FEDERAL SUBSISTENCE BOARD
PUBLIC REGULATORY MEETING
VOLUME III

EGAN Convention Center
ANCHORAGE, ALASKA

April 12, 2018
9:36 o'clock a.m.

MEMBERS PRESENT:

Anthony Christianson, Chairman
Charles Brower
Rhonda Pitka
Karen Mouritsen, Bureau of Land Management
Greg Siekaniec, U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service
Bert Frost, National Park Service
Lynn Polacca, Bureau of Indian Affairs
Wayne Owen, U.S. Forest Service

Ken Lord, Solicitor's Office

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CHAIRMAN CHRISTIANSON: Good morning everybody, sorry for the late start. We'll go ahead and get this started this morning with public testimony on non-agenda items. So first off this morning we have Enoch.

MR. SHIEDT: Yeah, good morning, Attamuk here for the Northwest Alaska.

This has really nothing to do with this meeting but we have a lot of Federal people here and I'm going to talk a little bit about the Federal waters. What's happening out there as a hunter and a harvester, I see a lot of debris out there and last few years unexpected time, a lot of migratory birds, sea birds, died off, at Sealing Point and I went out as much as 22 miles from the beach at Sealing Point and I was seeing a lot of birds that died. And I think you guys need to start worrying about what the cruise ships are doing out there and through the narrows between the Russia and Point Hope. I'm starting to hear it, not only -- I'm not the only one that's seeing it. There's other hunters that see it also from Point Hope, Noatak, so you guys need to start worrying about it now and we do it before it's too late. Because we, as Natives, depend on the sea quite a bit, not just on the caribou and other land animals and you guys are Federal and you have control over the Federal waters so something needs to be done, not today, could you start on it yesterday please.

Thanks.

CHAIRMAN CHRISTIANSON: Thank you, Enoch.

Next we have Ben Stevens.

MR. STEVENS: Good morning, Mr. Chairman, and members of the Board. Thank you very kindly for offering me this opportunity to share with you.
The last time I presented before this Board I came out of Stevens Village and brought our people's issues to share with you and unfortunately I was horribly humiliated. I left in defeat. We walk in here during this meeting and it just seems different. It seems welcoming, it seems warm, and for that I thank you because the folks that we have are terrified of this type of a forum. So, Mr. Chairman, and members of the Board, supporting Staff, thank you very much for warming this place up a little bit because it's imperative for our way of life that you hear from the real deal. So for that I am grateful.

As you've heard my name is Ben Stevens. I am Koyukon/Athabascan from Stevens Village. Stevens Village is north of Fairbanks, just a little bit up river from the Yukon River bridge where the pipeline crosses the Yukon. I grew up there. My grandmother raised me. I was trained by my grandpas and my uncles. What you consider the subsistence lifestyle. For work, I live in Fairbanks now and I work for the Tanana Chiefs Conference. My comments here are my own. I just wanted to give you some background as to what I do for a paycheck.

For them I head up the hunting and fishing task force. Essentially that is designed to help advocate on behalf of Alaska Natives hunting and fishing rights. A huge part of that job is helping our people understand the language that is used around all of the tables that are talking about their food. The North Pacific Fisheries Management Council. Almost the other side of the spectrum of your language. The Board of Fish. Board of Game. Even something so local as the local Fish and Game Advisory Committees. Different language. And so part of my job is to help translate that, help people understand the forums that are talking about their foods. That's part of what I do.

And I want to comment just a little bit about some of the things that I've heard here that I just want to just shoot across your radar just so we're -- you're cognizant of some of the things that I am facing when I try to do my job.

Mr. Orville Lind, the other day mentioned that he inadvertently gave out his phone number and before he knew it it started lighting up. And what I want to tell Orville is that that may be a
huge inconvenience to you but if the people are calling
that's a good thing. Grab them. Help them through this
quagmire.

A couple of other things that are
related to communication is that there is none out
there in rural Alaska. We talk about internet,
connectivity, that is spy to say the least. My little
village of Stevens Village, there is no internet there,
and when they do, when the Council office does get some
it's spotty. Communication is utterly, utterly
frustrating. It's spotty. The fax machine doesn't
work. The phone is in and out. And so I have a huge
challenge in communicating with my own village. A
nearby village, they only get internet for one hour a
day. And so if you're trying to reach them via email
you got to wait a whole day until they can reach that
one hour that they've got connectivity. Needless to
say some villages don't even get snail mail. Stevens
Village, you're lucky if you do get a plane coming in
there.

Another thing that's related to
communication is that what I have found is that we all
speak -- to some degree we all speak English but the
English that is spoken in Arctic Village is different
than it's spoken in Birch Creek, it's different as
spoken in Tanana all the way down to Grayling, Holy
Cross. It's different. And so given that, the
opportunity for miscommunication is huge. 80 to 90
percent of the challenges in my day is because I didn't
read somebody right. And so knowing that, I think that
exercising just a little bit more effort in trying to
understand those that you serve I think would be
greatly appreciated and I think it would reap much
better results, be more effective at getting the job
done and helping subsistence users to continue their
way of life.

That is incredibly important when it
comes to, not just continuing their way of life, but
sustenance. Somewhere down the line you're going to
hear from a gentleman I was talking to back here where
he was saying that his method of hunting is against
Refuge rules. Apparently there's a definition in the
Refuge system that says that his method of hunting is
illegal. And I think that's tragic. Because he either
is a law abiding citizen or he goes hungry and I think
that that is something that we need to work hard at
understanding and help him. Help him feed his family.

And so a slightly different tangent, I want to mention that a lot of the work that I do involves the RACs, Board of Game, and the ACs. One of the things that I've heard over and over from you and from everyone else out there is that we need more Alaska Native voices in these forums, sitting on the Boards, Commissions, Councils and Committees. We've been working very hard, I've been trying desperately to help Katyia and Zach find qualified Alaska Native people, the subsistence user to apply to these RACs and I have been successful. We've been, in the past couple of years, we've been successful in getting more people from, oh, no, way, I'm not going there, over here, to not only going to a meeting but actually applying to sit on these RACs and when their applications go in I'm told it goes into a void. I think that that is a huge problem. The reason why I think that's a huge problem is that we have highly qualified folks that are very capable at helping us understand, make the connections, passed over for someone that is not.

Let me give you an example.

Once we presented a highly qualified, well read, well spoken, Alaska Native subsistence user to the system, they applied, and that person was passed over for a person that -- not well read, not well spoken, sometimes goes to the meeting, sometimes goes to the meeting not well. Mr. Chairman, members of the Board, I see that as a challenge. Now, I don't know what happens in that void there but that is definitely a problem. When we can't get those well read, well spoken individuals to the table. That's just one issue that I have.

And because I know you're way behind schedule I'll defer the rest of it.

I do want to make a comment on a couple of the proposals that you're going to be looking at. Several deal with Federal closures. Basically holding a chunk of land reserved for Federally-qualified users. I believe those proposals are 22, 37, 38, 46 and 56, 56 being the issue that keeps coming up over and over and over again, and that's the Sheep Creek area up there by the Arctic Village people. I do believe that we need to give them additional consideration. These
folks are out there, they are struggling as it is to survive. Not to do well, to survive. Arctic Village, they pay $12 for a dozen eggs. $8 to $10 for a loaf of bread. Now, tell me it makes sense to swamp them with a whole bunch of additional hunting pressure. That is not serving the subsistence user, sir. I beg you to give those proposals extra attention.

Another one that I want to mention, I briefly alluded to earlier was the gentleman that was having a problem hunting caribou because his hunting method was contrary to what's in your regulations, the rules of the Refuges, and I believe that's 24. There's got to be some middle ground here. The story that he told about his experiences with the enforcement officer, him being humiliated in front of his family is horrible. That, I think, is where we can help.

Mr. Chairman and members of the Board, I really do appreciate all the hard work that you folks do. Your support Staff, I'm just -- I'm flabbergasted to see the book that you folks have to deal with, but I really do appreciate your hard work and I look forward to serving you as you serve those people out there in rural Alaska.

And I would be happy to answer questions. I promise, I'll be brief in my answers.

CHAIRMAN CHRISTIANSON: Any questions for him.

Ms. PITKA: I'd just like to know why our Arctic Village people aren't here to defend their proposal?

MR. STEVENS: Wow, that's a -- seemingly that's obvious, but that's a good -- a very good point. This proposal has come up over and over and over again and they have been to all of these meetings trying desperately to convey to you their needs. They just cannot keep doing it. It's a tremendous amount of money, maybe 500 bucks just to get out of Arctic Village, they can't afford it. I mentioned earlier, that small villages have a very difficult time with teleconferencing equipment, that's incredibly difficult too. They would like to be here
Mr. Chairman, I mentioned -- when I started this I said that sometimes these environments can be slightly uncomfortable to our people, that is not an exaggeration, especially considering the fact that the last time this discussion happened, discussing the Red Sheep Creek issue there were horrible, hateful, racist comments made at the RAC towards the Arctic Village people. That is absolutely unacceptable. If someone was saying those things about me and my village, I would not go to the meeting either. So maybe, you know, it definitely has something to do with cost but if you're not welcome in the room then, you know, you're very reluctant to go.

That was a longwinded answer, I apologize.

CHAIRMAN CHRISTIANSON: Thank you. And we apologize for anybody being uncomfortable at our meetings.

Any other questions.

MR. G. BROWER: I got one.

CHAIRMAN CHRISTIANSON: Gordon.

MR. G. BROWER: The proposal, and I think because we had C&T from Kaktovik in that area as well, we had a chance to review the concern. And being inquisitive as I am in trying to seek some underlying concerns about population, the trend, the stock, recruitment and things like that, it really didn't support being able to extend to non-Federally-qualified users when I recall a review from the North Slope RAC, and I think we supported the closure and limit it in those kind of situations and considering the dialogue about the very same issues we struggle with from Anaktuvuk Pass and other villages that express the concern to put food on the table and be very, very alarmed as we move forward and try to express these concerns so that we can convey effectively to the Federal Subsistence Board the very issues that we struggle with.

You know I'm equally concerned about the level of public testimony that slights the Native
community because we had that happen recently in Barrow, we had a carcass testify in the community and downcasted the Natives as wasteful, almost heathens of testimony when they get a carcass from somebody's yard and put it on the podium and look at what these Natives are doing. I found this in a yard, well, I think he stole it, it looked good, when we keep our food outside because we don't -- everybody doesn't have a refrigerator. The Arctic is a natural refrigerator. A lot of our caribou meat and frozen foods are naturally refrigerated in our yards. And these are the types of things that we are seeing in -- there's a major struggle that is going on.

I don't want to go any more than I need to on these things. But I think it's important to describe these things, what we -- what the villages go through and the struggles. Like Anaktuvuk Pass, you know, 12, $14 a gallon of fuel, no wonder people have to pool resources to try to be effective. This is the challenges in having fly in hunters in front of migrating animals to deflect them is a major hardship and a major issue.

Thank you.

CHAIRMAN CHRISTIANSON: Thank you, Gordon.

Thank you.

MR. STEVENS: Thank you, sir.

CHAIRMAN CHRISTIANSON: Is there anybody on the phone who would like to testify.

(No comments)

CHAIRMAN CHRISTIANSON: Operator.

OPERATOR: And if you would like to make a comment or ask a question, please press star-one.

(No comments)

OPERATOR: And I'm showing no questions coming from -- oh, one moment.
OPERATOR: Ivan Demientieff, Grayling Tribe, your line is open.

MR. DEMIENIEFF: Yes, Mr. Chairman, and fellow respected members of the Board. Today I am calling in to testify on behalf of 18-33 and 18-36, I believe they're combined for the shortening of the moose hunt down there in 21E, Unit 21E of Grayling and Holy Cross, Shageluk and Anvik.

You know the shortening of the moose hunt, there's a lot about -- as the First Chief of my village and I'm speaking on behalf of Grayling, my people come to me when they're in time of need, my people are, you know, and it just so happens that you read further on in the proposal that they're saying that none of us utilize this Federal hunt but I have news for that, all of our people depend on the Federal hunt more than you think. Food is so tough out there as it is and this is a big window for us to be out on our lands hunting without facing the outside hunters that come in in the State hunt.

So, you know, I don't see -- so I'm opposing 18-33.

And then following in line with 18-36, I'm opposing that also.

I apologize for not taking advantage of our tribal consultation with you but I just wanted to make that comment today and I appreciate everything that you guys do as a Board and I thank you for your time today.

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

(NO comments)

CHAIRMAN CHRISTIANSON: Appreciate that.

At this time now we'll entertain the public on consensus agenda items, and first up we'll call Tommy Kriska.
MR. KRISKA: Thank you, Mr. Chairman and members of the Board. My name's Tom Kriska. I'm originally from Koyukuk down in the Yukon area and one of the reasons that this -- this was brought up to me is I do travel all over and knowing a lot of people up and down the Yukon River. I spend a lot of my time traveling, building houses and knowing a lot of people all the way from Fairbanks all the way down towards Russian Mission and up to Huslia, Allakaket area.

And just kind of -- this was brought to my attention yesterday, I just got a phone call from three different chiefs to try to put this on the consensus to kind of oppose this 18-33 and 18-36. So I hope that with your heart you'll see that.

Because the rest of us, all the way up the river, we do have that hunt and it's a real good tool for a lot of our folks because a lot of them folks are 60, 70 years old and they like to hunt before a lot of people get there because trying to, you know, trying to hunt with others around there's a lot of boats that go there, there's way too many. The older people, they don't have a chance. It's just like you throw a big bag of candy out there, all the -- everybody else is grabbing it before they can even grab anything, and you could see at the end that they might have one or nothing.

So it's just a good thing that this is coming out and we have a chance to try to do something about it and I hope at some point it will.

That's one of my missions, I always try to help the people everywhere I go. So I'm on a lot of -- sit on a lot of other boards and the Western Interior Regional Council, the Middle Yukon Advisory, the City Council, Fairbanks Outboard Association, commodore for that, and I do a lot of other things to just try to help the people in a way to benefit their lives and make it a lot easier. And when a lot of things come up I always get calls all the time, no matter where I'm at so I have to stand for them and I always will and I've always been.

So, I guess -- and there was other -- I guess it's my time to speak right now because you must have pulled my card there.
CHAIRMAN CHRISTIANSON: (Nods affirmatively)

MR. KRISKA: Okay. Just a little bit about the rules and regulations to change. I think that, you know, going back to ANILCA, Title VIII, way back when that was written, there was a lot of commotion going on, they needed a way to get through our land and that Title VIII and some other .801, eight through 10, a lot of those were all written to make the way through our land. A lot of it is really good and it might have to be revisited at some point. Because the way it is and the rules and regulations, the Federal Board and everybody else that's supposed to go by a lot of this is still really technically not following it. It's just -- it's nobody's fault, it's not you guys' fault, it goes back to, as the world turns, a lot of changes. So the Board that was there that made a lot of these decisions, the people out here who was there to write these rules and regulations, they're not here today. Every other year it changes, every other year it changes and it will continue changing, 30 years from now none of us will be here, there'll be a new bunch. So we have to pretty much adjust the rules and regulations the best we can today.

It's going to be different. It'll be hard. But I believe that, you know, I really like being here because -- and then from what I've seen, just to go about this consensus the way you guys pulled it off, I mean that thing would have went out the door in a minute and we would have -- scramble to it, and I'm really thankful for you guys there.

And there's just like the way the rules and regulations are written, right now, my grandma, she taught me a lot of ways, you know, taught me about hunting, fishing and everything like that, and I can't really hunt that way, there's no way because of the way the rules and regulations are written. I can't do it. And it's sad. Grandma, thinking about her out in the woods, it's pretty sad and pretty hard, you know, your heart gets heavy because you can't do some of this stuff and it's kind of, I don't know, heartbreaking for me.

There's a couple of proposals I support here, it's 18-24 and there's a few that I will oppose, there's the 18-36 and the ones we're talking about...
right now. I had a lot of other things written but just the last minute this proposal and this phone call kind of threw me for a loop a little bit so I kind of apologize for that and I think that in time that we all are here and we start recognizing each other and what we have to do, I really appreciate the fact that you guys are there, and know some of you guys. I was kind of -- as well as I went to the Board of Game and getting there to the Board of Game meetings back in November, I was kind of thinking I've been on these boards before but still get a little shy but after I figured out who was who, I really felt at home and that we could talk about these things and get something done.

And to tell you the truth right now, we don't have a lot of time and we all want to do the right thing, and so let's just do the right thing and get all these matters behind us because what I'm worried about is our kids in the future. If we don't do it now and you can really think about it, our kids now days, their lifestyles are changing. There's a lot of rap music going on and a lot of drugs out there, a lot of different things that's kind of pulling away from our traditional values, our way of life and it's heartbreaking, and I know it's going to happen, we're probably the last chance right now to fix these rules and regulations the way they need to be done, and I really hope and I will possibly dedicate a lot of my time in my life to make sure that happens.

And I just want to let you know that and I really am thankful for -- now that I know a lot of you guys and I know there's hope, I really appreciate it and I thank you guys for being there and as well as the Staff here. And let's fix this. Somehow we got -- we don't want this to keep going on and on because of our people, like some of our folks said, that the fuel up north, I mean the way they talked about is bread and things being $12 a dozen, you go a little farther north, you're paying $14 a gallon of gas and I've seen $16 on a quart of oil, you imagine that and try to buy the dozen eggs and then look at your kids, we're going to have to fix that otherwise to tell you the truth we're all going to break the laws in order to feed those kids, and I imagine if you guys were sitting out there you'd do the same thing.

So let's just kind of get it together
here and make it happen.

Okay, thank you very much.

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

MR. SIEKANIEC: Thank you, Mr. Chair.

Greg Siekaniec. Thank you, Tommy, for your thoughts and your comments.

Just clarify for me, are you asking the Board to remove the 18-33 and 36 from the consent agenda?

MR. KRISKA: Yes.

MR. SIEKANIEC: Okay.

CHAIRMAN CHRISTIANSON: Yes, and as well as Ivan on the phone, we did receive a letter from three tribal chiefs requesting that we reconsider that as well.

MR. REAKOFF: Mr. Chairman. Jack Reakoff, Chair, Western Interior Council. When we deliberated this proposal, we requested comments -- we only got comments from the Advisory Committee, which was supporting these proposals but now we have people who are opposed to the proposal, and so I'm fully in favor of the Board deliberating the proposals with more input from the public, in the public process. So I'm fully in support of removing this from the consensus agenda on to the non-consensus agenda.

CHAIRMAN CHRISTIANSON: Can we get a motion.

MS. PITKA: I'd like to make a motion to remove 18-33 and 18-36 to the non-consensus agenda with the knowledge that this makes us up to 49 proposals that we have not considered yet.

(Laughter)

MR. SIEKANIEC: Second.

MS. MOURITSEN: Second.
MR. SIEKANIEC: This is Greg, I'll second that, and I recognize that as well.

(Laughter)

CHAIRMAN CHRISTIANSON: Okay. Any discussion on that.

(No comments)

CHAIRMAN CHRISTIANSON: Call for the question.

MR. C. BROWER: Question.

CHAIRMAN CHRISTIANSON: All in favor say aye.

IN UNISON: Aye.

CHAIRMAN CHRISTIANSON: Opposed, same sign.

(No opposing votes)

CHAIRMAN CHRISTIANSON: Motion carries unanimously.

MR. KRISKA: Thank you.

CHAIRMAN CHRISTIANSON: There you go.

MR. KRISKA: Good man -- or, good group.

(Laughter)

CHAIRMAN CHRISTIANSON: I'm glad you thought it was warm in here this morning.

(Laughter)

MR. KRISKA: Yep, okay, you guys have a nice day.

CHAIRMAN CHRISTIANSON: Bruce Thomas.

MR. THOMAS: Good morning, Mr. Chair, Subsistence Federal Board and Staff. My name is Bruce
Thomas. I come from Fort Yukon in the Yukon Flats and I'm the CATG natural director for the Council of Athabascan Tribal Governments, which is a consortium of 10 tribes up in the Flats and encompasses like a 250,000 square mile area.

I'm here to testify on Proposal 18-56, Wildlife Proposal, to rescind the Federal lands closure in Arctic Village Sheep Management Area, specifically the Red Sheep Creek drainage.

The people of the Yukon Flats oppose that proposal and the reason being the Red Sheep Creek area is a customary and traditionally use area for sheep and other wildlife for the Gwich'in of Arctic Village. And the Red Sheep Creek drainage is a sacred and spiritual place for the Gwich'in of Arctic Village and besides that the local residents do not need any more competition for their subsistence foods.

That's all I have, sir.

CHAIRMAN CHRISTIANSON: Thank you. And I appreciate you getting in your testimony before you're taking off this afternoon. Have safe travels.

MR. THOMAS: All right.

CHAIRMAN CHRISTIANSON: We'll make sure that your testimony is noted during the time of that proposal.

Thank you.

MR. THOMAS: Thank you.

CHAIRMAN CHRISTIANSON: That brings us back to -- anybody on the phone.

(No comments)

CHAIRMAN CHRISTIANSON: Operator, is there anybody else who would like to testify on the phone.

OPERATOR: Thank you. We have a Eugene Paul, your line is open.

MR. PAUL: Yeah, good morning, Mr.
Chairman and Board members. I was speaking on behalf of my village of Holy Cross but you guys pulled 19-36 and 19 -- or, 18, I'm sorry 18-33 from the consensus so I was going to contest to that -- but I mean do not contest to that, I was not in favor of that proposal so I would -- I really appreciate the sacrifices you guys do on behalf of our people in Alaska and thank you.

That's all I need to say.

CHAIRMAN CHRISTIANSON: Thank you for that.

Any questions for him.

(No comments)

CHAIRMAN CHRISTIANSON: Thank you for calling in today.

OPERATOR: And we do have another question on the -- person on the phone, Carol Wesley, your line is open.

CHAIRMAN CHRISTIANSON: You have the floor.

OPERATOR: Please go ahead, Ms. Wesley, your line is open.

(No comments)

OPERATOR: Please check the mute feature on your phone.

(No comments)

OPERATOR: Go ahead your line is open, Carol Wesley.

(No comments)

OPERATOR: Okay, I'm not getting a response from that line, and I show no one else in cue.

CHAIRMAN CHRISTIANSON: Thank you, Operator.

All right, we have a couple of announcements and then we're going to get on to our
order of business today.

Those interested in attending the lunch with the Mt. Edgecumbe students, we will be meeting at the Willawa just across from the courtyard to have lunch and discussion. If you have not indicated your interest but would like to go, please let the Southeast coordinator, Deanna Perry, know between now and 11:00 a.m., so we can make sure there’s enough seats at the restaurant.

And, please don't forget to vote on the artwork outside -- oh, the artwork's on the inside over here.

(Pause)

CHAIRMAN CHRISTIANSON: WP19 -- oh, 18-19.

(Laughter)

CHAIRMAN CHRISTIANSON: Sorry, Staff, we're going to start back with the regular order. Yesterday was a time certain for this proposal and so we still have a few things that we would like to mull over on this proposal and so we're going to start with the regular order of the agenda and then we'll get to this one later in the day. Yes.

That brings us to Southeast.

WP18-04.

MR. SUMINSKI: Mr. Chairman. Members of the Board and Council Chairs. My name is Terry Suminski. I'm with the United States Forest Service and manage the Subsistence Program for the Tongass National Forest. I'd like to have Luke have him introduce himself.

MR. DECKER: Mr. Chair. Members of the Board. My name is Luke Decker. I'm currently a wildlife biologist in Craig, Alaska from Southeast and I'm here to provide any answers to questions that may be asked.

MR. SUMINSKI: The executive summary for WP18-04 can be found on Page 632 of your books and...
the analysis begins on Page 635.

Proposal 18-04 was submitted by the Southeast Alaska Subsistence Regional Advisory Council and requests increasing the wolf harvest quota on Federal lands in Unit 2 to up to 30 percent of the most recent population estimate for the unit. The Council seeks to increase the allowable take of wolves on Federal lands in Unit 2 and is concerned that previous quotas have been too conservative. Unit 2 wolf harvest is managed under harvest quota. A guideline harvest level for Unit 2 wolves was set initially by the Alaska Board of Game in 1997 at 25 percent of the most recent population estimate. In 2000 it was raised to 30 percent, following an analysis indicating lower levels of natural mortality in Unit 2 wolves compared to other wolf populations. In January of 2015 the Board of Game reduced the harvest level to up to 20 percent of the fall population due to an apparent population decline.

Wolf populations are difficult to assess in Southeast Alaska due to the dense forest cover.

Research during the 1990s estimated the 1994 wolf population at 356 wolves. During the early to mid-2000s ADF&G estimated the wolf population at approximately 326 animals, which is similar to the estimate from '94. From 2012 to present research was initiated to develop a more efficient and cost effective technique to estimate wolf numbers. The new research included implementing hair boards to collect wolf hair samples for DNA fingerprinting, which enables the researchers to identify individual wolves and to determine a wolf population estimate in the project area using mark/recapture techniques. Data collected during 2012 proved insufficient to estimate the population using the mark/recapture technique but an estimate of 106 wolves was generated using radio collar methods. The mark/recapture methods produced wolf population estimates of 221 wolves in 2013, 89 wolves in 2014, 108 wolves in 2014.

Wolves can be harvested either with a firearm under hunting regulations or by trap, snare or firearm under trapping regulations with 93 percent of the harvest taken by Federally-qualified users.

Since 1985 59 percent of the wolves
have been harvested by hunters and trappers using boats
with harvest typically occurring on State tide lands.

The OSM recommendation is to oppose
this proposal with the following justification.

Since the proposal only increases
available harvest on Federal lands, management of
separate harvest quotas between State, private and
Federal lands will be challenging for State and Federal
managers and adds complexity for hunters and trappers.
Recent action by the Board of Game reduced the quota to
up to 20 percent of the fall population estimate to
allow for a sustainable harvest opportunity for wolves
by rebuilding the population. Increasing the harvest
quota back to 30 percent could create conservation

That concludes my presentation.

Thank you, Mr. Chair, and I'd welcome
any questions.

CHAIRMAN CHRISTIANSON: Any questions.

(No comments)

CHAIRMAN CHRISTIANSON: Okay.

Then.....

OPERATOR: And for anyone on the phone,
if you have a question or a comment please press star-
one and record your name when prompted.

(No comments)

CHAIRMAN CHRISTIANSON: Hearing none,
we'll move on to summary of public comment.

MS. PERRY: Thank you, Mr. Chair.
Members of the Board. Again, for the record, my name
is Deanna Perry. I'm the coordinator for the Southeast
Subsistence Regional Advisory Council.

A total of seven written comments were
received for this proposal all in opposition and
they're included in your meeting books beginning on
Page 654.
One general comment was made from Curtis Donald Thomas of Ketchikan, I summarized that yesterday, one of his key points was that there was a creation of special hunting rights for certain citizens.

Five additional written public comments were in opposition from Fairbanks residents. Francis Mauer, Sean McGuire, Jim Kowalsky for Alaskans for Wildlife, Larry Edwards of Sitka and Dr. Robert Sieks, president of American Society of Mammalogists. A second letter from Alaskans for Wildlife was received recently and that's located in your materials on Page 7-20 of the supplemental Section 7.

Viewpoints of all these comments include the extension of season would likely lead to excessive harvest of an already depleted population of wolves. The enforcement of past quotas have failed or have been poorly managed resulting most recently in the season quota being exceeded by over two and a half times. The situation represents mismanagement and erodes whatever public confidence has existed, if any, in the ability to manage hunting and trapping of wolves in Game Unit 2. Conservation concerns, including the impact of a illegal and legal overharvest. Finding the RAC's statement that there is no conservation concern involved for this population to be completely wrong, and that there is a lack of reflection of a substantial national interest in these public lands and the wildlife thereon. Beyond reported take, unreported take, added likely substantial taking, which might have resulted in unmanageable, substantial overkill versus the established 20 percent. A decrease in prey. The decrease in deer population expected because of past, current or planned logging. This proposal, in reality, is an anti-subsistence measure. The lack of consideration of other important factors and deer hunter success besides predation and more pressure on a wolf population already in trouble appears to be contrary to the basic concept of wildlife management.

That concludes the public comments received on Wildlife Proposal 18-04.

Thank you.

CHAIRMAN CHRISTIANSON: Thank you.

Any questions. Comments.
CHAIRMAN CHRISTIANSON: We'll open the floor to public testimony.

CHAIRMAN CHRISTIANSON: On the phone.

CHAIRMAN CHRISTIANSON: Hearing none, we'll move on to the Regional Council recommendation.

Chair.

MR. HERNANDEZ: Thank you, Mr. Chair. Once, again, Don Hernandez, acting Chair for the Southeast RAC.

Thank you, Mr. Chair, members of the Board. Our Council comments for this proposal are found on Page 649 of your meeting book.

The Council deliberated long and hard on this proposal and carefully considered, in addition to the Staff analysis, local knowledge of Council members concerning wolves in Unit 2. Public testimony heard at the winter 2017 Craig Council meeting, some strong reason, support from the four tribal governments on Prince of Wales Island and excellent population and scientific information provided by the Department of Fish and Game Staff. Because of the importance of wolves for subsistence, past controversy over wolf management in Unit 2 and the delegation of authority needed to implement the Southeast RAC's recommendation, the Council's rationale and intent covers a number of points.

And those include:

- Subsistence opportunity.
- Management situation.
- Delegation of authority.
- Scientific rationale.
Setting a harvest guideline level.

Long-term management of wolf in Unit 2.

The need for action.

And the Council also wrote up some more detailed descriptions of those categories I just mentioned that they wanted me to present to the Board.

The first category, subsistence opportunity, they wanted you to know that wolves are an important species harvested for subsistence uses in Unit 2. The Council wishes to provide sufficient opportunity to harvest wolves to meet subsistence needs for this species. And the Council's particularly concerned that unnecessarily low harvest quotas for wolves do not provide for subsistence uses and needs and they limit the opportunity for younger hunters, trappers to learn and participate in this subsistence tradition.

In the management situation, Unit 2 has been managed on a quota basis. The harvest quota is in the Alaska Board of Game regulations at 20 percent of the most recent population estimate. The State of Alaska 20 percent harvest guideline level can only be changed by a Board of Game action. State Board of Game call for proposals is for this coming year. The Board will meet in the fall -- or excuse me, I think in the winter, late 2018, possibly, or early 2019, and the Southeast RAC will submit a proposal to the Board of Game to align State and Federal regulations once again, that would be assuming that the Board adopts our regulation, we still -- our intent is to still try and align with State regulations through the Board of Game process.

Because the 20 percent harvest guideline level is in State regulations, State managers have no authority to exceed that harvest guideline level even if subsistence needs and biological data would support a higher harvest guideline level. The quota is set considering population estimate based on the DNA sampling and the population estimate for wolf has a time lag because of this. The time needed to process DNA samples takes some time, for example, the 2017/2018 quota is based on 20 percent of what they did in the fall of 2016 population estimate. So there's at
least a year time lag in setting their quotas from the
most recent data.

As far as the delegation of authority,
the RAC requested the U.S. Forest Service Craig
District Ranger receive delegated authority from the
Board to set the quota for subsistence take of wolf on
the Federal lands.

For the scientific rationale, local
knowledge and traditional, ecological knowledge of Unit
2 wolf harvesters supports that a harvest guideline
level of up to 30 percent is appropriate. Tribal
governments of Craig, Hydaburg, Kasaan and Klawock,
whose members are active subsistence wolf harvesters
believe that a higher harvest guideline level should be
implemented at this time. These sources believe that
wolf population has been growing rapidly and can
sustain a higher harvest level. They also note this
growth is not reflected in the Department of Fish and
Game's population estimate which is essentially from a
year ago, not present population levels. In other
words, they're observations are far more timely than
what the scientific evidence represents. The local
knowledge, traditional, ecological knowledge based on
more current observations has an opportunity to
evaluate wolf population size on a more real time
basis. Complimentary Western science data presented
suggested a healthy wolf population can sustain a 30
percent harvest level, sometimes even higher. Wolves
have high fecundity and wolf populations can expand
rapidly in a suitable environment. Prey availability
and habitat conditions are strong determinants of wolf
populations. Wolves are very resilient species.
Efforts were made to try and exterminate wolves at one
time in the past and obviously they survived those
efforts.

As far as setting this harvest
guideline level, the RAC would like the harvest
guideline level to be set through a transparent public
process involving Department of Fish and Game, Craig
Ranger District and Forest Service subsistence
biologists, local subsistence harvest harvesters and
traditional ecological knowledge experts and Prince of
Wales tribal governments. The RAC recognizes its
authority to set a Federal subsistence guideline level
would be vested with the Craig Ranger District with
close consultation with the Department of Fish and
Game. The RAC anticipates that the proposed up to 30 percent harvest guideline level could result in a higher quota than the present artificially low 20 percent harvest guideline level. The incorporation of local traditional ecological knowledge will allow more responsibility to the changing wolf population than the time lagging DNA population estimate.

Current local knowledge indicates that more wolves can be harvested. In future years incorporation of the local knowledge could indicate that few wolves should be taken than the time lagged DNA survey data would allow. And up to 30 percent harvest guideline levels provides managers with management flexibility of long-term management of the Unit 2 wolf.

The RAC believes that utilization of a population guideline would provide better management of wolves in Unit 2A. A population guideline would be set through a management plan for wolf in Unit 2. As with other species wolf management actions would aim at ensuring that the wolf population is maintained at a determined level. Wolves in excess of this population goal would be available for harvest. To start the development of such a management plan the RAC suggests a population goal of about 150 to 200 wolves for Unit 2 based on a post denning count or estimate. Council development of a strategy for the management of wolf populations within the region to accommodate subsistence uses and needs is authorized under ANILCA, Section .805(3)(d) and elsewhere.

So as far as the need for action, the RAC believes that immediate action is needed so that a harvest guideline level that provides for subsistence uses and needs can be in place for the 2018/2019 hunting and trapping season. The State of Alaska Board of Game action on the proposal, the RAC will submit will not be implemented until the 2019/2020 season at the earliest. If the Alaska Board of Game adopts the RACs proposal at its meeting covering Southeast in 2018/2019 there would be a common harvest guideline level in State and Federal lands in Unit 2 for the 2019/2020 season, but the RAC believes that the 2018/2019 season, this coming season implementation of up to a 30 percent harvest guideline level is necessary for further conservation of the wolf population itself. The excessively large wolf population will be subject
to crashing. The RAC recognizes that an up to 30 percent harvest guideline level on Federal lands may require Federal managers to track and monitor wolf harvest on Federal lands. If a higher harvest guideline level is set on Federal lands, the RAC anticipates that a Federal season would remain open to Federally-qualified users after the State season closed when its statutory determined lower harvest guideline level was met. And that action would be, probably the situation this coming season, due to the time lag and the potential Board of Game action.

So if the RAC recommendation is adopted, any harvest beyond the State limit of 20 percent would be available to Federally-qualified users. The RAC anticipates that the Board of Game may change its harvest guideline level to align with the new Federal regulation.

And one final issue they wanted to bring to your attention was the RAC -- when the RAC talks about a harvest guideline level, we mean that that would be one that is reported harvest, and verified other wolf kills, such as road kill for example. In the past the harvest guideline level has been reduced by a speculative inclusion of unverified non-legal kills, and we believe this is totally inappropriate and disrespectful of local hunters and trappers. The RAC notes that non-legal mortality exists for all harvested species through wounding loss, unrecovered kills, road kill, inter-species killing and many other factors.

So that's kind of a more detailed explanation of why we are in support of this proposal.

Thank you.

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

(No comments)

CHAIRMAN CHRISTIANSON: A very thorough report, thank you.

Hearing no questions we'll move on to the Tribal, Alaska Native Corp comment, Native Liaison.
MR. LIND: Mr. Chair. Board members.

The consultation was held September 14th with that region. Mr. Kitka didn't speak specifically to 04, however, after OSM Staff Kenner gave a brief overview of wildlife proposals 18-1 through 5, Mr. Kitka did speak on the -- he said there has to be a better system of counting of wolves because the system doesn't seem to be working now. And also he mentioned that he wanted to know what caused a big bird die-off and what was causing that to happen, he said climate changes are causing the changing dynamics of all their food resources, and locals are reporting more sightings of wolves on beaches because of that.

That concludes the discussion during the consultation.

CHAIRMAN CHRISTIANSON: Thank you, Orville.

Any questions for Orville.

(No comments)

CHAIRMAN CHRISTIANSON: Hearing none, we'll call on Alaska Department of Fish and Game, State liaison.

MR. SCOTT: Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Good morning. And good morning to Board members. I am Ryan Scott. I'm the regional wildlife supervisor in Southeast Alaska. Our comments can be found on Page 649 in your book.

The Department's recommendation for Proposal 18-04 is to oppose this proposal. And this is a long -- there's been a lot going on with wolves in Unit 2, and, Mr. Chairman, you've been involved with a lot of that as well, and Mr. Hernandez as well.

I guess I wanted to say that I appreciate the RAC's comments and the information that they provided in their comments and I specifically want to focus on some of the things that came up a little bit later in that.

So the Alaska Board of Game is scheduled to meet in January of 2019 in Petersburg. The Department has submitted a suite of proposals, if
you will, addressing Unit 2 wolves, but the real
premise behind those proposals is we can't chase these
percentages anymore and can't really -- it doesn't
matter if it's 20 percent or if it's 30 percent. The
background on the 20 percent is, as you'll see, in many
of the comments that you have in your Board books, this
population of wolves has been the subject of two ESA
petitions, both of them have been found unwarranted at
the time, but some inadequacies or some real concerns
is probably a better term to use, has been noted in
those decisionmaking documents.

One of them is the ability to manage
for those percentages. Managing on a guideline harvest
level or a percentage for a trapping season is pretty
doggone tough, there's a lot going on, you got a lot of
people in the field, you got a lot of equipment in the
field and then you have the delay in sealing
requirements. And that's fair. You know, having
people that need -- people need some time to get out to
get to where they're trapping, to get to their gear, to
get back in, that's completely understandable.

Unit 2 already has the shortest sealing
requirement in the state of Alaska, 14 days. And as
you can see if you, as you go through the information,
the Department has provided and other comments, it's
not that I don't think anybody ever intends to exceed
20 percent of the estimated harvest, or 30 percent of
the estimated harvest, it's a function of trying to
manage for a trapping season where you've got just a
lot of factors contributing to everything that's
happening, just the natural process of that.

Our intent is to introduce a wolf
harvest management plan to the Alaska Board of Game.
That plan is very much in a skeleton format at this
point, but the high points, I guess the take home
message is there, are that we would like to manage,
rather than chasing a percentage again, again, it
doesn't matter if it's going to be 20 percent or 30
percent, is to look at how to categorize the wolf
population, abundant, for lack of a better term,
normal, and then conservative. And looking at that,
those thresholds, there will be numbers or ranges of
numbers attached to those thresholds, but those
thresholds will be decided by biology, will be decided
by social input and traditional and ecological
knowledge. That's a term -- or that's a point that has
been made to me many, many times over the last couple years. I believe that this approach is a really good way to incorporate that and it's a methodology for us to take that information and to continue working with the residents of Unit 2, other interested parties and set those thresholds and manage for that.

At present we've been going down to Prince of Wales since about 2012 every year counting wolves and we do a DNA based system where we -- you've heard it explained in the RAC comments, we believe that the process is very -- is accurate, we think that it's -- we've come a long way, we've learned a lot, we've engaged folks on the island. We use citizen science.

We have teachers with students out checking hair boards. We work with the Hydaburg Cooperative Association, they have a dedicated field crew that runs their own stations and the Nature Conservancy as well. So we're getting a massive amount of information and sending these samples off to a lab in Montana and there is a lag time. That's the nature of the beast. It takes us about eight months to turn in the hair and get the data back. It takes us about two days to run the data and to come up with an estimate. And then we work through that and work closely with our Forest Service partners to, in the past anyway, our Forest Service partners to announce that quota.

Again, I think that it's important to recognize that trying to chase these percentages, we've learned the hard way, if you will, and we certainly have exceeded some of the guideline harvests that we've wanted to maintain and we're hoping to move away from that.

The last thing I would say as well is the Forest Service and the Department of Fish and Game have been in lock step with managing this population or establishing, you know, the quotas and working through the harvest years for a long, long time. And that was one of the strengths that was noted in the ESA petitions, both of them, that at that time, you know, the management agencies were not diverging. This is going to be a divergence. And as we heard from the public comments provided by Ms. Perry, there is still a lot of attention focused on wolf numbers in Game Management Unit 2. We believe that those numbers can be managed appropriately and they can be managed appropriately for the people of the unit, for the
wolves themselves, for the deer of the unit, but at this time for us to go separate directions I think that would be a mistake and I think that we're moving forward with a process that will, not only -- I mean the first couple of years are probably going to be pretty uncomfortable as we go into this, and having, you know, as a biologist, having a solid number to focus on and to work with, there's some comfort in that. You know we're going to have ranges and we're going to assign population levels to these thresholds as we go in through a cooperative approach, but I think that ultimately is going to be a much stronger management strategy in a lot of different ways. I mean, I think, again, we can do it for the wolves themselves, we can do it for the deer as is a concern, when we get a high population of wolves on the island and people get concerned about the deer that they prey upon and what's available for their needs.

But I think that the process that we are about to launch into, we're headed to Prince of Wales this month to sit down and start hammering out these numbers. It's something that's probably going to come out very, very strong and, you know, we all know that we work together and if you can get buy in from all the groups and engage everybody and have that, that's going to stand the test of time much better.

That concludes my comments.

I'm happy to answer any questions about WP18-04 and the State's comments.

I appreciate your time.

Thank you.

CHAIRMAN CHRISTIANSON: Thank you, Mr. Scott.

Any questions for Ryan.

MR. C. BROWER: Mr. Chair.

CHAIRMAN CHRISTIANSON: Charlie.

MR. C. BROWER: Just a question. So in 2016 the population grew up to 231, what I'm reading, then from 2014 it was only 89, within two years there
was a population growth of 142, I believe, so the
population right now is about three -- would be about
300, is that right, I mean I'm just guessing what the
number would be. The yearly growth would be about 71
wolves a year?

MR. SCOTT: Through the Chair. Member
Brower.

So the discrepancy between 2013 and
2014, a lot of that has to do with the -- and it took
us a while to look into it and figure out what happened
there. A pack was removed from one of the areas that
-- one of our focal study areas, and that impacted the
overall numbers. So is it -- I don't think it's
growing quite at 71 wolves a year but it's certainly
growing, no question about that. And I believe, you
know, the RAC portrayed that accurately. What the
growth rate is, you know, at this point, we don't know
that for sure.

We also have to keep in mind that as we
get the data, we're out in the field in the fall, we
start mid October, run through the end of December,
collecting hair, wolves are being harvested all the
time through that period, so that's a removal. We also
have to remember that spring comes along and wolves
have new wolves, and as a K9 species, they're able to,
you know, they have multiple pups in a litter and they
can expand very quickly.

So what the growth is, you know, is --
we don't have that data necessarily. At the same time
we recognize and very much agree with the RAC and
residents of the island that wolf numbers are
definitely up. That was also one of the points of the
20 percent, reducing it down to 20 percent, at the
Board of Game meeting. That was a time where wolf
numbers were -- we believed wolf numbers were down
significantly based on information we were getting from
the island and other parties. It was also a time that
we were sorting out how to go about to take this wolf
population into the future without having, you know,
having that endangered species act petition hanging
over our head. So that was a stop-gap to manage
conservatively until we could get things moving in the
right direction, and that means wolf numbers increasing
as well understanding and implementing methodologies to
actually manage pretty closely.
MR. C. BROWER: Thank you. I was just curious because the last count was 2016 and up to 231 at that time and now you have another two years of data; is that true?

MR. SCOTT: Through the Chair. Member Brower. So we have one additional year of data.

So we went out and collected the samples -- actually I should -- let me correct that, we have one additional year of sample collection. As we speak, those hair samples are in the lab being processed right now to identify individual wolves.

MR. C. BROWER: Thank you. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

MS. PITKA: So in your testimony you referenced a wolf management plan including all of the Regional Advisory Councils, it says that it -- that you plan to submit it to the Board of Game in January of 2019, in order to get the Regional Advisory Council's input, when do you plan to submit it to them?

MR. SCOTT: Through the Chair. Member Pitka. They're going to have to be at the table. Yeah, so it's frankly not a matter of submitting it to them, they will help craft it. Not only the Regional Advisory Council, Craig Tribal, Klawock, the Forest Service, you know, it's -- have all the individuals that I am hoping to get input from. I'm sure there's people I haven't even thought of yet, you know, but that's the process that we'll begin this month. Frankly, that'll be our time, in April, so it's not necessarily, it's not submitting it to the RAC, I mean they're going to help craft it, I hope, anyway.

Let me qualify that, that's my hope.

MS. PITKA: Okay. I asked that because they are all volunteers and they meet like twice a year.

MR. SCOTT: Through the Chair. Member Pitka. I recognize that. And I have nothing but great things to say about the Southeast RAC. I've been very fortunate over the last few years to work pretty closely with them on lots of different things and I -- frankly, I see a pretty successful product.
CHAIRMAN CHRISTIANSON: Greg.

MR. SIEKANIEC: Thank you, Ryan.

Appreciate your thoughts this morning.

I really appreciate your thoughts around a unified management plan perspective as it relates to potential endangered species petitions that we've experienced a couple of already.

You know, and I think I agree with you that when you're managing on a percentage and it shows up on paper that you've had a two and a half times the percentage goal harvest, it's very easy for a petitioner to look at that and say, well, you're not meeting your harvest strategy at all, therefore, a resubmission and a petition is potentially in the cards. I think that's something, certainly, I pay great attention to and would encourage you to be, you know, very, very strong in getting this thing under a, you know, perhaps liberal to conservative management strategy that allows you to move in and out of that window as you see, you know, from your biological information, science-based information that you're collecting.

So I appreciate that perspective a lot and thank you for bringing that.

CHAIRMAN CHRISTIANSON: I'll go to Don and then Gordon.

MR. HERNANDEZ: Thank you, Mr. Chair. I just thought it might be a good idea for me to make a comment here after Ryan's testimony. Just to say that, you know, the RAC is very happy with the way that Fish and Game is cooperating with the RAC at this time. There may have been some differences during that period when the endangered species listing was more in play and the wolf populations did seem to be declining. A lot of the local users felt that they were not being included in some of these decisions, that has definitely changed, you know, Fish and Game and Ryan are now working with them. The RAC's very happy about that.

And, you know, when we put forward this proposal there was no indication from the Fish and Game Department that they were going to take this new
management strategy forward as soon as they are. You
know, our intent was to try and rectify a situation
that's going on right now with this, you know,
increasing wolf population and no flexibility to be
able to respond to it. I think the RAC would -- I
guess what we anticipated was that we would change the
harvest guideline level and hopefully the State would
realign with us, now the State is telling us that they
are essentially going one step further with a
management plan, which I did say in our statement, is
where we had hoped to go in the future as well. But
we're kind of looking for some immediate changes, you
know, to deal with a present situation.

So that's kind of where we are.

Yes, we're definitely all on the same
page as moving forward with this management plan, which
they're still developing, which we will be included in,
I'm sure, as far as RAC involvement. It probably won't
be the whole RAC but, you know, we have members on the
RAC that are very involved in this and I'm sure will
volunteer their time. You know, Mike Douville from
Craig, he's one of the most active trappers on the
island. He's of long involvement. He and Ryan know
each other well. So you know this is going to happen.
It's just how we move through the immediate future, I
guess, is what the question is here.

Thank you.

CHAIRMAN CHRISTIANSON: Thank you, Don.

Gordon.

MR. G. BROWER: Just some observations.
I just wanted to -- I think I was going to mention the
same lines about the local perspective and the local
use and I wanted to ask ADF&G and the managers of this,
when the decline and there is some threats of ESAs
floating around, to what level is the harvest limited
currently. Is it the Federally-qualified users or is
it still open to other users at this time. It seems to
me when you're starting to get into management schemes
you're going to have to look at that and figure the
threshold level of that piece of it to be engaged for
the qualified users.

MR. SCOTT: Through the Chair. Mr.
Brower. Thank you for the question, sir.

It is open to all user groups at this point. Federally-qualified, non-Federally-qualified, non-residents. The non-resident, non-Federally-qualified harvest is very low. You know, five to 10 percent maybe at the top end. The majority of wolves are taken by Federally-qualified residents living in Unit 2 predominately. And it does vary from year to year what we see in the harvest. Even the harvest methodology and the harvest chronology can vary greatly from year to year but it is open currently and we believe, again, that we can provide that opportunity for all user groups, certainly meeting the subsistence needs of the Federally-qualified hunters and trappers, but I think we can be successful in providing that opportunity for anyone who is interested in harvesting a wolf.

MR. G. BROWER: Mr. Chair. Yeah, and I think we've heard some other testifiers on other species, other locations about their frustrations about this area that were not following the intent of sustained yield principles and a constant battle of analyzing something and bringing to bear these differing opinions when we need to be able to express what the law is about rural subsistence priority issues and when a sustainable level and threshold level is achieved because you just can't continue to put in front of communities the rest of Alaska. And that's your mantra, is the State of Alaska is all of Alaska and manage it in that way.

So there are some conflicting mandates and we really need to look at some of the other public testifiers in this area and work towards some of the mandates that ANILCA made in rural subsistence priority issues.

Thank you.

MR. SCOTT: Through the Chair. Mr. Brower. I don't disagree with you at all. But I also haven't -- I mean one of the things I really haven't been told about the wolf harvest in Game Management Unit 2 is that we are not meeting the subsistence needs of the rural users at all. And I believe at times of abundance we actually -- I mean we want to see an appropriate level of harvest on there and so I think
that's where the additional opportunity, you know, should it be there -- if it's not there, fair enough, but if the animals are available, I believe that our plan, our future management strategy will accommodate that.

CHAIRMAN CHRISTIANSON: Thank you guys for that discussion.
I think that brings us to the ISC.

MS. HARDIN: Thank you, Mr. Chair. Members of the Board. For the record my name is Jennifer Hardin. I'm the Subsistence Policy Coordinator for OSM and the Chair of the InterAgency Staff Committee.
The InterAgency Staff Committee provided the standard comment for WP18-04.
Thank you.

CHAIRMAN CHRISTIANSON: Thank you, Jennifer.
Board discussion with Council Chair and State liaison. I think we've had a pretty good discussion here.
(No comments)
CHAIRMAN CHRISTIANSON: Hearing none, we'll move on to Board action.

MR. OWEN: Mr. Chair.

CHAIRMAN CHRISTIANSON: Wayne.

MR. OWEN: Thank you, Mr. Chair. Wayne Owen with United States Forest Service.

I would like to move to adopt WP18-04 as submitted by the Southeast RAC. The proposal is shown on Page 632 of the Board book. If I get a second, I will explain why I intend to oppose the proposal.

MR. OWEN: Thank you, Mr. Chair. My justification for opposing WP18-04 is as follows:

Increasing the harvest quota back to 30 percent is likely to create a conservation concern for wolves in Unit 2 based on past population declines resulting from similar harvest quotas, the proposed harvest quota would likely lead to an unsustainable -- likely or maybe lead to an unsustainable harvest.

Since the proposal only increases available harvest on Federal lands, management of separate harvest quotas between State, private and Federal lands would make it more difficult for State and Federal managers who are currently working extremely well together, it would make it difficult for the managers as well as confusing for hunters and trappers.

Adopting the proposal would potentially violate established principles of wildlife management, which is contrary to the conservation mandate in Title VIII of ANILCA.

And, finally, we believe that the Forest Service working in collaboration with the Department of Fish and Game, as we have done so well over the last several years, to move together toward a sustainable solution to the Unit 2 wolf issues is in the best interest of all the stakeholders, including users, tribes, the State and the Federal government.

Further, I would like to say just, you know, maybe an off the cuff remark, you know, I would like us to have the room to come together to a collaborative solution such as, you know, what the Department of Fish and Game is proposing. They're not coming to us with an answer and just looking for us to rubber stamp it, they're deeply engaged and they want all of us together at the table. I believe that's in the best interest of everyone involved and I would like to see us allow that process to play out for a year.

Thank you, Mr. Chair.

CHAIRMAN CHRISTIANSON: Floor's open for discussion.

MR. C. BROWER: I have on, Mr. Chair.
My concern on that is, when you get your harvest total, you use all of Alaska in comparative to what's been taken, is that right? I just want to come back to that question. How you analyze this shortage or something, or decline, do you use total Alaska harvest to make it?

MR. SCOTT: Through the Chair. Member Brower. Help me, if I'm not answering the question, please let me know.

So when we look at the total harvest, it is -- I mean we can look at the different demographics of that harvest, you know, the Federally-qualified users that are taking the animals in Unit 2, non-Federally-qualified and non-residents as well. We certainly -- we consider all those, I mean they're all dead wolves. You know, they're all animals that have been taken from the population. Again, I would stress, though, that the lion's share, overwhelming majority of the animals harvested are taken by Federally-qualified users that live in Game Management Unit 2, annually.

MR. C. BROWER: Thank you.

CHAIRMAN CHRISTIANSON: Any further discussion.

(No comments)

CHAIRMAN CHRISTIANSON: Hearing none, I call for the question.

MR. OWEN: Question.

CHAIRMAN CHRISTIANSON: Roll call, please.

MR. DOOLITTLE: Okay. This is roll call on Wildlife Proposal 18-04 and the motion on the floor is adopt Proposal WP18-04 as found on Page 632 of the meeting book.

National Park Service, Herbert Frost.

MR. FROST: Oppose for all the reasons that were outlined by the Forest Service's comments.

MR. DOOLITTLE: Bureau of Land Management, Karen Mouritsen.
MS. MOURITSEN: Oppose because of -- oppose because of the reasons outlined by the Forest Service and in anticipation of the wolf harvest management plan that will address many of these issues and will have input from the RAC, Forest Service and others.

Thank you.


MR. SIEKANIEC: Oppose for the reasons stated and looking forward to seeing the unified management plan.

MR. DOOLITTLE: United States Forest Service, Wayne Owen.

MR. OWEN: Oppose.

MR. DOOLITTLE: BIA, Lynn Polacca.

MR. POLACCA: Oppose. I'm very hopeful that we can come to some kind of arrangement or agreement with the new management plan that you guys are working on that will include all parties and be able to, you know, have the tribes be able to provide that input. So I'm very hopeful that that can come to fruition.

MR. DOOLITTLE: Thank you, Lynn.

Public member, Rhonda Pitka.

MS. PITKA: Oppose in anticipation that that management plan will be completed.

MR. DOOLITTLE: Public Member Charlie Brower.

MR. C. BROWER: I support the Southeastern RAC. I believe the local people there know more of what's happening - (no microphone)

Try again.

I support the Southeast RAC proposal to support this issue. I think, locally, you have
traditional knowledge and people within that area that knows more by living around that area.

Thank you.

MR. DOOLITTLE: Chairman Anthony Christianson.

CHAIRMAN CHRISTIANSON: I support the Regional Advisory Council. I think in deference to their decision based on the testimony they received from the people. And I think it increases a subsistence opportunity on a species that there clearly isn't at this time a conservation concern for.

Thank you.

MR. DOOLITTLE: Motion failed, WP18-04.

CHAIRMAN CHRISTIANSON: Okay. We'll move on to....

MR. C. BROWER: Mr. Chair, can we take a five minute break.

CHAIRMAN CHRISTIANSON: ......a five minute break Charlie says.

(Off record)

(On record)

CHAIRMAN CHRISTIANSON: All right, we'll get back to business here. We have a lot to do in a day and a half and so as we get our seats, I'm going to ask as we move forward, I've been very generous in the amount of time, I think the dialogue we've had with the public and the people who have come to testify to things is really what this process is about but we also have to be mindful of the limited time that we have to meet on these proposals and some of them that are on the non-consensus are going to merit a lot of attention. So I'm going to ask as we publicly testify to them, that we try now to keep our comments to the specific proposals at this time and that we be mindful as we testify, support or non-support of projects. And so thank you guys for that. I'm already looking at possibly a 7:00 o'clock today and tomorrow as well, and, so, again, I don't mean to
(Laughter)

CHAIRMAN CHRISTIANSON: So let's do this team.

(Laughter)

MR. SUMINSKI: Mr. Chair. Members of the Board. My name is Terry Suminski, I'm with the U.S. Forest Service and manage the Subsistence Program for the Tongass National Forest. The executive summary for WP18-10 can be found on Page 109 of your books and the analysis begins on Page 112.

Proposal WP18-10 was submitted by the Yakutat Fish and Game Advisory Committee and requests that the Federal season for moose in Unit 5A, except Nunatak Bench, east of the Dangerous River, be open from September 1 through November 15 with Federal public lands closed to the harvest of moose except by residents of Unit 5A from September 1 to September 14.

Currently the area in Unit 5A west of the Dangerous River receives heavy hunting pressure during the first few days of the subsistence season resulting in a rapid harvest and multiple animals taken from local areas. The proponent states that in recent years the quota has been met and the season closed within about four to five days of the opening and that the area east of the Dangerous River is less accessible and receives less hunting pressure. The proponent claims that by opening up the east side of the Dangerous River earlier access will be improved for subsistence users, meaning longer days, potentially better weather conditions and greater availability of local air taxis, allowing additional opportunities and potentially reducing the hunting pressure during the opening days of the subsistence season on the west side.

Implementation of this request would effectively open the Federal season for moose in a portion of Unit 5A five weeks earlier than the existing regulation.

The proponent also submitted a parallel
The moose population in 5A is currently healthy including improved bull to cow ratios in recent years and healthy recruitment, likely as a result of recent mild winters. Total annual harvest east of the Dangerous River has averaged 15 moose from 2012 to 2016.

The OSM preliminary conclusion is to support WP18-10.

Opening the Federal season on the east side of the Dangerous River earlier will improve access allowing additional opportunities for subsistence users and potentially reducing the hunting pressure, or at least lengthening the season on the west side of the Dangerous River.

Since the harvest is managed on a quota, which is set annually, there would be minimal effects to the overall moose population. A season opening in September is consistent with other seasons in Southcentral Alaska, and given limited access the healthy moose population and a limited quota -- effects to reproduction are expected to be minimal. Consequently there are not expected to be any conservation concerns as a result of the adoption of this proposal.

The proponent submitted a parallel proposal to the State Board of Game, consequently if both proposals are passed, there would be no negative impact to State users and would also provide additional opportunities, including the availability of local air taxi service.

That concludes my presentation.

I'm open for questions.

Thank you.

Terry.

CHAIRMAN CHRISTIANSON: Thank you, Next, we'll have summary of public comments.
MS. PERRY: Thank you, Mr. Chair.

Members of the Board. Again, for the record, my name is Deanna Perry, coordinator for the Southeast RAC.

A total of four comments were received on this proposal. One comment received from Curtis Donald Thomas of Ketchikan, he addressed all Southeast proposals. That was the same I had summarized earlier. That comment can be found on Page 131.

Wrangell-St. Elias submitted a comment. You can find that on Page 7-27 of the supplemental Section 7 materials.

And I will summarize that real quickly.

The Wrangell-St. Elias National Park Subsistence Resource Commission supports WP18-10. This change will provide an opportunity for local residents to harvest moose before the rut. Additionally, opening the season earlier will improve access. During September fishermen would already be in the hunt area with their boats. The area is difficult to access by boat after October 1st due to fall storms.

Another comment was received by Jeff Sperry. You can find that on Page 7-4 of supplemental Section 7. In summary, he says there are family members that live outside of this unit that return to this unit to hunt with their family. He is opposed to this proposal. People would be excluded from the traditional and customary hunt if the proposal were passed. And since this is a one bull area with no antler restrictions, the local residents should have no problem harvesting an animal in the allotted time.

Lastly, we received a comment yesterday from the Yakutat AC, the proponent of this proposal. The Yakutat AC met on April 7th and voted to accept the RAC's recommendations. They wish to officially change their proposal to match the recommendation. We will also be asking the State Game Board to officially change their proposal to match the recommendation, too. We hope that they will change the non-domicile general hunt to September 30th and make the transition uniform. That was from Casey Mapes, I believe he called in yesterday and he may also be on the phone today.

That concludes the public comments.
received on Proposal 18-10.

Thank you.

CHAIRMAN CHRISTIANSON: Thank you.

With that we open up the floor to public testimony.

That'd be you Harold. Mr. Robbins.

MR. ROBBINS: Thank you, Mr. Chair. I would like to bring out a few issues there that this proposal fails to address.

The area 5B, which opens September 1st through December 31, right across the bay from the town is very readily accessible by boat, all of them are fishing and in the past several years by the records that I see there was only nine bulls killed in that 5B. So really they have a lot of access to moose hunt without changing the regulations for 5A east of the Dangerous, which the proposal is trying to do.

The other thing is, under the customary and traditional use, there's several hunters in that area that have hunted that for the last 40 years. This is the way that this opening is run ever since it reopened back in '78, it's always opened on the 15th of October, and so their lifestyles have been built around that opening date if you were going to plan on hunting. And to change this and move it ahead, is going to change how they operate their businesses, and so on, it's going to interfere with their fishing businesses if they're going to participate in the Federal subsistence hunt. And, personally, you know, we're not going to even probably participate in that hunt the way it's set because we want to wait until the 15th of October or later when the temperatures are better. You can take that moose and hang it, you've got time, you can spend time with that moose hanging in the woodshed and you can start canning it and putting it away for next year, because right there is where we want to use most of our moose.

So that is the reason why we really oppose this. Not that we would oppose other people coming in and hunting, it's just the timing for us, has traditionally been this way from where it opened the 15th of October and, so, consequently we've got our lives and habits around that and several other
fishermen in the area are set up the same way. So, you
know, under that, you know, I have -- I would suggest
that if they wanted to extend the season after, maybe
until the end of the year to try to take advantage of
those few more moose that would be fine, you know, and
it would tend to put less impact on the habitat in the
area. Because the area is pretty swampy. You get a
lot of rain in September and October, 20 inches plus
each month and the storms there in the Gulf are pretty
drainy. And if you're out there with wheelers you're
going to be in clear up to the handlebars in places
when it's raining like that. It leaves a terrible rut
for a long time.

And if any of you have any questions
I'd be happy to address them.

CHAIRMAN CHRISTIANSON: So, Harold,
you're saying the date they're proposing to just move
it from the -- I'm looking in here, I think it says to
the 8th to September 1st, -- October 8th to September
1st?

MR. ROBBINS: Right. Well, the RAC put
it in to move it from the 8th to the 16th of September
now instead of how the original proposal was.

CHAIRMAN CHRISTIANSON: Oh, okay. And
so the original date was the 15th, you're saying.

MR. ROBBINS: Well.....

CHAIRMAN CHRISTIANSON: The original
date.

MR. ROBBINS: The very original date
but in the last, since I think '90 or somewhere in
there, it had been opened from the 8th of October to
the 21st for Federal subsistence users only and then
everybody could hunt after that. But the big push is
that the Federal subsistence users in town were wanting
more space.

CHAIRMAN CHRISTIANSON: Okay, thank
you. Thank you, Harold, for taking your time to come
here, appreciate it.

Is there anybody on the line that would
like to testify.
OPERATOR: We have Casey Mace [sic] your line is open.

MR. MAPES: Thank you. Appreciate the opportunity to comment. I would just encourage you to put your faith into our ability as an Advisory Committee to have vetted this out. We're a 15 member panel and we held a series of meetings and discussed the issues at length with the community, with the subsistence users involved and we have a liaison Board member to the Yakutat Tlingit Tribe, we've discussed this at length with the Federal and State biologists involved. And it's been an ongoing issue and we're attempting to try to find a resolve to the short hunt on the west side of the Dangerous. And, you know, on average, we're not currently utilizing the bulls on the east side. And the intent is to try to send some of the hunting pressure to the east side early on to avoid those bulls being harvested by those users on the west side. So to extend the season into a later part of the year will not accomplish what our intention is, which is to try to alleviate some of the pressure on the west side and make a little bit longer hunt out of it.

There are currently subsistence families that are going without a moose because they're not able to get one in this current short hunt that we have on this side.

So, you know, this was the best option that we could come up with and we had nearly complete uniformity throughout the community's subsistence hunters that came and discussed it with us. We had two people that didn't like it. Other than that, the rest are in favor of it. And the RAC was in favor of it and the Federal and State biologists are in favor of it.

I would just like to encourage you to consider all that and take that into account because the vast majority are in favor of this.

I would be happy to answer any further questions anybody might have of us.

Thank you.

CHAIRMAN CHRISTIANSON: Thank you, Casey. Anybody have questions for Casey.
OPERATOR: Once again if you have a question or comment please press star-one.

(No comments)

CHAIRMAN CHRISTIANSON: Hearing none, thank you for your testimony today, Casey, appreciate you calling in.

MR. MAPES: Thank you.

CHAIRMAN CHRISTIANSON: Any additional public comment here.

(No comments)

CHAIRMAN CHRISTIANSON: Thank you, Harold, as well.

Regional Advisory Council recommendation.

MR. HERNANDEZ: Thank you, Mr. Chair. The Regional Council's comments can be found on Page 127 of your book. And for the record, this is Acting Chair Don Hernandez from the Southeast RAC.

The Council supported 18-10 with a modification from the original proposal.

The modification was to change the season open date from September 1st, November 15th to September 16th to November 15th. And changing the closure of the Federal public lands from September 1st to the 14th to September 16th to the 30th.

This proposal turned out to be fairly controversial as is obvious. It was submitted by the Yakutat Fish and Game Advisory Committee, however, other Yakutat residents are obviously not in favor of this proposal. The accessibility to this area is by airplane and cost prohibitive to many residents. The Council discussed dates and believe that local Yakutat residents would not be the ones to benefit because they are still engaged in fishing and not hunting yet during the proposed dates.

The Council amended the dates after
deciding that opening the harvest season earlier would allow a two week priority for rural residents during a later time when most would be finished fishing and, therefore, expanding the opportunity for subsistence users to get moose. There is no conservation concern. And the main goal of this proposal is to utilize a resource that has not been fully utilized in the past. Substantial evidence through analysis and studies support this amended proposal. The proposal will probably not restrict other users and the Council felt that a parallel proposal to the Board of Game is needed to adjust the State season so that non-Federally-qualified hunters do not suffer in their harvest opportunities.

So just to maybe kind of summarize, you know, this did turn out to be a controversial proposal. I think it was one of those situations where we had a proposal to shorten the month, or to change the season date earlier by about five weeks and there was a lot of controversy about that. Essentially what the Council tried to do was find a compromise by setting a date that was essentially right in the middle of those two controversial opening dates. So that's where we are on this.

CHAIRMAN CHRISTIANSON: Thank you, Don.

Any questions for Don, Council Chair.

(No comments)

CHAIRMAN CHRISTIANSON: Tribal, Native Alaska Corp comments, Native Liaison.

MR. LIND: Mr. Chair. Board members. During the consultation on September 14th Mr. Kitka asked for a brief overview of Proposal 18-10, which was given by Terry Suminski, Susan, and Justin Koller, and after that Mr. Kitka did not respond to that proposal.

CHAIRMAN CHRISTIANSON: Thank you.

Alaska Department of Fish and Game comments, State liaison.

MR. SCOTT: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Members of the Board. I'm Ryan Scott, the wildlife supervisor for Southeast Alaska with the Department of
Fish and Game. Our comments can be found on Page 128.

The Department is neutral on the allocation aspects of this proposal, but we do support the shifting of the dates and the locations.

So this has been a topic on the Yakutat Forelands, Unit 5A for a long time. As the previous area management biologist, we struggled beginning years ago of how to manage a hunt that was a portion of a hunt that was moving very, very quickly and trying to ensure that we were able to provide as much as opportunity to the subsistence users in Yakutat as possible. Lots of things have changed over the years, including some land management changes, economic changes in the community, specifically air taxi service and transportation availability, and it became, just in the last three or four years, as was noted in the comments, that portion of the Unit 5A hunt that occurs west of the Dangerous River, it's a three or four day event. It's really, really quick. And it's hard to keep up with it as a manager but probably more importantly is, once we get to that level, you know, where we feel like the harvest is sustainable, both on the State and the Federal side, working very closely with our Forest Service counterparts, we do close the season on that side.

Presently, to the east of the Dangerous River and I don't know if a map is available, it might be useful, I don't know, just so people have a -- okay, yeah, in your books, I believe in the OSM comments, just to give you a little bit of the lay of the land. At present, when that west side closes, the east side remains open. Access to it is pretty difficult, to a point. There is a bridge, as Mr. Robbins pointed out, you can drive across the bridge and there's a small parking area and then you can access a portion of the east side of the Forelands. But there's a lot of terrain and a lot of water, as Mr. Robbins pointed out, to get through several large drainages that make access somewhat difficult. So we've talked about how to help the subsistence users in Yakutat get more opportunity over the years, it's been a topic of discussion. This is something that we support in trying, and I appreciate the comments from Mr. Mapes and Mr. Robbins on this, but it's an attempt to distribute the effort.

We're very comfortable with the biology
of the moose herd on the Yakutat Forelands. Total number of moose look good. Bull to calf ratio -- or bull to cow, cow/calf ratios all look pretty good, so it's not a -- we don't have a conservation issue there, it's more about trying to provide the opportunity for the hunters and distribute those animals as far as we can. I also -- I don't anticipate a wholesale shifting of, you know, a 100 hunters out of Yakutat going to the east side of the Dangerous. If we can get a handful, if we can get 10 to take a moose over there where we believe we have additional harvestable surplus that's not being used, I think that's good. I think that's going to be a move in the right direction and going to be positive. That's going to potentially provide another X number of moose on the west side to people who don't have the options to move back and forth.

So, again, the State is neutral on the allocation portion of this but supports the shifting of the season and the intent of that is to provide additional opportunity and to relieve, you know, some of that pressure west of the Dangerous River shifted to the area east of the river where there are additional animals available and we hope that will work out.

And, you know, this Board is in a two year cycle, the Board of Game is in a three year cycle, it's a hunt that we're always on the ground for and we watch pretty closely. If it doesn't work, we'll be sitting here again, you know, before too long looking for another option to change.

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 comment.

MS. HARDIN: Thank you, Mr. Chair. The InterAgency Staff Committee provided the standard comment on WP18-10.

CHAIRMAN CHRISTIANSON: Thank you. Board discussion with Council Chair and State liaison.
(No comments)

CHAIRMAN CHRISTIANSON: Hearing none, we'll move for Board.....

MR. REAKOFF: Mr. Chair.

CHAIRMAN CHRISTIANSON: .....action.

MR. REAKOFF: Mr. Chair. One comment.

CHAIRMAN CHRISTIANSON: Okay, Jack.

MR. REAKOFF: I have moose all the time, that's our main meat that we have. I kill a lot of moose between the 10th to the 20th of September. As it gets past the 20th of the September, their in rut, they're going down hill, I get more and more pressed into trying to find a younger moose at that time. The 16th of September, a moose, a bull is in way better shape than it would be in October. They basically lose all their fat by the end of September. So my personal experience is moose are a heck of a lot better eating in the middle September than they are way into October. They've run all their fat off, they've lost muscle protein, the meat's dark, they get beat up, they've been fighting. They're a heck of a lot better in the middle of September.

Thank you, Mr. Chair.

CHAIRMAN CHRISTIANSON: Thank you, Jack.

Hearing or seeing no other comment, we move for Board action.

Wayne.

MR. OWEN: Mr. Chair. Wayne Owen with United States Forest Service.

I move to adopt Proposal WP18-10 as modified by the Southeast Regional Advisory Council. That modification can be found on Page 127 of our meeting book. If I get a second I will offer my justification.
MS. PITKA: This is Rhonda Pitka.

Second.

MR. OWEN: Thank you, Ms. Pitka. In the interest of time I'll abbreviate my justification, you know, and include the comments of the Southeast RAC, the State of Alaska and the Staff analysis.

Thank you.

CHAIRMAN CHRISTIANSON: Thank you, Wayne.

Any further discussion.

(No comments)

CHAIRMAN CHRISTIANSON: I'll call for the question.

MR. POLACCA: Question.

CHAIRMAN CHRISTIANSON: Question's been called. Roll call.

MR. DOOLITTLE: This vote is on Wildlife Proposal 18-10. The motion on the floor is adopt Proposal WP18-10 as modified by the Southeast Alaska Subsistence Regional Advisory Council, where the modification can be found on Page 127 of your meeting book.

National Park Service, Herbert Frost.

MR. FROST: Support.

MR. DOOLITTLE: BLM, Karen Mouritsen.

MS. MOURITSEN: Support.


MR. SIEKANIEC: Support with hope that the modification helps satisfy some of the concern that was raised by our people participating in the public comment period.

MR. DOOLITTLE: Thank you, Greg.
U.S. Forest Service, Wayne Owen.

MR. OWEN: Support.

MR. DOOLITTLE: BIA, Lynn Polacca.

MR. POLACCA: Support.

MR. DOOLITTLE: Public member, Rhonda Pitka.

MS. PITKA: Support in deference to the Regional Advisory Council.

MR. DOOLITTLE: Public member, Charlie Brower.

MR. C. BROWER: Support.

MR. DOOLITTLE: Chairman Anthony Christianson.

CHAIRMAN CHRISTIANSON: Support in deference.

MR. DOOLITTLE: Motion carried.

CHAIRMAN CHRISTIANSON: Thank you guys all for your time on this.

That brings us to WP-11.

MR. SUMINSKI: Mr. Chair. Members of the Board. Council Chairs. I'm Terry Suminski with the United States Forest Service. The executive summary for WP18-11 can be found on Page 675 of your books and the analysis begins on Page 678.

Proposal WP18-11 was submitted by Calvin Casipit of Gustavus and requests that the Federal Subsistence Board address Federal subsistence priority for moose in Berners Bay drainages through one of the following three options.

Provide a Federal priority for moose in Unit 1C Berners Bay for rural residents.

Or close Federal lands to the harvest of moose in 1C Berners Bay to all users.
Or clearly state on the record why a priority for moose should not be provided to rural residents on the Federal public lands of Berners Bay.

For analysis purposes, we analyzed the establishment of a Federal season and harvest limit for moose in the Berners Bay drainages.

The Berners Bay drainages are comprised of 97 percent Federal public lands. Moose were transplanted there in 1958 and 1960 and the population expanded quickly. However, with limited habitat in this geologically isolated area the population could not become very large. The population peaked in 2006 with about 131 animals and declined in 2007 through 2010 due to harsh winter conditions. The population has since recovered, and in 2016 the population was estimated at 141 animals, which is likely above the carrying capacity of the habitat. In short this is a small population in a small geographically isolated area that contains limited moose habitat.

Moose hunts in Berners Bay drainages began in 1963 and have been administered by the Alaska Department of Fish and Game. Moose in Berners Bay are currently harvested under a State draw permit and the number of permits available depends on recent estimates of this small population. The draw hunts are primarily for bulls but in some years there have been a draw for cow tags to manage the sex ratio of the population. The total number of permits issued each year ranges from zero to 20. Only a small percentage of applicants for these draw hunts are Federally-qualified subsistence users. However, the number of Federally-qualified subsistence users applying for these hunts routinely outnumbers the number of permits available. In other words the demand for Berners Bay moose for Federally-qualified subsistence users routinely outweighs the supply.

The OSM conclusion is to support Proposal 18-11 with modification to close the Federal public lands in Unit 1C Berners Bay drainages to all but Federally-qualified subsistence users, establish a Federal draw hunt for bull moose and establish a may be announced antlerless season.

Establishing a Federal hunt in Berners
Bay drainages would provide additional opportunity for Federally-qualified subsistence users to harvest moose on Federal public lands. However, it is not likely that the number of moose available for harvest will be greater than the demand from Federally-qualified subsistence users. Establishing a Federal draw hunt would prevent over harvest while giving preference to Federally-qualified users. Establishing a may be announced draw hunt for cow moose would provide managers flexibility to manage for the desired bull to cow ratio.

That concludes my presentation.

I’d be happy to answer any questions.

Thank you.

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

(No comments)

CHAIRMAN CHRISTIANSON: All right, we'll move for summary of public comment.

MS. PERRY: Thank you, Mr. Chair.

Members of the Board. Again, for the record, my name is Deanna Perry, coordinator for the Southeast RAC.

A total of five written comments were received on this proposal. The first three comments are included in your meeting book beginning on Page 695.

A comment received from Curtis Donald Thomas of Ketchikan addressing all Southeast proposals was previously summarized.

Two comments in opposition were received from Nicholas *Ore and one from Jerry Burnett, president of Territorial Sportsmen, Inc., supporting the third option of this proposal which is to clearly state on the record why a priority for moose should not be provided to rural residents on the Federal public lands of Berners Bay.

For these last two comments, view points included:
There was no historical moose population in Berners Bay with no accompanying customary and traditional uses of moose. Location of moose is not located near any rural communities. The introduced moose population by government and private efforts in the late '50s and in '1960 aided by attentive management has provided an extremely popular hunt for over 50 years to all Alaskans as well as hunters from other states. Funds used to pay for the transplant came from firearm and ammunition purchases in the U.S., and the state hunting license fees from all who purchase a hunting license in Alaska, residents and nonresidents. This population can only sustain a limited harvest via a revenue generating State tag drawing system, which is in very high demand. And moose were transplanted for increased recreational opportunities and has become a tradition.

Additionally, two comments were recently received and they're included in your supplemental book materials under supplemental Section No. 2.

The Alaska Board of Game, based on information provided by the Juneau-Douglas Advisory Committee stated that it believed it inappropriate to create a Federal subsistence priority for the Berners Bay moose hunt. A summary of that Board's reasons to reject this and any future proposals for a Federal subsistence priority for the Berners Bay moose hunt include:

Moose were transplanted to Berners Bay primarily for the benefit of Juneau hunters and with substantial support from Territorial Sportsmen Incorporated. That historically Juneau hunters have accounted for the overwhelming majority of hunter effort and harvest. Hunters from Federally-qualified communities in northern Southeast have virtually no record of hunting or harvesting game in Berners Bay. Adopting the proposal establishing Federal priorities would disenfranchise Juneau hunters. And the Department of Fish and Game currently devotes considerable effort to monitor the Berners Bay moose population and determine sustainable harvest levels. All Alaska hunters contribute to those funding sources and have a right to benefit from their expenditure.

The other supplemental letter came from...
Territorial Sportsmen, Inc., It stated that the group continues to believe that the Berners hunt, although largely on Federal land does not exhibit the characteristics of a subsistence hunt and should not be altered from its current configuration as a State drawing hunt.

Further viewpoints expressed included:

There is not a conservation problem that would require non-rural hunters from being excluded from this hunt.

There is little justification for implementing a Federal hunt in an area where there has not been a strong tendency for Federal-qualified hunters to go in the past. And current State drawing hunt meters (ph) hunting effort to a level appropriate for the size and productivity of the isolated moose population and gives opportunity to all who wish to hunt in it a proportion to the residency location of the applicant pool.

And, again, the view points of these two organizations in their entirety can be found in Section 2 of your supplemental meeting book materials.

That concludes the public comments received on Proposal 18-11.

Thank you.

CHAIRMAN CHRISTIANSON: Thank you, Deanna.

At this time we'll open up the floor to the public.

(No comments)

CHAIRMAN CHRISTIANSON: Anybody on the phone.

(No comments)

CHAIRMAN CHRISTIANSON: Hearing none, seeing none, we'll move on to.....

OPERATOR: I'm sorry, we do have on the phone.

CHAIRMAN CHRISTIANSON: You have
someting on the phone?

OPERATOR: Yes, one moment.

CHAIRMAN CHRISTIANSON: Okay.

OPERATOR: Matthew Robus, your line is open.

MR. ROBUS: Thank you. Good morning, Mr. Chairman and members of the Board. My name is Matthew Robus and I'm representing the Territorial Sportsmen again this morning. That's an outdoors people's organization of about 1,500 members based in Juneau.

The summary you just heard did a very good job hitting some of the points that I was going to make in my testimony. I'll try not to take a lot of time here but I did want to emphasize a couple of things.

Territorial Sportsmen continues to oppose the implementation of a Federal subsistence hunt in the Berners Bay drainages.

And I wanted to draw your attention to a policy that the Federal Subsistence Board adopted in 2007, and it's titled the Policy on Closures to Hunting, Trapping and Fishing on Federal public lands and waters in Alaska.

It says, in part, that, "the Board will not restrict the taking of fish and wildlife by users on Federal public lands unless necessary for the conservation of healthy populations of fish and wildlife resources or to continue subsistence uses of those populations."

In regard to conservation of healthy populations. The Berners Bay moose population remains healthy but it's a small and isolated herd with extreme geographic barriers preventing interchange with other moose populations. So it can only afford a small amount of annual harvest. And yet that low amount, allowable harvest does not arise from any conservation concern, it's just a reflection of the limited production of a small isolated herd. The State drawing hunt as presently configured does a very good job of
matching the hunting pressure with the number of moose
that can be harvested and distributes opportunity among
hunters in rough portion to their place of origin. So
rural hunters who apply for the hunt have just as good
a chance as anybody else of scoring a permit for the
hunt. So rural hunters are accommodated to that
extent.

Territorial Sportsmen believes that
there is not a conservation problem that would require
non-Federally-qualified hunters to be excluded from
this hunt.

Now, on to the second point contained
in the policy that I just quoted, which is the
continuation of subsistence uses of the population.
The Berners Bay moose hunt requires that a hunter go
past easier moose hunts that have higher allowable
harvests and expend additional resources to obtain a
moose. Usually airboats or aircraft need to be used to
access the area. Because of the difficulty and expense
in accessing the area and the availability of easier
more efficient moose hunts in the region, the
proportion of rural residents applying for State
permits has historically been rather low. It seems
likely that fewer rural users have chosen to apply for
this hunt due to the associated difficulties tied in
with it. On the face of it, there is little
justification for implementing a Federal hunt in an
area where there has not been a strong tendency for
Federally-qualified hunters to go in the past.

According to the Department of Fish and
Game about three-quarters of the moose taken in
Southeast Alaska are killed by rural residents and so
one or five moose added through a Federal Berners hunt
is really not going to move the needle if you look at
it from a regional perspective in terms of the amount
of subsistence moose meat taken. And as already
stated, to the extent that they apply to the hunt there
is a proportion of the permit holders that do come from
rural communities under the existing State system.

So, in summary, the Territorial
Sportsmen feel that converting some or all of the
Berners Bay moose hunt to a Federal subsistence hunt is
not a credible choice. The current State drawing hunt
meters hunting effort to a level appropriate for the
size and the productivity of this isolated moose
population and gives opportunity to all who wish to
hunt it in proportion to the residency location of the
applicant pool. Given the unique situation at Berners
Bay where you have a moose hunt on a herd that did not
exist there naturally and it's a sub-species of moose
that do not occur in Southeast Alaska, it's a very
different situation than any other moose hunt in
Southeast.

We believe that the parameters set out
in the Board’s own policy on closure of public lands to
hunting would work against the implementation of a
Federal drawing hunt per this proposal. We just don't
think it's warranted or appropriate and having two
parallel drawing hunt systems for a very small
allowable harvest is obviously not extremely efficient.

We feel that just because the hunt area
is predominately Federal lands, that's not sufficient
reason, in and of itself, to exclude users. We urge
the Board to refrain from establishing a Federal hunt
for the Berners Bay herd.

Thank you.

That concludes my comments.

CHAIRMAN CHRISTIANSON: Thank you.

OPERATOR: The next question or comment
comes from Calvin Casipit.

MR. CASIPIT: Hello, can you hear me.

CHAIRMAN CHRISTIANSON: Hi Cal.

MR. CASIPIT: Oh, good, you can hear
me, thank you. I was afraid I somehow got cut off.

Anyway, I am the proponent of this
proposal and I participated in both the Regional
Advisory Council meeting in the fall by telephone and I
was able to modify my travel schedule to be able to
attend the Southeast RAC meeting in person in the
springtime.

The testimony from the previous speaker
was kind of interesting for me to listen to. I wanted
to put some perspective here.
First of all, I think one of the major reasons why there's not more rural people applying for the State draw permits is because you got to pay money for them. And a lot of people in rural communities aren't going to spend, even if it's a few dollars, they have to make a choice between putting fuel in their rigs or putting fuel in their boat and applying for these State draw permits. That's what you're asking people to do. And I don't think that's fair to rural residents, number 1, because they have to make a choice between putting in for these draw permits and providing for their families and, you know, doing basic things.

I have to tell you right now that I've spent a bunch of this morning running around trying to figure out why the electricity went out in a small part of the neighborhoods here in my community that I live in. I mean this is the kind of things we deal with every day. And we consciously have to make choices between what we spend our money on and we have to be smart about it. And, quite frankly, putting in for draw permits in the State system is not high up on the list. There's other priorities for our money, including putting gas in our boats to go out and harvest and support our communities.

So anyway I wanted to put that out there.

The other thing that I think the Board needs to be aware of and I'll admit, I used to be part of the Federal Program, most of you know this, for almost 20 years, from the Katie John implementation in '98/99. I personally sat in the gallery when the State Legislature was trying to, you know, provide a Constitutional Amendment to provide for the rural priorities in State regulation that failed. The person -- or the organization that the person represents who just spoke, Territorial Sportsmen, they have from the very beginning have been opposed to ANILCA Title VIII from the very beginning, they have opposed the rural priority and it's no surprise that this is the kind of input you would get from them on a proposal like this.

The simple truth is, this is Federal land. It is the Tongass National Forest. It is part of ANILCA. ANILCA Title VIII applies. And I do not see how a Federal priority is being provided for rural residents on this particular piece of Federal land.
I heard lots of testimony at the fall RAC meeting about how hard it is to get there, you need to have specialized equipment and blah, blah, blah and all this kind of stuff, okay, well, fine, subsistence users in rural communities are smart too. We know how to figure these kind of stuff out too, we're not dumb. We are as skilled in hunting at these urban residents in Juneau are. I don't see how that matters to the question. The question of providing a priority.

Now, you know, how should that priority be provided, that -- that would be the question, I think, is up to the Board. How do you provide this priority. You know, obviously you could take the Staff recommendation, which is, you know, from a rural resident in a place, you know, in this place, in 1C, a rural resident from 1C Gustavus, of course I would prefer the Staff recommendation. However, I respect the RAC, and I respect what they do and I respect the balancing act that they have to do and so, you know, while the 25 percent, 50 percent, 75 percent, you know, whatever that number is going to be I trust the RAC, even though I wasn't there for the deliberation part when they came up with the recommendation of 25 percent, I respect that. And, you know, I'm fine with that. You know, while it doesn't go as far as, you know, what I think maybe should, but I respect the RAC and I'm willing to live with what the RAC has come up with. They had a difficult balancing act and I respect the RAC for coming up with what they did.

So with that, I guess that's all I have. I'd be happy to answer any questions.

I'm just a little taken aback listening to some of the public comments that apparently there's still a big number of people out there who don't either know about or appreciate the Title VIII priority and the meaningful preference that the Federal Subsistence Board has to ensure happens on Federal public lands.

That's what I'm asking you guys to do.

I'm asking the Board, you know, basically to do your jobs, to provide for that priority and just, you know, having a line in the regs that just says no Federal subsistence priority for a piece of Federal land, I think, it's just not right, not without justification and just because they were introduced
back in the '60s, to me, is not a proper justification. There's moose all over Southeast Alaska that people are hunting. And I could get into specifics about that, about from the other areas in 1C of Federal land that's going on -- I have to tell you if you go to (indiscernible) or the Home Shore area on September 15th when the moose season opens, you know, and basically the Federal season just tags on to the State season, we get the State registration permit and all that stuff, you know, go up to Home Shore on September 15th when the moose season opens up and go back on some of those -- it is a zoo, there are people everywhere and not a one of them do I recognize from either Gustavus or Hoonah, they're all from God knows where. And not a one of them do I recognize as being what I would consider local from Hoonah or Gustavus, it's becoming a problem.

Anyway, I'll let it go at that. That's really not part of the issue.

Anyway, happy to answer questions.

CHAIRMAN CHRISTIANSON: Thank you, Cal. Appreciate you calling in today and sharing your comments.

Any questions for Cal.

(No comments)

CHAIRMAN CHRISTIANSON: Hearing none, appreciate you calling in today.

MR. CASIPIT: Thanks, Tony. Thanks.

CHAIRMAN CHRISTIANSON: Regional Council comments on this.

MR. HERNANDEZ: Thank you, Mr. Chair.

Once again Don Hernandez for the Southeast RAC. And our Council's comments for this proposal are on Page 692 of your meeting book and there's also additional information contained in supplemental Section 2.

The Southeast RAC opposed Wildlife Proposal 18 at its fall regulatory meeting. The Council discussed Federal Proposal 18 in great depth and the motion to support the proposal failed by a vote.
thoughts on this issue, the latest and relevant

The Council agreed that there needs to be a way to address the proponent's concerns to provide a Federal subsistence priority but that this proposal could not be implemented while also maintaining a management system on this limited population of moose.

The Council felt they could not support this proposal based on the information analysis given, including limited information on how a Federal draw permit might work with a State draw and without 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 discussions in order to solve this problem without creating a conservation concern. The Council requested more information and alternatives from Staff and for its public meeting in February. Berners Bay moose was placed on the agenda to provide for an information exchange and an opportunity for further discussion on options to provide for a rural priority for hunting moose in Berners Bay in the future.

The Council continued discussions on the hunting of Berners Bay moose and ultimately came up with an alternative idea on how to provide a Federal priority. The Council wanted to share some information with the Board as a result of that discussion at its recent meeting.

If you refer to Section 2 of your supplemental materials you will find a detailed account of the Council's discussion and activities at its recent February meeting. Those details speak for themselves but I will go over some highlights.

At our winter meeting the Council formed a working group, met and discussed the issue with Federal and State agency Staff and provided a report to the Council during the meeting. The working group report provided some new valuable information. We learned how the Unit 6C hunt works and how a draw could be split as noted in the supplement. The Proposal 18-11 proponent, Cal, indicated he would be open to a harvest sharing agreement similar to the Federal drawing permit hunt in Unit 6C. The Council discussed the report and voted to request that this proposal be removed from the consensus agenda so that the Chair could inform the Board of the Council's thoughts on this issue, the latest and relevant
information and the Council's recent deliberations and
the Council's alternative idea for providing Federal
subsistence priority for Berners Bay moose.

After considering biological
information, local knowledge and public testimony on
the matter, the Council voted unanimously for the
Council's Chair to provide this information to the
Board before it takes action on Wildlife Proposal 18-
11.

The Council's alternative suggestion is
this:

One bull by Federal drawing permit with
a season of September 15th to October 15th. In 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 in
consultation with the Alaska Department of Fish and
Game. The Federal harvest allocation will be 25
percent, rounded up to the next whole number of the
moose permits. The Council also discussed that
implementation should be for the 2019 season as the
State draw hunt has already notified its participants
for the 2018 hunting season.

Again, the Council's recommendation is
to oppose 18-11. However, the Council does not feel
its recommendation was fully informed and is providing
this new information for the Board's consideration in
an effort to explain why the Council opposed 18-11 and
what it hopes can be done to address the concerns of
the proponent.

The Southeast Council appreciates the
Board providing this opportunity to share information
on this complex issue.

Thank you.

CHAIRMAN CHRISTIANSON: Thank you, Don.
Appreciate that.

Greg.

MR. SIEKANIEC: Thank you, Mr. Chair.
So, Don, just clear it up for me, you oppose this or you oppose it as a different form, or you would support it in a different form? You caught me off guard on your last statement there.

MR. HERNANDEZ: It could be a little confusing.

The Council is still opposed -- we opposed the original proposal in the fall. The Council is still opposed to that original proposal. We are just offering up additional information as an alternative for the Board to discuss.

CHAIRMAN CHRISTIANSON: Go ahead, Don.

MR. HERNANDEZ: And maybe I should just add the additional information is the idea for an alternative, which would be a split State/Federal draw permit with 25 percent, 75 percent allocation with 25 percent going to Federally-qualified; 75 percent to State non-Federally-qualified. That's the alternative suggestion put forward.

CHAIRMAN CHRISTIANSON: All right, I got a question for the State, what's the annual harvest limit for that Berners Bay moose?

MR. SCOTT: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Ryan Scott with the Alaska Department of Fish and Game, Wildlife Division in Southeast.

The harvest limit's set by the number of permits that we issue. And in the last few years we've issued five to seven bull -- any bull permits.

CHAIRMAN CHRISTIANSON: And so if we were to split that, then we would be saying there's one registration permit available -- according to what the RAC is suggesting, there would be one subsistence permit available and four or five sport permits, I guess I would call them.

MR. SCOTT: Mr. Chairman. If that's -- you know, the Federal Board and the Forest Service will have to figure out how they're going to administer a Federal Program, but, yeah, it would likely be, you know, at a one permit. But I'll have a lot more information about the herd itself during State
MR. G. BROWER: It seems like there's something wrong here. It's Federal land, usurped by the State in a way that is, like adverse possession or something. There's some underlying concerns that I think should be taken up that this is Federal land where there's laws that exist that provide for the rural Federally-qualified user, in lieu of doing that as a -- it seems to me the State needs to be leasing this property to be able to do that independent. I just thought I'd point those out.

CHAIRMAN CHRISTIANSON: Thank you, Gordon.

Any other questions for the Board Chair.

(No comments)

CHAIRMAN CHRISTIANSON: Hearing none, we'll move on to Tribal, Alaska Native Corp comments, Liaison.

MR. LIND: Thank you, Mr. Chair. Board members. Again, during the consultation held on September 14th, Sitka Tribe Member Mr. Kitka requested an overview of Wildlife Proposal 18-11 and after that was finished there was no further discussion.

Thank you.

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

MR. SCOTT; Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Members of the Board.

The Department of Fish and Game opposes establishing a Federal season for moose in Berners Bay. Primarily in looking at how it will be administered and the very small nature of the herd. But in addition to, also the opportunity that's afforded to Federally-qualified users throughout Southeast.
So in Southeast Alaska we have six unique moose hunts. Most of them are registration hunts, meaning that they're available over the counter, you walk in you get a permit and you go out and hunt. We have the Berners Bay drawing hunt. That is a -- it's a limited opportunity for those who draw a permit, but there is zero limitations on who can apply for those permits. I appreciate Mr. Casipit's comments about having to make decisions on one way or the other but that, I think it's important to recognize that this herd, you know, regardless if it was transplanted there or whatever, the biology is is the number of moose there is very small. It's 141, plus or minus, you know, a handful of animals, we're probably pushing upwards of 160 animals. They're very weather susceptible, beginning in -- we had -- if you happened to be in Southeast and was from Southeast the winter of 2006/2007 was a pretty exciting time for us, where we got excessive snow, we've had a few winters since then that have done the same thing, we essentially watch about half of the moose in Berners Bay tip over and die. And at that time we closed the season, we kept it closed until 2013 where we felt like we were at a point where we could start again offering the opportunity, again, to, you know, whoever was interested in applying. We started with five permits that year, five permits for the following year and the next, and now we've bumped it up to seven permits because we do believe the herd is pointed in the right direction.

We are not aware of any immigration into that area. Southeast Alaska is not a real successful moose rearing place, if you will. We have moose herds in some of the major river drainages and they generally stay in the drainages. It's just not a real -- it's just not real good moose habitat, not like many of the folks from the Interior, Southcentral, other places, Western Alaska that you can grow moose well. We kind of struggle to grow moose a lot of times.

In those places, in the region as a whole, as I mentioned, we've got six hunts, generally available to everybody. In addition to that we also have a Tier II moose hunt that -- in the Haines, Skagway, Kluwan area along the Chilkat River in Unit 1D that is hunted almost 100 percent by Federally-qualified hunters. That hunt actually happens on State land along the Chilkat River but they are all...
Federally-qualified hunters. The majority of the moose harvest coming out of the region now comes from Game Management Unit 3 in Central Southeast. It predominately comes off the Island systems. This is a smaller sub-species of moose that has moved down out of British Columbia and populated to the west essentially. I wish I could tell you how many we had, we can't count them because they like to be in the trees. And that's hopefully one of our next research projects. The point being that 90 percent, 95 percent of those moose are also harvested by Federally-qualified hunters, largely on Federal land.

So I guess I'd like to wrap this up in saying that Berners Bay is a neat place, the moose are doing okay, the herd's never going to be very big, they're susceptible to weather, there's also been comments over the years to predation, you know, primarily from brown bears. But there's also -- there is a significant amount of opportunity for Federally-qualified users in the region as a whole, as well as in areas that are adjacent to Unit 1C. There's not a lot of those adjacent areas because we just don't grow moose very well. That's just, you know, something we have to go with.

And I believe one of the comments was made that 76 percent of -- I think that was my math anyway, about 76 percent of the moose harvested in Southeast Alaska are taken by Federally-qualified hunters. Berners Bay is a situation where it's available to everybody. The opportunity to apply is available to everybody. It's a -- the harvest will likely never get to a point where it's going to make a, you know, I'm not sure how you relate seven moose or five moose or two moose, you know, to a priority or a significant portion of that opportunity. But if you compare it to the region and what's available and we haven't -- you know we've already been through a Unit 5A discussion where that's almost 100 percent, you know, Federally-qualified hunters, looking at Berners Bay utilizing something, it has very small impacts to improving the opportunity for Federally-qualified hunters. It's also available to Federally-qualified hunters. The opportunity to apply as well.

So I think this is -- from the State's position, this is a situation where I'm not sure it is broken. I don't know that we need to fix something
that's not broken when the opportunity is there to begin with.

Thank you, sir.

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

Ken.

MR. LORD: Thanks for your comments. One thought I did have, though, and a question, those adjacent areas where you talked about the Federal priority being available, are those opportunities also available to non-Federally-qualified subsistence users?

MR. SCOTT: Through the Chair. Mr. Lord. That is correct.

All of the lands adjacent to Berners Bay, and, again, the majority of the region are registration permits available to everybody over the counter, generally without any kind of quota system or limitations associated with them.

MR. LORD: Thank you.

CHAIRMAN CHRISTIANSON: Greg.

MR. SIEKANIEC: Thank you. In reading some of the background information. I read a section here that said that, you know, in the modification perspective, you know, it's sort of a quota that would be split between Fed and State but if there was no survey conducted the quota would simply be zero in the State's opinion, and/or if survey conditions or other circumstances do not allow for this survey to be conducted again the quota just reverts to zero. Is that kind of how you view the population right now, each year?

MR. SCOTT: Through the Chair. Mr. Siekaniec. No, it isn't. You know it's a little bit -- we have to be a little bit careful using the word, quota.

MR. SIEKANIEC: Agree.

MR. SCOTT: Yeah, it's -- because the
quota, there I go, is essentially the number of permits we put out there. Hunters in the system are generally very successful. You know, 90 to 100 percent. If they can get in, you know, potentially, they're going to do well. That said, if, for a given year we were unable to conduct a survey, I think it would be unlikely we would make -- you know, offer zero permits based on that, given just how moose herds work, and the history we have with this herd, as stated, also in the Staff analysis from the Forest Service, we do expend a lot of time and money in Berners Bay, and that largely started when the Juneau Access Project, the road out of Juneau up to Skagway started. We were able to get in, get some very -- little bit longer term baseline data and now we're -- you know, we're generally able to accomplish at least an aerial survey to get a composition count but we're also watching calf production and predation in those areas.

With that said, Southeast had a pretty rough winter year, it was kind of off and on and we were unable to get a count survey done in the drainage.

MR. SIEKANIEC: Thank you.

CHAIRMAN CHRISTIANSON: Any further -- Louis.

MR. GREEN: Thank you, Mr. Chair. For the Department. What's the percentage of local people getting those registered hunts and those tags and what's the expense because I heard mention of the expense by the author?

MR. SCOTT: Through the Chair. Mr. Green. So I believe the chart's in the Staff analysis. There were 590 some odd applications for the seven permits in Berners Bay for 201 -- that's probably going to be for 2017. The majority of them -- I believe five of them went to Juneau residents, one went to a resident in Thorne Bay, and I'm unsure where the other resident went. And the Thorne Bay resident did well, yeah.

The cost, I believe, it's $5 for each entry for moose hunts under the State drawing application process.

MR. GREEN: Thank you for that answer.
CHAIRMAN CHRISTIANSON: Hearing no further discussion with the State, we'll move on to the InterAgency Staff Committee.

MS. HARDIN: Thank you, Mr. Chair. The InterAgency Staff Committee provided the standard comment on Wildlife Proposal WP18-11.

CHAIRMAN CHRISTIANSON: Thank you.

Board discussion with Council Chair, State liaison.

(No comments)

CHAIRMAN CHRISTIANSON: Hearing and seeing none, we'll move on to Board action.

Mr. Owen.

MR. OWEN: Mr. Chair, thank you for acknowledgement.

I move to adopt WP18-11 with modifications to reflect the alternative discussed by the Southeast Alaska Subsistence Regional Advisory Council, which is included in Section 2 of your Board book supplemental materials. The modification language would read:

Unit 1C, Berners Bay drainages, one bull moose by Federal drawing permit with a season of September 15 to October 15.

Only one moose permit may be issued per household in Unit 1C.

A household receiving a State permit for Berners Bay drainages may not [sic] receive a Federal permit.

The annual harvest quota will be announced by the United States Forest Service Juneau Office, that's the Juneau Ranger District in consultation and collaboration with the Alaska Department of Fish and Game.

And, finally, the Federal harvest allocation will be 25 percent rounded up to the next whole number of bull moose permits.
If I get a second, I will explain why I support the modified proposal.

MR. POLACCA: Second.

MR. OWEN: Thank you, Mr. Chair. The Forest Service and basically everyone involved in this realizes that this is an exceptionally complex issue. However, the amended proposal would provide a priority for Federally-qualified subsistence users for hunting moose in Berners Bay. The combined Federal 25 percent and State 75 percent draw hunt would continue to provide opportunities for non-Federally-qualified moose hunters in Berners Bay while providing for moose conservation and the Federal Subsistence Board should delay implementation of this proposed hunt structure until fall 2019 so as not to conflict with the current State draw hunt.

Thank you.

CHAIRMAN CHRISTIANSON: Any Board discussion on that proposal.

MR. C. BROWER: Mr. Chair.

CHAIRMAN CHRISTIANSON: Charlie.

MR. C. BROWER: Just a question to Southeast. Are you guys satisfied with what was just being read, the alternative?

MR. HERNANDEZ: Thank you, Mr. Chair. Don Hernandez, the Southeast RAC. Yes, I would say that the Southeast RAC would be satisfied with that amended proposal. That is one of the recommendations that we did put forward for you to consider.

CHAIRMAN CHRISTIANSON: Greg.

MR. SIEKANIEC: Thank you, Mr. Chair. Wayne, thanks for your statement there. I'm just making sure I'm understanding this.

So the Unit 1C Berners Bay drainages, one bull moose by Federal drawing permit with a season, and then down below it says, only one moose permit may be issued per household but then we get down there and it says the harvest allocation will be 25 percent of --
rounded up to the next whole number. So how are we -- we go, one, one, and then all of a sudden if you have seven permits it could be two.

MR. OWEN: If -- as Mr. Ryan Scott suggested, if there are seven permits for that area, 25 percent of those rounded up to the next whole number is two, but only one of those permits can go to a specific household, a household cannot have two subsistence permits, a household may not have both a State and a Federal permit. One permit per household.

If that helps.

MR. FROST: But there's only going to be one bull moose harvested as a result of those two permits; is that right?

MR. OWEN: No, if two people apply -- the Federal allocation would be two permits, two different households could each get one permit.

CHAIRMAN CHRISTIANSON: But they couldn't have a State permit as well.

MR. FROST: Yeah, I got that part. I guess I'm troubling on the first statement.

MR. SIEKANIEC: Right.

MR. FROST: It says one bull moose by Federal drawing permit and it just says one.

MR. OWEN: One per hunter.

CHAIRMAN CHRISTIANSON: I guess I would interject here and say the clarification I think needs to happen, is it one permit or 25 percent, whichever is greater, right, because like you're saying there may be a year that 25 percent is two of what the State would deem as the number of permits they're going to issue based on their population.

MR. FROST: Right. Yeah.

CHAIRMAN CHRISTIANSON: So that's what we're trying to.....

MR. FROST: The way it reads right now
is there's only one.

CHAIRMAN CHRISTIANSON: Yeah. So are we wanting the Board's intent to say the 25 percent, or are we going to lock us into the one per year. That's, what I think the question is.

Go ahead.

MR. FROST: Or as Wayne said, one per household so there's only -- one per permit -- no, it.....

MR. OWEN: I'm sorry, Mr. Chair, I'm not seeing the conflict here. The idea is that Federally-qualified users should get a quarter of the allocation. No particular user should in any case get more than one permit, whether it's a State or a Federal permit. So whatever the State decides, you know, with their best available science is the available surplus for harvest, Federally-qualified users get 25 percent of that but only -- you know, any one person in one household -- I guess as it says, you know, issued per household in Unit 1C. So two different households, one permit each, there's your Federally-qualified allocation.

MR. C. BROWER: And the total of 25 percent of what, is seven bulls?

MR. OWEN: No, no.....

(Laughter)

MR. OWEN: No, I'm laughing because no matter how we try to make it easy the language is going to trip us up here.

CHAIRMAN CHRISTIANSON: Go ahead, Don.

MR. HERNANDEZ: Thank you, Mr. Chair. Don Hernandez from the Southeast RAC. I think maybe I can clarify a little bit what the intent of that language is.

The intent is that only one permit would ever go to a household. The way this would probably work, depending on how the managers implement it, but considering the fact that the State cannot
limit who applies for a permit, they could get applications from both Federally-qualified, and non-Federally-qualified hunters. So the intent of that wording is so that if a Federally-qualified user drew a Federal permit, his name would come out of the State draw if he had also entered in the State draw because that's that first sentence. Only one moose permit may be issued per household. That's what that's trying to address. You can't -- we don't want people to put into both drawings and get their name -- well, you know, a husband and wife maybe, or, you know, same household anyway. We were going to try to avoid that situation. Because the State cannot limit who applies in their permit draw.

CHAIRMAN CHRISTIANSON: Louis.

MR. GREEN: Just a comment. You know we have the same situation up in the Seward Peninsula, Bering Straits region where there's muskox permits, for Federal and State. The way I look at it is that if you get a State permit, you're not going to need a Federal permit because you're going to be able to hunt in the whole area as is down there. So if somebody receives a State permit in a household and they get a Federal permit also, that should automatically be where they take the State permit and the Federal permit moves on to the next household recipient, not, you know, so you're not allowing two permits in one house, whether it's State and Federal. I mean that's kind of the way it is up there.

So I can understand the wording and the way it's written. But it might need to be a little more specific.

Thank you, Mr. Chair.

CHAIRMAN CHRISTIANSON: Go ahead, Della.

MS. TRUMBLE: I'm struggling listening to this. We've done this with the State, with our caribou, and we basically -- the allocation was 50 percent, and there was a certain number of caribou that can be harvested for that specific year. State had a drawing permit, the Federal had the drawing permit, you can only get the -- the Federal did have more than one family -- did have four people, I looked at the list of
who did get the permits allowed in the drawings. From the Federal side, what we did with Izembek is basically had, if you were interested, we split it between the five communities within that Unit 9D that were eligible under the Federal and said you can put your name in and then we drew, and you only had five maybe permits that can be issued for that community, and in the case of King Cove, but you can only have one permit per household, period. And you could not have one, get one, if you had a State permit. And that's simple.

CHAIRMAN CHRISTIANSON: Thank you. And I appreciate your guys comments, I think that's what we're trying to get to with this proposal.

So is that clearly defined. Because now we have before us a motion to adopt with a modification.

MR. LORD: A point of order. Wayne, in your comments you mentioned delaying implementation until 2019, but that wasn't part of your motion. I would suggest that maybe another Board member might want to do a friendly amendment to make that clear.

MR. OWEN: I would welcome that.

CHAIRMAN CHRISTIANSON: Can we get a motion to amend, time specific to the 19th [sic], so I'm opening the floor for an amendment to the original motion to put a date.

MR. FROST: I'd move to amend to be effective in FY'19.

CHAIRMAN CHRISTIANSON: There's a motion on the floor to amend the original.....

MR. FROST: Not FY, fall of '19.

CHAIRMAN CHRISTIANSON: .....fall of '19.

MR. OWEN: Second.

CHAIRMAN CHRISTIANSON: A motion's been made and seconded to amend the original motion to include the date to the fall of '19.
Any discussion on the amendment.

(No comments)

CHAIRMAN CHRISTIANSON: Any opposition to the amendment as presented?

(No opposition)

CHAIRMAN CHRISTIANSON: Amendment carries. We're back to the original motion with the amended language to include the fall of 2019. Is there any further discussion on this.

MR. C. BROWER: Question.

CHAIRMAN CHRISTIANSON: Question's been called. Roll call.

MR. DOOLITTLE: .....reflect the alternate's discussion by Southeast Alaska Subsistence Regional Advisory Council found in Section 2 of the meeting book, supplemental materials, to be implemented in the fall of 2019. The modified language would read:

Unit 1C, Berners Bay drainage, one bull moose by Federal drawing permit with a season of September 15 to October 15.

Only one moose permit be issued by household in Unit 1C.

A household receiving a State permit for Berners Bay drainage moose may [sic] receive a Federal permit.

The annual harvest quota will be announced by the United States Forest Service Juneau Office in consultation and collaboration with the Alaska Department of Fish and Game.

The Federal harvest allocation will be 25 percent rounded up to the next whole number of bull moose permits.

This provision will be implemented in fall 2019.

National Park Service, Herbert Frost.
MR. FROST: Support.

MR. DOOLITTLE: Bureau of Land Management, Karen Mouritsen.

MS. MOURITSEN: I support the amended motion with the modification reflecting the alternative discussed by the Southeast RAC.


MR. SIEKANIEC: U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, Greg Siekaniec. I support as amended, or as recommended by the Regional Advisory Committee [sic].

MR. DOOLITTLE: U.S. Forest Service, Wayne Owen.

MR. OWEN: Mr. Chair. I believe I have a conflict of interest with this proposal and, therefore, the Forest Service abstains.

CHAIRMAN CHRISTIANSON: One second, too, as we do the vote here. Just a quick clarification as we read this off we want to make sure that everyone is aware that it is one bull moose, not one moose, for the public record -- sorry to interject.

Go ahead, sorry.

MR. OWEN: Mr. Chair. I believe I have a conflict of interest with respect to this proposal, therefore, the Forest Service abstains.

MR. DOOLITTLE: Thank you, Wayne.

BIA, Lynn Polacca.

MR. POLACCA: I support.

MR. DOOLITTLE: Public member, Rhonda Pitka.

MS. PITKA: I support in deference to the RAC.

MR. DOOLITTLE: Public member, Charlie Brower.
MR. C. BROWER: Support.

MR. DOOLITTLE: Chairman Anthony Christianson.

CHAIRMAN CHRISTIANSON: I support with deference to the RAC.

MR. DOOLITTLE: Motion carried.

CHAIRMAN CHRISTIANSON: Thank you guys for that. We're going to try to get one more done. We're still in session. Five minutes.

(Off record)

(On record)

CHAIRMAN CHRISTIANSON: All right, we'll begin, WP19, we'll start with the analysis.

MR. MCKEE: Mr. Chair. Members of the Board. My name is Chris McKee. I'm the Wildlife Division Supervisor for the Office of Subsistence Management and I will be giving you a short overview of Proposal WP18-19. The executive summary for this proposal starts on Page 736 of your book and the actual analysis starts on 741.

WP18-19 submitted by the Ahtna InterTribal Resource Commission requests that the Ahtna InterTribal Resource Commission be allowed to distribute Federal registration permits to Ahtna tribal members for the Federal caribou season in Units 13A, B and 13 remainder. This proposal also requests that the Ahtna Advisory Committee be added to the list of agencies and organizations consulted by the Bureau of Land Management, Glennallen Field Office Manager when announcing the sex of the caribou to be taken in Units 13A, and 13B.

The proponent states that per the Memorandum of Agreement between the United States Department of Interior and the Ahtna InterTribal Resource Commission, Federal wildlife proposals are to be written to accommodate Ahtna customary and traditional ways of harvesting large wild game. The proponent also states that the Ahtna InterTribal Resource Commission will distribute Federal permits in
that a customary and traditional manner to Ahtna tribal members advising them where and when to hunt.

Just some brief biological and harvest history for caribou in Unit 13. The Nelchina Caribou Herd calving grounds and summer range lie within Unit 13. The rut also generally occurs within Unit 13 as well. State management goals and objectives for the herd are to maintain a fall population of 35,000 to 40,000 caribou with a minimum of 40 bulls per 100 cows and 40 calves per 100 cows and provide for the annual harvest of three to 6,000 animals. Between 2001 and 2016 the Nelchina population ranged in size from about 31,000 animals to just under 50,000 animals and averaged 39,600 caribou during that time period. However, the herd has exceeded State population objectives since 2010. Bull/cow and calf/cow ratios have similarly fluctuated over time. Between 2000 and 2017 the fall bull/cow ratio ranged from 24 to 64 bulls per 100 cows and averaged 39.5 bulls per 100 cows. Over the same time period the fall calf/cow ratio ranged from 19 to 55 calves per 100 cows and averaged 40 calves per 100 cows. In summer 2017 composition surveys estimated a 54 calves per 100 cows.

A little on the harvest history. The herd is a popular herd to hunt and experiences heavy harvest pressure due to its road accessibility and proximity to Anchorage and Fairbanks. Population limits can be controlled solely by human harvest and harvest quotas are adjusted annually in order to achieve State management objectives. Over 95 percent of the herd occurs in Unit 13. Between 2001 and 2016 harvest from the herd under State regulations range from 797 to 5,709 caribou per year and average 2,423 animals per year. Over the same time period caribou harvest under Federal regulations in Unit 13 ranged from 237 to 610 caribou per year and averaged 417 caribou per year.

So the OSM conclusion is to support WP18-19 with modification to establish a community harvest system on Federal public lands for moose in Unit 11 and moose and caribou in Units 13 to be managed by AITRC and open to Federally-qualified subsistence users living within the Ahtna traditional use territory subject to a framework to be established by the Federal Subsistence Board. And that modified language can be found on Page 769 of your meeting materials booklet.
Unless formed, the Ahtna Advisory Committee will not be one of the entities consulted with by the Federal land manager during the administration of this hunt.

Establishing a community harvest system will allow AITRC to manage such a hunt without having to issue Federal permits. The community harvest system would be subject to the same harvest limits, seasons and methods and means already established under Federal regulations but would not involve the actual issuance of permits.

The proposed modification was supported by the Southcentral RAC at their meeting November of 2017. The specific guidelines governing the community harvest system would need to be established and agreed upon by Federal managers, AITRC and Office of Subsistence Management.

Moose and caribou populations in the Units under consideration are not expected to be adversely affected by the creation of the community harvest system on the relatively small amount of Federal public lands occurring within the Ahtna traditional territory in Unit 13.

Federal regulations for moose and caribou in Unit 11 will remain the same.

I should also make a note that in your book there is a -- under the Regional Advisory Council recommendation, the recommendation that's listed in your book by the Eastern Interior RAC is an error, it was a copy of the recommendation for WP18-18, so I just wanted to make that clear, and I'll let the Chair -- the representative for the Eastern Interior RAC speak to it when it comes to their turn. But I just want to make clear that their recommendation is essentially the same as that from the Southcentral Regional Advisory Council. So I just wanted to correct that error before you get any further in the process.

So that's all I had.

Mr. Chair.

CHAIRMAN CHRISTIANSON: Thank you, Chris. Any questions.
CHAIRMAN CHRISTIANSON: Summary of public comment.

MS. PERRY: Thank you, Mr. Chair. For the record this is Deanna Perry. I'm the coordinator for the Southeast RAC. I'm going to be pitch hitting for Donald Mike, coordinator of the Southcentral RAC.

We received four written public comments on the Wildlife Proposal 18-19. One in support, two in support of a modified version, and one in opposition. The comments received were from Ahtna InterTribal Resource Commission, the Wrangell-St. Elias National Park Subsistence Resource Commission, the Denali National Park Subsistence Resource Commission, and Jeff Sperry, resident of Alaska.

On the comments that Ahtna has management capability to distribute Unit 13 Nelchina caribou permits to tribal members and ensure tribal hunter return caribou permits.

The Wrangell-St. Elias National Park Subsistence Resource Commission supports 18-19 with modification that it also applies to moose hunts in Units 11 and 13 and that the Ahtna InterTribal Resource Commission, also known as AITRC, have the authority to issue permits to all Federally-qualified subsistence users, not just tribal members. The SRC supports the idea of Ahtna issuing Federal subsistence permits, however, recommends that they be able to issue permits to all qualified hunters, noting that it is important to work together without dividing communities.

The Denali National Park Subsistence Resource Commission supports a modified version of Wildlife Proposal 18-19. Specifically the SRC recommends amending the proposal to support the potential for AITRC to issue all permits. The Denali SRC supports Denali National Park collaborating with AITRC to issue Federal subsistence moose and caribou permits for Game Unit 13 and Cantwell. Partnering with AITRC provides an opportunity for the Park to share information and develop relationships with AITRC and local subsistence users.

Jeff Sperry states that he is opposed.
to Proposal 18-19. He says that there is no need to
add the Ahtna Advisory Committee to the designated
group that is determining what sex of animals can be
harvested. That is a biologically based decision and
can best be made by the Alaska Department of Fish and
Game biologists.

That concludes the comments received

Thank you.

CHAIRMAN CHRISTIANSON: Thank you. Now
we would open the floor to public testimony.

MR. STARKEY: Thank you, Mr. Chair. My
name is Sky Starkey and I'm assisting AITRC right now.

So we really appreciate the Board
taking this up. We understand that there might be --
in that there's a motion the Board's considering, we
think it might be helpful to go through some of our
suggested changes and then allow the Board members to
engage in any dialogue that they would like to in terms
of what we would be thinking in proposing. So
understanding your timeframe, the motion right now
reads:

I move that the Board defer taking
action on the proposal.

You know, we understand the
practicality of needing to do that given the
circumstances here. But the third line of the proposed
motion using the deferral time to work with the Alaska
-- with AITRC, we would suggest that any workgroup
needs to be small, and it needs to be small so it can
be effective and accomplish this task in a short
timeframe that we've got. So we believe by
incorporating the RACs, hopefully the RAC Chairs will
be part of this group, that the affected subsistence
users would be adequately represented and would
recommend striking affected subsistence users for
efficiency. We would also recommend that you insert --
that your intent at least be clear that you're talking
about the affected RACs and affected Federal management
agencies being the ones at the table.

And in terms of incorporating the
Alaska Department of Fish and Game, we would suggest that the motion read, that the workgroup is actually -- deferral -- work with AITRC, the Regional Advisory Councils and the affected Federal management agencies and insert, to consult with the Alaska Department of Fish and Game, as necessary. And we believe it's important to consult with ADF&G, but this is a Federal hunt, and in creating the framework, in order to make it effective, the group should be able to work on some issues that are exclusive to the Federal aspect of things and to pull in the State, when it's necessary on issues such as conservation and coordinating the hunts. So, you know, we would ask that that change be made clear.

Also in terms of the explanation on the motion, we would like for the motion -- the explanation to include the following:

On the third line of the explanation, after it reads, work cooperatively to develop a framework for a community hunt, and this is very important to AITRC, we would like it to read -- to insert a sentence that says, that is consistent with the, and this is a little different than what you may have in front of you -- that is consistent with the intent of the DOI/AITRC Memorandum of Agreement to the degree possible. And we think that's important. We understand that there may be -- it may not be possible to completely implement it line by line, word by word, but we do think that it's important at the beginning stages to try to incorporate the intent of the MOI to the degree it's possible. So we would like to see that in there.

Finally, the last sentence of the first paragraph of explanation, we would prefer that it read; the Board is fully supportive of AITRCs request for a community hunt, since that's what we're dealing with, that helps -- and we would prefer that it read, that it helps address and helps address their nutritional and cultural needs. So that makes it clear what the intent is here.

On the second paragraph on the third sentence, it reads; within a community, will be able to participate if they so desire and we would ask that the following language be included after desire; to participate in a community harvest system that is
managed and administered consistent with the Ahtna's customary and traditional knowledge and practices and this is a little different than what you might have before you, and frameworks, so that makes it clear that the community hunt is going to be -- that the intent is it be consistent with those customary and traditional practices, but only insofar as that's consistent with the frameworks that are approved and developed by the Board.

Finally, on line two, Karen just thankfully showed me, line two after administered, for all eligible rural residents, we would like to make sure that as we talked about yesterday, that it be administered for all Federally-qualified Ahtna tribal members, and by that we mean those Ahtna tribal members that are rural and have customary and traditional use within the area as required by the system, and, all eligible rural residents within a community.

Finally, or not finally, but we would ask that the second sentence in the third line, which now reads, a Federal community hunt, we would ask that that be changed to the workgroup should consider future growth and consideration from eligible communities with positive customary and traditional use determinations. AITRC fully understands that if another community comes in and wants to develop a community hunt, the system and the rural priority requires that opportunity be made to them as well. So perfectly open to making sure that that consideration is part of developing the framework. But in terms of the way this sentence reads now it almost indicates that we'd have to solve everybody's problem all the way into the future before we could come back to the Board with a plan. And so that seems a little broad.

The last sentence of the third paragraph, again, the same kind of consideration, we would ask that sentence, integration, as appropriate with the State system should be considered when developing a framework for a Federal community harvest system. Again, let's -- you know, we need to consider it, but to integrate, to be a part of it, integration actually may be a more practical thing that happens during the season and may be a hard thing to completely foresee. So by fully considering, we think that takes care of that problem.
On the last paragraph we would suggest that it read the second -- the first most sentence read, administering both Federal and State community hunts potentially operating simultaneously will -- we would suggest should be, may, because we really don't know that until we get into the details. Require coordinating an individual's participation in multiple harvest systems over multiple jurisdictions. A special action request presented to the Board to establish a community hunt framework should consider any administrative and regulatory requirements that may be needed for participation. Again, understanding that we're not sure that there's going to be those kind of conflicts.

Thank you very much for your leniency in letting us do that.

CHAIRMAN CHRISTIANSON: Thank you, Sky. Any comments or discussion of Sky.

Karen.

MS. LINNELL: Thank you. I asked Sky to help me with this as he was instrumental in the negotiation of the MOA with Ahtna's C&T committee and making sure that we were trying to meet the intent of the MOA so I appreciate his volunteering to help me get that done.

I just want to say that, you know, right now, it is up to you folks to set the Federal regulation and the agency Staff work in coordination with the Department in regards to what the population is doing, the health of the wildlife source, they coordinate very well together in that process. And so setting this framework is a Federal job.

I just have to say that, you know, under our current State and Federal regs, we're not meeting our subsistence needs and that's why it's necessary to go to this -- and why we're trying to establish this community harvest system. I do have one thing in the motion that was drafted and presented to us, is that, there is a change in words, it says community hunt in some places and it says community harvest in other places and I'd just like it to be consistent with what the Federal regulations allow and I believe it's community harvest, but that we make that
consistent throughout.

I think this is a good method to move forward.

I feel that, you know, if we set a framework and a timeframe for us to work this out and have details brought back to this Board is a crucial part of this. Delaying or waiting another year or two will create a hardship on our tribal members and those that live out in our community. So I ask for that in your consideration as well.

Thank you.

CHAIRMAN CHRISTIANSON: Thank you. Any questions for Karen.

(No comments)

CHAIRMAN CHRISTIANSON: Thank you. Is there anybody on the phone that would like to speak.

OPERATOR: Once again if you'd like to speak please press star-one and record your name when prompted.

(Pause)

OPERATOR: I currently show no one in cue.

CHAIRMAN CHRISTIANSON: Okay, thank you.

Regional Advisory Council recommendation.

MR. WOODRUFF: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. The Eastern Interior RAC passed the motion to support WP18-19 with the Southcentral RAC's modification to establish a community harvest system for moose and caribou in Units 11 and 13 to be managed by AITRC and open to Federally-qualified residents of the Ahtna traditional use territory.

As justification. The Council held an extensive discussion regarding that currently it is not legally allowed for tribal entities to have delegation
of authority to Federal registration hunt permits. The Council said that as long as permits are issued to all Federally-qualified subsistence users, the Council had no issue with AITRC having the delegation of authority. It would just allow the users to have another, more convenient place to receive permits. The Council noted that AITRC is being proactive and having community hunts will help manage the game for long-term sustainability. The proponent's intent was that for AITRC to distribute permits and to begin the process of moving forward with the implementation of the MOU.

I also would like to say that I have a letter here from us and Southcentral to the Board, to request from the Secretaries the delegation of authority and we have not received a response yet and that was dated the 5th of October.

That concludes my statements.

Thank you.

CHAIRMAN CHRISTIANSON: Thank you. Eastern Interior, any questions or discussion for Eastern Interior.

(No comments)

MS. STICKWAN: You didn't say Southcentral. You said Eastern Interior. What about Southcentral, you only said Eastern Interior.

CHAIRMAN CHRISTIANSON: Okay, Southcentral, yeah, no, sorry about that.

Go ahead.

MS. STICKWAN: Southcentral supported the proposal with the following modification. Establish a community harvest system for moose and caribou in Units 11 and 13 to be managed by AITRC and to open it to Federally-qualified residents of the Ahtna traditional use territory.

The Council noted that the proponent's intent was for the Ahtna InterTribal Resource Commission to distribute permits and to begin the process of moving forward toward the -- implementing the MOU. The Council supported the proposal with
modification. To establish a community harvest system as an interim step, while the steps to implement the MOU are being worked out. Although the original request for 18-19 was for caribou, the Council added moose as the three proposals WP18-17, 18-18 and 18-19 are related. The community hunt system as recommended by the Southcentral Regional Advisory Council would be managed by AITRC and open to all Federally-qualified rural users within the Ahtna traditional use territory.

And we also recommended a letter to the Federal Board seeking Secretarial modification of 50 CFR 100.10 (d)(6) to allow AITRC to issue Federal subsistence permits to all Federally-qualified users.

CHAIRMAN CHRISTIANSON: Thank you. Any questions. Comments.

Karen.

MS. LINNELL: Yes, thank you, Mr. Chair. I just want to be clear that this was the request was to be for our eight tribal villages and to include the residents of those eight villages, not the entire Ahtna traditional use territory. It would be difficult for me to come up with a quota or that kind of thing if we included all of the other dozen or so communities within our traditional use territory.

And, again, I just want to reiterate that this, you know, under the current State and Federal regulations we're not meeting our subsistence needs.

Thank you.

CHAIRMAN CHRISTIANSON: Thank you for that clarification. Any other questions or discussion.

(No comments)

CHAIRMAN CHRISTIANSON: All right.

Tribal, Alaska Native Corp comment.

MR. LIND: Mr. Chair. Board members. Orville Lind, Native Liaison. During the consultation on September 14th there was no discussion on WP18-19.

CHAIRMAN CHRISTIANSON: Thank you.
MR. BUTLER: Thank you, Mr. Chair. Members of the Board. Lem Butler, Assistant Director for Fish and Game.

The Department's neutral on how the Federal permit, or hunt opportunity is allocated and administered. However, we do reserve the right to object to changes that may affect the biologically sustainable harvest. And there are a few details that still aren't clear to me. Such as how the reporting is going to occur. I believe I heard that they're -- I've heard discussion of issuing permits but I also thought that it may look more like a delegation letter. Capturing the harvest information accurately and in a timely manner is very important to us to manage the hunting opportunities that are provided, in a, again, biologically sustainable way. So provided that whatever system the Federal Board comes up with meets that criteria, the harvest is accurately tracked and reported in a timely manner, we would not object. But, again, it depends on the details, and I don't know how far you're going to get into details today.

We also don't object to the modifications that Mr. Starkey read into the record. We don't feel like we need to be a part of every discussion as it pertains to the Federal process. But we do want to be at the table when it comes to decisions that, again, affect the biological sustainability of the hunt, such as season dates, quotas, and reporting requirements.

Thank you.

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

(No comments)

CHAIRMAN CHRISTIANSON: Hearing none. InterAgency Staff Committee.

MS. HARDIN: Thank you, Mr. Chair. The InterAgency Staff Committee comment on WP18-19 is located on Page 775 of your meeting book.

In addition to the standard comment,
the InterAgency Staff Committee recommends deferral of WP18-19, both as proposed and as modified in the WP18-19 analysis addendum.

The InterAgency Staff Committee also recommends that the Board assign appropriate OSM and agency Staff the task of exploring, with affected stakeholders, the details of how a Federal community harvest system might best address AITRC’s desires for greater autonomy, while also remaining consistent with the rural priority set for in Title VIII and also develop a draft framework for possible implementation by the Board.

The ISC recommends that the Board establish a reasonable deadline for completing the draft framework so they may make a decision in a timely manner. The proponent sites the Memorandum of Agreement between AITRC and the Department of Interior as being supportive of the proposal's overall intent. However, the Memorandum of Agreement describes the establishment of a much different community harvest permitting system than was originally proposed.

As written, WP18-19 seeks to delegate to AITRC the ability to distribute Federal registration permits for hunting caribou in Unit 13 under Permit No. 1302 specifically to its tribal members, while Federal agencies would continue to distribute these same permits to other Federally-qualified and eligible rural residents. Federal personnel broadly distribute thousands of Unit 13 moose and caribou registration permits annually to eligible hunters throughout the region. Reducing this administrative burden through a cooperative arrangement with AITRC would be a welcome outcome. However, there presently appears to be statutory impediments to the submitted proposal. Additionally, there are significant implementation uncertainties associated with the addendum's proposal for a community harvest system, which was recommended by the Southcentral Regional Advisory Council and modified accordingly by OSM. The modifications to WP18-19 in the addendum suggest broadening the proposal scope by establishing a community harvest system for both moose and caribou in Units 11 and 13. The modifications openly limit participation in the community harvest system to only those Federally-qualified rural residents living in the Ahtna traditional use territory. This defined territory does
not include all eligible rural residents with a customary and traditional use determination. Noting the expediential growth and participation in the State's community subsistence hunt, a commensurate interest and growth in a Federal community harvest system by eligible users should be anticipated in coming years, especially if it confers a harvest advantage to subsistence users. This expansion would be counter to the intent of the proponent's wishes for AITRC administered hunts largely unencumbered by competition from out of area hunters.

Additionally, the modified proposal, similar to WP18-18, as modified, supports establishment of a winter season for antlered moose in Units 13 and remainder from December 1 to December 31 by registration permit. Unit 13 moose harvest objectives and quotas are established by the Alaska Department of Fish and Game for individual sub-units. A Federal community harvest system concentrated on the limited Federal lands available in Unit 13 could result in localized depletions of moose on Federal and adjacent State-managed lands and in bull/cow ratios falling below State management objectives in these same areas.

For the Bureau of Land Management to responsibly authorize a winter season and establish a Federal harvest quota following the State and Federal fall hunts will require up to date moose population harvest and distribution information.

The Alaska Department of Fish and Game, and Bureau of Land Management and the National Park Service and potentially AITRC will therefore need to work cooperatively to gather and share timely information. If necessary, an allocation and management framework should be in place prior to a winter hunt being established so that setting a winter moose quota is not an arbitrary decision.

Thank you, Mr. Chair.

CHAIRMAN CHRISTIANSON: Thank you.

Board discussion, Council and State liaison.

(No comments)

CHAIRMAN CHRISTIANSON: Hearing and seeing none, we move for Federal Subsistence Board
Wayne.

MR. OWEN: Sorry, I had a comment, Mr. Chair.

CHAIRMAN CHRISTIANSON: Go ahead, Wayne.

MR. OWEN: Without any comment about the MOU or anything else that's gone here, the MOU was signed and put into place by the Secretary of Interior and included National Forest system lands, which are administered by the Department of Agriculture. This was not done in consultation with the Department of Agriculture and was not done with our concurrence. We believe the MOU on that basis is legally flawed and that's going to make it very difficult for us to support any actions on this MOU until that situation is rectified.

CHAIRMAN CHRISTIANSON: Karen.

MS. LINNELL: Just to respond to that. There are some Department of Agriculture lands south of this and this isn't included in that Unit 13. It's on the fringe. It is part of our traditional use territory. We do have an MOA with the Department of Agriculture as well that formed our tribal conservation district. We do -- and we work closely with them on other issues. We haven't done anything with Forestry land to date and have no plans to.

MR. OWEN: Again, I don't have a -- the Forest Service does not have a position on, you know, the value or, you know, the purpose or intent of the MOU. The maps, as they exist now, include Chugach National Forest lands, and I'm not going to vote in favor of any actions to implement this, and you don't really need my -- you know, this is procedural and, you know, that's just it.

I wish you all the luck, you know, this is not about that, this is about Federal bureaucracy, getting our act together.

MS. LINNELL: If I may, the boundaries for the Ahtna traditional use territory were formed
under the MOA with the Department of Agriculture first and it was then brought to the Department of Interior, just for your information.

CHAIRMAN CHRISTIANSON: Any other Board discussion, deliberation.

(No comments)

CHAIRMAN CHRISTIANSON: I, again, call for Board action.

MS. MOURITSEN: Can I make a motion, Mr. Chair.

CHAIRMAN CHRISTIANSON: The floor's open.

MS. MOURITSEN: Okay. Mr. Chair. I move that the Board defer taking action on this, WP18-19 proposal at this meeting, and that we take up the proposal at the Board's next work session, which is tentatively scheduled for July or August, and that we instruct the Office of Subsistence Management to use the deferral time to work with AITRC, the Regional Advisory Councils, the Federal management agencies and to also consult with the Alaska Department of Fish and Game, as necessary, to cooperatively establish a framework for a workable community harvest system for moose and caribou in Units 11 and 13.

If I get a second to this motion, I will explain my reasoning for proposing a deferral and what I believe should transpire in the interim, between now and the next meeting.

MS. PITKA: Rhonda Pitka, I'll second.

MS. MOURITSEN: Thank you. In my time, it's getting to be almost a year in Alaska, I'm seeing this Board operates at its best when stakeholders and agencies work towards achieving consensus and then approach the Board with proposed solutions.

My expectation in this matter is that the parties referenced in my motion will work cooperatively to develop a framework for a Federal community harvest system, or harvest, that is consistent with the intent of the DOI/AITRC MOA to the
extent possible, and then to submit a special action request to the Federal Subsistence Board for the Board's consideration and potential implementation as expeditiously as possible.

The Board is fully supportive of AITRC's request to establish community harvest that help in addressing AITRC's nutritional and cultural needs.

My expectation is that the framework of a community harvest scheme, unlike the State's community harvest program should be designed to be community based and all eligible rural residents within a community should be able to participate if they so desire -- if they so desire to participate in a community harvest system that's managed and administered by AITRC and is within the framework set by the Board. A Federal community harvest system should be designed to accommodate future growth and participation from eligible communities with positive customary and traditional use determinations.

Presently the State's community hunts can occur on Federally-managed lands as well as on State managed lands, whereas a Federal community hunt would be limited to Federally-managed lands. The State has specific regulations associated with their community hunt program related to seasons, bag limits, quotas, participation and eligibility. Integration, as appropriate with the State system should be considered as part of this framework for a community harvest system.

Administering both Federal and State community hunts that would be potentially operating simultaneously may require coordinating an individual's participation in these multiple harvest systems over multiple jurisdictions. So my expectation is that a special action request presented to the Board to establish a community hunt framework should consider and clearly address the administrative and regulatory requirements that may be needed for participation and to address the issues noted above.

Thank you.

CHAIRMAN CHRISTIANSON: Thank you. Any further discussion.
Ms. Pitka: I generally don't support deferring taking action because I think that it slows down an already slow and burdensome process for people, but I would really like, you know, the Board to make sure that this is something workable with the Program, you know, I truly think that we can probably move this along by July, I would hope, and I would hope that Staff would work with the affected parties as quickly as possible.

Chairman Christianson: Any other discussion -- thank you, Rhonda.

(No comments)

Chairman Christianson: All for the question.

Mr. Frost: Question.

Chairman Christianson: Question's been called. Roll call, please.

Mr. Doolittle: This action is on Wildlife Proposal 18-19 and the motion on the floor is: to defer taking action on Proposal WP18-19 at this meeting, and to take up the proposal at the Federal Subsistence Board's summer work session tentatively scheduled for July or August and to instruct the Office of Subsistence Management to use the deferral to work with AITRC, the Regional Advisory Councils and Federal management agencies and to consult with the Alaska Department of Fish and Game, as necessary, to cooperatively establish a framework for a workable community harvest system for moose and caribou in Units 11 and 13. The proposal is found on Page 736 in this meeting book.

National Park Service, Herbert Frost.

Mr. Frost: I support the motion as amended by the BLM to defer taking any action on this proposal at this time and instructing the affected parties to get together and figure this thing out.

Mr. Doolittle: Bureau of Land Management, Karen Mouritsen.
MS. MOURITSEN: I support my motion to defer taking action for the reasons stated.


MR. SIEKANIEC: I support the motion as it was read. And for the reasons that were stated but also in recognition of Ahtna for seeking a working resolution and helping us sort of understand what the important elements are in your interest so that we could actually do something to move in that direction. And, again, encourage this Board to set a timeframe for the Office of Subsistence Management to deliver on the expectation for our July or August meeting.


MR. OWEN: We support deferral.

MR. DOOLITTLE: BIA, Lynn Polacca.

MR. POLACCA: I support the deferral and really encourage the Office of Subsistence Management to really sit down and work with all the parties and try to come up with a system that would adequately address all the concerns that were outlined by Ahtna, and it's my hope that, you know, this will happen in a fairly quick time manner.

Thank you.

MR. DOOLITTLE: Public member, Rhonda Pitka.

MS. PITKA: I support deferral for the reasons that I've already stated.

MR. DOOLITTLE: Public member, Charlie Brower.

MR. C. BROWER: I support for the same reasons.

MR. DOOLITTLE: Chairman Anthony Christianson.

CHAIRMAN CHRISTIANSON: Support.
MR. DOOLITTLE: Motion carried.

CHAIRMAN CHRISTIANSON: Thank you all for that one, we got through that. One hour, we'll come back here at 2:15.

Thank you.

(Off record)

(On record)

CHAIRMAN CHRISTIANSON: All right, welcome back from lunch. I know we are missing one Board member. We did a working lunch with some students that were here from Mt. Edgecumbe and it was nice to be able to sit down with them and it took a little bit for our lunch to get together so Lynn will be working his way in here any minute. So we'll just go ahead and get started, we do have a quorum present.

We'll go ahead and start with the Staff analysis.

MR. EVANS: Good afternoon, Mr. Chair and Members of the Board. Again, for the record my name is Tom Evans and I work as a wildlife biologist for OSM. Proposal WP18-20 can be found on Page 803 of your Board book.

Proposal 18-20 was submitted by the Kodiak/Aleutians Subsistence Regional Advisory Council and it requests that the harvest limit be changed from one bull to one caribou and that the full harvest season -- fall harvest season be extended from August 10th to September 20th, to August 1st to September 30th, so it's extended on both ends.

The proponent stated that the Federal caribou regulations in Unit 9D were more restrictive than the State regulations and, thus, most of the Federally-qualified subsistence users are now hunting under the State regulations. The Southern Alaska Peninsula Herd is genetically distinct from the Unimak Herd is managed separately. In 2015 the minimum population estimate was 1,568 animals. The Southern Alaska Peninsula Herd operational management plan objective for the population is for like three to 4,000 animals. The cow/calf ratios average 31 calves per 100
cows since 2011, which is considered good, and the 
bull/cow ratio average 45 bulls per 100 cows since 
2011, which was above the State's management objective 
of 35 bulls per 100 cows.

Under the Southern Alaska Peninsula 
Caribou Herd management plan there is no harvest if the 
bull/cow ratio falls below 20 bulls per 100 cows or the 
population is below 1,000 and in decline based on three 
independent estimates. The harvest since 2001 has 
averaged about 42 per year.

Removal of the restrictions would allow 
Federally-qualified subsistence users to harvest -- 
have the same opportunity as provided under the State 
regulations and as I said before currently most of the 
Federally-qualified users are harvesting under the 
State regulations, they're more liberal right now. 
There's no indication that removal of the restrictions 
for the Federally-qualified subsistence users is going 
to substantially increase the harvest. There's an 
increasing population trend and good bull/cow ratio 
since 2013 so it suggests that caribou -- the Southern 
Alaska Peninsula Caribou Herd could withstand an 
additional increase in the harvest.

In the past the Southern Alaska 
Peninsula Caribou Herd has experienced wide population 
fluctuations and the current population is 
approximately 50 percent of the lower threshold in the 
operational plan. If the Izembek National Wildlife 
Refuge manager has delegated authority to determine and 
announce harvest quotas in any needed closures, there 
will be regulatory flexibility to adjust the harvest if 
needed based on fluctuations of the herd.

The OSM conclusion for this proposal is 
to support Proposal WP18-20 with modification, to 
remove the unit specific regulation referencing quotas 
and closures and delegate authority to the Izembek 
National Wildlife Refuge to announce quotas and any 
needed quotas via the delegation of authority letter.

That concludes my analysis and I'm open 
for questions.

Thank you.

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

(No comments)

CHAIRMAN CHRISTIANSON: Hearing none, summary of public comment.

MS. DEATHERAGE: Thank you, Mr. Chair. Members of the Board. There are no written comments for WP18-20.

Thank you.

CHAIRMAN CHRISTIANSON: I'll open the floor to public testimony.

(No comments)

CHAIRMAN CHRISTIANSON: Anybody on the phone.

OPERATOR: If you'd like to ask a question, please press star-one.

(No comments)

OPERATOR: For questions or comments, star-one.

(No comments)

CHAIRMAN CHRISTIANSON: Hearing none, Regional Advisory Council recommendation.

MS. TRUMBLE: Thank you, Mr. Chair. The Kodiak/Aleutians Subsistence Regional Advisory Council basically said support with modification to limit harvest to one to four caribou by Federal registration permit.

In 2016 the Council submitted a proposal to align Federal subsistence regulations with the more liberal State regulations, which allowed for the take of one caribou versus one bull from the Southern Peninsula Herd. OSM's preliminary conclusion was to modify the proposal to remove unit specific harvest and authorize delegation of authority to the Refuge Manager to establish and announce quotas. These
unit specific harvest and quotas were cumbersome and ineffective causing subsistence users to hunt caribou under the State permit. The herd has experienced expediential growth with few animals harvested and there's still some concern from State biologists that it could quickly grow beyond the biological carrying capacity of the area.

With that said, the population of the SAP Herd is still at the low end of the State's population objective between two and 3,000 animals. In response the Council voted unanimously to accept OSM's recommendation and further modify the proposal to limit the harvest to one to four animals, dependent upon harvestable surplus. Council members believe that this would allow managers to respond to herd growth in a conservative way while allowing for additional harvest when warranted for reducing unsustainable herd growth.

And basically the modified regulation would read:

One to four caribou by Federal registration permit only between August 1 and September 30th and November 15th and March 31st.

Thank you.

CHAIRMAN CHRISTIANSON: Thank you.

Tribal or Alaska Native Corp comments, Native Liaison.

MR. LIND: Thank you, Chair. Board members. During the consultation held September 7th, which Kodiak/Aleutian member Skinner was present, there were no further discussions on Proposal WP18-20.

Thank you.

CHAIRMAN CHRISTIANSON: Thank you.

Alaska Department of Fish and Game comments.

MR. BUTLER: Thank you, Mr. Chair.

Members of the Board.

The Department supports this proposal and supports the RAC modifications that have been discussed currently with a bag limit that would flex up to four caribou. We passed out a handout that demonstrates what the Alaska Board of Game has recently
done. Under our regulations we also have plans to increase the bag limit up to five caribou. Currently we're at a one caribou bag limit by State registration permit so the modifications that are being proposed would align State and Federal seasons and bag limits. So we support that.

And as Della mentioned, we do have concerns that this population could grow too fast and exceed the objectives so the additional harvest opportunity with the bag limit would provide more subsistence resource to local users in addition to giving us a few management tools to control the herd growth so we support the proposal as recommended by the RAC.

CHAIRMAN CHRISTIANSON: Thank you.
InterAgency Staff Committee comments.

MS. HARDIN: Thank you, Mr. Chair. The InterAgency Staff Committee provided the standard comment for WP18-20.

CHAIRMAN CHRISTIANSON: Thank you.
Board discussion with Council Chair and State liaison. Do we have any questions or comments.

(No comments)

CHAIRMAN CHRISTIANSON: Hearing none.
Federal Subsistence Board action -- oh, Chris, go ahead.

MR. MCKEE: Thank you, Mr. Chair. I'd just like to add that if the Board ends up wanting to go with the Council's recommendation, I would point you to the delegation of authority letter that starts on Page 1823 as Appendix A of the analysis. On Page 1824 under scope of delegation as we noted in the analysis, where the scope is currently under the letter we're proposing to set quotas and any needed closures for caribou in the area of interest, if you were to go with the Council's recommendation we would want to also add determining harvest limits and setting any needed sex restrictions, if you were going to go towards that, so they would have that flex -- so the manager would have the flexibility to adjust the harvest limit depending on the herd size as the State has been suggesting as to how the -- closer to what the Council's desires would
Mr. Chair.

CHAIRMAN CHRISTIANSON: So what you’re saying, Chris, is either -- do we change the letter of delegation or do we include that here in our motion?

MR. MCKEE: You would include -- we would add the language to the letter of delegation, to give that management flexibility to the Refuge manager.

CHAIRMAN CHRISTIANSON: Okay, thank you for that clarification.

Any other discussion or questions.

(No comments)

CHAIRMAN CHRISTIANSON: Board action.

MR. SIEKANIEC: Thank you, Mr. Chair.

Greg Siekaniec, Fish and Wildlife Service.

I move to adopt Proposal WP18-20 as modified by the Kodiak/Aleutians Council as indicated on Page 803 and 804, and 814 through 817. If I get a second I will provide my justification.


MR. SIEKANIEC: Thank you. The recommended modification is to limit harvest to one to four caribou by Federal registration permit that would be determined based on a harvestable surplus.

Adopting this modified proposal would remove the more restrictive harvest limit and season on Federally-qualified subsistence users hunting caribou under Federal regulations in Unit 9D, and give them the same opportunity as those hunting under State regulation. Even though the current caribou population is currently below its population objective, it is recognized and believed to be increasing rapidly. The delegated authority letter requires any management action proposed to have a sound biological justification and also requires consultation with the State. These required elements within the delegation letter will reduce the risk for overharvest, while at
the same time providing maximum management flexibility with the State to keep caribou populations healthy and sustainable and available for harvest opportunity.

Thank you, Mr. Chair.

CHAIRMAN CHRISTIANSON: Thank you. Any further discussion.

(No comments)

MR. C. BROWER: Question.

CHAIRMAN CHRISTIANSON: Question's been called. Why don't I just say, all those in favor of this proposal say aye.

IN UNISON: Aye.

CHAIRMAN CHRISTIANSON: Opposed, same sign.

(No opposing votes)

CHAIRMAN CHRISTIANSON: Motion carries unanimously.

That one took 15 minutes, so here we go.

(Laughter)

CHAIRMAN CHRISTIANSON: We'll move on to the next region, Bristol Bay.

(Pause)

MS. WORKER: Thank you, Mr. Chair. My name is Suzanne Worker. I'm a wildlife biologist with OSM and I will be going over WP18-21. This analysis begins on Page 826 of your books.

This proposal was submitted by the Bristol Bay Regional Advisory Council and there are basically two parts to their request. The first part of their request is that the harvest restrictions for caribou be eliminated in Units 9A, B and C, 17A, B and C, and 19A and B. This would result in a simple harvest limit of two caribou rather than the current
limit of two caribou with a restriction that no more
than one may be a bull and that no more than one may be
taken August 1st to January 31st. So this would result
in consistent harvest limits throughout the range of
the herd as well as consistent State and Federal
harvest limits since the Board of Game made these
changes in State regulation in 2016.

The second part of the request is that
within the portion of Unit 9C that drains into the
Naknek River from the north, the regulations be changed
from a may be announced season with a harvest limit of
one bull to an August 1st to March 15th season with a
harvest limit of two caribou consistent with the
proposed changes in the rest of the Mulchatna Caribou
Herd range. So consistent with the changes in the first
part of the request.

This area is at the margin of the
Mulchatna Caribou Herd range and the Northern Alaska
Peninsula Caribou Herd range and it would essentially
shift the regulatory emphasis from that Northern Alaska
Peninsula Herd to the Mulchatna Herd. And I'll just
note that a proposal identical to this second request
was submitted to the Board of Game and that Board did
adopt the changes when they met in February.

Historically the Mulchatna Caribou Herd
has ranged from around 20,000 to around 200,000 caribou
and in recent years it's fluctuated between 26,000 and
31,000 approximately. The most current population
estimate which was in 2016 was around 27,000 caribou so
it's on the low end of the historical population size
and it's also just below the population objective,
which is 30,000 to 80,000 caribou. However, in 2016
there were 39 bulls to 100 cows which is the highest
bull/cow ratio that's been observed since 2000. So the
status of this herd does seem to be improving.

The Northern Alaska Peninsula Herd is a
small population, it was approximately 3,000 animals at
last count, that was in 2015. So that's well below the
population objective of 12,000 to 15,000 caribou. But
the northern portion of this range, which is the part
that's relevant to the proposal has become less
important with caribou only rarely crossing the Naknek
River to the north side.

Reported harvest from the Mulchatna
Caribou Herd by Federally-qualified subsistence users has averaged fewer than 500 caribou annually since 2000 and in recent years reported harvest has been even lower than that, although unreported harvest almost certainly occurs, so we do anticipate that this is an under estimate of actual harvest by Federal users.

If this proposal was adopted there isn't expected to be any effect on the Mulchatna Caribou Herd or on subsistence users who hunt from this herd. And this is because the proposed changes have already been made in State regulation and all users are required to obtain a State registration permit in this hunt, including Federal hunters.

As I mentioned, the request in Unit 9C will result in a shift in the regulatory emphasis from the Northern Alaska Peninsula Herd to the Mulchatna Herd and we don't expect that biologically this is going to be a problem given the current movement and distribution pattern of those two herds. However, as the request is written it would consolidate the area north of the Naknek with the hunt area in the Alagnak drainage and this will result in regulatory inconsistencies within a single hunt area due to a Federal lands closure that exists in the Naknek drainage. So that's something that's going to have to be worked out.

The OSM conclusion is to support WP18-21 with modification, and the modification is found on Page 843 of your materials.

The first modification is to create a new hunt area described as Unit 9C, that portion draining into the Naknek River from the north and Graveyard Creek and Coffee Creek. And this is to accommodate the lands closure that I talked about. And I do want to point out that the hunt area description that's in your materials has an omission, it should include the area drained by Graveyard Creek and Coffee Creek and that just was not included in the analysis but that does accurately describe the area that we're talking about.

The second modification is to delegate authority to the BLM, Anchorage Field Office manager, to open and close the season and set the harvest limits, including sex restrictions if a new hunt area
is designated.

And, finally, to retain the language in the Unit 19A and B regulation, specifying that residents of Lime Village are authorized to hunt under an existing community hunt only.

That's all I have but I'm happy to take questions.

CHAIRMAN CHRISTIANSON: Thank you. Any questions for Staff.

MR. C. BROWER: I have one.

CHAIRMAN CHRISTIANSON: Charlie.

MR. C. BROWER: How do you differ Northern Alaska Peninsula Caribou, can you tell the difference?

MS. WORKER: Fish and Game has collars on the Northern Alaska Peninsula Caribou Herd and they are monitored so they know when those caribou are north of the Naknek River.

MR. C. BROWER: Thank you.

CHAIRMAN CHRISTIANSON: Any other questions.

(No comments)

CHAIRMAN CHRISTIANSON: Hearing none, we'll move to summary of public comments.

MR. MIKE: Thank you, Mr. Chair. Donald Mike, Council coordinator. Just for your information, the Federal Subsistence Board members, we have Mr. Dan Dunaway, a member of the Bristol Bay Regional Advisory Council on line and he will be presenting the Bristol Bay Council's recommendations to the Board.

For the written public comments, we have one written public comment received from Lake Clark National Park Subsistence Resource Commission and you will find it in your supplement on Page 7-29.
The Lake Clark National Park Subsistence Resource Commission supports WP18-21 as written.

Thank you, Mr. Chair.

CHAIRMAN CHRISTIANSON: Thank you. Now, the floor's open to any public testimony.

(No comments)

CHAIRMAN CHRISTIANSON: Seeing none here, on the phone.

OPERATOR: As a reminder, star-one to make a comment.

(No comments)

CHAIRMAN CHRISTIANSON: Hearing none, then we'll call on the Regional Council recommendation, and that is on the line.

(No comments)

MR. MIKE: Mr. Chair. That would be Mr. Dunaway on line.

CHAIRMAN CHRISTIANSON: Is Mr. Dunaway on line?

OPERATOR: Yes. Mr. Dunaway, your line is open.

MR. DUNAWAY: Thank you. Is this the place I should say what the RAC said. Over.

CHAIRMAN CHRISTIANSON: Yes, this is your time to share your recommendation from the RAC.

MR. DUNAWAY: Okay. Thank you very much for the opportunity.

Yes, the Bristol Bay Regional Advisory Council supported this proposal with the recommended modifications from the OSM. We like to have our regulations as consistent with other regulatory
agencies as possible to minimize confusion for our hunters.

Thank you.

CHAIRMAN CHRISTIANSON: Thank you. Tribal, Alaska Native Corp comments.

MR. LIND: Thank you, Mr. Chair. Board members. Orville Lind, Native Liaison, OSM.

On September 14th during the consultation there was no further discussion on the proposal.

CHAIRMAN CHRISTIANSON: Eva, and.....

MS. PATTON: Mr. Chair. Mr. Chair.

CHAIRMAN CHRISTIANSON: .....then Chris.

MS. PATTON: Mr. Chair and Council. This was a crossover proposal for both YK Delta and Western Interior Regional Advisory Councils. Our Council Chair for YK Delta, Alissa Rogers is out just at the moment with her little one and will join us here shortly so I will provide the YK Delta's recommendations on this proposal.

CHAIRMAN CHRISTIANSON: Thank you. And I apologize, I get ahead of myself here and forget there is more than one RAC on some of these proposals, so thanks to the Staff for flagging it out.

MS. PATTON: And this is a crossover proposal because the Mulchatna Caribou Herd range throughout several RAC regions and communities within the YK Delta hunt the Mulchatna Herd as well.

So the Council reiterated that as hunters they notice changes that are going on with resources they hunt in their region and there have been concerns about the Mulchatna Herd in the YK Delta RAC region as well as expressed by the Bristol Bay Regional Advisory Council. And the Council wishes to support the observations from the Bristol Bay region, so they voted to support this proposal in an effort to help the people in the Bristol Bay region retain this important
subsistence resource for their future generations and their efforts for conservation. And so while the Council did make a motion to support, as written, their intention was to support the wishes of the Bristol Bay Council that had submitted the proposal.

Thank you, Mr. Chair.

CHAIRMAN CHRISTIANSON: Thank you. And then I would call on the next RAC, Jack.

MR. REAKOFF: Thank you, Mr. Chair.
Western Interior Regional Advisory Council was very concerned about the Mulchatna Caribou Herd for the last several years and is happy to see that the bull/cow ratio is returning back to the objectives. We do feel that there is a harvestable surplus. The Western Interior Council supported the proposal with OSM modifications for reasons stated in the OSM justification.

The Council excluded 9C from their discussion and recommendation as that subunit is outside the Western Interior region's customary and traditional use.

Thank you, Mr. Chair.

CHAIRMAN CHRISTIANSON: Thank you. Any questions for the RAC Chairs.

(No comments)

CHAIRMAN CHRISTIANSON: Hearing none, we'll move on to the Alaska Department of Fish and Game comments.

MR. BUTLER: Thank you, Mr. Chair. Members of the Board. The Department supports the proposal as modified with some additional modifications.

As you've heard this proposal largely aligns State and Federal regulations for the Mulchatna Caribou Herd by adjusting the bag limit to two caribou which is a change that the Board of Game recently made and including the area of portion 9C, north of the Naknek River in with the general regulations for the Mulchatna Caribou Herd. This area has seen occupation
by two caribou herds the Mulchatna and the Northern Alaska Peninsula Herd. Recent changes in the distribution of the Northern Alaska Peninsula Herd keep it well to the south of 9C. So it really isn't occupying the same area, which is why we feel at this time, that portion of 9C, north of the Naknek River can be designated as a portion of the Mulchatna Herd's range and aligned with those seasons and bag limits.

Similarly, the closure that was mentioned in the Federal lands in the Naknek drainage of 9C, that closure was put in place to protect the -- or in consideration of the Northern Alaska Peninsula Herd, which, again, is not currently there. So we recommend that with the change in herd distribution that that closure is no longer needed at this time.

The other thing that may not have been mentioned is that as we align seasons with the remainder of the Mulchatna Herd's range, the typical season for the Mulchatna Herd closes on March 31st, so we'd recommend changing the season closure date in 9C, 9B and 9B -- 9C north of the Naknek River, I should be specific about that, to close on March 31st to align with general Mulchatna season dates.

Thank you, Mr. Chair.

CHAIRMAN CHRISTIANSON: Thank you.

Questions.

(No comments)

CHAIRMAN CHRISTIANSON: InterAgency Staff Committee.

MS. HARDIN: Thank you, Mr. Chair. The InterAgency Staff Committee provide the standard comment on Wildlife Proposal 18-21.

CHAIRMAN CHRISTIANSON: Thank you.

Board discussion with Council Chair, State liaison.

(No comments)

CHAIRMAN CHRISTIANSON: Hearing and seeing none, Federal Board action.
MR. FROST: Bert Frost, National Park Service. I move that we adopt WP18-21 as modified by OSM. This modification is found on Page 843 of the meeting book. And after a second, I will speak to my motion.

MR. POLACCA: Second.

MR. FROST: I intend to vote in support of my motion, WP18-21 as modified by OSM. It's consistent with the Bristol Bay RAC and Western Interior RAC recommendations, which are found on Page 847, and the Lake Clark National Park SRC recommendation found on Page 729 of supplemental Section 7.

In addition it also crea -- its creation of a single hunt area and alignment with State regulations will reduce regulatory complexity and a delegation of authority to a local manager for in-season management decisions within the hunt area will ensure flexibility to respond to caribou movements.

Thanks.

CHAIRMAN CHRISTIANSON: Thank you. Any discussion.

(No comments)

CHAIRMAN CHRISTIANSON: Any further deliberation.

(No comments)

CHAIRMAN CHRISTIANSON: All for the question.

MR. SIEKANIEC: Question.

CHAIRMAN CHRISTIANSON: Question's been called. All those in favor signify by saying aye.

IN UNISON: Aye.

CHAIRMAN CHRISTIANSON: Opposed, same sign.

(No opposing votes)
CHAIRMAN CHRISTIANSON: Motion carries unanimously.

We're on to the next one.

MS. WORKER: Thank you, Mr. Chair. The next one is 18-22, that begins on Page 854 of your meeting materials.

This proposal was also submitted by the Bristol Bay Regional Advisory Council, and they request that the Federal public lands closure for caribou on the Nushagak Peninsula be rescinded. Currently the harvest of Nushagak Peninsula Caribou is limited to residents of seven communities. Those are Togiak, Twin Hills, Manokotak, Aleknagik, Dillingham, Clark's Point and Ekok. So this closure does exclude some Federally-qualified subsistence users as it stands.

This population was the subject of several special action requests in regulatory years 2015 and 2016, all of which were aimed at increasing harvest. Those actions resulted in temporary liberalization of harvest regulations including rescinding the Federal public lands closure. We had no special action requests in regulatory year 2017 so Federal public lands are currently closed except to residents of those seven communities.

The current population estimate of the Nushagak Peninsula Caribou Herd is 968 caribou which is above the population objective of 400 to 900 caribou and above the optimum population size, which is 750 caribou. This population has been above the upper limit of this objective since 2012 and that has resulted in concern about the habitat and the long-term status of the population. Poor travel conditions resulted in lower than expected harvest during the population's peak for several years but in regulatory year 2016/2017 conditions were good and harvest was quite high at 371 caribou and so the population decline that we saw between 2016 and 2017 was largely a result of harvest. Despite the opening of a State season that year, nearly all reported harvest was attributable to residents of the seven communities who have always been eligible to harvest Nushagak Peninsula Caribou.

Just a little bit more detail on that.
23 caribou were harvested under State regulation and 22 of those were harvested by local residents who were eligible to harvest caribou under Federal regulation. So even with a State season the interest has remained primarily local.

If this proposal was adopted, Federal public lands on the Nushagak Peninsula will be open to all users, which may help reduce the population to more appropriate levels and is not expected to negatively affect subsistence users ability to harvest caribou at this point.

I also want to mention that the most recent special action related to this lands closure, which was WSA16-02 included a threshold of 900 animals so that’s the upper limit of that population objective. And the way the closure worked was that if the population estimate was above 900 caribou, then the closure would be rescinded and if it fell below that then Federal public lands would be closed.

And this alternative was considered in the analysis and it probably does have merit, and as you’ll soon hear this is the approach that was favored by the Bristol Bay Regional Advisory Council.

The OSM conclusion is to support WP18-22 as it was written.

Thank you, Mr. Chair.

CHAIRMAN CHRISTIANSON: Thank you.

Summary of public comment.

MR. MIKE: Thank you, Mr. Chair. There were no public comments received on WP18-22.

CHAIRMAN CHRISTIANSON: Thank you. At this time we’ll open the floor to public testimony.

(NO comments)

CHAIRMAN CHRISTIANSON: Anyone on the phone.

OPERATOR: No, there are no participants in the cue.
CHAIRMAN CHRISTIANSON: Thank you.

OPERATOR: One moment, we do have a
participant coming in. Dan Dunaway with Bristol Bay
Rural [sic] Advisory Council your line is open.

MR. DUNAWAY: Thank you, Madame Chair
-- Mr. Chair. Yes, as you can see the Bristol Bay RAC
has paid very close attention to this hunt and this
herd for some time. It's a really valued subsistence
resource in those years where weather permits access.
We supported it with modification to open Federal
public lands to all users when the herd is above 900
and closed to all except Federally-qualified users when
the herd is below 900.

We have excellent coordination and
communication between the agencies and the local
communities and they meet and discuss harvest levels
and herd conditions a few times in the summer and fall.
It is a very restricted area and we're painfully aware
of what happened some years ago when the herd grew too
big and then crashed to a point where there were very
few animals for anybody. We're kind of proud that we
all worked together and shared what few animals could
be harvested among the various communities, but we
don't want to get it to that point again and we're
hoping that this regulation will work well in periods
where there's abundance. It also would allow some of
our nearby neighbors who aren't officially qualified,
but are within range to come over by boat or airplane,
so it accommodates their needs and protect the herd,
yet, when the herd is somewhat smaller it preserves the
subsistence needs for the most immediate communities.

Thank you.

CHAIRMAN CHRISTIANSON: Thank you for
that. Any additional public testimony.

MR. REAKOFF: Mr. Chairman.

CHAIRMAN CHRISTIANSON: Yes.

MR. REAKOFF: Western Interior Regional
Advisory Council supported the proposal as written.
The Council justifies their support for the proposal
noting the caribou population is healthy and can
support additional harvest. The Council added that it
would likely be subsistence communities that would take advantage of the additional harvest anyway that were in proximity.

The Western Interior Council met before the Bristol Bay and so we didn't have their input on this proposal.

Thank you, Mr. Chair.

CHAIRMAN CHRISTIANSON: Thank you. So we've heard from both Chairs now. Yes, okay.

So then we'll move on to Tribal, Alaska Native Corp comments.

MR. LIND: Thank you, Mr. Chair. Board members. During the consultation of September 14th there was no discussion on WP18-22.

Thank you.

CHAIRMAN CHRISTIANSON: Thank you.

MR. BUTLER: Mr. Chair. Members of the Board. The Department supports the proposal.

We do intend to manage that hunt area in mind with the upper limit of the caribou population objective 900. We'd prefer just a complete rescinding of that and allowing the managers to work with local communities to adjust that as needed going forward in the future which is what's been done in the past. We don't think it needs to be formalized in regulation. But we do support opening it up. It'll provide additional opportunity, not just to these seven communities but also the other communities in Bristol Bay as well as other resource users.

The population was introduced by the State in the '80s. It's exceeded the objectives and it has a history of crashing if it isn't reduced to within the objective range so we think it's prudent to allow the additional opportunity.

Thank you.

CHAIRMAN CHRISTIANSON: Thank you.
InterAgency -- oh, go ahead.

MS. WORKER: Sorry, Mr. Chair. I think we missed a member of the public who would like to speak on this proposal.

CHAIRMAN CHRISTIANSON: Okay. Well, we might as well hear it now.

MS. HOSETH: Thank you, Mr. Chairman and members of the Board. I'm actually speaking on -- my name is Gayla Hoseth for the record and I'm the Second Chief of Curyung Tribal Council. I'm located in Dillingham and I've testified in front of you guys a couple of days ago regarding this. And is this part of the record or do I need to go, what I testified two days ago, because when the tribal consultations, our tribe was opposed to 18-22 and I just want to make that clear.

Do I need to restate what I stated two days ago?

CHAIRMAN CHRISTIANSON: No, you're on the record now so if you want to put it on the public record.....

MS. HOSETH: Okay. I was just wondering because we're during the tribal consultation portion what you called on, I mean we did oppose this proposal and I just want to make sure that that's clear for the tribal consultation reference.

CHAIRMAN CHRISTIANSON: Okay.

MS. HOSETH: Okay. I just wanted to add in additional information. And I hope that you guys could remember that our tribe was opposed to this proposal.

And I was just curious as to what is the population as of today because 93 were reported with the harvest tickets so far and they're still collecting the data. When we had our planning committee, like -- and I want to emphasize that this needs to be a co-management so that we have an equal vote on this when decisions are being made for our people. We have the seven tribal seats that were seated around the table and we were requesting a bag
limit of four or five. In the regulations it says that we have a bag limit of up to five but we -- but a bag limit of three was given to us. So our voices aren't being heard and we are the primary hunters, the seven communities in that area.

And I just wanted to make -- just come on the record and make sure that my comments were a part of the decision that you guys are going to be making today because this is a food source for the seven villages that live in this area and there already are mechanisms in place to expand to C&T and also the State could open up for a State hunt.

So I just wanted to make sure that we protect this for our area and our tribe is in opposition to this proposal.

CHAIRMAN CHRISTIANSON: Thank you for your comments.

Any other public, since I opened the floor.

(No comments)

CHAIRMAN CHRISTIANSON: InterAgency Staff Committee.

MS. HARDIN: Thank you, Mr. Chair. Members of the Board. The InterAgency Staff Committee provided the standard comment for WP18-22.

CHAIRMAN CHRISTIANSON: Thank you.

Board discussion and Council Chair, State liaison.

(No comments)

CHAIRMAN CHRISTIANSON: I just had a question. There was a question about the population, current population of that herd.

MS. WORKER: I can try to take that question, Mr. Chair.

CHAIRMAN CHRISTIANSON: Okay.

MS. WORKER: The best I can do on a
population estimate is -- so this herd is surveyed annually, which is somewhat unusual for a wildlife population and we have a really good record of harvest because it requires a Federal registration permit and I know the biologists out there do a lot of outreach to make sure that those harvests are recorded.

So a rough estimate of the population size would be what it was when we did the last survey minus harvest. Of course there's going to be some slop in that. I know the Refuge biologists are watching the harvest and they're cognizant of this, you know, we're sort of at an awkward place in this population because it's still above the upper limit of the population objective, but it seems to be on a downward trend now and soon the amount of harvest that's going to be available, it might be changing in the next several years and a lot of that depends on how much people are able to get out and harvest. So it's been highly variable over the years due to weather conditions.

So I understand Gayla's concern that this population is kind of right in that area where, you know, the closure is maybe a little bit, not as straightforward as it was two years ago when we first started talking about that.

So that's the best I can do on a population estimate.

CHAIRMAN CHRISTIANSON: Is that in our book somewhere because I still didn't get a number.

MS. WORKER: So the last estimate in 2017 was 968 caribou. The range is 750 to 1,186.

CHAIRMAN CHRISTIANSON: Thank you, that's what I was looking for.

Any other Board discussion or questions.

(No comments)

CHAIRMAN CHRISTIANSON: Board action.

MR. SIEKANIEC: Mr. Chairman.
CHAIRMAN CHRISTIANSON: Greg.


I would like to move to adopt Proposal WP18-22 with the modification recommended by the Bristol Bay Regional Advisory Council on Page 868. If the motion is seconded, I will provide my justification for this.


CHAIRMAN CHRISTIANSON: The new regulation would read as shown on Page 856 with the following language added:

Federal public lands are closed to harvest of caribou except by Federally-qualified subsistence users unless the population estimate exceeds 900 caribou.

The Bristol Bay Council concerns for potential over-grazing or overharvest of caribou are both addressed by this modification. Allowing other users to harvest when the estimated number of caribou exceeds the conservation population objective of 900 will help to keep the herd within carrying capacity. However, during times when the population does not exceed 900 harvest opportunity would be restricted in order to provide additional subsistence priority. Adopting this modified proposal provides certainty for all hunters as to when harvest may be allowed and provides flexibility to respond to increasing or decreasing caribou populations without the need for submission of special actions to the Board. Rescinding the closure when the population is above 900 offers the best potential to increase harvest and reduce the population size and is consistent with the Board's closure policy.

Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

CHAIRMAN CHRISTIANSON: Thank you. Any further discussion. Deliberation.

(NO comments)

CHAIRMAN CHRISTIANSON: Call for the
MR. FROST: Question.

CHAIRMAN CHRISTIANSON: Question's been called. All those in favor of the motion signify by saying aye.

IN UNISON: Aye.

CHAIRMAN CHRISTIANSON: Opposed, same sign.

(No opposing votes)

CHAIRMAN CHRISTIANSON: Motion carries. Oh, I'm forgetting a process here of reading into the record the motion but I guess Greg did that. All right, yeah, so, unanimous.

Thank you.

MS. LAVINE: Good afternoon, Mr. Chair. Members of the Board. And participants in the audience. My name is Robbin LaVine and I'm an anthropologist at the Office of Subsistence Management and I'll be presenting the proposal 18-23.

The proposal, 18-23 was submitted by Gayla Hoseth of Dillingham and it requests that residents of Units 9C and 9E be added to the customary and traditional use determination for caribou in Unit 17 remainder, specifically the geographic boundaries that encompass the primary range of the Nushagak Peninsula Caribou Herd.

The Nushagak Peninsula Caribou Herd has experienced significant growth in the past decade and has been above optimal population size for several years, as you've just heard. The proponent states that residents of Units 9C and 9E have demonstrated patterns of use relevant to the Nushagak Peninsula Caribou Herd during Bristol Bay Regional Advisory Council meetings and that adding them to the customary and traditional use determination for caribou on the Nushagak Peninsula will provide increased opportunity for Federally-qualified subsistence users to harvest caribou in times
During the fall 2015 Council meeting in Dillingham, while addressing Wildlife Proposal 16-31/32 on allowing same-day airborne hunting of the herd, Council members discussed other means of increasing harvest of the herd and controlling the booming population, specifically members expressed interest in expanding the C&T for caribou in Unit 17 in order to liberalize harvest opportunities for a larger pool of Federally-qualified subsistence users, rather than opening the hunt to all users. Discussions during the 2015 meeting centered around inclusion of both Unit 9 residents and East Bay villages. It should be noted that population numbers can never be a reason to grant or deny a customary and traditional use determination. C&T determinations recognize use and are not meant to regulate a resource.

Also pertinent to this proposal is Wildlife Proposal 18-22, which you just heard and have moved on.

So I'm going to move forward with a customary and traditional use determination analysis summary and we start with community characteristics.

There are 12 communities within Units 9C and 9E, King Salmon, Naknek and south Naknek in Unit 9C and Egegik, Pilot Point, Ugashik, Port Heiden, Chignik, Chignik Lake, Chignik Lagoon, Perryville and Ivanof Bay in Units 9E. The population of the 12 communities considered in this analysis totals approximately 1,650 persons.

So when conducting a customary and traditional use determination analysis eight factors are considered. You can find them listed in your analysis on Page 885. Please keep in mind, again, that these factors are not a checklist. So the Board makes customary and traditional use determinations based on a holistic application of these eight factors as well as the reports and recommendations of any appropriate Regional Advisory Council. The Board makes customary and traditional use determinations for the sole purpose of recognizing the pool of users who generally exhibit the eight factors and not for resource management or for restricting harvest. If a conservation concern exists the Board addresses that concern through harvest...
limits, season restrictions or the Section .804 subsistence user prioritization process, not customary and traditional use determinations.

Residents of Unit 9C already have a customary and traditional use determination for caribou in their units 9A, 9B, 9C and 9E and residents of Unit 9E have a customary and traditional use determination for caribou in Unit 9E. Therefore a long-term and consistent pattern of use of caribou, including methods of harvest, handling, preparing, preserving and storage and the sharing of knowledge and resources between generations and communities has already been recognized. And they address many of the eight factors.

So this analysis will demonstrate use and harvest of caribou in Unit 17 by residents of Units 9C and 9E in addition to harvest patterns that demonstrate a history and interest in traveling outside their immediate community for the purpose of hunting caribou. Additional ties to the Nushagak Peninsula Caribou Herd will also be explored.

So long-term and consistent pattern of using caribou. Archeological surveys and historic accounts document the primacy of the ocean and feeding the people of the Alaska Peninsula but they also describe the importance of caribou, particularly for those communities on the Western Bristol Bay portion of the Peninsula. Comprehensive subsistence surveys documented by ADF&G, the Division of Subsistence, document the continued use of caribou by residents of 9C and 9E but note that harvest was higher in the past compared to recent times, most likely due to the population decline and changing migration patterns of the Mulchatna Caribou Herd and prohibitions against the harvest of the Northern Alaska Peninsula Caribou Herd for health and recovery reasons. Regardless, harvest of caribou over the study years remain high averaging around 263 pounds per household in the 84 studies and in other communities during different study years, even higher. Almost all households in each study year used caribou.

Residents of Units 9C and 9E have harvested caribou in Unit 17 for as long as reports have been kept. Currently they may only harvest caribou in Unit 17 under State regulations. More
recently all State residents, including those in Units 9C and 9E were able to harvest Nushagak Peninsula caribou on Federal public lands due to Board approval of the Special Action 16-02.

ADF&G and U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service maintain a harvest reporting database, however, complete records were not kept until the mid-1980s and ADF&G data has not been added to the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service data since 2010. Regardless, some indication of harvest patterns can be discerned.

The table in the analysis, Table 1, demonstrates the cumulative harvest of caribou under State regulations by Unit 17 -- in Unit 17 by residents of Units 9C and 9E. From 1983 to 2010 harvest surveys conducted by ADF&G demonstrate the caribou harvest and search areas of Units 9 residents consistently include portions of Unit 17.

While prehistorically and through the early 1900s residents of Northern Alaska Peninsula typically hunted and harvested resources close to home, by the latter half of the 20th Century, the use of aircraft was becoming a prevalent form of local transportation for some expanding the range for harvest opportunities. The importance of this method for caribou hunting specifically was recorded in an ADF&G technical paper on the subsistence harvest of residents of the Northern Alaska Peninsula. In the description of use of caribou by residents of the Bristol Bay Borough the following was noted; the regulation change which created the most controversy and perhaps the biggest change in local hunting patterns was the elimination of same day airborne hunting. For the previous three years same day airborne hunting had been allowed for caribou from January through March. So they have also documented, Fall and Morris, the use of aircraft by residents of Pilot Point, Ugashik, Port Heiden to access caribou in '86 and '87. Early in the season hunters would access the herd along water ways by skiff, use ATVs when the ground hardened and then as the season progressed the herd migrated further north and hunters would use airplanes. So basically documenting a use of traveling far and outside of their communities to access not only caribou but other resources.
A final note, while residents of Units 9C and 9E can only hunt caribou in Unit 9, residents of Unit 17 have a customary and traditional use determination for caribou in Units 9C and E. And this demonstrates a regional pattern easily extended to residents of Unit 9 of caribou harvest that ranges far by necessity as migration patterns change and populations fluctuate.

In summary, residents of Units 9C and 9E have a pattern of customary and traditional use of caribou in their region as well as a documented history of caribou harvest in Unit 17.

The Bristol Bay Regional Advisory Council has expressed support for the inclusion of Unit 9 residents into the customary and traditional use determination for caribou in Unit 17, specifically as a means to provide access to the Nushagak Peninsula Caribou Herd. Residents of Unit 9C and 9E have a demonstrated pattern of using caribou and that use extends beyond their specific units. In the past use of a resource often required traveling beyond close proximity to home villages. Residents of Units 9C and 9E have a demonstrated pattern of traveling farther, particularly by airplane, to access their local herds and those herds that range into their region. Herds that they have accessed in the past through contemporary times include the Northern Alaska Peninsula Caribou Herd, the Southern Alaska Peninsula Caribou Herd and the Mulchatna Caribou Herd -- or the Mulchatna Herd. Residents of Unit 17 have a customary and traditional use determination for caribou in Units 9C and 9E demonstrating a regional pattern easily extended to residents of Unit 9.

Finally, residents of Unit 9 have a unique connection to the Nushagak Peninsula Caribou Herd that is recognized by the Council and area residents specifically because the herd was reintroduced to the Peninsula by transferring individual animals from the Northern Alaska Peninsula Caribou Herd within the Units 9C and 9E.

The OSM preliminary conclusion is to support Wildlife Proposal 18-23 with modification to add residents of Units 9C and 9E to the customary and traditional use determination for caribou in Unit 17 remainder. This modification reflects that customary
and traditional use determinations are not meant to regulate use, but, instead, are meant to recognize subsistence uses in the most inclusive manner possible.

Thank you.

CHAIRMAN CHRISTIANSON: Thank you for the in-depth analysis.

Questions.

(No comments)

CHAIRMAN CHRISTIANSON: Summary of public comment.

MR. MIKE: Mr. Chair. There were no written public comments received on this proposal.

Thank you.

CHAIRMAN CHRISTIANSON: Alrighty. We'll open the floor to the public and we have -- Dillingham.

MS. HOSETH: Hello, again, Mr. Chairman and Members of the Board. Gayla Hoseth, the Second Chief of Curyung Tribal Council.

First of all I just wanted -- I'm figuring out this process and I thought that our tribal consultation that we had with you was going to be part of the record of what you guys are talking about here and I was told that I need to reread it on the record, of our position, so I will reread it into the record of our position.

Curyung Tribal Council's -- first of all to make it clear on the record that I did not submit this proposal. This proposal is a Bristol Bay Regional Advisory Council proposal and when it was written my name -- I was a part of the process of writing this proposal, it is in the transcripts that the RAC was going to submit this proposal. So I just wanted to make that clear and put credit to where credit needs to go.

So as far as Curyung Tribal Council, we are in support of WP18-23 to include 9C and 9E for the
customary -- in the C&T for the Nushagak Peninsula Caribou Herd. This is where the caribou came from, from these Game Management Unit areas and they should be included in the C&T so that all of the Bristol Bay region will have access to the caribou when we expand to the C&T communities.

That's all I have, Mr. Chairman.

CHAIRMAN CHRISTIANSON: Thank you, Gayla.

Any other public testimony.

(No comments)

CHAIRMAN CHRISTIANSON: On the phone.

OPERATOR: Star-one. One moment we do have a participant cuing.

(Pause)

OPERATOR: Dan Dunaway your line is open.

MR. DUNAWAY: Thank you. Thank you, Mr. Chair. I want to thank Robbin LaVine for a very thorough and extensive discussion. She hit all the points I could think of. I did want to reiterate that it was very common at one time for people on Unit 17 to fly over into 9E to harvest caribou when the Mulchatna Herd was low. And then as this Nushagak herd got large, several of the representatives of the RAC from the 9E, 9C area expressed strong interest in being able to have a reciprocal opportunity, given that they provided the breed stock.

And one nice thing about being on this RAC is, overall, we get along really well and try to share as much as possible. So we are strongly in support of this proposal as modified by OSM.

Thank you.

CHAIRMAN CHRISTIANSON: Thank you.

Appreciate your comments.

Any additional public comment.
OPERATOR: Next we have Courtenay
Carty, your line is open.

MS. CARTY: Thank you so much, good
morning -- or good afternoon, rather, Mr. Chair.
Courtenay Carty, Curyung Tribal Council for the record.

Just appreciate the opportunity to
participate telephonically and would like to reiterate
our tribe's support of Proposal WP18-23 for extending
the customary and traditional use determination for
Nushagak Peninsula caribou for residents of eastern
Bristol Bay.

Thanks so much.

CHAIRMAN CHRISTIANSON: Thank you,
Courtenay.

Any additional public comment.

OPERATOR: No, there are no additional
participants in the cue.

CHAIRMAN CHRISTIANSON: Thank you.
Regional Advisory Council Chairs -- is the Bristol Bay
still on the line -- okay.

MR. REAKOFF: Mr. Chairman. Western
Interior.

CHAIRMAN CHRISTIANSON: Yes.

MR. REAKOFF: It's a crossover
proposal. Western Interior Regional Advisory Council
supported WP18-23. The Council justified the support
for the proposal noting that the caribou population is
healthy and can support additional harvest.

The Council added that it would likely
be subsistence communities that would take advantage of
the additional harvest closest in proximity but some
users coming from outside of the immediate area.

Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

CHAIRMAN CHRISTIANSON: Thank you.
I'll call on Bristol Bay one more time.
OPERATOR: Next, Dan Dunaway, your line is open.

MR. DUNAWAY: Thank you. It took me a moment to tie back in. Yes, sir, you have a question?

CHAIRMAN CHRISTIANSON: No, we were just getting Regional Advisory Council recommendations and we were calling on Bristol Bay.

MR. DUNAWAY: Okay. This is Dan Dunaway from the Bristol Bay RAC and I spoke a few minutes ago saying we supported.

CHAIRMAN CHRISTIANSON: Thank you for that. And so having heard from both Regional Council Chairs we'll move on to the tribal organization, Native Corp.

MR. LIND: Thank you, Chair. Board members. During the consultation session on September 14th there is no further discussion on WP18-23.

Thank you, Chair.

CHAIRMAN CHRISTIANSON: Thank you. Alaska Department of Fish and Game.

MS. OLSON: Thank you, Mr. Chair. Lisa Olson with Division of Subsistence, Fish and Game. The State's comments begin on Page 892 of your Board workbook there.

We agree that was a thorough and appropriate OSM analysis and the State is neutral on eligibility requirements for participation in the Program provided by ANILCA. There are no conservation concerns associated with this proposal. Increased harvest may tend to keep the Nushagak herd from growing beyond the ability of the habitat to support the population.

Mr. Chair.

CHAIRMAN CHRISTIANSON: Thank you.

ISC.

MS. HARDIN: Thank you, Mr. Chair. The InterAgency Staff Committee provided the standard
CHAIRMAN CHRISTIANSON: Thank you.

Board discussion with Council Chairs and State liaison.

(No comments)

CHAIRMAN CHRISTIANSON: Hearing none, we'll move for Federal Board action.

Go ahead, Greg.

MR. SIEKANIEC: Mr. Chairman. Greg Siekaniec, Fish and Wildlife Service.

I move to adopt Proposal WP18-23 with the modification recommended by OSM and supported by the Bristol Bay Regional Advisory Council. That modification can be found on Page 889 of the meeting book. If seconded, I will provide justification.

MS. PITKA: Seconded by Rhonda Pitka.

MR. SIEKANIEC: Thank you, Rhonda.

Residents of Unit 9C and 9E have a pattern of customary and traditional use of caribou in their region as well as a documented history of caribou harvest in Unit 17 as demonstrated by the OSM analysis. The Bristol Bay Subsistence Regional Advisory Council has expressed support for the inclusion of Unit 9 residents into the customary and traditional use determination for caribou in Unit 17, specifically as a means to provide access to the Nushagak Peninsula Caribou Herd. Residents of Unit 9C and 9E have a demonstrated pattern of using caribou and that use extends beyond their specific home units.

Thank you.

CHAIRMAN CHRISTIANSON: Thank you. Any further discussion.

(No comments)

CHAIRMAN CHRISTIANSON: Deliberation.
(No comments)

CHAIRMAN CHRISTIANSON: Hearing none, I'll call for the question.

MR. FROST: Question.

CHAIRMAN CHRISTIANSON: Question's been called. Before I take the vote I will have Tom read into the record one more time the motion so that we can get it clearly stated on the record.

MR. DOOLITTLE: Yep, that's my instructions.

(Laughter)

MR. DOOLITTLE: So on WP18-23, the motion on the floor is adopt Proposal WP18-23 as modified by the Office of Subsistence Management, that modification can be found on Page 889 of the meeting book.

CHAIRMAN CHRISTIANSON: All those in favor of the motion, signify by saying aye.

IN UNISON: Aye.

CHAIRMAN CHRISTIANSON: Opposed, same sign.

(No opposing votes)

CHAIRMAN CHRISTIANSON: Motion carries unanimously. That'll be the process here forward Staff.

(Laughter)

CHAIRMAN CHRISTIANSON: We did four in one hour so if we keep that up we might get done tomorrow night at 8:30.

(Laughter)

CHAIRMAN CHRISTIANSON: WP18-24, analysis.

MS. LAVINE: Thank you, Mr. Chair.
Members of the Board. And public audience and public, all in attendance. Once again for the record my name is Robbin LaVine and I will be presenting Wildlife Proposal 18-24, which was on the consensus agenda. You can find it in your Council books beginning on Page 259.

18-24 was submitted by Kenneth Nukwak of Manokotak and he requests that Federally-qualified subsistence users be allowed to use a snowmachine to position caribou, wolves and wolverine for harvest in Unit 17 provided the animals are not shot from a moving vehicle.

ANILCA provides for the appropriate use of snowmachines, motorboats and other means of service transportation on Federal lands for subsistence purposes, however, some agency-specific regulations are prohibitory. The proponent states that the requested regulatory change is needed to prevent hunters from shooting into a herd of animals and to provide better guidelines for hunters for this method of harvest.

The regulatory history for snowmachine use in Alaska extends from 1995 through to the last regulatory cycle and the last wildlife regulatory cycle Proposal 16-48 was submitted by the Native Village of Kotzebue and that proposal requested that Federally-qualified subsistence users be allowed to use snowmachines to position a caribou, wolf or wolverine for the harvest in Unit 23. The Board adopted that proposal with modification to allow this method of harvest only on those lands managed by the BLM. The Board recognized use of snowmachines to position animals as customary and traditional practice, however, positioning animals by snowmachine is prohibited on National Park Service and U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service lands under agency-specific regulations.

BLM regulatory language does not specifically prohibit the use of snowmachines to position animals for hunting and the harvest method is allowed on State managed lands.

So the cultural knowledge and traditional practice, the use of snowmachines across the state is described in your analysis as well as, not just in the analysis but in the past presentations and the biological health and history of the animals in
Unit 17. So I won't go into that here.

If adopted, Wildlife Proposal 18-24 would allow hunters to use a snowmachine to position caribou, wolves and wolverine for selection and harvest as long as they are not shot from a moving snowmachine. This proposal would address the need for Federally-qualified subsistence users to be able to use the most efficient and effective methods for taking wild resources important to their livelihood. The proposed regulation is not expected to result in significant population changes for caribou, wolves or wolverines as snowmachines are already extensively utilized in Unit 17 to access hunting grounds and tralines and harvest numbers will continue to be managed by seasons and limits within regulation.

However, adopting this Federal regulatory change would emphasize the difference between ANILCA, Section .811 and agency specific regulations on Park Service and U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service lands.

The biological effects of winter hunting with snowmachines on caribou, wolves and wolverine in Unit 17 are largely unknown. If this proposal were adopted any biological effects that may occur in these species related to traditional winter hunting practices are anticipated to remain mostly unchanged as snowmachine are already extensively utilized in this manner in order to bring hunters within close proximity to the animals they harvest.

The proposed regulatory changes would ensure that Federally-qualified subsistence users are provided the opportunity to use snowmachines as an efficient and effective means to harvest caribou, wolves and wolverines during winter months. The proposed changes would have little to no effect on current hunting behavior and any changes in the population status are anticipated to continue to be addressed, again, through seasons and bag limits.

The OSM conclusion is to support Wildlife Proposal 18-24.

Thank you.

CHAIRMAN CHRISTIANSON: Thank you.
Questions.

(No comments)

CHAIRMAN CHRISTIANSON: Summary of public comment.

MR. MIKE: Thank you, Mr. Chair.

You'll find your comments beginning on Page 278 and 279 in your meeting materials, also in your supplemental materials, Supplemental Section Page 7-29.

Sharon Alden wrote in opposition to WP18-24 opposing it in the strongest possible terms.

Francis Mauer opposes 18-24 stating the proposal will open the door to harassing of wildlife by snowmachines and violates the basic premise of hunting.

The Lake Clark National Park commented on this proposal and they discussed the proposal and decided not to comment since the use of snowmachine is already allowed for access to hunting grounds within Lake Clark National Park, though, not for the positioning of game.

That concludes the written public comments.

Thank you, Mr. Chair.

CHAIRMAN CHRISTIANSON: Thank you.

With that we open the floor to the public.

MR. NUKWAK: Thank you, Mr. Chair and Members of the Board. My name is Kenneth Nukwak. I am the proposer of this WP18-24.

The reason being is we, as hunters from Manokotak, even other communities within that region, we try to follow the laws that are set but, we, ourselves, have unwritten laws that has been ingrained in us from childhood. I come to you guys in a friendly manner. I could have gone to other sources but I chose this one first, after long thought over.

So where it came from, I forgot how many years ago, I got cited for following the caribou and my passenger was my wife and my 14 or 15 year old
son, at that time, was on another snowmachine and a Federal wildlife trooper, two of them were behind me, I didn't know that until I stopped maybe the second or third time. So I was following the caribou and not trying to scare them off or anything, but the caribou are always running off as soon as they see a snowmachine, they see us as predators already, they know what -- that's within their nature in the Nushagak Peninsula or within the whole state for that matter, that's their intrinsic nature, to run off, as soon as they see you within a mile, half a mile to a mile away, a mile and a half, they see you on a sunny day, the leaders of the herd of caribou are already looking at your direction. If you look with your binoculars they're already looking at you and the first thing they do, never fails, they're running off to the south, only place where they're running to. And where I'm from it's open country, not -- within that Nushagak Peninsula area, it's open country. And if it's not open country there's hills with pike like trees, we call them, (In Native Language), they're pike like trees and there's red brush (In Native Language), in the red brushes, where the ptarmigans feed. So that's the kind of topography where we are hunting the caribou and the only thing they're seeing is -- first thing is, oh, my goodness, there's going to be -- man there's company, the leaders go and tell his herd and here's company and they're off.

So that's where the proposal came from.

At first I didn't know where to go to when I got cited that day. And it was $500 just for following the caribou trying to put meat on the table.

And on top of that I was told that the meat would be taken away from me at that spot as I -- if I had gotten caribou, and a good thing I was a terrible shot then.

(Laughter)

MR. NUKWAK: According to that report, I was sent from the Federal wildlife trooper that made the report, it stated in there that I am -- Kenneth shot and he missed. I'm a terrible shot, I can't even hit a moose from here to that sign right there, that screen right there without using a scope. I'm in my '50s now and I got to use reading glasses to read.
I just want to hunt freely and try to follow the laws that are placed in there except that law, if they -- if that law is not written according to the standards of how we hunt, what I was taught from my father and my grandfather and my great-grandfather, and my great-great-grandfather taught that down to the generation, I'm that generation, and now I'm teaching it down to my generation.

If these laws are written according to our standards then I wouldn't be here.

And I didn't know there was a CFR 36 written in there. According to the herding, harassing and hazing is not allowed, that goes against my way of hunting. We try not to harass. We don't try to haze. We're just trying to put meat on the table. If you guys understand -- if you were in my shoes you'd do the same thing without trying to break the law, but the law states that I can't do that. And a devoted agent will follow you and he will cite you if you do that. So we need to find a way to write it down according to the standards of the Native way of hunting, which has been practiced for thousands of years. The only difference is years ago there wasn't technology, there was no snowmachines. They were using dogs, dog teams to go out hunting. And if they had to, with their spears they'd go on foot and herd a specific animal, they will pick out an animal that is weak that will fall behind like the wolves do. A group of wolves hunt and once the -- once the weakest starts falling behind then they get that through the study. I've been paying attention to. The study I've been learning from -- the technology and from experience.

So I'm asking for you guys to kindly please help me out, help you, and I want your help, too, at the same time.

I think that's about it.

I'm glad I don't have a timer right here waiting for it to buzz off.

(Laughter)

MR. NUKWAK: That's what I had to do in the State Board of Game testimony. And the State had passed this one with wording is in there where you can
get the wording from Gayla Hoseth, I think she's got
the wordings that Larry Van Dale had put in, I think,
or recommended.

If we don't change this -- if we don't
accept this law into place, there were more people from
Manokotak asking for help. Since I am probably the
first one from Manokotak to be here in front of you
asking for a law change, if that does not happen, they
will be cited and they will probably come to me and
I'll probably be sitting in front of you again. This
is my first time sitting in front of the Federal
Subsistence Board, and thank god I'm not afraid to sit
in front of you guys.

(Laughter)

MR. NUKWAK: It's like I'm sitting in
front of a group of friends, where we are just in
disagreement over how I hunt, where we can modify that
in a friendly manner. In a Native way we'll turn on
the steam house and invite you at 8:00 o'clock in the
evening and go to steam house and if you don't agree
I'll set up the temperature to 300 degrees.

(Laughter)

MR. NUKWAK: Do you guys agree.

(Laughter)

MR. NUKWAK: That's about it, I'll stop
here. Because we've have a very long day. I'm pretty
sure you guys have a very long day too.

CHAIRMAN CHRISTIANSON: Thank you for
your testimony.

MR. NUKWAK: Yes, sir.

CHAIRMAN CHRISTIANSON: Appreciate you
taking the time to come here and speak for a hunting
method that's been utilized for years.

Thank you.

MR. NUKWAK: Thank you, sir.

CHAIRMAN CHRISTIANSON: Any questions
for him.

(No comments)

CHAIRMAN CHRISTIANNSON: Any other public we have here on -- Gayla, you're up next. We're going through the list, did you put in a white card as well, okay, we'll get to you.

MS. HOSETH: Hello, again, Mr. Chairman and members of the Board. I didn't think I'd be coming up here this many times during this meeting but for the record Gayla Hoseth, Second Chief of Curyung Tribal Council.

I just wanted to put in the record kind of my testimony, what I gave during our tribal consultation and got more clarification on that process from when I spoke earlier.

Just to give you guys another idea, just as a location of where we're at. Bristol Bay is located in Southwest Alaska, we're about 300 miles away from Anchorage, southwest of here. And Kenneth, where Kenneth lives, he's about 60 miles away -- yeah, about 20, 30 -- very close proximity to Dillingham, it's a 10 minute plane ride. And the terrain where all these caribou are, it's very, very flat there and when we had the Board of Game out there Hazel said, you know, if you'd see a dog out there running, you could see your dog run for a long way so it's not like we have a lot of trees and stuff in our -- in the way.

The Curyung Tribal Council is in support of WP18-24 to position caribou, wolf and wolverine with a snowmachine submitted by Kenneth Nukwak and I am glad that he was able to come here and share his story with you here today.

Our tribe supports this proposal as it was written to have our traditional ways of hunting taught by our ancestors recognized in this regulatory system world that we live in now. Our people have always hunted in this manner, to position caribou and technology has replaced our feet with snowmachines. This method of hunting to position is the same and that was taught by our elders.

This was very controversial, like I
stated in our tribal consultation session that we had.

It was a very controversial topic when we were in
Dillingham at our AC meetings, and also during the
Board of Game, Board of Game member Larry Van Dale
conducted a town hall meeting with a lot of the local
hunters in the area and got clearer clarification.
That really helped in clarifying this proposal and I
would defer to Lem to give you guys the language and
actually what took place at the Board of Game for the
State side. And I believe Frank Woods is going to be
calling in on the phone, he's one of our tribal chiefs
as well and he very much participated in this
discussion.

Frank, are you on the phone.

(Pause)

CHAIRMAN CHRISTIANSON: I'll call on
him.

MS. HOSETH: Okay. So we have that and
hopefully I could also send him a message and maybe get
him to call in, he's getting ready for herring fishing.

But I just wanted to put it on the
record, our tribe is in support of this and just to let
you know that Dillingham is the primary hub of the
Bristol Bay region and our tribal council has the
largest tribal members of the region, and so we
represent a lot of people in the area.

Thank you.

CHAIRMAN CHRISTIANSON: Thank you,
Gayla.

Christopher.

MR. MAINES: Thank you, Mr. Chair.

Members of the Board of Game. My name is Christopher
Maines. I'm a resident of the Dillingham area. Much
like Gayla said, we're over 350 air miles southwest of
here.

And we live in a dual management area
and that causes a little complication here and there
and it brings to mind something that I used to think
about in regards to deer down in the Lower 48. A long
period of time ago, well, not so long ago, but just
about 10 years ago, I heard of this interesting
phenomena that was happening where white-tailed deer
were crossing the Mississippi, breeding with mule deer
and creating hybrid animals. And so met with a
predator, a white-tailed deer runs away, a mule deer
just stands still and stands its ground. These hybrid
animals, they don't know what to do, they trip all over
themselves and they fall down. That's kind of what
it's like for us living in a dual management area where
we are subject to not only Federal regulations but also
State regulations and it's hard to tell sometimes where
you are, what you need to because you're going against
a lot of your natural instincts and the practices that
your elders and fathers have taught you over the years
to, you know, use when hunting.

Now, as stated earlier, in Section .801
of ANILCA it allows us the continued opportunity to use
our subsistence activities for rural residents on
public lands and also have a meaningful role in its
management. But in the book, Alaska Subsistence and
NPS Management History by Frank Norris written in 2002
for the Department of Interior, he states that the FSB
regulations were copied directly from the sports
hunting regulations. With the caribou being
reintroduced to that Peninsula in '88 as a primary food
source for those seven eligible communities, this food
source was introduced before those regulations were put
in place formally in 1992, so now we're using a
subsistence food source and now they're being put under
sports hunting regulations, it just doesn't seem to
blend well together. And I know there isn't a great
way to bridge the gap on all regulations but with the
Board of Game passing this very same issue with
modifications, I think this is an opportunity for the
Federal Subsistence Board to reflect those same changes
and make it easier on the residents down there.

So currently Section .811 of ANILCA
permits the use of snowmobiles on public lands for
subsistence purposes, subject to reasonable
regulations. But later on in CFR 36.12(d) it does not
allow snowmobiles to be used in a fashion that involves
the herding, harassing, hazing or driving of wildlife
for hunting or other purposes. It doesn't directly
reflect subsistence use, it just says other purposes, I
find this to be a little confusing.
As stated earlier, it's a very flat area where these caribou live. If any of you are familiar with the area and if those of you who aren't familiar with the area, just look at the Bonneville Salt Flats in Utah to give a good visual image of what these hunters are dealing with. It's serious, they literally see you miles away.

So these traditional tactics that our people have been using for generations, as Kenneth mentioned earlier, were derived from how wolves traditionally hunt animals like caribou on open plains. The faster females, they get away from the pack, they direct the other animals into the rest of the wolves so they could take it down. And so our people seeing this method, found it to be very practical and the best course of action to get what you need.

And as mentioned just a moment ago, Larry Van Dale, at the Board of Game, just two months ago proposed some optional language that is now going to be legal on State lands, and I think that the Board of Game, again, can use similar language in case they want to modify this proposal.

Thank you.

CHAIRMAN CHRISTIANSON: Thank you for that. Any questions.

(No comments)

CHAIRMAN CHRISTIANSON: Okay, hearing none, thank you for your testimony, appreciate it.

We'll move on to Speedy Sam. Are you in the house. Andala, andala, 'eehaw.

(Laughter)

MR. SAM: Good afternoon. Thank you, Mr. Chair. Thank you, Board.

I'd like to thank the other people that gave their testimony. For the record, my name is Speedy Sam, I'm Second Chief of the village of Huslia. It's a small village of 360 people that lives on the Koyukuk River. We live a very strong subsistence lifestyle, we live a strong Native culture of beliefs
that we believe in that what our grandparents and our
parents taught us, how to hunt, how to trap and how to
fish. Because if we don't -- when my parents were
teaching me at the young age how to provide for a
family for one day when I become a father of my kids
and a husband and provider, and they've been doing that
ever since I was little. And once I caught on, how to
respect all that and respect our animals, and that goes
a long ways if you want to be a successful provider for
your family.

And today I'd like to help my fellow
people that that's how I was brought up, is to help our
people to have a successful life on our traditional
grounds and how to hunt our animals to provide for our
people, and today I support 18-24.

And if I may state the other support
and oppose, because I'm going to be catching a flight
pretty soon, if I may do that.

I'll make it quick.

CHAIRMAN CHRISTIANSON: Yes.

MR. SAM: I also support 18-46. Oppose
18-56 and 18-36, 33.

The one 18-33 if I could really make
this fast, is in my area on the Koyukuk River, what I
hunted back in the '80s, late '80s and '90s, we had 500
hunters that comes up the Koyukuk River to hunt the
moose. When I came home from the Marine Corps, I did
four years, it changed, I asked my dad what happened,
where are all these hunters coming from, and, you know,
we talked about it for years, and been fighting it, so
in the mid'90s we finally got it down to 250 hunters to
come up to the Koyukuk River. We're still fighting
that and then in the '2000s we got 100 hunters that
come up the Koyukuk River to hunt. And to this day, to
this day we probably have about 50 hunters that come up
the Koyukuk River now.

But that was too late.

We had a big decline in our moose, and
to this day we -- a lot of our families that hunted for
the fall time to fill to their freezers, you know,
they're not able to do that because of the moose count
was down. The villages above us, Allakaket, Bettles, Hughes, they're way more hurting than Huslia, and that's why I oppose this 33/36 because it's going to decline the moose count if we don't stop this now.

And I'd just like to thank you guys for hearing my voice and I wish you guys to have a safe trip home.

Thank you.

CHAIRMAN CHRISTIANSON: Thank you for your testimony and safe travels for you today as well.

Next we have Percy. Percy Loninitz (ph)

PERCY: Hi. My name is Percy (Indiscernible). Good afternoon.

I'm a Koyukon Athabascan. I'm from the Interior, that's on the Middle Yukon.

Mr. Chair. Members of the Board. Staff. I want to thank you for this opportunity to speak. I am humbled and honored.

Before I came down here I really didn't know what I was getting into. I had been to a Federal Subsistence Board meeting, I would say about 20-plus years ago and when I went and got the training this past week, I heard and I've seen a lot of changes. There has been changes that's been made really didn't, you know, impacted -- I think my main purpose here is to try to see if I can -- you know, I'm not here to fix anything, I'm not here to damage anything. I've been an advocate for a few years and I testified before the Board of Game, before the fish -- the Fish Board, National Pacific Fisheries Council. There's -- you know, this is all due to the fact that there was -- I wouldn't say discrimination, but I think the bottom line was that there was -- it seemed like our way of life was being jeopardized, so back in the days they had to do a lot of different techniques to -- that mechanism they call the State, the Federals, the Northern Pacific Fishery, that mechanism, in order to make a difference to, you know, advocate for my children, I figure I had to step up and do something about it.
First of all, I want to say to our neighbors over there in the area, the proposal 18-24, we had sat in that room and we listened to a young man and his elder, they tell stories of how it used to be, how it was then and I noticed in the crowd there, that was -- there was always this thing of unwritten law that was brought up throughout the conversation, so, you know, I was thinking that this unwritten law, it'll never go away but we're the only ones that got it. I say that because I know there's a high percentage of you that's sitting out here, you probably wouldn't have any idea what I'm talking about. You may have heard of it but you have to go out there and you have to live it.

This provision, food security, that's a really high priority. It doesn't matter where you come from. You can come from the Lower 48, from Southeast, up north, it doesn't matter, it's something that we have to work together, compromise, give us that opportunity to sit with you guys and talk about how we live, we can educate you. The door is open. Education is a really big concern. It could be when I was sitting next to the Senator about a week ago we talked about different issues and concerns that we had over the years and I told her, you know, what was my feelings and we started talking about education. I told her, Senator, you know, we have a lot of people out there that has degrees, they weren't educated in the Western way but they have degrees and they were passed on, passed on from generation after generation, I said we have that, it's here. I said you need to sit with me, talk with me, visit with me, you wouldn't be surprised how much you can learn just by sitting there in a day or two.

So I want to speak a little bit about 18-33/36.

I speak in opposition of this.

We had talked about it, deliberated, came to consensus and we see that there was a need there. When you have a red flag going up and you see that need, we can't sit there and look at each other and say that we can't do nothing, there's nothing we can do, there's something we can do.

So we needed to step in and opposition
I want to share a little bit about why my purpose, I believe, for coming down here to Anchorage, taking me away from my home, I have work, just like any one of you but when you see that you're needed somewhere or they ask you or they select you, however, I feel that it's really important.

Now, we all know that what ANILCA, Title VIII stands for, a section in there that was -- I believe it was .809. When ANILCA came out, it was passed by Congress, there was maybe what we can call today is a promise, and it was to provide for a way of life, for who, I'll leave that at that. I'll let that go for a minute.

And I want to get into the administrative structure.

CHAIRMAN CHRISTIANSON: Excuse me. Are you traveling out today, I don't mean to interject with you but we're.....

PERCY: Yeah. I checked with my flight before I came into the room.

CHAIRMAN CHRISTIANSON: Oh, you're going to fly out today then.

PERCY: I'm going to fly probably not today but it like it might be in the evening.

CHAIRMAN CHRISTIANSON: Tomorrow.

PERCY: No.

CHAIRMAN CHRISTIANSON: Tonight. Oh, okay, I'm just making sure because.....

PERCY: Yeah, pretty soon.

CHAIRMAN CHRISTIANSON: .....I'm just trying to accommodate for people who are leaving today but I also.....

PERCY: Okay. So if I may, I just want to say.....
CHAIRMAN CHRISTIANSON: .....want to see if there was any specific.....

PERCY: .....just a few more words.

CHAIRMAN CHRISTIANSON: Yes. I'm just making sure that I'm accommodating.

PERCY: Yeah, thank you, Mr. Chair.

So anyway I'd like to just put a few things in there like the administrative structure. There's some things that, you know, could work, some things that could not. And if it's working maybe we'll just leave it alone. And I want to say that the equity in funding, the equity in representation, this all falls under ANILCA.

And last but not least, I want to mention the sins of imbalance. I'm not here to pick fights or point fingers, I'm just stating my concerns. So like any other Board, whether it be State, Feds, you name it, I hold you guys accountable and I ask that you look into this concern.

That was it, thank you, Mr. Chair, for your time, Board members.

CHAIRMAN CHRISTIANSON: Thank you very much for your powerful testimony, appreciate it.

PERCY: Okay.

CHAIRMAN CHRISTIANSON: And I hope you have safe travels today.

PERCY: Okay, thank you.

CHAIRMAN CHRISTIANSON: Yes. Bruce Irvin. Yeah, and we are on 24, I know we've made a few exceptions today for those who are traveling out, but if you are going to be here tomorrow, we please ask that you stay to the proposal WP18-24.

Thank you.

MR. IRVIN: I'm not going to be here tomorrow but I'll make mine really quick. I realize you guys are trying to get through this. So I'll go
Thank you, Chairman, Members of the Board and Staff. My name's Bruce Irvin. I'm a student with the tribal management program with the University of Alaska-Fairbanks.

I'd like to start off today talking about respect. First off, out of respect for the Dena’ina people, I would like to thank them for allowing us to use this traditional lands here in Anchorage to conduct this Federal Subsistence Board meeting. From the day that we are born we learn respect from our elders. In the words of Elder Howard Luke, we don't take care of our animals, we just don't care and that's the reason all our animals are disappearing, especially our ducks. Every year it's getting lesser and lesser and that's what I mean, they're not coming back. I mean if I was mistreated I'm not going to go back too, well, it's the same way with animals, and that comes from Howard Luke.

This is why I support Ahtna InterTribal Resource Commission because they have an ancestral respect for animals, from a government to government perspective. Food sovereignty needs to be discussed with an Alaska Native Tribal voice involved in the process. The Ahtna/Dena'ina people have been properly been managing the subsistence balance since time immemorial, and with that long history why are we even questioning their ability. I urge you to respectfully support Ahtna Dena'ina people.

I also support WP18-24 because it allows for traditional practices supported in the past by the Board of Game. We cannot let our Alaska Native people be criminalized for practicing their traditional hunting, fishing and gathering practices. I ask you to support WP18-24.

Almost done.

I oppose WP18-33 and 36 because this proposal did not involve the Alaska Native voice in the process and several chiefs from the GASH area have brought this information forward.

I want to say thank you for pulling this proposal.
I support WP18-46 with the OSM modification.

I oppose WP18-56 because it's important to allow for continuing subsistence opportunity. I have a great respect for the Arctic Village Gwich'in people. They are the protectors of traditional ancestral way of life. The Gwich'in operate on a system of balance and only receive what is needed from the flora and fauna. If you break this time immemorial balance with the flora and fauna, the flora and fauna and the Gwich'in people will be the ones that have to live with the results. I urge you to respect the Gwich'in people and oppose WP18-56.

I would respectfully like to see a stronger Alaska Native voice in the InterAgency Staff Committee. This Committee has significant impact on our ability to practice our ancestral ways of life. I ask that you take up this issue and ensure our voice is at the table.

In closing, I would like to thank the Chairman, Members of the Board and the Staff for listening to my testimony.

Gunalcheesh (in own language) Quyana.

CHAIRMAN CHRISTIANSON: Thank you. Any questions.

(No comments)

CHAIRMAN CHRISTIANSON: Appreciate you taking the time to come and testify. Thank you.

MR. IRVIN: Thank you.

CHAIRMAN CHRISTIANSON: Darrel Vent.

MR. VENT: Good afternoon, Chair, Members and Staff. I'll try to be brief here.

I support 18-24.

I oppose 18-56.

And I am going to speak on behalf of 18-46, which affects my area of living.
Now, that, you know, when I was a young kid growing up we used to always get warned by our parents, get inside, the caribou are coming, because they would be coming through the village, getting caught in our clothes lines. And then we got into a meeting and the State said we're going to put a pipeline and it's going to go right through our backyard. So they said, they made promises, it's not going to affect our wildlife, it's going to be good for us, so there was an agreement made and it was oral, like we do, when we say something, our word, we meant it. And that did not happen. Because after that we noticed that our caribou didn't come back, they weren't coming through the village no more. We were getting different caribou herds, what was coming in from the west side, which was the Northwest Arctic Caribou Herd, which my friend spoke about on behalf of that, and he explained, you know, the necessity of what our lifestyle was built on. We depended on the caribou just like everybody else along the, you know, the west region and it hurted us. Our people had to improvise. So we depended on moose. And we got hurt there, too, because our people, they started finding moose with antlers and they were worried more about the antlers because we noticed that when we go to Galena after hunting season there'd be big piles of moose meat sitting there in the dump, which is disrespectful. We noticed that there'd be big piles in Anchorage, which was disrespectful. Seattle, disrespectful.

What was being done.

We don't want to say, you know, it's not an argument, but that was ruining our food because we were dependent on the moose, we're dependent on the caribou, which was limiting us. Now, you know, our people are having a hard time. We go out there and try to catch moose, you spend $1,400 and you come home with nothing. And your livelihood depends on this. You can't live off the food in the store, you don't have the money to do that.

So when he talk about the caribou, and about putting in the boundaries, I support him, because this is our way of life, we have to go 100 miles to catch a caribou and the amount of money and the parts (ph) to catch the caribou, that would really help us.

So that was my testimony. I want to be
brief to you guys because you guys got a lot to do
today and I thank you for your time.

CHAIRMAN CHRISTIANSON: I appreciate
your brevity and hopefully you have a safe trip home
and thank you for your testimony today. Appreciate it.

Steve Kakaruk.

MR. KAKARUK: Good afternoon, Chairman
and other Board members. My name is Steve Kakaruk, I'm
from Fairbanks where I presently reside for 28 years.
I'm from the Native Village of Teller originally. My
family is from there. I'm here today to testify in
support of 18-24.

I do come from a family that has
hunting backgrounds. My parents have instilled within
all of us in my family care of the meat and respect for
the animals and how to receive them. It is always an
honor to take a caribou and we do it respectfully. We
don't waste the animal and never, do we ever harass any
animals in this process. And it is my opinion that the
Native way of life of subsistence is in jeopardy daily,
yearly and it has been since first contact from Western
encroachment into Alaska. And it's not that I'm in
support of that because of that, it's because the laws
are here now stating that subsistence is open to all
and the practices is what we're trying to define today
and you have heard from Kenneth, and I don't know if I
could say any more to that, but I am in support of his
process, coming to you today.

I am also, because I'm getting on a
plane, I'm in support of 18-46. I do know that the
TransAlaska Pipeline has played a very vital role with
the extraction of oil and has brought in many, many
people from many ways of life, many were not Alaskans
at that time but they came for work and they brought in
with them their values on how they were harvesting and
taking animals. But now those need to be protected.
Because the people there believe and know because they
are there on the land and they are first to witness the
changes that are affected by them when other hunters
come into the area. So that's why it's very important
to listen to people that are coming from the area that
have knowledge when they see changes in the resources.

And I invite any of you that are on the
Board to come out to the villages, to come out to the communities and see for yourself, talk to the people.

And, lastly, I am opposed for 18-56. The Red Sheep and Clear Creek Sheep herd has always been there for the Gwich'in people. And subsistence needs to protect the animals there especially because they are in constant competition with outside hunters that come in, primarily big game guides, in my opinion, who come in and are driven by actually a dollar to fulfill their desire to take non-qualified subsistence users, or hunters out into their area to take perhaps moose or sheep or animals, which are in direct conflict for qualified subsistence users. So when you have this type of activity where non-qualified hunters are in direct competition -- well, they're qualified by the mere fact that the State allows for taking of animals, but in the eyes of subsistence users, it's in competition with their traditional way of life.

An example of this is there's a band of sheep that was primarily just decimated and these sheep were from the Kantishna Mountains just outside Denali National Park, early miners came into the area in seek of gold, minerals and perhaps just to find a way of life and bring back whatever they can and leave in the early 1900s. And when they came there to this land, the sheep were just wiped out. That's just a good example there how, in my opinion, what could possibly happen when you allow big game guides and outside resources such as outside hunters coming into the area.

So I'll leave it at that and I thank you for your time and I hope you give my testimony the weight that it really needs.

Thank you, very much.

CHAIRMAN CHRISTIANSON: Thank you, Steve, for your testimony. I really appreciate you taking the time, safe travels to you today as well.

Moses.

MR. TOYUKAK: Quyana, Mr. Chairman, the rest of the Board. My name is Moses Toyukak, Sr., my Native name is (In Yup'ik), which means standing. And I'm a commercial fisherman in our area, I've been doing that all my life. And I hunt and fish and trap for our
family and other families too. I've got lots of
grandkids and family and friends in our area that I'm
-- I've been a pilot as well, I used to fly and been
wearing lots of hats. Currently I'm Chairman of the
Walrus Commission and I teach net mending at the school
and also sled making for the kids.

And, you know, throughout the years we
hunt for moose, caribou and other animals to feed our
children and community members. When we go hunting,
when I was growing up our parents used to teach us how
to hunt, I mean they taught it to us, talking to us in
our language, which is, Yup'ik. I speak fluent Yup'ik.
And when my great-great-grandmother taught me to get
something for her, I'd jump up and go get it for her
because I respect her. And she was the first one to
tell me to learn how to speak English and let me tell
you a little story of my growing up.

We had -- my dad was a janitor for the
school and in our school a barge would come in,
bringing in fuel to the school, well, anyway, when one
of the guys that operated that barge said good morning
to me in the morning, I was playing boat and I said --
I'm a good imitator, okay, I turn around and I said,
good morning, and then come afternoon, I go home and go
eat and then came back down, I saw him again and I
said, good morning, and he turned around and he said
good afternoon.

(Laughter)

MR. TOYUKAK: It went down like that.
I learned three words. Good morning. Good afternoon.
Good evening. So after playing I went up to the house
to my mom, now, she's not an English speaker, she said,
Mom -- I mean I said to my mom, I'm a Gussak, I said, I
can say good morning, good afternoon, good evening.

(Laughter)

MR. TOYUKAK: And she laughed and then
she said you're a full Yup'ik.

But anyway growing up was fun where we
hunted for our elders. My elders were -- starting from
my great-grandmother, aapa and grandma, and then other
grandpa and aapas from other families that are related
to us. And, you know, my great-grandmother met some
people from Russia too, she was that old, and she said (In Yup'ik), which is in our language, Russians, or Russian people, they used to come over here to trade and hunt in our area too. And my father, when he was young in 1920s to '36 was a herder, caribou herder, and he used to tell stories about good times, bad times, the worst time that they had was when the caribou started dying off because of wolves. Wolves in our area, they multiply so fast when there's lots of food for them and so that's one thing that, you know, destroyed the caribou herd that my dad was herding at that time.

Now, this 18-24 is what I'm supporting wholeheartedly because I live there 365 days a year the past 66 years and -- oh, I'm telling my age, I'm real old.

(Laughter)

MR. TOYUKAK: But now I'm a senior citizen in our community too. And younger folks, some of them that remember they share some of their catch with me and I've got 24 grandkids and that's lots, some of them are here and in Kipnuk and back home. But I support 24 because we don't have dog team anymore. Earlier you guys listened to somebody talk about his dog team, he oils it, fuels it up and maintains it, but that same machine, this, you know, that we are using today as sled, or dog team, is a machine that can break. Ladies and gentlemen if it's really cold outside that same fast machine won't keep you warm. Dogs will keep you warm. That's what one of the guys in Manokotak had told us. You know, years ago we used to travel with dog team, you guys traveled with the fast Sno-Go now days, if it breaks down you're 40 or 50 miles away from the village, alone, you could freeze, because environment, it's not friendly at times.

But I'm in support of this.

And also in reference to why I support it, 50 CFR 36 Federal regs states; about our subsistence way of life. Like subsistence is hunting, about making sure animals do not run away from us, to ensure food security for our families and children and their children too. And so I hope that you guys could pass 18-24.
And also I oppose 18-56 and 18-22.

CHAIRMAN CHRISTIANSON: Thank you.

MR. TOYUKAK: Thank you.

CHAIRMAN CHRISTIANSON: Appreciate your testimony today. Are you flying out tonight, too?

MR. TOYUKAK: Pardon me?

CHAIRMAN CHRISTIANSON: Are you flying out tonight as well?

MR. TOYUKAK: No.

CHAIRMAN CHRISTIANSON: Oh, okay. Thank you for your testimony, appreciate it.

MR. TOYUKAK: Thank you.

CHAIRMAN CHRISTIANSON: Ashley Woods. And, again, we'd just ask testifiers that if you are going to be here to, please, testify to Proposal 24.

MS. WOODS: Good afternoon, Mr. Chair and the Board. RAC members. And any chiefs in here.

Thank you for your patience and for your hard work, it doesn't go unnoticed. You guys showed that by starving yourself an extra hour all the while talking about moose.

So I am leaving today so I want to show my -- well, first my name is Ashley Woods and I'm originally from Manley Hot Springs outside of Fairbanks, I'm Koyukon and Gwich'in Athabascan. I was raised up in Manley and partly in Angoon. My family's originally from Tanana and Fort Yukon and so it compasses a large part of the Yukon and Tanana Rivers. It's also called Nuchalawoyya and it's where the two rivers meet.

I help out with the Tanana/Rampart/Manley AC, information sharing, but I'm going to be speaking on my own behalf. And I just wanted to show my support today for the WP18-24. I don't think Kenneth could have said it any better. And the only thing that stood out for me with his testimony
was, I don't think his child or son should have saw his
dad get treated that way.

And I would also like to support the
WP18-46 and 18-47.

And at this time oppose WP18-56.

And also use my voice today to just
show my support for a government to government
relationship, that being the Federal, State and Tribal.

I think I would like to encourage
tribes and their chiefs to be here at these meetings.
I think if we had all 200 chiefs here in this room we
would only then be able to grasp who we are working
for.

Also a few housekeeping things that I
wanted to mention while I'm here is, someone called in
and it sounded like they were speaking their
traditional language but there was no interpreter here
to confirm so it's important to get that available.

And one of the concerns that was raised
from my area about coming to these meetings is that
when we submit proposals, we want to make sure the
Staff is not changing the language so much that we're,
in return, going against our own proposals. And so I
just want to ensure that we are being accountable for
that. And, again, your hard work doesn't go unnoticed,
the beneficiaries of these efforts are our kids, all of
our kids.

And I also support that there needs to
be some Tribal representation in the InterAgency Staff
Committee. And maybe -- it's just really hard to grasp
all the tribes by having -- with, you know, with all
due respect to Mr. Orville, the Tribal Liaison, but
it's one person representing 200-plus tribes, so we
really need to have in attendance all of our chiefs
here.

And that's all I've got today.

CHAIRMAN CHRISTIANSON: Thank you,
Ashley for your testimony, appreciate it.

MS. WOODS: Thank you.
CHAIRMAN CHRISTIANSON: Any questions.

(No comments)

CHAIRMAN CHRISTIANSON: Hearing none, appreciate you taking the time to come up and support.

MS. WOOD: Uh-huh, thank you guys.

CHAIRMAN CHRISTIANSON: Next we have Mackenzie.

MS. NOLLNER: Thank you for having me here today, Mr. Chairman and the Board members. Mackenzie Nollner and I'm from Ruby, Alaska and that's along the Yukon River. I'm a junior in high school. And I would like to speak on two testimonies because I will not be here tomorrow, I am leaving tomorrow morning.

I've been hunting since I was a baby. I've been taught my tradition every since I was born and it's always been my family's way of life to be taught, learning all of our traditions and I've been slowly learning some of the language. I don't know much of it. And I know most of our traditions for hunting and fishing. And I can't say that for most people have learned that these days. I don't know -- I mean I've met so many young people that don't even know how to fish or hunt the proper way, or how to fish and hunt with your regulations. There is so many regulations that we have to follow and not many people have been taught that way or read the guidelines. And I've met many subsistence users that show their love and respect for the land and for the animals.

And today I'm here to show my support for 18-24, which allows the traditional practices.

And I would like to oppose the 18-56 to allow for a continued subsistence opportunity. I wouldn't want to see people compete for their food that our Native, because we already compete enough.

And that's all I have to say, thank you for letting me speak here today.

CHAIRMAN CHRISTIANSON: Thank you, Mackenzie. We appreciate you students taking the time.
Oh, Rhonda has a question.

MS. PITKA: I do have one question.

Who are your parents?

MS. NOLLNER: Bertha Rickman and Barney Nollner.

MS. PITKA: Say hi to your mom for me.

MS. NOLLNER: I will.

(Laughter)

CHAIRMAN CHRISTIANSON: Must be proud.

(Laughter)

CHAIRMAN CHRISTIANSON: I see a future RAC member there.

(Laughter)

CHAIRMAN CHRISTIANSON: Calling on Tommy Kriska.

(No comments)

CHAIRMAN CHRISTIANSON: Did we lose Tommy.

(No comments)

CHAIRMAN CHRISTIANSON: That's you Enoch. Enoch Mitchell, is that you -- oh, that's the Enoch right there -- oh.

(Laughter)

CHAIRMAN CHRISTIANSON: He raised his hand a long time ago.

MR. MITCHELL: Hello, my name is Enoch Mitchell. I'm one of the regular folks from Northwest Alaska. I'm from the village of Noatak.

I am in support of 18-24. I can relate to this proposal. We had this same proposal in our
region. We began this proposal when one of our hunters got cited. He was a young man and he didn't know that there was this proposal, that he was breaking the law when he was going out there, he was hunting caribou, and he ran into a wolverine out there and so he began to track, follow it, trying to get a good shot, and get around it and the troopers up there right above him and they spotted him and watched him and they spotted him get the wolverine and took it home and the next thing we know that trooper landed in Kivalina and go talk to him, took his gear, his hunting gear, took his rifle and took his wolverine, his animal that he caught. And once we found out about that, we started this proposal. I also went to talk to him because I'm the AC representative for Noatak/Kivalina and I was working on that proposal too and I wanted to talk to him myself and so I went over and I did talk to him. And he said he didn't even know he was breaking the law and he didn't even when -- after it happened, after he went home, he didn't even want to go out of his own house, he was embarrassed. He didn't want to look at his own people. He was embarrassed, he was hurt. He didn't know he was breaking the law. He didn't even want to go out and hunt no more because he didn't know what law he might be breaking. That's something he didn't know about. I didn't know about that.

That law, I began working on that proposal and I found out that that law was in there for over 30-plus years and why weren't we cited in between those 30-plus years and why did it happen just then. I was confused with that one.

But I got to say that we wrote up that proposal, we brought it before the Board of Game and it passed and it works. It worked today for each of our hunters, our hunters don't feel like outlaws anymore. And even after it happened, before the proposal, there was a span there between, hey, man, I don't go hunt, I might be an outlaw, I don't want to break the law, you know, we're law abiding citizens and we respect the rules and regulations. We respect our land. We respect the animals. Highly. And when we find out we're breaking something and we didn't know we were breaking something, then we want to fix it so we wrote proposals and fixed it.

But I want to say I'm in support of this 18-24. It's safe and it works. It's also a
safety issue.

I, myself, I'm a hunter. And this happened to me one time, I was out there hunting, my snowmachine broke down, I mean I got stuck in the creek and I had a full load beluga on my sled, I just happened to look out of the side of my eye there was something brown coming down the side of the hill and that hill just comes right up to my snowmachine right there and I was out there right in the middle of nowhere, I had a .223 rifle, lucky I had metal case bullets in there, I saw that bear coming down that mountain coming straight for me, path, he was coming at me, I had a beluga, a good load of beluga in my sled and it was really coming, the closer it got to me, the faster it started coming, the closer and closer, man, I didn't know bears could run that fast, I mean it was running fast the closer and closer, I jumped off of my snowmachine, I pumped those shells and I waited until it was right up to the -- right up to -- and, boom, and I was going to shoot it again but one shot did it, it was right under the neck, it was right through the heart and right out the back, the metal case, one shot, and that bear slid about 10, 15 feet, (makes sound) it's like someone punched him in the stomach (makes sounds) stop there, two steps back and it dropped. Whoa, man, I was lucky. If that bullet didn't stop it, I know that my snowmachine sitting there would not protect me. That big bear was big. I mean big. The head was like this. It could have -- I mean the size of it was -- the skin was -- I got a 10 foot sled, the skin was hanging over the edges. That bear could have just (makes sound) throw my snowmachine out of the way and get me, you know, and start munching on me. Because it's -- I'm saying that because it is safe to use a snowmachine, it is safe, it is part of our tools, like our gun. The gun replaced the spear and the bow and arrow. The snowmachine replaced the dog teams. That's what they should see when they begin these laws.

They should sit down with us when they start doing these laws again so they can relate, they can understand.

That's what I got to say. It's safe and it works.

Taikuu.
CHAIRMAN CHRISTIANSON: Thank you, Enoch, for your testimony. Appreciate it.

That concludes the public testimony on paper we have. Is there anybody on line.

OPERATOR: We have no questions or comments on the phone line.

CHAIRMAN CHRISTIANSON: All right, thank you.

Regional Council comments.

Donald.

MR. MIKE: Thank you, Mr. Chair.

Before we proceed to Regional Advisory Council comments, I'd like to present a quick summary of the Council's action at its winter meeting in Naknek held this past spring.

The Bristol Bay Subsistence Regional Advisory Council voted unanimously at its winter 2018 meeting to request that the Federal Subsistence Board remove Proposal WP18-24 from the consensus agenda at its April 2018 wildlife regulatory meeting, limited by the concerns of the Federal Advisory Committee Act, the Council could not make any specific recommendations aside from its original recommendations developed at its fall 2017 meeting, rather the Council wanted to make sure that the Board was aware of the issues surrounding the adoption of a related State proposal and the reason for the Alaska Board of Game's adoption of it. Discussion at the Council meeting of the Board of Game's proposal centered around how important it was to provide clear guidance to hunters and the strong need for a vigorous educational and outreach strategy to ensure compliance and understanding.

It was also noted that while some people do engage in outright chasing of caribou in clear violation of the law, many hunters are concerned about whether their benign practices could be violating the law, due, in part, to the lack of clear guidance.

Concerns were also expressed about potential inconsistencies between State and Federal regulations if the Federal Subsistence Board does not
receive a briefing on the WP18-24 analysis and have the opportunity to fully deliberate the proposal with this new information at its meeting.

The Council noted that if the Board does not remove the proposal from the consensus agenda the proposal is consequently rejected. The Council will work on drafting a proposal for the next wildlife regulatory cycle to provide for consistency between State and Federal regulations.

That's the rationale for the request from the Council to take WP18-24 from the consensus to the non-consensus.

Thank you, Mr. Chair.

CHAIRMAN CHRISTIANSON: Thank you, Donald.

OPERATOR: Excuse me, we did get two cued up on the phone lines, would you like to take those quick.

CHAIRMAN CHRISTIANSON: Yeah.

OPERATOR: Okay. Susanna Henry, your line is open.

MS. HENRY: Good afternoon, Mr. Chair, Members of the Federal Subsistence Board, and RAC members and others that may be present there in Anchorage. This is Susanna Henry, I'm the Refuge Manager at Togiak National Wildlife Refuge and I'm at the headquarters in Dillingham. Sorry that I couldn't be there today.

I just wanted to point out a few things regarding WP18-24.

If passed, it would, as some folks have already noted, it would run up against existing 50 CFR, that's Code of Federal Regulations 36.12 that states that snowmachines can't be used for hazing, driving, or herding or harassment of wildlife for hunting or other purposes, and even with that -- with the current situation on the Nushagak Peninsula, which is part of Unit 17, hunters have been very successful in harvesting caribou. It is not as flat as the
Bonneville Salt Flats as Christopher Maines mentioned, it does have some rolling terrain, and places where people can stalk animals and sneak close, in fact, during the winter of 2016 to 2017, 373 harvested caribou were -- caribou were reported harvested, I should say, and this year for 2017/2018, we're now at 104 that have been reported harvest, with about a third of the hunters reporting in, we expect that number will go up as we approach the deadline on the 15th for people to report in.

So we've had very good success.

If you consider success meaning that someone harvested at least one caribou, even when more tags might have been available, we had about 50 percent hunt success.

We've talked a little bit, you all did, about the population of the caribou, they seem to have reached a peak and are starting to go down. According to the Nushagak Caribou Peninsula planning document, it suggested if the population dropped and is on a dropping trend we'll have to reduce the number of permits available in the future so there might not be as many available for the success -- so the number of animals harvested may go down in the future.

Also with regard to citing, citations. Mr. Nukwak mentioned that he'd been cited for chasing caribou. His was only one of three that were given in the last seven years on the Nushagak Peninsula and those were only in cases where individuals had pursued the caribou in such a way that was really egregious, and I believe in his case that he had pursued the caribou in excess of five miles and had taken a shot at them and I believe he had missed, so there were no caribou to seize in that case and I did check with the Federal wildlife officer that was there, so there was no seizing of any wildlife at that time. But it's a very rare citation. It's only given in the cases that are very egregious.

Thank you for giving me an opportunity to speak. I appreciate your time.

OPERATOR: Okay. Thank you, Susanna. Next up is Dan Dunaway, your line is open.
MR. DUNAWAY: Thank you. Yes, Dan Dunaway with Bristol Bay RAC.

I want to thank Donald for that excellent summary of our official actions for the RAC.

As you can see this is of high interest. I think this topic has been discussed in every steam bath, bar, and any other gathering place that hunters are since it first came out. And I think one of the big issues the clarity of the law of what constitutes legal hunting with a motor vehicle. Personally, I've even experienced some paranoia of whether I was being legal or not and I believe I'm a very careful fair chase hunter.

But, yes, it would be great for this to be resolved. This new information that came out of the Board of Game meeting here in Dillingham in February, and the language that came out is a nuance approach compared to what we saw as being available to us in our November meeting.

So I can't veer out beyond what legal constraints of the RAC are, but I want to thank you for thoroughly hearing Kenneth and other people on this issue and appreciate your work on it.

Thank you.

CHAIRMAN CHRISTIANSON: Thank you.

OPERATOR: We have no further questions or comments cued up.

CHAIRMAN CHRISTIANSON: Greg.

MR. SIEKANIEC: Thank you, Mr. Chair.

Donald, would you repeat for me, I apologize, what the final perspective was provided by the Regional Advisory Committee [sic], you were going a little bit quick there and I'm not sure I quite followed it. You said there was some consideration that, depending on the action, that was being requested.

CHAIRMAN CHRISTIANSON: Donald.
MR. MIKE: Thank you, Mr. Chair. Did you want me to restate the rationale on the record over again if that would help?

MR. SIEKANIEC: Yeah. But when you got close to the end of your little presentation you said this is the position of the Regional Advisory Committee [sic].

MR. MIKE: Okay, I'll start somewhere in the middle.

It was also noted that while some people do engage in outright chasing of caribou in clear violation of the law, many hunters are concerned about whether their benign practices could be violating the law, due, in part, to the lack of clear guidance.

Concerns were also expressed about potential inconsistencies between State and Federal regulations if the Federal Subsistence Board does not receive a briefing on WP18-24 analysis and have the opportunity to fully deliberate the proposal with this new information at its meeting.

The Council noted that if the Board does not remove the proposal from the consensus agenda the proposal is consequently rejected. The Council will work on drafting a proposal for the next wildlife regulatory cycle to provide for consistency between State and Federal regulations.

Thank you, Mr. Chair. And if you have any technical -- or further questions we have the Staff biologist present to answer questions.

Thank you.

CHAIRMAN CHRISTIANSON: Karen.

MS. MOURITSEN: Mr. Chair. I have the -- I didn't understand what you said where you said they said if it's not removed from the consent agenda it fail -- I forgot the word you said, fails, but I'm not understanding that part. And is what you're saying, on Page 275 it says the Bristol Bay Regional Advisory Council, at the top, it says oppose and then it had a few sentences, is that the same as what you're talking about?
I'm not understanding.

MR. MIKE: Thank you, Mr. Chair. To clarify what you found in the meeting materials in your book of the Bristol Bay Council's recommendation was to initially oppose the proposal, but with the recent action by the Board of Game the Council wanted the Federal Subsistence Board to take into consideration the recent action of the Board of Game to include as part of the deliberation on Proposal 18-24.

The Council, at its meeting, opposed the proposal stating that, you know, the rationale for opposing the proposal was the lack of guidance as far as the definition of either chasing or harassing an animal.

Thank you.

MS. MOURITSEN: Can I follow up.

CHAIRMAN CHRISTIANSON: Yes.

MS. MOURITSEN: So I understand at their -- I guess that was at their original meeting, they said they opposed because they noted the confusion over these definitions. Are you saying they met again later after, yeah, did they meet later and change their position?

MR. MIKE: Mr. Chair. They did not change their position, what you have in your meeting materials is the recommendations to the Federal Subsistence Board but what I'm saying is this recent action of the Board of Game that met in March, they passed a similar proposal that the Bristol Bay Council acted on to oppose, and in light of the decision by the Board of Game, they requested that the Federal Subsistence Board take this 18-24 into consideration with the new information that the Board of Game took action on at it's March meeting in Dillingham.

Thank you.

And we have Mr. Carl Johnson to have further explanation.

Thank you.
MR. JOHNSON: Thank you. And I'll note I got a non-verbal approval from the Chair and recognized by the Chair. My name is Carl Johnson, I'm the Council Coordination Chief at OSM. I'll fill in a missing piece of the puzzle here for Member Mouritsen.

And that is the action by the Board of Game happened too close to the publicly noticed meeting for the Bristol Bay Regional Advisory Council to provide public notice that the Council would be, again, examining WP18-24. So in the middle of Donald's blurb he mentioned due to constraints of the Federal Advisory Committee Act, they couldn't fully deliberate and come up with a new recommendation, that's why, the timing didn't provide public notice.

Similar to with the Southeast Council in 18-11, where they couldn't change their recommendation, but they wanted to bring new information to the Board's attention and allow the Board to fully deliberate with this new information rather than letting the consensus agenda position of oppose stand without the new information.

I hope that helps.

Thank you, Mr. Chair.

CHAIRMAN CHRISTIANSON: Thank you, Carl, for that clarification. Did that help you Karen.

MS. MOURITSEN: Yes.

CHAIRMAN CHRISTIANSON: Okay. So we ended up blending the public testimony and we heard the Regional Advisory Council recommendation, Bristol Bay. Now, we are on to Tribal, Alaska Native Corp., comments, Native Liaison.

MR. LIND: Chairman. Members of the Board. During the consultation session on September 14th there was no discussion on this wildlife proposal, 18-24.

Thank you.

CHAIRMAN CHRISTIANSON: Thank you, Orville. Alaska Department of Fish and Game.
MR. BUTLER: Thank you, Mr. Chair.

Members of the Board.

The Department's neutral in methods and means. They generally reflect ethics, which vary from hunter to hunter. If adopted, we don't believe that this is going to create a biological concern.

The Board of Game does act on these types of issues, methods and means, they've adopted the positioning of wolves and caribou in Unit 17. Although we do note that it's not allowed on Federal lands by Federal regulations. So that's part of it.

We don't think that the harvest is going to increase substantially. As was mentioned it's probably -- if there is a use for this, it's probably the Nushagak Caribou Herd, which is managed through a quota system. So, again, that can be controlled and seasons and bag limits can be adjusted, if needed, to address any concerns that may arise.

To fill in the last piece, people keep alluding to what the Board of Game did at their meeting. So, again, they recently adopted the positioning of caribou. They amended the proposal to allow hunters to approach caribou one time within 300 yards at 15 miles per hour. So that's how they went ahead and defined it. And that's the piece that has been alluded to several times at this meeting.

Thank you, Mr. Chair.

CHAIRMAN CHRISTIANSON: Thank you. Any questions.

(No comments)

CHAIRMAN CHRISTIANSON: ISC.

MS. HARDIN: Thank you, Mr. Chair. The InterAgency Staff Committee had the standard comment for WP18-24.

CHAIRMAN CHRISTIANSON: Thank you.

Board discussion with Council and State liaison.

MS. MOURITSEN: Thank you, Mr. Chair. I just have a question.
I'm now kind of understanding what, I think what's going on, and that there's several different definitions in sets of regulations. So my question is, how consistent do the Federal -- these Federal Subsistence Board regulations need to be to avoid confusion between your State regulations, the existing Federal regulations for the specific units. I've heard people talk about positioning a hunter, positioning a -- using a snowmobile to position a hunter to position an animal, chase versus positioning, and then there's the BLM regulations, which are a little different.

I'm just wondering how consistent we need to be or is there any need to be?

CHAIRMAN CHRISTIANSON: Well, I'm going to let Tom here, but I think the inconsistency comes from different mandates that the land managers each have and what is allowed on their property. And I think the consistency by the Federal Board is to try to stay consistent with that, albeit, though, there is a patchwork of land ownership that may lend to us making a decision here today. But I'll let Tom speak to something he has here.

MR. DOOLITTLE: Yeah, I think that we've seen a wide variety of different things, but on other National Wildlife Refuges, in fact, Yukon Delta, if you look at Unit 18 hunting in the Federal regulations handy-dandy book here, you may not pursue with a motorized vehicle an ungulate that is at or near full gallop. And at that time I was at the Refuge and we worked and wrestled with that issue to try to accommodate some sort of making sure that still the access by snowmachine was available, but also that people weren't running animals excessively.

Thank you, Mr. Chair.

MS. MOURITSEN: Can I.

CHAIRMAN CHRISTIANSON: Karen.

MS. MOURITSEN: Thank you, Mr. Chair. Well, I mean would there be any desirability to having our regulation be similar to the State regulation or that regulation, I think as far as I can tell we've got another variation here that we're being asked to adopt.
Thank you.

CHAIRMAN CHRISTIANSON: Greg.

MR. SIEKANIEC: Thank you, Mr. Chair.

Tom, thanks for that note.

In looking through the various information that I've been provided, so we now have 50 CFR 36 1.2 on a National Wildlife Refuge, prevent the herding, harassment, you've heard it all, you know, hunting or other purposes. We now have the subsistence regulations, and I'd like to remind us all that it does read too; except for provisions found and then you move down to Section 5, using a motorized vehicle to drive, herd or molest wildlife is prohibited. We just heard from the State saying we now have a perspective that a rate of speed of greater than 15 miles an hour would potentially be the violation and any closer than 300 yards. We also have other regulations that indicate that you may position a hunter in order to harvest of caribou, wolf and wolverine. I believe the State also only addressed caribou in this particular instance.

We have a myriad of rules in a variety of forms, which I think we heard quite a bit from the testimony that we're never certain what's going on where.

I believe I also heard earlier that Unit 23 was modified to only have specific to BLM lands.

I'm very concerned with the amount of confusion that we are putting into a variety of regulations relative to this particular topic out on the landscape.

So, for now, thank you.

(Laughter)

CHAIRMAN CHRISTIANSON: Thank you for the light on the confusion that we find ourselves in here, and an hour and a half of deliberating right now.

I think I seen Enoch with his hand up there.
MR. SHIEDT: Okay. Attamuk here from Northwest Alaska on Proposal 18-24. We have one, similar one in Northwest Alaska.

And to pursue this, when we put this together that we do harvest and chase caribou, my deal is this, when I am after caribou, I try to get the better of the bunch, just not shooting any one, so I position the caribou to harvest it, and not to harvest this one I don't want. I do that with snowmachine also. When I was 14, I grew up around dog team being the only one in the family, I did chase caribou by dog team. My dog team was good enough when I asked them to stop, they stopped, they did not keep going after the caribou. I've done this with dog team. We did it to put food on the table at the time and it was easier for me. Also when we were younger, we used to chase the caribou all day where they can't run no more. We did not give them a chance to feed. Any animal you chase long enough, if they don't feed, they will lose their stamina and lucky us Natives have more stamina than caribou, we chased them up to five, six hours, non-stop and we get them and position them where we want to shoot them and we get what we want and we let the rest go.

We never harvest no more than what we need. We've done this.

And what Enoch was talking about, that kid that got cited, they were threatening to take his snowmachine away. The snowmachine he uses is not only to hunt caribou, he go whaling, he haul wood, he haul ice, and he use it to go visit his relatives or sometimes to the hospital, and they were threatening to take it away, and these are the things we go through.

And I would like to see this one passed because we did it before, our forefathers did it before, and due to the long late delay, it's just that we're all tired and I will support it and if you have any questions after hours, you can gladly ask me, that way you could explain -- I could explain it better one on one with you, make it pass.

Thank you.

CHAIRMAN CHRISTIANSON: Thank you, Enoch.
Bert, go. Oh, sorry.

MS. PITKA: No, no, he was pointing at me.

(Laughter)

MS. PITKA: No, I just wanted to say I think what Kenneth, I can't say his last name, I'm sorry, I apologize, it's really late, was talking about was a long standing practice. And hypothetically, not that anybody would ever break the law deliberately, but I think having those sorts of common practices put into regulation makes sense.

Especially when -- I don't know if a lot of you actually live in Refuges around here, the Refuge law enforcement officers can be very heavy handed. They come at you and they say that they're going to take your snowmachine, take your guns away, you know, and that's the only way that you have to provide for your family. And then they throw a $500 fine at you when you may make $13,000 a year. So I completely understand and I empathize with what Kenneth was saying. Having those threats hanging over your head for a common practice for feeding your family is egregious. I believe that's what the Refuge manager said and I'm going to use that word, too. That is egregious. I don't think that it's okay to do that sort of thing to people, especially in front of their family.

CHAIRMAN CHRISTIANSON: Thank you for that Rhonda.

MR. POLACCA: Mr. Chair.

CHAIRMAN CHRISTIANSON: Lynn.

MR. POLACCA: I guess I'll have to throw this question out because, you know, after taking a look at it, I see that there is definitely a discrepancy with the regulations that we have that govern some of our Federal lands that are out there and how do we actually implement, you know, subsistence uses that are out there that are currently going on that have been used for, you know, years and years. You know, the foundation -- I guess one question that I wanted to ask was, and this will probably go to Fish
and Wildlife Service and National Parks since they're the ones that are underneath that, their lands, and really I guess where the regulations that were actually written, was that actually written from the viewpoint of sports hunting? And, you know, with the intent of what subsistence uses are and all that, is there a need to take a look and see whether or not we actually need to change that or propose some kind of language to incorporate a modification in some form or another?

CHAIRMAN CHRISTIANSON: Thank you, Lynn. I'll go with Greg.

MR. SIEKANIEC: Thank you, Mr. Chair. Lynn, we have 565 National Wildlife Refuges scattered across the United States. The regulation on the use of motorized vehicle was probably not given a sport kind of recognition or definition, it was probably given a very general perspective of how you operate motor vehicles on any National Wildlife Refuge concerning the wildlife that's there, meant, not to disturb, harass, harm, chase. So it was probably much more in a general sense of how you should use motorized vehicles associated with a National Wildlife Refuge, not from a sporthunt consideration or a subsistence hunt consideration.

MR. FROST: So, Lynn, I don't know for sure but from just the reading of the regulation, this is an Alaska-specific regulation for the National Park Service, and those were written after ANILCA to implement ANILCA. And if you look at Section A of CFR 36.460, where this regulation is, it says:

Notwithstanding, you know, the provision of this chapter, the use of snowmobiles, motor boats, dog teams and other means of surface transportation traditionally employed by local rural residents engaged in subsistence uses is permitted within Park areas, except in those times and those areas restricted by the Superintendent.

So definitely we're talking about subsistence.

But then down in Section D it specifically says, in such a manner in -- I mean it says: motorboats, snowmobiles, dog teams and other means of surface transportation traditionally employed
by local rural residents engaged in subsistence uses shall be operated, and then number 3 is, in such a manner as to prevent the herding, harassment, hazing, or driving of wildlife for hunting or other purposes.

So from reading that, it sounds like they were thinking about subsistence and hunting purposes when the Park Service regulation was written.

CHAIRMAN CHRISTIANSON: Okay. So I guess my thought is, is that's where we sometimes have a cross here with the Board is what lens that we are actually utilizing when we scrutinize the proposals.

You know, bear in mind, I think, ANILCA is the law of the land, in Alaska. And, albeit, we have to recognize across the board each agency-specific regulations that they must mind to as we develop these and how our decisions affect those, ultimately this Board, and the lens that we should be, I believe, looking at these proposals, through, is ANILCA. And however that affects that and what we need to change looking at our perspective agencies is the homework, I believe, we need to do, seeing Alaska is a very unique situation, a lot different than the Lower 48. And, hopefully, we can try to find some way to get past this hurdle that we keep coming up against as far as trying to help the users, the subsistence users on the landscape, get these caribou.

And, albeit, you hear the testimony, they're getting smarter, you know, animals, they do start to acclimate to their environment and we are a big part of it and they hear the engine coming over the hill, they run a little faster, I think, and so -- I mean how do we start to look at these proposals through the lens of ANILCA.

I just wanted to put that out there.

We do have somebody on line, I believe the Bristol Bay RAC Chair wanted to say something so at this time I'll recognize you on line.

OPERATOR: And, Dan, your line is open.

MR. DUNAWAY: Thank you, Mr. Chair. Dan Dunaway, Bristol Bay RAC. Yes, I'll try to get back to earlier questions on consistency and so on.
I think there's a strong desire for, number 1, clarity, what constitutes chasing versus normal hunting. In my personal case, I went down hunting in this very area, saw a large herd a long ways away, in the process of trying to get behind some hills and try to flank that herd, caribou leaped out of the bushes in front of me totally surprised and runs away. At that very moment I was worried if somebody saw, I'm trying to go fast, the caribou is running fast in front of me, I had no interest in him, I can't remember, I think I just veered off or waited for a minute, but at that very moment I recall going, oh, my God, somebody would think I'm chasing this thing right now, which was not my intent.

Of course, every shade from absolutely no chasing, no -- maybe some folks take a Sno-Go down and then ski around and shoot, too. I have seen a couple of times where somebody was running straight at a herd at probably 50, 60 miles an hour. So many of us, I think, would really like to have something clearer, clear guidelines to what constitutes legal activity and illegal activity.

Consistency is also critical.

At times, parts down in that area and other parts of the state where sometimes you're on Federal lands, sometimes you're on State land or private lands that falls under State rules, we're not going to be out there hunting with a GPS and a surveyor in one hand trying to manage our Sno-Go and going, well, what rules apply right now. Also just from a season to season, day to day, we need consistency and uniformity so that we don't get into an accidental violation. The more consistent the better. And that's been one of my personal goals as a member of the RAC, is to keep rules as consistent as possible, so it's easier to know that you're following the rules and easier to know what those rules are. With big flat country out there, there's some dotted lines on a map that sometimes say you're in Curyung land and sometimes you're in Federal lands and sometimes you're in State lands.

I did want to acknowledge that I know from the Board of Game activity in February, that they did switch the chasing, positioning discussion to just caribou and left wolves and other animals out of it.
Another part of a lot of the discussion, and something I brought up in, I believe, both of the RAC meetings, the fall meeting in November and the winter meeting in March, was that requested the agencies work together to develop an educational program to accompany whatever regulations eventually gets adopted so we could go village to village and display like a video or a cartoon or something, some program to say this is chasing, this is not chasing. This is ethical hunting, this is not. And I think we even had some members of the public stand up and advocate for that as well.

So I hope that helps guide the discussion. But consistency -- also consistency of enforcement is one of the concerns. Some enforcement agents tend to be way more vigorous in the interpretation of the law and other ones maybe a little less vigorous. So, again, there's this concern that, oh, we got a new trooper in the area, we got a new enforcement guy up at the Refuge, he or she, are they going to be one of these real sticklers or are they going to accommodate what appears to be common practice.

So I've yakked enough, I hope you consider that.

Thank you.

CHAIRMAN CHRISTIANSON: Thank you for that feedback, appreciate it.

Jack.

MR. REAKOFF: Mr. Chairman. I think the Board has identified that there needs to be statewide policy, regulation on pursuit of animals.

I want to remind the Board that CFR regulations were promulgated and passed without any customary and traditional input by subsistence users at all. Those regulations were put in place before the Regional Councils were even formed, long before there was any meaningful role by subsistence users in the promulgation of those regulations.

So I feel that the Board needs to look at this in a broad aspect of statewide regulations that
become consistent with what the State has done and what
customary and traditional comments on what -- how
people utilize resources historically, those need to
enter into a statewide regulation by the Federal
Subsistence Board on this issue of pursuing animals and
what constitutes legal abilities through the state, all
Federal subsistence users should have very consistent
regulation on no matter what kind of Federal land it is
on, and State lands, so that we know what we're doing.

I have constituents in my region that I
know utilize these harvest practices. I know they do.
They did it long -- when I was a little kid, they did
that. When they first invented Sno-Gos they were
pursuing animals with them. They did it with dog
teams.

There was no comment by subsistence
users in those CFR regulations that are being
implemented on Refuge lands and Park Preserve lands and
Park lands. And I feel that the Federal Subsistence
Board has that management authority and so this should
be revisited.

Thank you, Mr. Chair.

CHAIRMAN CHRISTIANSON: Don.

MR. HERNANDEZ: Yeah, I would agree
with that. I think a lot of us would agree with that.

I think as a followup, kind of in the
meantime, I think the Board should support this
proposal and I think the Federal managers should direct
their Staff and enforcement people as to how they want
this disparate group of CFRs and regulations enforced
in the meantime because this process that Jack was
talking about could take several years and I think
people want to see some changes right now.

CHAIRMAN CHRISTIANSON: Gordon.

MR. G. BROWER: Yeah, I would agree with
Jack and Donald over on that side of the aisle, exactly
what they said. I think it's good to look at this and
move ahead with its adoption and really look at
seriously, at the CFRs and working towards a consistent
approach that we all know what it is, whether you're on
Federal or State land.
CHAIRMAN CHRISTIANSON: Louis.

MR. GREEN: Thank you, Mr. Chair. Just a comment. You know, C&T is written all over our stuff here and cultural and traditional ways of hunting go back many, many years.

Up on the Seward Peninsula, up in the lava beds there was a site that was noted to be where a frame of a kayak or a paddle or something that existed, was made some two or 300 years ago and was stored inside near a lake and so you have to understand that if that kayak is there for the lake, it's not to go out there and row around and look at the stars at night, or the sun in the day time, it was there because it was a traditional grounds for caribou to be where they herded, they harassed, they hazed or they did whatever they needed to do to get those animals into the water so they could make a kill. There's stories about that in the Book of the People of Kawerak.

And so C&T is important.

And like Jack said, they didn't make any of these CFRs with anybody's input that really had any meaningful understanding of the subject back then.

Thank you.

CHAIRMAN CHRISTIANSON: Thank you, Louis.

Enoch.

MR. SHIEDT: Yeah, all I want to do is quote someone from the Federal Subsistence Northwest Alaska states, on BLM managed lands only, a snowmachine may be used to position a caribou, wolf or wolverine for harvest provided that the animals are not shot from a moving snowmachine. I just wanted to quote it, it's here.

Thanks.

CHAIRMAN CHRISTIANSON: Thank you.

Della.

MS. TRUMBLE: Thank you, Mr. Chair. I would agree with everybody's comments. I know our
subsistence users also do use snowmachines.

As it is there's times that they do feel threatened or, you know, feeling like they need to be sneaking around, I think, when they probably not need to be. But also he did, as he pointed out, it does, on Page 112, state, not only from the BLM side, but right above that, that basically does outline. And I think the need for an overall policy is beneficial for everybody. And that eliminates the confusion of what you can and cannot do depending on where you're at.

CHAIRMAN CHRISTIANSON: Thank you.

Louis, one more time.

MR. GREEN: Yes, sir, thank you, Mr. Chair. It says right above what she was reading there; it says caribou may be taken from a boat moving under power in Unit 22 -- on 23, swimming caribou may be taken with a firearm.

I recall a time hunting, flying same day, learned from an oldtimer that said, caribou can hear a snowmachine from a couple miles away and start running, hunting with a same day land and shoot, he said, it doesn't disturb them, they don't get excited. Maybe there's -- since then -- but I actually went out and did it back in the '80s when it was legal and he was right, they don't get excited about an airplane.

So I don't know where this is going but other than the fact that there's stuff in this book that says it's okay to hunt from moving vehicles. I don't know what the issue is with the CFR issue.

Thank you.

CHAIRMAN CHRISTIANSON: I think we're ready to go to No. 9, Federal Subsistence Board action. I think we've deliberated and talked about this as much as we can.

Greg.

MR. SIEKANIEC: Mr. Chair. Greg Siekaniec, Fish and Wildlife Service.

Thanks for the great discussion and the
debate. I would like to make a -- I would like to move
that we adopt Proposal WP18-24 as written on Page 259.
And if I get a second to the motion, I will provide my
justification as to why I intend to actually oppose
this motion.

MS. PITKA: I'll second.

MR. SIEKANIEC: Thank you, Rhonda.

You know I'm -- as you've already
heard, very, very concerned about the multiple existing
Federal regulations that conflict with the adoption of
this proposed regulation as written. Both the Fish and
Wildlife Service and the National Park Service, and as
I noted, our own Federal Subsistence regulations are in
conflict with that. The majority of the Federal lands
in this particular unit we're talking about are
administered by the Fish and Wildlife Service that I
believe in the range of 75 percent of the lands that
we're talking and another probably 10 percent by the
National Park Service.

I also am opposing this because I did
hear very clearly from the Bristol Bay Regional
Advisory Committee [sic] that we don't need more
confusion around this, we need clarity. We need
consistency. Both consistency of how the law reads and
how it affects people, but also consistency then
allowed through the enforcement of it. We talked
greatly at length about how the State regulation now is
going to be entirely another set of regulation. And
not only is another set of regulation in regards to how
you use a vehicle, it is specific to caribou. This
proposal is also -- adds wolverine and wolf, so now we
have another inconsistency that people would need to be
thinking about as to where and when they are on the
landscape.

I'm just greatly concerned that from a
Board perspective we would be doing a disservice in
this because the law of 36 CFR is still going to be on
the books, we are not getting rid of that law by way of
our action. The current regulation presently does
allow a hunter to position themselves with the use of a
snowmachine, this does nothing to take away the use of
a snowmachine, it does nothing to change the
opportunity for them to use the snowmachine to position
themselves relative to it. What it does not allow them
to do is to manage or move the caribou with the purpose
and intent that's been described.

I just think we have too much
confliction here in what this thing would put on the
land for users.

Thank you.

CHAIRMAN CHRISTIANSON: Thank you,
Greg. Anybody else want to discuss, more deliberation.

(No comments)

CHAIRMAN CHRISTIANSON: Everyone saying
no. I just want to say any means necessary means any
means necessary. And I think human's have been driving
animals on the American landscape for thousands of
years and most of the landscape is actually dotted with
those drive lines and those cliff falls and those
places where we got rid of ungulates in the Lower 48 by
the thousands because it was an impact to their
agriculture way of life, and up here more or less
because the tundra's big, flat and wide and they needed
ways to get these animals into a smaller area.

And so I just want to say that I
support subsistence, any means necessary. And I know
we have laws and regulations that we have to be mindful
to, but I want to speak to that, to support what I've
heard from the people on the land.

MS. PITKA: Mr. Chairman.

CHAIRMAN CHRISTIANSON: Rhonda.

MS. PITKA: It is a common practice and
I think having, you know, those regulations in Parks
and Refuges, it makes it difficult for a common hunting
practice to be provided for without criminalizing it
further.

Thanks.

Oh, so I support.

MR. C. BROWER: Question.

CHAIRMAN CHRISTIANSON: Question's been
called. Let's call for a roll call on this one.

MR. DOOLITTLE: Alrighty. This is Wildlife Proposal 18-24. The motion on the floor is to adopt Proposal WP18-24 as found on Page 259 of the meeting book.

National Park Service, Herbert Frost.

MR. FROST: I oppose for all the reasons that Greg had mentioned and I don't think I need to rehash those.

MR. DOOLITTLE: Bureau of Land Management, Karen Mouritsen.

MS. MOURITSEN: I oppose based on the original recommendation from the RAC to oppose because of the confusion over the terms and with the expectation that OSM and the RACs would talk to whoever they need to talk to, including the State and come up with something soon that would look at all these different terms and regs and try to come up with something that was less confusing to propose to us if they saw fit.

Thank you.

MR. DOOLITTLE: Thank you, Karen.


MR. SIEKANIEC: I oppose. And with very similar reasons with deference to the Bristol Bay RAC given that they were asking for clarity, consistency and a consideration of how you might take the State recent consideration into what might be allowed on the Federal lands in the unit as well.

Thank you.

MR. DOOLITTLE: Thank you, Greg.

Forest Service, Wayne Owen.

MR. OWEN: Oppose.

MR. DOOLITTLE: BIA, Lynn Polacca.
MR. POLACCA: I support.

MR. DOOLITTLE: Public member, Rhonda Pitka.

MS. PITKA: I support in defiance of the RAC because it would be detrimental to the satisfaction of subsistence needs.

MR. DOOLITTLE: Public member, Charlie Brower.

MR. C. BROWER: Support. It would be detrimental to the satisfaction of subsistence users.

MR. DOOLITTLE: Chairman Anthony Christianson.

CHAIRMAN CHRISTIANSON: I support as well.

MR. DOOLITTLE: We have a tie, four/four, the motion fails.

CHAIRMAN CHRISTIANSON: Thank you. I'm going to call for a five minute break and we'll come back and we still have some business to do today.

(Off record)

(On record)

CHAIRMAN CHRISTIANSON: All right. We look to the analysis, Region 5, Kuskokwim Delta.

MS. WORKER: Thank you, Mr. Chair. My name is Suzanne Worker. And the next proposal on the docket is 18-28. WP18-28 was submitted by the Togiak National Wildlife Refuge and this analysis begins on Page 895 of your Board materials.

The Refuge requests the addition of a winter may be announced moose season in the portion of Unit 18 in the Goodnews River drainage and south to the Unit 18 boundary. In January 2017 the Board of Game established a may be announced season in this hunt area which allows the area biologist to determine the length and timing of an opening and to establish a harvest quota for the hunt. So that is in addition to the
existing fall hunt. This proposal seeks similar flexibility for the Federal manager to open a winter season when it’s warranted.

Moose are relatively new to this area and the population has grown substantially in the last decade. In March 2017, the population estimate was approximately 600 moose and although there is some uncertainty in that number, the population is believed to have grown in the past several years. There were 47 bulls to 100 cows in late 2016 and calf production and recruitment have been sufficient to sustain growth. So this population appears to be doing well.

Moose harvests has been allowed in the Goodnews drainage since 2008 and since that time all but one moose has been taken by Federally-qualified subsistence users, primarily by residents of Goodnews Bay and Platinum. Those are the two communities that are located within the hunt area. The average reported harvest is 13 moose annually and the annual harvest has never exceeded the quota of 20 moose that was established in 2011. So a winter hunt would provide an additional opportunity to meet that quota.

These changes are not expected to affect the moose population in the area since they’ve already been made in State regulation. And, because Federally-qualified subsistence users are already hunting with State registration permits. However, having the ability to open a winter season gives local managers the flexibility to respond to dynamic moose population while the use of registration permits and harvest quotas guards against overharvest.

The OSM conclusion is to support WP18-28 with modification. Simply to delegate authority to the Refuge manager to close the fall season and open and close the winter season and to set harvest quotas and restrictions.

Thank you, Mr. Chair.

CHAIRMAN CHRISTIANSON: Thank you. Any questions.

(No comments)

CHAIRMAN CHRISTIANSON: Thank you,
Susan. Hearing none, we'll go to summary of public comments.

MS. PATTON: Mr. Chair and Members of the Board. For the record, Eva Patton, Council coordinator for the YK Delta Subsistence Regional Advisory Council.

While there were no written public comments submitted during the comment period, several ACs did meet and submitted comments. You'll find in your supplemental Section 7, beginning on Page 39 there were six Alaska Fish and Game Advisory Committees that met from the Western Alaska region. All six were in support of Proposal 18-28, and these include the Mid, Lower Yukon AC, the Central Bering AC, the Coastal Lower Yukon, the Central Kuskokwim AC, the Bethel AC and the Lower Kuskokwim AC were all in support of WP18-28.

Thank you.

And that concludes comments submitted for this proposal.

Thank you.

CHAIRMAN CHRISTIANSON: Thank you, Eva.

With that, I'll open up the floor for public testimony.

(No comments)

CHAIRMAN CHRISTIANSON: We have no white cards for this one. Whew.

(Laughter)

CHAIRMAN CHRISTIANSON: Is there anybody on the phone.

OPERATOR: We have no question or comment on the phone.

CHAIRMAN CHRISTIANSON: Nobody on line.

OPERATOR: No, no question or comments
from the phone line.

CHAIRMAN CHRISTIANSON: Thank you.

We'll move on to Regional Advisory Council recommendation.

MS. PATTON: Mr. Chair and Members of the Board. Again, Eva Patton, Council coordinator for the YK Delta Subsistence Regional Advisory Council.
The newly elected Chair for the YK Delta RAC, Alissa Rogers had to just depart to catch her flight home so I'll be reading the Council recommendations into the record.

And, Alissa, did wish to express her gratitude for the warm welcome here and participation in the Board process. She started attending RAC meetings as a child herself. Her late grandfather John Hanson served for many years as the YK Delta RAC Chair in the earlier days, so she's bringing up the next generation. So she wished to express that.

Thank you.

So the YK Delta Subsistence Regional Advisory Council supports WP18-26 [sic] and they support this as an additional subsistence opportunity in the region. The Council concurred with feedback from local residents of Goodnews Bay and Quinhagak that if they were not able to get the moose on their permit during the fall hunt season, a winter hunt season would be very beneficial to give them another opportunity to harvest a moose for their family. Council Chair at the time, Lester Wilde, Sr., noted that in the region they had worked very hard during the moose moratorium on the Kuskokwim River, which was a joint effort from communities all along the Kuskokwim River and in the region for many years to get to this point to where there are moose to harvest and the Council and public recognized that that effort had come to fruition, and so they're very happy to see that the population -- the moose population was back up where everyone in the region has an opportunity for much needed protein the moose provides, and he noted that this increased opportunity is a very good thing to see and they're very much in support.

Thank you.
CHAIRMAN CHRISTIANSON: Thank you.

Western Interior.

MR. REAKOFF: Thank you, Mr. Chair.
Western Interior deferred this to YK Delta region. We have customary and traditional use within Unit 18 but none of our constituents would go this far and we deferred to the Yukon Delta Council.

Thank you.

CHAIRMAN CHRISTIANSON: Thank you, Jack.

Tribal, Alaska Native Corp., comments.

MR. LIND: Thank you, Mr. Chair. Board members. Consultation was held on September 7th and I'd like to read a statement from a person over actually off of Healy Lake. And he asked why tribes aren't calling in and I shared with him upon contacting the region and talking to several tribal members and leaders that they wouldn't be available because of the upcoming moose seasons. And sometimes our timing doesn't allow a lot of phone calls to come in from the tribes because they're doing exactly that, they're out moose hunting. And I did state to him that, you know, we try to make a real effort and try to accommodate the tribes to let them know about consultation dates and times. And when I did talk to, I believe, six members they were stating that they would attend the Regional Advisory Council meetings when it happened.

Thank you, Mr. Chair.

CHAIRMAN CHRISTIANSON: Thank you, Orville.

Alaska Department of Fish and Game comments.

MR. BURCH: Thank you, Mr. Chair. I'm Mark Burch. A special projects coordinator for the Department of Fish and Game.

Our comments are on Page 905 in the book. The State of Alaska supports, with modification to change the bag limit to one moose to align it with the State regulations. We concur with the analysis of
the situation provided by OSM and we do not believe that adoption of this proposal will have appreciable effect on the population.

Thank you.

CHAIRMAN CHRISTIANSON: Thank you.
InterAgency Staff Committee.

MS. HARDIN; Thank you, Mr. Chair. The InterAgency Staff Committee made the standard comment for WP18-28.

CHAIRMAN CHRISTIANSON: Thank you.
Board discussion with Council Chairs and State liaison.

(No comments)

CHAIRMAN CHRISTIANSON: Hearing and seeing none, Federal Subsistence Board action.

MR. SIEKANIEC: Mr. Chair.

CHAIRMAN CHRISTIANSON: Greg.

MR. SIEKANIEC: Thank you, Mr. Chair.

Greg, with Fish and Wildlife Service.

I'd like to move to adopt Proposal WP18-28 as modified by OSM and noted on Page 895 of the meeting book. Should I get a second on this motion, I will gladly provide a justification.

MS. MOURITSEN: Second.

MR. SIEKANIEC: Thank you, Karen.

I agree with the OSM justification provided on Page 903 and 904. Modification provided by OSM simply clarifies the regulatory language and does not change the intent of the proposal as written and, thus, would be supported by the Yukon Delta Regional Advisory Committee [sic]. Establishing a winter season provides an additional opportunity for Federally-qualified subsistence users to harvest moose if they are unsuccessful in the fall. Relative to a preset season, a may be announced season, poses little risk to the moose population in the area since it allows local
managers to be responsive to changing population and harvest dynamics.

Thank you, Mr. Chair.

CHAIRMAN CHRISTIANSON: Thank you. Any further discussion. Questions by the Board.

MS. PITKA: I just wanted to address something that Orville Lind said in the comment, the tribal comment, he said something about there were no tribes on line because everybody was out moose hunting. That's going to be true if you have your consultations in the month of September, pretty much everywhere. So maybe keep that in mind when we form tribal consultation, is nobody's going to be anywhere in either September or June.

MR. LIND: Thank you, Rhonda for that. Absolutely. And, again, you know, we don't know when special actions are coming in or proposals are being sent in so, again, we try to accommodate the tribes the best way we can. And for the last three years there was a couple of times where we actually held the consultation after the Regional Advisory Council meetings.

Thank you.

CHAIRMAN CHRISTIANSON: Call for the question.

MS. C. BROWER: Question.

CHAIRMAN CHRISTIANSON: Question's been called. Can we read into the record please.

MR. DOOLITTLE: Certainly. This is Wildlife Proposal 18-28 and the motion on the floor is adopt Proposal WP18-28 as modified by the Office of Subsistence Management. That modification can be found on Page 895 of the meeting book.

CHAIRMAN CHRISTIANSON: Thank you. All those in favor of the motion signify by saying aye.

IN UNISON: Aye.

CHAIRMAN CHRISTIANSON: Opposed, same
There are currently no population

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surveys being conducted for ptarmigan in Unit 18.

Ptarmigan abundance naturally fluctuates along with the snowshoe hare populations and specialist predator populations. The Alaska Department of Fish and Game Staff have observed lower ptarmigan populations in Unit 18 than in the past, however.

Ptarmigan in Unit 18 are locally migratory, wintering in the Interior and breeding along the coast. Male ptarmigan begin to arrive along the coast of Unit 18 in late April and females do not fully arrive to the coastal areas in Unit 18 until late May.

The majority of Unit 18 ptarmigan harvest takes place from April through June.

Harvest estimates based on household surveys averaged 15,901 ptarmigan taken annually between 1986 and 2001 and 12,298 between 2002 and 2015. However, harvest estimates from the Alaska Migratory Bird subsistence harvest estimates household surveys have high levels of variation and provide limited utility for assessing impacts of management decisions on ptarmigan populations.

Harvest levels of Willow ptarmigan above 15 percent could be additive to natural mortality and a harvest of 30 percent of the post-breeding population could become super additive, that is, harvest could cause additional natural mortality following the harvest.

If adopted, this proposal would reduce the harvest opportunity for Federally-qualified subsistence users residing in coastal areas of Unit 18.

Since Willow ptarmigan do not begin to arrive to coastal areas until late May, or late April/early May, closing the season on March 31st would end the season prior to the arrival of ptarmigan to these coastal areas. This proposal may protect ptarmigan populations during the critical breeding season and allow the population to rebound. However, the proposal would make Federal subsistence regulations more restrictive than State regulations.

So the OSM conclusion is to support Proposal WP18-30 with modification, to leave the season
unchanged. Decreasing the harvest limit while maintaining the current season may provide an opportunity for ptarmigan populations to rebound while still providing harvest opportunity for coastal communities in Unit 18. But it is important to note that a proposal would also need to be submitted to the Board of Game to really have an impact on the harvest in the area.

And that's all I have and I'm open to any questions.

Thank you.

CHAIRMAN CHRISTIANSON: Any questions.

(No comments)

CHAIRMAN CHRISTIANSON: Thank you.

Summary of public comment.

MS. PATTON: Mr. Chair and Council.

Again, for the record, Eva Patton, Council coordinator for the YK Delta Subsistence Regional Advisory Council.

Again, you can find public comments submitted by the State Fish and Game Regional Advisory Committees beginning on Page 39 in Section 7 of your supplemental packet. All six of the ACs supported as amended, and, again, this includes the Mid, Lower Yukon AC, the Central Bering AC, the Coastal Lower Yukon, the Central Kuskokwim AC, the Bethel AC and the Lower Kuskokwim AC. And in addition to those comments, they all supported as amended, to support those coastal communities as that migration of ptarmigan come from the inland out to the coast and arrive at a later date, so they all supported maintaining the current dates but limiting the harvest.

Several ACs also had further comments. Their Council members from communities throughout the region noting that they, too, were seeing a decline in ptarmigan in their usual hunting areas. In particular, going back to usual hunting areas where they would see abundant ptarmigan, this year they had gone to hunt -- or this past year, and they didn't see any ptarmigan and they noted that in similar efforts, as the moose hunting moratorium that was supported by subsistence communities on the river, that they felt they were also
in support of reducing subsistence harvest to support
the future generations.

And that concludes the comments for
Proposal WP18-30.

Thank you.

CHAIRMAN CHRISTIANSON: Thank you, Eva.

Questions.

(No comments)

CHAIRMAN CHRISTIANSON: I would open
the floor to public testimony.

(No comments)

CHAIRMAN CHRISTIANSON: Seeing none, I
call on the line, the phone.

OPERATOR: No question or comment on the
line.

CHAIRMAN CHRISTIANSON: Thank you.

We'll move to Regional Advisory Council recommendation.

Is Bristol Bay still on.

(No comments)

CHAIRMAN CHRISTIANSON: Okay.

MR. MIKE: Thank you, Mr. Chair. Our
Bristol Bay representative had to leave for other
functions. I will read into the record the Bristol Bay
Council's recommendations.

The Bristol Bay Subsistence Regional
Advisory Council supports WP18-30 with modification to
change the season to August 10th to May 15th and change
the season bag limit to 20 per day and 40 in
possession. The modification to align the season with
current State regulations for ptarmigan and the harvest
limit with the adjacent hunt area in Unit 17. The
ptarmigan population has decreased in Unit 18 and the
proposal as amended will reduce regulatory complexity
between Federal and State hunting regulations. The
Council agreed action is needed now and reducing the
harvest limit is a starting point. Reducing the harvest limit will address the conservation concern and bring the population level back up for subsistence users future needs. Some subsistence users harvest ptarmigan out of real need and this action will benefit future subsistence harvest.

The modified regulation should read:

Unit 18 ptarmigan, both Rock and Willow, Unit 18, 20 per day, 40 in possession, season dates August 10th through May 15th.

Thank you, Mr. Chair.

CHAIRMAN CHRISTIANSON: Thank you. YK.

MS. PATTON: Mr. Chair and Council. Again, Eva Patton, Council coordinator for YK Delta Subsistence Regional Advisory Council, and I'll be reading the Council's actions on behalf of Chair Alissa Rogers.

The Yukon Delta Subsistence Regional Advisory Council supports WP18-30 as modified by OSM. All Council members, a 13 member Council with Council members from throughout the YK Delta region all discussed their personal observations around their communities of the decline in ptarmigan population, noting that over the last 10 years or so there have been fewer ptarmigan along the Kuskokwim River as well. The Council stressed that even if there was a lack of data, biological data on the declines, local hunters observe populations every year and see what's going on with the animals and the environment and local hunter observation should be considered valid in consideration of this proposal.

Overall, the Council shared the importance of ptarmigan for subsistence in the region and expressed great concern for its decline. The Council voted to support efforts to help the population rebound by reducing subsistence hunting pressure. The Council discussed that as hunters they have noticed the decrease and expressed that the future of this very important subsistence resource should be cared for by the people that are going to be coming after us.

The Council voted to maintain the current season upon consideration for the disparate
impact that the shortened season would have on the coastal communities, again, as the ptarmigan migrate out to the coast later in the season as the snow recedes. And, overall, the Council noted the importance of ptarmigan especially for hunting of resources when their chinook salmon are in decline and they're losing their winter and spring food. So even though it's a very important subsistence resource, they felt that the conservation was also imperative at this time for future generations.

Thank you.

CHAIRMAN CHRISTIANSON: Thank you.

Tribal, Alaska Native Corp., comments, Native Liaison.

MR. LIND: Thank you, Mr. Chair. Board members. During the consultation on September 7th there was no discussion on Wildlife Proposal 18-30.

Thank you.

CHAIRMAN CHRISTIANSON: Thank you.

Alaska Department of Fish and Game

MR. BURCH: Thank you, Mr. Chair. I'm Mark Burch with the Department of Fish and Game.

Fish and Game is neutral on this proposal and the reason is, is that it would cause a discrepancy between the State and Federal season, it would be more restrictive. And users could still hunt under State regulations, and so the discrepancy could be confusing.

As you heard we don't have any current population figures so assessing this proposal is difficult, although harvest during the springtime, during the breeding season is generally considered to be more additive mortality and so there is potential for that effect, especially since ptarmigan, both Rock and Willow ptarmigan males are especially susceptible to harvest during that time because of their behavior.

So just to reiterate, the Alaska Department of Fish and Game is neutral on this proposal.
CHAIRMAN CHRISTIANSON: Thank you.

InterAgency Staff Committee.

MS. HARDIN: Thank you, Mr. Chair. The InterAgency Staff Committee provided the standard comment for WP18-30.

CHAIRMAN CHRISTIANSON: Board discussion with Council Chairs, State liaison. Any questions, deliberations.

(No comments)

CHAIRMAN CHRISTIANSON: Hearing and seeing none, we'll move for Board action.

MR. SIEKANIEC: Mr. Chair. Greg Siekaniec, Fish and Wildlife Service.

I would move to adopt WP18-30 as modified by the Office of Subsistence Management as indicated on Page 923 of the meeting book and supported by the Yukon Delta Regional Advisory Committee [sic]. Keep the season dates unchanged and to modify the bag limit to 15 per day and 30 in possession. Should I get a second on this motion I will provide further justification.

MR. C. BROWER: Second.

MR. SIEKANIEC: Thank you, Charlie.

Maintaining the current season dates maintains a Federal subsistence priority and provides more opportunity than what is currently available under State regulations. Although it is expected that ptarmigan population declines are likely caused by climate change, human harvest during spring may have an additive mortality effect on the already declining population. It may be important to limit harvest until ptarmigan numbers rebound to maintain this resource for local users. The proponent stated that the subsistence users are responsible for a majority of the harvest and this proposal would limit these users, somewhat, and provide some potential for the population to rebound.

And I do fully recognize that we are adding another element of inconsistent State and Federal application of season, or of harvest limit, which is just another discrepancy and we should always
be mindful when we're doing that.

Thank you, Mr. Chair.

CHAIRMAN CHRISTIANSON: Thank you, Greg.

Any discussion.

(No comments)

CHAIRMAN CHRISTIANSON: Hearing none, call for the question.

MR. FROST: Question.

CHAIRMAN CHRISTIANSON: Will you please read into the record the motion please.

MR. DOOLITTLE: This is Wildlife Proposal 18-30. The motion on the floor is adopt Proposal WP18-30 as modified by the Office of Subsistence Management as indicated on Page 923 of the meeting book.

CHAIRMAN CHRISTIANSON: All those in favor of the motion signify by saying aye.

IN UNISON: Aye.

CHAIRMAN CHRISTIANSON: Opposed, same sign.

(No opposing votes)

CHAIRMAN CHRISTIANSON: Motion carries unanimously.

The floor is yours.

MS. WORKER: Thank you, Mr. Chair.

WP18-31 begins on Page 931 of your book. This proposal was submitted by the ONC. And they are concerned about the conservation status of the Mulchatna Caribou Herd so they're requesting that the caribou season in Unit 18 be shortened from the current season of August 1st to March 15th, to a new season of August 1st to February 28th.
Like I mentioned earlier today, the Mulchatna Caribou Herd is estimated to be around 27,000 animals and that was in 2016. And this is just below the lower limit of the population objective. But the bull/cow ratio has improved markedly in recent years and has approached or exceeded the population objective of 35 bulls to 100 cows since 2014.

Reported harvest by Federally-qualified subsistence users has averaged fewer than 500 caribou annually since 2000 and, again, we do anticipate that harvest is higher than reported.

Almost 50 percent of the reported harvest from the Mulchatna Caribou Herd occurs in early spring in either February or March. Among Federally-qualified subsistence users, nearly 50 percent of the reported harvest occurs in Unit 18. And so what happens in Unit 18 in the spring probably isn't inconsequential in terms of harvest of this population, however, if this proposal was adopted the Federal season will be shorter than the State season by 15 days, and since there is nothing preventing Federal users from hunting under State regulation, there is expected to be no actual effect on the caribou population or on subsistence users. Rather, the main effect of this proposal would be to increase the regulatory complexity, which is unnecessary in the absence of a conservation benefit.

So the OSM conclusion is to oppose WP18-31.

Thank you, Mr. Chair.

CHAIRMAN CHRISTIANSON: Any questions.

(No comments)

CHAIRMAN CHRISTIANSON: Summary of public comment.

MS. PATTON: Mr. Chair and Council -- or Board, rather. Again, for the record, Eva Patton, Council coordinator for the YK Delta Subsistence Regional Advisory Council. You will find written public comments in your supplemental Section 7 from the Western Alaska ACs.
Five of the Western Alaska ACs were in support of WP18-31, and those ACs were Mid-Lower Yukon AC, Central Bering Sea AC, the Central Kuskokwim AC, the Bethel AC and the Lower Kuskokwim AC were all in support of WP18-31, however, some did note it would disalign with the State regulations in the area.

One AC was opposed to WP18-31, the Coastal Lower Yukon AC had noted that it would be out of alignment with the State regulations and add to confusion for hunters in the region and felt that the 15 day shortening of the season wouldn't have a strong enough conservation effect for the effort. And they also had noted they weren't certain that it was subsistence hunter harvest that was having an impact on the caribou herd, and had noted that there were high rates of predation on the -- and, again, they felt that the shortening by 15 days wouldn't have the conservation effect but the disalignment may have some confusion for folks.

And that concludes public comments for WP18-31.

CHAIRMAN CHRISTIANSON: Thank you.

Open the floor to public testimony.

(No comments)

CHAIRMAN CHRISTIANSON: On the phone.

OPERATOR: No question or comment on the phones.

CHAIRMAN CHRISTIANSON: Thank you.

Regional Advisory Council recommendation.

MR. MIKE: Thank you, Mr. Chair. For the record, Donald Mike, Council coordinator for Bristol Bay. I'll be reading the Council's recommendation into the record.

Bristol Bay Subsistence Regional Advisory Council opposes Proposal 18-31. Although the herd is not growing as desired, there appears to be enough bulls to support the harvest. The proposal would have a detrimental effect on other subsistence users and the timing involved for the users from the
Bristol Bay region, typically use the resource later in the season and it will affect their abilities to access the resource if the later season dates are taken away.

Thank you, Mr. Chair.

CHAIRMAN CHRISTIANSON: Thank you. YK.

MS. PATTON: Mr. Chair. Members of the Board. Eva Patton, YK Delta Subsistence Regional Advisory Council speaking for our Chair Alissa Rogers.

The YK Delta Subsistence Regional Advisory Council supports this proposal. The Council discussed that the proposal specifically requested to shorten the caribou hunt at the end of the season in the spring and felt that that would be supported by communities since the fall hunt was a more important time to be out for hunting.

Some Council members noted that the overlap of the fall moose and caribou hunt allowed for an opportunity to harvest caribou at the same time if they were not able to get a moose. They felt that reduction in the season at the tail end would help reduce pressure on caribou at the end of the winter, without overly impacting subsistence communities in the region. However, because all of the subsistence is integrated the Council did discuss concerns about the reduction in salmon fishing opportunity and that they may run out of dry fish come spring and that springtime may be an important time for hunting to meet their subsistence needs as well.

However, overall, the Council concurred with observations and concern for a decline in the Mulchatna Caribou Herd and felt this was their opportunity to take action on the Federal lands and voted in support of this proposal in an effort to help the population be sustained for future generations.

Thank you.

CHAIRMAN CHRISTIANSON: Thank you.

Seward Penn.

MR. GREEN: Thank you, Mr. Chair.

Seward Peninsula RAC weighed in. We have two communities right at the top there just outside the
boundaries but they have C&T of taking these caribou.

The Council opposed this proposal because it would only shorten the Federal season by 15 days and likely have no appreciable impact conserving caribou in this area. All hunters can use a State registration permit to hunt the Mulchatna Caribou Herd, therefore, changing the Federal season would also create confusion in the State and Federal seasons that are already currently aligned.

Thank you, Mr. Chair.

CHAIRMAN CHRISTIANSON: Any questions for RAC Chairs.

Tribal, Alaska Native Corp., comments.

MR. LIND: Thank you, Chair. Board members. During the consultation of September 7th there was no discussion on Wildlife Proposal 18-31.

CHAIRMAN CHRISTIANSON: Alaska Department of Fish and Game.

MR. BUTLER: Mr. Chair. Members of the Board. The Department's opposed to the adoption of WP18-31 because it doesn't provide any clear benefit to the population and it makes subsistence regulations more restrictive and, generally more confusing in the area with the differences between the State and Federal seasons and bag limits.

The harvest on the Mulchatnna is pretty light right now, mostly because the herd is relatively inaccessible to people. The herd can support quite a bit more harvest and still grow, given its current population dynamics. So, again, there's really no need to limit harvest at this point and it's likely a distribution problem if people are seeing fewer caribou.

CHAIRMAN CHRISTIANSON: Thank you.

InterAgency Staff Committee.

MS. HARDIN: Thank you, Mr. Chair. The InterAgency Staff Committee provided the standard comment on WP18-31.
CHAIRMAN CHRISTIANSON: Thank you.

Board discussion with Council Chairs and State liaison.

(No comments)

CHAIRMAN CHRISTIANSON: Hearing and seeing none, Federal Board action.


I would like to move to adopt WP18-31 as noted on Page 931 of the information book. Should I get a second I will provide my justification that I believe is consistent with the Bristol Bay Regional Advisory Committee [sic], and the Seward Peninsula Regional Advisory Committee [sic], as to why I would intend to oppose this motion.

MR. C. BROWER: Second.

MR. SIEKANIEC: Thank you, Charlie. I believe this proposal is not expected to address the proponent's or the Yukon Delta Regional Advisory Committee's [sic] conservation concerns as we have heard from others, and does not provide any clear benefit to the population biology of the Mulchatna Caribou Herd or to Federally-qualified subsistence users. Because harvest will remain legal through March 15th under State regulations and because Federally-qualified subsistence users may hunt on both State and Federal lands under State regulation throughout Unit 18 it will have negligible effects on subsistence harvest or on population dynamics of the Mulchatna Caribou Herd. In addition, the misalignment of State and Federal seasons will, again, result in confusion among Federal users, which I believe is unnecessary in the absence of a conservation benefit as noted by the OSM evaluation.

Once, again, I'd like to remind the Board that, you know, we should try and avoid these confusing settings for people out on the land.

Thank you, Mr. Chair.

CHAIRMAN CHRISTIANSON: Thank you.

Open the floor for discussion.
CHAIRMAN CHRISTIANSON: Call for the question.

MR. C. BROWER: Question.

CHAIRMAN CHRISTIANSON: Do roll call on this one.

MR. DOOLITTLE: This is Wildlife Proposal 18-31. The motion on the floor is adopt Proposal WP18-31 as found on Page 931 of the meeting book.

Roll call vote.

National Park Service, Herbert Frost.

MR. FROST: Oppose.

Mr. DOOLITTLE: Bureau of Land Management, Karen Mouritsen.

Ms. MOURITSEN: Oppose.

Mr. DOOLITTLE: U. S. Fish and Wildlife Service, Greg Siekaniec.

Mr. SIEKANIEC: Oppose.

Mr. DOOLITTLE: U. S. Forest Service, Wayne Owen.

Mr. OWEN: Oppose.

Mr. DOOLITTLE: BIA, Lynn Polacca.

Mr. POLACCA: Oppose.

Mr. DOOLITTLE: Public member, Rhonda Pitka.

Ms. PITKA: Oppose in deference to two RACs.

Mr. DOOLITTLE: Thank you, Rhonda.

Public member, Charlie Brower.
MR. C. BROWER: Oppose.

MR. DOOLITTLE: Chairman Anthony Christianson.

CHAIRMAN CHRISTIANSON: Oppose.

MR. DOOLITTLE: Motion fails.

CHAIRMAN CHRISTIANSON: Right now I'm going to make a quick exception to do public testimony for somebody who has to leave. And so if Cynthia Kruger can come on up and speak to the proposal she has on the paper here.

MS. KRUGER: Hi. Mr. Chairman and respective Board Members. I'd just like to say I oppose the proposal WP18-33 and WP18-36.

In the proposal it states that we don't take advantage of the early hunt and we do. We use that time to bring our youth out, we have an annual cultural camp and we teach them boating safety and gun safety and we teach them how to harvest a moose during that time. It's a pretty big thing for our youth, our young boys, you know, to get their first moose. And to have it -- to shorten it and have it at the same time when the outside hunters come in and hunt, adding that extra competition and extra pressure, I don't like that idea.

So -- oh, my name is Cynthia Kruger, by the way, from Grayling.

CHAIRMAN CHRISTIANSON: Any questions for Cynthia -- are you finished Cynthia?

MS. KRUGER: (Nods affirmatively)

CHAIRMAN CHRISTIANSON: Go ahead, Ken.

MR. LORD: Cynthia, the culture camp, is it done under a cultural education permit or is it just during the regular season, or do you know?

MS. KRUGER: I don't. I'll have to get that -- I can get it written down and emailed to you guys.
MR. LORD: We can find out, that's okay, thank you.

MS. KRUGER: Okay.

CHAIRMAN CHRISTIANSON: Thank you, Cynthia, for your testimony, appreciate you taking the time and safe travels home.

MS. KRUGER: Thank you.

CHAIRMAN CHRISTIANSON: What I am going to say is 18-34 will be our last one for the day. There's hope in the air.

(Laughter)

CHAIRMAN CHRISTIANSON: Lynx get it on.

(Laughter)

MR. MCKEE: Mr. Chair. I just want to clarify, are you skipping over 33/36 until tomorrow or.....

CHAIRMAN CHRISTIANSON: Oh, I'm looking at the wrong sheet here.

MR. MCKEE: Because you did remove that from the consensus, just as a reminder.

CHAIRMAN CHRISTIANSON: I'm on the right one, aren't I?

MR. DOOLITTLE: Yeah, you're on the right one.

MR. MCKEE: You removed 33/36 from the consensus agenda.

MR. DOOLITTLE: Oh, 33, oh, I see what you did because it's 33/36.

MR. MCKEE: I don't want to point you in any direction, I just want to remind you that that was taken off.

MR. DOOLITTLE: Yeah.
CHAIRMAN CHRISTIANSON: Yeah, we're looking at the old list here.

MR. DOOLITTLE: Okay.

CHAIRMAN CHRISTIANSON: Is 33/36 a combined proposal?

MR. MCKEE: It is, yes.

MR. DOOLITTLE: Okay.

CHAIRMAN CHRISTIANSON: Is it a fast one?

(Laughter)

CHAIRMAN CHRISTIANSON: I don't want to get into.....

MR. MCKEE: No.

CHAIRMAN CHRISTIANSON: .....an hour long one.

MR. MCKEE: 34 would probably be better.

(Laughter)

CHAIRMAN CHRISTIANSON: Can we, by consensus here, skip over and do lynx, and then we'll get to this 33/36 in the morning.

(Board nods affirmatively)

CHAIRMAN CHRISTIANSON: Thank you.

Whew.

(Laughter)

CHAIRMAN CHRISTIANSON: Thank you.

(Off record comments re dinner)

CHAIRMAN CHRISTIANSON: The floor is yours. I'm giving you the Chair for just a moment, while I step out (to Siekaniec)
The floor is yours, go ahead.

MS. KLOSTERMAN: All right. Thank you, Mr. Chair. Again, my name is Megan Klosterman and I'm a wildlife biologist with OSM. I'm reviewing WP18-34 which can be found on Page 949 of your meeting materials.

The proponent, Jack Reakoff, of Wiseman, requests that the lynx trapping season in Unit 24A be lengthened by one month from November 1st through February 28th, to November 1st through March 31st. The proponent states that this proposal would align the lynx and wolverine trapping seasons which would limit incidental take of lynx while targeting wolverine. Lynx populations fluctuate in tandem with the lag of about one to two years with snowshoe hare population trends. Snowshoe hare have what is known as a super peak or abnormally high population spike every other peak cycle. Snowshoe hare are currently in a super peak cycle with populations expected to crash within the next two to three years. Likewise, lynx are also expected to be reaching a super peak in the near future. Due to the cyclical nature of the lynx population it is difficult to determine a population estimate, however, Alaska Department of Fish and Game biologists expressed that there is no -- there are no indications of any biological concerns at this time.

In Unit 24 the lynx harvest typically fluctuates along with the population cycle, which you can see in Figure 2 on Page 956. This proposal would provide additional harvests opportunity to Federally-qualified subsistence users as the lynx population reaches a super peak stage of the population cycle. This proposal would also align the lynx and wolverine trapping seasons, which would allow Federally-qualified subsistence users to harvest lynx and wolverine in the same trapline and reduce incidental take of lynx out of season.

The OSM conclusion is to support WP18-34, due to there being no indication of conservation concerns pertaining to lynx in Unit 24A.

Thank you, Mr. Chair.

And I'm available for any questions.
MR. SIEKANIEC: Thank you for your comments. Do we have any comments or questions.

(No comments)

MR. SIEKANIEC: Hearing none, let's go to a summary of the public comments.

MR. STEVENSON: Through the Chair, Members of the Board, this is Zach Stevenson, subsistence Council coordinator for both the Western Interior and Northwest Arctic regions.

There were no written public comments received for Wildlife Proposal 18-34. I do want to point out that the Council felt that this proposal would provide increased subsistence opportunity for users within the Western Interior region and did not present any conservation concerns.

Thank you, Mr. Chair.

MR. SIEKANIEC: Thank you. Any questions on the public comments.

(No comments)

MR. SIEKANIEC: Nothing there.

Welcome back, Mr. Chair, you're opening the floor to public testimony.

CHAIRMAN CHRISTIANSON: Thank you. The floor is open for public testimony.

(No comments)

CHAIRMAN CHRISTIANSON: Hearing none, on the phone.

(No comments)

CHAIRMAN CHRISTIANSON: Everybody's home already.

Regional Council recommendation.

MR. REAKOFF: Mr. Chairman. Western Interior Regional Advisory Council supported the
proposal for Unit 24A for lynx season extension.

The Council supported the proposal reflecting that there will be increased opportunity, there will be no conservation concern and that the fur is still in good condition in March. In fact, it's much better than the fur in November when the season opens. We used to have a lynx season that went through the end of March, then the fur prices went up over $500 a lynx and then there was conservation concerns when there was lots of trapping pressure. There's currently low fur prices and there's going to be lots of lynx under harvested, so that's why I submitted the proposal. The Council supported the proposal.

Thank you.

MR. WOODRUFF: Eastern Interior took up this proposal and the Council noted that lynx population cycles follow the hare cycles and that lynx taken in March have the best fur. Also the Council noted that aligning the lynx and wolverine season in 24A will make it less confusing for the users and will allow trappers to keep lynx caught incidentally in wolverine sets.

Finally, the Council recognized that there's no biological concern pertaining to lynx in 24A.

Thank you.

CHAIRMAN CHRISTIANSON: Thank you two for that, appreciate that.

Tribal, Alaska Native Corp., Native Liaison.

MR. LIND: Thank you, Mr. Chair. Board members. Again, during September 7 consultation there was no further discussion on 18-34.

CHAIRMAN CHRISTIANSON: Thank you.

Alaska Department of Fish and Game comments.

MR. BUTLER: Thank you, Mr. Chair.

Members of the Board.

The Department's changing its
recommendation on this to being neutral. We recognize
that there's no biological concern for the lynx
population if this proposal is adopted and it's likely
to result in minimal additional harvest. We do
recognize, though, that it complicates regulations in
the area and if it's adopted we recommend a similar
proposal be submitted to the Board of Game to get
things aligned again in the area.

Thank you.

CHAIRMAN CHRISTIANSON: Thank you.
That brings that to a consensus.

ISC.

MS. HARDIN: Mr. Chair. The
InterAgency Staff Committee made the standard comment
for WP18-34.

CHAIRMAN CHRISTIANSON: I like how
we're all still happy at our job at the end of the day.

(Laughter)

CHAIRMAN CHRISTIANSON: Board
discussion with Council Chairs and State liaison.

(No comments)

CHAIRMAN CHRISTIANSON: I think we're
discussed out. That opens it up here for Board action.

MS. MOURITSEN: Mr. Chair, I'd like to
make a motion. I move to adopt Wildlife Proposal 18-
34, the extension of the lynx trapping season in Unit
24A as shown on Page 949 in the meeting book. If I get
a second to the motion I will speak in support of it.

MS. FROST: Second.

MR. POLACCA: Second.

CHAIRMAN CHRISTIANSON: The floor is
yours Karen.

MS. MOURITSEN: Thank you. First, I
want to note the two RACs have supported this proposal,
the Eastern Interior and Western Interior RAC, and also
OSM is supporting this and also ADF&G has indicated that they did not identify any biological concerns for the lynx population in Unit 24A because they think that it'll be minimal additional harvest. I understand that the State had a tiny bit of concern about the proposals misalignment of trapping seasons between the Federal and State trapping seasons but they're not opposing for that reason anymore.

And then I do note, that, even given that, this change will benefit the subsistence users who trap those lynx and wolverine in Unit 24A. On average 17 lynx are taken each year in Unit 24A by trappers and hunters typically in small isolated areas of the unit that have better access. The majority of Unit 24A receives little or no hunting or trapping pressure for lynx.

Thanks.

CHAIRMAN CHRISTIANSON: Thank you. Any Board discussion.

(No comments)

CHAIRMAN CHRISTIANSON: Call for the question.

MR. OWEN: Question.

CHAIRMAN CHRISTIANSON: Question's been called. Read into the record the motion.

MR. DOOLITTLE: The last motion of the day, Wildlife Proposal 18-34. Motion, adopt Proposal WP18-34, extension of the lynx trapping season in Unit 24A as shown on Page 949 in the meeting book.

CHAIRMAN CHRISTIANSON: All those in favor signify by saying aye.

IN UNISON: Aye.

CHAIRMAN CHRISTIANSON: Opposed, same sign.

(No opposing votes)
CHAIRMAN CHRISTIANSON: Motion carries unanimously.

Thank you.

And I truly appreciate the patience and all the hard work that went into today and pushing the buttons and getting us to start expediting the process there a little bit. But, again, remind everybody here we're here for the public and this is the one shot wonder we have to listen to the people we serve, so, definitely appreciate the patience by everyone.

See you in the morning, 8:30.

(Off record)

(PROCEEDINGS TO BE CONTINUED)
CERTIFICATE

UNITED STATES OF AMERICA

STATE OF ALASKA

I, Salena A. Hile, Notary Public in and for the state of Alaska and reporter of Computer Matrix Court Reporters, LLC, do hereby certify:

THAT the foregoing, Pages through contain a full, true and correct Transcript of the FEDERAL SUBSISTENCE BOARD MEETING, VOLUME III taken electronically by our firm on the 12th day of April 2018 in Anchorage, Alaska;

THAT the transcript is a true and correct transcript requested to be transcribed and thereafter transcribed by under my direction and reduced to print to the best of our knowledge and ability;

THAT I am not an employee, attorney, or party interested in any way in this action.

DATED at Anchorage, Alaska, this 20th day of April 2018.

Salena A. Hile
Notary Public, State of Alaska
My Commission Expires: 09/16/18