

FEDERAL SUBSISTENCE BOARD

PUBLIC REGULATORY MEETING

VOLUME IV

EGAN Convention Center
ANCHORAGE, ALASKA

April 13, 2018
8:30 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/Thomas Whitford, U.S. Forest Service

Ken Lord, Solicitor's Office

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1 P R O C E E D I N G S

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(Anchorage, Alaska - 4/13/2018)

4

5

(On record)

6

7

CHAIRMAN CHRISTIANSON: All right.

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We'll get started this morning with the first

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announcement. Don't forget RAC Chairs and Board

10

members to vote on the art. We need that by lunch

11

today, so please appreciate the art back here and put

12

your vote on it.

13

14

MR. REAKOFF: Mr. Chair.

15

16

CHAIRMAN CHRISTIANSON: Yes.

17

18

MR. REAKOFF: The next proposal up as

19

far as I can tell is WP18-33 and 36. The GASH AC chair

20

is landing in Anchorage and I think that his testimony

21

on this proposal would be instrumental in the

22

deliberation of this proposal, so I would suggest that

23

we put this to the side until we get further testimony

24

because that was instrumental in the Western Interior's

25

deliberation of the proposal. If we could do that.

26

27

CHAIRMAN CHRISTIANSON: We'll see where

28

we're at, but I don't see why we shouldn't be able to.

29

It might take us time to get to the proposal here.

30

31

MR. REAKOFF: Okay.

32

33

CHAIRMAN CHRISTIANSON: We'll also be

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removing number 12 from the agenda. A presentation was

35

going to be made that is no longer going to be on the

36

agenda, so number 12.

37

38

So now we're going to just open up the

39

floor for non-agenda public comments. At this time if

40

you want to come up and speak to non-agenda item, the

41

floor is open.

42

43

MS. HOSETH: Good morning, Mr.

44

Chairman. Members of the Board. My name is Gayla

45

Hoseth and I'm representing the Curyung Tribal Council.

46

I'm not sure if I'm out of order to talk about

47

non-agenda items, but I just wanted to talk about the

48

action that was taken on WP-24 and how our subsistence

49

way of life conflicts with the regulations of 50 CFR 36

50

1 and if there's anything that we could do to change this
2 so that this is recognized in this law so that this law
3 doesn't hinder our people living our subsistence way of
4 life.

5
6 If you could hear the story of what
7 really happened in this incident. Mr. Nukwak wasn't
8 able to give his full testimony of his whole story and
9 he's coming down here because he was wanting to testify
10 and he's on his way here.

11
12 But the whole story and what happened
13 and the incidents that happened with testimony
14 yesterday just brought back the emotional stuff that
15 goes along with this of being treated like criminals on
16 our own land hunting our own traditional ways of life.
17 This needs to stop. It needs to not happen anymore.

18
19 So I was just wanting to know -- I
20 don't mean to get emotional, but it is very emotional.
21 What could we do here at this meeting? If it needs to
22 be a congressional delegation letter to Congressman Don
23 Young to have this changed in the code so that our ways
24 are recognized so that we're not bound by regulations.

25
26 CHAIRMAN CHRISTIANSON: Thank you for
27 that. Yeah, it is unfortunate the way it went. Oh,
28 he's coming in the door here now too. You're on the
29 mic, Ken. Good morning. I'm hoping I can get one of
30 the Federal guys up here to give you the process that
31 it would take to start the ball rolling on changing a
32 CFR.

33
34 MR. NUKWAK: Good morning. Thank you
35 for voting on my proposal yesterday. I mean it was very
36 close. I didn't expect it to be close. 4-4. That was
37 very good and I didn't expect it to pass on the first
38 round. This is only the first round and my first time.
39 If only you four would realize what it's like to be in
40 my shoes as a Native.

41
42 I am a genuine Alaska Native hunter. I
43 live off the land directly. Directly from the land.
44 My method of hunting is taught down from my dad and
45 from his dad and from my grandfather's dad on down
46 through the generations. Yet this 50 CFR 36, is it, is
47 choking up my way of life.

48
49 As we heard one of our peers from the
50

1 RAC committee I believe, I thought we were the only
2 ones within our region that do follow the caribou. I
3 thank him for testifying and letting me know that we
4 are not the only ones that do that. That day when I
5 got cited I did not try to be horrible. The word
6 egregious has two meanings to it to my understanding.
7 It can be a good word or it can be a bad word. The
8 person that used the word egregious has to let herself
9 known if she meant it to be good or bad. Yet I still
10 have a forgiving heart.

11
12 The old Kenneth he died a long time
13 ago. I've been sober for over 23 years and the days
14 are still counting. I would like to die the day I die
15 to be sober and show myself as an example to my people
16 and anybody that would like to sober up. To my
17 children and to my grandchildren. I have one
18 grandchild and there will be more. I hope your
19 grandchildren and my grandchildren they meet in the
20 future and they will work together as one where we are
21 trying to meet as one and yet our differences prevent
22 us from doing that.

23
24 What I have been taught is be
25 forgiving. If I get a citation, I try not to talk back
26 as much as I can, but that will still tick me off.
27 Anybody will get -- I hate to use the word pissed off.
28 Upset, the word upset and the word disappointed, yes, I
29 was that. I was upset and I was disappointed. I think
30 those two words are the proper words I will use that I
31 tried to use that day. I think this was in 2012, I
32 believe. So I've been on a long journey. I never
33 forgot that day.

34
35 It was behind Igushik fish camp,
36 Tunuing River. Tunuing means behind Igushik. Those
37 lands on the Nushagak Peninsula I know the names to
38 those and I know the names to the mountains, Yup'ik
39 names to the mountains, yet on the map they are named
40 -- some of them are named in English. These are the
41 names I have been given down to me. Even from my
42 grandfather, who is still alive today and he's nearly
43 95 years old. I paid him a visit back in February and
44 gave me the names to the places at the Nushagak
45 Peninsula. Tunuing River, Tuklung River. Why their
46 names are there. What they mean. (In Yup'ik).

47
48 I think I opened up a can of worms kind
49 of on our way of life that 50 CFR 36 is choking up our
50

1 way of life. It is in direct conflict with Title VIII
2 to my understanding. That isn't my opinion. Let us
3 sit down at the table and figure out a way to work on
4 that. I heard from up there, one of the Board members,
5 that it will not be changed. It can be changed. There
6 are ways to change it. It may take years, it may take
7 30 days, but it can be changed.
8

9 I might be the only one that got cited,
10 one or three when it was mentioned by the person that
11 was on the teleconference, and I thank God for that
12 number. Most of the hunters I know from Manokotak even
13 if I tell them not to follow the caribou or chase them
14 down they're already off. They're already off on the
15 snowmachine because that's the only thing they know how
16 and I fear for them. These are my brothers. These are
17 my friends, my cousins, my uncles, my great-uncles.
18 Even the people that are in their late 70s, early 80s,
19 that's the only practice they know.
20

21 This system is choking us up, choking
22 up our way of life, trying to put food on the table.
23 All animals they are wild. We know that. They see you
24 hunting. They know you are hunting them. Even a fish
25 salmon in the water will not even come close to your
26 feet. Not even six feet from you. They won't have you
27 touch them. The fish will not have you touch it in the
28 water. A moose will not have you touch him here in the
29 city. They're wild. If you try to touch that animal,
30 their self-defense mechanism will kick in.
31

32 Also I'd like to, since I'm here, on
33 WP18-25 and 26, before you guys get there, because I'm
34 the author of those two also and they're controversial.
35 I would like to pull them off. For the record, I would
36 like to ask who the Board of Game director is so that I
37 could have a word with him.
38

39 Before I put up the proposal there
40 wasn't a lot of wolves. Within a year or two that
41 number went up real fast. Just this year alone we've
42 seen a lot of wolf tracks because the Tuklung Mountain,
43 to the knowledge I was given, the Tuklung Mountain
44 female and the Sugtutlik Mountain male they merged
45 together and they're canine. We know that. Canine. My
46 miniature Schnauzer has six pups twice in a year. I
47 assume that the wolves will probably do that if they
48 don't have pups only in the springtime.
49
50

1 There doesn't have to be a worry about
2 depleting the wolves. Even if you try to deplete the
3 wolves, even if you wipe them all out, they will come
4 back. Their number always comes back. You also have
5 to realize that you have to put the word control in
6 there, predation control in there. Help the caribou
7 replenish successfully. Help the moose replenish
8 successfully.
9

10 Because in February I had a word with a
11 State biologist in Dillingham. The calf survival rate,
12 the number was miserably low. Only 12 percent survival
13 rate on the calves because of the wolf population. On
14 top of that the bears. The bears are eating the calves
15 in the springtime just when they're a week or two or
16 three weeks. This is the experience I am bringing to
17 you on the table from where I come from, from the
18 hunting grounds, because I see them firsthand. I live
19 it. I live in that area. It will probably be the same
20 throughout the whole state of Alaska.
21

22 Help us control the predators. Help us
23 control them. Talk with the State, you as Federal
24 Subsistence Board members and RAC. Find a way to keep
25 their numbers down because we are competing against the
26 wolf. We are competing against the bears. The very
27 animals that you represent. If there was a bear who
28 came out of a den, if there was a wolf -- I'm making up
29 the animation. If they came here, they would talk
30 against my words in an animated world. So I can only
31 imagine the Chairman imagining it.
32

33 (Laughter)
34

35 MR. NUKWAK: So please smile.
36 Everybody smile at everybody. Every time I sit down
37 right here everybody is so serious, like I'm facing my
38 grandmother when I got into trouble.
39

40 (Laughter)
41

42 MR. NUKWAK: Or my mother for that
43 matter. Once in a while please smile at a Native even
44 if we did something wrong. Smile at us. I'm smiling
45 at you. Even if you didn't pass it, even if you
46 opposed it, you had your reason and I can't change
47 that, but I have to find a way to convince you. I'm
48 here as a Native citizen.
49

50

1 (In Yup'ik). I'm going to have my
2 words at this length because I have shopping to do
3 today. Like we had teachers back then that taught us
4 English and yet I'm still learning today a little bit
5 of words like the word egregious. That's a wonderful
6 word.

7
8 Thank you to the lady and I forgive
9 her, yet I still want to sit at the table with her and
10 try to become one mind.

11
12 CHAIRMAN CHRISTIANSON: Thank you,
13 Kenneth. I really appreciate your words this morning.
14 Good luck with that. I think we should be able to find
15 a process for this CFR to start to recognize the ways
16 that the people hunt.

17
18 Thank you.

19
20 MR. NUKWAK: Thank you.

21
22 CHAIRMAN CHRISTIANSON: And I seen your
23 animation.

24
25 MR. NUKWAK: Oh, yeah. I love these
26 animations. I have a granddaughter that will probably
27 love them by the time she's six years old. I'd like to
28 teach her how to speak Yup'ik because I had to learn
29 how to speak English when I was five or six years old
30 and I thought I would never get to that point and I
31 thought I would never get to that point that my tongue,
32 my second tongue, my English tongue would bring me to
33 this table in front of you as one.

34
35 Yours is Haida. Mine is Yup'ik.
36 Without the English language we would not come to an
37 agreement. Inupiat, Yup'ik, Haida or any other Native
38 language in the state or within Nevada Navajo region
39 down in the Lower 48 where I have a few friends down
40 there.

41
42 Qu yana.

43
44 CHAIRMAN CHRISTIANSON: Yahguudang.
45 That's respect. Don.

46
47 MR. WOODRUFF: Thank you for your
48 heartfelt testimony. On Page 140 under the definitions
49 there's harass, which is very important for this
50

1 particular situation. The first two words means to
2 disturb and I can guarantee you that when I go up above
3 the tree line with my dog team, I'm disturbing the
4 caribou before I even get near them. So I think that
5 part of the definition is completely out of line.
6

7 Thank you.

8
9 CHAIRMAN CHRISTIANSON: Thank you.

10
11 Gayla.

12
13 MS. HOSETH: Thank you, Mr. Chairman.
14 I just wanted to see what we could do here or if
15 there's an action or comments that you guys could make
16 that could help support changing this CFR rule here at
17 the Federal Subsistence Board if we form a working
18 group or we do something to get this done because it
19 needs to be done.
20

21 I'm glad that Kenneth was able to come
22 here and speak. One thing that was left out that is
23 really important is that, you know, the impacts of
24 hunting our traditional ways and being cited and going
25 through what people go through impacts a person
26 emotionally and doesn't make them want to go out and
27 hunt anymore.
28

29 He wasn't able to go and get meat or
30 didn't want to go out again and have meat for that year
31 and that bothers me. That shame and that guilt for
32 doing our ways is not recognized. So if we could form
33 a working group, work on this together, I'd be willing
34 to -- there's a team of us that would be willing to
35 help where we could get something done.
36

37 MR. DOOLITTLE: Gayla, this is Tom
38 Doolittle, Deputy Assistant Regional Director for OSM.
39 I think one of the most important parts of the
40 development in crafting of the letter is to work
41 through your Bristol Bay RAC and working through a
42 committee process through your RAC because then you
43 have a formed entity that again in our office is always
44 advisory to that with the RACs through the support of
45 Council coordination.
46

47 Again, that has a venue to going
48 through the Board and it starts in the field. We're
49 always a bottom up program, so we want to maintain that
50

1 sort of direction with it and I think that that might
2 be a formative direction you may want to start with as
3 a suggestion.

4
5 MS. HOSETH: Okay, thank you for that.
6 Maybe we could do an all-Council meeting with the RACs
7 because this isn't an issue just for Bristol Bay. This
8 is an issue statewide and it's a real concern.

9
10 MR. REAKOFF: Mr. Chairman.

11
12 CHAIRMAN CHRISTIANSON: Jack.

13
14 MR. REAKOFF: I feel as a RAC Chair
15 that all the Regional Councils should be queried this
16 in our fall meeting as to what they feel is appropriate
17 use of boat, snowmobile, ATV in pursuit in hunting and
18 fishing efforts under subsistence regulations. I feel
19 that all Councils should address the issue, come up
20 with what they feel is appropriate.

21
22 Whether it's shooting a caribou
23 swimming across the river, whether it's pursuing a
24 wolf, caribou or wolverine with a snowmobile, these
25 Councils need to be queried as to what they feel is
26 appropriate and customary and traditional uses of those
27 methods and means. These have been here a lot longer
28 than the Federal program. These are customary and
29 traditional practices long before ANILCA law.

30
31 So I feel that the Councils -- that
32 should be on our fall agenda to address those issues
33 and find out what the commonalities are between the
34 Councils and then the Councils can discuss this issue
35 and come up with a regulation change in the
36 definitions. These definitions that we set will be
37 recognized as not violating the CFR regulations. The
38 CFR regulations were promulgated before there were
39 Councils, before there was any meaningful role by
40 subsistence users and customary and traditional uses.

41
42 So I feel that the Councils should
43 address this at our fall meeting.

44
45 I see a lot of shaking heads, Mr.
46 Chair.

47
48 Thank you.

1 CHAIRMAN CHRISTIANSON: Thank you,
2 Jack.

3
4 Louis.

5
6 MR. GREEN: Thank you, Mr. Chair.
7 Speaking to traditional ways of hunting, elders have
8 taught us in the old times when it came to bears -- I'm
9 seeing another trend here like bears. This is with our
10 other animals that we eat and live off of. Bears were
11 pursued to the point they were killed and eliminated
12 back in old times where -- you know, even when the
13 reindeer herders were out there they killed them off.
14 But the State started regulating bear hunts to the
15 point where people were afraid to pull the trigger.
16

17 So what I'm getting at is I'm hearing
18 this with caribou for crying out loud. We're going to
19 be afraid to get in position with a snowmachine if
20 somebody's watching us whether we're going to be
21 considered harassing an animal to the point that it's
22 against the law. This is a real serious item. Like
23 she says, she says it's not just Bristol Bay and I
24 wholeheartedly agree with her and anybody else in this
25 room.
26

27 You can consider what happened with the
28 bear population in this state. We've got to the point
29 where now we've got so many bears we can't get rid of
30 them and they're tearing down our food sources. I just
31 wanted to make that point that here's another trend
32 that we could get to the point we're afraid to pull the
33 trigger because we're doing something wrong out there.
34

35 I follow animals to get them, so I'm no
36 different than anybody else in the room that hunts.
37

38 Thank you, Mr. Chair.

39
40 CHAIRMAN CHRISTIANSON: Della.

41
42 MS. TRUMBLE: Thank you, Mr. Chair.
43 The word harass is interesting when you look at the
44 definition. One of the things I hear from the people
45 from King Cove a lot when they go to Izembek is they
46 feel harassed by the game managers when they're hunting
47 and that in itself -- there's two sides to this.
48

49 The other piece I think that's really
50

1 important and we found happening is when you hire a
2 refuge manager that's from the Lower 48, they have no
3 clue what subsistence means. We've had issues and Greg
4 knows. He's been out there. He was our Refuge Manager
5 many years ago. Thankfully we were able to work with
6 Greg, but that hasn't been the case with a number of
7 Refuge Managers.

8
9 There's a huge education piece I think
10 that's missing here also. There's an issue of respect.
11 There's an issue of respect on both sides. Respect the
12 people that you're working with and those people should
13 respect you. I agree. I think this needs to be taken
14 up with all Councils that we together can come up with
15 something that at least we can live with and move
16 forward.

17
18 CHAIRMAN CHRISTIANSON: Gordon.

19
20 MR. G. BROWER: Yeah, Mr. Chair. I
21 certainly agree with all of the dialogue. I listen to
22 our neighbors in the Northwest Regional RAC and the
23 issues. We have a lot of Federal land in our area.
24 I've heard many different concerns out of Kaktovik
25 around the Refuge lands in that area and their
26 inability to subsist. They would practically have to
27 go back into time and use dog teams and go back to that
28 method to be able to harvest in some cases.

29
30 I think it's a widespread issue and I
31 fear for all of our hunters too on the North Slope. I,
32 myself, I'm not going to say I'm in pursuit. I'm
33 positioning myself and we need -- that's how come that
34 language is trying to come out because there is no way
35 to provide an avenue to tell the enforcement officer
36 otherwise. He's just going to say you harass, you're
37 doing this. We need the tools to say we are
38 positioning ourselves and that I think is a difference
39 to give an even way of expressing ourselves when we're
40 hunting these animals.

41
42 I think it's important to make an
43 across-the-board change. Change that CFR so all Federal
44 lands -- there is no confusion to be able to pursue our
45 endeavors to put food on the table and always be legal
46 to do that.

47
48 Thank you.

1 MR. SHIEDT: I'm just going to use --
2 Enoch here, Attamuk, Northwest Alaska -- as an example.
3 Charles, Robert, you've got to be careful now because
4 you're going to go home and try to harvest whales with
5 a boat. You're going to be chasing them. Are you going
6 to get cited to put a harpoon on that whale so you
7 could feed your community?
8

9 That's what we're trying to say. This
10 is our culture and that's how we do it. So, Charles,
11 be prepared for a citation. They might give you a
12 citation for harvesting whale because you went after it
13 with a boat. It's all the same thing, snowmachine,
14 snowshoes. We all go after them.
15

16 CHAIRMAN CHRISTIANSON: Karen.
17

18 MS. LINNELL: Thank you, Mr. Chair.
19 I'm sorry I missed the discussion yesterday. I got to
20 hear this when I was in Dillingham in February and I
21 got to see the area that they were talking about. It's
22 not the same as in my home where we have hills rolling
23 and we can go behind the hill and come up on the other
24 side to position ourselves.
25

26 This is so flat there's no other
27 avenue. Even if they come out onto that flat those
28 caribou are going to move and it's a huge flat. If we
29 walked it, it would take us a couple days to get -- you
30 know, three, four days to get across through the other
31 side.
32

33 So positioning themselves or
34 positioning that caribou it's going to happen no matter
35 what they do. There's no trees to hide behind.
36 There's nothing. It's so flat. I was glad that I was
37 able to see it to better understand what they're
38 talking about.
39

40 It's different than my home. We can't
41 have this cookie cutter approach when things are so
42 different in all of our territories, all of our lands
43 where we hunt. At my home I can come up -- I can see
44 the caribou and I can go around and come up on the
45 other side if I go behind the hill, if I stay behind
46 the trees. That's what I can do to get to my caribou.
47 You can't do that here.
48

49 I'm really sorry I missed it yesterday
50

1 afternoon, but my brain was shutting down after all the
2 tenseness for the last few days. I really wish that
3 you folks would reconsider. There's been a definition
4 proposed and passed with the State on what positioning
5 means and I think it's a starting point for you folks.

6
7
8 I'm really sorry. That's one of the
9 things that my elder Roy Ewan told us. He said they're
10 regulating us out of our way of life. It's happening
11 and we're fighting tooth and nail to be able to
12 continue our traditional practices. I feel for Kenneth
13 and his ability to pass on to his children the right
14 way to do it. We talked about legalities and being
15 able to get out there. Like I said, as soon as you get
16 out on that flat they're going to start moving.

17
18 Like they were saying, there's a
19 rotation with the agency folks. We get a few that stay
20 for a long time, but you get some newbies and they have
21 that regulation and they don't understand what it's
22 like to live out on that land. The only way they're
23 going to get to know and be able to understand is if
24 they help and go out and try to participate by helping
25 somebody out there to harvest, then they'll understand
26 what it's like.

27
28 Kenneth, I'm sorry I missed yesterday.
29 I just hope that you folks come up with a good solution
30 that will work so that these folks can continue their
31 subsistence way of living.

32
33 Thank you.

34
35 CHAIRMAN CHRISTIANSON: Thank you.

36
37 Louis.

38
39 MR. GREEN: I know it's only a movie,
40 but it portrayed a way of life. I'm sure everybody in
41 this room seen the movie Dances With Wolves.

42
43 CHAIRMAN CHRISTIANSON: No. All right.
44 Thank you guys.

45
46 Appreciate -- Gayla.

47
48 MS. HOSETH: I just have a follow up.
49 Thank you, Karen, for your words and giving that. If
50

1 that is something that the Board could think about or
2 talk about of reconsidering WP18-24, just for what
3 we've talked about here and the explanation and thank
4 you for giving that detailed explanation. It is
5 different. I just feel sorry that we can't hunt the
6 way that we were taught from our ancestors.
7

8 CHAIRMAN CHRISTIANSON: Thank you,
9 Gayla. I think I heard a process here for moving
10 forward with support from all the Regional Advisory
11 Chairs that spoke to it, to bring it back. And also a
12 request here from Jack that this be placed on the
13 agendas so far at least to educate the subsistence
14 users to the words that we need to use to protect
15 ourselves, what the current regulation is, and then
16 maybe form committees at that level to really inundate
17 us with proposals.
18

19 Let's get it on the deck and let's see
20 what we can do to help the subsistence users get their
21 needs met. I think that's what this process is for and
22 why we keep the floor open to talk and discuss and to
23 formulate the plans that we need to come back to
24 this table again and take another run at it.
25

26 Thank you.
27

28 Now I think there was somebody online.
29 Anybody online for non-consensus agenda items.
30

31 (No comments)
32

33 MR. PELTOLA: Thank you, Mr. Chair. We
34 have our representative online standing by for
35 additional comments if you wish to hear them.
36

37 Thank you.
38

39 CHAIRMAN CHRISTIANSON: Yeah, I'm
40 calling for them on the line if they could clear the
41 operator. Could you check with them.
42

43 OPERATOR: Yes, we do have questions
44 online. Dan Dunaway.
45

46 MR. DUNAWAY: Yes, hello. This is Dan
47 Dunaway with the Bristol Bay RAC.
48

49 CHAIRMAN CHRISTIANSON: Yeah, you're
50

1 on, Dan.

2

3 MR. DUNAWAY: Okay. Thank you. I'm a
4 little late into the conversation this morning, but
5 first, speaking for the RAC, with that new development
6 from the Board of Game is why we really wanted to back
7 off from having this 18-24 in the consensus agenda. It
8 really changed our view. But, as has been explained,
9 you're limited legally to what action we could take.

10

11 Now separating that, I want to speak
12 personally. I've been an outspoken opponent of
13 chasing. But again, personally, having that town
14 meeting with the Board of Game, having what I call the
15 real hunters out there like Kenneth, and what I think
16 is very useful language that the Board of Game adopted,
17 I would feel personally much better about going out and
18 hunting and not being concerned that I was violating
19 the law.

20

21 You've heard now from other folks.
22 Gayla. It sounded like Karen from Ahtna speaking. We
23 really want to take this serious and find some way to
24 -- it's not fun to go out hunting and always kind of
25 feel like you're looking over your shoulder. I don't
26 want to make it sound like the nearby Refuge is heavy-
27 handed, but you get into these ambiguous situations
28 like I've personally been in. I'm a real strong
29 advocate for fair chase and all. I really take my
30 reputation serious and I want to be ethical.

31

32 So I think some of the language the
33 Board of Game adopted would be great guidance. I
34 suspect that -- I guess I've got to be careful, but I
35 suspect the whole membership of the Bristol Bay RAC
36 would look at this issue much more differently with
37 this new language that seems to open a reasonable door
38 for reasonable hunting and also protection of the
39 animals.

40

41 Thank you.

42

43 CHAIRMAN CHRISTIANSON: Thank you.

44

45 MS. CARTY: Courtenay Carty.

46

47 CHAIRMAN CHRISTIANSON: Courtenay, go
48 ahead.

49

50

1 MS. CARTY: Good morning, Mr. Chairman.
2 Thank you. For the record, Courtenay Carty, Curyung
3 Tribal Council. I'm glad Dan spoke up and was able to
4 recognize Karen's voice also because I'm texting people
5 in the crowd, is that Karen speaking. It's pretty
6 funny that we can know each other's voices, we've been
7 involved in this so long. But it would be really
8 helpful if people could speak into the record and state
9 their name because not everyone standing by online
10 knows who's talking.

11
12 With that said, I guess I just really
13 want to reiterate either a request for reconsideration
14 -- I mean it's standard parliamentary procedure for
15 boards to be able to reconsider an action that they
16 made within 24 hours standard. The Board of Fish does
17 it all the time. The Board of Game does it. If
18 multiple Board members think that there is pertinent
19 and new information or that information was applied
20 wrong, you can reconsider the decision that you made
21 yesterday. I don't know if you guys need to take a
22 break to figure out if that's something that should be
23 done today, but I would really like to put that clearly
24 in the record that that should be something considered.

25
26 Also, you know, I just have a hard time
27 with trying to understand, as so many people do, even
28 though I have formal education and life experience and
29 work in this field for a decade, is how do the Refuge
30 laws trump the ANILCA laws.

31
32 I don't know how much taken into
33 consideration. (16 USC Ch. 51) ANILCA (Sec.) 3170
34 special access regarding the use of snowmachines for
35 traditional activities and travel, how much that has
36 been -- how much this regulation and the decision that
37 was made yesterday has been viewed through that lens,
38 not just the lens of (50) CFR 36.121.

39
40 So I don't know if there's a way to
41 take some of that into consideration today or not, but
42 moving forward I think we need to really look at which
43 lens we're scrutinizing these regulations under.

44
45 And then if I could just take a quick
46 second to talk about -- everyone is saying this is a
47 traditional hunting practice. Our people were caribou
48 herders. These communities are now on the landscape of
49 permanent settlements after people had to settle

50

1 because their rights to herding were taken away.
2 That's why these caribou are there. They're remnants
3 from ancient herds.
4

5 So for our people in this contemporary
6 way of life and this contemporary modern society to not
7 be able to access our ancestral rights through modern
8 means is crazy. We need to continue working positively
9 towards changing that, you know. There was a point in
10 time where we never used guns and now that's pretty
11 standard practice. Snowmachines should be the same in
12 regards to positioning either caribou or people into
13 the landscape to provide for that reasonable access for
14 subsistence opportunity.
15

16 That's what I have this morning.
17

18 Thank you so much for the opportunity
19 to participate telephonically.
20

21 CHAIRMAN CHRISTIANSON: Thank you,
22 Courtenay for calling in.
23

24 Anybody else on the line?
25

26 OPERATOR: Yes. We have Jeremy
27 Havener.
28

29 MR. HAVENER: Hi, Mr. Chair. My name
30 is Jeremy Havener. I'm the Refuge Subsistence
31 Coordinator out of Galena for Koyukuk/ Nowitna/Innoko.
32 I've been briefed this morning that there's some things
33 coming up for Wildlife Proposals 18-33 and 18-36. I
34 just wanted you to know that I'm working with Ken
35 Chase, who is the chair of the GASH AC, and he was
36 hoping to get on and do public testimony here this
37 morning regarding that proposal. Right now he's in
38 Kotzebue waiting to get on an airplane to Anchorage.
39 So I just wanted to update you on that.
40

41 CHAIRMAN CHRISTIANSON: Thank you.
42

43 OPERATOR: Last we have Susanna Henry.
44

45 MS. HENRY: Good morning.
46

47 CHAIRMAN CHRISTIANSON: Susanna, you
48 have the floor.
49
50

1 MS. HENRY: Good morning. This is
2 Susanna Henry in Dillingham at the Togiak National
3 Wildlife Refuge.
4

5 CHAIRMAN CHRISTIANSON: Good morning.
6

7 MS. HENRY: Can you hear me?
8

9 CHAIRMAN CHRISTIANSON: Yes. You have
10 the floor.
11

12 MS. HENRY: All right. I just wanted
13 to make a comment about yesterday during the testimony
14 for WP18-24 I spoke. I wanted to make sure that
15 everybody understood. We take our role as an agency
16 very seriously for the conservation of wildlife, fish,
17 plants and habitat and I don't want my remarks to have
18 been taken personally. I had no intention to offend
19 anyone. Our intention is just to bring facts to the
20 table surrounding everything about the -- in this case
21 we were talking about caribou and the caribou
22 management of them and the situations that we have
23 there.
24

25 So thank you very much for letting me
26 have a chance to speak again.
27

28 CHAIRMAN CHRISTIANSON: Thank you,
29 Susanna. Anybody else on the line?
30

31 OPERATOR: We're showing no further
32 comments.
33

34 MR. G. BROWER: Mr. Chair.
35

36 CHAIRMAN CHRISTIANSON: It looks like
37 we have a public. Go ahead.
38

39 MR. SIMON: Thank you, Mr. Chair. For
40 the record, my name is Jim Simon. I've worked as an
41 anthropologist for more than 30 years. I'm just
42 presenting my personal testimony.
43

44 One of my first research projects in
45 the Bristol Bay area was a consequence of the U.S. Fish
46 and Wildlife Service's Refuge inappropriate and illegal
47 seizure of the reindeer herd from the herder in Togiak
48 approximately 25 years ago where the herd was condemned
49 to take an ownership by the Fish and Wildlife Service,
50

1 which only the Bureau of Indian Affairs can own
2 reindeer in Alaska and manage reindeer in Alaska. It
3 was done to a Yup'ik elder herder who did not speak
4 English. There was no translator.
5

6 I was part of the necropsy and
7 investigatory team that worked on Hagemeister for the
8 UAF Reindeer Research Program to investigate the cause
9 and document the necropsies given the fact that the
10 Federal rules for airborne hunters to attempt to
11 exterminate the reindeer population on Hagemeister
12 Island, which was a vital subsistence resource for the
13 residents of Togiak.
14

15 Where we necropsied and reviewed
16 approximately 200 young male reindeer that were shot up
17 to five times, their twisted bodies lying throughout
18 Hagemeister Island. There was no regard for the
19 documented harvest and use by many different Togiak
20 residents in the reindeer herder's cabin on the Refuge.
21
22

23 The claim was that those animals were
24 destroying the natural vegetation and had starved to
25 death. The four animals we sacrificed in order to do
26 our nutritional studies had at least an inch of back
27 fat. The animals running across the island looked like
28 pot-bellied pigs they were so fat. They did not starve
29 to death.
30

31 The egregious, outrageous statement
32 made yesterday and just again is very concerning to me
33 for someone who has worked with rural subsistence users
34 for 30 years in Alaska. I support the Federal
35 Subsistence Board's reconsideration of Wildlife
36 Proposal 18-24.
37

38 I support Bristol Bay Native
39 Association's request to have all the RACs engaged in
40 some sort of committee process to deal with the
41 incongruencies in Federal regulations between the
42 subsistence law, which, if I remember correctly, is an
43 Act of Congress, not a regulatory promulgation
44 procedure within the Department of Interior.
45

46 I hope that the Native liaisons for all
47 of your various agencies might learn a lesson here
48 about the kinds of cross-cultural communication and
49 cultural sensitivity training that the leaders that you
50

1 import, who know nothing about our way of life here,
2 need.

3
4 Because if this isn't a blatant example
5 of what rural people, including myself -- I'm from the
6 Copper River Basin -- have been dealing with for
7 generations of Federal overreach and is that really the
8 kind of record you want to build about how you are
9 fulfilling the Federal trust obligation to tribes. Is
10 that really how the U.S. government should treat Native
11 people from Federally recognized tribes in this venue.

12
13 Thank you.

14
15 CHAIRMAN CHRISTIANSON: I think right
16 now we do have a process that we can speak to about
17 that reconsideration. I'll let Tom do that.

18
19 MR. DOOLITTLE: This is Tom Doolittle,
20 Deputy Assistant Regional Director. If you go on our
21 website, you'll see a process for the reconsideration
22 of decisions of the Board. You can work with our
23 staff. You can work with respective individuals both
24 for meeting the concerns for Gayla and Courtenay that
25 were brought up and the gentleman that just last spoke.

26
27
28 So there is a process that entities,
29 when there's a decision that an entity may disagree
30 with the Board's decision on, can bring it forward
31 through a process. So please work with our staff.
32 That's part of what we do at OSM.

33
34 Thank you.

35
36 CHAIRMAN CHRISTIANSON: Carl.

37
38 MR. JOHNSON: Thank you, Mr. Chair.
39 Good morning, everyone. Carl Johnson, Office of
40 Subsistence Management. If the Board were to consider
41 the request that's been made here today, which for the
42 Board at this meeting to do a motion for
43 reconsideration to reconsider its decision yesterday,
44 under Robert's Rules it has to come from a person who
45 was in the winning vote and in this case it was a tie
46 vote, so the motion failed. So those who voted no on
47 the motion would be the only ones who could bring a
48 motion for reconsideration.

1 Thank you, Mr. Chair.

2
3 CHAIRMAN CHRISTIANSON: Thank you.
4 Does that conclude the non-consensus testimony this
5 morning? Your consensus. First on the consensus part.
6

7 MR. G. BROWER: Yeah, this is something
8 that's not on the agenda and I just wanted to express
9 some concerns and this is the other spectrum of the
10 competing users to subsistence activities. I would
11 really like to invite maybe the Chair.
12

13 Up in the Arctic we're having herrings
14 up there of a non-resident activities and violations
15 that -- because we're an organized area up in the
16 Arctic with the North Slope Borough we get to conduct
17 enforcement actions on those other stuff that are not
18 subsistence. The guides, transporters.
19

20 We see these things and conduct
21 enforcement actions of non-reporting, hunting outside
22 of concession areas without prior notification and
23 trespassing on other lands. These are some of the
24 issues that we are dealing with in the Arctic.
25

26 One of the other things during a public
27 hearing about caribou that was conducted by OSM for you
28 all issues about monitoring. For instance we had --
29 and you can go and look at the record that was recorded
30 -- ADF&G reporting in the amount of non-subsistence
31 users to be very minimal. Had the smallest, maybe even
32 12.
33

34 And then another user, a veteran, that
35 seems to have the most rights of everybody else, so
36 those with post-traumatic stress syndrome use the very
37 hunting grounds to use it in a way as therapy. He
38 said, and it's in the record, that he represents over
39 2,000 veterans that come up and do this.
40

41 It seems to me there is a very, very
42 heavy disparity between how the monitoring of ADF&G
43 goes up in the Arctic and what people are actually
44 saying and hunting and leads to some of the issues
45 about why there was major decline in herds under
46 expression of the use and utilization of these
47 resources.
48

49 I just wanted to bring those out.
50

1 You're very welcome to come to the Planning Commission
2 on the 29th, an appeal from these activities that are
3 going on up in the Arctic, some of them with as much as
4 \$75,000 in fines. We're dealing with these kind of
5 things of the other users.

6
7 Thank you.

8
9 CHAIRMAN CHRISTIANSON: Thank you.

10
11 Greg.

12
13 MR. SIEKANIEC: Thank you, Mr. Chair.
14 Greg Siekaniec, Fish and Wildlife Service. One, I want
15 to say thank you to everyone here for the very
16 heartfelt and emotional testimony that's been provided
17 this morning. I think I really want to take a moment
18 to speak to Mr. Nukwak and thank you very much for
19 coming to the table here.

20
21 On behalf of the Fish and Wildlife
22 Service I certainly want to apologize for yesterday's
23 comments that were directed towards egregious type
24 behavior when our role here is really to speak to the
25 proposal that is on the table, not to rehash past
26 things. So, on my behalf, I want to certainly say --
27 extend an apology on that.

28
29 I think you summed it up very
30 appropriately when you said we're at our best when
31 we're at the table, when we have an ability to have a
32 meaningful dialogue, we have a dialogue based on
33 respect for each other and the jobs that we have to do
34 and I look forward to that. I think a lot of
35 information has come forward.

36
37 I expressed yesterday many, many times
38 the concern I have over creating all of the confusion
39 around this issue, all of the inconsistencies around
40 this issue, all the ambiguities that have cropped up
41 around this issue, that if there's an opportunity for
42 us to come together to clarify this and whether it's
43 around what the State has come up with, I think that's
44 the kind of open dialogue we need to have in order to
45 figure out where we need to be.

46
47 So again my apologies and thank you
48 very much for your communications this morning
49 addressing this group.

50

1 Thank you.

2

3 CHAIRMAN CHRISTIANSON: Thank you for
4 that, Greg. I think that concludes the non-consensus
5 agenda. Now we open the floor for the consensus agenda
6 items and I'll call on Mark Richards.

7

8 MR. RICHARDS: Thank you, Mr. Chairman.
9 Good morning to members of the Board, Council Chairs
10 and Agency Staff. My name is Mark Richards. I'm the
11 executive director of Resident Hunters of Alaska and
12 I'll be representing our 1,500 members today in
13 respectful opposition to Wildlife Proposal 18-57. I
14 apologize that I couldn't do this in order. My flight
15 leaves at around 2:00, so I wasn't sure if you were
16 going to get to it by then.

17

18 A little bit about our organization.
19 We're focused on a sustainable wildlife management
20 policy grounded in resident hunting priority for all
21 Alaskans no matter where they live or how or why they
22 hunt.

23

24 I want to begin by pointing out that it
25 was the Resident Hunters of Alaska proposal to the
26 Board of Game in 2016 that led to the reduced seasons
27 and bag limits for the Central Arctic Herd for all. We
28 submitted that proposal in late April before the summer
29 photo census by the Alaska Department of Fish and Game
30 that showed that the Central Arctic Herd had declined
31 by nearly half. Many of our members, myself included,
32 have hunted caribou on Federal lands within the Arctic
33 National Wildlife Refuge for a long time and we depend
34 on the Central Arctic Herd to fill our freezers and to
35 feed our families.

36

37 The changes we were seeing, the
38 shifting migration patterns, less animals, is what led
39 us to propose hunting restrictions, most importantly
40 restrictions on cow harvest. It wasn't easy to ask for
41 these restrictions on our own membership and other
42 hunters, but conservation and sustainability of our
43 wildlife resources always comes first if we want to
44 have future hunting opportunities.

45

46 Overall, since those new restrictions
47 were put in place for the Central Arctic Herd, harvests
48 have been well under the allowable 680 caribou. This
49 past fall, 2017, 181 caribou were taken in Unit 26B,

50

1 approximately 100 taken in 26A, with another 50 caribou
2 expected to be harvested in 26B this spring.

3
4 We firmly believe that the reduced
5 seasons and bag limits implemented by the Board of Game
6 in 2016 are helping to stabilize the Central Arctic
7 Herd, allow for growth and that more time will help
8 confirm this view.

9
10 As I mentioned, our organization is
11 focused on a resident hunting priority. In our
12 proposal to the Board of Game that asked for
13 restrictions, we asked that out of state non-resident
14 hunters bear the burden of the new restrictions for the
15 Central Arctic Herd and be allowed to take no more than
16 10 percent of the harvest.

17
18 The Board of Game, however, imposed no
19 limits on out of state non-resident hunters and
20 harvest. This past fall out of state non-resident
21 caribou hunters took the majority of the harvest in
22 26B. We have been trying to communicate to the RACs
23 that using the Federal subsistence process instead of
24 the State Board of Game process to restrict or
25 eliminate non-Federally qualified users results in
26 Alaskan residents as well as somebody from Florida or
27 Spain being equally restricted.

28
29 Many Alaskans, for whatever reason,
30 that moved away from the region where they were
31 Federally qualified to hunt on Fed lands, myself
32 included, are now considered non-locals. These
33 closure requests affect them as well as someone from
34 out of state. That just doesn't seem right.

35
36 In the case of the Central Arctic Herd,
37 if any RAC has an issue with non-local, non-Federally
38 qualified harvest, we respectfully request that they
39 look at the harvest data to determine whether it would
40 be better to go through the Board of Game process and
41 propose to restrict out of state non-resident hunters
42 rather than use the Fed process to also restrict your
43 fellow Alaskans who are also trying to put food on the
44 table.

45
46 In closing, even though out of state
47 non-resident hunters now take the majority of the
48 Central Arctic Herd harvest in Unit 26B, the overall
49 harvest levels are still well below the new allowable
50

1 harvest of 680 caribou, the population is stable or
2 increasing, and there is no need at this time to
3 further reduce or eliminate harvest by non-Federally
4 qualified users.

5
6 Thank you very much for the opportunity
7 to comment.

8
9 CHAIRMAN CHRISTIANSON: Thank you,
10 Mark. Any questions for Mark.

11
12 (No comments)

13
14 CHAIRMAN CHRISTIANSON: Thank you,
15 Mark, for your testimony. Next we have Nissa.

16
17 Oh, no. Any other consensus agenda
18 comments.

19
20 (No comments)

21
22 CHAIRMAN CHRISTIANSON: All right.
23 Let's get a quick drink of water and we're going to
24 come back and start on wildlife proposals. A real five
25 minute.

26
27 (Off record)

28
29 (On record)

30
31 CHAIRMAN CHRISTIANSON: All right.
32 Before we get started with proposals Carl wanted to
33 make a quick statement into the record.

34
35 MR. JOHNSON: Thank you, Mr. Chair.
36 Carl Johnson again with OSM. So when I earlier was
37 mentioning to the Board on what Robert's Rules says
38 about a motion for reconsideration, the rules on motion
39 for reconsideration say only a prevailing party can
40 bring a motion for reconsideration.

41
42 In this case it's a tie vote and it's
43 not clear explicitly from how you interpret a
44 prevailing party in that case because it was a
45 procedural win, not a win on the vote. So on the one
46 hand you could say it's possible that anybody could
47 bring a motion for reconsideration.

48
49 In reviewing some Robert's Rules forums

50

1 where people can ask questions and get answers from
2 supposed Robert's Rules experts, those indicate that in
3 a tie vote those who voted no are the prevailing party.
4 So it's kind of not clear, as clear as I said it was
5 earlier, so it's hard to say with certainty who could
6 bring a motion for reconsideration.

7

8 I just want to bring that to the Chair
9 and the Board's attention.

10

11 CHAIRMAN CHRISTIANSON: Thank you for
12 the clarification, Carl. The one thing I know through
13 our process with a certainty is they could put it in
14 writing in a letter to the Board to request a
15 reconsideration on that proposal. That is one clear
16 process I know that we can pass to the public today in
17 light of that.

18

19 MR. JOHNSON: Certainly, Mr. Chair.
20 That's what Mr. Doolittle was referencing earlier, our
21 RFR process.

22

23 CHAIRMAN CHRISTIANSON: Thank you,
24 Carl, for that clarification.

25

26 MS. PITKA: So just to be clear that
27 means that if I voted to support a proposal yesterday
28 and it failed based on that procedure, then I could
29 then make a motion to reconsider.

30

31 MR. JOHNSON: Yes. Through the Chair,
32 Member Pitka. Certainly -- because one reading of the
33 rules suggests that the prevailing party status is
34 determined based on a substantive result of the vote.
35 So, in this case, like a 5-3 vote -- or a 3-5, excuse
36 me, if there were three yeas and five nays, then the
37 nays would be clearly the prevailing party there or
38 vice versa. So that's one interpretation.

39

40 Another interpretation is neither party
41 prevailed on the merits in this case because it was a
42 tie vote and it was only a procedural win as opposed to
43 a substantive win on the discussion. So that
44 interpretation would suggest that a motion for
45 reconsideration could be brought by either side in this
46 discussion, Madam Pitka.

47

48 MS. PITKA: Thank you, Carl.

49

50

1 CHAIRMAN CHRISTIANSON: Before we get
2 started I'd just like to also extend and acknowledge
3 Caron McKee for putting together all the meeting
4 materials. She has nice big books here. They look
5 wonderful and been easy to navigate, so we definitely
6 appreciate that hard work from the Staff.

7

8 (Applause)

9

10 CHAIRMAN CHRISTIANSON: With that we'll
11 start with -- oh, is the guy still flying in from
12 Kotzebue?

13

14 MR. REAKOFF: As far as I know he's
15 stuck on the ground. He was going to try and call in.
16 That's Ken Chase, the chair of the GASH AC.

17

18 CHAIRMAN CHRISTIANSON: Okay. Since
19 he's still on the ground I think we'll proceed with
20 this proposal. Hopefully he can call in.

21

22 MR. STEVENSON: Mr. Chair. Zach
23 Stevenson with Western Interior and Northwest Arctic
24 Regional Advisory Councils. In the event that Mr.
25 Chase is unavailable, I've been informed that he's been
26 on the tarmac for over an hour. We also have Nissa
27 Pilcher with the Alaska Department of Fish and Game on
28 standby via teleconference to address 18-33/36.

29

30 Thank you.

31

32 CHAIRMAN CHRISTIANSON: All right.
33 Let's get started.

34

35 MR. MCKEE: Are we doing 33/36?

36

37 CHAIRMAN CHRISTIANSON: Yes.

38

39 MS. MAAS: Thank you, Mr. Chair.
40 Members of the Board. My name is Lisa Maas. I'm a
41 wildlife biologist in the Office of Subsistence
42 Management. I'll be presenting a summary of the
43 analysis for Wildlife Proposal WP18-33/36, which begins
44 on Page 426 of the meeting book.

45

46 Wildlife Proposal 18-33 was submitted
47 by the Western Interior Council and requests that the
48 Unit 21E moose season be shortened 12 days from August
49 25 to September 30th to September 1st to September

50

1 25th. Wildlife Proposal WP18-36 was submitted by the
2 Grayling, Anvik, Shageluk, Holy Cross Fish and Game
3 Advisory Committee or GASH AC and requests the same
4 season changes as Proposal 33 and also that a State
5 registration permit be required.
6

7 The Western Interior Council states
8 that the proposed season change would reduce regulatory
9 complexity and user confusion by aligning State and
10 Federal moose seasons in Unit 21E. The GASH AC states
11 that the different State and Federal moose seasons and
12 permit requirements leads to user confusion and that
13 the proposed season changes should not affect
14 subsistence use or the moose population. The proponent
15 also notes that a registration permit hunt will provide
16 more accurate harvest information and that few
17 Federally qualified subsistence users hunt during the
18 August season.
19

20 In 2014, the Alaska Board of Game
21 adopted Proposal 60 to require a registration permit
22 for moose in Unit 21E. A harvest ticket is currently
23 required under Federal regulations.
24

25 In 2017, the Board of Game adopted
26 Proposal 76 to change the State moose season in Unit
27 21E to September 1st to September 25th. Proposal 76
28 was submitted by the GASH AC with the intent of
29 aligning State and Federal moose seasons.
30

31 The Unit 21E moose population increased
32 in 2016 meeting management objectives. The bull:cow
33 ratio is high and well above State management
34 objectives. The calf:cow ratio has been above or
35 within management objectives. Browse surveys and
36 twinning rates indicate that habitat is not limiting
37 this moose population.
38

39 Moose are an important subsistence
40 resource for local communities evidenced by the vast
41 majority of local households using moose in a given
42 year. Over the last 25 years reported moose harvest
43 has averaged 147 moose per year; however, many
44 harvested moose are not reported.
45

46 The Yukon-Innoko Moose Management Plan
47 estimated the total Unit 21E moose harvest as 340
48 moose, which is still within management objectives.
49 Reporting rates improved dramatically in 2014 when the
50

1 State required registration permits. Seventy-two
2 percent of reported moose harvest has occurred in
3 mid-September while only 10 percent occurred in late
4 September.

5
6 Adoption of this proposal would reduce
7 opportunity for Federally qualified subsistence users
8 by shortening the moose season in Unit 21E. While
9 there is no biological reason for this, a shorter
10 season would reduce user confusion and regulatory
11 complexity by aligning State and Federal seasons and
12 reduce law enforcement concerns due to the checkerboard
13 land pattern of land ownership in Unit 21E.

14
15 Additionally, this request came from
16 the Western Interior Council and GASH AC, which
17 represent local subsistence users. Requiring a
18 registration permit would also reduce user confusion by
19 aligning Federal and State reporting requirements and
20 could result in more accurate harvest data. However,
21 concurrence would be needed from the State to allow
22 Federally qualified subsistence users to use a State
23 registration permit.

24
25 The OSM conclusion is to support WP18-
26 36 with modification to clarify the regulatory language
27 for permit requirements during the fall season and to
28 remove the regulatory language referring to permit
29 conditions and season closures for the winter season
30 and delegate authority to set permit conditions and
31 announce season closures for the winter season via a
32 delegation of authority letter only and to take no
33 action on WP18-33.

34
35 Thank you, Mr. Chair. Members of the
36 Board.

37
38 I'd be happy to take any questions.

39
40 CHAIRMAN CHRISTIANSON: Thank you,
41 Lisa. Any questions.

42
43 (No comments)

44
45 CHAIRMAN CHRISTIANSON: Summary of
46 public comment.

47
48 MR. STEVENSON: Zach Stevenson with
49 Western Interior/Northwest Arctic RACs, OSM. Mr.

50

1 Chair, members of the Board, there were no written
2 comments received regarding Wildlife Proposal 18-33/36.

3

4 Thank you.

5

6 CHAIRMAN CHRISTIANSON: I just wanted
7 to make sure everybody got the written letter here
8 though. I'm not sure if we entered that into the
9 record, but we did receive the letter from the three
10 chiefs of that area. So I just wanted to make that
11 note here that we do have it.

12

13 So thank you, Zach.

14

15 MR. STEVENSON: Pardon me, Mr. Chair.
16 For clarification, I have not yet received a copy of
17 that letter that you're referring to.

18

19 Thank you.

20

21 CHAIRMAN CHRISTIANSON: Okay. I'll
22 make sure you get one. With that we open the floor to
23 public testimony.

24

25 (No comments)

26

27 CHAIRMAN CHRISTIANSON: It looks like
28 we have nobody here in the house, but on the phone I
29 think we have somebody. Nissa.

30

31 OPERATOR: One moment, please. Nissa,
32 your line is now open.

33

34 MS. PILCHER: Yes, I am still here.

35

36 CHAIRMAN CHRISTIANSON: You have the
37 floor, Nissa.

38

39 MS. PILCHER: Good morning members of
40 the Board. My name for the record is Nissa Pilcher
41 with the Alaska Department of Fish and Game and I am
42 the coordinator for the Graying, Anvik, Shageluk, Holy
43 Cross Fish and Game Advisory Committee. I know Ken
44 Chase wanted to be there in person to speak to you and
45 while he hasn't specifically said, in our text
46 conversations I know he apologizes for not being there.

47

48 So the intent of the GASH Advisory
49 Committee in submitting this proposal was to align

50

1 State and Federal seasons and permit requirements just
2 for simplification in the attempt to better receive
3 reporting on the moose taken in the area be accurately
4 recorded. So to offer reduced confusion on the users
5 in the area that were participating in the moose hunts.

6
7 Was there any questions to the GASH AC?

8
9 CHAIRMAN CHRISTIANSON: Any questions
10 for Nissa.

11
12 MR. REAKOFF: Mr. Chair.

13
14 CHAIRMAN CHRISTIANSON: Jack.

15
16 MR. REAKOFF: Nissa, do you have the
17 vote record for actions taken by GASH on Proposal 18-33
18 and 36?

19
20 MS. PILCHER: I was a little frazzled
21 this morning, so I wasn't quite prepared to be here,
22 but I do know that from my memory it was a unanimous
23 decision of the committee to support 33 and 36. I do
24 know quorum was met, but I cannot say -- I have yet in
25 my stumblings to find the exact set of minutes so I
26 could say specifically who was in the room.

27
28 MR. REAKOFF: Okay. I would also like
29 to have Ken Chase, if he's on the phone, if you could
30 ask if he's on the phone also.

31
32 MS. PILCHER: I believe he's probably
33 in the air. I've been texting him and haven't been
34 receiving responses, so I believe his flight has
35 subsequently taken off from Kotzebue.

36
37 MR. REAKOFF: Okay. Thank you.

38
39 Thank you, Mr. Chair.

40
41 CHAIRMAN CHRISTIANSON: Thank you,
42 Jack. Any other questions for Nissa.

43
44 (No comments)

45
46 CHAIRMAN CHRISTIANSON: Thank you,
47 Nissa.

48
49 MS. PILCHER: Thank you.

50

1 CHAIRMAN CHRISTIANSON: Any other
2 public testimony in here.

3
4 (No comments)

5
6 CHAIRMAN CHRISTIANSON: Hearing and
7 seeing none. We'll move on to Regional Council
8 recommendation.

9
10 MR. REAKOFF: Mr. Chair. Jack Reakoff,
11 Western Interior Regional Council. I'm trying to
12 clarify for the Board what actually occurred at our
13 Regional Council meeting. The GASH AC submitted a
14 proposal to the Board of Game. That was passed. We
15 were trying to align with what -- and one of our
16 Council members, Shirley Clark, is from Grayling and
17 she actually wanted us to submit a proposal to mirror
18 those State regulations.

19
20 We submitted the proposal, the proposal
21 was deliberated and we had Mr. Chase at -- I don't
22 recall if it was our fall or spring meeting, but I
23 asked him specifically what was the vote by the GASH AC
24 on our proposal WP18-33. He said it was a unanimous
25 vote. Under 805 -- and I carry a Title VIII with me
26 all the time, my dog-eared copy. Title VIII requires
27 the Councils to utilize State Fish and Game Advisory
28 Committees or anybody that has any issue with
29 subsistence. So I'm looking heavily to the advisory
30 committees. So Mr. Chase says that they had unanimous
31 support of the proposal.

32
33 During deliberation I asked over and
34 over. TCC had a representative there. I said do you
35 have comments on this proposal. No comment. None. We
36 have a phone line. I tried to get tribal comments.
37 I'm constantly begging for tribal comments. No comment.
38 We get to this meeting. TCC is down the hall. They
39 got everybody in a tempest in a teapot. Everybody is
40 commenting.

41
42 I'm not discounting that. We had a
43 young lady come over from Grayling, but I want the
44 Board to understand where this advisory council came to
45 supporting this proposal because we did not have all of
46 the local input. So this was a breakdown in tribal
47 input. I've yet to even see the letter that you have.
48 What's the date on that letter?

49
50

1 This is really late in the game for
2 this to happen. So this puts this Council at a
3 disadvantage by not having -- I'm positive that our
4 Council Coordinator and Orville transmitted to those
5 tribal councils this issue.
6

7 You can be rest assured that I will be
8 -- any issue that happens in that area again I will be
9 personally calling those tribal councils and make sure
10 that they're on the phone because I don't want this to
11 happen again.
12

13 The advisory committee voted in support
14 of the proposal. The Regional Council voted in support
15 of the proposal to align the seasons. I looked at the
16 map and the Unit 21E map shows a lot of State land
17 where people are hunting along the Yukon River. That
18 was a major consideration in my deliberation of this
19 proposal.
20

21 We did support the proposal. We did
22 get a lot of comments from people who were opposed to
23 the proposal. I wanted to lay this out for the Board
24 so that it's in your court now. I tried to do as much
25 as I can to get this much input as I could, but it's in
26 your -- you've got a whole bunch of comments in
27 opposition to the proposal.
28

29 Thank you, Mr. Chair.
30

31 CHAIRMAN CHRISTIANSON: Thank you for
32 that explanation, Jack. Appreciate that. Western
33 Interior. YK.
34

35 MS. PATTON: Mr. Chair. Members of the
36 Board. For the record, Eva Patton, Council Coordinator
37 for the YK Delta Subsistence Regional Advisory Council.
38 The Council did review this proposal; however, they
39 took no action on WP18-33 or 36. The Council noted that
40 it had little bearing on their region as they primarily
41 hunt in Unit 18.
42

43 Thank you.
44

45 CHAIRMAN CHRISTIANSON: Thank you, Eva.
46 Any questions for the Chairs.
47

48 (No comments)
49
50

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

3
4 MR. LIND: Thank you, Mr. Chair. Board
5 members. During the consultation held on September
6 7th, there was no discussion about Proposal 33/36.

7
8 Thank you.

9
10 CHAIRMAN CHRISTIANSON: Thank you,
11 Orville. Alaska Department of Fish and Game.

12
13 MR. STEVENSON: Pardon me, Mr. Chair.
14 I just received a message from Nissa Pilcher indicating
15 that she too has not received a copy of the letter that
16 you have a copy of before you from the three chiefs.

17
18 CHAIRMAN CHRISTIANSON: Okay. Yeah.
19 Like I said we just got it handed to us.

20
21 MR. STEVENSON: Thank you.

22
23 CHAIRMAN CHRISTIANSON: So it's fresh.
24 That moves us to ADF&G.

25
26 MR. BURCH: Thank you, Mr. Chair.
27 Members of the Board. For the record, I'm Mark Burch
28 with the Department of Fish and Game. You can find our
29 comments on Page 446 in your book.

30
31 The Alaska Department of Fish and Game
32 supports this proposal. We agree there are no
33 biological concerns. A survey in 2012 estimated the
34 moose density to be 1.1 moose per square mile.
35 Twinning surveys in 2013-14 indicated twinning rates of
36 32 percent.

37
38 Low harvest reporting makes assessing
39 harvest in this area difficult though. That would be
40 improved with the reporting system. Instituting a
41 State-Federal permit would help that and continue the
42 process that was initiated last year.

43
44 So we support this proposal.

45
46 Thank you, sir.

47
48 CHAIRMAN CHRISTIANSON: Thank you.

1 ISC.

2

3 MS. HARDIN: Thank you, Mr. Chair.
4 Members of the Board. For the record again my name is
5 Jennifer Hardin. I'm the subsistence policy
6 coordinator for OSM and the Chair of the InterAgency
7 Staff Committee. The InterAgency Staff Committee
8 provide the standard comment for WP18-33/36.

9

10 Thank you.

11

12 CHAIRMAN CHRISTIANSON: Thank you.
13 Board discussion with Council Chairs and State Liaison.

14

15 Karen.

16

17 MS. MOURITSEN: Thank you, Mr. Chair.
18 I have a question for Mr. Reakoff. I reviewed the
19 materials ahead of time and reviewed all the comments
20 and I could tell that your Council had a lot of
21 discussion about this, but then there were comments
22 about it yesterday in this letter. So now I'm kind of
23 puzzling what to do. We are in this process. We've
24 gone through the process. You went through a process.
25 We had a consultation process. But there are now a lot
26 of different people with comments. So I just wondered
27 if you had any thoughts on what -- if you have a
28 recommendation for us on a process.

29

30 Thank you.

31

32 MR. REAKOFF: Thank you, Member
33 Mouritsen. If I would have had this letter before me,
34 if I'd have had all those comments that were here
35 yesterday before me, it would have highly affected how
36 our Council would have deliberated the proposal. It
37 was a breakdown in the communication with the affected
38 area.

39

40 If I would have gotten these kind of
41 comments during the deliberation, I probably would have
42 failed our own proposal personally because I do not
43 want to violate what local people want if they really,
44 really want that, this current seasons and the way the
45 system is working right now. But I also would have
46 weighed heavily with what the advisory committee's
47 recommendation was. We have a Council member that
48 actually was wanting this regulatory change. She's on
49 that advisory committee and they deliberated that

50

1 proposal.

2

3 So if I'd have had dialogue with the
4 stakeholders, like the chiefs of Grayling, Anvik and
5 Holy Cross, if we'd have been able to dialogue with
6 them on the phone or in person, then we probably -- I'm
7 sure, but I can't speak for the entire Council, but it
8 would have weighted my vote. So that would be my
9 answer.

10

11 Thank you.

12

13 CHAIRMAN CHRISTIANSON: Rhonda.

14

15 MS. PITKA: I'm also a chief of the
16 village of Beaver and at a recent Tanana Chiefs
17 Conference meeting the GASH region submitted a proposal
18 that they were having difficulty getting on the State
19 Advisory Council Board and they wanted us to look into
20 it. But from my knowledge of the State Advisory
21 Council Board the process is that you show up at a
22 meeting and the people there vote you on.

23

24 It hadn't been an issue in my area, but
25 from their discussion they said that a lot of those
26 longtime members on the AC Board make up a proportion
27 of guides in their communities and that they felt like
28 a lot of their local voices were being left out of that
29 discussion. So that's a little bit of discussion on
30 that.

31

32 And then also Chief Ivan Demientieff
33 called in yesterday or the day before -- I'm getting my
34 days blended right now at this point -- and said that
35 the Federal hunt is a way that the local hunters are
36 able to get their moose before the non-local hunters
37 and the guides come in.

38

39 It's kind of strange to me that when we
40 have public comments here and testimony that it's not
41 summarized at the beginning of the analysis. So that
42 seems -- I don't know what that is.

43

44 CHAIRMAN CHRISTIANSON: Lisa.

45

46 MS. MAAS: Thank you, Mr. Chair. I
47 would just like to clarify that Proposal 36 is --
48 there's two issues. One is the harvest -- reduction of
49 harvest season and the other is requiring a State

50

1 registration permit. My recollection is all the public
2 testimony was in opposition to shortening the season,
3 not aligning State and Federal reporting requirements
4 and in 2016 the State issued a joint Federal/State
5 permit even though that's not legally required under
6 Federal regulations. So they're kind of already doing
7 it just to align those reporting requirements. So I
8 just wanted to clarify that there are kind of two
9 different issues here.

10

11 Also I think there is someone that
12 missed the public testimony.

13

14 Thanks.

15

16 CHAIRMAN CHRISTIANSON: Zach.

17

18 MR. STEVENSON: Thank you, Mr. Chair.
19 Zach Stevenson for the record with OSM. I wanted to
20 address a point that was raised just a moment ago. The
21 analyses which are provided for the public in our
22 meeting books do, at the very beginning of each
23 analysis, provide an indication of whether or not
24 public comments were received. In this case, written
25 public comments. To clarify, at the time in which that
26 analysis was received or produced there were no written
27 comments received and that's why you'll see that
28 indicated in your meeting books.

29

30 The public comment letter that I just
31 received about six minutes ago that came into this
32 building dated April 11th was signed by Ivan
33 Demientieff, Robert Walker, Eugene Paul, respectively
34 with the Grayling Tribal Council, Anvik Tribal Council
35 and Holy Cross Tribal Council.

36

37 I, a moment ago, texted those three
38 individuals inviting them to share their perspectives
39 on this issue and I received a text message from Eugene
40 Paul a moment ago, First Chief with Holy Cross Tribal
41 Council, indicating that he's on the teleconference
42 now.

43

44 Thank you, Mr. Chair.

45

46 CHAIRMAN CHRISTIANSON: Somebody's on
47 the phone? Zach.

48

49 MR. STEVENSON: Thank you, Mr. Chair.

50

1 Yes. Again, to clarify, Mr. Eugene Paul I'm informed,
2 First Chief with the Holy Cross Tribal Council, is on
3 the teleconference now.

4

5 Thank you, Mr. Chair.

6

7 CHAIRMAN CHRISTIANSON: Well, we'll
8 entertain listening to him. You have the floor on the
9 phone.

10

11 MR. PAUL: Thank you, Mr. Chairman and
12 Board members. Yeah, I just -- we usually -- I'm
13 sorry. For all of you that don't know me I'm the
14 village tribal chief there. I got elected about two
15 weeks ago. I'm on the AC board now for our local GASH
16 area. I don't know if we get sworn in or not, but,
17 yeah, we are just totally -- we usually get a book from
18 the State of Alaska on the AC Board on the proposals
19 and we have a chance to write our comments and address
20 these things.

21

22 I know the process instead of
23 addressing it now. Respectfully that we didn't receive
24 any proposals in our office there to read and I do
25 apologize. Usually we are on top of things and we just
26 received this proposal two days ago. I had a quick
27 meeting with my tribal council and some of our staff
28 and some public there to address this issue of
29 shortening our Federal subsistence hunts for our local
30 people there in our village.

31

32 A lot of comments came back to me
33 saying that most of our young men and especially our
34 families that are just starting out, we usually utilize
35 this hunt early in the fall of August 25th that a lot
36 of families are right at the end of their season.
37 Their freezers are pretty much depleted.

38

39 I was reading some of the comments and
40 we really utilize this Federal subsistence hunt for our
41 local needs. We're starting out the winter and we
42 really want to get our freezers full again and that was
43 one of our big concerns that this was going to be cut,
44 that we won't be able to put our freezers in a full
45 capacity and early because we're right at the end of
46 season.

47

48 We really look forward to do this
49 Federal subsistence hunt. Like I said, a lot of our
50

1 young families and even our elders really enjoy going
2 out at this time. The moose are really healthy.
3 There's a lot of velvet still on their horns because
4 when you do see that on the bull moose they're really
5 at their prime time. That's when we really utilize our
6 Federal subsistence hunts is during the August hunt.

7
8 I really would consider the Board not
9 to be passing this and reducing our Federal subsistence
10 hunt.

11
12 Thank you.

13
14 CHAIRMAN CHRISTIANSON: Thank you for
15 taking the time to call in. Zach.

16
17 MR. STEVENSON: Thank you. This is
18 Zach Stevenson through the Chair. I just received a
19 message from Ivan Demientieff, First Chief of the
20 Grayling Tribal Council that he too is on the line now.

21
22 Thank you.

23
24 CHAIRMAN CHRISTIANSON: Go ahead, Ivan.
25 You have the floor.

26
27 MR. DEMIENTIEFF: Thank you, Mr. Chair.
28 You know, going back to 18-33 and coming out of
29 Grayling as the First Chief and likewise I had a
30 meeting with my council there and people in Grayling --
31 I'm going to educate you guys a little bit here. We've
32 got to go 60 miles either way to get to good hunting
33 grounds in the fall time.

34
35 Our people have a tough time doing that
36 just by -- you know, we can hunt, but the country is
37 just as it is, unless you're going down towards Holy
38 Cross or in the Innoko. So we really utilize your
39 Federal hunt in August out there to fill our freezers,
40 meet our needs of our people.

41
42 I know firsthand. I help a lot of
43 people in our village that aren't able to go out. That
44 August hunt is very important to especially our elders.
45 The moose are in prime condition then. They're nice and
46 fat, you know. That's just the thing that we look at
47 as the chief. I'm just listening to what my people
48 have to say.

1 In aligning your 18-36 with the
2 permits, I believe there already is a consequence that
3 if we don't fill out our permits and turn them in that
4 we don't get to hunt next year. That's what it clearly
5 states in the paperwork we get.

6
7 I just wanted to really urge the Board
8 to really hear us out. I apologize for not using my
9 tribal consultation rights, you know, as the First
10 Chief of my village and of the council there. Again I
11 want to thank the Board for all you guys do and all
12 your issues that come before us and hope we can all
13 work together to get things good for everybody.

14
15 Thank you.

16
17 CHAIRMAN CHRISTIANSON: Thank you.
18 Zach, you have one more?

19
20 MR. STEVENSON: Yes, through the Chair.
21 We also have Ivan Demientieff although I believe he's
22 already spoken. I just received a message from him
23 that may have come through just a moment ago. I don't
24 know if he wanted to address a further point.

25
26 Thank you, Mr. Chair.

27
28 CHAIRMAN CHRISTIANSON: Ivan, did you
29 have one more point to make?

30
31 MR. DEMIENTIEFF: No, Mr. Chair, at
32 this time. I just really urge the Board in opposing
33 these proposals.

34
35 Thank you.

36
37 CHAIRMAN CHRISTIANSON: Thank you,
38 Ivan, for that.

39
40 MS. MOURITSEN: Mr. Chair. Can I make
41 a comment and a motion.

42
43 CHAIRMAN CHRISTIANSON: Go ahead.

44
45 MS. MOURITSEN: I wanted to say last
46 fall I went to Mr. Reakoff's council meeting and spent
47 most of the day listening. It was very interesting and
48 there was a lot of debate, although I don't think I was
49 there for this proposal. It was some other proposals

50

1 and there were a lot of people there, really good
2 debate.
3

4 I'm usually into the process and we had
5 a process and we went through it, but I feel like in
6 this case since there -- you know, I don't know exactly
7 what happened, but particularly Mr. Paul is new in his
8 First Chief job and I feel like since they had these
9 comments what I would like to do is make a motion to
10 defer this. Is this time to make the motion?
11

12 CHAIRMAN CHRISTIANSON: We're still
13 kind of deliberating right now.
14

15 MS. MOURITSEN: Oh, okay. Sorry. I
16 got ahead of myself.
17

18 CHAIRMAN CHRISTIANSON: Jack. We still
19 have some people who are discussing. So sorry
20 that.....
21

22 MS. MOURITSEN: Oh, sorry. I'm sorry.
23

24 MR. REAKOFF: Thank you, Mr. Chair. If
25 I would have had these kind of comments, I would have
26 failed our own proposal and I feel that the Board has
27 justification to oppose the proposal because of the
28 comments that were received by the public. A lot of
29 public went to a lot of trouble to make these
30 additional comments.
31

32 As a RAC Chair, I feel it would be
33 appropriate for the Federal Subsistence Board to oppose
34 the proposal at this time because of comments from the
35 locally affected people and they feel it would be
36 detrimental to subsistence in opposition to the
37 Council's support of the proposal.
38

39 Thank you, Mr. Chair.
40

41 CHAIRMAN CHRISTIANSON: Thank you,
42 Jack. I have the feeling you want to speak. I'll
43 allow it this time, but I would please ask the public
44 -- I make several announcements to the fact that the
45 floor is open at that time and we are running out of
46 time, so I hate to be that guy to say please listen for
47 those announcements, but at this time I'll allow it.
48

49 MR. SIMON: Thank you very much, Mr.
50

1 Chairman. For the record my name is Jim Simon. I work
2 for Tanana Chiefs Conference, hunting and fishing task
3 force. I'm sorry I missed the call for public
4 comments, but I was in the hall sending the call and
5 information to our chiefs who just called in to
6 testify.

7
8 I'd like to provide some clarity to the
9 process confusion so that you better understand why
10 this is coming at both Jack and the Regional Advisory
11 Council and to you late in the game. One of the
12 recurring issues that many tribes in Interior Alaska
13 face and in particular this year is the fact that these
14 chiefs were attending the statewide Board of Game
15 meeting during the fall RAC meeting time period.

16
17 There is typically also a conflict in
18 your scheduling of RAC meetings that either conflict
19 with TCC's annual convention or other State Board of
20 Game or Board of Fisheries processes. These gentlemen
21 and their staff attempt to keep up with everything as
22 quickly as they can. They're calling from -- they're
23 not even in Alaska right now. They're attending to
24 other business Outside.

25
26 Tanana Chiefs Conference has been
27 working on this issue since at least last August. We
28 have not been fully open because we have been trying to
29 deal with internal process issues more quietly, but I
30 feel at this point in time it's good for you to
31 understand the scheduling conflicts that result in
32 these last minute engagements in tribal consultation.

33
34 We have been -- also a more significant
35 issue which has been occupying our time is the fact
36 that it's very difficult for residents of these four
37 villages to actually know when the Fish and Game
38 Advisory Committee is even meeting. Part of my task
39 based on the comments Chief Pitka made on the record
40 just a moment ago with respect to the full board of
41 director's consideration of Tanana Chiefs Conference
42 staff's directions to help facilitate participation in
43 Fish and Game Advisory Committees and Regional Advisory
44 Council processes.

45
46 A good example is last week when I
47 contacted the Anvik Tribal Council -- no, it was more
48 than a week ago -- to advise them that there was a GASH
49 Advisory Committee meeting scheduled in their village
50

1 and the tribal council office didn't even know that
2 that meeting had been scheduled.

3
4 So we're hoping to work with the GASH
5 Advisory Committee. I have been in regular contacts
6 with the State, Nissa Pilcher, in order to get a
7 handle, advertise meeting schedules of this advisory
8 committee are typically difficult to find and then the
9 meetings are then subsequently cancelled and
10 rescheduled, but no notification is sent of when they
11 are rescheduled.

12
13 Tanana Chiefs Conference is committed
14 to working with the State to start addressing some of
15 these issues and to ensure that they follow the State
16 regulatory procedures on how advisory committees are to
17 operate. That they are supposed to have regular
18 elections and to provide opportunities for at least
19 three stakeholder groups to be represented.

20
21 The Chiefs have requested Tanana Chiefs
22 Conference ensure that the GASH Advisory Committee
23 increases its attention to protecting subsistence uses.
24 With that, I think that provides you enough context of
25 why we are here having this discussion right now.

26
27 Thank you, Mr. Chair.

28
29 CHAIRMAN CHRISTIANSON: Thank you. I
30 think that sums up the testimony on this. I think
31 we've heard from the Chairs, the public and I believe
32 most of the white cards we've heard over the past few
33 days -- remember yesterday a good amount of the public
34 testimony we heard on the record was to this proposal
35 and I believe most of that as well opposed this before
36 they had to travel, so I just wanted to bring that back
37 up as well.

38
39 At this time Federal Board action.

40
41 Confer.

42
43 MR. C. BROWER: Mr. Chair. If I may, I
44 would make a motion to oppose WP18-33 and WP18-36 as
45 requested by the users.

46
47 Thank you.

48
49 MR. POLACCA: Second.

50

1 CHAIRMAN CHRISTIANSON: There's been a
2 motion made and seconded to oppose.

3
4 MR. C. BROWER: Mr. Chair. The
5 rationale is I think -- I don't know. Maybe there was
6 lack of communication or whatever to the tribal members
7 in each community of these respected areas. To get
8 notice at last minute or not on time is pretty hard to
9 digest. These tribal members in these regions and
10 their advisories, whether there's a representation for
11 communication is down or it never been dispersed and
12 these tribal members are finally realizing and they
13 want to oppose this proposal, so I agree with them.

14
15 Thank you.

16
17 CHAIRMAN CHRISTIANSON: Just for matter
18 of process here, Charlie, as the maker of the motion we
19 usually make our motions in the positive and then we
20 justify whether we'll vote them up or down.

21
22 MR. C. BROWER: Thank you.

23
24 CHAIRMAN CHRISTIANSON: So if we can
25 just get a restating of the original motion to the
26 positive and then I would accept your justification as
27 why.

28
29 CHAIRMAN CHRISTIANSON: Thank you.
30 With the concurrence of the second.

31
32 MR. POLACCA: Yes.

33
34 MR. C. BROWER: Mr. Chair. I would
35 move to approve WP18-33 and WP18-36.

36
37 MR. POLACCA: Second.

38
39 CHAIRMAN CHRISTIANSON: Thank you for
40 that correction for the record. Appreciate that.

41
42 MR. C. BROWER: The rationale I had,
43 Mr. Chairman, was what I stated earlier. I think the
44 people within each region have their knowledge and
45 their background of how things happen, so I'm
46 supportive of this, thank you, proposal.

47
48 CHAIRMAN CHRISTIANSON: Any other Board
49 discussion.

50

1 (No comments)

2

3 CHAIRMAN CHRISTIANSON: Call for the
4 question.

5

6 MR. FROST: Question.

7

8 CHAIRMAN CHRISTIANSON: The question
9 has been called. All in favor of the proposal signify
10 by saying aye. Oh, I forgot my process here. We'll
11 read into the record. Sorry.

12

13 MR. DOOLITTLE: I've got to have
14 something to do here.

15

16 (Laughter)

17

18 MR. DOOLITTLE: This is Wildlife
19 Proposal 18-33/36 and the motion on the floor is to
20 approve or adopt WP18-33 and 36. The proposal can be
21 found on Page 426 of the meeting book.

22

23 I'm going to mix it up from yesterday.
24 U.S. Forest Service, Wayne Owen.

25

26 MR. OWEN: Oppose.

27

28 MR. DOOLITTLE: U.S. Fish and Wildlife
29 Service, Greg Siekaniec.

30

31 MR. SIEKANIEC: Oppose.

32

33 MR. DOOLITTLE: BLM, Karen Mouritsen.

34

35 MS. MOURITSEN: Oppose.

36

37 MR. DOOLITTLE: National Park Service,
38 Herbert Frost.

39

40 MR. FROST: Oppose.

41

42 MR. DOOLITTLE: Public member, Rhonda
43 Pitka.

44

45 MS. PITKA: Oppose in defiance of the
46 RAC because it would be detrimental to the satisfaction
47 of subsistence needs.

48

49 MR. DOOLITTLE: Thank you, Member

50

1 Pitka.

2

3 Bureau of Indian Affairs, Lynn Polacca.

4

5 MR. POLACCA: Oppose due to putting a
6 burden on the Federal Subsistence users.

7

8 MR. DOOLITTLE: Public member, Charlie
9 Brower.

10

11 MR. C. BROWER: Oppose.

12

13 MR. DOOLITTLE: Chairman Anthony
14 Christianson.

15

16 CHAIRMAN CHRISTIANSON: Oppose. As
17 stated, it would be detrimental to the subsistence
18 needs.

19

20 MR. DOOLITTLE: Motion failed.

21

22 CHAIRMAN CHRISTIANSON: Thank you guys
23 for that time and deliberation on that. Appreciate the
24 public taking the time to weigh in on that. Thank you
25 to Jack for recognizing that there was some
26 misinformation and a lack of it. That's why we have a
27 Board process is to get it straight. Thank you, guys.

28

29 We'll move on to the next proposal.

30

31 MS. WORKER: Thank you, Mr. Chair. My
32 name is Suzanne Worker. I'm a wildlife biologist with
33 OSM. Next up is WP18-37. This proposal can be found on
34 Page 963 of your Board materials.

35

36 This proposal was submitted by Lance
37 Kronberger of Eagle River and he requests that the
38 Federal public lands closure in the Unit 22A remainder
39 moose hunt area be rescinded September 1st to September
40 30th to coincide with the State's nonresident season.

41

42 A little bit of history will be useful
43 for helping understand how we approach this closure.
44 This lands closure has been in place since 1995 and
45 you'll notice that the pool of eligible users is
46 smaller than the pool of Federally qualified users.

47

48 So all residents of Unit 22 have a
49 customary and traditional use determination, so those

50

1 are the Federally qualified subsistence users, but the
2 closure excludes everyone except residents of Unit 22A.
3 So not all Federally qualified subsistence users are
4 eligible to participate in this hunt.
5 This is because the Board specified this when they
6 initiated the closure, not because an 804 analysis was
7 conducted.

8
9 Biologically, the difficulty with this
10 proposal is that moose surveys haven't occurred in the
11 Unit 22A remainder hunt area and the adjacent moose
12 populations are all very different from one another.

13
14 In central Unit 22A, this is the area
15 that includes the Unalakleet drainage, moose population
16 has grown to an estimated 840 moose. That's about .35
17 moose per square mile. This is an improvement, it has
18 grown, but it's still a relatively low density
19 population. I'll note that the data from this survey
20 area has historically been used to make inferences
21 about the moose abundance throughout Unit 22A, but
22 there are other populations adjacent to the Unit 22A
23 remainder hunt area that we can consider.

24
25 To the southeast in Unit 21E, the moose
26 densities are much higher. They're almost two moose
27 per square mile and to the south they're even higher.
28 In Unit 18 moose densities are approaching five moose
29 per square mile. It's not unlikely that some of those
30 moose are coming up the drainages and over the ridge
31 into Unit 22. So there's mounting evidence that the
32 population in southern Unit 22A is probably growing,
33 but we don't know for sure and we certainly can't
34 quantify that.

35
36 Reported harvest among local users has
37 declined in recent years in Unit 22A remainder, but we
38 do know the reported harvest likely underestimates
39 local harvest and perhaps significantly so.

40
41 The last consideration with regard to
42 harvest is that local residents report hunting
43 primarily in the middle and western portions of the
44 hunt area and this is where most of the Federal land
45 occurs.

46
47 If the lands closure is lifted, moose
48 hunting will be allowed on Federal public lands by all
49 users, which will likely result in additional harvest.

1 It's expected that a certain amount of this would come
2 from increased use of guides and transporters.

3
4 The Fish and Wildlife Service, which
5 manages most of the Federal land in this hunt area
6 permits a single guide, the proponent of this proposal,
7 but they don't limit the number of transporters using
8 the area and the BLM doesn't limit the number of guides
9 that are permitted and they have no permitting
10 requirements for transporters. So there is a potential
11 for increased use of Federal public lands in this area
12 if the closure is rescinded.

13
14 Given our limited understanding of the
15 moose dynamics in the area, there is some uncertainty
16 about what the effects on the population would be.
17 However, it's expected that the population has
18 increased and that it probably can sustain at least
19 some additional harvest.

20
21 The effect on subsistence users is
22 perhaps a little bit more uncertain. The subsistence
23 users concerns appear to be more related to poor access
24 to moose rather than moose on the landscape. So
25 considering the spatial use patterns there is a
26 potential for user conflict to develop as a result of
27 the increased non-local use.

28
29 Given these uncertainties, it may be
30 premature to open Federal public lands to all users
31 prior to opening it to all Federally qualified
32 subsistence users. So just again all residents of Unit
33 22 have C&T, but only residents of Unit 22A are
34 eligible to participate in this hunt.

35
36 The OSM conclusion is to support
37 Proposal WP18-37 with modification to open Federal
38 public lands only to Federally qualified subsistence
39 users. This approach would expand the pool of eligible
40 users to include all residents of Unit 22, but would
41 not include other Alaska residents or nonresidents
42 hunting under State regulation. We think that this
43 represents a step-wise approach to liberalization of
44 this hunt.

45
46 Thank you, Mr. Chair.

47
48 CHAIRMAN CHRISTIANSON: Thank you. Any
49 questions for the Staff.

50

1 (No comments)

2

3 CHAIRMAN CHRISTIANSON: Summary of
4 public comment.

5

6 MS. DEATHERAGE: Thank you, Mr. Chair.
7 Members of the Board. This is Karen Deatherage, Office
8 of Subsistence Management. As of the publication of
9 this book, there were no written public comments on
10 WP18-37.

11

12 Thank you.

13

14 CHAIRMAN CHRISTIANSON: Thank you.
15 We'll open the floor to the public. Any public
16 testimony in the building.

17

18 Lance.

19

20 MR. KRONBERGER: Good morning,
21 Chairman. Board members. I am the author of this
22 proposal. Spend a lot of time out there. I am the
23 concessionaire on the Federal lands and also have a BLM
24 permit in this area. I spend about two months a year
25 on the landscape and have a lot of personal knowledge.

26

27 I just want to go over some of the
28 comments and kind of clarify because there's some stuff
29 that is pretty vague. If you could have the map in
30 front of you, it will help clarify what goes on here.

31

32 In the report it says 22A remainder 50
33 percent of the lands are State. They're already open
34 to guides. So half of the remainder is open to guiding
35 and resident hunters. The other 43 percent is Refuge
36 lands and only 7 percent is BLM. So Refuge lands has
37 an intensive permitting requirement for guides and has
38 a permitting requirement for transporters, so they have
39 a grasp of what's going on in the area.

40

41 OSM also stated how difficult the
42 access is there. This is a very remote spot. They've
43 been trying to survey this area for a long time and
44 because of the access issues Fish and Game has not been
45 able to get an accurate survey of this exact spot.
46 This is also difficult for the local subsistence users
47 to access especially during the fall times when we're
48 out there. Like I said, I spend two months a year out
49 on the landscape personally in a tent. I've never

50

1 bumped into anyone out there.

2

3 I'm sure they access it during the
4 wintertime when they've got snow and freezing
5 conditions, but because of the access the perception
6 that it's going to be overrun with resident hunters and
7 guides is inaccurate. There's no conservation
8 concerns. If you look at the map, the Refuge lands,
9 which is over 90 percent of what is closed -- is around
10 90 percent of what is closed, is right adjacent to Unit
11 18. Five moose per square mile.

12

13 The biologist in Unit 18, who I talked
14 to earlier this week, said they could handle two to
15 three thousand more moose being harvested a year.
16 Matter of fact, the biologist in Unit 18 is worried
17 about a crash. What happens is we're hunting in Unit
18 18. I'm permitted by the Refuge to be the sole guide
19 that hunts the northern part of 18 and those moose walk
20 into 22A remainder and they're free.

21

22 So the moose, as you can see, was being
23 closed in 22A is adjacent to 18. When we start talking
24 about populations that are 150 miles away and saying
25 that's the correlations for the biological number of
26 moose there, we're stretching it. Then, on top of
27 that, the Refuge Manager goes on to state the moose can
28 be found anywhere that there are willows. It's in the
29 OSM report, which is absolutely correct. In that area
30 of the remainder of 22A that is adjacent to 18 is
31 littered with willows.

32

33 That geographic boundary between 18 and
34 22A is rolling hills. There's not a geographic
35 boundary there. It's a watershed divide, but it is low
36 rolling hills. Those moose are not the same moose that
37 are traveling to the Unalakleet River drainage.

38

39 The report also goes on to say that the
40 guides would deplete the population and that guides are
41 looking to expand. Well, the guides can't technically
42 expand into 22A. There's only 7 percent of BLM lands.
43 There's only one concessionaire that can be on Refuge
44 lands. So the expansion is much more difficult. It
45 even states that there are six guides in neighboring
46 units. I don't want to talk about what's going on in
47 neighboring units.

48

49 There are three guys who have BLM

50

1 permits on the southern -- in Unit 22A remainder. One
2 of them only does spring bear. There's two of us. So
3 to expand into 7 percent of what's closed is going to
4 have no effect. So there's not going to be additional
5 moose harvest.
6

7 What is going to happen is you're going
8 to give us the ability to spread out. Going to be able
9 to give us the ability to access lands that aren't
10 accessed by the local subsistence users during that
11 time. Our harvest numbers will be the same. We're
12 just going to be able to spread out. What we've been
13 concentrated on doing is the State selected lands are
14 on the travel corridors and are closer to the Native
15 communities.
16

17 So the guides operating in the area
18 have been condensed where they can operate and lands
19 that are very difficult to access for the local users
20 we are not being able to access. The harvest will stay
21 the same of what we're doing.
22

23 I've been listening to all this
24 testimony here and it's heartfelt that you hear all
25 these areas that are being depleted. This is an area
26 that has come back up. I tried to get this taken up
27 last year because the number of moose is crazy out
28 there. I feel like I'm not seeing any way that we get
29 to the point where, hey, things have come back up, what
30 do we need to do now so that other Alaskans can access
31 some of these lands.
32

33 That's all I have.
34

35 CHAIRMAN CHRISTIANSON: Thank you for
36 taking the time to come and testify today. Any
37 questions.
38

39 Louis.
40

41 MR. GREEN: Thank you, Mr. Chair.
42 Lance, how do you access that? You know, it's
43 difficult.
44

45 MR. KRONBERGER: We access that with a
46 Super Cub. We have aircraft that are set up and then
47 moose hunting in that area is -- you can't land
48 everywhere, so we are well staffed with young guys that
49 like to pack moose meat so that we can get it out. It
50

1 is a tough place, but because of the way we run our
2 operation and the staffing and the employees we have
3 we're able to do a lot of it on foot once we access it.
4

5 MR. GREEN: Through the Chair. Lance,
6 would you say you're condensed there because of the
7 landing opportunities with a Super Cub, your group
8 together?
9

10 MR. KRONBERGER: Through the Chair. We
11 are not condensed because of where we can land. We're
12 condensed because of the status of the land. We only
13 operate right now moose hunts where we can land on
14 State-selected BLM lands. We have landing spots on
15 hard Federal lands, but we're only hunting grizzly
16 bears there.
17

18 MR. GREEN: Thank you, Mr. Chair.
19

20 Thanks, Lance.
21

22 CHAIRMAN CHRISTIANSON: Greg.
23

24 MR. SIEKANIEC: Thank you, Mr. Chair.
25 Thank you for your comment. Could you help me
26 understand a little bit more when you said there will
27 be no additional harvest. Is that because your permit
28 requires you to stay within X number of people that you
29 have on the land?
30

31 MR. KRONBERGER: My Refuge permit
32 requires that I only can take a certain amount of moose
33 hunters. So right now, being able to go into the
34 Refuge lands in Unit 22A my permit is for 18 and 22A.
35 So in 2018 I will be allowed to take eight moose
36 hunters in Unit 18 and 22A. If 22A is not lifted, I'll
37 just take the eight moose hunters in Unit 18, which are
38 virtually the same moose population. They're traveling
39 back and forth.
40

41 MR. SIEKANIEC: Thank you. But if the
42 full closure gets lifted, I guess is what I'm trying to
43 figure out, that means it becomes available to all
44 residents of the State of Alaska if they have access
45 via their own personal airplanes and whatever, whether
46 they -- I don't know if you can get in by river or
47 water access. Would that be true?
48

49 MR. KRONBERGER: Through the Chair.
50

1 There is no water access, so it's only airplane access.
2 Yes, that would be true, but as stated this is an
3 extremely remote spot to get to. There are not any
4 close local air taxis. This is a virtually unused spot
5 because of the access. When residents go out there,
6 there's not a good place to store your airplane. These
7 are rolling hills with willow bottoms. You just don't
8 leave your airplane tied down out there on that coastal
9 region up on some ridge top.

10

11 I'm not going to speak for the harvest
12 of the resident Alaskans, but it's not user friendly
13 out there.

14

15 MR. SIEKANIEC: Thank you.

16

17 CHAIRMAN CHRISTIANSON: Gordon.

18

19 MR. G. BROWER: Just a question here.
20 In the proposal it states the closure has been closed
21 for a long time and to rescind it from September 1 to
22 September 30th and I'm wondering if that's limited to
23 just Federally qualified users, residents in that area.
24 Maybe I'm not understanding clearly well what they
25 intend. It sounds like you live out of the region, but
26 you come in to conduct operations and to try to develop
27 a clientele of Federally qualified users in that area
28 or to the general public.

29

30 MR. KRONBERGER: Through the Chair.
31 The proposal is to lift it to match the regulations
32 with the Department of Fish and Game. So it would be
33 for all users from September 1st through the 30th,
34 which would match the regulations by the Alaska
35 Department of Fish and Game.

36

37 CHAIRMAN CHRISTIANSON: Greg.

38

39 MR. SIEKANIEC: Thank you, Mr. Chair.
40 I think I need to go back to Suzanne for a question
41 here. I'm just trying to piece all the things together
42 along with like 57 other proposals. What did you say
43 the moose density was in this particular unit?

44

45 MS. WORKER: Thank you, Mr. Siekaniec,
46 through the Chair. In Unit 22A, the surveys in the
47 Unalakleet drainage survey area have historically been
48 used to infer moose densities in the rest of Unit 22A.
49 In that area, in central Unit 22A, moose densities are

50

1 .35 moose per square mile, but to the south of that in
2 Unit 18 they're five moose per square mile. So there's
3 a huge difference in how the moose populations are
4 doing in the area surrounding the hunt area in
5 question.

6
7 MR. SIEKANIEC: Thank you.

8
9 CHAIRMAN CHRISTIANSON: Any additional
10 questions. Thank you.

11
12 Oh, right here. Louis.

13
14 MR. GREEN: Thank you, Mr. Chair.
15 Suzanne, how long ago was it that there was a moose
16 moratorium in place? And was that by the local people
17 there?

18
19 MS. WORKER: Give me a second to review
20 the facts.

21
22 MR. GREEN: Well, my watch says your
23 time is up.

24
25 (Laughter)

26
27 MR. GREEN: I'm patient enough to wait.

28
29 MS. WORKER: The closure was initiated
30 in 1995 and then in 2003 Unit 22A was broken into three
31 separate hunt areas. Lem, you might be able to help me
32 on this. I don't know if there was ever a moratorium
33 in Unit 22A. There was in Unit 18, but I don't know
34 that there was in -- he's not here.

35
36 I will say that in the Unalakleet
37 drainage, which is the area of Unit 22A that has the
38 most use because of access, I assume, and human
39 population, there's been a registration permit required
40 for many years and is credited with helping the moose
41 population rebound. Just getting a handle on harvest
42 and regulating harvest. In the northern and southern
43 hunt areas, a regulation permit is not required.

44
45 MR. GREEN: Thank you, Suzanne.
46 Through the Chair. Karen Deatherage, do you have any
47 knowledge of a moratorium by local folks there?

48
49 MS. DEATHERAGE: Through the Chair, Mr.
50

1 Green. The knowledge I have is of the moratorium in
2 Unit 18. There were a couple of non-hunting
3 moratoriums. I know one lasted five years. I'm not
4 quite sure how the other one -- how long the other one
5 went.

6
7 Thank you.

8
9 I'm not aware of any moratoriums in the
10 Seward Peninsula region.

11
12 MR. GREEN: Thank you. Fact checking,
13 Mr. Chair. Thanks.

14
15 CHAIRMAN CHRISTIANSON: Any other
16 questions.

17
18 MR. G. BROWER: I've got one.

19
20 CHAIRMAN CHRISTIANSON: Gordon.

21
22 MR. G. BROWER: Maybe to the folks that
23 are -- that same dialogue. Is it currently closed only
24 to Federally qualified users or is it closed to
25 everybody?

26
27 MS. WORKER: Yeah, that's a point worth
28 clarifying. Federally qualified users are residents of
29 Unit 22 and hunting in this area is currently limited
30 only to residents of Unit 22A. So one of the
31 consequences of this proposal will be if it's adopted
32 as written, there will be Federally qualified users
33 that only have access to these Federal lands for a
34 portion of the Federal season because they're
35 essentially restricted to hunting under State
36 regulation.

37
38 So the Federal season in the fall is
39 August 1st to September 30th. During that season only
40 residents of Unit 22A can access this land currently.
41 If the closure is lifted between September 1st and
42 September 30th, all users will be able to use it, but
43 only for the month of September. Does that help you?

44
45 MR. G. BROWER: Yeah, I think it's good
46 to understand who's doing what currently and if there
47 were reasons developed for that scheme to exist today.
48 It seems to be needing 22A folks' input. That's what I
49 would think.

50

1 CHAIRMAN CHRISTIANSON: Go ahead.

2
3 MR. KRONBERGER: Through the Chair. So
4 we operate out of the town of Unalakleet. Have been
5 operating there since 2005. The input on the people of
6 the town of Unalakleet has been very good. We donate
7 almost all of our moose meat to the residents of the
8 town of Unalakleet. These last couple years it has
9 become harder and harder to donate meat to the
10 residents of Unalakleet because everybody's freezers
11 are full because the moose are starting to come back.

12
13 So why there's been no public comment
14 from the people in the town of Unalakleet is I don't
15 think that this is that big of issue because we are
16 trying to access moose that they have no access to.
17 One thing we've got to remember is from Unalakleet to
18 this area and the remainder of 22 is a little over 100
19 miles.

20
21 As far as the Federally qualified
22 people in 22, as much as we want to get the moose to as
23 many people as we can, from the northern part of 22
24 down to this area is a multi-day snowmachine ride if
25 they want to access it. Sometimes that's impractical
26 especially as remote and hard to access as this area
27 is.

28
29 CHAIRMAN CHRISTIANSON: Thank you. Any
30 other questions.

31
32 (No comments)

33
34 CHAIRMAN CHRISTIANSON: Appreciate your
35 testimony today. Was there anybody on the phone that
36 wanted to speak to this proposal.

37
38 OPERATOR: We're showing no comments at
39 this time.

40
41 CHAIRMAN CHRISTIANSON: Thank you.
42 We'll move on to Regional Council recommendation.

43
44 Louis.

45
46 MR. GREEN: Thank you, Mr. Chair. A
47 little bit of background. I do recall Unalakleet
48 caribou hunters traveling through Koyuk, several
49 hundred miles or more, to go caribou hunting because
50

1 they didn't have any in their area at the time. But
2 this is about a subsistence hunt and the lack of moose
3 on the Seward Peninsula now could actually create the
4 idea that people from the Nome area that may want to go
5 down there and may want to hunt in the Unalakleet area
6 if they had the opportunity.

7
8 On Federal lands, this option that OSM
9 is bringing to the table would potentially provide that
10 opportunity. So the Council supported this proposal
11 with OSM modification to open up the area to all
12 Federally qualified subsistence users, which includes
13 all Federally qualified users in all of 22.

14
15 The Council members believe that the
16 moose population in this region is still too low to
17 allow for non-resident hunters who have better access
18 and could intercept moose that would otherwise move
19 into areas accessible by subsistence users. The Alaska
20 Department of Fish and Game does not currently
21 understand the impact of non-resident hunters on
22 subsistence hunters.

23
24 She mentions that there's .35 moose per
25 square mile there and so those numbers are still low in
26 22A. So that's where the Seward Peninsula RAC falls on
27 this issue.

28
29 Thank you, Mr. Chair.

30
31 CHAIRMAN CHRISTIANSON: Thank you,
32 Louis. Tribal, Alaska Native Corp comment, Native
33 Liaison.

34
35 MR. MIKE: Thank you, Mr. Chair.
36 Donald Mike, Council Coordinator. I'll be pinch-
37 hitting for Mr. Orville Lind and I'll be liaising for
38 him.

39
40 Thank you.

41
42 There was consultation on September
43 7th, 2017 and no comments were received from Tribal or
44 ANCSA corps.

45
46 Thank you, Mr. Chair.

47
48 CHAIRMAN CHRISTIANSON: Thank you,
49 Donald. Alaska Department of Fish and Game.

50

1 MR. BURCH: Thank you, Mr. Chair.
2 Members of the Board. I'm Mark Burch. The Department
3 of Fish and Game supports this proposal. Our comments
4 are found on Page 983. As you've heard, there's a
5 history in this area where the population was believed
6 to have declined and that brought on this closure.

7
8 Unit 22A central, the area of the
9 Unalakleet drainage, has been used to make inferences
10 in the past. Its population has ranged from .31 to .39
11 moose per square mile. But, as you've also heard,
12 there are other adjacent areas that can be used to make
13 inferences to some extent.

14
15 Unit 21E and 18, the density estimates
16 for the areas have ranged from 2.0 moose per square
17 mile to 4.7 moose per square mile. Actually let me be
18 clear about that. In 21E it was 2 and in 18 it was
19 4.7.

20
21 We attained harvest estimates from both
22 residents and nonresidents through harvest tickets.
23 Low reporting can have an influence on that as you're
24 probably well aware.

25
26 Results from community harvest
27 assessment surveys do have information about harvest
28 trends and spatial distribution of harvest from local
29 residents. Surveys to date suggest the resident
30 harvest in the area has declined, but they do point out
31 the environmental conditions have become increasingly
32 difficult with access to the area.

33
34 So, as I stated, the Department of Fish
35 and Game supports this proposal because it's unlikely
36 to increase harvest significantly. Again, you've heard
37 that's due largely to access and some of the issues
38 that the proponent just described.

39
40 Despite the lack of biological
41 information for this moose population, there's no
42 reason to believe that there's a conservation concern
43 associated with the current level of harvest. Local
44 observation suggests that the population is increasing
45 and several adjacent populations are in medium to high
46 density with good bull:cow ratios. A clear
47 justification by the Federal Subsistence Board about
48 why federal lands should remain closed should be made
49 if this proposal is not adopted.
50

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

3
4 Gordon.

5
6 MR. G. BROWER: I just wanted to maybe
7 try to understand a little bit. Are you inferring that
8 the population there, the amount, the count, is
9 transient in nature and is dependent on the other
10 border neighboring Council and to be grouped together?

11
12 MR. BURCH: I think the important term
13 in your question is inferences and that's really what
14 we need to do. We have some opportunity to infer
15 population levels from adjacent areas and so that's
16 what we're doing.

17
18 MR. G. BROWER: Just to follow up. I
19 seem to have a little bit of trouble here because we
20 made the same arguments for Kaktovik in the Kongakut
21 and the transient in nature of the moose that come up
22 through the refuge and I couldn't get past that. The
23 area biologist on sidebar conversation said, yeah, the
24 transient nature and the hunting pressure that you put
25 on them will still be recouped from another area and
26 which they do in traditional knowledge.

27
28 So just a little bit of conflict. I
29 just thought I'd add that in.

30
31 CHAIRMAN CHRISTIANSON: Lem.

32
33 MR. BUTLER: Thank you, Mr. Chair.
34 We're not saying transient in nature at all and the two
35 populations are very different. So we're inferring
36 similar habitat adjacent populations. That's what
37 we're doing.

38
39 CHAIRMAN CHRISTIANSON: Thank you.
40 InterAgency Staff Committee.

41
42 MS. HARDEN: Thank you, Mr. Chair.
43 Members of the Board. The InterAgency Staff Committee
44 provided the standard comment on WP18-37.

45
46 CHAIRMAN CHRISTIANSON: Thank you.
47 Board discussion with Council Chairs and State Liaison,
48 further discussion on this.

49
50

1 (No comments)

2

3 CHAIRMAN CHRISTIANSON: Hearing none
4 and seeing none. Federal Board action.

5

6 MR. SIEKANIEC: Thank you, Mr. Chair.
7 Thank you everyone for the discussion on this
8 particular proposal. I make a motion to adopt WP18-37
9 as modified by OSM and located on Page 963 of the
10 meeting book and supported by the Seward Peninsula
11 Regional Advisory Committee. If I get a second, I will
12 provide a justification for supporting.

13

14 MR. C. BROWER: Second.

15

16 MR. SIEKANIEC: Thank you, Member
17 Brower. Frankly, I find this one still a little bit
18 difficult, you know. In the absence of sort of the
19 clear biological evidence that a full recision is
20 perhaps warranted, I do very strongly believe that an
21 incremental liberalization of harvest regulation that
22 extends this opportunity to a broader group of
23 Federally qualified subsistence users is absolutely
24 appropriate. I think it makes sense.

25

26 I think additional harvest opportunity
27 is here, it is appropriate, but I'm also very concerned
28 that we're starting to have a discussion about an
29 adjacent unit area with a very high moose population
30 and the discussion that it may overextend its habitat
31 use, I would really like to see additional population
32 level information that can strongly support this
33 expansion and removal of the Federal closure in the
34 future.

35

36 Thank you, Mr. Chair.

37

38 CHAIRMAN CHRISTIANSON: Thank you. Any
39 further discussion.

40

41 (No comments)

42

43 CHAIRMAN CHRISTIANSON: Call for the
44 question.

45

46 MR. C. BROWER: Question.

47

48 CHAIRMAN CHRISTIANSON: Question has
49 been called. Will you please read the motion into the

50

1 record again.

2

3 MR. DOOLITTLE: Wildlife Proposal 18-
4 37. The motion on the floor is adopt Proposal W18-37
5 as modified by the Office of Subsistence Management.
6 The modification can be found on Page 963 of the
7 meeting book.

8

9 BIA, Lynn Polacca.

10

11 MR. POLACCA: Support. And giving
12 deference to the RAC.

13

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

16

17 MR. OWEN: Support.

18

19 MR. DOOLITTLE: U.S. Fish and Wildlife
20 Service, Greg Siekaniec.

21

22 MR. SIEKANIEC: Support. And this is
23 with deference to the Regional Advisory Committee.

24

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

27

28 MS. MOURITSEN: Support with deference
29 to the RAC.

30

31 MR. DOOLITTLE: National Park Service,
32 Herbert Frost.

33

34 MR. FROST: Support.

35

36 MR. DOOLITTLE: Public member, Rhonda
37 Pitka.

38

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

41

42 MR. DOOLITTLE: Public member, Charlie
43 Brower.

44

45 MR. C. BROWER: Support.

46

47 MR. DOOLITTLE: Chairman Anthony
48 Christianson.

49

50

1 CHAIRMAN CHRISTIANSON: I support with
2 deference to the RAC.

3
4 MR. DOOLITTLE: Motion is carried.

5
6 CHAIRMAN CHRISTIANSON: To the guy back
7 there. One step closer. I know you didn't get your
8 proposal, but it definitely looks like they opened up
9 and liberalized for the users. Make another proposal
10 and maybe the population will be substantial enough for
11 that to happen.

12
13 Thank you.

14
15 Next proposal.

16
17 MS. WORKER: Thank you, Mr. Chair.
18 This is Suzanne Worker again. WP18-38 begins on Page
19 986 of your meeting materials. This proposal was also
20 submitted by Lance Kronberger.

21
22 He requests that the Federal public
23 lands closure in the portion of Unit 22A north of and
24 including the Tagoomenik and Shaktoolik river drainages
25 be rescinded September 1st to September 20th to
26 coincide with the State's nonresident moose season.

27
28 As with the proposal that we just
29 finished discussing, this closure was initiated in 1995
30 and like that closure this one excludes all moose
31 hunters except residents of Unit 22A even though all
32 residents of Unit 22 have C&T.

33
34 I also want to mention that in January
35 2017 the Board of Game added six days to what was
36 previously a 14-day nonresident season in this area, so
37 harvest restrictions have recently been liberalized in
38 this area.

39
40 Unlike the proposal we just discussed,
41 the Central Unit 22A population surveys are expected to
42 be the best representation of moose dynamics in this
43 northern hunt area. In that survey area, the moose
44 population is believed to be 840 moose, which is near
45 the upper bound of the State's management objective of
46 600 to 800 moose.

47
48 It's still relatively low density
49 population .35 moose per square mile. The bull:cow
50

1 ratios are unusually high in this area. They were
2 124:100 in 2016, so that's an unusual number and it
3 does raise questions about harvest and dispersal
4 patterns and I think everyone would agree that that
5 warrants some additional attention.
6

7 Recruitment was 12 percent in 2017,
8 which is characterized as adequate, although it is
9 lower than the estimates from the previous decade.
10 Harvest is estimated to be 10 to 15 moose annually and
11 that comes out to about two to four percent of the
12 population.
13

14 Local biologists believe the harvest is
15 at an appropriate level for the population and they
16 don't recommend more than a five or six percent harvest
17 rate without a better understanding of those population
18 dynamics. So when we do the math on that, the most
19 conservative calculation of an additional harvestable
20 surplus is an additional five moose annually.
21

22 If this proposal is adopted, Federal
23 public lands in the Unit 22A North moose hunt area will
24 be open to all users September 1st to September 20th to
25 coincide with the State's nonresident season. Included
26 in this expanded user pool are those Federally
27 qualified subsistence users who are not residents of
28 Unit 22A. So, again, only a subset of Federal users
29 are eligible to hunt moose on Federal lands in this
30 area.
31

32 The remainder of Federally qualified
33 users will be able to hunt on Federal lands September
34 1st through September 20th, but not for the remainder
35 of the approximately two month long fall Federal
36 season.
37

38 This regulatory complexity has the
39 potential to become a source of confusion among
40 Federally qualified subsistence users. Collectively,
41 this change may result in an increase in non-local
42 hunting pressure, particularly considering the recent
43 extension of the State's nonresident season, but it's
44 uncertain what effect this will have on the moose
45 population in the area.
46

47 So the most conservative approach is to
48 maintain the status quo and the OSM conclusion is to
49 oppose WP18-38.
50

1 Thank you, Mr. Chair.

2

3 CHAIRMAN CHRISTIANSON: Thank you.
4 Summary of public comment.

5

6 MS. DEATHERAGE: Thank you, Mr. Chair.
7 Members of the Board. There were no written public
8 comments received for WP18-38. For the record, I'm
9 Karen Deatherage with the Office of Subsistence
10 Management.

11

12 CHAIRMAN CHRISTIANSON: Thank you.
13 We'll open the floor to public testimony.

14

15 MR. KRONBERGER: Again, my name is
16 Lance Kronberger. I am the author of this proposal and
17 am a guide in this area. Seventy-eight percent of the
18 land in this area is BLM. The area that is not BLM is
19 State selected lands. So by closing the Federal lands
20 you've congregated everybody on the river corridors and
21 close to the villages. If you look at the map, you can
22 see the Federal lands are all at the head of the
23 drainages. They're harder to access. So we're being
24 concentrated to where the moose population is doing
25 much better in there.

26

27 We've been aggressively harvesting
28 grizzly bears in there for 12 years now and things are
29 coming back and we're starting to see more calf
30 survival, we're starting to see a lot more bulls and
31 like we said, we're seeing a high, high bull:cow ratio.
32 We're seeing mature bulls. We're trying to get spread
33 out. We're trying to access stuff that no one else is
34 accessing and we're not able to.

35

36 In the reports it's talking about the
37 guide use up there. There's only one guide, myself,
38 that has a campsite permit with BLM to be operating in
39 the fall. I understand the argument of we're unaware
40 of the consequences of what's going to happen, but I
41 keep hearing that we're not aware of the consequences
42 and I keep hearing about we need to get a survey.

43

44 We've tried to get a survey done in the
45 last proposal. We've tried to get a survey done here.
46 I can't get a survey done. I can't do the survey.
47 Fish and Game weather parts. We keep coming back to we
48 didn't get a survey, we didn't get a survey, and it
49 gets very frustrating from my standpoint because I can

50

1 never get anything going in the right direction because
2 we can't get a survey.

3
4 Yet when things are depleting in places
5 that we're using to correlate, we have no problem
6 shutting it down and that gets frustrating. That's
7 been frustrating for everybody that it works one
8 direction and it doesn't work the other direction.

9
10 I understand you want a survey. I had
11 the proposal last year. We don't have a survey. I
12 tried to get a survey this year. They couldn't get a
13 survey done. It's not on the docket to get a survey
14 until 2022. So here we have all these lands that are
15 closed that no one can access because of the remote
16 accessibility to it.

17
18 You know, the rivers that are within
19 this northern part of 22 are the Ungalik and the
20 Shaktoolik. Both of them have State selected lands on
21 the lower ends, which are the ones that you can access
22 by motorboat. That's where we're concentrated. The
23 rivers are not extremely big. They don't have great
24 travel corridors up to the headwaters, so therefore if
25 you don't have a Super Cub or you don't have an
26 aircraft, those lands are not getting accessed during
27 this timeframe.

28
29 The State extended the season six days
30 not to increase the harvest. They extended the season
31 because of things warming up that you've heard from
32 everybody, all the locals, so that we could hunt when
33 we had an opportunity to get the meat out when it was
34 cooler. These areas are very hard to access, so you
35 have to be able to move quick and get things flown out
36 and that's why it was extended.

37
38 OSM stated that the Unalakleet drainage
39 is where they're getting their information from.
40 That's where they're doing their survey and they're
41 extrapolating it. That is where the most concentration
42 happens of hunting. This has got very low as you can
43 see in the graphs, got a very low participation. We
44 don't know what the reporting is, but basically -- I
45 understand the air taxis, especially with the caribou,
46 have really affected it. This is not the case with
47 moose in this area.

48
49 Unalakleet doesn't have a big air taxi
50

1 fleet. There's one guy who does the fly-in for the
2 guides. So I can't speak to what guys are going to do
3 if they have their own aircraft, but it is frustrating
4 when you look at this. It is a one direction. When
5 something gets closed, it seems like it takes an Act of
6 Congress to get it back open and the stipulations that
7 are used to close something are not the same
8 stipulations that are used to get it reopened. What's
9 happening is guides, residents and people that should
10 have access to Federal lands when there is an abundant
11 population are not having access to it.

12
13 If you guys were to pass this, the
14 commercial activity in my opinion would not increase.
15 There's a lot of land. The moose density is not what
16 it is in the remainder of 22A, but it is high enough to
17 handle some more harvest and we are seeing bulls when
18 we're out in the fall grizzly bear hunting in places
19 that no one without an aircraft and a team of guides to
20 get it out can get to and we've just got to walk away
21 from them.

22
23 We've got moose that are dying of old
24 age because of this high bull to cow ratio that should
25 be harvested that aren't being able to be harvested
26 because of the closure in an area that in my opinion
27 has an abundant moose population that there's room for
28 additional harvest.

29
30 That's all I have.

31
32 CHAIRMAN CHRISTIANSON: Thank you. Any
33 questions.

34
35 MR. G. BROWER: I have one.

36
37 CHAIRMAN CHRISTIANSON: Gordon.

38
39 MR. G. BROWER: If I was a resident and
40 I had -- I was a Federally qualified user in that area,
41 I could easily go to you and say, hey, this area is
42 open for me, can you take me there. How often does that
43 happen?

44
45 MR. KRONBERGER: Through the Chair. To
46 answer your question, it doesn't happen very often, but
47 it happens often that the guys say, hey, can you bring
48 me some moose meat and I say absolutely. So it's better
49 than me taking them because I'm going to bring it to
50

1 your freezer and drop it off. Like I said, it is
2 getting more difficult to find people, but we have
3 many, many elders and widows that are on a list and
4 when we get into the fall we're delivering moose meat.

5
6 This can be a win/win. I think we've
7 lost the idea that when these people are coming to go
8 with me on guided hunts, they're coming for an
9 experience. They're coming for an Alaska experience
10 and what they're wanting to do is they're wanting to
11 take home the cape and the horns and about 50 pounds of
12 meat. I mean they're coming for an experience and the
13 rest of it is getting delivered to the local
14 communities.

15
16 This can be a real win/win, but we've
17 become divisive when we come to the meetings, yet when
18 I'm in the village of Unalakleet, man, everybody is
19 like, hey, you know, if you've got some moose meat or
20 something like that or -- you know, at the beginning of
21 the season everybody is telling me who needs moose
22 meat. So that's disappointing from that standpoint is
23 that we come here and it seems so divisive and when I'm
24 out there in the village it's not the way it is.

25
26 CHAIRMAN CHRISTIANSON: I definitely
27 appreciate you taking the time to help the locals with
28 their needs. It's commendable too. Thank you.

29
30 Any other questions.

31
32 MR. HERNANDEZ: How many moose are you
33 taking per season?

34
35 MR. KRONBERGER: We're taking about 10
36 moose. I'm allowed to take eight that are down there
37 on the Yukon Delta and then on the State selected lands
38 we're taking two or three, which could handle a lot
39 higher harvest. Up in this area we didn't take a moose
40 last year. I don't feel good about bumping into the
41 locals and having a moose rack floating down the river.
42 I knew this proposal was coming up and I didn't want to
43 make any heartache, so we didn't take a moose in this
44 area even though we saw lots of shooter bulls. They
45 were just on hard Federal land.

46
47 So we're in these areas grizzly bear
48 hunting in the fall also, but we're very, very
49 sensitive to -- we have a great relationship with the
50

1 local communities, so I don't ever want to jeopardize
2 that.

3
4 CHAIRMAN CHRISTIANSON: Thank you. Any
5 further questions. Leo -- Louis.

6
7 MR. GREEN: Leo, Louis, it's all the
8 same.

9
10 (Laughter)

11
12 MR. GREEN: And I was born in May, so
13 I'm a Taurus. Through the Chair, Lance. Do you have
14 any letters of support from these people in the
15 communities? I hear what you're saying and you and I
16 have had conversations in the past. I just wanted to
17 ask that question.

18
19 Thank you, Mr. Chair.

20
21 MR. KRONBERGER: Through the Chair. I
22 don't. It would take a half hour to drum up a letter.
23 I feel a little bit at odds going to them saying, hey,
24 will you sign this letter to support me in something
25 that -- if that's what you guys would require, I'd do
26 it. I just don't want to go around trying to drum up
27 support for something.

28
29 I will say this. When I'm in the local
30 communities, not everybody wants people to know that
31 I'm donating meat to them. They don't want to know --
32 there's a little bit of pride that, hey, someone else
33 is filling my freezer. So I'm sensitive to that and
34 because of that I haven't. If that was helpful, I
35 definitely would pursue that, but I'm trying to be
36 sensitive to the community and to people in that
37 regard.

38
39 MR. GREEN: Thank you, Mr. Chair. Just
40 a follow up on that. There's tribal councils, there's
41 city councils and there's corporate boards. You know,
42 you're not picking on any single person when you deal
43 with those type of entities. So it gives a broader
44 reach for you and it does take the pressure off of
45 people that don't want to be recognized as recipients.

46
47 Our job here is to create opportunity
48 for subsistence. So I appreciate your communication to
49 us about how you go about your business and I think at
50

1 some point in time you're going to get some support.

2

3 Thank you, Mr. Chair.

4

5 CHAIRMAN CHRISTIANSON: Thank you.

6 Appreciate that. Anybody on the phone?

7

8 OPERATOR: As a reminder, you may dial

9 *1 to make a comment.

10

11 (No comments)

12

13 CHAIRMAN CHRISTIANSON: Hearing none on

14 the phone. Regional Council recommendation.

15

16 MR. GREEN: Thank you, Mr. Chair.

17 Louis Green, Seward Peninsula RAC Chair. The Council
18 opposed it, voted to oppose the proposal. As you heard
19 the maker of the proposal there, there's no surveys
20 done yet. The State's admitted to that. Without
21 making too big of a -- taking too big of a step and
22 opening it up, it would be similar to me to say that
23 the Federal lands be opened up to all of 22 residents
24 for the same reasons that I stated on 18-37.

25

26 So, having said that, the Council also
27 did not believe opening of this area to nonresident
28 hunting without surveys again and the input from
29 potentially impacted communities. I really would like
30 to see letters of support if this comes up to my
31 Council again. I would really appreciate the
32 communication.

33

34 Thank you, Mr. Chair.

35

36 CHAIRMAN CHRISTIANSON: Thank you.

37 Tribal, Alaska Native Corp comments.

38

39 MR. MIKE: Thank you, Mr. Chair.

40 Donald Mike, Council Coordinator. There was a
41 consultation on September 7th, 2017 for this region and
42 there were no tribal or ANCSA comments received.

43

44 Thank you, Mr. Chair.

45

46 CHAIRMAN CHRISTIANSON: Thank you.

47 Alaska Department of Fish and Game.

48

49 MR. BURCH: Thank you, Mr. Chair. This

50

1 is Mark Burch from the Department of Fish and Game.
2 Our comments are found on Page 999 of your Board book.
3

4 The Alaska Department of Fish and Game
5 supports this proposal. Once again we're in a
6 situation of using nearby populations to make
7 inferences about this proposal. Using estimates to
8 extrapolate moose abundance suggests that we have
9 between 574 and 722 moose in this area by making that
10 extrapolation.
11

12 I would also point out that a survey in
13 the central portion of 22A was estimated at 124 bulls
14 per 100 cows in 2016. Naturally that comes with
15 caveats that that can be affected by local harvest
16 patterns and movements of moose and things like that.
17 So take it for what it is.
18

19 The reported moose harvest by both
20 residents and nonresident hunters has averaged two
21 moose and one moose respectively from 2006 to 2016. A
22 household subsistence survey conducted in Shaktoolik in
23 2010 indicated a community harvest of approximately 10
24 to 15 moose annually and that's about 3 percent of the
25 population.
26

27 So, again, the Alaska Department of
28 Fish and Game supports this proposal. Based on what we
29 know about the moose population there's a harvestable
30 surplus of bull moose in the area. Adoption of the
31 proposal may result in a redistribution of the harvest
32 as we discussed. Again, if the Board chooses not to
33 adopt this proposal, there should be a clear
34 justification on the record.
35

36 Thank you.
37

38 MR. BUTLER: And to expand on that
39 there should be a clear justification. This state is
40 too big to survey every square inch of the state.
41 These survey techniques are utilized by the U.S. Fish
42 and Wildlife Service, the Park Service and other
43 entities to extrapolate the areas. We're showing a
44 very high bull to cow ratio, 124 bulls per 100 cow.
45 That does not demonstrate a conservation concern for
46 this population. And the inaccessibility of the area
47 suggests that it's not heavily utilized for subsistence
48 purposes. So, again, we really do want to know why
49 these areas remain closed.
50

1 Thank you.

2
3 CHAIRMAN CHRISTIANSON: Thank you.
4 Questions for the State.

5
6 Louis.

7
8 MR. GREEN: Through the Chair. Thank
9 you, Mr. Chair. To the State. What does the word
10 extrapolate mean. I'm trying to understand that.

11
12 MR. BUTLER: It's where you look at
13 similar habitat's predation levels, climate, the
14 ecology of the area to make inferences to areas that
15 you can't survey. It's very typical in statistics
16 where you try to -- you can't survey every unit area,
17 so you utilize the knowledge that you have and make
18 inferences towards other areas that you can't survey.
19 Again this state is just too large.

20
21 And the use in this area is so minimal
22 that it's quite frankly not going to rise to our
23 priority to get a survey conducted in this area. There
24 are other areas that see more utilization that we think
25 are more important to get yearly information on. So it
26 will be very difficult to get a survey in the area.

27
28 MR. GREEN: Through the Chair. What
29 kind of bear surveys and wolf surveys you got? I heard
30 you speak of predation and that's part of your
31 extrapolation formula. So what do you have there?

32
33 MR. BUTLER: Through the Chair. We
34 don't have that type of survey information. There are
35 a lot of factors that affect moose populations in the
36 state on an annual basis and we do not try to quantify
37 all those factors. What we look at is the population
38 itself of moose and that reflects the factors that
39 influence it, both nutritional limitations, predatory
40 limitations and weather/climatic limitations. So we
41 let the animals provide that information to us.

42
43 MR. GREEN: But you don't have any
44 surveys to do that. So the extrapolation formula to me
45 doesn't mean much. I'm an old Super Cub pilot and from
46 my experience this would be a great time of the year to
47 count moose because generally the moose are at the
48 headwaters of all the main river systems over there.
49 That's what I've witnessed in my time on the Seward
50

1 Peninsula, so in my backyard. It's not my river, it's
2 my backyard. Mr. Tommy Gray likes to call it his river
3 thing.

4
5 So anyway I'm trying to make sense out
6 of what you're saying there and the State's opinion on
7 this to support. You spoke of extrapolation of numbers
8 and I can't see how you can get a number if you don't
9 have any sound data. So, having said that, I'm still
10 in a position to oppose it in my opinion.

11
12 Thank you, Mr. Chair.

13
14 MR. BUTLER: Through the Chair. You
15 know, I've heard people with 50 years of data say that
16 there's not enough information. There's always going
17 to be more information to be had. I understand what
18 you're saying, but with all due respect, again, there's
19 -- we provide the information that we have and that's
20 the best we can do. There's always going to be a limit
21 to it. So I don't think that this Board can say that
22 just because there's a lack of specific information.
23 That's not a reasonable justification to say that
24 there's a biological reason to keep an area closed.

25
26 Thank you, Mr. Chair.

27
28 MR. REAKOFF: Mr. Chair.

29
30 CHAIRMAN CHRISTIANSON: Thank you.

31
32 Jack.

33
34 MR. REAKOFF: My question for the State
35 would be do you have a harvest for brown bears in Unit
36 22A? That would be relevant to the proposal. Do you
37 have an annual brown bear harvest trend?

38
39 MR. BUTLER: Through the Chair. I can
40 look that information up if you think that would be
41 helpful. We've been liberalizing our bag limits and
42 seasons for brown bear in that area, so it has been
43 increasing. If you think that that's going to benefit
44 you, I'll try to mine it.

45
46 MR. REAKOFF: That's okay. I just
47 wanted to know. These hunting guides are taking these
48 brown bears. Brown bears eat these moose calves. So
49 that's a consideration that should be taken by the
50

1 Council in future proposals. When you're deliberating,
2 what does that brown bear harvest negating the
3 subsistence harvest. So usually I'm questioning what
4 the predation harvest is in relation to what's being
5 requested.

6
7 Thank you, Mr. Chair.

8
9 CHAIRMAN CHRISTIANSON: Thank you.

10
11 Gordon.

12
13 MR. G. BROWER: Just a last question in
14 terms -- the same line of dialogue. A lot of times
15 there's a need to do a harvestable surplus and that is
16 correlated also with community needs and when was that
17 last conducted. A lot of times we're using some survey
18 from some time ago the needs of the community as a
19 population increases needs to be updated. There's a
20 correlation between the community's needs, the
21 harvestable surplus and then the need to liberalize the
22 hunt. Are those in play here?

23
24 MR. BUTLER: Through the Chair. I'm
25 learning that our last community survey was in 2010 to
26 estimate the amount of moose utilized by local
27 communities. The Board of Game recently had a meeting
28 two years ago and it did not come up as a limitation at
29 that time. We can come up with a harvestable surplus
30 if that would help you. I'm sure it's above the ANS,
31 which is the amount necessary for subsistence.

32
33 CHAIRMAN CHRISTIANSON: Thank you.

34
35 ISC.

36
37 MS. HARDIN: Thank you, Mr. Chair.
38 Members of the Board. The InterAgency Staff Committee
39 made the standard comment for WP18-38.

40
41 CHAIRMAN CHRISTIANSON: Board
42 discussion. Council Chairs, State Liaison.

43
44 (No comments)

45
46 CHAIRMAN CHRISTIANSON: Open the floor
47 for Board action.

48
49 MS. MOURITSEN: Thank you, Mr. Chair.

50

1 I move to adopt Wildlife Proposal 18-38 as shown on
2 Page 986 of the meeting materials. If there is a
3 second to my motion, I will explain why I intend to
4 support this proposal.

5

6 MR. C. BROWER: Second.

7

8 MS. MOURITSEN: I looked at these
9 materials and I know that the Seward Peninsula RAC
10 recommended to oppose. However, the information in
11 here about the populations and the information from the
12 State was persuasive to me because the State
13 information is that it's not going to create a
14 biological concern for the moose population. So I am
15 supporting in opposition to what the RAC says because
16 of the principles of fish and wildlife conservation.

17

18 CHAIRMAN CHRISTIANSON: Any further
19 discussion on the floor here.

20

21 (No comments)

22

23 CHAIRMAN CHRISTIANSON: Call for the
24 question.

25

26 MR. C. BROWER: Question.

27

28 CHAIRMAN CHRISTIANSON: The question
29 has been called. Do roll call.

30

31 MR. DOOLITTLE: This is Wildlife
32 Proposal 18-38 and the motion on the floor is to adopt
33 Proposal WP18-38 as shown on Page 986 of the meeting
34 book.

35

36 BIA, Lynn Polacca.

37

38 MR. POLACCA: I oppose. My rationale
39 is that the reason why this land was closed back in '95
40 was because of the impact to Federal subsistence users.
41 One of the things that we have to go through the
42 process, in order to reopen that back up there needs to
43 be the information to support that. The only way to
44 really go through that process is through the actual
45 survey. By going through -- I guess making inferences
46 on the population through estimates and all, I think
47 that's not quite there. So at this time I'm opposing.

48

49 MR. DOOLITTLE: Thank you very much,

50

1 Lynn.

2

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

5

6 MR. SIEKANIEC: Thank you. I support
7 this. I appreciate, you know, the perspective that's
8 been brought to the table. I also think that we now
9 have two different scenarios going on that might
10 provide us an opportunity to evaluate against them.
11 You know, we responded to the last one and kept the
12 Federal lands closed. Now we're responding to one to
13 potentially open them up.

14

15 I appreciate the State's perspective on
16 this state is huge. Pinpoint exact survey data and
17 type of information everywhere is extremely complicated
18 and I think we have to at times use the best sound
19 judgment from a conservation standpoint on the
20 principles of fish and wildlife harvest and survey
21 methodologies.

22

23 So thank you.

24

25 I will support this one.

26

27 MR. DOOLITTLE: Thank you, Greg.

28

29 National Park Service, Herbert Frost.

30

31 MR. FROST: I oppose giving deference
32 to the RAC, but I would also say that I think the State
33 and the proponent makes a very good argument and I
34 would urge the RAC get with the State and the proponent
35 to really sort of nail this down and have the
36 conversations that we need in order so the RAC feels
37 comfortable so they can support this.

38

39 I think the conversation is great and
40 I'm struggling. I'm on the line on whether to oppose
41 or support, but I'm going to support -- I mean oppose
42 in deference to the RAC. But I think there's a good
43 argument here and I think that there's an opportunity
44 here that this should be opened up.

45

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

48

49 MS. MOURITSEN: Support for the reasons

50

1 I said earlier.

2

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

5

6 MR. OWEN: Support.

7

8 MR. DOOLITTLE: Public member, Rhonda
9 Pitka.

10

11 MS. PITKA: I oppose in deference to
12 the Regional Advisory Council recommendation and the
13 OSM conclusion on Page 906 of the meeting book.

14

15 MR. DOOLITTLE: Public member, Charlie
16 Brower.

17

18 MR. C. BROWER: Oppose. Same as the
19 RACs.

20

21 MR. DOOLITTLE: Chairman Anthony
22 Christianson.

23

24 CHAIRMAN CHRISTIANSON: I oppose in
25 deference to the RAC.

26

27 MR. DOOLITTLE: Motion fails.

28

29 CHAIRMAN CHRISTIANSON: Thank you. At
30 this time we'll take a lunch break. What's going on?
31 Oh, sorry, Lem. Go ahead.

32

33 MR. BUTLER: Thank you, Mr. Chair. I
34 was trying to make myself look larger. Can you state
35 on the record why this proposal failed? I get that it
36 was stated it was in deference to the RAC, but I don't
37 believe that's a provision under ANILCA for keeping
38 Federal lands closed. It has to be a biological
39 concern or subsistence related or in relation to
40 another regulation. So can you quantify it in one of
41 those three categories why this proposal failed?

42

43 CHAIRMAN CHRISTIANSON: Well, I guess
44 from -- I would have to say Lynn probably presented it
45 the best that, yeah, although there is the perception
46 there is a large population, at this time I think there
47 needs to be a little more work done on getting that
48 information to the Federal Board so we could liberalize
49 that hunt out there. I believe there is support here

50

1 for that even through the RAC Chair. I see him nodding
2 his head that that would be a reality. So from my
3 perspective that's what I heard here today.

4
5 MS. PITKA: I wanted to read the OSM
6 recommendation on Page 996 of the Board book into the
7 record. It is unknown what effect rescinding the
8 closure in the Unit 22A North moose hunt area will have
9 on the moose population in the area, or on subsistence
10 users. Moose densities in Unit 22A, while improving,
11 remain low. Local biologists believe that the
12 population can sustain a small amount of additional
13 harvest.

14
15 However, acknowledging uncertainties in
16 estimates of population size and harvest, the most
17 conservative estimate suggests that a harvest increase
18 of just five moose annually will result in maximum
19 harvest levels recommended by ADF&G. Rather than
20 expanding non-local opportunity in State and Federal
21 regulation concurrently, OSM's conclusion represents an
22 incremental approach.

23
24 Retention of the Federal lands closure
25 will allow assessment of the effects of the State's
26 nonresident season on harvest levels. In addition,
27 opening Federal public lands to the harvest of moose by
28 Federally qualified users for the duration of the
29 Federal season, prior to opening Federal public lands
30 to all users, may be warranted.

31
32 So I think that this proposal could
33 possibly go back to the RAC next cycle. Thank you.

34
35 CHAIRMAN CHRISTIANSON: Thank you. One
36 hour lunch. 1:00, yeah, not 1:30 like it states so we
37 can try to get through this business today. 1:00
38 o'clock.

39
40 (Off record)

41
42 (On record)

43
44 CHAIRMAN CHRISTIANSON: Welcome back
45 after lunch everybody. Thirteen minutes past 1:00. We
46 didn't do too bad. I still got half a Subway sandwich
47 here if somebody wants it. Highest bidder.

48
49 (Laughter)

50

1 CHAIRMAN CHRISTIANSON: We're up on
2 WP18-41/42.

3
4 MS. KLOSTERMAN: Good afternoon, Mr.
5 Chair. Members of the Board. Again, for the record,
6 my name is Megan Klosterman and I'm a wildlife
7 biologist with the Office of Subsistence Management.

8
9 WP18-41/42 can be found on Page 1002 of
10 your meeting materials. The proponent of WP18-41 was
11 the Northwest Arctic Subsistence Regional Advisory
12 Council. They requested the moose season be modified
13 throughout Unit 23 to a two month cow season of
14 November 1st to December 31st, the bull season be
15 shortened by three months from July or August 1st
16 through March 31st to July or August 1st through
17 December 31st, and the Federal and State
18 hunt areas be aligned.

19
20 If you're curious about what the hunt
21 areas look like in that area, you can find the hunt
22 area maps on Page 1028, Figure 10.

23
24 The proponent of WP18-42 is Louis
25 Cusack of Chugiak, Alaska. He requests that moose
26 seasons be modified throughout Unit 23 to include a
27 winter any moose Federal registration permit hunt with
28 a harvest quota aimed at reducing total cow harvest by
29 20 percent, and that the harvest limit be modified from
30 one moose to
31 one bull moose during the rest of the season.

32
33 At the January 2017 Alaska Board of
34 Game meeting the antlerless moose season in Unit 23 was
35 modified to a bag limit of one antlered moose due to
36 conservation concerns.

37
38 At the March 2017 Northwest Arctic
39 Subsistence Regional Advisory Council public meeting,
40 the Alaska Department of Fish and Game mentioned that
41 the non-resident moose hunt was canceled for the
42 current regulatory year also due to conservation
43 concern.

44
45 In April of 2017 the Federal
46 Subsistence Board rejected Temporary Special Action
47 WSA17-02, which requested that Federal public lands in
48 Unit 23 be closed to all non-Federally qualified
49 users for moose harvest during the 2017/18 regulatory
50

1 year.

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The moose population for Unit 23 is currently estimated to be around 6,300 moose, which is different from what you have in your books. That's the latest update as of the last RAC meeting this winter. This is below the overall population goal of 8,100 to 10,000 moose for Unit 23.

The most recent data shows adult moose densities throughout Unit 23 range from 0.03-0.44 moose per square mile and you can see that table on Page 1015, Table 2. Recent calf:cow ratios range from 4-24 calves per 100 cows depending on the survey area.

New data was recently made available from ADF&G and the National Park Service who were able to complete a spring 2017 count survey in the Lower Kobuk/Squirrel River survey area. In this survey area the recent data indicated a 47 percent decline in moose estimates, from 2,546 total moose to 1,346 total moose in the Lower Kobuk/Squirrel River survey area.

According to harvest reports, 165 moose, 144 bulls and 21 cows, were harvested in Unit 23 in 2015. 85 of these were taken by local resident users in 2015. Community household surveys show that harvest reporting among local users in Unit 23 is generally low. After reviewing community household surveys, ADF&G estimated that approximately 300 moose are harvested annually in Unit 23. So far in the 2017-2018 RM880 permit hunt 81 moose were harvested by local residents and 20 were harvested by non-local residents.

The moose population is in decline across most of Unit 23. These proposals could reduce overall harvest by shortening the moose season and reducing the harvest of cows, which are key to population growth. Creation and enforcement of a Federal registration permit could provide more accurate harvest reporting among Federally qualified subsistence users in Unit 23, who are estimated to be responsible for a majority of the moose harvest in the unit. It could also lead to greater user confusion and an additional decrease in harvest reporting.

It may be worth considering eliminating the antlerless season and changing the overall harvest

1 limit to one antlered bull. This would simplify
2 regulations and could aid in conserving cow moose which
3 are essential to maintaining a healthy moose
4 population. But this modification would result in
5 additional reduction of harvest opportunity to
6 Federally qualified subsistence users and therefore
7 would need further discussion.
8

9 The OSM conclusion is to support
10 Proposal WP18-41 with modification to change the
11 harvest limit to one antlered bull July or August 1st
12 through December 31st and create a November 1st through
13 December 31st any moose season by Federal registration
14 permit and delegate authority to the Federal land
15 manager to determine quotas, close the season via a
16 delegation of authority letter, and take no action on
17 Proposal WP18-42 since most of that request was
18 included in our modification of 41.
19

20 Changing to an antlered bull season
21 rather than an any bull season helps to reduce the risk
22 of inadvertent cow harvest outside of the antlerless
23 moose season. Limiting the antlerless moose harvest to
24 a two month season and determining a quota could limit
25 the harvest of antlerless moose and aid in increasing
26 the moose population in the unit. Combining Federal
27 hunt areas to align with State hunt areas would reduce
28 user confusion in Unit 23.
29

30 If the OSM modification is adopted, the
31 Board would still need to discuss who would receive the
32 delegation of authority and would have to vote on that.
33

34 Thank you, Mr. Chair.
35

36 That's all I have.
37

38 CHAIRMAN CHRISTIANSON: Thank you. Any
39 questions.
40

41 (No comments)
42

43 CHAIRMAN CHRISTIANSON: Hearing none.
44 We'll move onto summary of public comment.
45

46 MR. STEVENSON: Thank you, Mr. Chair.
47 This is Zach Stevenson with Council Coordination
48 Division at Office of Subsistence Management. The
49 Northwest Arctic Subsistence Regional Advisory Council
50

1 supported WP18-41 due to the moose decline in Unit 23
2 and wanted to do their part to conserve this important
3 subsistence resource especially considering that the
4 caribou population also in Unit 23 is declining and
5 therefore more Federally qualified subsistence users
6 will need to harvest moose to meet their needs. The
7 Council further justified their support for WP18-41
8 adding that as caribou decline.....
9

10 (Whispered conversation)
11

12 MR. STEVENSON: The Council supported
13 18-41 and took no action on 18-42.
14

15 Thank you, Mr. Chair.
16

17 CHAIRMAN CHRISTIANSON: Thank you. At
18 this time I open up the floor to the public.
19

20 (No comments)
21

22 CHAIRMAN CHRISTIANSON: Anyone on the
23 phone.
24

25 OPERATOR: No comments at this time.
26

27 CHAIRMAN CHRISTIANSON: Thank you.
28 Regional Council recommendation. Northwest Arctic.
29

30 MR. SHIEDT: We support Proposal WP18-
31 41 and took no action on 42. Action was taken because
32 our caribou, like Zach said, has declined heavily and
33 we also -- our moose is declining in our area. As I
34 was coming here Thursday, I got a call in the evening
35 about this proposal that from Noorvik area that they
36 saw moose, but they saw some late. It was unusual they
37 said probably due to warming. They asked me to mention
38 that. They did see some, but not like the numbers they
39 seen before.
40

41 Also I'm going to ask Zach -- when we
42 had our SRC meeting we brought this up. Zach, could
43 you read the one from Kobuk Valley.
44

45 MR. STEVENSON: Through the Chair. The
46 National Park Service, Western Arctic National Park
47 Lands through staff noted that both the Kobuk Valley
48 Subsistence Resource Commission and the Cape
49 Krusenstern Subsistence Resource Commission supported
50

1 Wildlife Proposal 18-41 and took no action on Wildlife
2 Proposal 18-42. Further, staff noted that the Gates of
3 the Arctic Subsistence Resource Commission voted to
4 support 18-41.

5

6 Thank you, Mr. Chair.

7

8 CHAIRMAN CHRISTIANSON: Thank you.

9

10 North Slope.

11

12 MR. G. BROWER: Thank you, Mr. Chair,
13 for the opportunity. The North Slope RAC did support
14 WP18-41 and took no action on 18-42. We wanted to make
15 sure we supported our neighbors. In addition to that
16 our residents out of Point Hope has C&T in that area as
17 well in Unit 23. We're hopeful that as caribou have
18 declined that this will help to supplement needs when
19 they need that.

20

21 So that was the direction of the North
22 Slope RAC.

23

24 Thank you, Mr. Chair.

25

26 CHAIRMAN CHRISTIANSON: Thank you,
27 Gordon. Tribal, Alaska Native comments.

28

29 MR. MIKE: Thank you, Mr. Chair.
30 Donald Mike, Council Coordination. Tribal consultation
31 was scheduled for September 7, 2017 and no comments
32 were received from tribal or ANCSA corps.

33

34 Thank you, Mr. Chair.

35

36 CHAIRMAN CHRISTIANSON: Thank you,
37 Donald. Alaska Department of Fish and Game.

38

39 MR. BUTLER: Mr. Chair, members of the
40 Board. The Department supports the proposal as
41 modified by OSM and agrees with the OSM analysis.
42 Recommends take no action on 42.

43

44 CHAIRMAN CHRISTIANSON: Thank you.
45 InterAgency Staff Committee.

46

47 MS. HARDIN: Thank you, Mr. Chair. The
48 InterAgency Staff Committee provided the standard
49 comments for WP18-41/42.

50

1 CHAIRMAN CHRISTIANSON: Thank you.
2 Regional Board discussion with Council Chairs, State
3 Liaison.
4

5 (No comments)
6

7 CHAIRMAN CHRISTIANSON: Seeing and
8 hearing none, we'll open the floor for Board action.
9

10 MR. FROST: Thank you, Mr. Chair. I
11 move to adopt WP18-41 as found on Page 1002 of the
12 meeting book and take no action on WP18-42. After a
13 second I'll speak to my motion.
14

15 MR. POLACCA: Second.
16

17 CHAIRMAN CHRISTIANSON: Bert.
18

19 MR. FROST: I intend to vote in support
20 of my motion WP18-41 as proposed by the Northwest
21 Arctic Subsistence Regional Advisory Council, would
22 shorten the moose season, reduce cow harvest, create a
23 bull season and reduce regulatory complexity between
24 the Federal and State hunt areas. The proposed actions
25 provide needed protection to the declining moose
26 population. Also due to caribou population declining
27 in Unit 23, local subsistence users are relying more
28 heavily on moose to meet their needs.
29

30 This recommendation is consistent with
31 the recommendations of the Northwest Arctic and North
32 Slope RACs as stated on Page 1034. Also Cape
33 Krusenstern National Monument, Kobuk Valley National
34 Park and Gates of the Arctic National Park SRCs found
35 on Page 7-30 to 7-35 in the supplemental section 7.
36 And the proposed regulatory language for WP18-42 is
37 located on Pages 1002-1003 in the executive summary of
38 the Board book.
39

40 Thank you.
41

42 CHAIRMAN CHRISTIANSON: Thank you,
43 Bert. Any discussion.
44

45 (No comments)
46

47 CHAIRMAN CHRISTIANSON: Call for the
48 question.
49
50

1 MR. SIEKANIEC: Question.

2

3 CHAIRMAN CHRISTIANSON: All right.
4 Tom, I'll have you read it in and do roll call.

5

6 MR. DOOLITTLE: This is in reference to
7 Wildlife Proposal 18-41/42. The motion on the floor is
8 to adopt Proposal WP18-41 as found on Page 1002 of the
9 meeting book and take no action on WP18-42.

10

11 CHAIRMAN CHRISTIANSON: With that, all
12 in favor of the motion signify by saying aye.

13

14 IN UNISON: Aye.

15

16 CHAIRMAN CHRISTIANSON: Opposed same
17 sign.

18

19 (No opposing votes)

20

21 CHAIRMAN CHRISTIANSON: Motion carries
22 unanimously. Lisa.

23

24 MS. MAAS: Thank you, Mr. Chair.
25 Members of the Board. For the record my name is Lisa
26 Maas and I'll be presenting the summary of the analysis
27 for Wildlife Proposal 18-43, which begins on Page 1040
28 of the meeting book.

29

30 Wildlife Proposal WP18-43 was submitted
31 by the Northwest Arctic Council and requests that the
32 Unit 23 brown bear harvest limit be increased from one
33 to three bears per year and that the season be extended
34 to year-round. The proponent notes an overabundance of
35 brown bears in Unit 23 and states that the proposed
36 regulation changes would reduce human-bear conflicts
37 and disturbance to migrating caribou.

38

39 In 2017 the Alaska Board of Game
40 increased the resident brown bear harvest limit in Unit
41 23 to two bears per year. Another Federal wildlife
42 proposal WP18-44 could affect this proposal. WP18-44
43 requests that up to two brown bear hides and
44 skulls could be sold per year and will be presented
45 next.

46

47 There are many uncertainties about the
48 Unit 23 brown bear population. However, according to
49 aerial survey data and local observations the brown
50

1 bear population and most of Unit 23 appears healthy and
2 to be increasing. Brown bear populations are often
3 managed conservatively.

4
5 Brown bears are a highly respected and
6 utilized subsistence resource in Northwest Alaska.
7 Bears are predominantly harvested during the spring and
8 fall. They are rarely hunted in the summer because
9 they're lean, their hides are of lesser quality and
10 they are considered more dangerous. Local hunters
11 rarely take bears in defense of life and property as
12 the process is onerous and hunters fear they may have
13 broken the law. Rather nuisance bears are more often
14 killed and not reported but their meat is utilized.

15
16 Since 1990 reported brown bear harvest
17 in Unit 23 has averaged 50 bears per year. Unit 23
18 residents have reported 14 brown bear harvests per year
19 on average. However, when unreported harvests are
20 included, Unit 23 residents have harvested an estimated
21 20 to 30 brown bears per year. While the percent of
22 males in the reported harvest has exceeded State
23 management objectives, the impact of hunting on the
24 Unit 23 brown bear population is unknown due to
25 unreported harvest and lack of population data.

26
27 Overharvesting may be occurring within
28 Gates of the Arctic National Park and Preserve. One
29 alternative considered was to increase the harvest
30 limit to two bears per year instead of three due to
31 uncertainties about brown bear populations and harvest.
32 A two bear harvest limit would also reduce user
33 confusion and regulatory complexity by aligning with
34 recent changes to State regulations.

35
36 Adoption of this proposal would
37 increase opportunity for Federally qualified
38 subsistence users and would provide for a Federal
39 subsistence priority as Federal regulations are
40 currently more restrictive than State regulations.
41 However, concurrence would be needed from the State to
42 allow Federally qualified subsistence users to use a
43 State registration permit with season dates and harvest
44 limits that differ from existing State regulations.

45
46 As all edible meat must be salvaged and
47 two bears can already be harvested under State
48 regulations, an increase in the Federal harvest limit
49 is not expected to result in a substantial increase in
50

1 harvest. Similarly, as bears are traditionally
2 harvested in the spring and fall, few bears are
3 expected to be harvested during the extended season in
4 June and July.

5
6 A year round season may increase
7 harvest reporting and would also allow for the take and
8 utilization of nuisance bears during the summer that
9 would not be legal under defense of life and property.
10 However, there may be conservation concerns for this
11 proposal.

12
13 While the best available information
14 suggests that the Unit 23 brown bear population is
15 stable or increasing there are still many uncertainties
16 about the population and harvest. Additionally, brown
17 bears are slow to recover from overharvest. A three-
18 bear harvest limit would be the highest in the state
19 and may be unsustainable.

20
21 The OSM conclusion is to support WP18-
22 43 with modification to increase the harvest limit to
23 two bears per year.

24
25 Thank you, Mr. Chair.

26
27 I'd be happy to take any questions.

28
29 CHAIRMAN CHRISTIANSON: Thank you.
30 Questions.

31
32 (No comments)

33
34 CHAIRMAN CHRISTIANSON: Hearing none.
35 We'll move on to summary of public comment.

36
37 Thank you for that.

38
39 MR. STEVENSON: Thank you, Mr. Chair.
40 For the record, this is Zach Stevenson with the Office
41 of Subsistence Management. One public written comment
42 was received by Sterling Miller, retired Alaska
43 Department of Fish and Game bear biologist, and by
44 Clait E. Braun, past president of the Wildlife Society
45 and former editor of the Journal of Wildlife
46 Management.

47
48 Both gentlemen oppose Wildlife Proposal
49 18-43 stating that science demonstrated that bears are
50

1 a keystone predator and eliminating them would have a
2 negative conservation effects to the unit.

3
4 Also both gentlemen disputed the
5 reduction of user conflicts or human conflicts with
6 brown bears, stating that a lack of evidence was not
7 provided to substantiate that concern and that non-
8 lethal techniques could be used to eliminate or address
9 that problem.

10
11 And additionally stated that the
12 reduction or damage to public property did not provide
13 sufficient justification for the proposed action.

14
15 That concludes the summary of comments
16 for Wildlife Proposal 18-43, Mr. Chair.

17
18 CHAIRMAN CHRISTIANSON: Thank you. Now
19 we open the floor to public testimony.

20
21 (No comments)

22
23 CHAIRMAN CHRISTIANSON: Anyone online.

24
25 OPERATOR: No comments online.

26
27 CHAIRMAN CHRISTIANSON: Thank you.
28 Regional Council recommendation. Western Interior.

29
30 MR. REAKOFF: Thank you, Mr. Chair.
31 Western Interior Regional Advisory Council supported
32 the modified OSM modification to two bears with a year
33 round season.

34
35 Thank you, Mr. Chair.

36
37 CHAIRMAN CHRISTIANSON: Thank you.

38
39 Northwest Arctic.

40
41 MR. SHIEDT: Yeah. In one of our
42 proposals we had less bear to be taken and we had
43 conflicts with bear early in the season. We have so
44 many bears that they were destroying cabins. Also
45 people that are in their cabins were being bothered by
46 bears where two camps within a mile apart had to spend
47 the night at their roof, not in their cabin because
48 they were coming in. They were scared and they had to
49 move on top of their cabin and they slept there. So

50

1 they shot them next day and they also were at the
2 cabin.
3

4 This is also happening in the river. A
5 lot of cabins are being destroyed by bears. There's so
6 many bears that I almost lost my son. Only distance
7 between the bear and my son was the side of the boat.
8 Bear claw marks right on the boat and it took me and my
9 other son to try to shoot it to save -- he wanted to
10 save his brother, I wanted to save my son, but every
11 time we aim at the bear he would align himself with my
12 son and the boat. We were running back and forth at
13 our camp outside. I mean that's how much we are being
14 disturbed by bears. That's why we change our mind and
15 we increase it to three.
16

17 The other reason is winter bears are
18 getting to be known now. I don't know if you guys know
19 anything about winter bears. They're the same bears but
20 they ice themselves so they won't freeze. Reason why I
21 know I shot one before. Just only the joints have no
22 ice in them and their neck. That's all you could shoot
23 them at. So it took me seven shots to shoot one bear.
24 That's how dangerous it's getting.
25

26 Too many bears all over, increasing in
27 Northwest Alaska. People are losing their fish, what
28 they dry in the air. One lady had about four poles,
29 maybe about 30, 40 whitefish, and in one night he ate
30 them all. And he never even say thank you.
31

32 (Laughter)
33

34 MR. SHIEDT: That's why we ask for
35 increase for the safety. Also at Noatak they call me.
36 He said, Attamuk, there's bears on the street and kids
37 are going to school. I say shoot the sucker and drag
38 it and work on it. That's how bad it is. Not only
39 Noatak. Other villages are experiencing this bear
40 problems in Northwest Alaska because there's no caribou
41 for them to feed on. There's low decline in moose and
42 there's hardly any beached -- dead seals beached. So
43 what are they doing? I hate to see a Native get killed
44 by a bear.
45

46 That's why we ask for this support.
47 That's why we support it and that's why we change it
48 from the other proposal. That's why in the slight time
49 we change it, the Park Service didn't like it, from two
50

1 bears and we try to increase it. Because we are scared
2 of bears. They're scary. There's too many.

3
4 I remember one time we were at camp.
5 We had no caribou in our boat. The bear was in the
6 river and he charged us and we were in the middle of
7 the river. That's how hungry he was. He charged, but
8 only thing -- we didn't shoot it because he was in the
9 water. He'll sink. I mean that's how dangerous it's
10 getting.

11
12 Thank you.

13
14 CHAIRMAN CHRISTIANSON: Zach, you had
15 something to add.

16
17 MR. STEVENSON: Yes. Thank you, Mr.
18 Chair. I also wanted to note that the Cape Krusenstern
19 Subsistence Resource Commission voted in support of
20 Wildlife Proposal 18-43 as modified by the Office of
21 Subsistence Management and the Upper Kobuk Advisory
22 Committee voted to support Wildlife Proposal 18-43 as
23 well.

24
25 Thank you, Mr. Chair.

26
27 CHAIRMAN CHRISTIANSON: Thank you.

28
29 North Slope.

30
31 MR. G. BROWER: Thank you for the
32 opportunity. Gordon Brower, North Slope Regional RAC
33 Chair. The North Slope voted to support WP18-43.
34 Council members from Point Hope noted that there is an
35 abundance of brown bears in this area in Unit 23. Point
36 Hope is within the North Slope region, but it also
37 overlaps with Unit 23 where Attamuk and them are. It
38 seems to be ample for additional harvest opportunities.

39
40
41 So the Council recognized and support
42 Northwest Regional Advisory Council and the proposal as
43 written. Maybe we weren't privy to the modifications
44 at the time and when we talked about this some of the
45 other regions hadn't voted yet. I think they had yet
46 to meet and talk about it.

47
48 Unit 23 had weighed in the
49 consideration noting that the locals are most
50

1 knowledgeable based on their experience and
2 observations. So the North Slope supported.
3

4 MR. SHIEDT: Yeah, I forget to -- I'm
5 going to add this. At my camp at Aggie, I'm a little
6 ways from Aggie, right from our window, within about a
7 mile from the mouth of Aggie, my wife and I one day --
8 not one day but one time alone we count 22 bears. We
9 could count them with binoculars. That's how
10 concentrated they are at Aggie.
11

12 CHAIRMAN CHRISTIANSON: Louis.
13

14 MR. GREEN: Seward Peninsula didn't
15 weigh in on this, but I just wanted to make a comment
16 about -- thank you, Mr. Chair -- about the idea that
17 there's hybrid bears now. I just heard them talking
18 about a winter bear and that's the first time I've
19 heard of that. So the Feds have recognized the fact
20 several years ago that there's a cross-breed between
21 polar bear and grizzly. I would imagine that that
22 might be the area that it's taking place in. I know
23 I've seen them around the Nome area also back in the
24 early 2000s. So this might be your winter bear. I was
25 dreading the idea that that could ever be a potential,
26 but maybe that's what's happening.
27

28 Thank you.
29

30 MS. PITKA: What he was talking about
31 was a brown bear that ices itself in a lake. So it
32 ices itself so thick that you can't shoot it easily.
33 So the fact that he was able to shoot one is pretty
34 awesome.
35

36 MR. SHIEDT: No, the elders they always
37 educate us about our way of life and they told us about
38 it that if you ever run into winter bear, don't just
39 shoot at it. You have to shoot at it at the joints
40 when it turns and around the neck when it's turning and
41 looking. That's the only way you could ever kill it.
42 The fur has ice what they did and when we saw it at the
43 Noatak River. They told me it went to the creek, get
44 wet, go up and freeze and he keep moving until he got
45 ice all over. That's why they're winter bears.
46 They're summer bears. The reason why I call them
47 winter bears is due to the ice-up. I saw one when I
48 was 14 and the old man showed me how to kill it. He
49 say if we don't watch it, he'll get our dog team then.
50

1 Last year there was winter bears. You hear about maybe
2 about six years ago when a polar bear went to Noorvik.
3 That's up the river. Yes, there is cross breed on
4 polar bear and brown bear. We seen them before. It's
5 not unusual. It do happen. Let's just put it that
6 way. Not much difference between a white man and an
7 Eskimo lady. They do cross breed.

8
9 (Laughter)

10
11 CHAIRMAN CHRISTIANSON: I'm living
12 proof.

13
14 (Laughter)

15
16 CHAIRMAN CHRISTIANSON: Any other
17 comments. That's what my grandpa called me when he'd
18 tell me a story. White half-breed like you, he said.
19 I didn't know how to take it, but best of both worlds.

20
21 Any more with that.

22
23 (No comments)

24
25 CHAIRMAN CHRISTIANSON: Tribal, Alaska
26 Native comments.

27
28 MR. MIKE: Thank you, Mr. Chair.
29 Donald Mike, Council Coordinator. There were two
30 consultations scheduled for September 7th and September
31 14th for tribal and ANCSA consultation. We did not
32 receive any comments.

33
34 Thank you, Mr. Chair.

35
36 CHAIRMAN CHRISTIANSON: Thank you.
37 Alaska Department of Fish and Game comments.

38
39 MR. BURCH: Thank you, Mr. Chair. Mark
40 Burch with the Department of Fish and Game. Our
41 comments are found on Page 1060 in your book. Fish and
42 Game opposes the proposal as written and supports
43 modifying the proposal so that it aligns both the bag
44 limit and the season with the current State seasons.

45
46 The proposal asks to increase the bag
47 limit from one bear to three bears. Harvest using the
48 State's bag limits right now is low. So we don't
49 anticipate a problem from a conservation perspective

50

1 with too much harvest if this proposal is adopted, but
2 it would put both the bag limit and the season out of
3 sync with each other and cause additional confusion
4 from that perspective.

5
6 So, as I stated, we encourage you to
7 modify the proposal to align the bag limit with the
8 State of two bears as well as the season.

9
10 Thank you.

11
12 CHAIRMAN CHRISTIANSON: Thank you.
13 InterAgency Staff Committee.

14
15 MS. HARDIN: Thank you, Mr. Chair.
16 Members of the Board. The InterAgency Staff Committee
17 comments on WP18-43 are located on Page 1059 of your
18 book.

19
20 In addition to the standard comment,
21 the InterAgency Staff Committee offered the following
22 comments on WP18-43: The proponent's justification for
23 submitting this proposal is to reduce human-bear
24 conflicts, particularly the destruction of cabins and
25 taking meat from boats.

26
27 The issues of nuisance bears and
28 protection of life and property from wildlife are not
29 under the purview of the Federal Subsistence Board, but
30 are covered under State regulations concerning Defense
31 of Life and Property. Since Defense of Life and
32 Property is under State regulations, proposals
33 submitted for the primary purposes of reducing
34 human-bear conflicts related to the defense of life and
35 property should not be validated for further
36 consideration by the Board.

37
38 The analysis notes that human
39 consumption of brown bears is not common in Unit 23 and
40 that most bears are taken in the fall before they enter
41 their dens or in the spring when they emerge, which
42 raises the question why a year-round season is
43 necessary, particularly during the summer months when
44 the animals are lean
45 and the hides are of lower quality.

46
47 The analysis also indicates there are
48 many uncertainties regarding brown bear populations and
49 harvest within Unit 23 and that overharvest may already
50

1 be occurring in Gates of the Arctic National Park and
2 Preserve. This proposal would not bring Federal
3 regulations into alignment with the State regulations
4 and there doesn't appear to be a pressing need to
5 increase harvest and season lengths at this time.

6
7 Thank you, Mr. Chair.

8
9 CHAIRMAN CHRISTIANSON: Thank you.
10 That opens it up for Board discussion with Council
11 Chairs and State Liaison.

12
13 (No comments)

14
15 CHAIRMAN CHRISTIANSON: I was going to
16 ask a question of why we weren't going to align it with
17 the State and then I got my memory jogged that some of
18 the Federal qualified users wanted that opportunity to
19 shoot them when we were on the Kuskokwim because of the
20 problem they were starting to present to fish camps and
21 not wanting to break the law defending their property
22 and stuff. So I was going to ask that question and
23 then my mind kind of got jogged just why some Federally
24 qualified users were looking for that year open hunt.

25
26 Louis.

27
28 MR. GREEN: Thank you, Mr. Chair. Same
29 question she has. Is it the State's -- or I have that
30 question, I guess. What's the State's season. You're
31 aligning the number, but is the date.....

32
33 MS. MAAS: Yeah, through the Chair.
34 Currently the State and Federal seasons are aligned.
35 It's August 1st through May 31st, but currently the
36 harvest limit of the State and Federal seasons are not
37 aligned, so the State is currently two bears per year
38 and the Federal regulations is one bear per year. The
39 OSM modification is to align the State and Federal
40 harvest limit to two bears per year and go with the
41 year-round extended season, whereas the State's
42 position is to align both the season and the harvest
43 limit for State and Federal regulations.

44
45 CHAIRMAN CHRISTIANSON: Any further
46 Board discussion. Thank you for that.

47
48 MR. C. BROWER: Mr. Chair.

1 CHAIRMAN CHRISTIANSON: Charlie.

2

3 MR. C. BROWER: So when you're aligned
4 State and Federal, that's two from State, two from
5 Federal, that's four, right?

6

7 (Laughter)

8

9 MR. G. BROWER: Mr. Chair.

10

11 CHAIRMAN CHRISTIANSON: Gordon.

12

13 MR. G. BROWER: It seems to me we're
14 about all year. I mean two months is the discrepancy.
15 It seems to me that's not a very huge gap to fill. I
16 too have heard hunters up in the Arctic area of bears
17 coming out a little earlier around the Colville and
18 things like that. We are riddled with an increased
19 number of brown bears. I can attest for those kind of
20 things myself. There aren't very many people that go
21 out there and do this stuff and take them for
22 subsistence purposes. I just wanted to point that out.

23

24 Thank you.

25

26 CHAIRMAN CHRISTIANSON: Thank you.

27

28 Louis.

29

30 MR. GREEN: Thank you, Mr. Chair. To
31 go along with Mr. Brower. Like I said again earlier,
32 the shooting of a bear was so restricted for so long
33 people are still stuck with that idea that if they pull
34 a trigger, they're going to get in trouble. I see that
35 in my area and it sounds like it's happening up there.
36 Somewhere the curve has got to curve the other way, I
37 suppose.

38

39 I don't know what the problem would be
40 with allowing the third bear in there. You've got two
41 years to make the decision on what to do. Isn't it a
42 two-year cycle we're in with the Feds, right? So these
43 people are talking about something that happened in my
44 area, in the Nome area, where the bears were increasing
45 and people complained about them. Their fish camps
46 were getting busted into, racks of fish were getting
47 cleaned off.

48

49 You know, it took a long time for Fish

50

1 and Game to start catching up to the idea that maybe
2 they needed to go from one bear every four years to one
3 bear every year. Now we've got an over-abundance of
4 bears and they're still doing the same thing. I think
5 this proposal that they have would help curb that
6 increase. I heard Fish and Game or somebody say that
7 the bears are on the increase up there. Just speaking
8 in favor of the three.
9

10 Thank you, Mr. Chair.
11

12 MR. REAKOFF: Mr. Chair.
13

14 CHAIRMAN CHRISTIANSON: Thank you.
15

16 Jack.
17

18 MR. REAKOFF: I heard it stated in the
19 analysis and then the InterAgency Staff Committee that
20 there's over-harvest in the Gates of the Arctic Park
21 and I don't know where that data is coming from because
22 I'm on the Gates of the Arctic Subsistence Resource
23 Commission. Where were you attaining that data?
24

25 MS. MAAS: Through the Chair. That
26 data comes from Kyle Jolly, a biologist with Gates of
27 the Arctic National Park and Preserve. After the
28 Western Council meeting an area biologist from Unit 24
29 questioned that information as well, so we went back to
30 Kyle and got some further clarification on where his
31 data is coming from and it's based on a mortality study
32 up in that area and he said there's not definitive
33 results yet, but any mortality they've found has been
34 through human harvest.
35

36 There's just concern about the
37 navigable rivers up in that area that people are up
38 there fishing and there might be added mortality when
39 all the bears are -- you know, it's kind of a hot spot
40 when you're on those fishing rivers. That's where the
41 bears and the people go.
42

43 Again, that's information from Kyle,
44 but most of the brown bear survey data is from the
45 Lower Noatak and that's also where most of the harvest
46 occurs. So Kyle's information is kind of for all of
47 Gates of the Arctic but a lot of that park is in Unit
48 24, not Unit 23.
49
50

1 MR. REAKOFF: Mr. Chair. I live in
2 Unit 24 and I know that there's very little harvest in
3 Gates of the Arctic Park. Anaktuvuk takes a couple
4 bears a year. There's not a heck of a lot of harvest
5 inside the Park. There might be harvest on the Kobuk
6 Preserve, but I wouldn't say that the Gates of the
7 Arctic Park as a whole, which is a very lightly
8 populated human population, would have an overharvest
9 problem. I don't agree with that.

10

11 Thank you, Mr. Chair.

12

13 CHAIRMAN CHRISTIANSON: Lem.

14

15 MR. BUTLER: Thank you, Mr. Chair.
16 Just to contribute to the conversation. We don't agree
17 with that assessment either. We'd agree with Jack that
18 it's lightly harvested and can sustain.

19

20 CHAIRMAN CHRISTIANSON: Okay. Thank
21 you guys for that.

22

23 MR. FROST: Thank you, Mr. Chair. In
24 deference to the Northwest Arctic, I think that we've
25 had a lot of discussion about them meeting their needs
26 with caribou and moose. A big part of that is probably
27 because they've got so many bears. I think that's a
28 consideration.

29

30 Thank you.

31

32 CHAIRMAN CHRISTIANSON: Thank you. I
33 think we've discussed this one. Oh, Enoch got one more
34 there.

35

36 MR. SHIEDT: Jack, did you say Upper
37 Kobuk, bears not being taken at Upper Kobuk?

38

39 MR. REAKOFF: No, I said in the Gates
40 of the Arctic National Park, which is an 8.5 million
41 acre park, to say that the bears in the Gates of the
42 Arctic Park are overharvested is a real stretch. Maybe
43 in the Kobuk Preserve right on the river where people
44 are up there fishing or something. Maybe the harvest
45 along the Kobuk River, but you can't extrapolate that
46 to the entire Park. That doesn't work this way.

47

48 They did a Western Brooks Range
49 analysis for the Ambler Road. So they had one bear

50

1 that went over the Brooks Range and was collared on the
2 south slope and was killed on the Colville River. One
3 of those boars went way to the other side, but that
4 doesn't mean that the entire Park is overharvested.

5
6 I take exception to that. I'm on the
7 Gates of the Arctic Subsistence Resource Commission. I
8 live -- I can see the Park from my house and I know
9 that there's not a lot of harvest in the Gates Park
10 itself. So I disagree with the Park Service saying
11 that the entire Park is being overharvested. That's
12 not the way this is happening.

13
14 There may be harvest in the Kobuk
15 Preserve that's showing high harvest -- mortalities
16 being human harvest, but that doesn't mean the entire
17 Park is overharvested. So that's what I was pointing
18 out to the Board.

19
20 Thank you, Mr. Chair.

21
22 CHAIRMAN CHRISTIANSON: Thank you. I
23 think I'm going to ask for Board action.

24
25 MR. FROST: Mr. Chair. I would move
26 that we adopt WP18-43 as modified by OSM. This
27 modification is listed on Page 1056 of the meeting
28 book. After a second I will speak to my motion.

29
30 MR. C. BROWER: Second.

31
32 MR. FROST: I intend to vote against my
33 motion. The proponent's justification for submitting
34 this proposal is to reduce human/bear conflicts,
35 particularly the destruction of cabins and taking meats
36 from boats. The proponent also claims the disturbance
37 of caribou migration by brown bears may also be
38 reduced.

39
40 The issue of nuisance bears and
41 protection of life and property from wildlife are not
42 under the purview of the Federal Subsistence Board.
43 Instead these issues are covered under State
44 regulations concerning Defense of Life and Property.

45
46 In addition, the analysis notes that
47 human consumption of brown bears is not common in Unit
48 23 and that most bears are taken in the fall before
49 they enter their dens or in the spring when they
50

1 emerge, which raises the question of why a year-round
2 season is necessary, particularly during the summer
3 months when the animals are lean and the hides are of
4 lower quality. The analysis also indicates that there
5 are many uncertainties regarding brown bear populations
6 and harvest within Unit 23.

7
8 Speaking to the justification for not
9 following the recommendations of the Regional Advisory
10 Council, defense of life and property is addressed by
11 State regulations and not by the Federal subsistence
12 regulations. Therefore I will vote to oppose my
13 motion.

14
15 CHAIRMAN CHRISTIANSON: Any discussion
16 with the Board.

17
18 (No comments)

19
20 MR. C. BROWER: Question.

21
22 CHAIRMAN CHRISTIANSON: The question
23 has been called. Do roll call. Read into the record
24 the motion, please.

25
26 MR. DOOLITTLE: This is Wildlife
27 Proposal WP18-43. The motion on the floor is adopt
28 Proposal WP18-43 as modified by the Office of
29 Subsistence Management. This modification can be found
30 on Page 1056 of the meeting book.

31
32 Bureau of Land Management, Karen
33 Mouritsen.

34
35 MS. MOURITSEN: Oppose.

36
37 MR. DOOLITTLE: National Park Service,
38 Herbert Frost.

39
40 MR. FROST: Oppose.

41
42 MR. DOOLITTLE: U.S. Forest Service,
43 Wayne Owen.

44
45 MR. OWEN: Support.

46
47 MR. DOOLITTLE: U.S. Fish and Wildlife
48 Service, Greg Siekaniec.

1 MR. SIEKANIEC: I oppose because I do
2 believe that the DLP is administered by the State of
3 Alaska and we would be overextending our reach as far
4 as the Board.

5
6 Thank you.

7
8 MR. DOOLITTLE: BIA, Lynn Polacca.

9
10 MR. POLACCA: I support.

11
12 MR. DOOLITTLE: Public member, Rhonda
13 Pitka.

14
15 MS. PITKA: I support.

16
17 MR. DOOLITTLE: Public member, Charlie
18 Brower.

19
20 MR. C. BROWER: Support.

21
22 MR. DOOLITTLE: Chairman Anthony
23 Christianson.

24
25 CHAIRMAN CHRISTIANSON: I support based
26 on an increased opportunity for subsistence and to make
27 sure that our regulations are more stringent in the
28 State. Thank you.

29
30 MR. DOOLITTLE: Motion carried.

31
32 CHAIRMAN CHRISTIANSON: Move on to the
33 next.

34
35 MR. REAM: Good afternoon, Mr. Chair.
36 Members of the Board. For the record, my name is
37 Joshua Ream. My Tlingit name is Xixch'i Toowoo. I'm
38 an anthropologist with the Office of Subsistence
39 Management.

40
41 WP18-44's executive summary begins on
42 Page 1066 of your Board books. The actual analysis
43 begins just a few pages later on 1071.

44
45 Proposal WP18-44, submitted by the
46 Northwest Arctic Subsistence Regional Advisory Council,
47 requests regulations allowing the sale of up to two
48 raw/untanned brown bear hides (with claws attached)
49 and/or skulls per regulatory year, from brown bears
50

1 legally harvested by Federally qualified subsistence
2 users on Federal public lands in Unit 23.

3

4 Since much of the regulatory history,
5 the harvest history, and the biology was presented in
6 the last proposal, WP18-43, I will not repeat them
7 here. If you have any questions about these at the end
8 of the presentation, please be sure to let me know.

9

10 The Northwest Arctic Regional Advisory
11 Council voted to submit this proposal to align State
12 and Federal regulations in Unit 23 by adding a
13 provision in Federal regulations allowing the
14 sale of up to two skulls and raw/untanned hides of
15 brown bears legally harvested on Federal public lands
16 by Federally qualified subsistence users, per
17 regulatory year.

18

19 The Council also voted to submit a
20 companion proposal (WP18-43) to increase the Federal
21 harvest limit for brown bears from one bear to three
22 bears per
23 regulatory year and extend the season to year round.
24 The proponent clarified that they only seek to allow
25 the sale of two brown bear skulls and raw/untanned
26 hides (with claws attached) per regulatory year.

27

28 Because of the State increase in the
29 brown bear harvest limit to two bears per regulatory
30 year in Unit 23, the sale of brown bear skulls and
31 hides (with claws attached) is legal under general
32 State regulations in Unit 23 as of July 1, 2017.
33 However, brown bears harvested under a State
34 subsistence registration permit in Unit 23 (as
35 currently required under Federal regulations) that are
36 either removed from the subsistence area or presented
37 for commercial tanning must be sealed by a designated
38 sealing officer and the skin of the head and front
39 claws must be removed and kept by the Alaska Department
40 of Fish and Game.

41

42 Federal regulations currently allow the
43 harvest of one brown bear annually in Unit 23 by State
44 registration permit, therefore requiring that the front
45 claws be removed and kept by Alaska Department of Fish
46 and Game upon sealing.

47

48 In 2008, the Board adopted Proposal
49 WP08-52 to allow the sale of handicrafts made from the
50

1 fur of a brown bear taken in Unit 23 so that
2 subsistence users could more fully utilize the brown
3 bear resource.
4

5 In 2012, the Board adopted Proposal
6 WP12-01 to require sealing of brown bear hides or claws
7 prior to selling handicrafts incorporating these parts.
8 This was done in order to ensure that marketed
9 handicrafts were made from legally harvested bears. The
10 proposal was submitted by the Brown Bear Claw
11 Handicraft Working Group.
12

13 In 2016, the Board of Game adopted
14 Proposal 57 to allow the sale of brown bear hides
15 and/or skulls by Alaska residents in units where the
16 harvest limit is two bears or more per regulatory year.
17 The proposal was submitted by the Nushagak Advisory
18 Committee with the stated intent of encouraging brown
19 bear harvest to reduce predation on moose and caribou
20 and to reduce bear hazards around communities.
21

22 In 2017, the Board of Game adopted
23 Proposal 40 to increase the resident brown bear harvest
24 limit in Unit 23 to two bears
25 per regulatory year. The Board of Game supported
26 Proposal 40 because it provided more harvest
27 opportunity, because there were no conservation
28 concerns, and because it was supported by five local
29 Fish and Game Advisory Committees.
30

31 In November of 2017 the Board of Game
32 heard Proposal 49, which requests that a permit be
33 required before brown bear skulls and hides with claws
34 attached could be sold. The proposal was submitted by
35 the Alaska Department of Fish and Game because there is
36 no method to track the sale of bears harvested in areas
37 where the harvest limit was two brown bears per year.
38 The proponent stated that this proposal will allow
39 Alaska Department of Fish and Game to track and
40 quantify the interest in selling brown bear skulls and
41 hides with claws attached.
42

43 While the proponent has expressed in
44 public testimony that
45 raw/untanned brown bear hides that are prepared for
46 sale typically require much more time and skill in
47 ensuring that there are no rips or tears during
48 processing as compared to those prepared for personal
49 use, this does not appear to meet the definition of a
50

1 handicraft as defined in 50 CFR 100.4.

2
3 Raw/untanned hides (with claws
4 attached) and skulls do not align with the definition
5 of a handicraft, but these items may be sold more
6 appropriately under customary trade. Federal
7 subsistence regulations define customary trade in 50
8 CFR 100.4 as follows: Exchange for cash of fish and
9 wildlife resources regulated in this part, not
10 otherwise prohibited by Federal law or regulation, to
11 support personal and family needs; and does not include
12 trade which constitutes a significant commercial
13 enterprise.

14
15 It defined as customary trade the sale
16 of raw/untanned hides and skulls of brown bears under
17 Federal regulations would still require adherence to
18 the meat salvage regulations.

19
20 The issue of claw retention was
21 examined extensively by the Brown Bear Claw Handicraft
22 Working Group that was set up by your
23 Board and was formed in 2009 to discuss a range of
24 issues relating to brown bear claws including their use
25 in handicrafts, the feasibility of tracking, and
26 potential changes to regulations. Of particular
27 concern to this group was preventing the illegal
28 harvest and sale of brown bear parts that can garner
29 significant monetary value in worldwide markets, and
30 which may incentivize illegal harvest of brown bear
31 populations elsewhere in North America where
32 conservation concerns are prevalent.

33
34 Brown bears have long been a highly
35 respected and utilized subsistence resource in
36 northwest Alaska and the species has a prominent
37 physical and symbolic role in the lives of local
38 people. These animals provide a source of meat, raw
39 materials, and medicine within the Inupiaq culture of
40 the region. Brown bears have also been prized as
41 trophy sport hunting animals
42 in the region, largely by non-Native residents of the
43 regional hubs of Nome and Kotzebue.

44
45 The hunting of brown bears in Inupiaq
46 culture traditionally required strict adherence to
47 prescribed practices designed to show respect to the
48 animal and a hunter's success was considered dependent
49 on adherence to these protocols.

50

1 The use of brown bears for food in the
2 region is variable among communities, depending on
3 geographic location. Inland communities eat brown
4 bears more frequently while coastal communities rarely
5 eat this species unless it is harvested in interior
6 areas where bears feed on fish and berries. Coastal
7 bears are often considered unpalatable due to their
8 tendency to
9 consume marine mammal carcasses along the beaches.

10
11 Among the edible parts of a brown bear,
12 the fat is the most prized product. Local hunters time
13 their hunting to correspond with when bears have the
14 most fat and the meat is of highest
15 quality.

16
17 Customary trade is a long-standing
18 practice among Alaska Native cultures statewide and
19 closely resembles bartering
20 practices with the introduction of monetary exchange.

21
22 In 2010, data on customary trade for
23 one Inupiaq community in the Northwest Arctic Borough,
24 Selawik, was documented by the Alaska Department of
25 Fish and Game. During the study year, which was
26 2010-2011, approximately 32 percent of households
27 engaged in customary trade. Though brown bear hides
28 and skulls were not included in these transactions.

29
30 The OSM conclusion is to oppose
31 Proposal WP18-44. Adoption of this proposal is
32 unlikely to significantly increase subsistence
33 opportunities for area residents. Few residents of
34 Unit 23 hunt brown bears under Federal or State
35 subsistence regulations due to meat salvage and sealing
36 requirements. These requirements would remain in place
37 if this proposal was adopted.

38
39 There are law enforcement and
40 conservation concerns regarding the sale of brown bear
41 products. Global markets drive high prices for brown
42 bear parts and are known to encourage poaching.
43 Increasing market availability and/or prices of brown
44 bear products may intensify illegal harvest from those
45 populations.

46
47 Tracking the illegal harvest and sale
48 of brown bear products is difficult. Furthermore,
49 customary trade of animal products may not rise to the
50

1 level of a significant commercial enterprise, but
2 defining and enforcing the parameters of this is
3 challenging. Given the unaltered nature of the products
4 requested in this
5 proposal, these products also do not meet the
6 requirements of a handicraft which may already be sold
7 under Federal subsistence regulations.

8
9 While there is evidence of a general
10 pattern of customary trade of wildlife in Unit 23,
11 there is no documented pattern as it relates
12 specifically to brown bears, especially the hides and
13 skulls of this species. The most recently documented
14 harvest data for brown bears suggests that harvest by
15 local residents for food is low.

16
17 Additionally, the proponent lists
18 several justifications for their request but none of
19 these indicate that adoption of this proposal would
20 facilitate patterns of customary trade.

21
22 Lastly, population data for brown bears
23 in Unit 23 is sparse and variable. Brown bear
24 populations are slow to recover from overharvest and
25 commercial incentivization may increase the risk of
26 overharvest from potentially vulnerable populations
27 elsewhere through this species' range.

28
29 I do want to point out too that the way
30 that you vote on this proposal is dependant -- if you
31 go with either of the Council's recommendations that
32 ask you to consider the alternatives considered that
33 are found on Page 1087 of your books, it is creating a
34 general hunt, which would remove the coupling with the
35 State subsistence permit. It currently, in the
36 alternatives considered, says one bear. But because
37 you voted to increase to two bears, you'll want to
38 consider that when making your motions.

39
40 Thank you.

41
42 CHAIRMAN CHRISTIANSON: Thank you. Any
43 questions.

44
45 (No comments)

46
47 CHAIRMAN CHRISTIANSON: Hearing none.
48 Summary of public comment. Thank you for that.

49
50

1 MR. STEVENSON: Thank you, Mr. Chair.
2 There were two public comments received. One from the
3 Cape Krusenstern National Monument and the other from
4 the two gentlemen whose letter I read previously. I'll
5 restate both.

6
7 Regarding comments from the Cape
8 Krusenstern Subsistence Resource Commission regarding
9 Wildlife Proposal 18-44, the Commission voted to take
10 no action, justifying their position noting concern
11 that the proposal would necessitate that the Park
12 Service administer the bear hunt because of conflicts
13 with the State requirements. Additionally, the SRC
14 expressed that it was not traditional to sell hides.

15
16 Returning to comments shared by the two
17 gentlemen who I mentioned previously, they noted that
18 there was not sufficient evidence to demonstrate a
19 customary and traditional sale of bear parts, that
20 there was not sufficient evidence to provide defense of
21 life and property considerations and that such matters
22 were handled through the State.

23
24 Thank you, Mr. Chair.

25
26 CHAIRMAN CHRISTIANSON: Thank you. Any
27 public testimony.

28
29 (No comments)

30
31 CHAIRMAN CHRISTIANSON: Seeing none,
32 we'll call on the phone.

33
34 (No comments)

35
36
37 CHAIRMAN CHRISTIANSON: Hearing none on
38 the phone. We'll go to Regional Council
39 recommendation.

40
41 MR. REAKOFF: Mr. Chair. Western
42 Interior Regional Council deferred this to home region.
43 We did discuss a permitting process to document how
44 those sales were occurring that had been provided by
45 the Board of Game at that time. The Council felt that
46 this was best addressed by the home region.

47
48 Thank you, Mr. Chair.

1 CHAIRMAN CHRISTIANSON: Thank you.

2
3 Northwest.

4
5 MR. SHIEDT: Yeah, our Council supports
6 this. We supported WP18-44 with modification to create
7 a general season for brown bears in Unit 23 and
8 authorize the customary trade of brown bear hides and
9 skulls in Unit 23.

10
11 Some campers when they do get bear,
12 they get bear to feed themselves or they come around
13 and they want to trade a skull or the skin or the claws
14 for a little bit of gas and stuff like that. That's
15 why we supported it.

16
17 CHAIRMAN CHRISTIANSON: North Slope.

18
19 MR. G. BROWER: Thank you for the
20 opportunity. Gordon Brower, North Slope Regional
21 Council Chair. The North Slope Regional Subsistence
22 Advisory Council supported WP18-44 with modifications
23 to create a general season for brown bears in Unit 23
24 and authorize the customary trade of brown bear hides
25 and skulls consistent with the description on Page
26 1095. The area is in a dual area. Point Hope is in
27 Region 10 and also subsist activities in Unit 23.

28
29 Thank you.

30
31 CHAIRMAN CHRISTIANSON: Thank you.
32 Tribal, Alaska Native Corp comments.

33
34 MR. MIKE: Thank you, Mr. Chair.
35 Donald Mike, Council Coordinator. There were two
36 tribal consultations held on September 7th and
37 September 14th regarding Proposal 18-44 and there were
38 no comments received from tribal or ANCSA corps.

39
40 Thank you, Mr. Chair.

41
42 CHAIRMAN CHRISTIANSON: Thank you.
43 Alaska Department of Fish and Game comments.

44
45 MR. BURCH: Thank you, Mr. Chair. Mark
46 Burch, Department of Fish and Game. Our comments are
47 found on Page 1097.

48
49 The Department of Fish and Game

50

1 supports this proposal. The intent is to align the
2 State and Federal regulations for the sale of brown
3 bear hides. To do that it would be effective to
4 establish a general hunt season rather than require the
5 registration permit for the subsistence hunt through
6 the Department of Fish and Game because that requires,
7 I think you've heard, removal of the head and skull in
8 order to take the material out of the unit. So that
9 would be counter to the proposal.

10

11 The other thing that we would ask is
12 that if the Board adopts this requirement that they
13 also require the permit that the State has established.
14 In that process, a person must acquire a permit and
15 have the hide permanently marked with the permit
16 number. If they intend to sell it, they must include
17 that number on the advertisement and then, in turn, if
18 they sell it, they need to report that that hide with
19 that number has been sold.

20

21 So it's something that we believe as
22 the State is necessary to track effectively the sales
23 of brown bear hides and claws and skulls.

24

25 Thank you, Mr. Chair.

26

27 CHAIRMAN CHRISTIANSON: Thank you.

28

29 Greg.

30

31 MR. SIEKANIEC: Thank you, Mr. Chair.
32 Mark, could you one more time go over that general hunt
33 perspective that you talked about.

34

35 MR. BURCH: Yes. I believe your
36 regulations currently require use of the State
37 subsistence permit. That allows someone to essentially
38 shoot a bear and eat the meat without having to go
39 through a lot of processing with the hide and skull.
40 So, therefore, they have to remove the head and the
41 claws and you wouldn't want to do that if you wanted to
42 sell your hide.

43

44 MR. SIEKANIEC: Thank you. So if I'm
45 understanding that right, if we agree and support this
46 as a subsistence, the person who harvests the bear is
47 still going to have to remove the hide and the claws,
48 so you're going to separate that before they can do
49 anything with it. So we're kind of defeating the whole

50

1 idea of having this as an option to sell the skull and
2 a full hide.

3
4 MR. BURCH: Right. It sounds to me
5 like some of the Regional Advisory Councils kind of
6 sorted that out and that's why they suggested
7 establishing a general season as opposed to the permit.

8
9 MR. SIEKANIEC: Thank you.

10
11 CHAIRMAN CHRISTIANSON: Any additional
12 questions for the State.

13
14 (No comments)

15
16 CHAIRMAN CHRISTIANSON: ISC.

17
18 MS. HARDIN: Thank you, Mr. Chair. The
19 InterAgency Staff Committee comments for WP18-44 begin
20 on Page 1096 of your meeting book. In addition to the
21 standard comment, the InterAgency Staff Committee
22 provided the following comments on WP18-44.

23
24 The primary justification for
25 submitting this proposal is to align with State
26 regulations that were put in place last year to allow
27 for the sale of bear hides and skulls. The proponent
28 also states that the proposal is intended to increase
29 utilization of harvested brown bears, increase
30 opportunity for profit, reduce overpopulation of brown
31 bears in Unit 23, reduce conflicts with bears in
32 communities and at camps, and to reduce danger due to
33 increased bear activity.

34
35 The last three justifications are
36 outside the Board's purview. The reduction of brown
37 bear populations falls under predator control while the
38 final two are issues of defense of
39 life and property.

40
41 Customary trade is defined in 50 CFR
42 100.4 as the exchange for cash of fish and wildlife
43 resources regulated in this part, not otherwise
44 prohibited by Federal law or regulation to support
45 personal and family needs; and does not include trade
46 which constitutes a significant commercial enterprise.

47
48 Worldwide, the trade of bear parts and
49 hides has evolved into a lucrative market with both
50

1 legal and illegal components. The legal online market
2 for brown bear skulls and claws appears to be well
3 established and profitable. Some examples of recent
4 prices in the online commercial market are provided on
5 Page 1096 of your meeting book.
6

7 Since each brown bear has one skull and
8 a hide with ten front and ten rear claws attached,
9 there is a very real potential for the customary trade
10 requested by this proposal to constitute a significant
11 commercial enterprise.
12

13 As noted in the OSM justification
14 opposing this proposal, global markets drive high
15 prices for brown bear parts and are known to encourage
16 poaching. Increasing market availability and/or prices
17 of brown bear products may intensify illegal harvest
18 from those populations.
19

20 The analysis also states that tracking
21 the illegal harvest and sale of brown bear parts is
22 difficult, which creates challenges for law
23 enforcement. In addition, the analysis notes while
24 there is evidence of a general pattern of customary
25 trade in Unit 23, there is no documented pattern as it
26 relates specifically to brown bears, especially the
27 hides and skulls of the species.
28

29 If that is indeed the case, then
30 creating a special provision under customary trade to
31 allow the sale of up to two brown bear skulls and two
32 untanned brown bear hides with claws attached is not
33 appropriate.
34

35 Under ANILCA Section 805(c), the Board
36 may choose not to follow a Council recommendation if it
37 is, 1) not supported by substantial evidence; 2)
38 violates recognized principles of fish and wildlife
39 conservation; or 3) would be detrimental to the
40 satisfaction of subsistence needs.
41

42 With respect to this proposal, there is
43 insufficient evidence that residents of Unit 23 have an
44 established pattern of customary trade involving brown
45 bear hides and skulls to justify the creation of a
46 Federal customary trade regulation that mirrors
47 existing state regulations.
48

49 In addition, adoption of this proposal
50

1 would violate sound principles of fish and wildlife
2 conservation by turning brown bear parts into
3 commodities to be sold for profit and permitting the
4 sale of a species that already has an extensive illegal
5 black market established.

6
7 Thank you, Mr. Chair.

8
9 CHAIRMAN CHRISTIANSON: Board
10 discussion with Council Chairs and State Liaison.

11
12 (No comments)

13
14 CHAIRMAN CHRISTIANSON: Hearing none,
15 seeing none. Federal Board action.

16
17 MR. LORD: Mr. Chair.

18
19 CHAIRMAN CHRISTIANSON: Ken.

20
21 MR. LORD: One point before we take
22 action for the Board's clarification. Section 805(c)
23 of ANILCA requires deference to a Council
24 recommendation regarding the taking of fish and
25 wildlife. This is not a recommendation regarding a
26 taking of fish and wildlife. This is a customary trade
27 action, which occurs after the taking. So because of
28 that 805(c) does not apply here, you can still choose
29 to defer to the Council's recommendation, but you're
30 not statutorily obligated to do so.

31
32 CHAIRMAN CHRISTIANSON: Bert.

33
34 MR. FROST: I move that we adopt WP18-
35 44 as found on Page 1066 of the meeting book. After a
36 second I will speak to my motion.

37
38 MR. C. BROWER: Second.

39
40 MR. FROST: Thanks, Charlie. I intend
41 to vote against my motion consistent with the
42 recommendation of the Office of Subsistence Management
43 as listed on Page 1090. There are both law enforcement
44 and conservation concerns with adopting this proposal.

45
46
47 Global markets drive high prices for
48 brown bear parts and are known to encourage poaching.
49 Increasing market availability, prices or both of brown
50

1 bear parts may intensify illegal harvest. Brown bear
2 populations are slow to recover from overharvest and
3 creating a commercial incentive to harvest brown bears
4 may increase the risk of overharvest.

5
6 Additionally, there is insufficient
7 evidence that residents of Unit 23 have an established
8 pattern of customary trade involving brown bear hides
9 and skulls and few residents of Unit 23 harvest brown
10 bears under the Federal subsistence regulation due to
11 meat salvage and sealing requirements.

12
13 There's just a lot of good reasons why
14 I think this motion has a problem, so I will vote to
15 oppose this motion.

16
17 CHAIRMAN CHRISTIANSON: Any further
18 Board discussion.

19
20 (No comments)

21
22 CHAIRMAN CHRISTIANSON: I myself have a
23 hard time differentiating between a bear, a wolf,
24 animals we trap and we do all of that to try to
25 supplement. Especially in an area where there already
26 seems to be depreciated economic opportunities as
27 stated by the people in the region and other issues
28 that may arise.

29
30 I know customary traditional trade is a
31 touchy subject, but it's actually a reality and this
32 potentially might just bring into the actions on the
33 ground and provide maybe, like it said in here, that
34 opportunity for the user to engage in. I find that
35 people who are in the Black Market are going to be in
36 the Black Market whether there's a regulation in place
37 or not. That's just the business they would be in.

38
39 I've got two people raising their hand
40 now. I've got Louis and Lem. Go ahead.

41
42 MR. GREEN: Thank you, Mr. Chair. I
43 hear hypothetical and the words used in there that it
44 could become a commercial enterprise. The Chair speaks
45 to that. My feelings are the same. You're providing
46 opportunity.

47
48 We just had a man come in here today
49 and yesterday to testify because he was having problems
50

1 justifying how he was to hunt caribou and he was honest
2 about his approach on how he does it. It was taught to
3 him. Some of us have spoken to that. So
4 hypothetically isn't a good enough word to use for me
5 to make a decision on whether or not somebody gets
6 opportunity to use those hides to sell under illegal
7 take.

8

9

Thank you, Mr. Chair.

10

11

MR. BUTLER: Thank you, Mr. Chair.

12

13

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24

CHAIRMAN CHRISTIANSON: Thank you, Lem,
for that.

25

26

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35

MR. C. BROWER: Question.

CHAIRMAN CHRISTIANSON: The question
has been called. Do roll call and I'll have you read
the motion into the record, please.

36

37

38

39

40

41

42

43

44

BLM, Karen Mouritsen.

MS. MOURITSEN: I oppose due to the OSM
justification on Page 1090 and as summarized by Mr.
Frost.

45

46

47

48

49

50

MR. DOOLITTLE: National Park Service,
Herbert Frost.

MR. FROST: I oppose.

MR. DOOLITTLE: U.S. Fish and Wildlife
Service, Greg Siekaniec.

1 MR. SIEKANIEC: I oppose due to the OSM
2 perspective that they provided, but I'm also more
3 concerned we did not receive any motion to adopt a
4 permit for sale that would be in line with the State of
5 Alaska. Therefore, would be setting up once again a
6 very confusing setting and potentially people to be in
7 violation of State rule regulation for the disposal of
8 bear hides and skulls.

9
10 MR. DOOLITTLE: Thank you, Greg.

11
12 U.S. Forest Service, Wayne Owen.

13
14 MR. OWEN: Oppose.

15
16 MR. DOOLITTLE: BIA, Lynn Polacca.

17
18 MR. POLACCA: I oppose. I think
19 there's a lot of questions that still need to be
20 answered also too. It makes it a lot more confusing,
21 you know. I do have reservations right now about
22 moving forward.

23
24 MR. DOOLITTLE: Public member Rhonda
25 Pitka.

26
27 MS. PITKA: Oppose.

28
29 MR. DOOLITTLE: Public member Charlie
30 Brower.

31
32 MR. C. BROWER: I support because I
33 believe the people living within these regions know
34 more knowledge than the other folks coming in.

35
36 Thank you.

37
38 MR. DOOLITTLE: Thank you, Charlie.

39
40 Chairman Christianson.

41
42 CHAIRMAN CHRISTIANSON: I support the
43 proposal and I think again here we're more restrictive
44 than the State in this issue here and I think they
45 provided with a good pathway forward and I hope we can
46 look to entertain this proposal again in the future.
47 Bear in mind customary and traditional use on the
48 landscape is a reality that we should really start to
49 look at in the Federal program as starting to support

50

1 and address.

2

3

Thank you.

4

5

MR. DOOLITTLE: The motion failed.

6

7

CHAIRMAN CHRISTIANSON: We're going to
8 take a five-minute break and then we're going to come
9 back and look at the stuff.

10

11

(Off record)

12

13

(On record)

14

15

MS. PITKA: Hello, Mr. Chair.

16

17

CHAIRMAN CHRISTIANSON: Yes.

18

19

20

21

22

23

24

25

MS. PITKA: I'd like to make a motion
to reconsider WP18-36 requesting that the Federal
public land closure for moose harvest in the portion of
Unit 22A north of and including the Tagoomenik and
Shaktoolik River drainages be rescinded, September 1
through September 20th.

26

MR. MCKEE: 38.

27

28

CHAIRMAN CHRISTIANSON: 38.

29

30

MS. PITKA: 38, thank you.

31

32

33

34

CHAIRMAN CHRISTIANSON: Thank you,
Chris.

35

36

37

There's a motion on the floor to
reconsider.

38

39

MR. OWEN: Second.

40

41

42

CHAIRMAN CHRISTIANSON: There's been a
second.

43

44

45

Any opposition to the motion at this
moment to reconsider.

46

47

(No opposing votes)

48

49

50

CHAIRMAN CHRISTIANSON: Hearing no
opposition to the motion, the Board will look to

1 reconsider WP18-38.

2

3 MS. MOURITSEN: Thank you, Mr.
4 Chairman.

5

6 After the discussion that we had before
7 the break when we were talking about Proposal 18-38,
8 due to that discussion and this motion to reconsider
9 that Ms. Pitka just made, I would like to make a new
10 motion.

11

12 So I move to adopt WP18-38 with a
13 modification to open Federal public lands within the
14 portion of Unit 22A, north of and including the
15 Tagoomenik and the Shaktoolik River drainages, only to
16 Federally-qualified subsistence users.

17

18 If, given a second, I will explain my
19 modified motion and give a justification.

20

21 CHAIRMAN CHRISTIANSON: There's a
22 motion.

23

24 MS. PITKA: Second.

25

26 MR. C. BROWER: Second.

27

28 CHAIRMAN CHRISTIANSON: Motion's been
29 made and seconded.

30

31 Karen.

32

33 MS. MOURITSEN: Okay. Thank you, Mr.
34 Chairman. So the modification would be, if you have
35 the language of the current regulation you can look on
36 -- oh, wait, let me make sure I have the right page, on
37 Page -- I think it's on Page 988, instead of -- the
38 regulation where it says, it talks about Federal public
39 lands are closed to hunting and then it says, except by
40 residents of 22A, my modification would strike
41 residents of 22A and replace that with Federally-
42 qualified subsistence users.

43

44 The justification is that the Unit 22A
45 moose population is growing but remains a low density
46 population. Opening the Federal public lands in a
47 manner that would primarily benefit non-resident
48 hunters and guides prior to opening these lands to
49 Federally-qualified subsistence users may be premature.

50

1 So this modification would expand the pool of eligible
2 users by opening to Federally-qualified subsistence
3 users and represent an incremental liberalization of
4 this hunt. This may be prudent, particularly given the
5 recent extension of the State's non-resident season.

6
7 CHAIRMAN CHRISTIANSON: Further Board
8 discussion.

9
10 (No comments)

11
12 CHAIRMAN CHRISTIANSON: Hearing none,
13 call for the question.

14
15 MR. C. BROWER: Mr. Chair.

16
17 CHAIRMAN CHRISTIANSON: Yes, Mr.
18 Brower.

19
20 MR. C. BROWER: Just a question. On
21 the third justification. This modification will expand
22 the pool of eligible users, Karen did you add Federally
23 qualified hunters, or residents there?

24
25 MS. MOURITSEN: I think I said
26 Federally-qualified subsistence users; is that correct?

27
28 CHAIRMAN CHRISTIANSON: Yes.

29
30 MR. C. BROWER: Thank you.

31
32 CHAIRMAN CHRISTIANSON: So what the
33 proposal looks to do is to open the unit to all
34 Federally-qualified users, not just those from that
35 specific community. So that's what we're doing, is
36 we're liberalizing the hunt for all State Federally-
37 qualified users.

38
39 MS. MOURITSEN: Correct, that was my
40 intent.

41
42 CHAIRMAN CHRISTIANSON: All in favor of
43 the proposal signify by saying aye.

44
45 IN UNISON: Aye.

46
47 CHAIRMAN CHRISTIANSON: Opposed, same
48 sign.

1 MR. SIEKANIEC: Aye.

2

3 CHAIRMAN CHRISTIANSON: Let the record
4 reflect that we have seven in support and one in
5 opposition.

6

7 MR. DOOLITTLE: Motion carried.

8

9 CHAIRMAN CHRISTIANSON: Thank you.
10 Let's get back on to the order.

11

12 MR. DOOLITTLE: We're at 46/47.

13

14 CHAIRMAN CHRISTIANSON: And, again, I'm
15 going to ask, you know, as we do these things let's use
16 the best summarizations we can and ask that we have
17 public testimony, if we do get it, specific to the
18 topics and keep our conservations, like I said as
19 specific as we can to each perspective proposal as it
20 comes forward.

21

22 Thank you.

23

24 We're running out of time.

25

26 MS. MAAS: All right, thank you, Mr.
27 Chair. Members of the Board. For the record my name
28 is Lisa Maas and I will -- oh, and this is Josh Ream,
29 anthropologist, with OSM, we are co-analysts for this
30 proposal. I will be presenting a summary of the
31 analysis for Wildlife Proposal 18-46/47, which is
32 Section 3 of the supplemental materials.

33

34 Wildlife Proposal 18-46 was submitted
35 by the Western Arctic Caribou Herd Working Group, or
36 WACH working group, and Wildlife Proposal WP18-47 was
37 submitted by Enoch Mitchell of Noatak. Both proposals
38 request that Federal public lands in Unit 23 be closed
39 to caribou hunting except by Federally-qualified
40 subsistence users although WP18-47 specifically
41 requests that the closure extend for two years only
42 from July 1st, 2018 to June 30th, 2020.

43

44 Both proponents are concerned about the
45 decline of the Western Arctic Caribou Herd and noted
46 that the 2016/2017 closure to non-Federally-qualified
47 users helped local hunters meet their subsistence needs
48 by reducing user conflicts and hunting activity by non-
49 local hunters. Both proponents also emphasized the

50

1 vital cultural and nutritional role of caribou to Unit
2 23 residents. The proponent for WP18-47 also stated
3 that aircraft noise from guides and transporters can
4 disrupt caribou migration, which is a source of user
5 conflict. Co-sponsors for WP18-47 include the Native
6 Village of Noatak, Cape Krusenstern National Monument
7 Subsistence Resource Commission, Kobuk Valley National
8 Park Subsistence Resource Commission and the
9 Noatak/Kivalina Fish and Game Advisory Committee.

10
11 According to Title VIII of ANILCA, two
12 reasons to restrict non-subsistence use of a resource
13 are for the conservation of a healthy wildlife
14 population and to continue subsistence uses of a
15 resource. Federally-qualified subsistence users
16 depicted in Map 1 on Page 15 are those residents with a
17 customary and traditional use determination for caribou
18 in Unit 23.

19
20 In 2015, the Alaska Board of Game
21 enacted restrictions to caribou regulations across the
22 ranges of the Western Arctic and Teshekpuk Caribou
23 Herds in response to declining caribou populations.
24 The Federal Subsistence Board approved Special Action
25 Request for the 2015/16 regulatory year and adopted
26 Wildlife Proposals in 2016 that were similar to the
27 Board of Game's restrictions, including reducing the
28 Unit 23 harvest limit from 15 caribou per day to five
29 caribou per day. In 2016 the Board adopted Wildlife
30 Special Action 16-01 closing all Federal public lands
31 in Unit 23 to caribou hunting by non-Federally-
32 qualified users for the 2016/17 regulatory year. In
33 June 2016 the State submitted Temporary Special Action
34 Request 16-03 to reopen Federal public lands in Unit
35 23. The Board rejected this request. In June 2017 the
36 Board adopted Wildlife Special Action 17-03 closing a
37 portion of Federal public land in Unit 23 to caribou
38 hunting by non-Federally-qualified users for the
39 2017/18 regulatory year. This targeted closure
40 included Federal public lands along the Noatak River
41 and within the Squirrel, Eli and Aggie River drainages.

42
43 There are several management areas that
44 affect caribou hunting and address user conflict in
45 Unit 23, which are depicted in Map 2 on Page 16, and
46 include the Noatak Controlled Use Area, which is
47 administered by the State, the National Park Service's
48 special permit use area and Noatak National Preserve
49 and portions of Selawik National Wildlife Refuge that
50

1 are closed to commercial hunting.

2

3 Caribou migration routes vary annually
4 and their populations naturally fluctuate over time.
5 The WACH population peaked at 490,000 caribou in 2003
6 and declined over 50 percent to approximately 201,000
7 in 2016. In 2017 the herd increased to an estimated
8 259,000 caribou. Bull/cow ratios are within management
9 objectives.

10

11 Harvest from the WACH approximates the
12 estimated harvestable surplus for this herd. In 2016
13 the harvestable surplus was about 12,000 caribou. The
14 long-term estimated annual harvest also averages about
15 12,000 caribou. On average local hunters within the
16 range of the WACH account for 95 percent of the total
17 WACH harvest, while non-local hunters account for five
18 percent. Most WACH caribou are harvested in Unit 23.
19 On average 58 percent of the total WACH harvest is by
20 Unit 23 residents, while 76 percent of the harvest by
21 non-local hunters occurs in Unit 23. In 2016 during
22 the Federal lands closure 230 non-Federally-qualified
23 users hunted caribou in Unit 23, which is down from a
24 long-term average of 487 non-Federally-qualified users.
25 However, this number also somewhat decreased in 2015
26 after restrictions to State regulations.

27

28 In Noatak National Preserve 124 hunting
29 groups were transported on average between 2010 and
30 2015. The during the closure in 2016 only 11 hunting
31 groups were transported into the Preserve. Most local
32 hunters access caribou hunting areas by boat, while
33 most non-local hunters access hunting areas by plane.

34

35 Caribou have been a primary resource
36 for the Inupiat of the Northwest Arctic Region for
37 thousands of years and continue to dominate the
38 subsistence harvest of the region. In household
39 harvest surveys conducted in Northwest Alaska between
40 1964 and 2012, caribou were often the most harvested
41 species accounting for 100 to 200 pounds per person.

42

43 User conflicts between local and non-
44 local hunters have been well documented in Unit 23
45 since at least the 1980s. Particularly in Noatak
46 National Preserve and the Squirrel River drainage.
47 Local hunters have expressed concerns over aircraft and
48 non-local hunters disrupting caribou migration by
49 scaring caribou away from river crossings, landing and

50

1 camping along migration routes and shooting lead
2 caribou. Other sources indicate that while aircraft
3 can affect caribou behavior in the short-term, they
4 likely do not impact long-term caribou behavior or
5 migration through Noatak National Preserve. Short-term
6 disturbance could still affect hunter success. Several
7 efforts have been made to address and mitigate user
8 conflicts in Unit 23, including the formation of the
9 Unit 23 working group as well as the various management
10 areas, such as the Noatak Controlled Use Area. In
11 addition, the Unit 23 InterAgency group was established
12 in January 2017 when the Board directed OSM to organize
13 a group of State and Federal representatives in order
14 to discuss possible solutions to Unit 23 user conflicts
15 such as targeted closures. This group met in April
16 2017 and agreed upon a possible targeted closure.
17 However, more could be done by the State and by Federal
18 land managing agencies to address user conflicts in
19 Unit 23.
20

21 User conflicts occur more frequently in
22 some areas of Unit 23 than in others. Specifically,
23 portions of the Noatak National Preserve and the
24 Squirrel River drainage have been repeatedly been
25 identified at Regional Advisory Council and public
26 meetings as areas where conflicts are concentrated.
27 Conversely, other Federal public lands in Unit 23 such
28 as Bering Landbridge National Preserve, Selawik
29 National Wildlife Refuge and Gates of the Arctic
30 National Preserve have not been identified as areas
31 experiencing much user conflict.
32

33 Due to this discrepancy in user
34 conflict a partial Federal public lands closure as
35 depicted in Maps 10 and 11 on Pages 51 and 52 may be
36 more appropriate and more effective than a unit-wide
37 Federal lands closure. Indeed a unit-wide closure may
38 represent an unnecessary restriction on non-subsistence
39 uses. The targeted closure depicted in Map 10 on Page
40 51 is the area suggested by the Unit 23 InterAgency
41 group. The targeted closure depicted in Map 11 on Page
42 52 is the area currently closed by WSA17-03. The WACH
43 working group, Western Interior, Seward Peninsula and
44 Northwest Arctic Councils supported the targeted
45 closure of this area.
46

47 If this proposal is adopted caribou
48 hunting on Federal public lands in Unit 23 will be
49 closed to non-Federally-qualified users. Regulatory
50

1 year 2018/19 would be the third year of a closure.

2
3 No biological impact is expected from
4 approving this request as non-Federally-qualified users
5 account for such a small percentage of WACH harvest.
6 While the number of non-Federally-qualified users and
7 aircraft in Unit 23 would likely decrease substantially
8 use may become concentrated on State lands,
9 particularly on gravel bars below the mean high water
10 mark. Other users, such as moose hunters, private
11 planes and recreational boaters would still be able to
12 fly over and access Federal public lands.

13
14 Subsistence opportunity for Federally-
15 qualified subsistence users may increase. Local
16 residents particularly from the village of Noatak
17 recognize positive effects from the 2016/17 closure
18 citing higher harvest success.

19
20 The WACH working group developed
21 guidelines for herd management, which can be found in
22 Table 1 on Page 24. These guidelines were developed
23 and agreed upon by many stakeholders, including the
24 Federal Subsistence Board.

25
26 In December 2017 the working group
27 voted to change the status of the WACH from
28 conservative to declining, to conservative/stable.
29 While closure of some Federal public lands to non-
30 qualified users is recommended under preservative
31 management, it is not a recommendation under
32 conservative management.

33
34 Two criteria for restricting non-
35 subsistence use under Title VIII of ANILCA are
36 conservation of healthy wildlife populations and
37 continuation of subsistence uses. Closure for
38 conservation reasons is not warranted. However,
39 closure of some Federal lands for the continuation of
40 subsistence uses is warranted due to continued user
41 conflicts in the Noatak and Squirrel River drainages as
42 well as the benefit of the 2016/17 closure to Noatak
43 residents.

44
45 As I'm reading the OSM conclusion it
46 may help to refer to Map 10 on Page 51.

47
48 The OSM conclusion is to support
49 Proposal WP18-46 with modification to close all Federal
50

1 public lands within a 10 mile corridor, five miles
2 either side, along the Noatak River from the western
3 boundary of Noatak National Preserve up stream to the
4 confluence with the Cutler River, north of the Noatak
5 River, between and including the Kelly and the
6 Nimiuktuk River drainages within the northern and
7 southern boundaries of the Eli and Aggie River
8 drainages, respectively, and within the Squirrel River
9 drainage to caribou hunting, except by Federally-
10 qualified subsistence users and to take no action on
11 Proposal WP18-47.

12
13 Thank you, Mr. Chair.

14
15 Josh and I would be happy to take any
16 questions.

17
18 CHAIRMAN CHRISTIANSON: Thank you.
19 Thank you for that thorough analysis. Any questions
20 for Staff.

21
22 (No comments)

23
24 CHAIRMAN CHRISTIANSON: Hearing none,
25 we'll move to summary of public comment.

26
27 MR. C. BROWER: I have one, Mr. Chair.

28
29 CHAIRMAN CHRISTIANSON: Oh, go ahead.

30
31 MR. C. BROWER: Lisa, you stated that
32 the surplus animal, ANS, did you just get a total of
33 the Western Caribou Herd or the other herds too, for
34 12,000?

35
36 MS. MAAS: The 12,000 is the
37 harvestable surplus for the Western Arctic Herd and
38 that is separate from the Teshekpuk Herd. I think the
39 State can correct me, but I believe the ANS is combined
40 for the herds but the harvestable surplus is separate.

41
42 MR. C. BROWER: Thank you.

43
44 CHAIRMAN CHRISTIANSON: Gordon.

45
46 MR. G. BROWER: Yeah, there seems to be
47 some issues around harvestable surplus and I don't know
48 if the Federal Board of Game takes into account the
49 harvestable surplus and I don't really know the
50

1 mechanism by which they determine the level of need for
2 communities. But it is important to note that we've
3 had concerns about the State's harvestable surplus
4 calculating the ANS, the amount necessary for
5 subsistence in the past. More specifically in 2014 it
6 came to a head with concerns of combining the Teshekpuk
7 Herd along with the Western Arctic Herd and deriving an
8 ANS that was, in our view, arbitrarily high, and in our
9 meetings, which were recorded by the Regional
10 Subsistence Advisory Council of the Arctic, the North
11 Slope, and they're documented in there, and our
12 questioning of the area biologist were not to answer
13 the question by either the solicitor or the ADF&G folks
14 at the time. But the issue became that when you
15 separate the ANS between Teshekpuk and Western Arctic
16 Herd it didn't support other hunts, other than that of
17 the communities themselves in calculating the need for
18 each community based on their harvest, had already
19 exceeded the harvestable surplus.
20

21 So those were still in question and I
22 think the State was trying to answer these things more
23 recently in our fall meeting and trying to come to a
24 head with those line of questioning.
25

26 So I'll just leave it at that.
27

28 I mean there's just been some concerns
29 about these issues and the ability of the herd to
30 sustain other non-Federally-qualified hunters when 38
31 communities depend on that resource and consume all of
32 the harvestable surplus, all the while that the
33 population has at least gone down more than 50 percent
34 from its height of 490,000 to 200,000, those kinds of
35 issues, at the same time taking into account over the
36 course of that time the communities growth patterns and
37 the population increasing in communities.
38

39 Thank you.
40

41 CHAIRMAN CHRISTIANSON: Thanks, Gordon.
42

43 Any other questions for Staff on this
44 one.
45

46 (No comments)
47

48 CHAIRMAN CHRISTIANSON: We'll move to
49 summary of public comment. Zach.
50

1 MR. STEVENSON: Thank you, Mr. Chair.
2 For the record this is Zach Stevenson with the Council
3 Coordination Division at the Office of Subsistence
4 Management.
5

6 There were three comments received from
7 Subsistence Resource Commissions. One comment received
8 from the Western Arctic Caribou Herd Working Group.
9 And I've also been informed that Mr. Louis Cusack is on
10 the teleconference available to provide testimony on
11 his perspective.
12

13 Through the Chair. I'll briefly
14 summarize those comments as follows.
15

16 From the Cape Krusenstern Subsistence
17 Resource Commission. The Commission voted to support
18 Wildlife Proposal 18-46 as modified by the Office of
19 Subsistence Management.
20

21 Enoch Mitchell commented that the
22 2017/2018 closure had worked for Noatak to harvest
23 their caribou.
24

25 Alex Whiting liked that the
26 modification from OSM included the western boundary of
27 the Noatak National Preserve up stream to the
28 confluence with the Cutler River and north to the
29 Noatak River between and including the Kelly and
30 Nimiuktuk River drainages.
31

32 Addressing Wildlife Proposal 18-47 the
33 Cape Krusenstern National Monument Subsistence Resource
34 Commission voted to take no action on Wildlife Proposal
35 18-47 noting that their support of Wildlife Proposal
36 18-46 addressed their concerns about closing Federal
37 lands for caribou hunting.
38

39 Additionally, addressing comments
40 received from the Gates of the Arctic National Park
41 Subsistence Resource Commission, the Commission noted
42 that pertaining to 18-46 that the question was asked
43 regarding why Proposal 18-45 was submitted to lower the
44 bag limit from five caribou per day to three, further,
45 why would it be necessary to submit an additional
46 proposal to close Federal public lands to non-
47 Federally-qualified users. Further, they noted the
48 proposal is lacking -- is asking, I should say, pardon
49 me, is asking for harsher restrictions. Concerns that
50

1 non-Federally-qualified users would move to State lands
2 to go caribou hunting and that there are State lands
3 near the community of Ambler, in particular, where
4 thousands of caribou ordinarily migrate.

5
6 Addressing Wildlife Proposal 18-47, the
7 Commission made comments already on Proposal 18-46,
8 which they stated is a similar proposal.

9
10 From the Kobuk Valley National Park
11 Subsistence Resource Commission, addressing Wildlife
12 Proposal 18-46/47, the Commission stated that during
13 discussion of the proposal, Enoch Mitchell, said
14 modifications are good, however, he hopes that they are
15 kept the same as with the original wildlife proposal,
16 17-03.

17
18 Sheil Downey, Greta Shirk and Nellie
19 Grist all questioned the impact of closing Federal
20 lands in the Noatak on the Upper Kobuk hunting areas.
21 Additionally, Sheil Downey related the following
22 concerns that Louie Commack, a resident in the region,
23 is worried that fly over hunters would crowd the Upper
24 Kobuk on the Selawik side of the river and State lands
25 near Selawik.

26
27 Addressing comments submitted by the
28 Western Arctic Caribou Herd working group, specifically
29 comments pertaining to Wildlife Proposal 18-46, the
30 working group stated that they unanimously support --
31 pardon me -- supported, in majority, 13-2 to support
32 Wildlife Proposal 18-46 with modifications. That the
33 closure would apply only to Federal lands delineated in
34 the Federal Subsistence Board's Special Action 17-03
35 and only for two years. Further in discussion the
36 working group members supported the modified proposal,
37 noting that the closure will be limited to Federal
38 lands where user conflicts have been the greatest in
39 the past years. While -- pardon me -- and will
40 maintain access for non-Federally-qualified subsistence
41 users to other Federal lands in Unit 23, and would
42 apply for only two years.

43
44 Finally, addressing Wildlife Proposal
45 18-47 the Western Arctic Caribou Herd working group
46 voted 15-0 to take no action on, again, Wildlife
47 Proposal 18-47.

48
49 And, additionally, we have Mr. Cusack,
50

1 I believe standing by on the teleconference.

2

3 Thank you, Mr. Chair.

4

5 CHAIRMAN CHRISTIANSON: Thank you.

6 Anybody here in the building want to provide public
7 testimony.

8

9 (No comments)

10

11 CHAIRMAN CHRISTIANSON: Hearing none,
12 we'll call on the phone.

13

14 OPERATOR: As a reminder if you'd like
15 to ask a question or make a comment, please press star-
16 one, record your first and last name when prompted.
17 Please give us a moment.

18

19 (Pause)

20

21 OPERATOR: One moment please.

22

23 (Pause)

24

25 OPERATOR: Mr. Louis Cusack your line
26 is open.

27

28 MR. CUSACK: Thank you. Appreciate the
29 opportunity to comment today. My name is Louis Cusack
30 and I'm a resident, Alaska hunter and I've been hunting
31 in Unit 23 for close to 20 years now and I'm opposed to
32 18-46/47.

33

34 I think what was proposed in 17-03
35 resolves a lot of the user conflict and I can't see
36 where there's any documented or scientific evidence
37 stating that airplanes flying over, you know, landing
38 legal hunters have significantly impacted the migration
39 of the caribou herd.

40

41 CHAIRMAN CHRISTIANSON: Thank you. Any
42 questions.

43

44 (No comments)

45

46 CHAIRMAN CHRISTIANSON: Anybody else on
47 the phone that would like to speak.

48

49 OPERATOR: There are no other

50

1 questions.

2

3 CHAIRMAN CHRISTIANSON: Thank you,
4 Operator.

5

6 With that, we'll move on to Regional
7 Council recommendation.

8

9 MR. REAKOFF: Mr. Chairman.

10

11 CHAIRMAN CHRISTIANSON: Jack.

12

13 MR. REAKOFF: Jack Reakoff, Western
14 Interior Regional Advisory Council.

15

16 We supported WP18-46 with modification
17 to close all Federal public lands within a 10 mile
18 corridor as depicted in Map 11 on Page 52 of our book
19 here.

20

21 We also went along with the WACH work
22 group with a sunset, this would be for 2018/19 and
23 2019/20 regulatory years.

24

25 And we also felt that the closure
26 annually should extend through September 21 of each
27 calendar year only. Because the main problem is user
28 conflict when caribou are migrating. And once the
29 caribou have started to go through from the northern
30 part of the unit across the Kobuk River, once those
31 lead cows have gone through the trails are there, you
32 can't stop them, they're going to keep coming. The
33 problem has been the previous bag limits allowed lots
34 of cow harvest, camps were put in and when the
35 migration started to show up on the Noatak River here
36 comes the lead cows and they shoot -- here's some cows,
37 let's shoot some, well, they shot the lead cows and it
38 started deflecting migration. So this is customary and
39 traditional knowledge, everybody that knows anything
40 about caribou, has watched caribou migrate knows you do
41 not shoot those lead cows, you leave those alone. They
42 have an inter-digital gland, especially large on the
43 back hoof, those lead cows lay down a scent trail and
44 once they've gone through, once they've established the
45 route, they'll keep coming. Everybody knows that.

46

47 Nobody's ever put a collar on a lead
48 cow and they can't document it because they have never
49 done that before. Oh, that doesn't happen, no, the

50

1 traditional knowledge, everybody knows you leave those
2 lead cows go through, that's what happens in Anaktuvuk
3 Pass every year, and if any young person goes out there
4 and shoots at those cows, they're almost roasted for
5 doing such a thing.

6
7 I've seen it happen on the Haul Road,
8 the Central Arctic Herd tried to come down in the Upper
9 Diettrich River, 1991, the traffic drove the caribou
10 away from their traditional routes, they went into the
11 Chandalar drainage and they've been going over there
12 ever since. Caribou have lead animals that lead those
13 migrations.

14
15 So the main thing is to get the caribou
16 to cross the Kobuk River. Once they're crossing the
17 river you can't stop them. There's no need -- we have
18 -- we analyzed the data, the population is now thought
19 to be 259,000, there's a harvestable surplus for non-
20 subsistence uses but the user conflict issue is a big
21 deal.

22
23 And so we felt that having the closure
24 go through September 21, and then allowing non-
25 subsistence users opportunity would be a fair deal.

26
27 Thank you, Mr. Chair.

28
29 CHAIRMAN CHRISTIANSON: Thank you,
30 Jack. Seward Penn.

31
32 MR. GREEN: Thank you, Mr. Chairman.
33 So the Seward Peninsula voted in support of the 18-46
34 with the OSM modification.

35
36 While the closure would not impact the
37 conservation of the caribou it may reduce the user
38 conflicts.

39
40 Several members were very concerned,
41 however, that these targeted closures could push non-
42 resident hunters into Unit 22.

43
44 The Council took no action on 18-47 due
45 to the similarity to 18-46.

46
47 During the winter meeting of 2018, this
48 year, our meeting of the Council, we revisited the
49 proposal and voted unanimously to support the OSM 18-46

50

1 with modification, it was similar to the -- I think it
2 was Special Action 17-03 to close all Federal public
3 lands within a 10 mile wide corridor, five miles either
4 side along the Noatak River from the western boundary
5 of the Noatak National Preserve, up stream to the
6 confluence with the Cutler River with the northern and
7 southern boundaries of the Eli and Aggie River
8 drainages, respectively and within the Squirrel River
9 drainage two caribou hunting except by Federally-
10 qualified subsistence users only.

11
12 The Council voted to change from the
13 OSM modification to the above modification in response
14 to new information on herd population as well as the
15 position of the Western Arctic Caribou Herd working
16 group. The Council did not include a proposed caribou
17 herd -- excuse me -- we did not include a proposed
18 sunset on the two years for the 18-46 but approved it
19 indefinitely.

20
21 The thought, what Mr. Reakoff points
22 out to about the lead cows, in 1997 when that herd
23 expanded into a southwestern part of our region, the
24 Department obviously knew something of this and they
25 did something to protect reindeer herds by allowing
26 people -- they waited and had us held back until the
27 last minute and then they said all right they're
28 getting to the road got to go out and kill them and so
29 everybody went out there and it was a free for all. So
30 I can see that when you get in front of these lead
31 animals you're detrimental to the path that they're
32 taking. You're going to turn them, and that's what
33 ultimately happened. And so the rest is history.

34
35 Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

36
37 CHAIRMAN CHRISTIANSON: Thank you.
38 We'll hear from Northwest Arctic.

39
40 MR. SHIEDT: Yeah, we supported W-46
41 [sic] and take no action on 18-47.

42
43 46 when we first closed it a few years
44 ago, there was a big decline land we had a lot of
45 problems with transporters and outfitters. To make it
46 short, one transporter, alone, had 47 spike camps every
47 -- about three people per camp, and I'm talking -- and
48 I know of guys that call me, after we close it, because
49 they know me from previous meetings, that they became

50

1 transporters and they quit guiding because there's more
2 money as a transporter and he said, yes, we take a lot
3 of people out, that's why we're having a lot of
4 problems. And this closure worked and we would like to
5 extend it a little bit longer, hopefully the caribou
6 come back and when transporters and outfitters call me
7 I'll tell them, take a sacrifice for a couple years and
8 after a couple years if the caribou keep building we
9 will probably open it and you could take whatever you
10 could do, careful, and we will try to control you
11 because we're scared.

12
13 The caribou numbers went up but I have
14 a problem, if they count the Teshekpuk Herd again. The
15 reason why, when I went up the Noatak River, when the
16 boys got caribou, I saw the Teshekpuk Herd, I know the
17 difference and I told them, out of the six you get,
18 four are Teshekpuk and they said how you know and I
19 said look at the fur and look at the size, size in
20 difference, a little bit smaller and the fur is a
21 little bit darker. And as Native from Noatak I always
22 herd the elders called it from when they get -- not the
23 Western Arctic Caribou Herd, the Teshekpuk Herd, they
24 even have an Eskimo name for them (In Native language),
25 the real caribou, because they are the originators of
26 caribou.

27
28 And I will say, we need to close this
29 again and I will support 46 and take no action on 47.

30
31 If you have any questions I'm open.

32
33 CHAIRMAN CHRISTIANSON: Thank you,
34 Enoch.

35
36 North Slope.

37
38 MR. G. BROWER: Yeah, this has been an
39 issue quite some time like Enoch said. And I think it
40 was 2016 when the closure went into effect back then
41 and then the reports coming in.

42
43 We did deliberate on WP18-46 to support
44 that.

45
46 We discussed the modifications that
47 were being proposed by OSM in detail, there were two
48 different blocks of land, one to the north and one to
49 the south, and on top of that the original proposal by
50

1 the Western Arctic Caribou Herd working group, which is
2 comprising, it looks like -- when you look at the
3 pamphlet that they -- comprise of, I think 38 villages,
4 something to that level, there's a lot of
5 representation of communities that look after the herd
6 and its health.

7
8 So with that the North Slope Regional
9 Advisory Council moved to support WP18-46, take no
10 action on WP18-47.

11
12 As with comments on Proposal 18-57, it
13 was noted that the impact from aircraft use to bring in
14 non-local hunters affect the migration and ability of
15 local hunts.

16
17 I think we've battled this for far, far
18 too long and we're going to continue to do that,
19 whether the herd gets small, whether the herd gets big,
20 we're going to continue to have these issues if we do
21 not resolve that problem once and for all and I think
22 there needs to be a work shop to talk about those kinds
23 of things.

24
25 I will add more to those comments after
26 I finish the Council's recommendation here.

27
28 The Council feels aircraft operator's
29 desire to place paying clients in the path of caribou
30 are diverting caribou and preventing local communities
31 from being able to get caribou. The Council stressed,
32 stressed that even closure may deflect non-Federally-
33 qualified subsistence users to State land, it is
34 important to take steps to provide the opportunity for
35 subsistence on Federal land. And if there is a real
36 true conservation need and preservation tactics needs
37 to start to occur, we're going to need to work with the
38 State, maybe the Federal Board of Game sending a
39 proposal to the State Board of Game, you know, that
40 kind of thing. We need to be able to affect each other
41 for the best management of these herds.

42
43 The Council noted that this conflict
44 has been going on in this area for many years. It
45 seems up to us -- until this point, until this point is
46 a good issue, because we can start to talk about all
47 kinds of hunting pressure when the caribou start to
48 decline. Yep. All those old wounds, those old things
49 that we've been battling for years are going to come to
50

1 the surface. It's going to always come to the surface,
2 because it's inherent about the State about providing
3 for all Alaska residents and it's upon the Federal
4 management to provide a rural subsistence priority.
5

6 It seems to us until this point,
7 transporters and guides have not shown any inclination
8 to self-regulate, to work with local users to resolve
9 the conflicts. It was noted that the Western Arctic
10 Caribou Herd working group represented a broad variety
11 of communities and user groups and that this proposal
12 is the voice of the people of the region.
13

14 As such, the Council supported this
15 request.
16

17 The Council recognized that the work
18 that went into evaluating and the most areas of most
19 importance to local communities for harvest of caribou
20 and are in the site of the most intense user conflicts
21 in the area, but did not support the OSM modifications
22 because the full closure of the more dramatic effort
23 needed in order to maximize subsistence opportunity.
24

25 The Council feels that the local
26 harvest is already consuming the harvestable surplus.
27 I want to emphasize that. The local -- that the local
28 harvest is already consuming the harvestable surplus.
29 Communities are growing. We're looking at these things
30 -- and I don't know who else, anywhere else in the
31 state who is monitoring the community growth, and their
32 needs, and to establish their needs for the community.
33 And that perhaps it's time to go into preservation
34 mode, start to act. Do we want to go back to times
35 when everybody's arguing about these herds so much that
36 the Federal government started handing out beef. I
37 could remember that as a kid in the 1976 or 1975 area,
38 these herds crashed to the point that they couldn't
39 harvest them no more and there was actual efforts by
40 the Federal government to supplement households with
41 beef. Mind you just one time.
42

43 It was noted, however, that it appeared
44 that the OSM modification reflected that those areas
45 were the real problem areas for user conflicts. The
46 Council commended the work that went into identifying
47 the area that was most critical for subsistence hunters
48 in the area and that has been at the heart of the user
49 conflicts in the region for so many years. We
50

1 recognized the effort to find a solution that could be
2 supported by all.

3

4 That concludes the dialogue between the
5 North Slope Regional Advisory Council.

6

7 I think it's very important to
8 recognize there was some concern about there was no
9 verifiable evidence of activity of aircraft use that
10 would disrupt the harvest of local users.

11

12 Anaktuvuk Pass is a very good example
13 of those kind of concerns, where the spike camps north
14 of the community are being in front of the planning
15 commission up in the Arctic to talk about these very
16 concerns and issues under violation of these kinds of
17 things. And those caribou have satellite tags, they're
18 telling on themselves. They're telling on them --
19 they're are 75 radio collars in front of a firing squad
20 of many spike camps and you can see the shift in their
21 movement, taking out those first leaders is not the
22 thing to do. Those are some of the concerns that we
23 have.

24

25 I think I would leave the extend of
26 that comment to some of the proposals that we may have.

27

28 CHAIRMAN CHRISTIANSON: Thank you. Any
29 questions for the Board Chairs.

30

31 (No comments)

32

33 CHAIRMAN CHRISTIANSON: We'll call on
34 Tribal, Alaska Native Corp comments.

35

36 MR. MIKE: Thank you, Mr. Chair.
37 Donald Mike, Council coordinator.

38

39 There were two consultations scheduled
40 for September 7th and September 14th on Proposal 18-
41 46/47. There were no comments received from tribal nor
42 ANCSA Corps.

43

44 Thank you, Mr. Chair.

45

46 CHAIRMAN CHRISTIANSON: Thank you,
47 Donald. Alaska Department of Fish and Game comments.

48

49 MR. BUTLER: Thank you, Mr. Chair.

50

1 Members of the Board. The Department opposes this
2 proposal at this time because it does not improve the
3 herd status.
4

5 As has been noted already, the herd's
6 stable at this point, if not likely increasing. It had
7 57 calves per 100 cows, which is generally a sign that
8 the population is increasing. We do calculate
9 harvestable surplus, we did do community surveys of
10 harvest, we are tracking the use of this population.
11 The harvest is within the limits of what we consider to
12 be a reasonable harvest at this time. So there really
13 is no concern associated with human harvest and it
14 certainly wasn't drove the herd's decline.
15

16 The Board of Game has recently taken
17 action to try to address some of these user conflicts.
18 They modified the Controlled Use Area in Unit 23 based
19 on public input to address user conflict. And I'll
20 note, too, that for over 10 years we've had a Unit 23
21 conflict resolution work group that's made several
22 recommendations over time that have been adopted. So
23 this is not a new issue, the user conflict, but there
24 has been considerable work done with the communities to
25 try to address it.
26

27 We've also gone to registration permit
28 to track the non-local harvest, which I think you'll
29 have in the next suite of proposals to adopt a similar
30 requirement for monitoring harvest. We think that all
31 these things are prudent at this time to manage this
32 herd going into the future.
33

34 If the Board thinks that a change is
35 necessary, we recommend going with the Western Arctic
36 Caribou Herd working group's recommendation. It's Map
37 11 that's been referenced here already, it's a partial
38 closure. The working group is a -- represents multiple
39 users of the area and communities. There's a lot of
40 effort put into it by both the Federal and the State
41 system and if we're going to have a working group, I
42 think we should recognize their actions and their
43 recommendations for them to be effective. And they
44 have been stepping up quite a bit and making
45 recommendations so we really applaud their efforts and
46 recommend that you support them as well.
47

48 But, again, there really isn't a
49 biological reason to close this area at this time. If
50

1 anything it is to reduce the user conflicts in the
2 area.

3
4 Thank you, Mr. Chair.

5
6 CHAIRMAN CHRISTIANSON: Thank you, Lem.

7
8 Zach, do you have something to put on
9 the record.

10
11 MR. STEVENSON: Thank you, Mr. Chair.
12 I was asked to provide a brief restatement of the
13 position, specifically from the Seward Peninsula
14 Regional Advisory Council and their recommendation.

15
16 In addition to the Northwest Arctic
17 Subsistence Regional Advisory Council and their
18 recommendation, with your permission I'll be happy to
19 provide that.

20
21 CHAIRMAN CHRISTIANSON: Sure.

22
23 MR. STEVENSON: The Seward Peninsula
24 RAC supported Wildlife Proposal 18-46 with modification
25 to close all Federal public lands within a 10 mile
26 corridor, specifically five miles on either side of the
27 Noatak River from the western boundary of the Noatak
28 National Preserve, up stream to the confluence with the
29 Cutler River, within the northern and southern
30 boundaries of the Eli and Agashashok River drainages,
31 respectively, and within the Squirrel River drainage to
32 caribou hunting, except by Federally-qualified
33 subsistence users. Additionally the Seward Peninsula
34 Regional Advisory Council took no action on Wildlife
35 Proposal 18-47.

36
37 The Northwest Arctic Subsistence
38 Regional Advisory Council recommendation supported
39 Wildlife Proposal 18-46 with modification, specifically
40 to close all Federal public lands, again, within a 10
41 mile corridor, specifically five miles on either side
42 along the Noatak River from the western boundary of the
43 Noatak National Preserve, up stream to the confluence
44 with the Cutler River, within the northern and southern
45 boundaries of the Eli and Agashashok Rivers -- pardon
46 me, river drainages, respectively, and within the
47 Squirrel River drainage to caribou hunting, except by
48 Federally-qualified subsistence users. And, again,
49 they took no action on Wildlife Proposal 18-47.
50

1 Thank you, Mr. Chair.

2

3 CHAIRMAN CHRISTIANSON: Thank you. ISC
4 comments -- oh, Greg has a question.

5

6 MR. SIEKANIEC: Actually I think I have
7 a question back to the State for Lem.

8

9 Help me, if you can, how, you know, the
10 State has taken some actions that, how is that
11 different from the closure that's now proposed along
12 the corridor and, you know, it seems like in 17-03 we
13 recommended that the Northwest Arctic Caribou Herd
14 management board or the working group go back and work
15 with, you know, OSM, the State and to come up with 17-
16 03 and I've heard that it satisfied the user conflicts
17 and now it seems like we're refining this in some way
18 by way of the proposal that's here, but then you said
19 the State is also taking something that you think
20 satisfies this as well, help me understand the
21 difference between the State and what we have on this
22 map right now I'm looking at.

23

24 MR. BUTLER: Through the Chair. The
25 restricted area would be similar but the map on Page 11
26 -- or Map 11, I guess, is a larger closure area. It
27 extends further from the river. Ours is within five
28 miles of the river, and it's.....

29

30 MR. SIEKANIEC: So like two and a half
31 miles of each side.

32

33 MR. BUTLER: I believe that's correct,
34 yeah. So, again, very similar but this would cover a
35 larger area, it takes in just a little bit more land.

36

37 MR. SIEKANIEC: Okay, thank you.

38

39 CHAIRMAN CHRISTIANSON: ISC.

40

41 MS. HARDIN: Thank you, Mr. Chair.
42 Members of the Boards. The InterAgency Staff Committee
43 had the standard comment for WP18-46/47.

44

45 CHAIRMAN CHRISTIANSON: Thank you.
46 Board discussion with Council Chairs, State liaison.

47

48

49 (No comments)

50

1 CHAIRMAN CHRISTIANSON: Hearing none,
2 we open the floor for Board action.
3

4 MR. FROST: Thank you, Mr. Chair. I
5 move to adopt WP18-46 as modified by the Northwest
6 Arctic and Seward Peninsula Regional Advisory Councils,
7 and take no action on WP18-47. The modification can be
8 found on Page 65 of the supplemental Section 3 and
9 depicted in Map 11 on Page 52 of Supplement Section 3
10 in the Board book. After a second I'll speak to my
11 motion.
12

13 MR. C. BROWER: Second.
14

15 MR. FROST: Thank you. I intend to
16 vote in support of my motion.
17

18 My motion is consistent with the latest
19 recommendations of the Northwest Arctic RAC, the Seward
20 Peninsula RAC and the Western Arctic Caribou Herd
21 working group. The Map 11 closure area is smaller than
22 the closed area proposed in the OSM recommendation to
23 modify Proposal 18-46. It, nonetheless, represents a
24 reasonable compromise to a complex problem.
25

26 The lands north of the Noatak River
27 between and including the drainages of the Kelly and
28 the Nimiuktuk Rivers would remain open. These are NPS
29 managed lands and the western part of the proposed area
30 is currently being managed by NPS as a special
31 management area which limits the dates of access into
32 the area by commercial big game transporters operating
33 under NPS commercial use authorization permits. The
34 NPS restrictions would also apply on areas within the
35 river corridor.
36

37 Thank you, Mr. Chairman.
38

39 CHAIRMAN CHRISTIANSON: Thank you. Any
40 further discussion.
41

42
43 (No comments)
44

45 CHAIRMAN CHRISTIANSON: Hearing none,
46 call for the question.
47

48 MR. C. BROWER: Question.
49
50

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

4
5 IN UNISON: Aye.

6
7 CHAIRMAN CHRISTIANSON: Opposed, same
8 sign.

9
10 (No opposing votes)

11
12 CHAIRMAN CHRISTIANSON: Motion carries
13 unanimously. I'll have it read into the record.

14
15 (Laughter)

16
17 MR. DOOLITTLE: Gosh, chopped liver.
18 Wildlife Proposal 18-46/47 that was on the floor and
19 passed unanimously is adopt Proposal WP18-46 as
20 modified by the Northwest Arctic and Seward Peninsula
21 Subsistence Regional Advisory Councils and take no
22 action on WP-47. The modification can be found on Page
23 65 of the Supplement Section 3 and depicted in Map 11
24 on Page 52 of the Supplement Section 3 in the Board
25 book.

26
27 Motion carried unanimously.

28
29 CHAIRMAN CHRISTIANSON: Thank you.
30 48/49.

31
32 MS. MAAS: All right. Thank you, Mr.
33 Chair. Members of the Board. For the record my name
34 is Lisa Maas. I'll be presenting a summary of the
35 analysis for Wildlife Proposal 18-48/49 which begins on
36 Page 1103 of the meeting book.

37
38 Wildlife Proposal 18-48 was submitted
39 by the Western Arctic Caribou Herd working group, or
40 WACH working group and Wildlife Proposal WP18-49 was
41 submitted by Louis Cusack of Chugiak. Both proposals
42 request that Federal reporting requirements for caribou
43 in Units 22, 23 and 26A be aligned with the State's
44 registration permit requirements.

45
46 Both proponents recognize the
47 registration permit hunt as a useful tool to monitor
48 harvest, inform herd management and provide more
49 accurate harvest data, which is particularly important

50

1 given the recent caribou population declines. The
2 proponent for WP18-49 also states that different
3 Federal and State reporting requirements would be very
4 cumbersome and confusing to manage.
5

6 In 2016 the Alaska Board of Game
7 adopted Proposal 40 to establish a registration permit
8 hunt in Unit 22. In January 2017 the Board of Game
9 adopted Proposal 2 requiring registration permits in
10 Units 23 and 26A in order to better monitor harvest and
11 improve management flexibility.
12

13 This proposal affects units within the
14 ranges of the Western Arctic and Teshekpuk Caribou
15 Herds.
16

17 Caribou populations naturally fluctuate
18 over time and both herds have experienced recent
19 precipitous declines. As information on the Western
20 Arctic herd was already presented in WP18-46/47 I will
21 focus on the Teshekpuk Herd.
22

23 The Teshekpuk Herd peaked at 69,000
24 caribou in 2008 and declined 40 percent to 41,500
25 caribou in 2015. The herd increased in 2017 to an
26 estimated 56,000 caribou. The 2016 bull/cow ratio of
27 28 bulls to 100 cows was the lowest ratio since 1991
28 and is below management objectives. Local harvest from
29 the Western Arctic Herd is often derived from models
30 which accurately reflect harvest trends but not actual
31 harvest numbers. There is a lot of uncertainty
32 surrounding harvest estimates from the Western Arctic
33 Herd. Harvests from the Teshekpuk Herd may already
34 exceed the estimated harvestable surplus for this herd,
35 however, estimating harvest from the Teshekpuk herd is
36 difficult due to the lack of harvest data and overlap
37 between herds.
38

39 Currently the harvestable surplus
40 estimate is 2,500 caribou, however, the estimated total
41 harvest is 3,022 caribou. On average local hunters
42 account for 99.7 percent of the Teshekpuk harvest while
43 non-local hunters only account for .3 percent of the
44 harvest. The vast majority of the Teshekpuk caribou are
45 harvested in Unit 26A.
46

47 If this proposal is adopted State
48 registration permits will be required to hunt caribou
49 in Units 22, 23 and 26A. Requiring State registration
50

1 permits would also reduce regulatory complexity and
2 user confusion by aligning State and Federal reporting
3 requirements, however, concurrence would be needed from
4 the State to allow Federally-qualified subsistence
5 users to use a State registration permit while hunting
6 under Federal regulations. Registration permits may
7 burden rural users in villages with limited access to
8 permits. No biological impacts are expected from this
9 proposal, rather registration permits would provide
10 better harvest data benefitting the caribou resource
11 and subsistence uses through more informed herd
12 management and hunting regulations.

13
14 The OSM conclusion is to support
15 Proposal WP18-48 and to take no action on Proposal
16 WP18-49.

17
18 Thank you, Mr. Chair.

19
20 CHAIRMAN CHRISTIANSON: Thank you for
21 that. Any questions for Staff.

22
23 (No comments)

24
25 CHAIRMAN CHRISTIANSON: Hearing none,
26 we'll move on to summary of public comment.

27
28 MR. STEVENSON: Through the Chair.
29 Wildlife Proposal -- pardon me, this is Zach Stevenson
30 with the Office of Subsistence Management. Written
31 comments were received from the Western Arctic Caribou
32 Herd working group, who was in favor of -- I should
33 say, supported Wildlife Proposal 18-48.

34
35 In discussion, the working group voted
36 14-0 in support of the proposal, noting that this
37 proposal aligns Federal and State regulations on
38 harvest reporting and provides needed data for herd
39 management.

40
41 Regarding Wildlife Proposal 18-49, the
42 working group was in favor of establishing a
43 registration permit specifically for Units 22, 23 and
44 26A voting unanimously to take no action on Proposal
45 18-49.

46
47 Thank you, Mr. Chair.

48
49 CHAIRMAN CHRISTIANSON: Thank you. Now
50

1 we open the floor to the public and we have one card
2 here for Louis Cusack.

3

4

5

(No comments)

6

7

8

CHAIRMAN CHRISTIANSON: Are they on the
phone.

9

10

11

OPERATOR: You have to press star-one,
Mr. Cusack to get into cue.

12

13

(Pause)

14

15

16

OPERATOR: Your line is now open, Mr.
Cusack.

17

18

19

20

21

22

23

24

25

26

27

28

29

30

MR. CUSACK: Yes, hello, this is Louis
Cusack again, resident of Chugiak Alaska and 20 years
plus in Unit 23. My intention with the proposal is
just to insure that, you know, we simplify the
reporting process and align regulations so that it's
clear and simple for everybody and that we have a
process that allows us to accurately manage harvest
data so that, you know, one set of data, one set of
data bases, you know, we can provide much greater
accuracy and a lot better reporting structure than we
have today and help the biologists make real good
biological and scientific decisions for the future of
the Western Arctic Caribou Herd.

31

32

33

CHAIRMAN CHRISTIANSON: Thank you. Any
questions.

34

35

36

Oh, Zach.

37

38

39

40

41

42

43

44

MR. STEVENSON: Thank you, Mr. Chair.
For the record this is Zach Stevenson with the Office
of Subsistence Management. My apologies. It also came
to my attention that there were comments provided by
the Cape Krusenstern, Kobuk Valley and Gates of the
Arctic SRCs and with your permission I'd be happy to
share those comments on Wildlife Proposal 18-48/49.

45

46

47

48

49

50

CHAIRMAN CHRISTIANSON: Go ahead.

MR. STEVENSON: Thank you, Mr. Chair.

From the Cape Krusenstern Subsistence

1 Resource Commission, the Commission voted to support
2 Wildlife Proposal 18-48 and regarding Proposal 18-49
3 the Commission took no action stating that their
4 support for Proposal 18-49 addressed concerns about
5 caribou harvest reporting.
6

7 From the Gates of the Arctic National
8 Park Subsistence Resource Commission, the Commission
9 voted to support this regulatory change stating that
10 harvest information could be collected in a more
11 accurate and trustworthy manner. Specifically
12 specifying that the North Slope Borough and their
13 wildlife department has done an example of this
14 effectively. While many communities of the North Slope
15 are still needed to help be informed, that there is now
16 a State regulation for caribou harvest tickets in the
17 same game management units.
18

19 And from the Kobuk Valley SRC, the
20 Kobuk Valley Subsistence Resource Commission voted to
21 support Wildlife Proposal 18-48 noting that the
22 proposal encourages everyone to do their part in
23 managing this herd, that is the caribou herd. The
24 Commission further supports gathering accurate harvest
25 data from a registration permit process. Additionally,
26 the Kobuk Valley SRC voted to take no action on
27 Wildlife Proposal 18-149 because their concerns about
28 harvest reporting were already addressed in the support
29 of Wildlife Proposal 18-48.
30

31 Thank you, Mr. Chair.
32

33 CHAIRMAN CHRISTIANSON: Thank you. Any
34 other public testimony.
35

36 (No comments)
37

38 CHAIRMAN CHRISTIANSON: Hearing none,
39 we'll move to Regional Advisory Council recommendation.
40

41 Western Interior.
42

43 MR. REAKOFF: Thank you, Mr. Chair.
44 Western Interior supported WP18-48. Took no action on
45 18-49.
46

47 The Council noted that providing the
48 harvest data through the registration permit insures
49 that managers have that useful information and helps
50

1 protect allocation of the resource to Federally-
2 qualified subsistence users in the future.
3

4 I've told people over and over, if you
5 don't report your harvest, whether it's moose or
6 caribou or whatever it is, the Board's don't know where
7 that resource went and they will reallocate it to
8 somebody else and so I feel that this is a very
9 important issue of documenting harvest on all species
10 so that it protects the subsistence users level of use.
11

12 Thank you, Mr. Chair.
13

14 CHAIRMAN CHRISTIANSON: Thank you.
15 Seward Penn.
16

17 MR. GREEN: Thank you, Mr. Chair.
18 Seward Penn voted in support of WP18-48, and took no
19 action on WP18-49.
20

21 The Council agreed that this proposal
22 may improve reporting and reduce confusion. The
23 Council was assured that the State would manage the
24 registration hunt and that permits would be valid in
25 both State and Federal lands and outreach and education
26 was already under way to encourage public
27 participation.
28

29 The Council, of course, took no action
30 on WP18-49 due to its similarity to 18-48.
31

32 Thank you, Mr. Chair.
33

34 CHAIRMAN CHRISTIANSON: Thank you.
35 North Slope.
36

37 MR. G. BROWER: Thank you for the
38 opportunity. Gordon Brower, North Slope Regional
39 Subsistence Advisory Council Chair.
40

41 We supported WP18-48, took no action on
42 WP18-49. Overall the Council voted to support the
43 registration permit in order to gain more data and
44 insight into caribou harvest in support of conservation
45 management efforts. It was recognized that the Federal
46 government could use more information for informed
47 management and the State registration hunt for caribou
48 was recently enacted but there was still reluctance to
49 give up local control on the process of information
50

1 gathering related to harvest. The Council expressed
2 concern over duplication of effort in harvest data
3 collection and the additional imposition placed upon
4 users. It was noted that the North Slope Borough
5 Wildlife Department and the Inupiat Community of the
6 Arctic Slope have already been involved in subsistence
7 harvest data collection with communities in the region.
8 There was a bit of discussion expressing concern about
9 impacts the younger hunters, that it was made clear
10 that those under 10 can hunt with an adult and starting
11 at 10 a hunter could get their own permit and hunt
12 without a license until 18, however, the permit is at no
13 cost and hopefully it will provide good information to
14 managers and better inform management of the caribou
15 herd and subsistence needs.
16

17 In particular, there was an interest in
18 better understanding community harvest needs and what
19 the harvest is in low years when the caribou are not
20 around.
21

22 The Council requested that
23 informational outreach and support be provided to
24 communities to assist with the new permitting process
25 and stressed that this is a critical part of supporting
26 this proposal.
27

28 Concerns was also expressed for
29 communities like Wainwright, specifically, that have
30 super hunters, individuals that hunt to provide for
31 families and the community for those that are not able
32 to hunt, such as widows and elders. A permit system
33 that would undermine traditional ways of hunting and
34 those few hunters that provide for much of the
35 community in this case.
36

37 In addition to that, there was concerns
38 specifically from whaling captains, because we're the
39 traditional leaders of communities, the Umialik in our
40 communities are held in high regard to provide festival
41 for our communities and the permit and registration
42 process, I don't know how to overcome a process of
43 traditional activity that's been on for thousands of
44 years. When we're putting on the blanket toss, you
45 have -- maybe in the '70s we used to feed 2,000 people,
46 wherein the year 2018 we're feeding 5,000 people in our
47 community under these same practices and need to
48 recognize the growth of communities, the needs that are
49 expressed. These are very important parts. At the
50

1 same time we want to be part of the solution, we want
2 to give the Federal managers the tools necessary to
3 make sure communities have a fair shake at expressing
4 their needs and that is very important.

5
6 Three years running, three years
7 running. Last year the community put an outcry from
8 Anaktuvuk, we need food. The herd did not grace that
9 community how many consecutive years. It was
10 elaborated by biologists in the times of plenty when
11 the herd wasn't that small, only the outer periphery of
12 that large herd would grace the community, that outer
13 periphery has shrunk to a point where it is critical
14 for some communities like Anaktuvuk Pass. Wainwright
15 has been instrumental in harvesting Western Arctic
16 Caribou Herd in excess and snowmachining resources to
17 other villages like Wainwright to supplement their
18 needs. Nuiqsut was doing that all this winter. Their
19 hunters bringing food resources to Anaktuvuk Pass. We
20 care for our people. We want to make sure we provide
21 enough food for them and their families and their
22 communities.

23
24 So I just wanted to express that.

25
26 We need to continue to be able to
27 convey to the Federal Subsistence Board the needs of
28 communities, even if it needs to be shaken up a little
29 bit, maybe there needs to be new ways of doing things.

30
31 One of the things we -- looking at, and
32 I think what you guys just did in Unit 23 kind of
33 resembles a village area of influence in the community
34 plans that we've been developing. Those kind of things
35 that need to be more talked about.

36
37 Thank you, very much.

38
39 CHAIRMAN CHRISTIANSON: Thank you,
40 Gordon.

41
42 Northwest.

43
44 MR. SHIEDT: We opposed 18-48 and took
45 no action on 18-49. And to tell you the truth I missed
46 this part of this proposal because I had to run to the
47 airport, I had to go to the hospital. So that's all --
48 so when the Co-Chair filled me in on this he didn't --
49 I mean he forget this part right here. So whatever

50

1 taken or whatever was said at that meeting, I'll have
2 to rely on Zach to answer it for me.

3

4 Thank you.

5

6 CHAIRMAN CHRISTIANSON: Zach.

7

8 MR. STEVENSON: Thank you. And through
9 the Chair and responding to the request from Chairman
10 Shiedt. The deliberation that led to the Council --
11 the Northwest Arctic Subsistence Regional Advisory
12 Council opposing the proposal focused on a concern that
13 a registration process may be burdensome to local
14 hunters, Federally-qualified subsistence users.

15

16 However, there was also some
17 recognition, I think this point was alluded to through
18 Chairman Brower, that while there is an implicit
19 desire, in this case, in the Northwest Arctic, to avoid
20 burdening Federally-qualified subsistence users,
21 there's also an awareness that improved data, improved
22 reporting can help to provide more timely and accurate
23 wildlife management, however, registration permit may
24 not be the only way to get at that goal. The
25 discussion around proxy hunting, a means for providing
26 food for elders might be one approach or for that
27 matter, community harvest surveys where members
28 themselves are approached door to door, rather than
29 through a registration permit process, may be a way to
30 get there as well.

31

32 So I wanted to provide that nuance.

33

34 Thank you, Mr. Chair.

35

36 CHAIRMAN CHRISTIANSON: Thank you for
37 giving us that summary, appreciate it.

38

39 Any questions for the Chairs.

40

41 (No comments)

42

43 CHAIRMAN CHRISTIANSON: Move on to
44 Tribal, Alaska Native Corp comments.

45

46 MR. MIKE: Thank you, Mr. Chair.
47 Donald Mike, Council coordinator.

48

49 Consultations were provided during the

50

1 dates of September 7th and September 14th for Proposal
2 18-48/49, and we did not receive any comments from
3 tribes nor ANCSA corps.

4

5 Thank you, Mr. Chair.

6

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

9

10 MR. BUTLER: Thank you, Mr. Chair.
11 Members of the Board. The Department supports this
12 proposal.

13

14 We feel that it will provide additional
15 information to supplement the community household
16 surveys that are already being done so it will improve
17 our management. We have no problem with the Federal
18 process using the State permit system. In fact, we
19 encourage that. And our Staff has put quite a bit of
20 effort into distributing the State registration permits
21 in all the communities and will continue their
22 outreach.

23

24 So that's -- I actually can't say
25 enough about the amount of effort they've put into it.
26 I think you'll be happy with the results.

27

28 Thank you.

29

30 CHAIRMAN CHRISTIANSON: Thank you.
31 InterAgency Staff Committee.

32

33 MS. HARDIN: Thank you, Mr. Chair.
34 Members of the Board. The InterAgency Staff Committee
35 comments are located on Page 1148 of your meeting book.

36

37 In addition to the standard comment,
38 the ISC, or InterAgency Staff Committee noted that the
39 North Slope Council's concern about individuals that
40 hunt to provide for many families in the community and
41 for those that are not able to hunt, such as widows and
42 elders, who may not be able to continue these
43 traditional practices using a State registration
44 permit. While State proxy hunting can occur only under
45 specific circumstances, Federal regulations allow
46 Federally-qualified subsistence users to designate
47 another qualified subsistence user to take fish and
48 wildlife on his or her behalf using the Federal
49 designated harvester permit. The Federal designated

50

1 harvester permit -- I'm sorry -- the Federal designated
2 harvester must be a Federally-qualified subsistence
3 user, have the other user's State registration permit
4 and a Federal designated harvester permit in their
5 possession while hunting. The Federal designated
6 harvester may hunt for an unlimited number of users
7 with State registration permits, but as per Federal
8 regulation, may have no more than two harvest limits in
9 possession at any one time.

10

11 If this proposal is adopted and State
12 registration permits are required, the availability of
13 Federal designated harvester permits should be
14 publicized widely to insure awareness of this
15 opportunity under the Federal Program.

16

17 Thank you, Mr. Chair.

18

19 CHAIRMAN CHRISTIANSON: Thank you.
20 Seeing no questions we'll move to Board discussion with
21 Council Chairs and State liaison.

22

23 (No comments)

24

25 CHAIRMAN CHRISTIANSON: It looks like
26 we're ready for Board action.

27

28 Bert.

29

30 MR. FROST: I move to adopt WP18-48 as
31 found on Page 1103 of the meeting book and to take no
32 action on WP18-49. After a second I will speak to my
33 motion.

34

35 MR. C. BROWER: Second.

36

37 MR. FROST: Thanks, Charlie. I intend
38 to vote in support of my motion. The NPS concurs with
39 justifications provided by the supporting RACs on Page
40 1147 and the SRCs on Page 7-31 and 7-36 of the
41 Supplemental Section 7, and OSM on Page 1141.

42

43 No biological impacts are expected from
44 this proposal. While compliance with the new reporting
45 system will likely take time, more accurate harvest
46 data provided by registration permits could benefit the
47 caribou resource and subsistence use by a more informed
48 herd management and hunting regulations. Requiring
49 registration permits would improve herd management,

50

1 which is particularly important during periods of
2 population declines.
3

4 Additionally, adoption of this proposal
5 would reduce regulatory complexity by aligning Federal
6 and State reporting requirements for caribou in Units
7 22, 23 and 26A.
8

9 Concurrence from the State to allow
10 Federally-qualified subsistence users to use a State
11 registration permit while hunting under Federal
12 regulations would be needed.
13

14 Taking this action is also consistent
15 with the Western Interior, North Slope, Seward Penn
16 RACs and the Cape Krusenstern, Kobuk Valley SRCs and
17 OSM.
18

19 Thank you.
20

21 CHAIRMAN CHRISTIANSON: Thank you. Any
22 further Board discussion or comments.
23

24 (No comments)
25

26 CHAIRMAN CHRISTIANSON: Call for the
27 question.
28

29 MR. C. BROWER: Question.
30

31 CHAIRMAN CHRISTIANSON: Question's been
32 called. Will you read the proposal into the record
33 please.
34

35 MR. DOOLITTLE: Absolutely. Wildlife
36 Proposal 18-48/49. The motion on the floor, adopt
37 Proposal WP18-48 as found on Page 1103 of the meeting
38 book, and take no action on Proposal WP18=49.
39

40 CHAIRMAN CHRISTIANSON: All those in
41 favor of the motion, signify by saying aye.
42

43 IN UNISON: Aye.
44

45 CHAIRMAN CHRISTIANSON: Opposed, same
46 sign.
47

48 (No opposing votes)
49
50

1 CHAIRMAN CHRISTIANSON: Motion carries
2 unanimously.

3
4 (Off record)

5
6 (On record)

7
8 CHAIRMAN CHRISTIANSON: All right,
9 before we get started we're going to make a public
10 announcement here on our contest winners. The result
11 of the student art contest are in as follows:

12
13 (Sings a diddy)

14
15 CHAIRMAN CHRISTIANSON: First place,
16 wildlife category: Ryland Democha, Age 12 from the
17 Kodiak Middle School.

18
19 (Applause)

20
21 CHAIRMAN CHRISTIANSON: Does somebody
22 want to -- do you just want to grab the winners -- oh,
23 right on. Vanna, Vanna White, I'll be Drew Carey.

24
25 (Laughter)

26
27 CHAIRMAN CHRISTIANSON: Honorable
28 mention in the wildlife category was Nulani Recostiodo,
29 Age 13 from Kodiak Middle School, and there it is.

30
31 (Laughter)

32
33 (Applause)

34
35 CHAIRMAN CHRISTIANSON: And also is
36 Addison Mangini, Age 12 from the Kodiak Middle School
37 as well.

38
39 (Applause)

40
41 CHAIRMAN CHRISTIANSON: First place in
42 the fisheries category was Levica Naomi Hernandez, Age
43 17. That is a really good one, I like that, from
44 Barrow High School.

45
46 (Applause)

47
48 MR. C. BROWER: Yeah.

49
50

1 (Laughter)

2
3 CHAIRMAN CHRISTIANSON: The Barrow
4 Whalers strike again.
5

6 And then we have honorable mentions in
7 the fishery category of Leanna Marsh, Age 12 from
8 Kodiak Middle School.
9

10 (Applause)

11
12 CHAIRMAN CHRISTIANSON: And Kaley
13 Rogers, Age 12 from the Kodiak Middle School.
14

15 (Applause)

16
17 CHAIRMAN CHRISTIANSON: Right on. Way
18 to go.
19

20 Appreciate all the students and their
21 involvement in the art contest. I thank all of you,
22 Staff, who made it happen.
23

24 All right, we're on WP18-51.
25

26 MS. MAAS: All right, thank you, Mr.
27 Chair. Members of the Board. For the record my name
28 is Lisa Maas and I will be presenting a summary of the
29 analysis for Wildlife Proposal 18-51, which begins on
30 Page 1155 of your meeting book.
31

32 Wildlife Proposal 18-51 was submitted
33 by the Eastern Interior Council and requests that
34 Federal statewide bear baiting restrictions be aligned
35 with State regulations, specifically the use of
36 biodegradable materials.
37

38 The proponent states that current
39 Federal bear baiting restrictions are more restrictive
40 than the State's and do not provide for a Federal
41 subsistence priority. Aligning State and Federal bear
42 baiting restrictions would reduce regulatory complexity
43 and user confusion and allow baiting with items, such
44 as dog food, anise, baked goods, et cetera, that have
45 traditionally been used as bear bait by Federally-
46 qualified subsistence users and are currently are
47 allowed under State regulations.
48

49 Federal regulations for bear baiting
50

1 were adopted from State regulations in 1990 and have
2 not been modified since. In 2015 the National Park
3 Service published a final rule prohibiting the take of
4 black and brown bears over bait on National Preserves
5 under regulations. In 2017 the Park Service published
6 a final rule limiting the types of bait that may be
7 used for taking bears under Federal regulations to
8 Native fish or wildlife remains with some exceptions in
9 Wrangell-St. Elias National Park and Preserve.

10
11 Black and brown bears have been
12 traditionally and contemporarily harvested and utilized
13 across much of Alaska using various methods. However,
14 the occurrence of bear baiting is limited within
15 published literature and is unknown whether this method
16 was rarely practiced or just seldom documented. In
17 some cases the bait ingredients are unknown.

18
19 One alternative considered was to
20 define the term scent lure as no definition currently
21 exists under Federal or State regulations. If not
22 defined, any material or chemical could be used at
23 registered bait stations on Federal public lands,
24 including non-biodegradable ones.

25
26 If this proposal is adopted Federally-
27 qualified subsistence users could use any biodegradable
28 material as well as scent lures at registered bear
29 baiting stations on lands administered by the U.S. Fish
30 and Wildlife Service, the Bureau of Land Management and
31 the U.S. Forest Service. As bear bait is limited to
32 Native fish and wildlife remains on National Park
33 Service lands, adoption of this proposal would not
34 affect Park Service lands, with some exceptions in
35 Wrangell-St. Elias.

36
37 Adoption of this proposal would reduce
38 regulatory complexity and user confusion by aligning
39 State and Federal regulations as the requested changes
40 are already permitted under State regulations, no
41 appreciable differences in bear populations, harvest,
42 subsistence uses or habituation to human foods are
43 expected from adopting this proposal.

44
45 The OSM conclusion is to support WP18-
46 51 with modification to establish a definition for
47 scent lure and to clarify the regulatory language
48 substituting the word, wildlife, for the terms, game,
49 fur animals and small game as these terms are not
50

1 defined under Federal regulations but are included in
2 the Federal definition of wildlife.

3

4 Thank you, Mr. Chair.

5

6 CHAIRMAN CHRISTIANSON: Thank you. Any
7 questions for the Staff on that.

8

9 CHAIRMAN CHRISTIANSON: Move on to
10 summary of public comment.

11

12 MS. WESSELS: Thank you, Mr. Chair.
13 Members of the Board. For the record my name is Katya
14 Wessels and I'm Council coordinator for the Eastern
15 Interior.

16

17 Public comments on the Wildlife
18 Proposal WP18-51 can be found on Page 1173 of the main
19 book, as well as on several pages of the Supplemental
20 Section 7.

21

22 We received 12 written public comments
23 on the WP18-51. Five comments were in opposition, five
24 in support, one in support as modified by the Denali
25 National Park Subsistence Resource Commission, and one
26 in support as modified by OSM.

27

28 The comments opposing WP18-51 state;
29 that allowing the use of human produced foods and
30 scents for the bear baiting would habituate bears to
31 humans and human foods, contribute to and increase
32 human/bear conflict resulting in serious human injuries
33 and tragic loss of human loss, present a public safety
34 and ethical issues.

35

36 Comments in opposition also state; that
37 State's baiting regulations are outdated and trying to
38 align Federal baiting regulation to State's would lower
39 Federal standards. They recommend that the existing
40 State bear baiting rules should be revised to match or
41 exceed Federal rules.

42

43 The opposing comments also state; that
44 as allowing brown and black bear baiting in the
45 National Park land including Wrangell-St. Elias
46 National Park and Preserve conflicts with the National
47 Park Service's own rule 36 CFR 2.2(a)(2), which
48 prohibits the feeding, touching, teasing, frightening
49 or intentional disturbance of wildlife nesting,
50

1 breeding or other activities in National Parks.

2
3 The comments also suggest that the
4 passing of this proposal would generate a highly
5 negative public reaction. Some comments note that in
6 certain areas of the state, as for example, in the Lake
7 Clark region, bear baiting is not recognized as an
8 established traditional method of hunting bears. The
9 Lake Clark SRC believes the term, any biodegradable
10 material is too broad because it may include items such
11 as commercial dog food, baked goods, anise and syrup
12 that are not considered traditional bait. If bait were
13 allowed, the only bait appropriate for hunting purposes
14 should be limited to fish and wildlife remains
15 indigenous to the area.

16
17 Other comments state that they do not
18 support bear baiting near fish camps and villages,
19 especially during summertime when game and fish are
20 being processed.

21
22 The Denali National Park Subsistence
23 Resource Commission does not support WP18-51 as
24 written. The Denali SRC adopted WP18-51 to align the
25 Federal regulations with the State and amended the
26 proposal to include only natural bait. The SRC is
27 concerned about bears getting accustomed to people
28 food. If bears get used to non-natural bait they're
29 going to be more aggressive to campers. The Denali SRC
30 does not want bears acclimated to human food on Federal
31 lands. Although currently non-natural bait is not
32 allowed on NPS lands, it is anticipated that if non-
33 natural bait is legal on Federal lands there will be
34 future pressure to allow non-natural baiting on NPS
35 lands.

36
37 Other Parks have severe problems with
38 bears and Denali is lucky, due to management and
39 education efforts, so they don't have acclimation. It
40 is difficult to reverse acclimation.

41
42 The Wrangell-St. Elias SRC supports
43 WP18-51 as modified by the Office of Subsistence
44 Management. Several comments in support also noted
45 that aligning State and Federal definitions of bait
46 will simplify the regulations and make them easier for
47 users to understand.

48
49 Thank you.

50

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

3
4 Gordon.

5
6 MR. G. BROWER: Yeah, I was just
7 listening to that a little bit.

8
9 You know I talked to my father when he
10 was alive about bears and how to manage those things.
11 And they used to make these baleen with spear tips at
12 both ends and tied them together with sinew and put
13 them in a ball of meat and let them eat them, and then
14 the sinew would dissolve and the baleen would open with
15 its points inside the stomach and that's how we would
16 manage bears. So there is some traditional subsistence
17 hunting using baiting in this fashion.

18
19 I just wanted to mention that.

20
21 Thank you.

22
23 CHAIRMAN CHRISTIANSON: Thank you. Any
24 other public testimony.

25
26 (No comments)

27
28 CHAIRMAN CHRISTIANSON: On the phone.

29
30 OPERATOR: Not on the phones.

31
32 CHAIRMAN CHRISTIANSON: Thank you.

33
34 MR. C. BROWER: Mr. Chair.

35
36 CHAIRMAN CHRISTIANSON: Charles.

37
38 MR. C. BROWER: I did that once it never
39 worked.

40
41 (Laughter)

42
43 MR. C. BROWER: So next time I went out
44 polar bear hunting I brought a stinky walrus flipper
45 face the wind, they never came, I must have done it
46 wrong.

47
48 (Laughter)

1 MR. C. BROWER: No.

2
3 (Laughter)

4
5 CHAIRMAN CHRISTIANSON: Louis.

6
7 MR. GREEN: You know, just thinking
8 about the syrup and things used, I think I'd rather
9 have that used than having fish and game used because I
10 want to protect my fish and game so I thought it would
11 be better to use syrup.

12
13 Thank you.

14
15 CHAIRMAN CHRISTIANSON: Cherrio.

16
17 (Laughter)

18
19 CHAIRMAN CHRISTIANSON: Any other
20 public testimony. I get goofy after 4:30, sorry.

21
22 (No comments)

23
24 CHAIRMAN CHRISTIANSON: Hearing none,
25 Regional Advisory Council recommendation.

26
27 (Pause)

28
29 CHAIRMAN CHRISTIANSON: Southeast.

30
31 MR. HERNANDEZ: Thank you, Mr.
32 Chairman. The Southeast RAC did support this proposal
33 with the OSM modification.

34
35 CHAIRMAN CHRISTIANSON: Thank you.
36 Southcentral.

37
38 (No comments)

39
40 CHAIRMAN CHRISTIANSON: Oh, they
41 stepped out.

42
43 Donald.

44
45 MR. MIKE: Thank you, Mr. Chair.
46 Donald Mike, Council coordinator. I'll be reading into
47 the record the Southcentral Council's recommendation.

48
49 The Southcentral Council support WP18-
50

1 51 as modified by OSM. And I also will read into the
2 record Bristol Bay, we don't have a representative
3 here. The Council's recommendation, support WP18-51 as
4 modified by OSM.

5
6 Thank you, Mr. Chair.

7
8 CHAIRMAN CHRISTIANSON: Thank you,
9 Donald.

10
11 Western Interior.

12
13 MR. REAKOFF: Western Interior supported
14 WP18-51 as modified by OSM.

15
16 CHAIRMAN CHRISTIANSON: Thank you,
17 Jack.

18
19 Northwest.

20
21 MR. SHIEDT: Supported with modification
22 by OSM.

23
24 (Pause)

25
26 MR. SHIEDT: Northwest Arctic in our
27 area supported with modification by OSM.

28
29 CHAIRMAN CHRISTIANSON: Thank you,
30 Enoch.

31
32 Eastern Interior.

33
34 MR. WOODRUFF: Thank you, sir. This
35 was put in by the Eastern Interior and we supported it
36 with the modification by OSM and our Council vote was
37 6-0.

38
39 CHAIRMAN CHRISTIANSON: Thank you.
40 Kodiak/Aleutian.

41
42 MS. TRUMBLE: Thank you, Mr. Chair.
43 The Council moved to take no action on WP18-51. The
44 Council recognized that 18-51 only applied to Federal
45 areas where bear baiting is permitted, bear baiting is
46 currently not permitted on any Federal lands in Region
47 3 and the Council rarely comments on proposals that do
48 not impact their region.

49
50

1 CHAIRMAN CHRISTIANSON: Thank you,
2 Della. Sorry for that.

3
4 Seward Penn.

5
6 MR. GREEN: Thank you, Mr. Chair. The
7 Seward Peninsula voted to support.

8
9 The Council agreed to support this
10 proposal, recognizing, however, that bear baiting is
11 not currently permitted in Federal lands in Unit 22,
12 for the record.

13
14 Thank you, Mr. Chair.

15
16 CHAIRMAN CHRISTIANSON: Thank you.
17 Yukon Kuskokwim Delta.

18
19 MS. PATTON: Mr. Chair. Members of the
20 Board. Reporting for the Yukon Kuskokwim Delta
21 Subsistence Regional Advisory Council, they voted to
22 support WP18-51. And the Council discussed its support
23 for the use of biodegradable material as a bait for
24 harvesting bear and aligning Federal subsistence
25 regulations with the State regulations on this issues.

26
27 Thank you.

28
29 CHAIRMAN CHRISTIANSON: Thank you.
30 North Slope.

31
32 MR. G. BROWER: The North Slope
33 Regional Subsistence Advisory Council supported WP18-51
34 as written.

35
36 CHAIRMAN CHRISTIANSON: Thank you.
37 Tribal, Alaska Native Corp comments.

38
39 MR. MIKE: Thank you, Mr. Chair.
40 Tribal consultations were provided September 7th and
41 September 24th [sic] and no tribal comments nor
42 corporate comments were received.

43
44 Thank you, Mr. Chair.

45
46 CHAIRMAN CHRISTIANSON: Thank you,
47 Donald. Alaska Department of Fish and Game comments.

48
49 MR. BUTLER: Thank you, Mr. Chair.

50

1 Members of the Board. We support this proposal.

2

3 We modified our definition about two
4 years ago. Our former definition looked very similar
5 to what you currently have. We realized all of a
6 sudden that things like furbearer carcasses couldn't be
7 used as bait, you know, it was limited to the head,
8 bones, viscera and skin of legally harvest fish and
9 game and so we went to lengths to include furbearer
10 carcasses, people use beaver for bait and other things.
11 So we really recommend that you make this change.

12

13 As far as safety and acclimation, we've
14 got bear baiting all over the state, people using dog
15 food and donuts and all sorts of other things, there's
16 no evidence at all that the bears get acclimated
17 through this vehicle, or that there are any safety
18 issues, in fact, where we have the majority of our bear
19 baiting, around Fairbanks, we have very few problems.
20 Places like Anchorage, we have very limited bear
21 baiting, we have a lot of problems with bears, so it's
22 actually the opposite and we could get into why. But
23 anyways the safety and acclimation arguments, while
24 they come up frequently with bear baiting, in
25 particular, really have no -- there's no evidence to
26 support that there's anything there at all.

27

28 Thank you, Mr. Chair.

29

30 CHAIRMAN CHRISTIANSON: Thank you, Lem.

31

32 InterAgency Staff Committee.

33

34 MS. HARDIN: Thank you, Mr. Chair.
35 Members of the Board. The InterAgency Staff Committee
36 provided the standard comment on WP18-51.

37

38 CHAIRMAN CHRISTIANSON: Thank you.
39 Board discussion with Council Chairs and State liaison.

40

41 (No comments)

42

43 CHAIRMAN CHRISTIANSON: Hearing none, I
44 open up the floor for Board action.

45

46 Greg.

47

48 MR. SIEKANIEC: Mr. Chair. I'd like to
49 move that we adopt WP18-51 as modified by OSM as

50

1 indicated on Page 1155 and 1156 of our meeting book
2 materials and supported by the Eastern Interior,
3 Northwest Arctic, Seward Penn, Western Interior,
4 Bristol Bay, Southcentral and Southeast Regional
5 Advisory Committees [sic]. Should I get a second on
6 this I will give some additional justification.
7

8 MR. C. BROWER: Second.
9

10 MR. SIEKANIEC: Thank you, Mr. Brower.
11 The use of biodegradable baits is already permitted as
12 a form of baiting. Aligning State and Federal
13 regulations will reduce this confusion. And I believe
14 that defining scent lures will clarify the regulation
15 and, again, reduce the potential for what we see as may
16 be harmful or inappropriate use of other materials that
17 are non-biodegradable.
18

19 Thank you, Mr. Chair.
20

21 CHAIRMAN CHRISTIANSON: Thank you. Any
22 Board discussion.
23

24 (No comments)
25

26 CHAIRMAN CHRISTIANSON: Hearing or
27 seeing none, call for the question.
28

29 MR. C. BROWER: Question.
30

31 CHAIRMAN CHRISTIANSON: Question's been
32 called. Please read into the record, the motion.
33

34 MR. DOOLITTLE: Wildlife Proposal 18-
35 51. The motion on the floor, adopt Proposal WP18-51 as
36 modified by the Office of Subsistence Management as
37 found on Page 1155, 1156 of the meeting book.
38

39 CHAIRMAN CHRISTIANSON: All those in
40 favor of the motion signify by saying aye.
41

42 IN UNISON: Aye.
43

44 CHAIRMAN CHRISTIANSON: Opposed, same
45 sign.
46

47 MR. FROST: Aye.
48

49 CHAIRMAN CHRISTIANSON: The motion
50

1 carries with one nay.

2

3 MR. DOOLITTLE: Who's the nay.

4

5 CHAIRMAN CHRISTIANSON: Bert.

6

7 MR. DOOLITTLE: Bert.

8

9 CHAIRMAN CHRISTIANSON: I knew his
10 name, I just forgot what company he represents.

11

12 (Laughter)

13

14 CHAIRMAN CHRISTIANSON: WP18-51 is
15 done. WP18-53.

16

17 MS. MAAS: All right, thank you, Mr.
18 Chair. Members of the Board. For the record my name
19 is Lisa Maas and I will be presenting a summary of the
20 analysis for Wildlife Proposal 18-53(b), which begins
21 on Page 1178 of your meeting book.

22

23 Wildlife Proposal 18-53(b) was
24 submitted by the Eastern Interior Council and request
25 that the moose season in Unit 25B be extended to
26 October 7th.

27

28 The proponent states that a longer
29 season is needed to ease meat care due to warmer falls
30 and to provide additional opportunity for Federally-
31 qualified subsistence users. WP18-53(a) could affect
32 this proposal. WP18-53(a) requests a customary and
33 traditional use determination for moose in Units 25B
34 and 25C and is on the consensus agenda.

35

36 Moose population data in Unit 25B is
37 lacking. Moose surveys within Yukon-Charley National
38 Preserve and surrounding units indicate a low density
39 stable moose population with high bull/cow ratios of 62
40 bulls per 100 cows. However, bull/cow ratios in
41 northern Unit 25B may be considerably lower. While
42 uncertain, household surveys indicate moose harvest
43 from northern Unit 25B is very low, about five to 12
44 moose per year. Reported moose harvest for Unit 25B
45 averages 31 moose per year, although most of the
46 reported harvest is by non-local hunters. Local
47 hunters, residents of Units 25A, D, B and Eagle account
48 for 28 percent of the reported harvest on average.
49 Most of the reported harvest occurs in mid-September

50

1 with only 17 percent occurring during the fourth week
2 of September on average.

3
4 Adoption of this proposal would provide
5 Federally-qualified users with additional harvest
6 opportunity in early October which may ease meat care
7 issues associated with higher fall temperatures. The
8 amount of competition and harvest pressure resulting
9 from this proposal is contingent upon WP18-53(a) and
10 whether or not a C&T determination is adopted for moose
11 in Unit 25B.

12
13 There are minimal conservation concerns
14 due to the bulls only harvest restriction, high
15 bull/cow ratios in southern Unit 25B, very low harvest
16 pressure in northern Unit 25B and historically low
17 harvest during the end of September.

18
19 The OSM conclusion is to support
20 Proposal 18-53(b).

21
22 Thank you, Mr. Chair.

23
24 CHAIRMAN CHRISTIANSON: Thank you.
25 Rhonda.

26
27 MS. PITKA: So you noted that WP18-
28 53(a) will have an impact on this but you didn't say
29 what the impact would be because it is on the consensus
30 agenda as modified by OSM.

31
32 MS. MAAS: Sure. Thanks, Member Pitka.
33 So currently the C&T determination for Unit 25B is open
34 to all Federally-qualified subsistence users, there has
35 not been a C&T determination for that unit. So
36 actually when the Eastern Interior Council, at their
37 meeting last year when they were putting in this
38 proposal, there was concern from residents of Eagle
39 that competition with hunters, primarily from the Tok
40 and Glennallen areas might compete with the local --
41 you know, the really local hunters from Eagle, coming
42 up to that area and hunting during the extended fall
43 season. So if 53(a) is passed, and I don't have that
44 modification in front of me, but it's a much limited
45 number, you know, of Federally-qualified users that
46 would have that C&T determination, that would decrease
47 the number of hunters that could hunt during that
48 extended season.

1 So Josh has that modification if you'd
2 like me to read it.

3
4 So just for clarification, the OSM
5 conclusion for 18-53(a) is to recognize the customary
6 and traditional uses of moose in Units 25B and 25C by
7 residents of Units 20D, 30E, 25B, 25C, 25D and
8 residents of the communities of Tok and Livengood. So
9 that limits the number of Federally-qualified
10 subsistence users that could take advantage of that
11 extended season.

12
13 MS. PITKA: Thank you.

14
15 CHAIRMAN CHRISTIANSON: Could we get
16 summary of public comment.

17
18 MS. WESSELS: Thank you, Mr. Chair.
19 Members of the Board. Katya Wessels, for the record.

20
21 We received no written public comments
22 on this proposal.

23
24 CHAIRMAN CHRISTIANSON: Thank you. We
25 will open the floor to public testimony.

26
27 (No comments)

28
29 CHAIRMAN CHRISTIANSON: On the phone.

30
31 OPERATOR: No, sir. If you have a
32 question or comment, please press star-one.

33
34 (No comments)

35
36 CHAIRMAN CHRISTIANSON: Regional
37 Advisory Council recommendation.

38
39 Eastern Interior.

40
41 MR. WOODRUFF: Thank you, Mr. Chairman.
42 I'm the proponent for this through the RAC. And for
43 years people have been coming to me and saying, my
44 meat's rotting, I can't get it out of camp, I can't get
45 it to a freezer, some people don't have electricity in
46 that area and it's not assumed that they live in a
47 village. And so for years I've been saying, well,
48 there's not a lot we can do about it because I don't
49 see through Fish and Game or the Federal system that
50

1 they're lengthening the seasons because of the weather
2 change. I'm not going to say global warming, too many
3 times.

4

5 (Laughter)

6

7 MR. WOODRUFF: So I put this proposal
8 in through the RAC hoping that we could alleviate some
9 of that waste and care for our meat a little better.
10 And I want to say that I've been hanging meat for 45
11 years and it works. But I've gone hungry a few times
12 and passed up moose because it's 65 degrees the last
13 two days of hunting season at the end of September and
14 I end up eating chum, which is fine, but it's kind of
15 boring.

16

17 Thank you.

18

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

21

22 MR. MIKE: Thank you, Mr. Chair. On
23 September 14th tribal consultation was held and we did
24 not receive any tribal nor corporate comments.

25

26 Thank you.

27

28 CHAIRMAN CHRISTIANSON: Thank you,
29 Donald. Alaska Department of Fish and Game comments.

30

31 MR. BURCH: Thank you, Mr. Chair. Mark
32 Burch with Department of Fish and Game.

33

34 The interest in being able to take good
35 care of your meat is commendable, appreciate that.

36

37 Hunting during the rut may disrupt
38 breeding but we'd expect this effect to be relatively
39 minimal since -- with low participation. And ADF&G is
40 opposed to the proposal because it unnecessarily
41 complicates management for subsistence, regulations
42 being different between the State and the Federal
43 government.

44

45 Thank you.

46

47 CHAIRMAN CHRISTIANSON: Thank you.
48 ISC.

49

50

1 MS. HARDIN: Thank you, Mr. Chair. The
2 InterAgency Staff Committee provided the standard
3 comment for Wildlife Proposal WP18-53(b).
4

5 CHAIRMAN CHRISTIANSON: Thank you.
6

7 Board discussion with Council Chairs
8 and State liaison.
9

10 (No comments)
11

12 CHAIRMAN CHRISTIANSON: Hearing and
13 seeing none, we'll open for Board Federal action.
14

15 Karen.
16

17 MS. MOURITSEN: Thank you, Mr. Chair. I
18 move to adopt Wildlife Proposal 18-53(b) lengthening
19 the moose season in Unit 25B to October 7th as shown in
20 the meeting materials on Page 1178. If I'm given a
21 second to the motion I will justify my support.
22

23 MS. PITKA: Second by Rhonda Pitka.
24

25 MS. MOURITSEN: My support for this
26 motion is based on the fact that the Eastern Interior
27 RAC submitted and supports the proposal for providing a
28 slight increase in hunting opportunity time for the
29 Federally-qualified subsistence hunters into early
30 October. The area receives minimal hunting pressure
31 and presently has a bull/cow ratio that can sustain
32 additional harvest if the season extension results in
33 additional harvest, as well as a later time to harvest.
34

35 Therefore, I support the motion.
36

37 Thank you.
38

39 CHAIRMAN CHRISTIANSON: Thank you. Any
40 further Board discussion.
41

42 MR. C. BROWER: Question.
43

44 CHAIRMAN CHRISTIANSON: Question's been
45 called. Please read into the record the motion.
46

47 MR. DOOLITTLE: WP18-53(b), the motion
48 on the floor. Adopt Proposal WP18-53(b) lengthening
49 the moose season in Unit 25B to October 7th as shown on
50

1 Page 1178 of the meeting book.

2

3 CHAIRMAN CHRISTIANSON: All in favor of
4 the motion signify by saying aye.

5

6 IN UNISON: Aye.

7

8 CHAIRMAN CHRISTIANSON: Opposed, same
9 sign.

10

11 (No opposing votes)

12

13 CHAIRMAN CHRISTIANSON: Motion carries
14 unanimously.

15

16 Thank you.

17

18 I'd like to thank you guys for your
19 diligence in staying all week, thank you guys have a
20 safe trip and appreciate you guys being here all week.

21

22 (Applause)

23

24 CHAIRMAN CHRISTIANSON: Thank you.
25 Have a safe trip home.

26

27 UNIDENTIFIED VOICE: And thanks so much
28 for the support and helping them to be here.

29

30 CHAIRMAN CHRISTIANSON: Thank you guys.

31

32 MR. DOOLITTLE: Thank you.

33

34 MS. LAVINE: Good afternoon, Mr. Chair.
35 Members of the Council. Once again my name is Robbin
36 LaVine and I will be presenting a summary of the
37 analysis of Proposal Wildlife 18-56 and it begins on
38 Page 1228 of your Board books.

39

40 Wildlife Proposal 18-56 was submitted
41 by Richard Bishop of Fairbanks, Alaska. And he
42 requests that the Arctic Village Sheep Management Area
43 in Unit 25A be opened to the harvest of sheep by non-
44 Federally-qualified users.

45

46 The proponent states that sheep hunting
47 opportunity on Federal public lands of the management
48 area should be opened to the public under State hunting
49 regulations because there is no biological or

50

1 subsistence related reasons to preclude sheep hunting
2 opportunities by the public. Federal closures to the
3 harvest of sheep, except by Federally-qualified
4 subsistence users have been in effect since 1991. The
5 closure was expanded in 1995 to include Cane Creek and
6 Red Sheep Creek drainages, but the closure was
7 rescinded in these drainages from 2006 to 2011 between
8 August 10th and September 30th each year.
9

10 People traditionally occupying the area
11 call themselves Netsi Gwich'in, the literature
12 pertaining to these people is sparse and they have
13 rarely participated in research. Netsi Gwich'in means
14 people who dwell on the side of the mountain.
15

16 Oral history, local traditional
17 knowledge and public testimony describe the
18 significance of Red Sheep Creek and Cane Creek area for
19 the Netsi Gwich'in.
20

21 Before about 1890 Netsi Gwich'in
22 regularly traveled over the Brooks Range to the Arctic
23 Coast to trade with Inupiat at Barter Island, thus the
24 name Barter Island. Sheep, caribou, fish and small
25 wildlife were harvested along the travel route
26 traversing the Brooks Range. According to Arctic
27 Village elder Gilbert Trimble, Red Sheep Creek and Cane
28 Creek are situated on this travel route. Last fall at
29 an Eastern Interior -- last fall an Eastern Interior
30 Council member asked Hollis Twitchell, the U.S. Fish
31 and Wildlife Service, to describe what he knew about
32 Red Sheep and Cane Creek areas. Mr. Twitchell explained
33 that he'd spent a day with Mr. Gilbert walking around a
34 site in the Red Sheep Creek drainage. Mr. Gilbert
35 described that his clan, men and women, elders and
36 youth would travel by foot, up Red Sheep Creek to this
37 place, upon arrival some men continued over the pass
38 and down the coastal plain to trade at Barter Island
39 while their families remained behind harvesting and
40 preserving sheep and other resources. When the traders
41 returned, the clan loaded boats with dried food that
42 had been stored and specifically made caches and
43 floated back to Arctic Villages. Specialized hunting
44 supplies remained behind in caches. Mr. Gilbert
45 identified and talked about graves and caches that
46 still exist there.
47

48 Compelling documentation also comes
49 from Steven Dinero of Philadelphia University who
50

1 conducted field work in Arctic Village in the early
2 2000s. He reported that among the Gwich'in there's a
3 story about how Red Sheep Creek was named, which sheds
4 light on why Arctic Village residents consider it a
5 revered place. The story begins with people who were
6 hungry. One day at the church, someone spotted caribou
7 moving in the brush, upon closer inspection people
8 realized they were looking at unusual sheep with red
9 markings, or what many say were crosses on their coats.
10 People followed the red sheep far into the mountains
11 where they were finally able to harvest them. The
12 hides of the sheep were kept and passed down because of
13 their distinctive markings.
14

15 The trip from Arctic Village to Red
16 Sheep Creek is over 100 miles and residents use great
17 effort, both physically and economically to hunt sheep
18 in these drainages. Since 1993 Arctic Village
19 residents have testified to the Board the plane traffic
20 and use by non-Federally-qualified users have
21 interfered with their ability to successfully hunt
22 sheep in the Red Sheep and Cane Creek drainages.
23 Residents reported that plane flavors spooked sheep and
24 that older rams can climb to higher elevations making
25 them more difficult to hunt, explaining that both
26 valleys are very narrow and consequently flights
27 through the area disturb the sheep.
28

29 Since 1995 Federally-qualified
30 subsistence users have been required to get a Federal
31 registration permit to hunt for sheep in the management
32 area but we must take care when using these data as it
33 is likely that many Gwich'in hunters have not reported
34 their harvest efforts. The majority of Federal permits
35 have been issued since 19 -- or since 2005. Residents
36 of Arctic Village have requested 25 Federal permits to
37 hunt sheep in the management area and residents of Fort
38 Yukon have requested five permits to hunt sheep in the
39 management area. The location of the harvest for the
40 majority of the sheep taken was not reported. Using
41 State harvest tickets or permits from 2006 to 2010
42 approximately 22 sheep were reported harvested in the
43 area north of Cane Creek and in the Red Sheep drainage
44 while it was opened to non-Federally-qualified
45 subsistence users.
46

47 The management area can be divided into
48 two areas regarding habitat. The first is the area
49 south of Cane Creek. Sheep densities in this area have
50

1 generally been low compared to the other areas of the
2 Brooks Range, which is likely due to poor habitat
3 quality. In 1991 when the Board adopted the closure,
4 portions of the area did not appear to be able to
5 support more sheep than have been present. Sheep
6 populations in the management area situated south of
7 Cane Creek continue to exist at low densities and
8 should remain closed to non-subsistence uses in order
9 to protect healthy populations of sheep as mandated in
10 ANILCA Section .815.

11
12 In the second habitat area north of
13 Cane Creek there may be more sheep than in areas to the
14 south but to ensure the continuation of subsistence
15 uses the area should also remain closed. Since 1995
16 the Board has continued to hear substantial testimony
17 and ethnographic evidence demonstrating the importance
18 of Cane Creek and Red Sheep Creek drainages to
19 Federally-qualified subsistence users, especially Netsi
20 Gwich'in who occupy the area historically and continue
21 to occupy the area today.

22
23 In 2012 the Board reiterated that the
24 closure was needed to ensure the continuation of
25 traditional subsistence uses of sheep by Arctic Village
26 hunters and, again, in 2014. There have been no
27 indications that the phenomenon has changed. This area
28 should remain closed to non-subsistence uses in order
29 to ensure the continuation of subsistence uses.

30
31 The Office of Subsistence Management
32 conclusion is to oppose Wildlife Proposal 18-56.

33
34 Thank you.

35
36 CHAIRMAN CHRISTIANSON: Thank you. Any
37 questions for Staff.

38
39 (No comments)

40
41 CHAIRMAN CHRISTIANSON: Hearing none,
42 we'll go to summary of public comment.

43
44 MS. WESSELS: Thank you, Mr. Chairman.
45 Members of the Board. Katya Wessels for the record.
46 Public comments on the Wildlife Proposal WP18-56 can be
47 found on Page 1248 through 1315 in the main book, and
48 on Pages 519 and 38 of the Supplemental Section 7.

49
50

1 All together we received 53 written
2 public comments on WP18-56.

3
4 52 of the comments are in support of
5 WP18-56 and one is in opposition.

6
7 The members of the public who provided
8 comments are primarily from Alaska, although there are
9 several comments from out of state. The opposing
10 comment came from Yukon Flats AC.

11
12 In support comments list the following
13 reasons for passing of the proposal.

14
15 First. The restriction of hunting dall
16 sheep by non-Federally-qualified subsistence users is
17 in violation of ANILCA that states that, "nothing in
18 this title shall be construed as authorizing a
19 restriction on the taking of fish and wildlife for non-
20 subsistence uses on the public lands unless necessary
21 for the conservation of healthy populations of fish and
22 wildlife."

23
24 Second. The Arctic Refuge lands are
25 public lands and its resources are public, therefore,
26 it should be available to all citizens. Hunting is an
27 allowed and wildlife dependent recreational use of
28 Refuge public lands.

29
30 Third. The existence of Arctic Village
31 Sheep Management Area is inconsistent with the U.S.
32 Fish and Wildlife Comprehensive Management Plan for the
33 Arctic Refuge.

34
35 Fourth. There is a healthy sufficient
36 population of full curl dall sheep that is currently
37 not being utilized by anyone, therefore, there is no
38 conservation concern for taking mature rams and no
39 biological reasons for closure of the area to dall
40 sheep harvests by non-locals. The materials provided
41 by OSM biologists for this meeting proves this point.

42
43 Fifth. Local hunters under utilize
44 this resource. They prefer younger sheep to mature
45 rams or prefer caribou to dall sheep. Based on
46 reportings over the last 25 years subsistence use of
47 dall sheep by Arctic Village residents has averaged
48 fewer than three sheep per year which is
49 inconsequential use of the resource.

50

1 Sixth. Opening of Arctic Village Sheep
2 Management Area would lessen the pressure on the other
3 dall sheep herds and hunting areas across the state.
4

5 Seven. Because there is no overlap in
6 hunting seasons for non-local users and local users,
7 there would be no conflict in the field between these
8 two hunter groups.
9

10 Eight. Opening the area would support
11 local economy with the money spent by the non-local
12 hunters during fly in hunting
13

14 Nine. Closures due to perceived
15 cultural or social reasons and not supported by either
16 ANILCA or the Arctic Refuge's Comprehensive
17 Conservation Plan, which states according to one
18 comment that, "users will not be prohibited unless a
19 public process determines the use is detrimental to the
20 area's resource values."
21

22 The in support comments also state that
23 not passing these proposal would:
24

25 First. Continue to violate ANILCA.
26

27 Second. Result in significant lost
28 opportunity for a number of sheep hunters.
29

30 Third. Continue to create a social
31 divide between local and non-local hunters.
32

33 Comments also provided a suggestion
34 that the dall sheep hunt for full curl ram should be
35 reestablished with an open season from August 10th to
36 September 20th.
37

38 The one opposing comment from the Yukon
39 Flats Fish and Game Advisory Committee stated that:
40

41 First. There has not been an increase
42 in the sheep population even with a closure and limited
43 harvest by Federally-qualified subsistence users. It
44 should remain closed.
45

46 Second. It was noted that the sheep
47 population in the modified area just north of Cane
48 Creek could not support the hunt if all the people who
49 commented in support of the proposal were to hunt
50

1 there.

2

3 Third. The importance of this area to
4 Arctic Village and the need to maintain the closure
5 were noted.

6

7 Fourth. The Advisory Committee member
8 from Arctic Village shared the desire of several fellow
9 village sheep hunters to be licensed guides for sheep
10 for this area.

11

12 That concludes the summary of public
13 comments.

14

15 Thank you.

16

17 CHAIRMAN CHRISTIANSON: Thank you.

18

19 Questions.

20

21 (No comments)

22

23 CHAIRMAN CHRISTIANSON: Open the floor

24

25 to any public testimony.

26

27 (No comments)

28

29 CHAIRMAN CHRISTIANSON: I see Kenneth

30

31 is no longer here, we had a card for him. Moses, are

32

33 you in the house.

34

35 (No comments)

36

37 CHAIRMAN CHRISTIANSON: So they've left

38

39 and I believe some of them testified already to their

40

41 feeling on these proposals.

42

43 Anybody on the phone.

44

45 OPERATOR: None on the phones.

46

47 CHAIRMAN CHRISTIANSON: Thank you.

48

49 Regional Advisory Council recommendation.

50

MR. WOODRUFF: Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

This is Don Woodruff, Eastern Interior.

This might be a little bit different

procedure but I personally can't support the RAC's

position, and the reason for that is in 2006 we had a

1 meeting, a Council meeting in Arctic Village and we had
2 so much heartfelt testimony that we continued to keep
3 this closed and we've had four more meetings dealing
4 with this and it's actually wearing down some of the
5 Council members, they don't want to deal with it
6 anymore, and, therefore, they voted to close it -- I
7 mean to open it.

8
9 And, me, personally, I'm offended by
10 biologists and the public when they say that there's no
11 subsistence need and I want to read, just briefly, a
12 statement by one commenter on the phone to us from
13 Nome. He said, that traditional ecological knowledge
14 is a new catchy phrase and that it actually has little
15 or no influence on academia and State politics, and I
16 think that's totally wrong, and I want to reference my
17 opening comments at the Council concerns about how much
18 we think that TEK is so valuable and it's not being
19 valued enough.

20
21 Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

22
23 CHAIRMAN CHRISTIANSON: I just want
24 clarification for the record, though, your Regional
25 Advisory Council voted support with modification.

26
27 MR. WOODRUFF: Yes. And we voted 4-3.

28
29 CHAIRMAN CHRISTIANSON: Okay, thank
30 you. We just needed that on the record, thank you.

31
32 North Slope.

33
34 MR. G. BROWER: Sorry, I wasn't paying
35 attention, I was texting for dinner reservations.

36
37 (Laughter)

38
39 MR. G. BROWER: All right. Yeah, Mr.
40 Chairman, the North Slope Regional Advisory Council
41 opposed WP18-56.

42
43 The Council found this proposal
44 alarming in that it would potentially take away a very
45 important subsistence priority on federal land that
46 encompasses an area. While fairly small in size that
47 has been vital to the community of Arctic Village for
48 generations and is very important to the other rural
49 communities in the region with cultural and traditional
50

1 use of sheep in the area. The Council stressed that it
2 would be detrimental to subsistence users to open up an
3 area to non-Federally-qualified users hunting and it is
4 necessary to restrict these other users in order to
5 provide for subsistence needs. The Council highlighted
6 that there is a considerable amount of historical
7 discussion and the importance of the area to the local
8 communities is well supported. There is a need for
9 stability and for food security in these communities.
10 The importance of protecting the subsistence
11 opportunity in the area is well documented and
12 recognized even though repeated proposals are reviewed.
13 And we just heard that, just tired of hearing the
14 repeated proposals.

15
16 The history and contemporary hunting
17 patterns exist to provide food security for the
18 community and the closure has allowed for the continued
19 traditional harvest of sheep. The Council also
20 stressed that the concern is not only the harvest of
21 the sheep by non-Federally-qualified subsistence users
22 but also the deflection of the sheep with the non-
23 resident hunting activities and plane access pushing
24 sheep further and higher up into the mountains
25 displacing them away from local communities.

26
27 The Council has heard testimony from
28 Arctic Village as well as Kaktovik in the past. It was
29 noted that hunters from Kaktovik do go and hunt in this
30 area when other animals are not available, and it is an
31 important area because sheep can be reliably found
32 around the natural mineral formations in that small
33 area.

34
35 Council members spoke to the cultural
36 importance of the area and that the sheep not only
37 provides important subsistence food but it is also
38 considered medicinal providing minerals and special
39 nourishment for elders and helpful for recovery from
40 illnesses.

41
42 It was noted that sheep become much
43 more important for survival when the caribou do not
44 come around the community and even if harvest is low in
45 some years it is critical to maintain the population
46 for food security when they need to shift harvest to
47 more sheep in low caribou years. The Council stressed
48 that the population needs to be higher level in order
49 to provide for opening up the hunt and currently the
50

1 census data is incomplete and unreliable.

2
3 It was noted that even though non-
4 Federally-qualified subsistence users would be required
5 to take a full curl ram, the pressure of numerous
6 hunters traveling into the area to harvest those rams
7 would displace animals that locals would otherwise be
8 able to hunt. Additionally, the breeding impact of
9 that lone full curl ram is important to sheep
10 population that is struggling and when there are
11 concerns about recruitment and stabilizing the
12 population.
13

14 That is the extent of the comments from
15 the North Slope Regional Advisory Council. We took
16 some time and deliberated and took some time to read
17 some of the concerns that was available to us and the
18 concerns from Kaktovik members that have C&T in the
19 area.
20

21 CHAIRMAN CHRISTIANSON: Thank you,
22 Gordon.
23

24 For a matter of record here I was going
25 to ask, Donald, we don't have on record -- you voted 4-
26 3 to support with a modification but we don't have on
27 record what that modification is, do you have that in
28 front of you there, and if you do could you please read
29 that into the record. Does somebody here have it?
30

31 UNIDENTIFIED VOICE: Mr. Chair.
32

33 CHAIRMAN CHRISTIANSON: They found it
34 for him.
35

36 UNIDENTIFIED VOICE: Thank you.
37

38 MR. WOODRUFF: Support WP18-56 with
39 modification, to open only that portion of the Arctic
40 Village Sheep Management Area that is north of Cane
41 Creek to the harvest of sheep. The Council -- I don't
42 know what this word is, O-P-I-N-A-D, opinad, that the
43 only Legislative reason under ANILCA, Title VIII to
44 restrict or eliminate the use of the resource on
45 Federal public lands by non-subsistence users are
46 conservation concerns and/or detrimental effects on
47 satisfaction of subsistence needs.
48

49 The Council recognized that the issue
50

1 at stake here is the cultural concern and felt that the
2 cultural and social issues are not legitimate reasons
3 to close the area under provisions of ANILCA. However,
4 a few Council members differed in this opinion.
5

6 The closing of Arctic Sheep Creek
7 Management Area to the harvest of sheep by non-
8 subsistence users only affects sheep hunters. All
9 other types of visitors to the area, including hikers,
10 wildlife photographers, flight in-sight seers have been
11 allowed to use the area. The Council stated that this
12 -- that they consider this issue to be a political
13 football and are very disappointed to find out that it
14 is not resolved and on the table again.
15

16 The Council felt that sheep
17 conservation is very important and encouraged the
18 Federal and State government to work together on this
19 regulatory issue.
20

21 The Council also suggested that
22 implementation of a special designed -- a specifically
23 designed requiring respectful hunters education course
24 for users who hunt in this area. The Council felt that
25 learning respect for other people's uses for the
26 resource is very important as well as learning and
27 understanding other cultures. The Red Sheep Creek area
28 is a very important cultural place and the Native
29 culture values the world of wildlife very differently
30 than White cultures. The influence of certain areas in
31 the Native culture does not have to manifest itself in
32 a substantial harvest.
33

34 To alleviate some potential
35 conservation concerns the Council modified the proposal
36 to only open the area north of Cane Creek including Red
37 Sheep drainage. The modification should read.
38

39 Is that clear?
40

41 CHAIRMAN CHRISTIANSON: Thank you,
42 Donald. We just weren't sure what that was, and we
43 needed it on the record, so, thank you.
44

45 MR. WOODRUFF: Any questions.
46

47 CHAIRMAN CHRISTIANSON: Any questions.
48 Yes, Greg has one.
49
50

1 MR. SIEKANIEC: Donald, thanks for your
2 testimony or your comments.

3
4 You had referenced that you actually
5 had meetings in Arctic Village with your Regional
6 Advisory Council or with your Regional Advisory Council
7 and public and, you know, concerns, Federally-qualified
8 users, I mean what were those meetings, what did they
9 consist of?

10
11 MR. WOODRUFF: It was a regular Council
12 meeting and in the past we've had them in the villages
13 so that we can get sincere testimony, you.....

14
15 MR. SIEKANIEC: Yep.

16
17 MR. WOODRUFF:aren't going to get
18 that here. They're not going to travel here.

19
20 MR. SIEKANIEC: Right.

21
22 MR. WOODRUFF: In fact, they're somewhat
23 disengaged because they're so overwhelmed with the
24 government and the State and I would really recommend
25 that they get -- try to get a resource person that's
26 well spoken to represent them because it doesn't seem
27 to be happening.

28
29 Thank you.

30
31 MR. SIEKANIEC: One more.

32
33 CHAIRMAN CHRISTIANSON: Sure.

34
35 MR. SIEKANIEC: Thank you. And the
36 area of Cane Creek and Red Sheep Creek, are those the
37 areas that are traditionally most significant from a
38 cultural standpoint?

39
40 MR. WOODRUFF: That's as I understand
41 it.

42
43 MR. SIEKANIEC: And that is also in the
44 area that is recommended to be opened for sheep
45 hunting?

46
47 MR. WOODRUFF: That's correct.

48
49 MR. SIEKANIEC: Why that area versus
50

1 the other part of the 25A or the Arctic Village Sheep
2 Management Area?

3

4 MR. WOODRUFF: I believe that the
5 Council felt that this was a compromise, and that they
6 would open a certain area to the public.

7

8 MR. SIEKANIEC: Is it there's just more
9 sheep there, I mean maybe this will come out when we
10 hear from the, that there's higher sheep densities
11 there, it's a better habitat use area, I mean I just
12 find it interesting that the area that's being
13 recommended to open is also the most significant
14 cultural use area versus -- it looks like there's a lot
15 of area left in that Arctic Village Sheep Management
16 Area.

17

18 MR. WOODRUFF: That's correct.

19

20 CHAIRMAN CHRISTIANSON: We have Staff
21 here that look like they may have.....

22

23 MR. FROST: Lisa can help you out.

24

25 MR. SIEKANIEC: Lisa, please.

26

27 MS. MAAS: Yeah, thank you, through the
28 Chair. The reason that the Eastern Interior Council
29 recommended opening the area north of Cane Creek was
30 because the sheep density in that area is quite higher
31 than the area south. So they were basing it on a sheep
32 density rationale versus a cultural rationale.

33

34 MR. FROST: But just to followup.....

35

36 CHAIRMAN CHRISTIANSON: Bert.

37

38 MR. FROST: But, Lisa, didn't you say
39 that the habitat wasn't as good south of Cane Creek as
40 it was north?

41

42 MS. MAAS: Yeah, that's true. The
43 habitat south of Cane Creek, it's a different
44 geological formation so it doesn't support the same
45 vegetation as the area north of Cane Creek, so that's
46 thought why there's typically been higher sheep
47 densities north of Cane Creek.

48

49 MR. SIEKANIEC: Thank you.

50

1 CHAIRMAN CHRISTIANSON: Any questions.

2
3 (No comments)

4
5 CHAIRMAN CHRISTIANSON: Tribal, Alaska
6 Native Corp comments.

7
8 MR. MIKE: Thank you, Mr. Chair.
9 Donald Mike, Council coordinator.

10
11 Tribal consultations were presented on
12 September 14th and we did not receive any tribal
13 comments nor any corporate comments.

14
15 Thank you, Mr. Chair.

16
17 CHAIRMAN CHRISTIANSON: Thank you,
18 Donald. Alaska Department of Fish and Game comments.

19
20 MR. BUTLER: Thank you, Mr. Chair.
21 Members of the Board. The Department supports the
22 adoption of this proposal to remove the restriction to
23 non-Federally-qualified hunters.

24
25 We believe that maintaining the closure
26 is in violation of ANILCA. There are no conservation
27 concerns or risks to the continuation of traditional
28 subsistence uses. The mere inclusion of non-Federally-
29 qualified users should not be seen as a justification
30 to automatically conclude that subsistence uses will be
31 discontinued as was implied by the OSM comments.

32
33 Again, there's no conservation concern.
34 The sheep population's stable. The Federal bag limit
35 is much more liberal than the State bag limit of full
36 curl. Federally-qualified users are allowed to harvest
37 any ram, which means that really these non-Federally-
38 qualified hunters would only be competing for about
39 nine percent of the rams that are available to
40 Federally-qualified users. So there's, again, quite a
41 few additional sheep that would be available and it
42 wouldn't be in direct conflict with the Federally-
43 qualified users.

44
45 The State's put in restrictions on
46 aircraft use while hunting. People are not allowed to
47 fly aircrafts during sheep seasons and disturb sheep.
48 They're not allowed to spot sheep. Probably the
49 majority of the aircraft disturbance is going to come

50

1 from other uses as a result and not from aircraft use.

2

3 Let's see, again, full curl harvest is
4 very minimal, it's very sustainable, so no detriment to
5 the sheep population.

6

7 In continuation with the idea that
8 there shouldn't be an automatic conclusion that
9 subsistence uses will be discontinued, there's no
10 evidence of that from the period of time when the
11 harvest was open from 2006 until 2010 that I've heard
12 identified. So I think you should try to make that
13 clear in your comments if you do vote this proposal
14 down and if you don't remove the restriction.

15

16 That'll be it for now.

17

18 Thanks.

19

20 CHAIRMAN CHRISTIANSON: Thank you.

21 Greg.

22

23 MR. SIEKANIEC: Thank you, Mr. Chair.

24 Thank you, Lem.

25

26 Help me, again, understand what it
27 means to go back and open it per the State regulations
28 that are in place. So August 10th to September 20th
29 you would have a season it looks like that would be by
30 harvest ticket?

31

32 MR. BUTLER: That's correct.

33

34 MR. SIEKANIEC: And how does the
35 harvest ticket part work? So on August 10th, any
36 number -- this is my -- any number of hunters could
37 show up and participate and how does the reporting then
38 get made that would end that part of the harvest ticket
39 hunt?

40

41 MR. BUTLER: Right. So harvest tickets
42 are available over the counter.

43

44 MR. SIEKANIEC: Yep.

45

46 MR. BUTLER: So anyone could pick one
47 up.....

48

49 MR. SIEKANIEC: Yep.

50

1 MR. BUTLER:that has a hunting
2 license. So the State would not restrict the number of
3 hunters that utilize the area. There may be some
4 Federal concession restrictions associated with air
5 charters and guides; I'm not aware of what's in place
6 in that area, but that would probably be the main
7 limitation, that and any space, the guides and
8 transporters self-impose.
9

10 After the hunt concludes, the hunters
11 -- well, they punch the harvest ticket, notching the
12 dates that they -- they validate it, demonstrating that
13 they've taken an animal, they fill out the harvest
14 report portion, date, location, et cetera, the animal
15 that's been harvested, and then there's a sealing
16 requirement. So they bring that horn into the
17 Department, we make sure that it's -- verify that it's
18 full curl or eight years of age or broomed on both
19 sides, affix a permanent seal to the animal and that
20 basically concludes their obligations to the State.
21

22 MR. SIEKANIEC: Thank you. More
23 questions.
24

25 CHAIRMAN CHRISTIANSON: Yes.
26

27 MR. SIEKANIEC: So the last time that
28 it was open, under this scenario, do you know how many
29 sheep were taken under the harvest ticket scenario in
30 like the first year that it was open?
31

32 MR. BUTLER: Let's see, I just had that
33 open. Apparently in one of our management reports we
34 said that six sheep were taken during the five years
35 reported from that area. That's from the management
36 biologist, how he defined that area, I guess is -- we
37 just have to believe that's as stated, if that makes
38 sense.
39

40 Oh, I'm sorry, okay, I'm glad you
41 pointed this out.
42

43 So it was an average of six hunters
44 harvesting 3.7 sheep per year so I misspoke, so it was
45 more than I indicated at first.
46

47 MR. SIEKANIEC: Averaging -- okay, so
48 six hunters picked up the harvest ticket and they
49 averaged 3.7, okay.
50

1 MR. BUTLER: So an average of six
2 hunters a year, that's right.
3

4 MR. SIEKANIEC: 3.7 full curl per year,
5 okay. And then so that's under the harvest ticket, and
6 then under the registration. Help me out with, how
7 does that three work.
8

9 MR. BUTLER: So to harvest under the
10 three sheep bag limit you can get that over the counter
11 as well, but you have to start from Arctic Village.
12 You can't -- you have to fly into Arctic Village or
13 Kaktovik.....
14

15 MR. SIEKANIEC: Right.
16

17 MR. BUTLER:and hunt from there
18 so it's really not utilized by people that are from
19 outside the area. Again, you know, people just
20 wouldn't have access to the snowmachines or
21 fourwheelers, et cetera, to take advantage of it. Very
22 limited use of that permit option, at least what's
23 reported to us.
24

25 MR. SIEKANIEC: But it provides the
26 potential for three per year.
27

28 MR. BUTLER: Correct.
29

30 MR. SIEKANIEC: Three per year. And
31 that's any sheep?
32

33 MR. BUTLER: Correct.
34

35 MR. SIEKANIEC: Okay. And then the one
36 ram, full curl or larger every four regulatory years
37 is, again, by harvest ticket, how does that fit into
38 this whole scenario?
39

40 MR. BUTLER: So that would be your
41 statewide bag limit.
42

43 MR. SIEKANIEC: So year one you would
44 issue that to a non-resident and then you would have to
45 -- it's not every year, then it would be four years
46 later you issue another one, or is it every year just a
47 different non-resident.
48

49 MR. FROST: It depends on if they got
50

1 it or not.

2

3 MR. BUTLER: Okay, right, so for each
4 individual hunter, if a non-resident shoots a sheep in
5 X year they have to wait four years before they can
6 hunt again legally, in a one every four area.

7

8 MR. SIEKANIEC: Right. But every year
9 there would be one available to a non-resident hunter?

10

11 MR. BUTLER: Right, so the one every
12 four years is an individual bag limit, so it wouldn't
13 restrict the number of hunters.

14

15 MR. SIEKANIEC: Right. So I guess what
16 I'm trying to figure out, what is the potential -- how
17 many sheep could potentially be taken per year out of
18 this by opening it this way? I mean here's my dilemma,
19 my struggle, is Arctic National Wildlife and the six
20 priority public uses and hunting and being open for the
21 use by all residents and non-residents, given that it's
22 a National Wildlife Refuge and balancing that with the
23 subsistence interests, you know, because of Title VIII
24 of ANILCA, and I'm trying to figure out, is this a
25 fairly aggressive harvest strategy that would begin to
26 conflict with subsistence at some point in time and I'm
27 wondering, you know, you have other special sheep
28 management areas, I believe, like I think in Tetlin or
29 Tok area, where you actually have maybe a draw permit.

30

31 MR. BUTLER: That's correct.

32

33 MR. SIEKANIEC: Where you actually say,
34 we're going to open this up for one, two, whatever it
35 is, under a full curl scenario or whatever it might be,
36 7/8ths curl, that's my dilemma right here, is, I'm
37 trying to understand what -- how aggressive this could
38 actually be and would that create a conflict between
39 the subsistence user and the sporthunt type user. And
40 to be honest with you I don't know how to do that right
41 now.

42

43 MR. BUTLER: Right.

44

45 MR. SIEKANIEC: I mean you're probably
46 aware, I mean, I have people coming up to me saying,
47 you need to understand what this means, the story
48 behind, like the first year that it was opened last
49 time, you know, people came in and took six big rams

50

1 immediately and then, you know, over the next few years
2 it progressively was fewer and, you know, I don't know,
3 if that's the right strategy, is that the strategy that
4 created a lot of angst between, you know, the
5 subsistence users and potentially additional sport
6 harvester hunt, that's what I'm really trying to sort
7 out.
8

9 MR. BUTLER: Through the Chair. Yeah,
10 and the only information we have to even approximate it
11 would be based on what historically occurred, so an
12 average of six hunters a year, 3.7 sheep per year. I
13 mean hunters are allowed to utilize surrounding areas,
14 so there probably is some commercial interest but it's
15 a pretty big flight to get to that area, it's pretty
16 well removed from Coldfoot and other places that would
17 be a natural place for an air carrier operation to try
18 to base out of to access it.
19

20 Undoubtedly, if there's the thought
21 that it hasn't been harvested in a long time, you know,
22 that initially probably would attract a few people that
23 were interested in trying to find a large sheep. So I
24 think that thought process is probably accurate,
25 initially there probably would be some additional
26 interest in hunting the area.
27

28 But, again, the mere inclusion of non-
29 Federally-qualified hunters, I don't see how you can
30 automatically conclude that that would automatically
31 impact -- I mean hunters are going to have conflicts in
32 the field, undoubtedly, but if you extend that logic
33 out too far you could close all Federal lands. So, you
34 know, I think it's just a dangerous path, it should be
35 justified with something more than just, you know, non-
36 Federally-qualified hunters equals the end of
37 subsistence.
38

39 MR. SIEKANIEC: Thanks, Lem. So, I
40 mean you can probably guess I'm struggling with a way
41 to kind of get to yes here.
42

43 (Laughter)
44

45 MR. SIEKANIEC: Is there any way, you
46 know, that we can work with the State perspective on
47 like a draw permit that would give some sort of sense
48 of a very understandable this is what's going to occur
49 there. There is going to be an opportunity for, you
50

1 know, two individuals or something, to be in this
2 management area for the purposes of taking a full curl
3 sheep, you know, that keeps us out of this, what it
4 looks like to me anyway, sort of a fairly aggressively
5 start right away, right from the very beginning.
6 Because, you know, I am starting to get the sense that,
7 you know, there is going to be some concern given to
8 the satisfaction of subsistence needs here, the
9 argument's likely going to happen if we open it up with
10 this sort of very aggressive kind of an opportunity
11 right from the first season.

12
13 MR. BUTLER: Through the Chair. Any
14 changes to the hunt would have to go through the Board
15 of Game process so what I would recommend is that you
16 -- if you're interested in the State trying to pursue
17 some alternative hunt structure, probably the best
18 thing you could do is defer this proposal and allow us
19 an opportunity to perhaps submit an agenda change
20 request to bring it in front of the Board of Game and
21 see if they are willing to entertain. I can't speak
22 for the Board, obviously, but I would think with the
23 idea that the area would have some use that they would
24 probably be some what open to at least considering
25 alternative hunt structures for the area.

26
27 CHAIRMAN CHRISTIANSON: One second,
28 Rhonda, we have Gordon and then Rhonda.

29
30 MR. G. BROWER: Yes, just the same
31 lines, thank you, Mr. Chair.

32
33 Yeah, I do struggle with the path that
34 it would take because in the literature that we've read
35 it's a low density, and the amount of growth expected
36 to be able to meet other users is of concern. And I
37 think that was one of the things where some of the
38 other conflicts with the subsistence issues, because
39 there is also the cultural and social needs tied to
40 ceremonial use, the festival use, those types of issues
41 that can be used to take additional take that I have
42 seen and encountered, even when it was not able to be
43 allocated, allowed to take even just one for ceremonial
44 uses.

45
46 So those would be the same kind of
47 concerns I would have, is to the thought that it should
48 be some sort of a restricted, gradual controlled
49 addition, if it were to some how make its way to the

50

1 yes. I mean that would -- and I think that was where
2 some of the more concerns that were raised because, you
3 know, these areas are so remote, there's not even
4 people here or on the phone to be able to represent
5 themselves. And from the literature I read some of its
6 even ingrained in part of our dialogue and
7 recommendation, that the repeated proposals over and
8 over to deal with and getting overwhelmed with these
9 kinds of issues is -- I would think if it were going to
10 unfold for them, it would have to be some level of a
11 tier hunt for other users.

12

13 CHAIRMAN CHRISTIANSON: Rhonda.

14

15 MS. PITKA: You've repeatedly said on
16 the record that there will be no risk to subsistence
17 uses but then you didn't say why that would be. So the
18 subsistence uses that have been talked about are the
19 sacredness of that area, so how is it that there is no
20 risk to that use, what is your rationale there, I don't
21 understand that?

22

23 MR. BUTLER: Through the Chair. I said
24 that you can't just automatically conclude that. And,
25 again, I did acknowledge that there may be user
26 conflicts. The State, depending on what type of hunt
27 structure, but by providing harvest ticket
28 opportunities for all Alaskans, we are providing for
29 subsistence opportunity as well through the State
30 process. It's not what was intended by ANILCA, which
31 is why we've got two different regulatory processes
32 but, again, you know, there are subsistence
33 opportunities provided by the State and, again, I'm
34 just saying that you can't just automatically conclude
35 that allowing non-residents into this area -- or non-
36 Federally-qualified hunters equals a subsistence
37 conflict.

38

39 MR. REAKOFF: Mr. Chair.

40

41 CHAIRMAN CHRISTIANSON: Jack.

42

43 MR. REAKOFF: A couple of points I have
44 not heard discussed.

45

46 The Board of Game has precluded the use
47 of aircraft during the sheep season to spot sheep so
48 the aircraft can be used to spot sheep up until the
49 10th of August, after that time throughout the entire

50

1 sheep season they can't use aircraft.

2

3 Another point that the Board needs to
4 understand is the Refuge permits hunting guides and
5 they need to contact Arctic Refuge and find out if they
6 have a guide concession permit for that area, if they
7 don't have a guide concession permittee then they
8 cannot have non-resident hunters. Non-resident hunters
9 with a hunting guide have the highest success rate of
10 all hunters for dall sheep in Alaska.

11

12 So those are important issues that this
13 Board is wrestling with, is there a concession permit
14 that will allow a hunting guide to take non-resident
15 hunters even if there's a drawing permit. They spend a
16 lot of time, they don't just come and go like a
17 resident hunter kind of comes in, it's a weekend deal
18 typically, or a few days, they go away. Hunting guides
19 stay all season. And they are -- they continuously
20 hunt, they're really good at hunting sheep and so
21 they're highly effective and would have a longer
22 presence there.

23

24 But the aspect of aircraft flying
25 around the entire time, that can't happen, if it does
26 happen those pilots can get cited for spotting sheep
27 with an aircraft. And so that was an important issue
28 that the Board addressed and is yet -- and they've
29 maintained that closure on aircraft use and I've been
30 very supportive of that. It's really slowed down the
31 user conflict with aircraft.

32

33 Thank you, Mr. Chair.

34

35 CHAIRMAN CHRISTIANSON: Thank you. I
36 think that moves us to ISC.

37

38 Thank you, Rhonda.

39

40 MS. HARDIN: Thank you, Mr. Chair. The
41 InterAgency Staff Committee provided the standard
42 comment for WP18-56.

43

44 CHAIRMAN CHRISTIANSON: Thank you. Now
45 we're on Board discussion with State liaison and
46 Council Chairs. I think we've done a good job here of
47 trying to discuss this out.

48

49 Was there someone on the phone,

50

1 somebody told me a little while ago somebody on the
2 phone wanted to say something and we'll give them the
3 opportunity.

4
5 OPERATOR: Yes, sir. Yes, sir, we do
6 have a few that are waiting on the phones.

7
8 Our first comes from Charlene Fisher,
9 your line is open.

10
11 DR. FISHER: Hello. And thank you,
12 Chairman Christianson and members of the Board. I am
13 calling in opposition to Wildlife Proposal 18-56 to
14 rescind Federal land closure in Unit 25A Arctic Village
15 Sheep Management Area.

16
17 My name is Dr. Charlene Fisher, I am
18 the executive director of the Council of Athabascan
19 Tribal Governments, or CATG.

20
21 CATG is a tribal consortium founded in
22 1985 with the vision of self-sufficient communities and
23 a shared commitment to promoting common goals. The 10
24 remote villages Gwich'in and Koyukon Athabascan tribes
25 that form CATG are Arctic Village, Beaver, Birch Creek,
26 Canyon Village, Chalkyitsik, Circle, Fort Yukon,
27 Rampart, Stevens Village and Venetie.

28
29 The CATG tribal consortium opposes
30 Wildlife Proposal 18-56. The tribal lands of our
31 member tribes are the Yukon Flats, a 55,000 square mile
32 area encompassing what is now the Yukon Flats National
33 Wildlife Refuge and part of the Arctic National
34 Wildlife Refuge stretching from the White Mountains in
35 the south and the Brooks Range in the north, from the
36 western edge of the Yukon Flats the TransAlaska
37 Pipeline east to the United States Canadian Border, and
38 it is of significant cultural geographic importance to
39 the CATG tribes.

40
41 We support closure and find this
42 approval process a struggle.

43
44 The administrative record is clear and
45 I hope you are able to reference it. The Federal
46 closure is necessary for our tribal membership
47 especially the Netsi Gwich'in who continue to practice
48 their subsistence ways as they practice food
49 sovereignty in the targeted area. The Red Sheep Creek
50

1 area is a sacred place for the Netsi Gwich'in and is
2 still currently recognized as such. Good stewardship
3 of these resources have been maintained for thousands
4 of years under the management of the Gwich'in people
5 and to push the burden of diminished hunting
6 opportunities into our area because of low sheep
7 population elsewhere in the state, remove our
8 subsistence bag limit to impose trophy hunting
9 restrictions on our uses will risk our traditional
10 harvest practices and sacred area.

11
12 Since time immemorial the CATG tribes
13 and their tribal membership have lived in reciprocity
14 with these lands and the resources therein. Our
15 traditional and sacred areas cannot support this as we
16 know there would be an onslaught of hunters due to
17 closures elsewhere in the state.

18
19 Again, we oppose this proposal.

20
21 Thank you for your consideration.

22
23 And on a personal note I'd like to say
24 that indigenous knowledge systems and traditional
25 ecological knowledge is valid research and is accepted
26 by the academy, indigenous researchers and other non-
27 Native indigenous researchers are diligent in their
28 qualitative and quantitative collection and their
29 findings are as authentic as any other field in the
30 academy.

31
32 Thank you for your time.

33
34 CHAIRMAN CHRISTIANSON: Thank you.
35 Questions.

36
37 (No comments)

38
39 CHAIRMAN CHRISTIANSON: Okay.

40
41 OPERATOR: Next we have Charlene Stern,
42 your line is open.

43
44 (Teleconference feedback)

45
46 DR. STERN: Thank you, Chairman
47 Christianson and members of the Board.

48
49 I oppose Wildlife Proposal 18-56 to
50

1 rescind Federal land closure in Unit 25A, Arctic
2 Village Sheep Management Area. My name is Dr. Charlene
3 Stern. I am a tribal member of the Native Village of
4 Venetie, my family comes from Arctic Village, we have a
5 long history of a traditional relationship with this
6 area and the resources that come from it.

7
8 Our people have continuously struggled
9 with this process to maintain this closure. The
10 administrative record on our position is clear and I
11 hope that you are able to reference this record. This
12 Federal closure is necessary to provide opportunities
13 for subsistence to our Netsi Gwich'in people. The Red
14 Sheep Creek area is a sacred place.

15
16 I understand that there has been
17 diminished hunting opportunities across the state due
18 to low sheep populations, but we don't want that to
19 come at the expense of our people and our subsistence
20 needs. I personally have been part of a family
21 tradition of my grandfather and my uncles hunting in
22 this area, that sheep meat is absolutely critical to us
23 especially in years where the caribou hunt and harvest
24 hasn't been what it has been in other years and those
25 that do hunt sheep today also share that meat with
26 others in the community at very special potlatches and
27 those types of things. So I think that some of the
28 information that has been provided here has been sort
29 of taken out of context.

30
31 I would also like to state that I think
32 that I have some concerns regarding the conflict of
33 interest and I don't believe that the record will show
34 that many of the hunters and guides who wish to access
35 our traditional and sacred territories are actually
36 State and Federal employees of ADF&G and/or U.S. Fish
37 and Wildlife employees. I believe that this is a
38 systematic issue across the state and it needs to be
39 recognized and addressed.

40
41 And, with that, I want to reiterate
42 that I oppose reopening of this area to non-qualified
43 Federal subsistence -- non-subsistence hunters.

44
45 Thank you.

46
47 CHAIRMAN CHRISTIANSON: Thank you. Any
48 questions.

1 (No comments)

2

3 OPERATOR: And lastly we have Jessica
4 Black, your line is open.

5

6 DR. BLACK: Okay. Thank you very much,
7 Chairman Christianson and members of the Board. Thank
8 you for your service.

9

10 I would like to just say I oppose
11 Wildlife Proposal 18-56 to rescind Federal land closure
12 in Unit 25A. Like I said, my name is Dr. Jessica
13 Black. My family is from Fort Yukon and my partner is
14 from Arctic Village. Our history in this area is
15 10,000 years deep and so we have a lot of knowledge of
16 this sacred place. And we are adamantly opposed to
17 this proposal.

18

19 And, again, like has been said we have
20 continually struggled with the process to maintain the
21 closure and just because there are diminished hunting
22 opportunities in other areas of the state doesn't mean
23 that this area should be open.

24

25 I'd also like to add that we need
26 increased indigenous and tribal voices within this
27 process as a matter of equity and as established in
28 Section .801 of ANILCA, one way to accomplish this
29 immediately is to add a tribal seat to the InterAgency
30 Staff Committee.

31

32 So I'd just like to thank you for your
33 service.

34

35 I would like to, again, say I am
36 opposed to this Proposal 18-56.

37

38 Thank you.

39

40 CHAIRMAN CHRISTIANSON: Thank you. Any
41 additional people on line.

42

43 OPERATOR: No, sir.

44

45 CHAIRMAN CHRISTIANSON: Thank you.
46 Greg.

47

48 MR. SIEKANIEC: Thank you, Mr. Chair.
49 Lem, one more time, what's your regulatory cycle for
50

1 the next wildlife type regulation considerations?

2

3 MR. BUTLER: I'm just trying to -- the
4 Interior region, so this area wouldn't meet until
5 probably 2020 to address this issue, but, again, to
6 take up a proposal out of cycle, we do have the agenda
7 change request process. So likely the next Board
8 meeting where they could take up an agenda change
9 request would be next fall in November of 2018 -- oh,
10 ACR -- the agenda change request deadline is November
11 1st, 2018.

12

13 Thanks.

14

15 MR. SIEKANIEC: November 1st of 2018 is
16 when a proposal would have to go in and then it
17 would.....

18

19 MR. BUTLER: That's the request for the
20 Board to take up a proposal that's out of cycle. So if
21 the agenda change request were accepted then the
22 proposal would be drafted after that and submitted to
23 the Board.

24

25 MR. SIEKANIEC: Okay. Because if I'm
26 understanding our deferral process, is that, you know,
27 if I was to make a motion to defer it to the next
28 regulatory cycle for us and you didn't have anything
29 accomplished by then I'm still in the same awkward
30 spot. But it sounds like you could potentially have
31 something run through your regulatory cycle ahead of
32 our next regulatory cycle. Boy there's a lot of cycles
33 going on here in my head right now. Where we could
34 then entertain a proposal again based on different
35 criteria than just opening it up under harvest ticket
36 and registration processes.

37

38 So I guess, you know, one of the
39 questions here is do you have any interest in that at
40 all?

41

42 MR. BUTLER: It wouldn't necessarily be
43 my decision but I think that that would be a prudent
44 direction. So I believe that, without speaking for the
45 State necessarily, that we would pursue that if given
46 the opportunity.

47

48 MR. SIEKANIEC: Okay. Thank you for
49 those comments. Because I am, again, like I said I'm

50

1 trying to balance this, you know, National Wildlife
2 Refuge perspective, priority public uses, ANILCA, Title
3 VIII, you know, and respect so that we don't take an
4 action that would be detrimental to the satisfaction of
5 subsistence needs. Because I think right now if I was
6 to make a motion right now, other than deferral, it
7 would be to oppose it, because I do get this sense that
8 this would absolutely be detrimental to the
9 satisfaction of that.

10

11 So you kind of know where my head is
12 anyway around this whole issue.

13

14 CHAIRMAN CHRISTIANSON: Rhonda.

15

16 MS. PITKA: Yeah, I think Donald
17 mentioned earlier about how many times this proposal
18 has come up. It's repeatedly come up to this Board.
19 And it's come to the point where the Chief of Arctic
20 Village, Jonathan John has told me that he will not
21 testify against this or about this matter anymore, and
22 that he's, frankly, disgusted with the process because
23 it comes up so many times to open this area that's
24 sacred to his people. And I think that says a lot
25 right there, how many times this has come up to this
26 Board, how many times this has come up to Board of
27 Game. This area is important. Our Reverend Trimble
28 Gilbert has testified extensively on the record about
29 this matter and how it affects his people.

30

31 I think I had a question, Donald, about
32 the modification that you mentioned. So that was an
33 attempt to compromise with the Eastern Interior
34 Regional Advisory Council on this matter; is that
35 right?

36

37 MR. WOODRUFF: That's correct.

38

39 CHAIRMAN CHRISTIANSON: You had a
40 question.

41

42 MR. DOOLITTLE: I did. Hey, Lem, one
43 clarifying question. So with the cycle, hypothetical,
44 just so everybody has the dates down, if it went in
45 November 1st for an out of cycle, would that mean that
46 you guys would look at the actual proposal if
47 everything would go, in March 2019?

48

49 MR. BUTLER: Through the Chair. It

50

1 looks like the Board has a meeting scheduled for
2 January 10 through 15, so that's one possibility.
3 Their next meeting is March 15 to 19 of 2019. So we'd
4 encourage them to take it up in January likely, the
5 January 10 through the 15th meeting, 2019.
6

7 MR. DOOLITTLE: Yeah, thank you, Lem.
8 Then we would go into our next regulatory cycle about
9 this time of year in 2020.
10

11 CHAIRMAN CHRISTIANSON: Okay.
12

13 MR. DOOLITTLE: And we would accept our
14 proposals in 2019, and then act in 2020.
15

16 CHAIRMAN CHRISTIANSON: Okay. The
17 floor is open.
18

19 MR. SIEKANIEC: Mr. Chair. Greg
20 Siekaniec Fish and Wildlife Service. At this time I
21 would like to move that we defer Wildlife Proposal 18-
22 56 on Page 1229 of our information book. And if I get
23 a second I will try and articulate what my intent is
24 behind this.
25

26 MS. PITKA: Second. Rhonda Pitka.
27

28 MR. SIEKANIEC: Thank you Member Pitka.
29 As I had stated earlier I think what I'm trying to do
30 is I'm trying to reach an understanding of how we treat
31 Arctic National Wildlife Refuge with the interest that
32 it's due from both a National, State and subsistence
33 perspective.
34

35 I think I would like to take the time
36 under a deferral to work with the State to see if we
37 can't come up with a harvest strategy that is much more
38 in line with what would be acceptable to the community
39 of Arctic Village and the users of Arctic Village from
40 the subsistence standpoint so that we don't end up in a
41 spot where it is viewed as being detrimental to the
42 satisfaction of subsistence needs but, yet, we also
43 satisfy the opportunity of Arctic Refuge being, you
44 know, what it's intent was when it was established in
45 addition to the Title VIII perspective.
46

47 CHAIRMAN CHRISTIANSON: Discussion.
48 Rhonda.
49
50

1 MS. PITKA: I speak in opposition to a
2 deferral motion. I think that we need to take this
3 motion up now. I don't think that we need to wait. I
4 think the administrative record is very clear on this
5 matter. And I think that opening this area would be
6 detrimental to the subsistence and the sacred and
7 religious needs of the Arctic Village people.

8
9 MR. POLACCA: Mr. Chair.

10
11 CHAIRMAN CHRISTIANSON: Lynn.

12
13 MR. POLACCA: I also have to agree with
14 that. You know, by deferring it all we're doing is
15 just kicking this down the road and we're going to end
16 up back at the same situation later on. I think we've
17 heard a lot of testimony that has come forward through
18 the villages and all -- that basically have demons --
19 you know they've documented and shown that there has
20 been an impact from the years 2006 to 2010 that their
21 subsistence use has been impacted by hunting there,
22 unless there's another option there, you know, that's
23 presented by the State, I think it's something that
24 needs to be acted on right now.

25
26 Thank you.

27
28 MR. SIEKANIEC: Thank you, Mr. Chair.
29 You know, part of my consideration here I think is what
30 I've heard around this Board, well, actually throughout
31 the room is that if we don't try something different
32 this is coming back again. We'll be back here having
33 the same discussion, you know, we might not have a 4-3
34 vote, we might have a 6-2 vote or something, so I do
35 believe that unless we try something different here and
36 try to work out an acceptable approach to this we will
37 just continue to have this each cycle that the wildlife
38 proposals come up.

39
40 So, thank you, Mr. Chair.

41
42 CHAIRMAN CHRISTIANSON: Karen.

43
44 MS. MOURITSEN: Thank you, Mr. Chair.
45 I also was thinking along those lines. I was thinking
46 that if we defer and try and work something out, and
47 then have something presented the next time around
48 we're here, we don't have to vote on -- vote any -- you
49 know, we might vote it up or might vote it down, but if
50

1 we just vote -- if we happen to vote to oppose this one
2 then we will have the -- I feel like the history is
3 we'll have the same motion two years from now. So
4 that's why I'm kind of thinking I like Greg's idea of
5 trying to defer and try to work something out, not that
6 we have to accept what's worked out.

7

8 Thank you.

9

10 MR. SIEKANIEC: Thank you, Mr. Chair.
11 Again, thank you for that Karen. I think that if we do
12 take up a deferral and have a dialogue we will at least
13 have a different discussion rather than the same
14 discussion and I think that's getting to be pretty
15 important for this Board because we've had, it sounds
16 like, the same discussion over and over and over, and
17 so I'd like to look for a way that we have at least a
18 different discussion around it. And, I agree with
19 Karen, we may not get to an answer that's agreeable
20 with the State or with my perspective on the Refuge but
21 at least we would have some additional dialogue and
22 information to make a decision.

23

24 CHAIRMAN CHRISTIANSON: Bert.

25

26 MR. FROST: You know I'm torn on this
27 one, too. I don't disagree with Rhonda and Lynn, but I
28 also don't disagree with Greg.

29

30 I think another important thing that we
31 should consider is that if this isn't deferred and we
32 just oppose it, the State then has no incentive to do
33 anything and they can just leave their regulation as it
34 is. If we defer it and say let's try and come to a
35 resolution, at least it incentivizes the State to work
36 with us because there might be a solution in the
37 future. IF we just oppose it then, you know, I've sat
38 on the Board for four years and this is my second
39 wildlife regulatory cycle and this is the second time
40 I've seen this and I suspect if I'm here in two years
41 it'll be the third time I'd see it, so three for three.

42

43 So I think it makes some sense to try
44 and incentives the State. There's no guarantee the
45 State's going to get to where we want either so -- and
46 there's no guarantee that whatever happens, as Karen
47 says, that we would vote something in, but, again, it's
48 at least a different strategy as opposed to just sort
49 of the rehashing the same old thing over and over

50

1 again.

2

3 CHAIRMAN CHRISTIANSON: Are we done
4 hashing this one.

5

6 Tom.

7

8 MR. WHITFORD: I guess I'd like to
9 mention that even if the Board does vote to oppose
10 we're still letting the State know that the Board is
11 open to suggestions in the future so if they do
12 approach the Board next cycle that the Board is open to
13 a new proposal from the State.

14

15 CHAIRMAN CHRISTIANSON: Don.

16

17 MR. HERNANDEZ: Thank you, Mr.
18 Chairman. This is Don Hernandez from the Southeast
19 RAC. I don't know, listening to all this I just feel
20 like I have to weigh in a little bit because it's kind
21 of bothering me.

22

23 I think the Board can settle this issue
24 at this meeting if the Board is willing to accept the
25 fact that there is a strong cultural significance to
26 this area that could be recognized. I don't think it
27 matters so much what the anthropologist Staff feels
28 about that cultural significance, the fact that the
29 local people believe there's a cultural significance is
30 the factor and if this area were to be opened to
31 outside hunters and if opening that area in any way
32 affected the way that the local people used that area,
33 that is a detriment to their subsistence use and I
34 think that's the issue.

35

36 And I think Rhonda was on the right
37 track there.

38

39 And if the Board were to recognize that
40 I think that would settle the issue. It's not a matter
41 of how many sheep are taken out of the area, that's not
42 the issue. The issue is whether or not the local
43 people feel that their use of that area is being
44 affected by outside users.

45

46 So I just had to say that, thank you.

47

48 CHAIRMAN CHRISTIANSON: Thank you, Don.
49 We have a motion on the floor to defer.

50

1 MR. FROST: Question.

2

3 CHAIRMAN CHRISTIANSON: Question's been
4 called, roll call. Please read into the record the
5 motion.

6

7 MR. DOOLITTLE: This is Wildlife
8 Proposal 18-56. The motion on the floor is defer
9 Proposal WP18-56 as found on Page 1228 of the meeting
10 book. Roll call vote.

11

12 Karen Mouritsen.

13

14 MS. MOURITSEN: I support the motion to
15 defer for the reasons I gave a little earlier.

16

17 MR. DOOLITTLE: BIA, Lynn Polacca.

18

19 MR. POLACCA: I oppose and as I stated
20 before I think one of the things we have to recognize
21 is the traditional and cultural use of that area and I
22 do believe that that position is never going to change.

23

24 MR. DOOLITTLE: U.S. Forest Service,
25 Thomas Whitford.

26

27 MR. WHITFORD: I vote to oppose.

28

29 MR. DOOLITTLE: U.S. Fish and Wildlife
30 Service, Greg Siekaniec.

31

32 MR. SIEKANIEC: Support.

33

34 MR. DOOLITTLE: Public member, Rhonda
35 Pitka.

36

37 MS. PITKA: I vote to oppose the
38 deferral. I think that we can take action in this
39 meeting.

40

41 MR. DOOLITTLE: Public member, Charlie
42 Brower.

43

44 MR. C. BROWER: I oppose.

45

46 MR. DOOLITTLE: Chairman Anthony
47 Christianson.

48

49 CHAIRMAN CHRISTIANSON: I oppose.

50

1 MR. DOOLITTLE: This motion failed.
2
3 MR. FROST: You forgot me.
4
5 MR. DOOLITTLE: Oh, excuse me, Bert, I
6 didn't mean to do that.
7
8 (Laughter)
9
10 MR. DOOLITTLE: That was a big end of
11 the day oops.
12
13 (Laughter)
14
15 MR. DOOLITTLE: Yeah, I owe you
16 something, bro.
17
18 (Laughter)
19
20 MR. DOOLITTLE: Anyways, National Park
21 Service, Herbert Frost.
22
23 MR. FROST: I support.
24
25 MR. DOOLITTLE: Okay. Motion failed.
26
27 CHAIRMAN CHRISTIANSON: That brings us
28 back to the original proposal here. I look now for a
29 new motion to be drafted.
30
31 MS. PITKA: Public member, Rhonda
32 Pitka.
33
34 I make the motion to accept WP18-56 as
35 written on Page 1228 of the meeting book.
36
37 MR. C. BROWER: Second.
38
39 CHAIRMAN CHRISTIANSON: Motion's been
40 made and seconded. I think we've discussed this
41 already, call for the question.
42
43 MR. POLACCA: Question.
44
45 CHAIRMAN CHRISTIANSON: Hold it, is
46 there further discussion on this.
47
48 MR. FROST: Sorry, I thought the
49 original proposal was to open the Unit for Federal.....
50

1 MS. PITKA: Yeah, that's.....
2
3 CHAIRMAN CHRISTIANSON: We have to.....
4
5 MR. FROST: Oh, okay, you're going
6 to.....
7
8 MS. PITKA: Yeah.
9
10 MR. FROST: Okay, gotcha.
11
12 MS. PITKA: And then I'll speak to
13 my.....
14
15 MR. FROST: Right, got it. Got it.
16
17 MS. PITKA: Sorry.
18
19 CHAIRMAN CHRISTIANSON: Go ahead,
20 Rhonda.
21
22 MS. PITKA: I'll speak to my opposition
23 this. I think the Arctic Village Sheep Management Area
24 needs to remain closed because of the significant
25 religious and cultural part of that area.
26
27 Thank you.
28
29 CHAIRMAN CHRISTIANSON: Any further
30 discussion. Sorry, not trying to rush us, just trying
31 to get us through the day.
32
33 MS. PITKA: Okay. And also I vote to
34 remain closed to continue the subsistence uses of the
35 people of the area.
36
37 CHAIRMAN CHRISTIANSON: Any further
38 discussion or deliberation.
39
40 (No comments)
41
42 CHAIRMAN CHRISTIANSON: Call for the
43 question.
44
45 MR. POLACCA: Question.
46
47 CHAIRMAN CHRISTIANSON: Question's been
48 called. Please read into the record the new motion,
49 roll call.
50

1 MR. DOOLITTLE: This is Wildlife
2 Proposal 18-56. The motion on the floor is adopt
3 Proposal WP18-56 as found on Page 1228 of the meeting
4 book.

5
6 I'll start the vote. Herbert Frost.

7
8 (Laughter)

9
10 MR. FROST: I oppose.

11
12 MR. DOOLITTLE: BLM, Karen Mouritsen.

13
14 MS. MOURITSEN: Oppose.

15
16 MR. DOOLITTLE: U.S. Fish and Wildlife
17 Service, Greg Siekaniec.

18
19 MR. SIEKANIEC: Oppose.

20
21 MR. DOOLITTLE: U.S. Forest Service,
22 Thomas Whitford.

23
24 MR. WHITFORD: Would you mind
25 clarifying what oppose is voting for and what support
26 is voting for.

27
28 CHAIRMAN CHRISTIANSON: Thank you, Tom,
29 because I was just scratching my head here wondering if
30 the three over here voted the right way because it's to
31 adopt and the proposal is to open.

32
33 (Laughter)

34
35 MR. WHITFORD: Uh-huh.

36
37 MR. FROST: So we're opposing the open
38 -- right.

39
40 CHAIRMAN CHRISTIANSON: Oh, okay, so
41 you.....

42
43 (Laughter)

44
45 CHAIRMAN CHRISTIANSON: We're getting
46 tired, sorry. Tom, it's on you.

47
48 MR. WHITFORD: Thank you for that
49 clarification. I oppose.

50

1 MR. DOOLITTLE: Did you oppose.
2
3 MR. WHITFORD: Yes.
4
5 MR. DOOLITTLE: Okay. Bureau of Indian
6 Affairs, Lynn Polacca.
7
8 MR. POLACCA: I oppose.
9
10 MR. DOOLITTLE: Public member, Rhonda
11 Pitka.
12
13 MS. PITKA: I oppose.
14
15 MR. DOOLITTLE: Public member, Charlie
16 Brower.
17
18 MR. C. BROWER: Oppose.
19
20 MR. DOOLITTLE: Chairman Anthony
21 Christianson.
22
23 CHAIRMAN CHRISTIANSON: Oppose.
24
25 MR. DOOLITTLE: Motion failed.
26
27 CHAIRMAN CHRISTIANSON: Last proposal,
28 boom.
29
30 MR. DOOLITTLE: Oh, good. I was
31 worried, like did I forget somebody.
32
33 (Laughter)
34
35 CHAIRMAN CHRISTIANSON: It's on you
36 Tom.
37
38 MR. EVANS: Well, thank you, Mr.
39 Chairman and members of the Board. Again, for the
40 record my name is Tom Evans and I work as a wildlife
41 biologist for the Office of Subsistence Management.
42 This proposal was prepared by Joshua Ream and myself.
43
44 Proposal WP18-57 starts on Page 1322
45 and the analysis starts on Page 1326. This proposal
46 was submitted by the North Slope Subsistence Regional
47 Advisory Council and it requests that Federal public
48 lands in Units 26A and 26B be closed to caribou hunting
49 by non-Federally-qualified subsistence users.
50

1 Information on the regulatory history, biology,
2 cultural and harvest history of the Western Arctic
3 Caribou Herd in Unit 23 and the Teshekpuk Caribou Herd
4 in Unit 26A was already presented in Proposals WP18-
5 46/47 and WP18-48/49 respectfully. I will only present
6 additional information on the biology, culture and
7 harvest history for the Western Arctic Caribou Herd in
8 Unit 26A and the Teshekpuk Caribou Herd and the Central
9 Arctic Caribou Herd in Units 26B to reduce repetition
10 and redundancy.
11

12 WP18-57 directly affects the North
13 Slope region but overlaps with the Northwestern and
14 Western Interior regions. This is due to the North
15 Slope communities of Point Hope, Point Lay and
16 Anaktuvuk Pass which harvest primarily from the Western
17 Arctic Caribou Herd. The proponent wanted to ensure
18 that local people get the caribou they need and protect
19 the three caribou herds from overharvest and to reduce
20 user conflicts.
21

22 The Teshekpuk Caribou Herd climbed from
23 approximately 68,000 to 39,000 in 2014 -- from 2008 to
24 2014, however, recent population and composition data
25 suggests that the Teshekpuk Caribou Herd may be
26 declining at a slower rate and may be stable. As of
27 2017 using the new digital camera system the TCH was
28 approximately 55,000 caribou.
29

30 The Central Arctic Caribou Herd
31 declined from approximately 70,000 in 2010 to 22,000 in
32 2016. In 2017 the new population estimate was 28,051,
33 which is near the lower threshold of the State
34 management goal of 28,000 for this population.
35

36 Caribou are an important subsistence
37 resource for the Inupiaq people of the Northern Alaska.
38 This is particularly true for inland communities such
39 as Atqasuk and Anaktuvuk Pass where marine mammals are
40 not readily available. For example, in 2014, residents
41 of Anaktuvuk Pass harvested approximately 330 pounds of
42 caribou per capita representing 84 percent of the
43 entire community harvest in a year.
44

45 Subsistence means more than just
46 meeting nutritional needs for the Alaska Native
47 peoples, it is also the basis which establishes their
48 cultural identity. Some Unit 26 residents have
49 suggested that user conflicts have degraded the
50

1 meaningful subsistence experience. Testimony has
2 linked this to aircraft activity, wanton waste and
3 archery wounding loss. User conflict concerns
4 regarding caribou in Unit 26 have most frequently
5 reported in the vicinity of Anaktuvuk Pass and along
6 the Dalton Highway Corridor. There is also some
7 concern around Point Lay.

8
9 Concerns also exist regarding herd
10 migration deflections due to hunting activity along the
11 Dalton Highway. Jack Reakoff mentioned that earlier
12 from a 1991 timeframe and in various river drainages of
13 the Alaska Arctic National Wildlife Refuge which are
14 accessible by boat from the road.

15
16 Trying to understand the overlap of the
17 caribou harvest between local and non-local users is
18 complicated by the lack of exact location, harvest
19 numbers and which caribou herd is being targeted.

20
21 Residents living north of the Yukon
22 River prior to 2017 were not required to register with
23 the Alaska Department of Fish and Game or an authorized
24 vendor. Compliance with this registration requirement
25 was low and not enforced. So most of the information
26 on the harvest by Federally-qualified subsistence users
27 is from community harvest surveys. Harvest by Alaska
28 residents living south of the Yukon River is monitored
29 using harvest reports. Even with the harvest reports,
30 exact hunt information is not known for many of the --
31 from the data that's received. The average annual
32 harvest from 2000 to 2014 for the Western Arctic
33 Caribou Herd was approximately 12,000 a year. Local
34 residents take approximately 94 percent of that harvest
35 with the vast majority of that coming from residents of
36 Unit 23. Residents of Anaktuvuk Pass, Point Lay and
37 Point Hope from the North Slope harvest primarily from
38 the Western Arctic Caribou Herd. Local residents in
39 Unit 26A take about eight to 10 percent of the total
40 harvest. In Anaktuvuk Pass in 2014 took 770 caribou.

41
42 The average harvest from the Teshekpuk
43 Caribou Herd is approximately four to 5,000 a year.
44 Residents of Atkasuk, Barrow, Nuiqsut and Wainwright
45 from the North Slope communities harvest primarily from
46 the Teshekpuk Caribou Herd. The annual harvest from
47 the Teshekpuk Caribou Herd is 99 percent by local
48 residents and less than three percent by non-Federally-
49 qualified subsistence users. The harvestable surplus
50

1 for the Teshekpuk Caribou Herd is approximately 2500 at
2 a six percent harvest rate. Currently the harvest rate
3 from the Teshekpuk Caribou Herd is approximately 10
4 percent, which is almost double that of the Western
5 Arctic Caribou Herd and the Central Arctic Caribou
6 Herd.

7
8 The average harvest from 2013 to 2015
9 from the Central Arctic Caribou herd was 930 with 100
10 of those being taken by Federally-qualified users
11 compared to 830 being taken by the non-Federally-
12 qualified users, thus the proposed change to the
13 caribou regulations would have the most impact on the
14 non-Federally-qualified subsistence users in Unit 26B.
15 The State goal is to reduce the annual harvest from
16 around 930 to 680 and the cow harvest from
17 approximately 200 to 75. Preliminary harvest data from
18 2017 suggests that the new harvest regulations
19 instituted by the State maybe having a desired effect,
20 to-date approximately 184 caribou were harvested from
21 the Central Arctic Caribou Herd and only four of those
22 were cows. There was no actually no legal cow harvest
23 on that so a few were harvested.

24
25 One alternative considered was to close
26 Federal public lands in Unit 26B which would include
27 the BLM lands on either side of the southern section of
28 the Dalton Highway and the U.S. Fish and Wildlife
29 Service lands in the Arctic National Wildlife Refuge in
30 the southeast corner of Unit 26B. It is possible that
31 closing these Federal lands to non-Federally-qualified
32 users would reduce the harvest but it may also just
33 shift hunting locations to adjacent State lands and
34 this was a concern around Anaktuvuk Pass and Point Lay.

35
36 If the request is approved caribou
37 hunting on Federal public lands in Unit 26A and 26B
38 would be limited to Federally-qualified subsistence
39 users for the 2018/2020 regulatory cycle. The total
40 harvest by non-Federally-qualified users in Unit 26A is
41 approximately one percent of the total harvest from the
42 Western Arctic Caribou Herd, it's about 117 out of an
43 estimated annual harvest of about 12,000 animals.
44 Local people have voiced concern that the closure would
45 likely concentrate more people on State lands in the
46 proximity of communities (indiscernible) increasing
47 potential user conflicts. For example, closing Federal
48 public lands may concentrate non-local hunters on State
49 lands near Anaktuvuk Pass and Point Lay.

1 The total harvest by non-Federally-
2 qualified users from the Teshekpuk Caribou Herd, which
3 occurs primarily in Unit 26A is less than three percent
4 of the total harvest. Closing Federal lands in Unit
5 26B to non-Federally-qualified users would have the
6 greatest impact on non-Federally-qualified users that
7 hunt primarily from the Central Arctic Caribou Herd in
8 Unit 26B as they account for, right now, approximately
9 89 percent of the total harvest from that unit.

10
11 In Unit 26B it is likely that the non-
12 Federally-qualified harvest would not decline much
13 because non-Federally-qualified users would shift
14 location to the State lands. Currently 70 percent of
15 the lands in Unit 26B are State lands and 30 percent
16 are Federal lands.

17
18 Preliminary harvest data from 2017 and
19 this was as of March 5th, 2018, suggests that the new
20 harvest regulations may be having desired effects.
21 Combined with a new population estimates for the
22 Central Arctic Caribou suggests that waiting for
23 another couple of years might be a prudent option to
24 see if the population trends continue. Part of this is
25 because there was a digital -- different camera systems
26 were used. The population right now is at the lower
27 limit of the Central -- the State recommendations for
28 the Central Arctic Caribou population and a trend isn't
29 really developed unless you have two or three years
30 using the same method.

31
32 OSM's conclusion for this proposal, is
33 to oppose Proposal WP18-57.

34
35 The justification is due to -- some of
36 this will be a little bit repetitive, due to the
37 relatively small caribou harvest in Unit 26A, the need
38 for adequate time to see if the newly enacted
39 regulations are effective in reducing the caribou
40 harvest, particularly in Unit 26B and as I've mentioned
41 before it seems like some of those -- that seems to be
42 the case so far. The newly enacted State regulations
43 to protect the Central Arctic Caribou Herd in Unit 26B,
44 which for residents, is a reduction in the harvest from
45 five caribou per day to two bull caribou and one bull
46 for non-residents, and elimination of the cow harvest
47 is likely to have more effect than restricting the
48 Federal public lands to non-Federally-qualified users.

49
50

1 Reduction of the caribou harvest on a
2 relatively small portion of Federal public lands,
3 again, around 30 percent along the Dalton Highway
4 Management Corridor and the Arctic National Wildlife
5 Refuge to non-Federally-qualified users will likely
6 just shift the hunting pressures of the non-Federally-
7 qualified users to the adjacent State lands. Reducing
8 the hunting pressure along the Dalton Highway
9 Management Corridor is unlikely to increase
10 availability to local residents living west of the
11 highway.
12

13 And, finally, the increase in the
14 Western Arctic Caribou Herd Teshekpuk Caribou Herd and
15 the Central Arctic Caribou Herd populations suggests
16 that some of the restrictions that have been placed on
17 all hunters may be having some of the desired effects
18 of turning around the populations.
19

20 Thank you.
21

22 And I'm open for questions.
23

24 CHAIRMAN CHRISTIANSON: Any questions
25 for Staff on that.
26

27 (No comments)
28

29 CHAIRMAN CHRISTIANSON: Thank you, Tom.
30

31 Summary of public comment.
32

33 MS. PATTON: Mr. Chair and members of
34 the Board. While there were no written public comments
35 submitted during the comment period, several ACs did
36 submit letters as well as the Western Arctic Caribou
37 Herd working group, which met this fall.
38

39 In your Supplemental Packet, Section 7,
40 beginning on Page 31 you'll find a letter from the Cape
41 Krusenstern SRC and they made a motion to support WP18-
42 57 because they were concerned that the traditional
43 lands of the North Slope Inupiaq are accessible through
44 the Haul Road and support WP18-57 as a show of
45 solidarity with the North Slope RAC.
46

47 Two SRCs did review this proposal but
48 took no action. Gates of the Arctic SRC and the Kobuk
49 Valley SRC both acknowledged the intent of the proposal
50

1 but decided to take no action and defer to the Council
2 in making that decision.

3
4 The Western Arctic Caribou Herd working
5 group met in December of this past year and also took
6 action on WP18-57 and you will find their letter on
7 Page 56 of your Supplemental Packet, Section 7. The
8 Western Arctic Caribou Herd working group voted to
9 oppose WP18-57 with a vote of 8-7. In discussion,
10 preceding this close vote the working group members
11 opposing the proposal indicated that the area proposed
12 for closure is too large and that there is not a
13 conservation concern at this time to warrant the
14 closure.

15
16 And that concludes public comments.

17
18 Thank you.

19
20 CHAIRMAN CHRISTIANSON: Thank you, Eva.
21 Open the floor to public testimony.

22
23 (No comments)

24
25 CHAIRMAN CHRISTIANSON: Hearing none,
26 anybody on the phone.

27
28 OPERATOR: No, sir, not at this time.

29
30 CHAIRMAN CHRISTIANSON: Thank you.
31 We'll move on.....

32
33 MS. PATTON: Mr. Chair.

34
35 CHAIRMAN CHRISTIANSON:to
36 Regional.....

37
38 MS. PATTON: Mr. Chair and Council. We
39 did have someone attempting to call in, Esther Hugo
40 from Anaktuvuk Pass had wanted to testify. So maybe
41 we'll just check with the operator again, if the lines
42 are open, apparently she's tried and wasn't able to get
43 through.

44
45 OPERATOR: And just as a reminder, if
46 you'd like to make a comment, please unmute your line
47 and press star-one, please.

48
49 Give us a few moments.

50

1 (Pause)

2
3 CHAIRMAN CHRISTIANSON: Regional
4 Advisory Council Chair, North Slope.

5
6 MR. G. BROWER: Mr. Chair. Gordon
7 Brower, North Slope Regional Advisory Council Chair.
8 And I'm going to read a summary of our Council's
9 recommendations and start from there.

10
11 This has been a effort for a long time
12 to look at how the issues can be met and hoping that
13 the door opens for new ways of managing to where
14 communities are heard in looking at the rural
15 subsistence priority issues that need to be met,
16 subsistence needs, which are not being met.

17
18 Before I read this I wrote a couple of
19 things down.

20
21 In the areas where traditional areas
22 where the animals are expected to move, reasonable
23 availability of subsistence resources, the Borough has
24 policies in place to protect the reasonable
25 availability of subsistence resources, including
26 caribou, those migratory movements. In 2014 the
27 community is struggling with caribou needs and we are
28 right now currently dealing with hearings of violations
29 of guides outside of their concession areas unreported
30 in areas that they're not supposed to be in. These
31 concerns are heavy because the community has an
32 expectation to receive this migratory route and try to
33 protect them.

34
35 The other concerns that are weighing
36 very heavy, Nuiqsut, when the community of Anaktuvuk is
37 crying for food and needing help, our other communities
38 come, nobody else is going to do it, nobody has been
39 doing it to help. Other communities, using
40 snowmachines, even chartering airplanes to bring food
41 to other communities like Anaktuvuk Pass when the
42 caribou doesn't come, Nuiqsut has done that, Wainwright
43 has done that. The Arctic is suffering from a myriad
44 of regulatory processes that have conflicting mandates
45 and there needs to be a way to work together for the
46 sake of communities and to provide those subsistence
47 needs on these traditional lands. It's a very
48 important food security issue that's going on year
49 after year.

50

1 I'm not saying this just because I want
2 to say them to you, I'm saying them because I've been
3 in those villages, I've heard the concerns from those
4 people. These are real issues.

5
6 I think this is a monumental task to
7 try to convey to the Board the needs of communities and
8 to think of things outside of the box like you just did
9 with this map. Having the communities areas of
10 influence recognized might be one of those paths in
11 changing.

12
13 So with that I'm going to read this and
14 I have -- you know, I'm passionate about our
15 communities and our people. We love them, we share
16 with them, where we need to assist we provide food for
17 them. As a whaling captain it's my job as it was my
18 father's job as other whaling captains provide food for
19 your people. There's no -- we can't grow anything, we
20 don't have orange trees or things like that, so we take
21 it very serious to be able to provide these resources
22 and food for our people.

23
24 The North Slope Regional Advisory
25 Council support WP18-57.

26
27 By the way I applaud those Subsistence
28 Resource Councils that supported because I think
29 they've heard it.

30
31 The Council expressed concerns over the
32 decline of the Western Arctic and the Teshekpuk Caribou
33 Herds and especially the recent dramatic decline of the
34 Central Arctic Caribou Herd. The Council noted that
35 even though there was a small sliver of Federal land in
36 Unit 26B, perhaps it was important to have the closure
37 even for a small area of land in order to provide
38 protection of the herd in that area, which is critical
39 to the migration of the herd. Subsistence communities
40 in the area have been impacted by hunting activities in
41 the area and access from off the Dalton Highway.

42
43 I don't think we can emphasize more the
44 needs of communities when we have a large competing
45 population of residents, the Alaska residents, when you
46 -- it's very hard to describe when ADF&G has to manage
47 for the entire state and manage that right at the front
48 door step of communities and compete directly to put
49 food on the table for our villages. There has to be a
50

1 new way. Think about that, maybe there has to be a
2 designation so that these conflicts and migratory path
3 deflections do not happen anymore. The expectation of
4 the movement becomes once again an expectation, they're
5 coming.

6
7 The Council stressed the importance of
8 the rural subsistence priority and that a closure to
9 non-Federally-qualified users was not taken lightly but
10 warranted at this time when subsistence needs were not
11 being met. I got to reemphasize that, when subsistence
12 needs are not being met.

13
14 I'm going to give you a quick example.
15 In a liberal hunting management scheme people can go
16 starving, in a liberal hunting management scheme, when
17 there are abundance of harvestable surplus, you put a
18 firing line of spike camps in front of the migratory
19 path head on with a community you will deflect those
20 resources out of the reasonable range and availability
21 of the village. We are dealing with that.

22
23 The local government has already made a
24 determination and used it very well, that you will
25 deflect resources out of reasonable subsistence use by
26 deflection even though there's abundance of those
27 resources.

28
29 Communities in the region have already
30 taken efforts to support conservation of the caribou
31 herd by reducing their own subsistence harvest and now
32 the only tool left available was to close non-
33 Federally-qualified hunters on Federal land. We
34 recently had a proposal to change from what we've
35 already reduced, a lot, we made traditional practice
36 into rules. We don't hunt the bulls during rut, well,
37 we make that a law. We're not going to hunt them
38 during that time, an animal doesn't fit for
39 consumption, that's a law. We don't hunt fawns with a
40 cow and calf parent, we make that into the law. I think
41 ADF&G, when we were hearing that this rulemaking was
42 going to come, the local people took it upon
43 themselves, hey, they're going to restrict us so much,
44 we need to do something on our part and take the
45 initiative to do these things, and we did, we stepped
46 up to the plate, using our traditional knowledge to
47 limit and be conservationists on our own. Those are
48 some of the things, and then further reduce from five
49 to three, I think was too much, even for me, as a
50

1 person, as a whaling captain having to provide for an
2 entire community, there's not very many people that are
3 captains that have to provide over and above.

4
5 If I started talking about that, I'd go
6 on until tomorrow, so.....

7
8 CHAIRMAN CHRISTIANSON: Yeah, we got a
9 half hour.

10
11 (Laughter)

12
13 MR. G. BROWER: Well, I'm just letting
14 you know we've taken our own efforts to reducing our
15 own subsistence harvest and help turned them into law.

16
17 ADF&G can take the credit but we did
18 that.

19
20 Council members expressed grave concern
21 about continuing viability of the herds in the area and
22 noted the evidence on the record, a drop from 490,000
23 animals 10 years ago to 200,000, with a new tool, with
24 a digital camera that they've had for a decade already,
25 they could have counted using digital equipment a
26 decade ago and saying, oh, we got 50,000 new ones just
27 came up, yep, we found them, you know, and that's
28 dangerous. It's dangerous to advertise a blip and I'm
29 used to science, I'm used to science, use science,
30 we've been supported science from bowhead whale, the
31 most studied animal on the face of the Earth, I think,
32 and we use that, to 200,000 for the Western Arctic
33 Herd, shows that there is a conservation concern, truly
34 when there's a 50 percent or greater decline and then
35 over 10 years your communities are growing there's got
36 to be a few babies born during that time, you know,
37 we're not static, I'm not using the right word, we're
38 not staying the same population, all of our community
39 plans show that we're increasing and that consumption
40 and need is increasing.

41
42 The Council noted that the special
43 action closure in Unit 23 had shown positive results
44 providing for more subsistence opportunities for people
45 in the area and thus felt the measure could also
46 benefit in Unit 26A and Unit 26B.

47
48 Additionally the Council felt that if
49 there was a shift of hunters from Federal lands on Unit
50

1 23 to Unit 26, that a followup closure to Federal non-
2 qualified users in Unit 26 would help support
3 communities on the North Slope.

4
5 So it's just common sense, if we're
6 going to look at conservation efforts in Unit 23,
7 follow through on Unit 26, because there are 38
8 communities that are being graced by the herd, many,
9 many communities, villages, all of them growing are
10 graced by these herds.

11
12 While it is anticipated that perhaps
13 the Western Arctic Caribou Herd count may be
14 stabilizing there still needs to be conservative
15 action, if not preserving and preservation mode.
16 Despite the overall low number of non-Federally-
17 qualified users in 26, the Council stressed that each
18 one of those hunters represents aircraft activity that
19 contributes to the diversion of the herd. It is not
20 the number of hunters but how they access the herd that
21 causes problems. The Council feels that reducing the
22 non-Federally-qualified users harvest will have an
23 overall beneficial outcome in support of subsistence
24 opportunity.

25
26 The Council dismissed the argument that
27 it would concentrate hunters on to State land near the
28 local communities, noting that there was a vast area of
29 State land in areas accessible along the Dalton
30 Highway. I think it's almost heart wrenching to think
31 about the consequences, you do this, this is going to
32 probably happen, you do this, this is another effect,
33 but those need to be dealt with when they happen, and
34 that's the Council's, at this time, has made that
35 determination, we'll deal with that when it comes to
36 that.

37
38 There needs to be a way to provide food
39 for our communities. It's just not happening. When
40 other villages have to hunt for an entire village,
41 these are trying times.

42
43 The Council also noted that the issues
44 end up being competition between people who can afford
45 planes and be guided to the front of the herd and
46 people in rural and economic depressed areas who need
47 the caribou to survive.

48
49 And this is something I hear so much
50

1 and in community plans about subsistence, the economics
2 in our villages is I think misunderstood, just because
3 they're within the North Slope Borough. The household
4 income, the jobs in villages, when you have a community
5 of 300, 400, the availability of jobs and the economic
6 conditions they live under. When fuel is so expensive
7 and you got to juggle between paying your utility bill
8 and going out to subsist while others are pooling
9 resources together to try and do that hunting together,
10 to have a better success rate, those are major issues.
11

12 The Council noted that these issues end
13 up being competition between people who can afford
14 planes and be guided to the front of the herd and
15 people in rural economic depressed areas who need the
16 caribou to survive, where caribou is an integral part
17 of their community, culture and food security, the
18 restrictions of other users is necessary at this time.
19 Deference should be given to the people in the
20 community who rely on the resources for food security.
21

22 And I've got pages and pages of things
23 I wanted to say but for the best interest of time, for
24 the best interest of time, I know we're tired, our
25 brains are probably, you know, stretched to their max,
26 but I wrote a lot of things but I think the limited
27 amount of time to be able to try to convey and sway the
28 opinion and look at a new way, a new model, even if it
29 has to close this and open up with a new way that is
30 better for communities, we need to think of those kind
31 of ideas.
32

33 Thank you, very much and I'm going to
34 stop here as I think I've tried to do justice for the
35 proposal.
36

37 CHAIRMAN CHRISTIANSON: Thank you for
38 your thorough testimony, appreciate that Gordon.
39

40 Western Interior.
41

42 MR. REAKOFF: Thank you, Mr. Chair.
43 Jack Reakoff Western Interior Regional Advisory
44 Council.
45

46 Western Interior Council noted that the
47 harvest was disbursed over the Unit 26A and
48 concentrated in Unit 26B so we were primarily
49 addressing the 26B, that's where we have customary and
50

1 traditional use for our region.

2
3 The Council opposed the closure,
4 specifically in 26B because of Board of Game action, at
5 the urging of the Koyukuk River Advisory Committee to
6 close cow caribou harvest in 26B, they were killing way
7 too many cows on a declining herd and the Board of --
8 the Department wanted winter hunting for caribou from
9 the Dalton Highway in 26B and I wrote specifically to
10 the Board to tell them that caribou only have one calf
11 a year, they never have a twin, they never have
12 triplets, four Board members told me they didn't even
13 know that when they read my comment to them. So the
14 Board didn't go along with the Department's
15 recommendation for winter hunting, they closed from
16 6950 north everything to the south to cow caribou
17 harvest. That's a big deal. That's not a little deal,
18 that's a huge deal because that stopped the deflection
19 of the caribou migrations. When they opened it in 2010
20 to cow caribou harvest, five caribou cows, those
21 hunters lined up on the Sag River and shot the tar out
22 of the front edge of those herds, that's when that herd
23 started getting beat up real hard, wound loss rate goes
24 right through the roof when you give five caribou limit
25 like that. There was a lot of wounded caribou that got
26 hurt and they've deflected those herds big time. Those
27 cows are terrified of that road now.

28
29 Those cow caribou in Central Arctic,
30 they come out of the Arctic Refuge and they turn over
31 and go up into the Chandalar drainages, I don't know
32 how long it's going to take them to get used to coming
33 back to coming across the road again.

34
35 When the Board listened and closed cow
36 caribou harvest for sporthunters in 26B I felt that
37 they had done a part to reduce -- they reduced the bag
38 limit to one bull for non-residents, two bull bulls for
39 resident hunters, and they closed the cow caribou
40 season. I felt that then there was -- and reflects in
41 the harvest, the harvest has gone way down when they
42 did that. Those hunters aren't killing -- they're not
43 even getting 25 percent of the harvestable surplus for
44 Central Arctic. So I felt that since the Board of Game
45 listened, instead of listening to the Department, they
46 listened and closed the cow caribou season, I felt that
47 there was no need to have a Federal closure, it would
48 -- the Federal closure, if you look at the maps here it
49 shows that the harvest on the Federal lands up along
50

1 the Dalton Highway are nothing compared to on the State
2 lands down below. And if you push all those hunters
3 off the Federal land out there where the caribou are
4 trying to migrate across the Sag River it's just going
5 to exacerbate this migration problem. You're going to
6 have a lot of hunters harassing these caribou.

7
8 So I opposed the closure on the Federal
9 land on 26B, specifically -- not specifically for 26A,
10 the Council, Western Interior Council listened to our
11 deliberation and so we opposed the proposal, primarily
12 for 26B. 26A, we're not really addressing it.

13
14 Thank you, Mr. Chair.

15
16 CHAIRMAN CHRISTIANSON: Thank you,
17 Jack. Any questions for our Chairs.

18
19 (No comments)

20
21 CHAIRMAN CHRISTIANSON: Tribal, Alaska
22 Native Corp comments.

23
24 MR. MIKE: Thank you, Mr. Chair.
25 Donald Mike, Council Coordinator.

26
27 Tribal consultations were held on
28 September 14th and efforts were made to contact Point
29 Lay tribal council members by Ms. Henry but due to a
30 communication technical issues those council members
31 that were scheduled to call in could not -- were not
32 able to call in due to the teleconference, due to the
33 communications technical issues.

34
35 Carlene Ticket from Anaktuvuk Pass, the
36 tribal administrator asked for a briefing on WP18-57,
37 which OSM Staff biologist provided, and Ms. Ticket
38 requested -- or questioned why they rejected that
39 special action and I'm assuming that's WP18-57. Staff
40 biologist replied that the closure on Federal lands in
41 Unit 26A would likely shift hunters to State lands in
42 Anaktuvuk Pass, the Staff biologist stated there are
43 Federal lands surrounding south of Anaktuvuk Pass
44 however north and east of Anaktuvuk Pass are State
45 lands. Staff biologist also shared that they can
46 submit a proposal for the 2020/2022 wildlife proposal
47 cycle.

48
49 That concludes the tribal consultation,
50

1 Mr. Chair.

2

3

Thank you.

4

5

CHAIRMAN CHRISTIANSON: Thank you.

6

Eva, you look like you have something to say.

7

8

MS. PATTON: Mr. Chair and members of
9 the Board. We did have a representative from Anaktuvuk
10 Pass that was trying to call in. These are the
11 realities of the technical difficulties, their internet
12 has been down for a couple of weeks and she wasn't able
13 to get through on the teleconference line. But she was
14 able to relay a very brief message on behalf of
15 Anaktuvuk Pass, if I may provide her comments.

16

17

18

19

20

21

22

Again, this is Ether Hugo, calling in
for the community of Anaktuvuk Pass. She's in support
of WP18-57 because of the significance of caribou for
her people, and strongly asks the Board to follow the
wishes of their community.

23

24

Thank you.

25

26

27

CHAIRMAN CHRISTIANSON: Thank you.

Alaska Department of Fish and Game.

28

29

30

MR. BURCH: Thank you, Mr. Chair. I'm
Mark Burch with the Alaska Department of Fish and Game.

31

32

33

34

Everyone will be glad to know you have
to turn all the way back to Page 1386 to get to our
comments.

35

36

(Laughter)

37

38

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49

50

MR. BURCH: I just want to start by
reflecting a little bit on how we started out this
morning. I know there's naturally a lot of conflict
throughout these processes but we listen to each other
respectfully and work through those and I just want to
acknowledge that. And acknowledge that, I, personally,
have heard in many working groups, Regional Advisory
Council meetings, Board meetings about deflection of
caribou and that's something that the Department of
Fish and Game has documented as well. And we want to
at least acknowledge that, and, certainly hunters are
going to affect the movement of animals and caribou as
well. There's no doubt about that, at some level. But

1 deflection of migration on a herd basis hasn't really
2 been detected. And additional studies would be
3 necessary to document that deflection.

4
5 But anyway I wanted to start there.

6
7 I think we've heard a lot about the
8 population status of the Central Arctic Herd and the
9 Teshekpuk Herds, with both the photo censuses and
10 recent surveys. Based on those surveys and especially
11 the demographics we believe the Central Arctic Caribou
12 Herd is stabilized and the Teshekpuk may even be
13 increasing a little.

14
15 So our conclusion is there's really no
16 conservation concern per se.

17
18 And I also want to point out that the
19 State, again, is listening and has made substantial
20 attempts to address some of these concerns, beginning
21 with a controlled use area around -- in the vicinity of
22 Anaktuvuk Pass and then with the more recent Board of
23 Game action that went into place in 2017. And we
24 really do encourage you to give that attempt a shot,
25 let's see what the experience is and go from there.

26
27 And so the Alaska Department of Fish
28 and Game opposes this proposal at this time.

29
30 Thank you, Mr. Chair.

31
32 CHAIRMAN CHRISTIANSON: Thank you. And
33 I definitely appreciate your comments about the Board
34 and the process and the open dialogue that helps us
35 find a path to getting to where we can all at least
36 agree so appreciate that and the time you guys have
37 spent being patient with our process.

38
39 Thank you.

40
41 Gordon.

42
43 MR. G. BROWER: I wanted to find a way
44 and let the process pan out for the controlled use
45 area. We've been working with the controlled use area
46 for maybe a decade now or maybe greater than that, but,
47 yet, you know, we didn't maybe do the necessary type of
48 restrictions that would limit the impact. And I have
49 my doubts because that's -- in the face of the
50

1 controlled use area we're dealing with these issues,
2 including providing food for the community when the
3 caribou are not coming.

4
5 And there's a lot of variables about
6 why the caribou is not coming, one of them is the herd
7 size has shrunk so substantially that the outer
8 periphery only grazed the community and that outer
9 periphery has shrunk sufficiently enough to where it is
10 not coming through for the community.

11
12 I have heard explanation after
13 explanation on these things and I just wanted to point
14 those out.

15
16 CHAIRMAN CHRISTIANSON: Thank you. And
17 then just for the matter of the record I wanted to ask,
18 Jack, one more time, again, to clearly state exactly
19 what your Council was opposed to, the entire thing or
20 part of it?

21
22 MR. REAKOFF: When we deliberated the
23 proposal, because we only have customary and
24 traditional use in 26B, we were addressing 26B portion
25 of the proposal. And so we opposed the proposal for
26 closure in 26B, specifically, not 26A because we don't
27 have customary and traditional use over there.

28
29 Thank you, Mr. Chair.

30
31 CHAIRMAN CHRISTIANSON: Thank you.

32
33 MR. G. BROWER: One of the reasons for
34 ours, looking at the Central Arctic Herd is Nuiqsut
35 hunts pretty much big time out of that herd as well.
36 It will come down and calve by Meltwater2P area, which
37 is about maybe 12 miles from the village of Nuiqsut and
38 then come to the coast for insect relief in that area.
39 It's a very well documented, well used herd by the
40 community of Nuiqsut and what we are seeing in
41 population decline looking at the management scheme
42 that's probably going to change, and we're hopeful that
43 the blip is going to be real and it's going to go up,
44 but we need to be very careful as to how we approach
45 these things.

46
47 Thank you.

48
49 CHAIRMAN CHRISTIANSON: Thank you guys.

50

1 ISC.

2

3 MS. HARDIN: Thank you, Mr. Chair. The
4 InterAgency Staff Committee provided the standard
5 comment on Wildlife Proposal WP18-57.

6

7 CHAIRMAN CHRISTIANSON: Thank you.
8 Board discussion with Council Chairs and State liaison.

9

10 MR. G. BROWER: Maybe it's not the --
11 you're with the Council Chairs, right.

12

13 CHAIRMAN CHRISTIANSON: Council Chairs.

14

15 MR. G. BROWER: Yeah, I just urge, as a
16 Chairman on the North Slope, we've deliberated this,
17 we've talked about it, we thought about what we can do
18 and the communities are struggling with caribou.
19 There's over a 50 percent decline. We're hopeful that
20 it will come up. There's some differing opinions about
21 biologists, because they will play with numbers, and
22 ANS is another way to play with numbers. We argued and
23 argued about why Teshekpuk Herd and the Western Arctic
24 Herd ANS was being combined, and I asked specifically
25 to the biologist, if you separate the ANS for each one,
26 would it support non-resident and other hunters because
27 the -- by the way that these animals grace communities
28 their harvestable surplus would have been consumed.

29

30 Thank you.

31

32 MR. C. BROWER: Mr. Chair.

33

34 CHAIRMAN CHRISTIANSON: Charlie.

35

36 MR. C. BROWER: I share the same
37 concern that Mr. Brower has over there. And I felt it
38 because I'm a vital hunter up there too and I'm out
39 there hunting constantly with my boys and when the
40 decline of harvest came, two of my boys, we went out
41 and we only got six, and you take that six caribou home
42 and debone them and put them away, you know, it doesn't
43 last very long. So imagine you can make hamburger and
44 jerky and other things with it and it gave us a -- it
45 was heartbreaking to go through that process.

46

47 And like Mr. Brower stated, you know,
48 we took some guidelines on our own to preserve what we
49 can for the long-run. And also if I may when the

50

1 voting comes through, I think I have a conflict since
2 I'm a hunter in that area, I don't know, Mr. Lord might
3 have to give me advice on the voting since I'm a hunter
4 on these caribous and so on.

5

6 Thank you, Mr. Chair.

7

8 MR. LORD: Mr. Chair. I'm not here to
9 give ethical advice, our office isn't supposed to, but
10 at the same time there's nobody else here to do it. So
11 my suggestion would be if think you might have an
12 ethical concern that it would be better to go ahead and
13 recuse yourself from the vote.

14

15 CHAIRMAN CHRISTIANSON: Any other Board
16 discussion.

17

18 (No comments)

19

20 CHAIRMAN CHRISTIANSON: Board action.

21

22 MS. MOURITSEN: Thank you, Mr.
23 Chairman. I move to adopt Wildlife Proposal 18-57 as
24 shown in the book materials on Page 1322 and if my
25 motion is given a second I will explain my reasons for
26 opposing this proposal from the North Slope RAC.

27

28 MR. FROST: Second.

29

30 MS. MOURITSEN: Thank you, Mr. Chair.
31 I really appreciate the testimony and discussion about
32 this matter and -- but I decided that what I -- that I
33 need to oppose this and the reasons, there are a couple
34 of them.

35

36 In the book, on Page 1375 to 1376 is
37 the write up by OSM and their reasons for opposing this
38 and so I adopt that and I also note that one of the
39 RACs, the Western Interior RAC is opposed to this
40 proposed closure as not being justified under Section
41 .815 of ANILCA, it is not necessary for conservation
42 nor the continuation of subsistence uses. Beginning in
43 2015 both the State and Federal Management Programs
44 began making regulatory changes designed to reduce cow
45 harvest and better conserve caribou populations that
46 were showing declines. While the Western Arctic
47 Caribou Herd has shown some recent improvements, the
48 regulatory changes have been given little time to take
49 effect and little time to evaluate their effectiveness

50

1 in reversing recent declines among some of the affected
2 herds. Closing the Federal lands now will not produce
3 a desired conservation effect and will likely increase
4 user conflicts on the State lands that will remain open
5 by shifting users to those lands.

6
7 Thank you.

8
9 CHAIRMAN CHRISTIANSON: Any further
10 discussion by the Board.

11
12 MR. C. BROWER: Yeah, I have one, Mr.
13 Chair.

14
15 CHAIRMAN CHRISTIANSON: Charlie.

16
17 MR. C. BROWER: I have one, Mr. Chair.
18 You know in reading through this proposal, I noted that
19 the population was up at 259, is that right, or is that
20 the new count, 259, right, but the actual count is 239,
21 and I was just wondering.....

22
23 MR. BURCH: For which herd are you
24 referring to?

25
26 MR. C. BROWER: Western Herd.

27
28 MR. BURCH: It's 259,000 I believe is
29 our estimate. But that's -- they don't -- well, I'm
30 going to take that back, I'll just leave it at that at.

31
32 MR. C. BROWER: But in reading there's
33 another number where the accurate count might be 239,
34 is that right?

35
36 MR. EVANS: I could address that.

37
38 So, Mr. Brower, through the Chair. So
39 the minimum count was 239 but when they do the modeling
40 through the rewest-estimate it ended up being 259,000.

41
42 MR. C. BROWER: Okay, I was just
43 curious.

44
45 Thank you.

46
47 CHAIRMAN CHRISTIANSON: Any further
48 discussion by the Board.

49
50

1 Rhonda.

2
3 MS. PITKA: Hi, Rhonda Pitka. I'd
4 speak in support of the closure. It seems that the
5 North Slope has extensive testimony and has supported
6 the notion of the conservation of a healthy wildlife
7 population and the continuation of subsistence uses.

8
9 Thanks.

10
11 CHAIRMAN CHRISTIANSON: Call for the
12 question.

13
14 MR. C. BROWER: Question.

15
16 CHAIRMAN CHRISTIANSON: Question's been
17 called. Please read into the record and roll call.

18
19 MR. DOOLITTLE: This is Wildlife
20 Proposal 18-57. Motion adopt Proposal WP18-57 as shown
21 on Page 1332 of the meeting book.

22
23 Okay, roll call vote.

24
25 National Park Service, Herbert Frost.

26
27 MR. FROST: I oppose this motion for
28 the reasons as articulated by Member Mouritsen of the
29 BLM.

30
31 MR. DOOLITTLE: Bureau of Land
32 Management, Karen Mouritsen.

33
34 MS. MOURITSEN: I oppose.

35
36 MR. DOOLITTLE: U.S. Fish and Wildlife
37 Service, Greg Siekaniec.

38
39 MR. SIEKANIEC: I oppose for the
40 reasons articulated as well by Karen.

41
42 MR. DOOLITTLE: U.S. Forest Service,
43 Thomas Whitford.

44
45 MR. WHITFORD: I oppose for the reasons
46 stated.

47
48 MR. DOOLITTLE: Bureau of Indian
49 Affairs, Lynn Polacca.

50

1 MR. POLACCA: I support for the
2 Northwest [sic] Regional RAC, correction North Slope.

3
4 MR. DOOLITTLE: Public member, Rhonda
5 Pitka.

6
7 MS. PITKA: I support.

8
9 MR. DOOLITTLE: Public member, Charlie
10 Brower.

11
12 MR. C. BROWER: I support.

13
14 MR. DOOLITTLE: Chairman Anthony
15 Christianson.

16
17 CHAIRMAN CHRISTIANSON: I support.

18
19 MR. DOOLITTLE: Tie, 4/4 motion fails.

20
21 CHAIRMAN CHRISTIANSON: Thank you,
22 guys, that gets us through the non-consensus agenda
23 item and now we'll read into the record the consensus
24 agenda item and we can take care of that business.

25
26 MR. MCKEE: Thank you, Mr. Chair.
27 Chris McKee, Wildlife Division Supervisor at OSM.

28
29 Just as a reminder, the consensus
30 agenda proposals are those proposals for which there is
31 agreement among Federal Regional Advisory Councils, the
32 Federal InterAgency Staff Committee and the Alaska
33 Department of Fish and Game concerning Board action.

34
35 The following are the consensus agenda
36 proposals:

37
38 WP18-02 to expand the customary and
39 traditional use determination for deer in Units 1
40 through 5. The recommendation is to support.

41
42 WP18-03 to extend the hunting season
43 end date and move the trapping season date for wolves
44 in Units 1A and 1B. The recommendation is to support.

45
46 WP18-05 to extend the hunting season
47 end date and move trapping starting date for wolves in
48 Unit 3. The recommendation is to support.

1 WP18-06 to increase the harvest limit
2 for black bears in Unit 2. The recommendation is to
3 oppose.

4
5 WP18-09 change the number of recipients
6 a designated hunter may hunt for deer in Units 1B and
7 Unit 3. The recommendation is to oppose.

8
9 WP18-12 customary and traditional use
10 determination for the community of Gustavus for goats
11 in Unit 1C. The recommendation is to support.

12
13 WP18-13 to remove the trap marking
14 requirement for all trapping species in Units 1 through
15 5. The recommendation is to support.

16
17 WP18-14 to change the hunting and
18 trapping season dates for wolverine in Units 11 and 13.
19 The recommendation is to support.

20
21 WP18-15 to make changes to the drawing
22 permit process for moose in Unit 6C. The
23 recommendation is to oppose.

24
25 WP18-16/50 to extend the winter season
26 for moose in Unit 11. The recommendation is to
27 support.

28
29 WP18-25/26 to establish a new hunt area
30 and a may be announced winter season for moose in Unit
31 17C. The recommendation is to oppose.

32
33 WP18-27 establish a customary and
34 traditional use determination for muskox in Unit 18.
35 The recommendation is to oppose.

36
37 WP18-29 to lengthen the season by one
38 month for moose in Unit 18 remainder. The
39 recommendation is to support.

40
41 WP18-32 to align season dates for
42 caribou in Units 21D, 22, 23, 24, 25A west, 26A and
43 26B. The recommendation is to oppose.

44
45 WP18-35 to align State and Federal
46 boundary areas for the winter season for moose in 24B.
47 The recommendation is to support.

48
49 WP18-39 to align State and Federal
50

1 seasons and harvest limits for brown bears in Unit 22B.
2 The recommendation is to support.

3
4 WP18-40 to align State and Federal
5 season and harvest limits for brown bears in 22C. The
6 recommendation is to support.

7
8 WP18-45 to decrease the harvest limit
9 for caribou in Unit 23. The recommendation is to
10 oppose.

11
12 WP18-52 to extend the season for moose
13 in Unit 25D remainder. The recommendation is to
14 oppose.

15
16 WP18-53A to establish a customary and
17 traditional use determination for moose in Unit 25B.
18 The recommendation is to support as modified by OSM.

19
20 WP18-55 to extend the winter and fall
21 season for moose in Unit 12 remainder. The
22 recommendation is to oppose.

23
24 That concludes the consensus agenda
25 proposals.

26
27 And just on a note I'd like to commend
28 both the wildlife and the anthropology Staff for the
29 amount of work and the quality and timeliness of the
30 analyses that were done on what was necessarily an
31 extremely shortened proposal cycle. And I'm just
32 really proud as a supervisor to be able to show the
33 analyses and the amount of work that was done among OSM
34 Staff.

35
36 So, Mr. Chair, thank you.

37
38 CHAIRMAN CHRISTIANSON: Definitely
39 appreciated and doesn't go unseen. And, again, truly
40 do appreciate all the Staff and all the commitment that
41 goes into these meetings and the urgency that was
42 expressed the last couple of days to get us through at
43 least the most important part of our business, the
44 regulations. So definitely appreciate everybody.

45
46 With that I think I'll entertain a
47 motion.

48
49 MR. PELTOLA: Mr. Chair, if I may.

50

1 There are a couple of remaining agenda items that the
2 Board has not addressed yet, although we've gotten
3 through the regulatory aspect of things.

4
5 What's that.

6
7 (Off record comments)

8
9 MR. PELTOLA: Sorry, yeah, go ahead.

10
11 CHAIRMAN CHRISTIANSON: I'll entertain
12 a motion for the consensus.

13
14 MS. PITKA: I'll make a motion to adopt
15 the consensus agenda.

16
17 MR. C. BROWER: Second.

18
19 MR. WHITFORD: Second.

20
21 MR. C. BROWER: Question.

22
23 CHAIRMAN CHRISTIANSON: Motion's been
24 made and seconded, and the question's been called.

25
26 All in favor of the consensus agenda
27 signify by saying aye.

28
29 IN UNISON: Aye.

30
31 CHAIRMAN CHRISTIANSON: Same sign,
32 opposed.

33
34 (No opposing votes)

35
36 CHAIRMAN CHRISTIANSON: Motion carries
37 unanimously to accept the consensus agenda as read into
38 the record by the Staff.

39
40 Thank you, very much for that.

41
42 Gene.

43
44 MR. PELTOLA: As I mentioned when we
45 gave Beth her award, once again, my timing's
46 impeccable, I messed this one up too.

47
48 But there's a couple of outstanding
49 agenda items and then confirming with the Solicitor's
50

1 office and Staff, what we'd recommend is that in order
2 to address these, that, you, as the Chair, recess this
3 meeting to or near the week of May 14th, which the
4 exact date, location and time would be announced by the
5 Office of Subsistence Management, and at this time the
6 Board would address the remainder of the agenda items
7 and any other issues that the Board may want to address
8 at that segment of the meeting.
9

10 CHAIRMAN CHRISTIANSON: That's the
11 recommendation from Staff, do I hear any opposition
12 from the Board here.
13

14 (No opposition)
15

16 CHAIRMAN CHRISTIANSON: I recommend we
17 recess this meeting until at or near May 14th, time to
18 be determined.
19

20 Recessed.
21

22 (Off record)
23

24 (PROCEEDINGS TO BE CONTINUED)
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