager to close the season,
set the harvest quota and set any needed permit conditions will provide the flexibility to close seasons early if needed. The delegation of authority letter should be modified to include that the in-season manager has the authority to set sex restrictions relative to harvest.

This was mentioned by OSM and I believe I brought up earlier in discussions with Chris. In the overview of the proposal I would like to see the administrative change made so the manager has the flexibility to restrict sex of caribou harvest when needed.

Thank you, Mr. Chair.

CHAIRMAN CHRISTIANSON: Thank you, Greg. The floor is open for discussion. Board members.

(No comments)

CHAIRMAN CHRISTIANSON: Hearing no further discussion. We'll call for roll call, Tom. Thank you.

MR. DOOLITTLE: Thank you, Mr. Chair. We are looking at Wildlife Proposal 20-22b and this proposal with modification as proposed by Board Member Siekaniec is to establish the Federal drawing permit hunt for caribou in Unit 15 with a season of August 10 through September 20th, establish three new hunt areas and delegate authority to the Kenai National Wildlife Refuge Manager to close the season, set harvest quota, set sex restrictions and set any needed permit conditions via delegation of authority letter only.

To be clear this is Unit 15 caribou and that's Unit 15B within Kenai National Wildlife Refuge and Wilderness Areas, one caribou by Federal drawing permit, August 10 through September 20th and Unit 15C north of Fox River and east of Windy Lake, one caribou by Federal drawing permit. Unit 15 remainder there is no Federal open season.

Rhonda Pitka.

MS. PITKA: I support WP20-22b in deference to the Southcentral Alaska Regional Advisory
Council and based on -- hello?

MR. DOOLITTLE: Just for clarification, Board Member Pitka, are you supporting the proposal as I read?

MS. PITKA: Can you hear me?

MR. DOOLITTLE: Yes. Board Member Pitka.....

MS. PITKA: Yes, I'm supporting the proposal.

MR. DOOLITTLE: As modified by OSM and as presented by.....

MS. PITKA: Yes.

MR. DOOLITTLE: .....Board Member Siekaniec?

MS. PITKA: Yes.

MR. DOOLITTLE: Thank you.

National Park Service, Donald Striker.

MR. STRIKER: Park Service also supports the OSM modified proposal in deference to the Regional Advisory Council and for the reasons well articulated by Greg and Fish and Wildlife Service. Thank you.

MR. DOOLITTLE: Thank you, Mr. Striker.

Bureau of Land Management, Chad Padgett.

MR. PADGETT: I support as modified and in deference to the RAC.

MR. DOOLITTLE: Thank you, Chad.


MR. SIEKANIEC: I support as I had stated.
MR. DOOLITTLE: Bureau of Indian Affairs, Gene Peltola.

MR. PELTOLA: Bureau of Indian Affairs supports the proposal as modified by the Fish and Wildlife Service and utilize their justification.

MR. DOOLITTLE: Thank you, Gene.

Charlie Brower.

MR. C. BROWER: I support with OSM conclusion with modification and Southcentral recommendation for support.

MR. DOOLITTLE: Thank you very much, Charlie.

U.S. Forest Service, David Schmid.

MR. SCHMID: Yes, I support as modified with OSM modification and presented by the Fish and Wildlife Service. It's based on the justification provided and in deference to the Southcentral RAC. Thank you.

MR. DOOLITTLE: Thank you very much, Dave.

And last, Chairman Anthony Christianson.

CHAIRMAN CHRISTIANSON: I support as modified by OSM ISC to provide an opportunity for rural subsistence users to subsist on the caribou in the area. Even though the Regional Advisory Council hasn't voted on this, I think it still provides a meaningful opportunity and something for us to look at in the future if it does need to be modified to fit the needs of the Regional Advisory Council. So I support the proposal to provide an opportunity.

MR. DOOLITTLE: Thank you very much, Chairman Christianson. The motion passes unanimously. We move on to Wildlife Proposal 20-23b.

MR. C. BROWER: Mr. Chair, can we take a nature break real quick.
CHAIRMAN CHRISTIANSON: Yes. Let's take a five-minute break.

MR. C. BROWER: Thank you.

CHAIRMAN CHRISTIANSON: I'm staying on. Just a five-minute break.

(Off record)

(On record)

CHAIRMAN CHRISTIANSON: Welcome back from the break. Which one, Tom?

MR. DOOLITTLE: Mr. Chair. We're on Wildlife Proposal 20-23b.

CHAIRMAN CHRISTIANSON: All right. We'll call up the lead analyst and author for 23b, stabilize Unit 15 goat.

MR. MCKEE: Thank you, Mr. Chair. Members of the Board. Again for the record my name is Chris McKee and I'll be presenting an overview of Proposal WP20-23b. The analysis for WP20-23b begins on Page 737 of your meeting materials book.

Wildlife Proposal WP20-23b was submitted by the Ninilchik Traditional Council and requests that an August 10th to November 14 goat season be established in Unit 15, with a harvest limit of one goat by Federal registration permit. The proponent also requests that the Kenai National Wildlife Refuge Manager be given authority to open and close the season in consultation with the Alaska Department of Fish and Game and the Chair of the Southcentral Alaska Subsistence Regional Advisory Council.

The proponent states that these changes will provide a meaningful opportunity for rural residents in Unit 15 to engage in goat hunting and provide for a meaningful subsistence preference.

As mentioned before, goat populations occur in small isolated populations with little overlap with other populations. Predation by wolves, extreme climatic conditions and warm summer days, human-caused disturbance such as helicopter flights and overhunting
can have a significant impact on goat populations.

ADF&G has monitored goat populations of hunting on the Kenai Peninsula since the 1970s and each goat population is managed separately. Unit 15 is divided up into 15 active count and hunt areas. Three count areas are closed to hunting and one count area number 352, as previously mentioned, is divided up between Unit 7 and 15. Also as previously mentioned no goat hunting is allowed in Kenai Fjords National Park.

Mountain goat populations decreased from the 1990s to 2006 and then recently increased to numbers not seen since the 1990s. However not all goat populations have increased. A few are declining, some are stable, while some have stabilized at low numbers.

Unit 15 is comprised of about 47 percent Federal public lands, most of which occurs within the Kenai National Wildlife Refuge. There has never been a Federal subsistence season for goat in Unit 15. ADF&G has managed goat hunting on the Kenai Peninsula through a combination of drawing and registration hunts.

Since 2001 the State has had an early drawing hunt from August 10 to October 15 followed by a later registration hunt from November 1st to November 14th. The late registration hunts are designed to fill any quotas not filled by the earlier season drawing hunts.

Past harvest rates, sex and age structure of the harvest, population size and trends, age of the survey data, ease of access, weather severity are some of the factors used to determine the number of annual permits issued each year. Goat populations in Unit 15 are small and vulnerable, and even at optimal population levels, the harvest of even a few extra goats could result in a conservation concern.

From 2009 to 2018, approximately 62 percent of goats were taken during the early season using drawing permits and 38 percent were taken during the later season using registration permits. A majority of the goats harvested in Unit 15 from 2009 to 2018 were taken from Unit 15C.
The average annual harvest increased from 35 animals between 2009 to 2013 to 51 animals from 2014 to 2018. Again September is typically the month when the greatest harvest occurs. From 2009 to 2018 rural residents took approximately 4-6 percent of the goat harvest. During the same time period nonrural residents living in Unit 15 took between 50 and 54 percent of the harvest followed by Alaska residents not living in Unit 15 with 20-26 percent of the harvest. Finally nonresidents with 16-24 percent of the harvest.

This proposal if adopted would provide additional hunting opportunity for goats in Unit 15 for Federally qualified subsistence users. Providing this opportunity for subsistence harvest of goats is consistent with Section 804 of ANILCA, which calls for a priority consumptive use of fish and wildlife populations by rural Alaska resident. The Kenai National Wildlife manager would need to work closely with the Alaska Department of Fish and Game to monitor the harvest under both the State and Federal subsistence regulations.

The OSM conclusion, which can be found on Pages 751-752 of the Board book is to support Proposal WP20-23b with modification to establish a Federal drawing permit for goats in Unit 15 and delegate authority to the Kenai National Wildlife Manager to close the season, set harvest quotas, set any needed sex restrictions and set any needed permit conditions.

Thank you, Mr. Chair.

That concludes my overview of the analysis.

CHAIRMAN CHRISTIANSON: Thank you, Chris. Any questions for Chris from the Board.

(No comments)

CHAIRMAN CHRISTIANSON: Hearing none. We'll move on. Summary of public comment, Regional Council Coordinator.

MR. DOOLITTLE: Katya Wessels, are you online?
OPERATOR: If you're online, please press *1.

MR. DOOLITTLE: Katya.

OPERATOR: Her line is currently open.

MS. DEATHERAGE: This is Karen Deatherage. Did Katya share the written comments?

CHAIRMAN CHRISTIANSON: No. Could you please do that. Thank you.

MS. DEATHERAGE: I'm sorry?

CHAIRMAN CHRISTIANSON: That's where we're at right now is the summary of public comments.

MS. DEATHERAGE: WP20-23?

CHAIRMAN CHRISTIANSON: 23b, yes.

MS. DEATHERAGE: Thank you. This is Karen Deatherage with the Office of Subsistence Management. Greetings, Mr. Chair. Members of the Board. There were no written public comments for WP20-23b.

Thank you.

CHAIRMAN CHRISTIANSON: Thank you. At this time we'll open it up to anybody online, any public that wants to speak to this proposal. Now is your opportunity.

(No comments)

OPERATOR: Katya Wessels, your line is open.

MS. WESSELS: I do not need to speak at this moment. My presentation has already been presented by Ms. Deatherage. Thank you.

CHAIRMAN CHRISTIANSON: Thank you, Katya. Hearing no open lines for the public to testify. We'll go to the Regional Advisory Council recommendation, Chair or designee.
MR. ENCELEWSKI: Through the Chair.

This is Greg Encelewski, the Southcentral Chair. We supported WP20-23b with modification to prohibit the take of nannies with kids and the take of kids, and to make a hunter ineligible to get a permit for three years if a billy is harvested and for five years if a nanny is harvested and have this restriction in regulation. The Council stated that a drawing permit was too restrictive and wanted to ensure that Federally qualified users would have an opportunity to harvest this limited resource.

CHAIRMAN CHRISTIANSON: Thank you, Greg. Any questions for Greg.

(No comments)

CHAIRMAN CHRISTIANSON: Hearing none. We'll go on to Tribal/Alaska Native corporation comments. Orville.

MR. LIND: Thank you, Chair. Board members and RAC Chairs. Orville Lind, Native Liaison for Office of Subsistence Management. There were no comments on WP20-23b.

Thank you, Mr. Chair.

CHAIRMAN CHRISTIANSON: Thank you, Orville. We'll move on to Alaska Department of Fish and Game comment, State Liaison Ben Mulligan.

MR. MULLIGAN: Thank you, Mr. Chair.

Ben Mulligan, Alaska Department of Fish and Game.

Alaska Department of Fish and Game is neutral on the eligibility requirements set down for the Federal subsistence program in this proposal. However, we are opposed to opening a unit-wide hunt for mountain goats in Unit 15 due to conservation concerns.

We would support the portion of the proposal that seeks to establish seasons and harvest limits with modification to establish a drawing hunt instead of a registration hunt in Unit 15. The proposed bag limit of one goat should not be modified furthermore due to our conservation concerns.
We support modifying the proposal to clarify the following that there should be some sort of quota set up here in the proposal. It would prohibit taking a nanny with kids. Permits allocated within the current state hunt areas and that the areas in which tags will be issued each year should be determined in consultation with ADF&G the previous September/October to the permit year.

Thank you.

CHAIRMAN CHRISTIANSON: Thank you, Mr. Mulligan. Any questions for the State.

MR. SIEKANIEC: Mr. Chair. This is Greg.

CHAIRMAN CHRISTIANSON: Yes, Greg, you have the floor.

MR. SIEKANIEC: Hey, Ben. Generally do you try and get a collection of a biological sample from a harvested animal because of the concerns on goat and sheep populations in Kenai?

MR. MULLIGAN: Through the Chair. Member Siekaniec. We do have them come in to get sealed, but I'd have to double check to see if we're taking genetics off of those. I just don't know it off the top of my head.

MR. SIEKANIEC: All right. The Refuge Manager can certainly work that out if we get there. Thank you.

CHAIRMAN CHRISTIANSON: Any other additional comments or questions from the Board to the State.

(No comments)

CHAIRMAN CHRISTIANSON: Any additional Board discussion with the Council Chairs and State Liaison.

(No comments)

CHAIRMAN CHRISTIANSON: Hearing none at this time we'll move to open the floor for Federal
Subsistence Board action on WP20-23b.

MR. DOOLITTLE: Mr. Chair. This is Tom. Can we back up to ISC comments.

CHAIRMAN CHRISTIANSON: How did I miss that one again. ISC comments.

MS. WORKER: Thank you, Mr. Chair.

CHAIRMAN CHRISTIANSON: Sorry about that.

MS. WORKER: The Interagency Staff Committee supports establishing a Federal goat season in Unit 15 to provide a new priority opportunity for Federally qualified subsistence users to harvest goats on Federal public lands.

Goat populations in Unit 15 are small, unstable, and vulnerable, and even at optimal population levels, the harvest of even a few extra goats could result in a conservation concern. The State harvest framework and permit regulations are subsequently complex and conservative to ensure the risk of over harvest is minimized. Only a few animals may be harvested from each subpopulation without causing a decline. The number of permits allocated per hunt, and the harvest quotas for each unit, are dynamic and based on the survey counts and the previous year's harvest.

Providing a delegation of authority letter to the Kenai National Wildlife manager to set the season, harvest quota, sex restrictions and any needed permit conditions is appropriate, given the need for close coordination with the State to ensure goat populations in various hunt sub-units are not over harvested.

Successful implementation of the Federal hunt will require the in season manager to follow the same hunt framework established by the State. As stressed in the OSM analysis, and by the Southcentral Subsistence Regional Advisory Council, the Federal drawing hunts should not be issued for any goat in the population, but be specific to local populations, as is done by the State. The Board may consider adding this adherence to the State hunt
framework to the Federal regulation or delegation of authority letter to ensure this important characteristic of the hunt is followed.

The State currently has two potential harvest seasons, August 10 to October 15 and November 1 to 14. The gap between seasons allows the State to determine if the harvest quotas have been met or if additional opportunity may be afforded to certain hunt units via registration hunts. Adding this requirement to Federal regulation or the delegation of authority letter, to align with State season dates, may be appropriate to reduce regulatory confusion and ensure this critical coordination aspect is not overlooked.

The ISC asked for legal counsel clarification related to the Southcentral Council's request to limit eligibility following a successful hunt. The Southcentral Council's recommendation specifies that a hunter be ineligible for a permit until three years after harvesting a billy goat, and five years after harvesting a nanny.

Legal counsel responded as follows:

Per ANILCA Section 804, subsistence uses can be restricted only when it is necessary to restrict the taking of populations of fish and wildlife on such lands for subsistence uses in order to protect the continued viability of such populations, or to continue such uses.

Even where this threshold is met, any restrictions on subsistence uses must apply the following priority criteria:
customary and direct dependence upon the population as the mainstay of livelihood; local residency; and the availability of alternative resources.

Since past permit drawing and/or hunting success is not a relevant criteria for implementing a priority, a rule that attempted to restrict subsistence uses on that basis would violate Section 804. The ISC concluded that this component of the proposal that restricts subsistence use is not permitted under ANILCA Section 804.

If this proposal, and proposals WP20-22b and WP20-24b are passed by the Board, there will be three new Federal hunts established in Unit 15.
Each hunt will require significant time and coordination commitments by the Kenai National Wildlife staff to administer. Reducing regulatory complexity between Federal and State hunts, to ensure successful implementation, may be important to consider when evaluating this proposal.

Thank you, Mr. Chair.

CHAIRMAN CHRISTIANSON: Thank you, ISC. I apologize. It's just the way it looks on my deal. I keep missing it. Any questions for the ISC committee comments.

(No comments)

CHAIRMAN CHRISTIANSON: Hearing none from the Board. We'll go through Board discussion with Council Chair and State Liaison.

(No comments)

CHAIRMAN CHRISTIANSON: Hearing none. We'll turn it over to you, Tom, to do Federal Board action. I open the floor for a motion on this proposal.

MR. SIEKANIEC: Mr. Chair. Greg Siekaniec with Fish and Wildlife Service.

CHAIRMAN CHRISTIANSON: Yes, you have the floor, Greg.

MR. SIEKANIEC: Mr. Chair. I'd like to move to adopt Proposal WP20-23b with modification to establish a Federal drawing permit for goats in Unit 15 and delegate authority to the Kenai National Wildlife Manager to close the season, set the harvest quota and set any needed permit conditions via delegation of authority letter only. Kids and nannies accompanied by kids may not be taken.

The modified regulation should read as follows: Unit 15 goat. One goat by Federal drawing permit. Kids and nannies accompanied by kids may not be taken August 10 to November 14.

The original proposal regulation language is shown on Page 741 of the Board book.
Following a second, I will explain why I support my motion.

MR. C. BROWER: Second.

MR. SIEKANIEC: Establishing a Federal subsistence goat season in Unit 15 in support of the Southcentral Regional Advisory Council request will provide additional opportunity for Federally qualified subsistence users to harvest a goat and it’s consistent with Alaska National Interest Lands Conservation Act Section 804.

Modifying the proposal to prohibit take of kids and nannies with kids is responsive to the request made by the Southcentral Regional Advisory Council and helps further align this regulation with State regulations.

Managing sustainable harvest of goats in Unit 15 is very complicated as pointed out in the Office of Subsistence Management analysis. Given the small and fluctuating discreet goat populations, limited permits and vulnerability to overharvest, it is important for a Federal draw hunt to align with State harvest seasons and subunit hunt boundaries.

The need to allocate permits by subunits is necessary as each subunit essentially has a discreet population. Establishing a Federal drawing permit will allow for better harvest monitoring, minimize regulatory confusion and provide the best opportunities for collaborative harvest management and enforcement. It is important the Kenai National Wildlife Refuge Manager align the Federal draw permit system with the existing State management framework in order to reduce the potential to overharvest.

Delegating authority to the Kenai Manager provides the management flexibility to close the season, set the harvest quota and set any needed permit conditions. This flexibility will allow for in-season adjustments and a more timely response to changes in population status, hunting conditions or hunting access. This delegation is also appropriate and necessary to allow for close alignment and coordination with the State.

Federal drawing permits issued by the
in-season manager should contain a request, not a
mandate but a request, that harvested goats should be
made available to Refuge staff for collecting
biological data. This data will be critical and
important to goat management in establishing quotas in
the future.

Thank you, Mr. Chair.

CHAIRMAN CHRISTIANSON: Thank you,
Greg, for that. Any more discussion.

MR. MCKEE: Mr. Chair. This is Chris.
Can I ask for a point of clarification from Greg.

CHAIRMAN CHRISTIANSON: Yes, Chris, you
have the floor.

MR. MCKEE: Yes, Greg, I heard your
motion. I wanted to make sure. Did you intend to
include setting any needed sex restrictions to be
included in the delegation of authority?

MR. SIEKANIEC: I thought we did that
in the regulation by way of the kids or nannies with
kids may not be harvested.

MR. MCKEE: Well, yeah, but it's kids
and nannies accompanied by kids, correct?

MR. SIEKANIEC: Correct.

MR. MCKEE: I just wanted to be sure
that we include those sex restrictions in there because
that only prohibits the harvest of nannies with kids.

MR. SIEKANIEC: No, you're correct.
Kids and nannies accompanied by kids may not be taken.

MR. MCKEE: Right. But what I'm
meaning is that if you don't set sex restrictions in
the delegation of authority, it won't prohibit the
harvest of just nannies.

MR. SIEKANIEC: Okay, thank you for
that. We'll include it.

MR. MCKEE: Thank you.
MR. SIEKANIEC: It would be delegating authority to the Kenai Manager to provide the management flexibility to close the season, set the harvest quota, set sex restrictions and set any needed permit conditions.

Thank you.

MR. C. BROWER: Mr. Chair. Is Greg restructuring his motion?

CHAIRMAN CHRISTIANSON: I think he just added some clarification there to include the sex restriction into the delegation letter just to be reflective of the original motion and its intent. I think it still holds the same. It's just a point of clarification.

MR. C. BROWER: Okay. I was just curious. Thank you.

CHAIRMAN CHRISTIANSON: Any other Board questions, discussions, deliberation.

(No comments)

MR. C. BROWER: Question.

CHAIRMAN CHRISTIANSON: The question has been called. Tom, will you do a roll call on 23b, please.

MR. DOOLITTLE: You bet. This is a vote on Wildlife Proposal 20-23b. This is for one goat by Federal drawing permit. Kids and nannies accompanied by kids cannot be taken. This is also to establish a Federal drawing permit for goats in Unit 15 and delegate authority to the Kenai National Wildlife Refuge Manager to close the season, set harvest quota, set any needed sex restrictions and set any needed permit conditions via delegation of authority letter only. The season would be August 10 through November 14. One goat by Federal drawing permit.

U.S. Forest Service, David Schmid.

MR. SCHMID: Yes, I support WP20-23b with the OSM modification that was presented and clarified by the Fish and Wildlife Service. I support
that in deference to the request from the Southcentral
RAC.

MR. DOOLITTLE: Thank you, Dave.

Bureau of Land Management, Chad
Padgett.

MR. PADGETT: I support in deference to
the RAC and in support of the modified version. Thank
you.

MR. DOOLITTLE: Thank you, Chad.

Bureau of Indian Affairs, Gene Peltola.

MR. PELTOLA: Bureau of Indian Affairs
votes to support with the justification as articulated
by the Fish and Wildlife Service and in addition to
recognizing the Southcentral Regional Advisory
Council's desire to establish a harvest.

Gene.

MR. DOOLITTLE: Thank you very much,

Rhonda Pitka.

MS. PITKA: I support as modified with
the justification provided by the Fish and Wildlife
Service. Thank you.

MR. DOOLITTLE: Thanks, Rhonda.

Charlie Brower.

MR. C. BROWER: I support with the
modification by OSM and the Regional Council.

MR. DOOLITTLE: Thank you, Charlie.

National Park Service, Don Striker.

MR. STRIKER: Park Service supports for
the reasons given by my colleagues. Thank you.

Don.

MR. DOOLITTLE: Thank you very much,

U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, Greg
Siekaniec.

MR. SIEKANIEC: Thank you, Tom. I support in deference to the Southcentral Regional Advisory Council and the justification of the modified proposal I provided.

MR. DOOLITTLE: Thank you very much, Greg.

And last is Chairman Tony Christianson.

CHAIRMAN CHRISTIANSON: I support in deference to the RAC. Thank you.


MR. MCKEE: Thank you, Mr. Chair. Members of the Board. Again for the record my name is Chris McKee and I'll be giving an overview of Proposal WP20-24b which begins on Page 765 of your meeting materials book.

It was submitted by the Ninilchik Traditional Council and requests that a sheep season of August 10th to November 14th be established in Unit 15, with a harvest limit of one sheep by Federal registration permit.

The proponent also requests that the Kenai National Wildlife Refuge Manager be given authority to open and close the season in consultation with the Alaska Department of Fish and Game and the Chair of the Southcentral Alaska Subsistence Regional Advisory Council.

The proponent states that the requested changes would provide opportunity for rural residents of Ninilchik to engage in subsistence sheep hunting and provide a meaningful subsistence preference.

To note there's never been a Federal subsistence season for sheep in Unit 15. Sheep are found mostly in five sub-populations within Unit 15; the Resurrection Trail, Kenai National Wildlife Refuge, Grant Lake, Cooper Mountain and Crescent Lake.
ADF&G currently manages the sheep population in Unit 15 and tries to sample each of the 14 count areas every three years and maintain viable sheep populations of at least 50 sheep. Harvest of sheep sub-populations is suspended if they fall below 50 animals.

Annual sheep surveys conducted from 1968 to the late 1990s indicate that there was between 1,000 to 2,000 sheep on the Kenai Peninsula. From 1997 to 2008 sheep population in Units 15 and 7 declined from 1,545 to 658. Overall, there's been an 80 percent decline since the 1960s. Currently there are only about 500 sheep left on the Kenai Peninsula based on minimum count data.

Climate change, which can affect the alpine habitat, severe winter conditions with deep snow and icing events and competition with caribou are some of the factors that have contributed to the declines in populations.

Sheep are susceptible to overharvest by sport and subsistence hunters in local areas and thus there is need to closely manage harvest for those populations that are easily accessible. Harvesting mature rams is often the most conservative strategy, especially after population declines. Since 1989 full curl management has been in place for most of Unit 15 for the general hunt and the drawing hunts.

From 1992 to 2007 an average of 14 sheep have been taken annually from 2008 to 2018 an average of four sheep have been taken annually. In 2018 only one sheep was harvested. Rural residents account for about 2 percent of the total sheep harvested since 1992. Nonrural residents in Unit 15 take about 66 percent. Alaska residents living outside of the unit account for 23 percent and nonresidents account for 9 percent.

Establishing a Federal subsistence hunt would provide additional opportunity for Federally qualified users and providing for this opportunity is consistent with Section 804 of ANILCA which calls for a priority consumptive use of fish and wildlife populations by rural Alaska residents.

Establishing a drawing permit would
restrict the number of permits, thus minimizing the potential for overharvest. While delegating authority to the Kenai Peninsula Refuge Manager would allow for greater hunt management flexibility through in-season adjustments and a more timely response to changes in population status, hunting conditions, or hunter access while maximizing harvest opportunities for subsistence users.

As mentioned from some of these other hunts, the Kenai National Wildlife Refuge Manager would need to work closely with ADF&G to monitor the harvest under both State and Federal subsistence regulations.

The OSM conclusion, which can be found on Page 778 of the Board book, is to support Proposal WP20-24b with modification to establish a Federal drawing permit hunt for sheep in Unit 15 with a harvest limit of one sheep, and delegate authority to the Kenai National Wildlife Refuge Manager to close the season, set the harvest quota, set any needed sex restrictions, and set any needed permit conditions via delegation of authority letter only.

Thank you, Mr. Chair.

That concludes my presentation on this analysis.

CHAIRMAN CHRISTIANSON: Thank you, Chris. Appreciate that. Any questions for Chris.

(No comments)

CHAIRMAN CHRISTIANSON: All right. Hearing none from the Board. We'll go to summary of public comments, Regional Council Coordinator.

MS. WESSELS: Thank you, Mr. Chair. For the record, Katya Wessels with OSM. We received no written public comments for WP20-24b.

Thank you.

CHAIRMAN CHRISTIANSON: Thank you. At this time I'll open the floor to the public. Anybody on the line that would like to speak to this proposal.

(No comments)
CHAIRMAN CHRISTIANSON: Hearing no public testimony online. We'll move on to Regional Advisory Council recommendation, Chair or designee. Greg.

MR. ENCELEWSKI: Through the Chair. Our Regional Council Southcentral we supported with OSM's modification. The Council stated that a Federal priority needs to be established, providing an opportunity for Federally qualified users to harvest a sheep that does not exist at this time. With the declining population, it is important to set aside this priority before restrictions in harvest occur. Delegated authority will allow flexibility in how the hunt is managed and give the land manager the ability to close the hunt if needed for conservation or other reasons.

That concludes my report.

CHAIRMAN CHRISTIANSON: Thank you, Greg. Any questions from the Board for Greg.

(No comments)

CHAIRMAN CHRISTIANSON: Hearing none. We'll move on to Tribal/Alaska Native corporation comments, Native Liaison. Orville.

MR. LIND: Thank you, Mr. Chair. Board members, RAC Chairs. Orville Lind, Native Liaison for Office of Subsistence Management. During the consultation session there were no comments made on WP20-24b.

Thank you, Mr. Chair.

CHAIRMAN CHRISTIANSON: Thank you. Alaska Department of Fish and Game comments, State Liaison. Ben Mulligan.

MR. MULLIGAN: Thank you, sir. For the record the Alaska Department of Fish and Game is neutral on the eligibility requirements for the proposed hunt. However, we do oppose the portion of the proposal that seeks to open a nanny sheep hunt.

If the proposal is adopted, Alaska Department of Fish and Game would support a
modification to restrict the bag limit to one full curl ram with season dates that align with the State, which is August 10th to September 20th.

Thank you.

CHAIRMAN CHRISTIANSON: Thank you, Ben. Any questions from the Board for the State.

(No comments)

CHAIRMAN CHRISTIANSON: Interagency Staff Committee. I didn't forget you guys this time.

MS. WORKER: Thank you, Mr. Chair. The Interagency Staff Committee supports establishing a Federal sheep season in Unit 15 to provide a priority opportunity for Federally qualified subsistence users to harvest sheep on Federal public lands.

To implement this proposal and avoid overharvest, proactive, frequent and timely coordination between State and Federal agencies will be crucial, along with timely harvest reporting from permitted hunters. Subsequently, aligning with the State hunt framework (full curl rams only) and seasons (August 10th to September 20th) may be important for the Board to consider.

Almost all of Unit 15 is currently open to sheep hunting for 40 days with a free State harvest ticket available to all user groups. Annual harvest from 2010 to 2018 has ranged from 1 to 8 full curl rams. Only the small area in Unit 15A is a State draw hunt and it has not produced a legal ram in 8 years.

Allowing an any sheep hunt that could extend to November 14 would create an additional harvest opportunity afforded only to Federally qualified users. However, allowing the take of sheep that are not full curl may have negative impacts to these vulnerable populations.

Overharvest could occur with an any sheep harvest, even with an established quota, tight reporting requirements and the in-season manager's ability to close the season. Management of small and vulnerable populations often focus on full curl management to maximize conservation measures while
allowing limited take.

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The Unit 15 sheep populations are vulnerable due to several factors: 1) populations are small and declining; 2) habitat limitations due to climate change are impacting their limited range; 3) recent 2019 fire impacts are unknown; and 4) populations are susceptible to over hunting.

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The vulnerability and uncertainty of the Kenai sheep populations warrants conservative and careful harvest management, especially with dual administration of harvest from Federal and State agencies.

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Adopting the State framework to initiate this Federal hunt would reduce regulatory confusion and allow nuances surrounding the administration of the hunt by Federal and State entities to be resolved. Future proposals or in-season special actions to increase season lengths or permit any sheep harvest limits could be implemented over time if sheep populations improve. The current 40-day season provides a reasonable harvest time, and most hunters do not want to hunt near the rut period as the meat is undesirable.

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If this proposal and proposals WP20-22b and WP 20-23b are passed by the Board, there will be three new Federal hunts established in Unit 15. Each hunt will require significant time and coordination commitments by the Kenai National Wildlife Refuge staff to administer. Reducing regulatory complexity between Federal and State Hunts, to ensure successful implementation, may be important to consider when evaluating this proposal.

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Thank you, Mr. Chair.

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CHAIRMAN CHRISTIANSON: Thank you. Any questions from the Board to the ISC.

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(No comments)

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CHAIRMAN CHRISTIANSON: Hearing none. We'll move to Board discussion with Council Chairs and State Liaison. The floor is open for the Board if they wish to discuss Proposal WP20-24b.
MR. SIEKANIEC: Mr. Chair. Greg Siekaniec with Fish and Wildlife Service.

CHAIRMAN CHRISTIANSON: Greg, you have the floor.

MR. SIEKANIEC: Mr. Chair. I would like to move to adopt Proposal WP20-24b with modification to establish a Federal drawing permit hunt for sheep in Unit 15 with a harvest limit of one ram with 3/4 curl horn or larger, a season of August 10th to September 20 and delegate authority to the Kenai National Wildlife Refuge Manager to close the season, set the harvest quota, set any needed sex restrictions, and set any needed permit conditions via delegation of authority letter only.

The original proposal language is located on Page 768 of the Board meeting book. The modified regulation should read: One ram with 3/4 curl horn or larger by Federal drawing permit, dates of August 10 to September 20.

Following a second, I will explain why I support my motion.

MR. C. BROWER: Second.

MR. SIEKANIEC: Establishing a Federal subsistence sheep season in Unit 15 in support of the Southcentral Regional Advisory Council request will provide additional opportunity for Federally qualified subsistence users to harvest the sheep and it's consistent with Section 804 of the Alaska National Interest Lands Conservation Act.

Populations of sheep are of concern on the Kenai National Wildlife Refuge and require very conservative harvest management. To minimize regulatory confusion and provide the best opportunities for collaborative harvest management and enforcement it is important the Kenai National Wildlife Refuge Manager align the Federal draw permit system with the existing State management framework in order to reduce the potential for overharvest.

Modifying the language to allow only 3/4 curl ram or larger will allow take of sheep while minimizing the possible take of ewes. Ewes could be
harvested if the regulation allows for the take of any sheep or any ram. Often young rams and ewes look similar and the 3/4 horn should eliminate potential accidental take of ewes.

The take of any ewes to provide major impacts given the steady decline of this population. Allowing for harvest of 3/4 ram provides a priority to Federally qualified users as the State will only allow the take of one full curl ram.

Aligning season dates with the State is necessary to maximize conservation potential for sheep populations that have been in steady decline since the late 1990s. Extending the season beyond September 20 at the request of the Southcentral Council would increase potential stress to animals entering in the rut and misalignment with State seasons could lead to overharvest of these vulnerable populations.

Harvest of animals that are in rut or approaching rut is generally not practiced as the meat is found undesirable. Adopting the State season will also reduce regulatory confusion and provide the best opportunity for collaborative harvest management and enforcement.

Delegating the authority to the Kenai National Wildlife Refuge Manager to close the season, set the harvest quota, set sex restrictions and set any needed permit conditions will provide the flexibility to close seasons early if needed and reduce the potential for overharvest.

Thank you, Mr. Chair.

CHAIRMAN CHRISTIANSON: Thank you.

MR. MCKEE: Mr. Chair. This is Chris.

CHAIRMAN CHRISTIANSON: Yeah, go ahead.

MR. MCKEE: Yeah, I just need to add a point of clarification. If the Board is going to adopt the motion as just read out by Greg, you can't set it at 3/4 curl harvest limit and still have sex restrictions in the delegation letter. Once it's said in the regulation, the Manager can't change it. So you'd either want to keep it as 3/4 curl the
regulations and take it out of the delegation letter or leave it as any sheep and allow the Manager to make that determination from season to season.

I just wanted to clarify that. Once it's in the regulation the Manager can't do anything about that curl limit.

MR. SIEKANIEC: Mr. Chair. This is Greg.

CHAIRMAN CHRISTIANSON: Go ahead, Greg. You have the floor.

MR. SIEKANIEC: Thanks, Chris. It seems like we're having a similar discussion we had last time when we went the other direction. I am perfectly willing to remove the sex restrictions from the delegation letter since we are authorizing a 3/4 horn ram or larger.

Thank you.

MR. MCKEE: Thanks, Greg.

CHAIRMAN CHRISTIANSON: Any other Board discussion around this. Any other clarification.

(No comments)

MR. C. BROWER: Question.

CHAIRMAN CHRISTIANSON: The question has been called. Roll call, Tom.

MR. DOOLITTLE: Through the Chair. This is Proposal WP20-24b. Adopt as modified by OSM to establish a Federal drawing permit hunt for sheep in Unit 15 for the harvest of one ram with 3/4 curl horn or larger, a season of August 10 to September 20 and delegate authority to the Kenai National Wildlife Refuge Manager to close the season, set the harvest quota and set any needed permit conditions via delegation of authority letter only.

I'll start with National Park Service, Don Striker.

MR. STRIKER: Park Service supports the
modified proposal in deference to the RAC and for all
the reasons so well articulated by Fish and Wildlife
Service. Thanks, Greg.

MR. DOOLITTLE: Thank you, Don.

Bureau of Land Management, Chad
Padgett.

MR. PADGETT: I support in deference to
the RAC as well as the modifications made by the Fish
and Wildlife Service.

MR. DOOLITTLE: Thank you very much,
Chad.

Bureau of Indian Affairs, Gene Peltola.

MR. PELTOLA: Bureau of Indian Affairs
votes to support the proposal as modified by the Fish
and Wildlife Service and recognizing the desire of the
Southcentral RAC to establish a harvest.

MR. DOOLITTLE: Thank you very much,
Gene.

Rhonda Pitka.

MS. PITKA: I support. I support the
modification as stated by Fish and Wildlife Service.
Thank you.

MR. DOOLITTLE: Thank you, Rhonda.

Charlie Brower.

MR. C. BROWER: I support WP20-24b as
modified by Fish and Wildlife Service. Thank you.

MR. DOOLITTLE: Thank you, Charlie.

U.S. Forest Service, David Schmid.

MR. SCHMID: Yeah, I support WP20-24b
as modified and justified by the Fish and Wildlife
Service and in deference to the request of the
Southcentral RAC. Thanks.

MR. DOOLITTLE: Thank you, David.

MR. SIEKANIEC: Thank you, Tom. Yes, I support WP20-24b in deference to the Southcentral RAC and as modified in my justification. Thank you.

MR. DOOLITTLE: Thank you, Greg.

Chairman Tony Christianson.

CHAIRMAN CHRISTIANSON: Yes, I support as modified for the reasons stated.

MR. DOOLITTLE: Thank you, Tony. The motion carries unanimously. That’s one ram with 3/4 horn or larger by Federal drawing permit August 10 through September 20. Thank you.

Mr. Chair, we go Wildlife Closure 20-03.

CHAIRMAN CHRISTIANSON: There we are. WCR20-03. We’ll call on the Staff to present that to us.

MR. MCKEE: Thank you, Mr. Chair. Members of the Board. Again for the record my name is Chris McKee with OSM. I'll be presenting a summary of the analysis for WCR20-03, which can be found on Page 791 of your meeting materials booklet.

Wildlife Closure Review WCR20-03 pertains to the closure to moose hunting on Federal public lands in Unit 7 for that portion draining into Kings Bay. Currently it is closed to the taking of moose except by residents of Chenega Bay and Tatitlek.

In 2014, the Board adopted Proposal WP14-11 to limit those eligible to hunt moose in Unit 7, that portion that drains into Kings Bay only to the residents of Chenega Bay and Tatitlek because of a high potential of the very small harvestable surplus of moose and a large number of subsistence hunters with C&T determination. This closure review was last reviewed in 2014.

The amount of moose habitat in the Kings Bay area consists of marginal habitat located in...
very limited narrow riparian areas along the Kings River and Nellie Juan River. The small area of moose habitat at Kings Bay is isolated with only one accessible route for moose to enter the area across the mountains from Paradise Lakes or Nellie Juan Lake areas and then down the Nellie Juan River, a distance of some 15 to 20 miles over difficult terrain. Interchange of moose with other areas is therefore likely minimal.

Viability of this moose population is low due to the small population, low productivity, limited safe calving habitat, the presence of black and brown bears, severe winters and deep snow and steep terrain, which limits easy movement in and out of the area.

The average minimum count of moose in the Nellie Juan and Kings Bay since 1996 is approximately 10 animals. In 2014, the last time a survey was conducted, no moose were counted in the Kings Bay drainage. The survey conditions during that time were excellent.

In 2019, no moose were captured on four trail cameras deployed in the Kings Bay area by the U.S. Forest Service. Harvest data indicate that no moose were harvested from this area between 1997 to 2000.

In 2000 to 2008, a total of five moose with the average of 0 to 2 moose per year were reported harvested under State regulations within the Nellie Juan River drainage area and the Kings River drainage. This harvest was by non-Federally qualified users, which typically access the area by aircraft. No moose were harvested in the Nellie Juan drainage from 2010 to 2017.

Moose population has been at low density and there are no indications that there has been any increases to justify rescinding the closure. No moose were seen during the 2014 survey and the Southcentral Council supported maintaining the closure or the status quo.

Therefore, the OSM conclusion, which can be found on Page 797 of your board book is to maintain the status quo for Closure Review WCR20-03.
Thank you, Mr. Chair.

That concludes my presentation.

CHAIRMAN CHRISTIANSON: Thank you, Chris. Appreciate that. Any questions from the Board for Chris on the presentation of the closure.

(No comments)

CHAIRMAN CHRISTIANSON: Hearing none. We'll move on. Public comments from Regional Council Coordinator.

MS. WESSELS: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. For the record, Katya Wessels. We had not received any written public comments for WCR20-03. Thank you.

CHAIRMAN CHRISTIANSON: Thank you, Katya. At this time, Operator, is there anybody on the line? The floor is open for public testimony.

OPERATOR: At this time I'm showing that no one is queued up.

CHAIRMAN CHRISTIANSON: Thank you, Operator. We'll move on. Regional Advisory Council recommendation, Chair.

MR. ENCELEWSKI: Tony, through the Chair. This is Greg with Southcentral. Our recommendation is maintain status quo. The Council voted to maintain the status quo with the recommendation for a survey to be completed by the U.S. Forest Service. The Council voiced a conservation concern and the Council would not support a harvest based on the data provided.

Thank you.

CHAIRMAN CHRISTIANSON: Thank you, Greg. Any questions from the Board for Greg.

(No comments)

MR. LIND: Thank you, Mr. Chair. Board members, RAC Chairs. Orville Lind, Native Liaison, Office of Subsistence Management. There were no comments made on WCR20-03.

That's all I have, Mr. Chair.

CHAIRMAN CHRISTIANSON: Thank you, Orville. We'll move on to Alaska Department of Fish and Game comments, State Liaison. Ben Mulligan.

MR. BURCH: Mr. Chair. This is Mark Burch with the Alaska Department of Fish and Game. The Department has no comments. Thank you.

CHAIRMAN CHRISTIANSON: Thank you, Mark. Interagency Staff Committee comment, ISC Chair.

MS. WORKER: Thank you, Mr. Chair. This is Suzanne Worker. The ISC offered the standard comment for WCR20-03. Thank you.

CHAIRMAN CHRISTIANSON: Thank you. We'll open the floor for any Board discussion with the Council Chairs or the State Liaison.

(No comments)

CHAIRMAN CHRISTIANSON: Hearing none. At this time I'll open up the floor and entertain the motion.

MR. SCHMID: Mr. Chair. Dave Schmid, Forest Service.

CHAIRMAN CHRISTIANSON: You have the floor, Dave.

MR. SCHMID: I move to maintain the status quo for WCR20-03. This proposal is shown on Page 791 of the board book. Following a second, I will explain why I intend to support my motion.

MR. C. BROWER: Second.

MS. PITKA: Seconded by Rhonda Pitka.

MR. SCHMID: Thank you. Based on surveys, the moose population has been at a low density
and there are no indications that there have been any
increases in the moose population to justify rescinding
the current closure. Moose habitat in the kind Bay
area is limited and consists of narrow riparian areas
along the Kings River and Nellie Juan River. Severe
winters with deep snow are common in this area and
probably contribute to a high mortality rate and the
relatively low moose densities.

The Southcentral Subsistence Regional
Advisory Council supported maintaining the closure and
the continuation of the current closure to moose
hunting in Kings Bay portion of Unit 7 is necessary for
the conservation of this wildlife resource.

Thank you.

CHAIRMAN CHRISTIANSON: Thank you,
Dave. Any further discussion by the Board.

(No comments)

CHAIRMAN CHRISTIANSON: Hearing none.
I'll call for the question.

MR. SIEKANIEC: Question.

CHAIRMAN CHRISTIANSON: The question
has been called. Tom, roll call, please.

MR. DOOLITTLE: Thank you, Mr. Chair.
This is for Closure Review WCR20-03, closure to moose
hunting in Unit 7 draining into Kings Bay except by
residents of Chenega Bay and Tatitlek and to maintain
the status quo.

I'll start with National Park Service,
Chad Striker. I mean Don Striker, excuse me.

(Laughter)

MR. PADGETT: That would be a good one.
Thank you.

MR. STRIKER: The Park Service supports
the motion to maintain the status quo in deference to
the Southcentral RAC and for the reasons articulated by
Mr. Schmid.
MR. DOOLITTLE: Alrighty, Don. Thank you. Sorry to hybridize you with BLM.

BLM, Chad Padgett.

MR. PADGETT: At least you didn't say Striker Padgett.

(Laughter)

MR. STRIKER: I was wondering if I got your vote too.

(Laughter)

MR. PADGETT: I move to support status quo. Thank you.

MR. DOOLITTLE: Thank you, Chad.


MR. SIEKANIEC: Thank you, Tom. I support maintaining the closure in deference to the Southeast Regional Advisory Council and as articulated by the U.S. Forest Service.

Thank you.

MR. DOOLITTLE: Thank you, Greg.

U.S. Forest Service, Dave Schmid.

MR. SCHMID: Yes, I support the motion as I shared with my justification and also that we'll do some work here at the request, looks like of the RAC, to continue trying to get a survey in to that part of the world.

Thank you.

MR. DOOLITTLE: You bet, Dave.

Rhonda Pitka.

MS. PITKA: I support maintaining the status quo based on the justification on Page 797. Thank you.
MR. DOOLITTLE: Thank you very much, Rhonda.

Charlie Brower.

MR. C. BROWER: I support to maintain status quo for WCR20-03.

MR. DOOLITTLE: Thank you, Charlie.

Gene Peltola, BIA.

MR. PELTOLA: BIA votes to support maintaining the status quo as articulated by the Forest Service and showing deference to the Southcentral RAC with regard to the take.

MR. DOOLITTLE: Thank you, Gene.

And Chairman Tony Christianson.

CHAIRMAN CHRISTIANSON: I support.

MR. DOOLITTLE: Thank you, Chairman.

The motion carries unanimously to maintain the status quo on that closure.

That moves us on to WCR20-41. Mr. Chair.

CHAIRMAN CHRISTIANSON: All right. Thank you very much for that, Tom. We'll move on to that and we'll call on the Staff to go ahead and do the analysis of that.

Thank you.

MR. MCKEE: Thank you, Mr. Chair. Members of the Board. Again my name is Chris McKee with OSM. I'll present a summary of the analysis of Closure Review WCR20-41, which can be found on Page 801 of your meeting materials book.

Wildlife closure, WCR20-41 pertains to moose hunting in unit 6C, both the State and Federal regulations use a drawing permit for moose in this area. The quota is determined by the U.S. Forest Service in consultation with the Alaska Department of Fish and Game.
The antlerless moose season, which is from September 1st to October 31st, is for one antlerless moose by drawing permit only. Federal harvest allocation is 100 percent of the antlerless moose permit. The bull moose season from September 1st to December 31st is for one bull by Federal drawing permit only.

The Federal allocation is for 75 percent of the bull permits. In Unit 6C only one moose permit may be issued per household and a household receiving a State permit for Unit 6C moose permit may not receive a Federal permit.

Federal lands are closed to the harvest of moose except by Federally qualified users with a Federal permit for Unit 6C moose. Moose populations in Unit 6C west of the Copper River have ranged between 296 to 677 animals from 2005 to 2017. Population estimates since 2011 have been above the moose management objective of 600 to 800 moose with a minimum bull count ratio of 25 bulls to 100 cows. Bull/cow ratio during the last composition count on December 2nd, 2013 was 49 bulls per hundred cows.

Because of the relatively easy access to Unit 6C, especially by road and airboat, the demand for moose exceeds the number of moose that can be harvested with hunter success often approaching 100 percent for permit holders. Harvest on Federal public lands in Unit 6C has averaged 65 moose per year, 42 percent of which are cows, between 2007 to 2016.

Harvest in 2017 was 88 moose, of which 38 percent were antlerless. Over 90 percent of the moose taken in Unit 6C are by residents of Cordova. Current regulations for moose in Unit 6C were generated with great community support and has worked well since adopted in this current form by the Federal Subsistence Board in 2002.

Moose populations are stable in this area at over 600 animals since 2011. The bull/cow ratio is above the recommendation of 25 bulls per 100 cows, but is based on one data point collected in 2013. Opening Federal public lands in Unit 6C would likely reduce the opportunity for Federally qualified residents to harvest moose in Unit 6C.
Retaining the closure on Federal public lands in Unit 6C to non-Federally qualified users would maintain Federal subsistence priority and allow for the continuation of Federal subsistence uses on Federal public lands.

The OSM conclusion, which can be found on Page 810 of your Board book, is to maintain the status quo for WCR20-41.

Thank you Mr. Chair.

That concludes my presentation.

MR. DOOLITTLE: Mr. Chair, are we still on?

(No response)

MR. SIEKANIEC: Must be telling you it's quitting time.

MR. DOOLITTLE: Ha, must be. Without the Chair, Rhonda, would you like to take over at this point.

MS. PITKA: Yes. Yes, I would. No, I'm joking.

MR. DOOLITTLE: The next in line should be Katya for the summary of written public comments.

ACTING CHAIR PITKA: Thank you. Katya, would you please submit written public comments.

MS. WESSELS: Thank you, Madame Chair. This is Katya Wessels with OSM. We did not receive any written public comments for Wildlife Closure Review WCR20-41.

Thank you.

ACTING CHAIR PITKA: Thank you very much for that summary. Next would be -- I'm sorry I cannot find my card.

CHAIRMAN CHRISTIANSON: I'm back on here, Rhonda. Sorry about that guys.
MS. PITKA: Oh, perfect.

CHAIRMAN CHRISTIANSON: Where did we end up? Sorry about that, guys. My call got dropped.

MS. PITKA: We were at 20-41, Unit 6C moose. We just did public comment and none submitted.

CHAIRMAN CHRISTIANSON: Okay. Thank you, Rhonda, for doing that. I appreciate the transition there. Regional Advisory Council recommendations, Chair or designee.

MR. ENCELEWSKI: Tony, this is Greg, Southcentral. We maintained a status quo on the present closure.

CHAIRMAN CHRISTIANSON: Thank you, Greg.

MR. LIND: Mr. Chairman.

CHAIRMAN CHRISTIANSON: Tribal/Alaska Native corporations comments, Native Liaison. Yes, go ahead.

MR. LIND: Yeah, I think you missed open for the public testimony, unless I missed it.

CHAIRMAN CHRISTIANSON: Oh, I thought Rhonda said there was none. Was there any public.....

MS. PITKA: No, there was no public testimony from -- there was no public comments submitted to Katya.

CHAIRMAN CHRISTIANSON: Oh, none. Okay. So open the floor to any public testimony if anybody online would like to speak to this proposal.

(No comments)

CHAIRMAN CHRISTIANSON: Hearing none. We heard from the Regional Advisory Council. Thank you, Greg. We'll move to Orville Lind, Tribal/Alaska Native corporation comments, Native Liaison. Orville, you have the floor.

MR. LIND: Thank you, Mr. Chair. Board members, RAC Chairs. During the consultation session
there were no comments made on WCR20-41. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

CHAIRMAN CHRISTIANSON: Thank you, Orville. We'll move on. Alaska Department of Fish and Game comments, State Liaison.

MR. BURCH: Thank you, Mr. Chair. This is Mark Burch. The State has no comments. Thank you.

CHAIRMAN CHRISTIANSON: Thank you.

Interagency Staff Committee comments, ISC Chair.

MS. WORKER: Thank you, Mr. Chair. This is Suzanne Worker. The ISC provided the standard comment for WCR20-41.

CHAIRMAN CHRISTIANSON: Thank you.

Board discussion with Council Chair and State Liaison.

(No comments)

CHAIRMAN CHRISTIANSON: Hearing none. We'll open the floor for Federal Board action.

MR. SCHMID: Mr. Chair, David Schmid, Forest Service.

CHAIRMAN CHRISTIANSON: You have the floor.

MR. SCHMID: Thank you. I move to maintain status quo for WCR20-41. This proposal is shown on page 801 of the Board book. Following a second I will explain why I intend to support my motion.

MR. SIEKANIEC: Second.

MR. SCHMID: Thank you. Retaining the closure of Federal public lands to moose hunters without a valid Federal permit for Unit 6C moose would maintain the Federal subsistence priority and continue subsistence uses on Federal public land.

The dual management system between the U.S. Forest Service, Cordova Ranger District, and ADF&G for moose in Unit 6C currently meets the long term
needs of local users in Cordova, maximizes the hunting
opportunity and encompasses the population biology and
variable access in Unit 6.

The Southcentral Subsistence Regional
Advisory Council supports maintaining the status quo as
this hunt continues to provide an important opportunity
for Federally qualified subsistence users in Cordova.

Thanks.

CHAIRMAN CHRISTIANSON: Thank you, Dave. Any Board discussion, deliberation?

(No comments)

CHAIRMAN CHRISTIANSON: Hearing none. I'll call for the question.

MR. C. BROWER: Question.

CHAIRMAN CHRISTIANSON: Question. We'll move to roll call, Tom.

MR. DOOLITTLE: Thank you, Mr. Chair. This will pertain to Closure Review WCR20-41, which reviews the closure to moose hunting in Unit 6C from November 1 through December 31, except by Federally qualified subsistence users. This vote is whether or not to maintain the status quo.

I'll start with U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, Greg Siekaniec.

MR. SIEKANIEC: Thank you, Tom. I support the motion in deference to the Southcentral Regional Advisory Council and the justification provided by the United States Forest Service and I'd like to note the cooperative moose management plan to ensure that a Federal subsistence priority still exists.

Thank you.

MR. DOOLITTLE: Thank you very much, Greg.

Bureau of Land Management, Chad Padgett.
MR. PADGETT: I vote to support WCR20-41 to maintain the status quo in deference to the RAC and the Forest Service presentation. Thank you.

MR. DOOLITTLE: Thank you, Chad.

Bureau of Indian Affairs, Gene Peltola.

MR. PELTOLA: Bureau of Indian Affairs votes to support to maintain the status quo as recommended by the Southcentral Regional Advisory Council.

MR. DOOLITTLE: Thank you, Gene.

National Park Service, Don Striker.

MR. STRIKER: Forest Service votes to support the motion to maintain status quo for the reasons articulated by my colleagues. Thank you, Tom.

MR. DOOLITTLE: You bet, Don.

U.S. Forest Service, David Schmid.

MR. SCHMID: Yes. Again I support maintaining the status quo for the reasons I shared and also in deference to the Southcentral Subsistence Regional Advisory Council.

MR. DOOLITTLE: Thank you, Dave.

Rhonda Pitka.

MS. PITKA: I support maintaining the status quo in deference to the Regional Advisory Council and as stated on the justification on page 810 in the meeting book. Thank you.

MR. DOOLITTLE: Thank you, Rhonda.

Charlie Brower.

MR. BROWER: I support to maintain status quo for WCR20-41. Thank you.

MR. DOOLITTLE: You bet, Charlie.

Thank you.
Last but not least Tony Christianson.

CHAIRMAN CHRISTIANSON: I support in
deferece to the RAC.

MR. DOOLITTLE: Thank you very much.
Chair, the motion carries unanimously. That will move
us on to Kodiak/Aleutian proposals. That one will be

CHAIRMAN CHRISTIANSON: Thank you, Tom.
So that brings us to 20-25. We'll call on Staff to go
ahead and present us with the information.

MS. MAAS: Thank you, Mr. Chair. This
is Lisa. Can you hear me okay?

CHAIRMAN CHRISTIANSON: Loud and clear.
Thank you. You have the floor.

MS. MAAS: All right. For the record,
my name is Lisa Maas and I'll be presenting a summary
of the analysis for Wildlife Proposal WP20-25, which
begins on page 814 of your meeting book.

Proposal WC20-25 was submitted by the
Kodiak/Aleutians Regional Advisory Council and requests
that Federal public lands in Unit 10, Unimak Island
only, be open for a limited bull caribou hunt by
Federal registration permit from August 15 through
October 15, for the residents of False Pass only and
that the Izembek National Wildlife Refuge manager be
allowed to determine the annual harvest quota.

The proponent would like to provide
opportunity for False Pass residents to harvest from
the Unimak Caribou Herd as other caribou herds are
inaccessible.

Between 2009 and 2017, caribou hunting
on Unimak island was closed under State and Federal
regulations because of conservation concerns. In 2018
the Board approved Special Action 18-01, opening a
limited fall caribou hunt on Unimak island for False
Pass residents only. In 2019 the Board approved
Special Action WSA19-05, which also opened a limited
hunt for False Pass residents.

The population of the Unimak Caribou
Herd has fluctuated over the previous decades, peaking at about 3,300 caribou in 1975. In 2013, the herd had declined to 192 caribou. Since then the herd has been slowly increasing. In 2018 the population estimate was 413 caribou.

The Unimak Caribou Herd experienced extremely low bull/cow ratios between 2008 and 2014, averaging 9 bulls per 100 cows over this time period. The bull/cow ratio recovered to 33 bulls per 100 cows in 2016 and was very high in 2017 at 80 bulls per 100 cows. Between 2005 and 2012, fall calf/cow ratios were very low, averaging only 6 calves per 100 cows. Calf/cow ratio improved substantially in 2016 and 2017 averaging 42 calves per 100 cows.

Between 1997 and 2008, annual reported harvest averaged 12 caribou and those were harvested by nonlocal residents. No reported harvest occurred between 2009-2017 when the hunt was closed. In 2018, during the limited Federal hunt, three bulls were harvested.

False Pass residents have expressed concern over the Unimak Island caribou closure and say that the lack of hunting opportunity is one of the reasons people have left the island. One alternative considered was to keep the hunt closed until the caribou population increased and the bull/cow ratio was above 35 bulls per 100 cows for three consecutive years.

This alternative was not chosen because the limited harvest is unlikely to be a conservation concern and the Izembek Refuge Manager will be able to set the harvest quota and close the season as needed.

Adopting this proposal would provide False Pass residents with a meaningful opportunity to transfer cultural knowledge and traditional hunting practices between generations. The in-season manager would have management flexibility to adjust hunt parameters, including the harvest quota, based on the health and status of the herd. However the proposed season would extend into the rut, which could disrupt breeding and cause additional stress to the animals. Mature bulls are also not palatable during the rut.

The OSM conclusion is to support
WP20-25 with modification to change the season dates and to delegate authority to the Izembek Refuge Manager to set the harvest quota, sex restrictions and permit conditions and to close the season via delegation of authority only.

Shifting the season dates earlier in the year reduces the potential of disturbing caribou during the rut and is in line with the Kodiak/Aleutian Council's recommendation. Just to clarify, the season dates would be August 1st to September 30th. So it's just shifting the season 15 days earlier to avoid the rut.

Also of note this proposal should have been on the consensus agenda since the State changed their position; however, the delegated authority and the Council's recommendation could also use some clarification.

Thank you, Mr. Chair.

I'm available for questions.

CHAIRMAN CHRISTIANSON: Thank you. Any questions from the Board for the Staff. Thank you for that good presentation.

(No comments)

CHAIRMAN CHRISTIANSON: Hearing no questions from the Board. Summary of public comments received.

MR. WESSELS: Thank you, Mr. Chair. This is Katya Wessels with OSM. We did not receive any written public comments for WP20-25. Thank you.

CHAIRMAN CHRISTIANSON: Thank you, Katya. At this time, Operator, open up any lines if there's any public comment. Anybody that would like to speak to this proposal now is your time.

(No comments)

CHAIRMAN CHRISTIANSON: Hearing none. We'll go to Regional Advisory Council recommendation, Chair or designee.

MS. TRUMBLE: Thank you, Mr. Chair. This is Della Trumble, the Chair of Kodiak/Aleutians.
At the meeting last month, the Kodiak/Aleutian RAC approved this proposal. They strongly support a subsistence priority for the community of False Pass. The issue setting the dates to August 1st to September 30th was recommended to align those dates with the Unit 9D, which is the August 1st to September 30th. The Council approved that.

However, I have to say that when I got to Cold Bay and ran into Tommy Hoblet, who is a resident of False Pass, and a subsistence user, he stated that last year because of the weather that they weren't able to harvest any caribou. The one thing when we talked about these dates he said the August 1st is a good date because they get a couple weeks earlier of good weather. He, however, would want to keep the August to October 15th because it allows them just a little bit more time to hopefully harvest the caribou.

In Unit 9D, the caribou season opens August 1st to September 30th and then it closes September 30th, but it opens November 15th to March 31st. Unit 10 does not reopen. It's only open for that period of time.

So deferring to the subsistence users in False Pass, I strongly believe our council who supports the subsistence priority on Unimak would agree that if we could make those changes to August 1st and stay with October 15th, we would like to see that.

Thank you.

CHAIRMAN CHRISTIANSON: Thank you. Any questions from the Board.

MR. C. BROWER: Mr. Chair. Charlie.

CHAIRMAN CHRISTIANSON: Yes, Charlie, you have the floor.

MR. C. BROWER: Can you give me the month, the season. Did you say August 15 to October 15?

MS. TRUMBLE: This is Della. It would be August 1st to October 15th, not September 30th.
MR. C. BROWER: Thank you.

CHAIRMAN CHRISTIANSON: So Della, just for the record, right now at this time, you're saying that you feel the Council would strongly support extending that season two weeks, which is different than the original proposal we have before us?

MS. TRUMBLE: Yes, I believe they would because they would defer to the subsistence users in False Pass. We've always strongly supported caribou harvesting in False Pass for subsistence users.

CHAIRMAN CHRISTIANSON: Thank you. Any questions for Della from the Board.

MR. DOOLITTLE: Mr. Chair. This is Tom. I'd like to interject.

CHAIRMAN CHRISTIANSON: Yes, Tom, go ahead.

MR. DOOLITTLE: Yes, I think it's really important that the Board separates Della's comment, which is extremely well intended to have the August 1st through October 15th season. But again, what the Kodiak/Aleutian Subsistence Regional Advisory Council recommended that stays on the record is that August 1 through September 30th. Just a point of clarification as part of the decision process.

Thank you.

CHAIRMAN CHRISTIANSON: Thank you, Tom, for that. Any other discussion by the Board.

MR. C. BROWER: Question.


MR. C. BROWER: No, I thought it was a motion. Sorry.

(Laughter)

CHAIRMAN CHRISTIANSON: No motion yet, Charlie. We're still at Council Chair. Any other questions for the Regional Advisory Council Chair.
(No comments)

CHAIRMAN CHRISTIANSON: Hearing none.

We'll move on to Tribal/Alaska Native Corporation comments, Native Liaison. Orville Lind.

MR. LIND: Thank you, Mr. Chair. Board members, RAC Chairs. Orville Lind, Native Liaison for the Office of Subsistence Management. During the consultation session we had no comments although I did share some information to False Pass residents and they were actually supposed to call and listen in on all the Kodiak/Aleutian wildlife proposals, but they never did. So there was no comment made on WP20-25.

Thank you, Mr. Chair.

CHAIRMAN CHRISTIANSON: Thank you, Orville. We will move on to Alaska Department of Fish and Game comments, State Liaison.

MR. MULLIGAN: Thank you, Mr. Chair. For the record, the Alaska Department of Fish and Game is neutral on the proposal and will consult with the Refuge Manager to determine the harvest quota.

And, if I may, I will put in one more comment that looking at the subsistence needs of those citizens and looking at -- I know it's not maybe quite as close, but it's still available. The hunting availability on the Southern Alaska Peninsula Herd on Federal public lands where there is no conservation concern is also an option and I know our biologists commented on with that population there could be additional harvest.

Thank you.

CHAIRMAN CHRISTIANSON: Thank you. Any questions for the State from the Board.

(No comments)

CHAIRMAN CHRISTIANSON: Hearing none.

Interagency Staff Committee comments, ISC Chair.

MS. WORKER: Thank you, Mr. Chair. The ISC provided the standard comment for WP20-25.
CHAIRMAN CHRISTIANSON: Thank you.
Board discussion with Council Chair, State Liaison.

MR. PELTOLA: Mr. Chair. BIA.

CHAIRMAN CHRISTIANSON: Go ahead. You have the floor, Gene.

MR. PELTOLA: My understanding in order for a Board member to show deference with regard to take the RAC, we would act upon the modified dates, which are August 1st to September 30th, as voted upon by the Regional Advisory Council.

It's also my understanding that if the agency making the motion would modify that to include the October 15th date, then we could vote on that. Short of a modified motion, then the other option to extend beyond September 30th, which the Kodiak/Aleutian RAC voted on, would be a special action request.

Is my thought process correct?

MR. LORD: Mr. Chair. This is Ken.

CHAIRMAN CHRISTIANSON: I think you are. Go ahead. Who is this?

MR. LORD: Ken Lord.

CHAIRMAN CHRISTIANSON: Oh, hey, Ken, go ahead. You have the floor.

MR. LORD: Yeah, Gene is correct. The deference would be accorded to the motion voted on by the Regional Advisory Council. That doesn't preclude the Board from going ahead and acting on the October 15th date if it so chooses.

CHAIRMAN CHRISTIANSON: Thank you for that clarification, Ken.

MR. PELTOLA: Thank you, Ken.

Appreciate it.

CHAIRMAN CHRISTIANSON: Thank you, Gene. So under Board discussion we're currently at -- I think we all want to support as is. Just a date is the discussion at this point, whether it's the 30th of
September or October 15th as changed by the Regional Advisory Council Chair. So further discussion as far as this motion goes.

MR. SIEKANIEC: Mr. Chair. This is Greg.

CHAIRMAN CHRISTIANSON: Yes, Greg. Go ahead.

MR. SIEKANIEC: Would you modify the original motion or the modified motion of OSM?

CHAIRMAN CHRISTIANSON: I think here, Greg, we would be still looking at modifying the proposed regulation and then we would make a motion on that. So we have the Regional Advisory Council who voted on the date of the 30th, but the Council Chair, who said they'd like to give deference to the rural subsistence user, stated two weeks, basically 15 additional days, probably would help them in fulfilling their need due to the weather impacts that they have.

So we're kind of here now seeing a change in that, but it hasn't been supported by a vote of the full Council, just brought forward by the Council Chair. I hope that helps clarify. That's what I understand it is right now.

MR. SIEKANIEC: Thank you.

CHAIRMAN CHRISTIANSON: So I don't think that we would have a problem modifying the motion or making a motion that would reflect that, but then I don't think were giving the deference to the RAC, which was the date of the 30th. But I think in lieu of recent information it's up to the Board to make that determination at this time.

At this time I will open up the floor if there is no further Board discussion to Federal Board action on this proposal.

MR. SIEKANIEC: Mr. Chair. Greg with the Fish and Wildlife Service.

CHAIRMAN CHRISTIANSON: Yes, Greg, you have the floor.
MR. SIEKANIEC: Thank you. I would move to adopt Proposal WP20-25 as modified by Office of Subsistence Management in the addendum. The proposed language is shown on Page 834 of the Board book. Following a second I will provide justification for why I intend to support my motion.

MR. C. BROWER: Second.

MR. SIEKANIEC: This action supports the Kodiak/Aleutian Regional Advisory Council desire to establish a Federal subsistence hunt for residents of False Pass to harvest caribou on Unimak island. The Regional Advisory Council requesting a change of season dates provides more opportunity earlier in the season and that's reduced potential disturbance to caribou during the rut.

The requested season also aligns the State season for Southern Alaska Peninsula Herd, further reducing regulatory confusion. Restricting harvest to only False Pass residents in accordance with Alaska National Interest Lands Conservation Act 804 is appropriate given the current low population of the Unimak Caribou Herd.

The successful implementation of the 2018 and 2019 hunt that afforded potential harvest of a limited number of bull caribou was appreciated by False Pass residents and allowed them to continue their customary and traditional practices.

Delegating the authority to Izembek National Wildlife Refuge Manager to set harvest quotas and any needed sex restrictions, close the season and set permit conditions should allow for regulatory flexibility to in-season adjustment and a more timely response to changes in population status, hunting conditions or hunter access while maximizing harvest opportunities to Federally qualified subsistence users.

Currently the population is slowly increasing, but remains below State's objective. Consequently, the harvest needs to be closely monitored so as not to overharvest. If pre-hunt population data is acquired that indicates a declining population, there should be consultation between the Refuge, Kodiak/Aleutian Regional Advisory Council, False Pass residents and the State to modify the allowable harvest
or close the season.

Thank you Mr. Chair.

CHAIRMAN CHRISTIANSON: Thank you, Greg. Any further board discussion.

(No comments)

CHAIRMAN CHRISTIANSON: Call for the question.

MR. C. BROWER: Question.

CHAIRMAN CHRISTIANSON: Roll call, Tom, please. Thank you.

MR. DOOLITTLE: The vote is on Wildlife Proposal 20-25, modified by OSM to change the season dates and to delegate authority to the Izembek National Wildlife Refuge Manager, set the harvest quota and any needed sex restrictions, close the season and set any needed permit conditions via delegation of authority letter only.

The regulation would be in Unit 10 caribou. It would be one bull by Federal registration permit. Federal lands are closed to the taking of caribou except by residents of False Pass and the season date in this particular regulation is August 1 through September 30th.

BIA, Gene Peltola.

MR. PELTOLA: Bureau of Indian Affairs supports adoption of WP20-25 as articulated by the Fish and Wildlife Service and in addition to showing deference to the Kodiak/Aleutian Regional Advisory Council with regard to take.

MR. DOOLITTLE: Thank you, Gene.

U.S. Forest Service, David Schmid.

MR. SCHMID: Yes, the Forest Service supports with modification and based on the justification as provided by the Fish and Wildlife Service and in deference to the RAC.
MR. DOOLITTLE: Thank you, Dave.

National Park Service, Don Striker.

MR. STRIKER: Park service supports this modified proposal in deference to the Kodiak/Aleutians Subsistence Regional Advisory Council for the reasons detailed by my colleagues. Thank you.

MR. DOOLITTLE: Thank you, Don.

Rhonda Pitka.

MS. PITKA: I support Proposal 20-25 with modification in deference to the Regional Advisory Council and as stated by the other supporters. Thank you.

MR. DOOLITTLE: Thank you, Rhonda.

Public Member Charlie Brower.

MR. C. BROWER: I support WP20-25 with modification, recommendation from the Kodiak/Aleutians Subsistence Regional Advisory Council recommendation. Thank you.

MR. DOOLITTLE: Thank you, Charlie.

BLM, Chad Padgett.

MR. PADGETT: I support as previously stated by my colleagues.

MR. DOOLITTLE: Thank you, Chad.


MR. SIEKANIEC: Thank you, Tom. I support in deference to the Kodiak/Aleutians Regional Advisory Council and the justification that I provided. I do recognize Della's perspective that has been brought into the discussion of possibly adding a couple of weeks and would look forward to entertaining that in the future. Thank you, Della.

MR. DOOLITTLE: Thank you too, Greg.

And last but not least, Tony Christian, Chair.
CHAIRMAN CHRISTIANSON: Yes, I support
in deference to the RAC.

MR. DOOLITTLE: All right. The vote is
unanimous to pass that particular motion on WP20-25.

MS. TRUMBLE: Mr. Chair. This is
Della. May I make a comment?

CHAIRMAN CHRISTIANSON: Yes, Della, you
have the floor.

MS. TRUMBLE: Thank you very much. And
tank all of you. I guess I'll take some
responsibility for this. We tried to get ahold of
False Pass during the meeting so I could talk to Tommy
to see if he agreed with what we were recommending.
Unfortunately sometimes it's hard to get ahold of
people in the community and the phones don't work very
well over there.

One thing that struck my mind in
listening to this discussion, especially Greg when you
were going through this, his rational at the time isn't
so much as a date. It's October 15th because sometimes
they fish through September, so it gave them a little
bit more time. But I'll work this with our Council
because we will definitely want to do something for the
community as we do strongly support the subsistence
users on Unimak.

Thank you.

CHAIRMAN CHRISTIANSON: Thank you for
that, Della. Again, I think Greg stated, you know,
there's an opportunity as well to do the Special Action
Request. If we do need that additional time later in
the season, they could file for that sooner. It might
be something we could entertain prior to that season,
you know, if there's a longer fishing season or some
other issue that creates a problem for them being able
to meet their subsistence needs.

I appreciate your efforts.

Thank you, Della.

MS. TRUMBLE: Thank you.
CHAIRMAN CHRISTIANSON: That brings us now I think five minutes to 5:00. At this time I think I'm going to look for calling to recess it today. Before I recess it though I wanted to entertain a topic we've heard loud and clear both yesterday in the tribal consultation meeting and the public comment at the start of the meeting both yesterday and this morning about the food security issue that rural Alaskans are facing right now.

We do have a few Special Action Requests that have been coming into the office as of recently reflecting all the hardships that are happening out in rural Alaska. I know the pressure is going to be on the Staff.

With us having a Board meeting this week, it might behoove us to have a discussion about providing some direction so that we can -- to let the public know we hear the situation that is happening on the ground and that us, as a Board, is doing our diligence to make sure that we could expedite the process and make sure that we can truly react to on-the-ground needs of rural Alaskans as it pertains to food security and the opportunity to subsist.

I'd like to open the floor at this time before I recess for the day on food for thought because I would like to say I think it's a topic that we could add to the end of the agenda so we could give some direction to the Staff on how we intend to fulfill that need.

So I open the floor at this time.

MR. SIEKANIEC: Tony, this is Greg.

CHAIRMAN CHRISTIANSON: Yes, Greg, go ahead.

MR. SIEKANIEC: Tony, thanks for bringing that up or bringing that forward. I think it is very appropriate that we have a discussion and I think we need to get ourselves oriented in working with the Office of Subsistence Management and the local areas where these Special Action Requests are coming from and start having our land managers start to engage in the dialogue and the discussion with the communities, the users, the State of Alaska and start
to put together the analysis that would be needed.

Whether it becomes an action to take through a delegated letter or it becomes a Board action, we still need to have the analysis done and the consideration given. I think we really need to set an expectation that these need to start happening. Just my thought.

Thank you very much, Mr. Chair.

MR. PADGETT: Mr. Chair. This is Chad Padgett.

CHAIRMAN CHRISTIANSON: Go ahead, Chad. You have the floor.

MR. PADGETT: Thank you. I agree it's a very important discussion to have. Thank you for taking a few minutes to go over this. I don't know if it's an appropriate question for Ken or if it's more of a policy call. It would be really good to clarify what authorities we may have in regards to this legally between the State, FEMA and the Board. I think that would help guide the discussion at least so that we know we're within our legal parameters.

Thank you.

MR. LORD: Mr. Chair. This is Ken. You have the floor.

MR. LORD: We've already had that discussion with FEMA and have been told there's nothing the Federal Subsistence Board can do would interfere with FEMA's efforts under the Stafford Act. So that's not a problem and they don't need to be consulted.

They did suggest that we coordinate with -- I'm blanking on the name of the group, but there is another response team that was put together to address food security issues where the State of Alaska has the lead. And the Secretary's Office will take an interest in this issue and whether or not it's appropriate to try to address these issues through the Federal Subsistence Board, but we've not gotten any guidance down, but there is definitely -- at least
they're taking a hard look at it. We're trying to work
with Steve Wackowski to work through that. Greg and
others have been on the calls as well.

MR. PELTOLA: Mr. Chair. BIA.

CHAIRMAN CHRISTIANSON: Yes, go ahead.
You have the floor, Gene.

MR. PELTOLA: So far I've heard
delocations of authority. I've heard coordinating with
FEMA. So obviously before the Board could have a fully
informed discussion about delegations, including which
regions have delegations and which do not for mammals
and/or fish.

I think there needs to be a broader
discussion to bring all the Board members up to speed
on why FEMA was mentioned, what that has to do with the
delegation, because some Board members may have had
more exposure than others and we can't have a
fully-engaged informed discussion unless everybody is
brought up to the same page.

MR. LORD: Mr. Chair. I'd suggest
bringing Steve Wackowski into that discussion when the
Board has it. This all came down through the
Secretary's Office. I'm just responding, not the one
raising the issues.

CHAIRMAN CHRISTIANSON: Okay.

MR. PELTOLA: Mr. Chair. Yeah, I
understand that, but I'm just saying that in order for
us to have an informed discussion by the Federal
Subsistence Board everybody needs to be on the same
page before we have that informed discussion.

MR. SCHMID: Mr. Chair. Dave here.

CHAIRMAN CHRISTIANSON: Go ahead, Dave.

MR. SCHMID: Thank you for bringing
this up, Mr. Chair. Certainly I know our staff and
folks have been engaged with Kake and other villages
and areas here and requesting. Whatever we can do I
think it's appropriate this week here during the Board
meeting if we can get fully informed and figure out
what our authorities are and what kind of analysis we
need. But anything we can do to streamline the request I think without overburdening Staff is going to be important.

Thank you.

CHAIRMAN CHRISTIANSON: Thank you for that, Dave.

MR. STRIKER: Mr. Chair. Don with the Park Service.

CHAIRMAN CHRISTIANSON: Go ahead. You have the floor.

MR. STRIKER: I really appreciate that you identified that theme. I had written down some other themes too from our conversations yesterday. Certainly I think regs in conflict with ANILCA was another one. I think we did some good work to resolve that yesterday.

I may say in addition to this topic that you currently brought up we might also want to have a brief conversation about the SRC membership and sort of the back story with the FACA process and so on and so forth just to see whether or not we want to try to take any action as a Board for all the concerns that were expressed with the reduced RAC participation.

Thank you.

CHAIRMAN CHRISTIANSON: Thank you for that, Mr. Striker. That was a very good topic to bring up because that's what's probably number two on the list of security during this week was the lack of appointments. So thank you.

Any other Board member would like to comment or make a discussion.

MR. C. BROWER: Mr. Chair.

CHAIRMAN CHRISTIANSON: Yes, go ahead.

MR. C. BROWER: I think it's just starting, you know. We don't know how long this thing is going to last. As stated earlier by the folks that are testifying that things are getting worse as we're
coming along. I agree with everyone that we should be
looking into this matter seriously.

Thank you.

CHAIRMAN CHRISTIANSON: All right. The
floor is still open. Any other Board would like to
make a comment.

(No comments)

CHAIRMAN CHRISTIANSON: Okay. Hearing
none. I'm going to just add okay without -- I think I
would like to entertain the idea that we just maybe add
this on as another topic of discussion at the end of
the meeting. Add it to the current agenda so that
maybe within two days we might be able to maybe have
another discussion on where we could provide that Staff
feedback that needs to happen. So I'm just
entertaining the idea that maybe we have this
discussion one more time prior to the end of this
meeting.

MS. PITKA: This is Rhonda Pitka. I
support that. I think that people on the ground really
need the direction also.

CHAIRMAN CHRISTIANSON: All right.
Hearing no opposition to that, I think I'll just look
at the agenda here. Under 12, with no opposition to
it, under other business we'll just add this discussion
to the agenda as other business.

Appreciate you guys taking the time to
just hear me out on this and just the importance of
what we hear from the people we represent in rural
Alaska and Alaska as a whole.

So thank you guys and all your support
for that.

Without any other discussion on the
topic, I'll recess the meeting until 9:00 a.m.
tomorrow.

MR. SIEKANIEC: Thank you, Mr. Chair.

CHAIRMAN CHRISTIANSON: Yeah, thank
you, guys.
MR. C. BROWER: Thank you, Mr. Chair.

MR. DOOLITTLE: Thank you, Mr. Chair.

CHAIRMAN CHRISTIANSON: Thank you.

Thanks, Tom.


(Off record)

(PROCEEDINGS TO BE CONTINUED)
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