SOUTHEAST ALASKA FEDERAL SUBSISTENCE REGIONAL ADVISORY COUNCIL MEETING

PUBLIC MEETING

VOLUME I

Central Council Tlingit and Haida's Vocational Training and Resource Center
Our Uncle's House
Juneau, Alaska
February 13, 2018
9:00 a.m.

COUNCIL MEMBERS PRESENT:

Michael Bangs, Chair
Michael Douville
Donald Hernandez
Albert Howard
Harvey Kitka
Cathy Needham - (Telephonic)
Steve Reifenstuhl
Robert Schroeder
Raymond Sensmeier
John Yeager

Regional Council Coordinator, DeAnna Perry

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PROCEEDINGS

(Juneau, Alaska - 2/13/2018)

(On record)

MS. PERRY: Good morning, everyone.
Welcome to the Southeast Regional Advisory Council
meeting.

Before we get started and do our formal
call to meeting I just thought I would greet everyone
and take care of some housekeeping announcements. I
want to personally welcome folks visiting us here in
Juneau. We are in the Central Council Tlingit and
Haida's Vocational Training and Resource Center, also
known as Our Uncle's House.

Some housekeeping for our building. In
the event of an evacuation, you'll need to go out
either one of these doors and make your way to one of
the staircases. You all probably came up the staircase
in the front. There's also one in the back. And
there's doors at each end as well.

Restrooms are located downstairs, just
inside the front door, on that side of the building.
There's a water fountain right out here in the hallway.

Wifi connectivity information is a
little sketchy this morning, but I just heard that if
you go to wifi guest, it shouldn't ask you for a
password. So if you can't connect, let me know and
we'll try to troubleshoot that for you.

If anyone is interested in applying to
sit on this Regional Advisory Council, we've got
application forms on the intake table. The deadline to
apply has been extended to February 16th, so there is
time to apply or nominate someone. So if you would
like to pick up an application. And you're more than
welcome to hand that back in to me before the end of
the week.

Our agenda for the meeting, along with
meeting books and supplemental materials for our
meeting are on the table right underneath the American
flag.
For those on the phone, the meeting materials can be found online on the Federal Subsistence Program's website. And that's www.doi.gov/subsistence. And if you go into the Region's tab you'll be able to follow along and look at the book digitally.

So one of the main purposes of our meetings is to encourage and promote local participation in the decision-making process affecting subsistence harvests on Federal public lands. If you would like to address the Council during the meeting on any of our agenda items or non-agenda items, please fill out a blue testifier form. And they're on the small table just inside the door. And then give it to any of us Staff members and we'll make sure that the Council provides an opportunity for you to address the Council. And this also helps us keep track of anyone who would like to speak regarding a specific agenda item when we get to it.

For Staff that are with us, there are some nameplates on the testifier table. I think most of the Council knows who everyone is, but if you will indulge me and put those up when you speak, that would be helpful.

I would like to remind folks here in the room and on the phone that there will be time for tribal and public comment on non-agenda items. The Chair will announce this each morning and that will be an opportunity for those present, as well as those participating on the phone, to speak to non-agenda items.

For those attending our meeting in person, we ask that you sign in at the front table. There is a sign in sheet for each of the three days of meeting. We'd appreciate that if you would sign when you're here. Also, if Staff could sign, it helps me, myself, when I'm preparing minutes and also our court reporter on spelling of names. So if you would do that, we'd appreciate it.

I'd like to take a moment now to see who we have participating on the phone. So could each of you state your name, your agency or group you represent or the community you live in.
MS. KENNER: Okay. This is Pippa Kenner, with OSM, in Anchorage.

MS. OEHLERS: Good morning. This is Susan Oehlers, with the Forest Service, in Yakutat.

MR. KOLLER: My name is Justin Koller, with the Forest Service, in Sitka.

MR. COLLIER: This is Jim Collier, in Wrangell, Alaska.

(Pause)

MS. PERRY: Okay. Great. Thank you guys for calling in and being part of our meeting.

So right before we start our meeting, I would like to ask our Council member Ray Sensmeier if he would provide an invocation before we start our meeting officially.

MR. SENSMEIER: Please rise if you're able to.

To the east where the sun rises. To the west where the sun sets. To the north where the cold comes from. To the south where the warmth and the light come from. Father, Son, giver of life, Grandmother Moon, who gives our minds balance and harmony. Sweet Mother Earth, eternal grandmother.

Father, we thank you for this beautiful day. We thank you for the snow which keeps our Mother Earth warm. For the rain that gives us life. We thank you for all the things that you put on this Mother Earth for us to use in a good and proper manner.

We thank you for bringing us all together safely in this place and that you will bring those who are not with us this morning together safely as well.

We pray that we can continue to live a way of the life that has existed for thousands and thousands of years. We pray for this for our children and our children's children and those yet unborn when it's their time. It is necessary for our survival. For our physical survival. For our cultural survival.
For our spiritual survival.
We ask these things in a good way and
only if they're good and meant to be.

Gunalcheesh.

CHAIRMAN BANGS: Okay. I'd like to
call the meeting to order.

Thank you, Ray, for that. For those
kind words.

I'm really happy to be here in Juneau
and before we get to the meeting part, I'd like to ask
Harvey to call the roll, please.

MR. KITKA: Thank you, Mr. Chair.
Steve Reifenstuhl.
MR. REIFENSTUHL: Here.
MR. KITKA: Frank Wright.
(No response)
MR. KITKA: Patricia Phillips.
(No response)
MR. KITKA: Mike Douville.
MR. DOUVILLE: Here.
MR. KITKA: Harvey Kitka is here.
Robert Schroeder.
MR. SCHROEDER: Here.
MR. KITKA: Albert Howard.
(No response)
MR. KITKA: Donald Hernandez.
MR. HERNANDEZ: Here.
MR. KITKA: Kenneth Jackson.

(No response)

MR. KITKA: Ray Sensmeier.

MR. SENSMEIER: Here.

MR. KITKA: John Yeager.

MR. YEAGER: Here.

MR. KITKA: Michael Bangs.

CHAIRMAN BANGS: Here.

MR. KITKA: Cathy Needham.

(No response)

MR. KITKA: Mr. Chair, we've got a quorum. Eight present. Eight participating.

CHAIRMAN BANGS: Thank you, Mr. Kitka.

Now we have a letter of resignation that I'd like DeAnna to read for us, please.

DeAnna.

MS. PERRY: Ken Jackson tendered his resignation by email in December; however, I didn't receive that until January. And I'd like to share that with everyone.

His email included:

It is with sincere regret that I write this letter. Please accept my resignation from our Subsistence Council. It has been a great privilege and honor to have served with such a knowledgeable and professional Board. The contributions and dedication to our Regions is exemplary by each Board member. Merry Christmas and Happy New Year to each of you and your families.

Sincerely, Ken Jackson, Senior.
Ken's term was up to expire at the end of this year, so again if anybody would like to apply for that seat or any available seats, we have application packets here.

And Ken will be missed.

CHAIRMAN BANGS: Thank you, DeAnna.

Okay. I'd like to move on to welcoming everybody that made it. I know there's a few of us that are stuck because of the weather.

Patty isn't able to make it here from Pelican. The weather is terrible. And Albert Howard isn't able to make it from over in Angoon for the same reason. But we're hoping that they make it here sometime today safely.

So anyway, if we could start over here I'd like for the Council to introduce themselves and where they're from and what they do. And then we'll go on to the audience if that works.

John.

MR. YEAGER: Thank you. Good morning, Mr. Chair. My name is John Yeager, from Wrangell, Alaska.

MR. REIFENSTUHL: Steve Reifenstuhl, general manager of Northern Southeast Regional Aquaculture, Sitka. Thank you.

MR. HERNANDEZ: Don Hernandez. I live in Point Baker, on Prince of Wales Island.

MR. DOUVILLE: Mike Douville, from Craig.

MR. SENSMEIER: (In Tlingit)

My Indian name is (In Tlingit). I am from the Raven Moiety. I come from the Clan of the Humpback Salmon and the Copper River People. I am the grandson Teikweidi, the Brown Bear, my grandfather's people. And I come from the House of the Half Moon People, from (In Tlingit), Yakutat.
Gunalcheesh.

MR. KITKA: Harvey Kitka, Sitka, Alaska.

CHAIRMAN BANGS: Mike Bangs, from Petersburg.

MR. SCHROEDER: Bob Schroeder, Juneau.

CHAIRMAN BANGS: Okay. If we could start in the audience with the woman over here, please.

If you could just give us your name, please, and tell us who you represent.

MS. HOUSTON: Thank you very much. I was invited to attend this event.

My name is Francis Houston. I go by Fran. My Tlingit name is X'unei. I am of the Raven Moiety from the Dog Salmon Clan. (In Tlingit) from the (In Tlingit). (In Tlingit) is the Dipper House.

I am also here to welcome each and every one of you that are here. And glad that you made it safely. The weather cooperated for some of you. And when you venture on back home, I wish to have all of you make a safe journey back home.

I would like to also mention that just previously the Aak'w Kwaans, we applied for a non-profit organization. Our name is the Aak'w Kwaan Cultural Heritage and Land Foundation. We just received this last month and I just wanted to mention that.

So again I would like to welcome each and every one of you. Even the ones that are behind me. I would like to say welcome also. And my favorite saying is good morning to each and every one of you.

Gunalcheesh.

CHAIRMAN BANGS: Thank you.

MR. SENSMEIER: Gunalcheesh.

MR. WEITZEL: Good morning. My name is
Kenneth Weitzel. I'm from Central Council Tlingit and
Haida Native Lands and Resources Department. I am
Tlingit (In Tlingit). And we're here to give a
presentation on transboundary watersheds and the work
we're doing.

So we're looking forward to that.

Thank you for inviting us.

CHAIRMAN BANGS: Thank you.

MS. DUNCAN: Good morning. My name is
Desiree Duncan. I'm the Native Lands Manager for
Tlingit and Haida Central Council. My Tlingit name is
(In Tlingit) and I'm Eagle Killer Whale. And I'm happy
to be here for a couple of hours.

Thank you.

MR. HEITHECKER: Good morning. Troy
Heithecker, Deputy Forest Supervisor, in the Tongass
National Forest. Here on behalf of Earl Stewart,
Forest Supervisor. I'm glad to be here this morning.

Thank you for having me.

MR. OWEN: Good morning, everyone.
Wayne Owen, United States Forest Service, Alaska
Region, here in Juneau. And I think that's all for
now, right? Okay.

MS. JOHNSON: Good morning. My name is
Marci Johnson. I'm a wildlife and fisheries biologist,
with the U.S. Forest Service, here in Juneau. I work
on the Juneau Ranger District in Admiralty Island
National Monument.

MR. MUSSHLEWHITE: And I am Jake
Musslewhite, fisheries biologist with the Forest
Service here at Juneau Ranger District. Thanks.

MR. VANALEN: And I am Ben Vanalen,
also with the Forest Service here in Juneau. Fisheries
Biologist.

Thank you.

MR. SUMINSKI: Good morning. I'm Terry
Suminski, with the Forest Service, and the Subsistence Program Manager for the Tongass National Forest. And I live in Sitka.

Thanks.

MR. DOOLITTLE: My name is Tom Doolittle and I am the Deputy Assistant Regional Director for OSM, based out of Anchorage, Alaska.

MR. ROBUS: Good morning. My name is Matt Robus. I represent Territorial Sportsmen, which is an outdoors advocacy group based here in Juneau.

CHAIRMAN BANGS: Thank you all and welcome.

I think our coordinator has an announcement.

DeAnna.

MS. PERRY: Thank you, Mr. Chair.

Thank you, Fran, for coming and greeting us today with your very warm welcome. I have a couple of other welcomes before we get on to Council business.

Wayne Owen, who introduced himself just a moment ago, Director of Wildlife Fish Ecology Watershed and Soils in the Regional Office with the Forest Service. He'll be speaking with us today on behalf of Beth Pendleton, the Regional Forester, and also a Federal Subsistence Board member. She could not be with us today.

So Wayne, if you would like to share a few words.

MR. OWEN: Good morning. Wayne Owen, for the record.

I want to start just with a thank you for the trouble that it's taken you all to get here. I recall a phone call I had with Chairman Bangs in January about why we're not meeting in Wrangell a couple of weeks ago. And I'll just share the ending of that conversation.
( Interruption - map falls off wall)

MR. OWEN: Well, that kind of sums it up.

(Laughter)

MR. OWEN: Yes. What happened is crazy. Yes, it's difficult to understand. And that kind of stuff happens all the time in the government. So thank you for your indulgence and your willingness to -- you know, and your ability to stick to it and come here at a different time. That's -- I know it's a challenge for your schedules, but it's really appreciated.

And I want to mention a couple of ways specifically that it is appreciated. You know, yeah, we put money into this and we send Staff behind us to do that. But the reason we, the Forest Service, does that is because of the critical importance of the work that you, each and every one of you as Council Members, the contribution you make to our mission here.

You know, the Forest Service -- you know, besides the obvious, you know, we're here to implement, you know, Title VIII of ANILCA. Besides that, you know, having a forum of respected people helping us talk to the public and with the public about the management of fish and wildlife resources in the 17 and a half million acres of Tongass National Forest really is essential to our social license to operate. It is essential to our community relationships. It is essential to the actual human side, which is the only important side of the work that we do. So thank you all for that.

Secondly, and I think, you know, I've been troubled recently by a lot of stuff in the news about the abuse of fish and wildlife resources in the state of Alaska and in Southeast. You know, you've all -- know the story of the fisherman from Craig who got busted, you know, creek robbing and had his boat taken away. Maybe you all haven't heard about the kids that were arrested in Petersburg for running down deer downtown. We hear statewide about people shooting out herds of muskoxen because, you know, they're bad for people's dogs.
This sort of immoral and unjustified use of the fish and wildlife resource is shocking and stunning for Alaskans to see. And, you know, I'll just say right here the moral -- the moral example and the ethical example that the Regional Advisory Councils across the strait -- across the state are important to sort of setting that tone for how Alaskans interact with fish and wildlife. We're here to do the right thing.

There's lots of different ways to do the right thing, but gosh, it breaks my heart to see so many people around the state doing the bad thing, the wrong thing for fish and wildlife. So thank you each and every one of you. You know, you're not getting paid. You're not getting rich off of this. You're doing this because this is important, and, by God, that's the way it should be.

So thank you for what you're doing for us. Alaskans thank you for what you're doing for our culture in Alaska. And thank you for what you're doing for the United States Forest Service.

And that's the end of my remarks.

Thank you.

CHAIRMAN BANGS: Thank you, Wayne. I'm sure we'll get into more discussion on the reasoning and justification for changing our venue, but we'll talk about that later.

DeAnna.

MS. PERRY: Thank you, Mr. Chair.

Also with us today is Troy Heithecker, who also introduced himself a little bit earlier today. Deputy Forest Supervisor. Forest Supervisor Earl Stewart couldn't be with us today, but Troy is here in his stead and would like to say a few words to the Council as well.

Thank you.

MR. HEITHECKER: Thank you. Good morning. Troy Heithecker again for the record.
On behalf of Earl Stewart, the Forest Supervisor, who wanted to recognize or continue to recognize the value and importance of this Council in providing the guidance and continued support to the Tongass.

It's our duty and our honor to fulfill that role as leaders on the Tongass and we're happy to be here in attendance today and working with you all. And I appreciate the opportunity to get to know some of you here this week.

I'd like to highlight just a few of the things that are -- many things that are going on from our side on the Tongass. As Earl likes to say, there's a lot of noise around the system right now. And I think that we've all seen that in the media and the press. And I think the agency, in general, is kind of -- we're making a lot of changes and trying to be more effective and more efficient in the way that we deliver our services.

And we have some visitors from Washington, D.C. in town this week and, you know, working with us and working with the externals to find better ways to operate. I'd like to quote a saying somebody told me once that said, you know, if we continue to do -- we're always asked to do more with less. Do more with less until the point where we -- we're doing everything with nothing. And it's not really a sustainable mission for us, so what we're trying to do -- we really do have to do more with less. And the way we can do that is to be more effective and more efficient in how we handle our project work and our workload.

So in light of that, we're pushing towards a different way of doing our NEPA projects and our work so that we're not focusing on -- on small areas and trying to do these integrated resource plans. An example of which is the Prince of Wales landscape level analysis, where we're trying to create the NEPA framework to do integrated projects for the next ten to fifteen years on that island. And these integrated projects go from recreation to timber, infrastructure, and restoration and watersheds. That project is supposed to be finished out early next year, the environmental impact statement, and provide sustainable resources and economy for the island over the next ten
to fifteen years.

We are moving next into the Central Tongass landscape level analysis. The same sort of approach. Trying to get the sustainable workload in place for the next ten to fifteen years.

On the northern end of the forest we're also working on many different projects. One that I will be involved with just kind of locally here is the Hoonah Native Forest partnerships. We're looking at some watershed restoration across land ownerships. And it's an exciting project that's hopefully going to set sort of a framework for how we do business across what we're calling all lands, all hands type of opportunities.

So many other things going on, as you know. I'll be here all week.

Thank you for having me.

CHAIRMAN BANGS: Thank you, Troy.

Well, thank you all for introducing yourselves. And I think what we'll do now is move on to review and adopt of the agenda.

I know once again they've come through with delivering our materials in a timely manner and so I'm sure the Councils all had a chance to review the agenda. And I appreciate Staff for doing that. It's real helpful when we get our materials ahead of time.

And I think we're going to add a few things to the agenda if it's okay with the Council. We have the -- the discussions we've had in the past about the outstanding national resources water designation in the Yakutat Forelands. We would like to discuss that some more, so I would like to add that to the agenda if that suits the Council.

And another thing is the letter on the transboundary rivers which will accompany the discussion we're going to have a little bit later on that. So if we could add that.

And then I would entertain a motion to adopt the agenda as a guideline.
MR. REIFENSTUHL: Motion to adopt the agenda as a guideline.....

MR. YEAGER: Seconded.

MR. REIFENSTUHL: .....with the additions.

CHAIRMAN BANGS: Thank you. It's been moved and seconded. All those in favor, say aye.

IN UNISON: Aye.

CHAIRMAN BANGS: Opposed.

(None opposed)

CHAIRMAN BANGS: Motion carries. Thank you.

Okay. Now we're going to move on to the election of officers. And I'm going to refer to DeAnna.

MS. PERRY: Thank you, Mr. Chair.

We'll now hold elections for officers of the Southeast Subsistence Regional Advisory Council. Are there any nominations for the Chair position.

Mr. Douville.

MR. DOUVILLE: Thank you, Madam Chair.

I nominate Michael Bangs for Chair.

MS. PERRY: Thank you, Mr. Douville.

Michael Bangs has been nominated. Are there any other nominations for Chair.

(No comments)

MS. PERRY: Hearing none. Do we have a motion to close nominations for Chair of the Southeast Regional Council.
MR. SENSMEIER: So moved.

MS. PERRY: Mr. Sensmeier has moved to close the nominations. Do I hear a second.

MR. YEAGER: Second.

MS. PERRY: Thank you, Mr. Yeager.

All those in favor, signify by saying aye.

IN UNISON: Aye.

MS. PERRY: Those opposed, same sign.

(No opposing votes)

MS. PERRY: Motion carries.

I have the distinct pleasure of announcing the Chair of the Subsistence Regional Council for the Southeast as Mike Bangs.

CHAIRMAN BANGS: I'm not sure if that's a good thing or not, but thank you.

(Laughter)

CHAIRMAN BANGS: Thank you very much for putting your trust in me. I hope that I can live up to your expectation.

And I would like to open the floor for nominations for Vice Chair.

MR. REIFENSTUHL: I'd like to nominate Harvey.

MR. KITKA: Mr. Chair, I decline the nomination but thank you anyway.

CHAIRMAN BANGS: Mr. Douville.

MR. DOUVILLE: Mr. Chair, I nominate Don Hernandez.

CHAIRMAN BANGS: Any other nominations for Vice Chair.
(No comments)

CHAIRMAN BANGS: Hearing none, the nomination is closed.

MR. DOUVILLE: So moved.

CHAIRMAN BANGS: Thank you.

All those in favor of Don Hernandez as Vice Chair, respond by saying aye.

IN UNISON: Aye.

CHAIRMAN BANGS: Opposed.

(No opposing votes)

CHAIRMAN BANGS: Motion carries.

Congratulations, Don.

Don.

MR. HERNANDEZ: Yeah. Thank you, Council.

I guess I would like to say that the only reason I'm getting nominated is because unfortunately, you know, Cathy Needham, who's not here because of some, you know, family health problems, you know, had to kind of step down as Vice Chair. Otherwise, I'm sure we would have nominated her.

So I would be glad to, you know, try and be a Vice Chair for the interim, but I would hope that in the very near future that the next time available Cathy would be able to come back as Vice Chair because I think she's done an excellent job.

So thank you.

CHAIRMAN BANGS: Thank you, Don. I'm sure you'll do a great job as well. And I must say Cathy did do a very good job and I was hoping that she would be able to stay on, but I'm glad that you're stepping up to the plate and filling those shoes.

Thank you.
Okay. Now we have nominations for the office of the Secretary.

Mr. Douville.

MR. DOUVILLE: Mr. Chair, I nominate Harvey Kitka.

CHAIRMAN BANGS: Any other nominations for Secretary.

(No comments)

CHAIRMAN BANGS: Hearing none, I would close nominations for the nominations for Secretary.

Mike.

MR. DOUVILLE: Thanks, Mr. Chair. And I will move the nomination cease and we cast unanimous ballot for Harvey Kitka.

CHAIRMAN BANGS: Thank you, Mr. Douville.

All those in favor as Harvey as our Secretary, respond by saying aye, please.

IN UNISON: Aye.

CHAIRMAN BANGS: Opposed.

(No opposing votes)

MR. KITKA: Nay.

(Laughter)

CHAIRMAN BANGS: Sorry, Harvey. You're outnumbered.

(Laughter)

CHAIRMAN BANGS: Thank you.

Congratulations, Harvey. You've been doing a great job and we really appreciate it that you're willing to fill that spot.

Okay. Now we're going to review and
adopt or approve the previous minutes from the meeting that we held last -- in Juneau here last fall. And like I say, I think that we've had the materials for a while so hopefully everyone has been able to read it, but I'll give you a minute here to look through them and look up any highlights that you may have made to corrections that need to be made to the minutes.

(Pause)

CHAIRMAN BANGS: Okay. Has everyone had a chance or do you need a little bit more time.

(No comments)

CHAIRMAN BANGS: I do have one change that I -- it's just a typo, I think, but I didn't want to be mistaken for the comments that I made from my report. It says that trawlers were doing well with king salmon. And we know that's true, but.....

(Laughter)

CHAIRMAN BANGS: .....it's supposed to say trollers. And I just didn't want that to be misunderstood. Trawlers are something we don't do here in Southeast. But anyway, that's one correction.

Anyone else.

(No comments)

CHAIRMAN BANGS: Hearing none, I would entertain a motion to approve the minutes of the last meeting.

MR. YEAGER: Move to approve the minutes.

MR. DOUVILLE: I'll second.

CHAIRMAN BANGS: It's been moved and seconded to approve the minutes of the last meeting.

All those in favor, say aye.

IN UNISON: Aye.

CHAIRMAN BANGS: Opposed.
(No opposing votes)

CHAIRMAN BANGS: Okay. Motion carries.

DeAnna.

MS. PERRY: Mr. Chair, just to be clear, that was a passing of -- or approval of the meeting minutes with your correction, correct?

CHAIRMAN BANGS: Correct.

And I think that was basically a typo or a -- you know, everybody knows that we don't trawl for king salmon in Southeast, but I'm sure one of those slips of the word. It was probably the way I pronounced it.

But okay. Now we'd like to go on to reports. And I received a message today that Cathy is not able to be here for the whole meeting. She's going to try to teleconference in, but she wasn't sure when she's able to participate. And she didn't have a prepared report from her -- for Juneau. And so anyway, she just wanted to pass that along that she's sorry that she was not able to be here, but it's a -- it's family issues.

Steve.

MR. REIFENSTUHL: I would just like to make a note that there seems to be some distress about our use of the microphones. And so I think when we make motions or seconds, she would like us to make sure we key our microphone.

REPORTER: Yes she would.

MR. REIFENSTUHL: Because we haven't been doing that, including myself.

CHAIRMAN BANGS: Thank you for that, Steve.

REPORTER: Because otherwise none of it's on the record. Thank you, Steve.

CHAIRMAN BANGS: Okay. So now we're on to Council member reports. And I think we'll start
with Mr. Schroeder.

Bob.

MR. SCHROEDER: Thank you, Mike.

I just looked through my Council report from the minutes and I don't think I had too much to add for that. What my concerns -- my continuing concerns are for the Juneau area that we keep getting pinched in availability of resources for people to harvest on their own. I'm not referring to the commercial harvest. And that doesn't seem to have changed around. And as I mentioned at our last meeting in Juneau, we're under severe restrictions for salmon harvest, king crab harvest, and shrimp, and it's getting hard to find a halibut that is larger than a ping pong paddle.

My other main concern is that we as a Council are facing a time of pretty rapid climate change with unknown effects on subsistence uses. And I think that we need to encourage that there be more professional attention to the effects of climate change on the things that are important for people in Southeast Alaska and that that be a matter that we continuously pursue.

The climate change problem, whether it affects fisheries returns or a deer habitat or other species that people use, could really dwarf the way we deal with things. It could dwarf the things that we -- it could change the approach that we take to resource management and that mostly ANILCA is considering allocation decisions and saying that if resources are in short supply that subsistence needs receive a priority. We may be facing a situation where we have just really drastic declines.

That's about all I have for today.

Thank you.

CHAIRMAN BANGS: Thank you, Mr. Schroeder.

Mr. Kitka.

MR. KITKA: Thank you, Mr. Chair.
Harvey Kitka here.

We had some real concerns this last year. We had a Board of Fish meeting about our herring in Sitka. A lot of people may not realize that -- how bad it got over the last few years. And our subsistence needs haven't been met as far as our people are concerned. Even with industry helping, we still fell short of what we needed.

A lot of people that are extended families that stretch across Alaska didn't get eggs this year. I got probably maybe only a quarter of what I usually send out. But aside from that, the last eight years -- and I spend a lot of time out in the ocean commercial fishing for salmon. And realizing that all the other forage fish disappeared almost eight years ago. About three years ago the murres across Alaska started dying and starving mostly because the little fish that they fed on disappeared.

In Sitka Sound we have such a small amount of these other forage fish that it's unbelievable. And herring are probably the last real forage fish we have. And we at Sitka Tribe trying to put in some conservation measures, but they all got shot down.

And we are still very concerned about this. Because salmon and everything in the ocean feed on this. As we run into problems with our salmon streams in Alaska, one of the things they need to look at is how much food is left in the ocean for them to eat.

So this is one of our concerns in Sitka.

Thank you.

CHAIRMAN BANGS: Thank you, Harvey.

Mr. Sensmeier.

MR. SENSMEIER: Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

I read my last year's testimony and I just have a few things to add. Harvey mentioned the
herring problem in Sitka and it's a concern of ours in Yakutat as well. For thousands of years we have traded eulachon for herring -- herring eggs. They come in at about the same time and eulachons for whatever reason don't spawn on an island, and Sitka is an island, so -- I didn't receive any herring eggs from Sitka last year and hopefully that will change and that maybe we can make decisions that will, you know, enhance that prospect.

Another issue we're concerned with -- and I sit on a board of SEACC and the TransTribal Boundary Mining Work Group. And that's the mines that are being built by the Canadians at the head waters of not only the Unuk, Ketchikan, the Stikine by Wrangell, the Taku here in Juneau and the Alsek near Yakutat, there are now ten mines that we're looking at.

I've traveled to Vancouver with the lieutenant governor and state commissioners when they had a breakage of the toxic pond and it went into the Fraser River and into the -- and into the water supply. Working now -- we're going to a meeting on March 12th in Tulalip. The TransBoundary Mining Work Group to work with First Nations people to try to address this problem.

And it's also an issue with SEACC. The cruise ships dumping of raw sewage here in Juneau and in Ketchikan. The fecal chloroform count in the waters around Juneau and Ketchikan are -- prevent the gathering of subsistence foods. And the ships are getting bigger -- 4,000, 5,000 people. And that's a lot of waste going into our waters.

And also the Tier III Yakutat Forelands, Chairman Bangs mentioned it a minute ago and we'll probably talk more on that then.

So thank you.

CHAIRMAN BANGS: Thank you, Mr. Sensmeier.

Mr. Douville.

MR. DOUVILLE: Thank you, Mr. Chair.

We've been listening to complaints on
residents, rural residents not being able to get their
needs met with deer and it appears that the deer
surveys are bearing it out. Like there was 700 less
deer taken the year before than the average, which had
been going up. And the complaints are louder this last
season and more often, so I expect that the harvest
will be less.

And this can be attributed to I think
less and less old growth for wintering, the high wolf
populations, and actually a high harvest level of
bucks. Probably too high.

The other things that are of concern is
the Forest Service has been inventorying the timber for
the last year there and trying to figure out how to
develop enough timber sales to keep the local mill
operating for the next ten to fifteen years. And it
takes about 20 million a year. It's very difficult.
It's quite of concern. There's even talk of letting
the State take over some of the Tongass. They seem to
have less resistance from the greens when it comes to
timber sales.

Also of concern is the new bill that
our senators are putting out that would give five
village corporations 23,000 acres. And they all seem
to want a piece of Prince of Wales Island. This would
take away from our Federal land base that we have a
rural priority on.

Already we've lost a considerable
amount of acreage to Sealaska and the private
corporations and this would add more. It's -- I don't
know. It needs to be addressed so we don't lose that
rural priority on those lands.

Also in the bill is a provision to give
veterans 160 acres, which probably a lot are deserving,
but it has the ability to develop parcels almost
anywhere on the island and would further erode the
ability for subsistence.

Those are just the basic concerns I
have at this time.

Thank you.

CHAIRMAN BANGS: Thank you, Mike.
Mr. Hernandez.

MR. HERNANDEZ: Yeah. Thank you.

First of all, I think I'd like to say that from my communities there on the north end of Prince of Wales Island, we probably agree with everything Mr. Douville has just talked about as far as land uses and deer habitat and the condition of the deer hunt last fall.

I think we would probably concur with just about everything he said.

But my main topics of concern for this meeting is in regard to kind of a significant thing that's happened in our local waters this winter. We have seen no herring in our bays this winter. No herring. Nobody's eating king salmon. There's just, you know, no feed. There doesn't seem to be any fish around.

So, you know, I've been living in that area for about 40 years now. And, you know, my observations, I've seen a lot of changes in that time. I know -- you know, I've also been on this Council for 15 years now. About a third of that time I've been hearing observations from Council members throughout all that time about the -- just the changes we're seeing in herring stocks throughout the region.

Just kind of basically, when I first was in this country there were a lot of large herring year-round in the waters close to, you know, my community of Point Baker. Then we started seeing those kind of disappearing in the wintertime and we'd see a lot of small herring, but more seasonal. Some large herring in the summer. And in the most recent past all we have seen in the wintertime is just these very small, immature herring that would generally be there all winter long. Not more than, you know, three inches long. I don't know. Maybe a couple of year old herring.

I don't know.

This year we did not see those at all. They're just gone. Don't know where they went. If they moved or they're just not around anymore. You
know, my 40 years of experience seems fairly long, but
I know there’s, you know, people on this Council that
are close to twice that length of time that they’ve
been observing herring and bringing those reports to
the Council. And some of the Council members, their
traditional knowledge goes back, you know, hundreds of
years. And we’ve heard all that. So it’s very
concerning to our community.

So part of what I have observed is kind
of -- from my own personal experience, it’s kind of --
I kind of refer to it as herring paradox. And that is
that, you know, at a time when the stocks were
considered to be depleted -- and this is -- goes back
like I say about this 40 year ago time period when I
started, when I came to the country and I was fishing
commercially. I was a deck hand, fishing herring. I
fished down to Kah Sheets. I fished in Seymour Canal.
I fished in Sitka Sound. I seined up in Berners Bay.
I participated in some winter bait herring fisheries.
I was, you know, places like Port Camden, by Kake we
were fishing herrings.

Just it seemed to be at that time
despite the assessment that the stocks were depleted
that there were fairly abundant herring resources
scattered sort of throughout the region. Over that
time period the stocks have been increasing in Sitka
Sound. The fishery there is much larger than it was
when I fished there. I think when I was there in ’79
the quota was 2,000 tons. Now we’ve seen quotas up,
you know, closer to 20,000 tons. So there’s definitely
been an increase in stocks in Sitka Sound, yet
throughout the region, all these places where people
have seen herring and people have fished herring seem
to be on the decrease through all of that time period.

So something’s going on regionally and
I don’t think we understand fully what it is. So --
but my own personal worry is that by continuing to take
these large amounts of herring in the Sitka sac roe
fishery, we may actually be in some way depleting the
stocks throughout the region.

And I don’t think we fully understand
the dynamics of what the herring life cycles are. My
own opinion is that there’s probably a lot more mixing
of stocks than what is accounted for.
So now we had this Board of Fish meeting where herring was one of the main topics. And, you know, I was kind of disappointed and surprised by the Board's actions given all of the extensive testimony that was given about this traditional, ecological knowledge that we've all heard. That the Board did not make any substantial changes. It kind of kept this status quo management in place. And I guess I'm not really surprised at that decision. And, you know, looking at things from the Board of Fish's perspective, I think I can understand why they made the decisions they made, but I think there's just a couple of factors here. I don't believe that the research and the management is really taking this holistic approach to what is really happening with the overall stocks.

I think, you know, we're in the situation where the Board of Fish is -- that, you know, they're not residents from here. They live all over the state. They kind of depend -- just kind of getting into their heads a little bit, I think they kind of depend more on what's presented by agencies than listening to the local knowledge. I think it's just kind of the way their mindset is. And like I say, I just don't think there's enough real good research as to what's going on with the herring. That kind of makes sense of this paradox that we've all witnessed over all this time period.

So how does the Council, you know, react to all of this.

And, you know, we have this totally different perspective in our body. I mean we are, you know, people that live here. We've got a tremendous amount of historical observation and experience. We don't -- we aren't really tasked with being that concerned with the commercial value of the resources, which is also a huge factor I think in Board of Fish decisions. They -- you know, fact of life. They're -- you know, they're dealing with tens of millions of dollars in revenue to fisheries and communities. It definitely influences their decision.

As a Council, we are kind of obligated to consider other users and some of those impacts, but, you know, primarily we -- our responsibility is to maintain a way of life that will hopefully continue for generations into the future. And I think at some point
it may be up to us to really try and essentially save
this resource if it's in danger of kind of dwindling
away. And there are -- you know, the fishery may not
be the main factor. There could be environmental --
there probably are environmental factors involved. But
to continue to conduct a fishery as if those
environmental factors are not there just seems
irresponsible to me.

So I guess just what I would like to
say, you know, to the Council and anybody else who's
listening that, you know, if some proposals were put
before this Council on the Federal subsistence side
that, you know, could make a difference in this whole
situation, I think we should seriously consider any and
all proposals that may be put before us here in the
future.

And I know, you know, we have a
fisheries proposal opportunity right now. I don't --
you know, it's been too soon after the Board of Fish
actions for me to really say that I have any -- you
know, formulated any ideas of what we ought to do, but
I would certainly be looking forward to seeing some.

So thank you very much.

CHAIRMAN BANGS: Thank you for that,
Don. That's a good point and I think maybe that's
something we should discuss when it comes to the
request for fisheries proposals.

Mr. Reifenstuhl.

MR. REIFENSTUHL: Thank you.

As everyone probably knows, Sitka is
the center of universe for troll fishing -- commercial
troll fishing. And so at the Board of Fish, they took
up stocks of concern and have new management plans for
Chilkat River chinook and Unuk River chinook down by
Ketchikan, as well as the King Salmon River and the
Admiralty. These actions have and will severely
constrict the troll fishery. On inside waters and in
timing it's really going to change how the trollers are
able to access resource. And I mean they really
support these management plans as hard as they are
going to be on individual fishermen and communities.
At the same time, the sport charter
groups were not restricted in significant ways,
particularly on the outside waters off Sitka, where
they're going to be able to fish in May and June, which
of course is very important to clients that come up
here to fish. There will be, through the Pacific
Salmon Treaty, probably, a one fish limit dictated from
that management authority, but there will be great
restrictions from the state management authority on the
inside waters and other areas that commercial trollers
fish.

The good news that I think is still out
there and maybe won't last is that the wild systems are
still producing enough chinook smolt that if they
survive well enough and the ocean can return large
numbers of chinook with these management restrictions
to perpetuate the stocks. However, if the freshwater
environment declines or they just don't get enough
adults back in there, then that will fall below the
recruitment threshold and it could take, you know,
generations to rebuild the chinook stocks.

But right now there is that piece of
good news.

And the biologists feel that -- and
this has been shown up in the Yukon-Kuskokwim and areas
down along Canada that the most critical period for the
smolt as they come out of the streams in May or June is
the first 30 to 45 days when they're feeding on
copepods and small zooplankton in the ocean. They are
not getting what they need and survival is poor at that
time and that's where most of the mortality is
occurring.

That's all I have.

CHAIRMAN BANGS: Thank you, Steve.

Mr. Yeager.

MR. YEAGER: Thank you, Mr. Chair.

A lot of the tone in Wrangell mirrors a
lot of what Mr. Reifenstuhl spoke of. King salmon is
the buzz word in Wrangell. There's a lot of concern
regarding this year and the future years as to how the
king salmon are going to be managed. Are we going to
look at other stocks that are suffering as well and how that's going to affect the communities, subsistence, and also commercial fishing in general. And it just has everybody really on a -- somewhat of a heightened alert as far as what can happen, what might be causing this, and the fact that I don't think anyone wants to do any future and further harm to the run. So king salmon has been the hot topic.

And also not just the runs coming to the Stikine River off Wrangell, but also surrounding waters. And I think that the community is taking steps to help alleviate some of the pressure on the king salmon coming back to the Stikine, but that also creates some concern about fishing pressure in other areas.

So I feel that we're not alone in this. I know other communities are facing the same thing, if not some worse situations. But I think that we'll be talking about king salmon for a long time.

Thank you.

CHAIRMAN BANGS: Thank you, John.

Okay. I'd just like to give a few comments on what's happened since our last meeting in the Petersburg area and as to do with the Board of Fish.

Now up until just the week before the Board of Fish, I was under the understanding that I was going to be able to travel and give comments in regards to our proposals that this Council submitted to the Board of Fish in accordance with the concerns about sockeye salmon and non-resident annual bag limit for accountability. And at the last minute they decided that they couldn't fund that trip. And I was reluctant, but I offered to pay for half. I said I'll pay for travel if you pay, you know, hotel or whatever just for a night so -- or two nights so that I could convey our message and that didn't go anywhere. But I didn't want to set a precedent and do it on my own dime because I think that would not be -- not set well with the whole program.

So I didn't go.
I listened and I got comments back from
the Advisory Committee from Petersburg that they were
-- the Board was disappointment that there wasn't
anyone there to support our proposal. Although Harvey
and Steve were both there, but they weren't given the
permission from our Council to speak on behalf of the
Council and so I felt reluctant to ask them to step out
of what this Council -- we had talked about.

So I wrote some comments and DeAnna had
sent them over there as an RFR so that they could -- I
think it's an RFR. But anyway, they were put on the
record. I don't know if they had a chance to read
them, but a copy of those comments are in our book and
hopefully everyone read that. And I tried to get the
gist of our discussions about how important that was.

(Teleconference interference)

CHAIRMAN BANGS: I hope that --
that.....

(Teleconference interference)

(Laughter)

CHAIRMAN BANGS: Oh, well, we got the
news.

(Laughter)

REPORTER: Someone put themselves on
hold and we get their hold cue. I'm disconnecting and
reestablishing the line.

(Pause)

CHAIRMAN BANGS: Okay, I guess it's
okay if I continue here.

REPORTER: Yes, of course, continue.

CHAIRMAN BANGS: But anyway,
unfortunately, I wasn't able to make it. But I think
our message was there.

But the question came from the Board
that they wanted more specific streams that we felt
were in jeopardy. Because after talking to Fish and
Game prior to the meeting, the fish biologist in Petersburg said that there's some streams in our area -- one in particular that is a concern for us because the department doesn't do a stream assessment. They don't do stock assessment. They don't walk the stream. They don't have any idea how much carrying capacity it has for sockeye. And it's being wildly fished by the unguided. There's lodges in the area and they send their clients over there to -- in fact, they were caught snagging sockeye. And there's no accountability for those.

And this is what brought the concern up to me.

And I know that Mr. Jackson had mentioned that around the Kake area. That there's some of these smaller streams that are pretty vulnerable to over-exploitation. And I think the lodges are expanding in a lot of areas and I think it's something that we need to address.

So in retrospect, I think we should probably look at individual stream systems and come up with a plan to help protect those individual stream systems, and address our proposal specifically to those.

So that's what I gathered from actually not being there, but the gist of what the Board conveyed to the public was their concern as well. Because they understand the advance of more and more lodges and these unaccounted for take of numerous species.

And anyway, with sockeye aside, we're concerned about the king salmon as well. And much to the communities dismay, they had to cancel the king salmon derby, which is a big influx of not only the local people to the local businesses for, you know, fuel and groceries and going out and participating in it and -- and it's a big function over a four-day weekend, and they cancelled that just because of the scare of the lack of king salmon.

And I know Wrangell severely cut their derby back. And I think it's a big concern in our area to protect those king salmon.
So that's definitely something in our region that's on the forefront of discussion about salmon.

Another thing that bothers the -- a lot of the locals is the advance of sea otters. Now they're coming into town. They're in the Wrangell Narrows. They're in Duncan Canal. And that's never, never happened before. And so now we're worried about just being able to go out in the little bay -- in Scow Bay and catch crab because they're -- they're moving in. And although there's an active harvest, it's just they can't keep up with them. There's just not enough being harvested. So I don't know what we can do to change that, but it's definitely become a larger issue. We've been talking about this for years on this Council and it's definitely hit home way up in the inside now, too.

So we're facing -- this winter for some reason Wrangell didn't get snow. Juneau didn't get snow. But Petersburg got snow.

(Laughter)

CHAIRMAN BANGS: We got lots of snow.

(Laughter)

CHAIRMAN BANGS: And now it's kind of a concern where the deer are more vulnerable. Not only do we have to worry about the wolves, now we've got teenagers chasing them down.

So this is a concern.

You know, the deer population is -- could be vulnerable this winter. So that's going to be something we're going to have to keep an eye on as well.

And another big concern in regards to herring is we're noticing that every summer there seems to be more and more humpback whales. I mean it's hard to go through Frederick Sound and not have to slow down to keep from hitting them. I mean there is getting to be hundreds and hundreds of humpback whales that migrate to Frederick Sound. And we're wondering what's happening to the -- whether it's the small herring,
whether it's salmon fry. Whatever it is that brings them in there, not only krill, but there's a lot of other things that they're eating. And it's a growing concern where what are we going to do with all these whales.

And that's something that we could probably address as a Council, but it is something to be aware of. And maybe it's part of the big picture as far as a problem.

One other thing I would like to mention is -- which is more of a problem for us to address the Board of Fish or the Board of Game with any kind of proposals is they're on a three-year cycle, which is why it's so intense. When they did this meeting in Sitka there was hundreds of proposals. It took days and days and days to get through them all. And a lot of times there's so much information I think that even though the Board is diligent about doing their homework and stuff, there's just got to be an overwhelming amount of information. We have hundreds of testimonies and you have hundreds of pages of documents. It just becomes more and more difficult. Well, now there's a movement to go every five years. And if they do that, then that means if we have an urgent to deal with a State proposal, it's going to be even more troublesome to get before the Board of Fish.

So anyway, just with those things in mind it's worrisome to think that this is not going to get any better it seems like before it gets worse.

So anyway, that's the comments that I have.

And I'd like to take a five-minute break or ten-minute break and then we're going to start into public and tribal comments on non-agenda items so we'll take a little recess here.

Thank you.

(Off record)

(On record)

CHAIRMAN BANGS: Okay. I'd like to call the meeting back to order.
And we just finished with the Council
reports, but I'm glad to see that Mr. Albert Howard
just arrived from Angoon.

So welcome, Albert. And if you have a
report from your area, we would entertain some of your
time.

MR. HOWARD: Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Just a short report. Our hunting
season went pretty well, but we still have outlying
communities coming in, so we'll go to an area and
there's already someone there. And I'm sure that's
common around other places.

Other than that, king salmon -- we
haven't -- we have guys out trying to catch them and
they're not -- they're not finding them.

So the weather is cold. It's been cold
for the last four week. And I think that's a good
thing. It seems like that trend is going back into the
cycle of when I was younger. And that to me is
probably a good thing. But it leaves you concerned for
the deer and everything else that they're finding what
they need.

So I'll keep it short. Tried to get
here yesterday and that didn't go so well.

Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

CHAIRMAN BANGS: Thank you, Albert.
And I'm glad you made it safe and hopefully Patty will
be able to make it sometime today as well. It looks
like the weather is breaking a little bit here, but I
don't know what it's like out in the outside. But I'm
glad you made it.

So okay. Now we're going to move to a
portion where we ask for comments from the public on --
on tribal comments on non-agenda items. And first I'll
take any comments on non-agenda items from the public
that are here in the room with us, if there are any,
and then I will go to people that are on the phone.

So if there's anyone in the room that
has any comments regarding issues that are not on the
agenda.

(No comments)

CHAIRMAN BANGS: Seeing none, I will go

to the phone.

I have a Mr. Jim Collier or Collier. I

think he is representing his own views. And he has

been in contact with members of the Council and our

coordinator.

So Mr. Collier, are you on the phone?

MR. COLLIER: Yes, I am. Thank you,
sir.

CHAIRMAN BANGS: Okay. Just a reminder

that there's probably other people that want to make

comments, so please state your name for the record and

who you represent and then try to keep your comments

focused on your issue and then we'll be able to give

everyone else time as well.

Thank you.

MR. COLLIER: You bet. Thank you.

My main concern are the king salmon,
especially if you have a genetic strain that seems to
still survive here. They tend to be from one of the
five rivers in the Bradfield and Eastern Passage area,
with little to no protection in front of these streams
during our sport season.

Now I have commercially fished and
sport fished for 45 years here in Southeast. I have
recorded temperatures on the salmon from many years ago
and eventually lost my thermometer the State had given
me. And never kept much track until the last ten years
and have noticed the sea temp service only on my diving
meter now or electronics that tell me that it's much,
much higher than it used to be, which might be having a
lot of effect with our herring.

But back to the king salmon, it's --
that's what my main goal is here. Is to see if we
can't get a little protection in front of these streams
that have what Board of Fish tell me are extremely low,
and they are in the Eastern Passage and in the Bradfield.

If you can move the boundary line from Point (indiscernible) down to Point Ward and then over to (indiscernible) Inlet, that should give these large king salmon a little bit of a chance to get into a river and spawn. And that’s all I ask.

Thank you very much.

Goodbye.

CHAIRMAN BANGS: Thank you for those comments, Mr. Collier.

Just one point that I would like to make is those boundaries are made through the Board of Fish, through the State. And although we can support any proposal if the Council wishes to, but I would suggest that a proposal be made to the Board of Fish to change those boundaries. And then that would afford more protection.

But, I, for one appreciate someone that’s willing to go out there on their own time and document data such as water temperature and your knowledge from over the years is very valuable to the Board of Fish and I think that I could speak on behalf of the Council. We encourage participation from the public in the decision-making process that the Board of Fish offers us.

So thank you for your comments.

MR. COLLIER: You’re welcome.

One last thing though is this extremely low numbers of returning kings. That should give some kind of indication there that it needs attention.

Thank you.

Bye.

CHAIRMAN BANGS: Yeah. Thank you.

Thank you again.

Okay. Are there anyone else -- is
there anyone else on the phone that would like to speak
to non-agenda items from the public.

MR. PAPPAS: Mr. Chair, George Pappas,
Office of Subsistence Management.

CHAIRMAN BANGS: Hello, Mr. Pappas.
Good to hear your voice. Go ahead.

MR. PAPPAS: Good day, sir.

Yes, I'm working with the previous
public testimony there. I'll be working with him at
the Board of Fish process and potentially have an
agenda request information center on directly from the
Board of Fish executive director. So if he -- if the
gentleman's interested in putting an out of cycle
request in to the Board of Fish, we can point him in
the right direction.

Thank you, Mr. Chair.

CHAIRMAN BANGS: Thank you, Mr. Pappas.
I think that we'll try to pass that on to him if he had
hung up the phone. So thank you for that. And I'm
sure DeAnna will help us get back in touch with him and
pass that information along.

Thank you. That's helpful.

Okay. Is there anyone else on the
phone that has any comments relating to non-agenda
items.

(No comments)

CHAIRMAN BANGS: Hearing none, we'll
move along on the agenda.

Okay. We have some old business that
has to do with a Board of Game companion proposal to
WP18-04. And if we could get Mr. Suminski to give us a
little background of what we did over the last meeting.

And then what we talked about -- if
it's okay with the Council, I think it would save a lot
of time and discussion on the Council record if we
formed a work group that was formed at our last meeting
and possibly other people if they're interested to
meet. And we'll break for lunch a little early and
we'll take a little longer lunch so that the work group
can work over the period and still have time for lunch
and then come back with an update to present to the
Council, if that sounds okay with the Council.

Because I think there's going to be
lengthy discussions and I think it would go much
quicker if Mr. Suminski has some ideas for us to
streamline it.

Terry.

MR. SUMINSKI: Good afternoon. Terry
Suminski, with the Forest Service. I think I can keep
this pretty brief.

Basically, this is kind of a follow up
on Proposal 4 that would increase the harvest of wolves
to up to 30 percent in Unit 2. And during that
discussion it seemed like there was -- the Council
wished to submit a companion proposal to the Board of
Game. And it was suggested that maybe a working group
to have a more open, easier discussion. And I think
that's what Mr. Bangs was referring to.

Thank you.

CHAIRMAN BANGS: Thank you, Terry.

Do we have any questions from the
Council to Mr. Suminski.

Mr. Schroeder.

MR. SCHROEDER: Terry, will you be
available if a subcommittee meets, to give us your
words of wisdom?

MR. SUMINSKI: Mr. Schroeder. Through
the Chair. I will certainly be available. I can't
guarantee about the wisdom part.

(Laughter)

MR. SUMINSKI: And I believe Mr. Scott
will also help us with that.

Thank you.
CHAIRMAN BANGS: Follow up?

MR. SCHROEDER: I just want to -- for the whole Council, do you see any reason why we can't go pretty much with what we proposed to the Federal Subsistence Board and our rationale that we submitted with that proposal.

MR. SUMINSKI: Through the Chair. Mr. Schroeder. It's a perfectly valid proposal, but I think there's some other options that are worth discussing that would be most related to this working group situation.

Thank you.

CHAIRMAN BANGS: Any other questions for Mr. Suminski.

(No comments)

CHAIRMAN BANGS: Thank you, Terry.

I think what we'll do -- maybe a similar thing for the Berners Bay moose. After lunch maybe we'll put that off. I know Mr. Casipit may be able to make the meeting. He's arriving after noon today and he was the proponent of that proposal. And he would like to speak to the Council before we make any other decisions.

But one thing I would like to point out is this is a unique situation for this Council as we've never been able to reflect on our proposals before a Federal Board meeting at a second meeting. Now, we can't really change the things that went before the Board, but we can add additional information that we've learned since that meeting.

Because the Federal Board meeting usually meets earlier in the winter, when I go before the Federal Board it's what happened at our last meeting is all I have. And we have an opportunity for two non-consensus items, which include Berners Bay and Proposal number 4. So there may be some additional information that we could come up with that would be admissible to the Federal Board when we meet in April that I can bring more justification for our reasoning behind the proposal.
So I think it's a unique opportunity for us to do that. So I would like to see that maybe we could do the same with the Berners Bay. The options that we asked for at our last meeting, I think that Staff has worked hard to come up with some alternative, you know, options for us. So I think that we should take advantage of those options and maybe add any additional information to be able to bring to the Board and help them make us -- follow through with what we feel is good for the resource and good for subsistence users.

So if the Council is in agreement with that, I would like to get the work group together and at lunch time here we'll -- like I say, we'll break a little early and then we'll take a little longer lunch and come back. And then hopefully that will streamline the process and we won't -- you know, we'll get a good presentation from the work group.

Is everybody okay with that.

(Council nods affirmatively)

MS. PERRY: Do you want to identify the work group and ask them.

CHAIRMAN BANGS: Okay. One thing DeAnna just pointed out. That we -- I'm not sure who was on the work group. I know Mr. Schroeder was. I think Patty was on the work group. I don't know who else.

Don, were you on there? Mr. Douville?

(Nods affirmatively)

CHAIRMAN BANGS: So I think we've got three or four of the people that were on there. And it's open to anyone that would like to be on that work group that would meet and help with the discussion.

So do you remember, Robert, who was on the.....

MR. SCHROEDER: I've testified twice.

CHAIRMAN BANGS: Okay. Well, we'll find out. But I know you were on it and I know Mr.
Douville and Donald. So -- yeah, I think maybe Cathy was on it too. Patty, yeah. So okay.

Well, if there's anyone else that would like to participate with that, that would be good. Anybody could join the work group and listen in or put your two cents in. That would be helpful.

So same thing with Berners Bay. I don't remember. We didn't have a work group on that, but we could easily form one and have that discussion to streamline the process on the record.

So okay. With that being said, I think we could move on to the OMWR letter that has to do with the Yakutat Forelands and it's a letter that we have. And I know Mr. Sensmeier is the nominee for this -- or his group. And after reading more about what this entails, it's never been done in the State. There's four other nominated waters that are nominated for Tier 3.

And I would like Ray if he could to give us a little brief update on what we went over last time.

Ray.

MR. SENSMEIER: Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

This is still an issue that we're concerned with. It's being taken up by not only this entity, but the TransTribal Boundary Workgroup and SEACC. I've testified with Victoria Demmert, president of the Yakutat Tlingit Tribe before the State legislature and DEC twice. It hasn't moved in the legislature as of yet. I don't know if it will, but it's something that I think we need to keep on top of.

I know Guy Archibald from SEACC has been traveling to different communities, Ketchikan and up through Klukwan recently. They're seeking Tier 3 status for the Chilkat. The Canadians, the Constantine Mine are proposing to put in a mine upstream just on the other side of the border. And that would be detrimental to the fish run that exists through the winter there and the bald eagle preserve which as upwards of 3,000 eagles at any one time and would be
Bristol Bay is seeking Tier 3 for the
Bristol Bay watershed. And Yakutat. And it's just
something that we're trying to keep on top of. And I
don't think it's something that we should lessen our
efforts on. We look at this for the future as we
always have. For our children. For their children.

The Yakutat Forelands is an area that
has not been altered through time. It has over 90
rivers, streams, and tributaries that are home to five
species of salmon. The sockeye, the humpy, the coho,
the king salmon, and the chum salmon, as well as carp
and Dolly Varden and huge runs of eulachon in the Aisek
area. And these are things that we wish to protect.

So we're still on top of this. And so
thank you, Mr. Chair.

CHAIRMAN BANGS: Thank you, Ray.

Just as a background overview, I'm sure
most of you have read what this entails. Although the
State has never designated any waters that I know that
I've read about into the Tier 3 status, but they
haven't developed the criteria yet for the State of
Alaska. And another thing that it entails is the
nominee, which would be the group that Ray is speaking
about, is responsible for the cost in doing the water
sampling or any testing of the watershed that they're
trying to designate.

And so the State still doesn't have the
criteria laid out yet, but these are ongoing processes.
And like Ray mentioned, that it hasn't gone through the
legislative process yet but from what I understand, it
doesn't preclude any development. Roads could be put
in or temporary water degradation could happen as long
as it returns to its original state.

What I think it's for -- it's not to
keep people from developing these lands in certain ways
it just protects the water quality. And any activities
that occur in these waters or above the tributaries in
these waters can happen just as they happen now, but it
cannot degrade over long periods of time the quality
of the water.
So it is -- it's a useful tool to protect against possible development on watersheds that cover especially transboundary areas. So it's -- I think it's probably a worthwhile endeavor to protect these watersheds from development of mines or whatever could cause permanent degradation of the water quality.

So what's the -- oh. I'd like to present the letter that we had -- I don't know if everyone's read the letter, but there is a letter and I'd like to ask DeAnna to make a point of.....

MS. PERRY: Thank you, Mr. Chair.

For the Council, I had originally sent sort of a history and a copy of the drafted letter that this Council as a past annual report item wanted to be sent to the governor of Alaska and so that he then would send one to the Secretary of State to encourage the State to get moving on making a vehicle available for this designation.

So in between that being named as an annual report item and today, I've been informed that the language in that drafted letter actually needs to be approved by the Council. So that's the main reason why it's back on your agenda today as an action item for you to review and approve or amend the drafted letter.

And also to let you know last week I talked to a gentleman at the DEC to inquire what the status was of this process since it's still not fully developed. And he said they are in the process of having internal discussions based on the working groups and the information sharing that they've had over the last year.

There is no time frame right now as to when they think they will have a process in place. So one of my questions was do you feel that the State is moving forward and that this letter is not needed or would you still like for the Council to send this letter.

So Through the Chair. If you could get the Council's wishes on that.

CHAIRMAN BANGS: What would the Council
like to do.

Ray.

MR. SENSMEIER: Mr. Chairman, I would vote to approve this.

Thank you.

MR. KITKA: Mr. Chair, I second the motion.

CHAIRMAN BANGS: Okay. It's been moved and seconded to approve the letter to be forwarded.

Any discussion.

(No comments)

MR. SENSMEIER: Call for the question.

CHAIRMAN BANGS: The question's been called for to approve the letter to be forwarded.

All those in favor, respond by saying aye.

IN UNISON: Aye.

CHAIRMAN BANGS: Opposed.

(No opposing votes)

CHAIRMAN BANGS: Motion carries.

Thank you.

Okay. We have an update from our TransBoundary Rivers letter.

DeAnna.

MS. PERRY: Thank you, Mr. Chair.

This is another follow-up item. And there was some question about this and where exactly it stood at our last meeting.

The letter from the Council went to the
Chair of the Federal Subsistence Board and asked the chair to write a letter to the lieutenant governor.

Asking the lieutenant governor to then send a letter to the Secretary of State encouraging him to move forward and show support for the transboundary river watershed issues that we are experiencing.

I understand a formal reply has not been given to the Federal Subsistence Board or this Council as a result of that letter. However, I was able to find that the lieutenant governor, the governor, United States Senator Murkowski, Senator Sullivan, and Congressman Young all signed a letter regarding the transboundary mining concerns, and that was sent out to you. I don't know if you all have had a chance to read that.

But again the question is for an action item for this Council. If you would like to take further action and send a second follow-up letter or if you feel like the letter that has been sent, dated November 13th, 2017, meets the intent that this Council mentioned in its fall 2016 meeting.

Mr. Chair.

CHAIRMAN BANGS: Thank you, DeAnna.

What's the wish of the Council.

Mr. Schroeder.

MR. SCHROEDER: Thank you, Mr. Chair.

I think, you know, we've been following procedures the best we can to have our voice heard on this matter. And I feel that we haven't been very effective namely because we haven't been able to address issues directly and to send letters to people who can make important decisions, particularly the transboundary committee or our senators and representative. And I think this really brings up a major issue of just how the Council communicates. And we have some history there.

Early on in the program, Councils were authorized and, in fact, encouraged to communicate as widely as they felt, desired. Specifically, a previous coordinator was told that if Councils wish to send
letters to each and every senator and representative in
the U.S. government, that that was a completely fine
activity and that the program wouldn't object to that.

I think that that was probably a little
bit more than what our Council would ever wish to do;
however, I don't believe that our Council really should
have its communications go through a vetting process
that goes on for so long that our letters simply aren't
sent. I don't think that's the intention of ANILCA and
it wasn't the intention of the agreement reached by
earlier Council Chairs with the program, which agreed
to not vet letters, but to cycle our communication
through the Federal program to avoid embarrassment or
possible technical errors.

So I think that we need to keep on this
both with a specific letter -- because I don't think
our voice is hear -- or very well heard if what we're
doing is possibly influencing someone else to possibly
send a letter possibly reflecting our views, that
doesn't seem to be a very good way for us to be heard.

We are a chartered committee under
Federal law and we have the authority to communicate on
matters that affect subsistence. And this is
definitely a matter that we've heard from Council
members and from many numbers of the public feel is
very dangerous to subsistence users.

So I'm not making a proposal right now,
but I'd like to see if other Council members are on
board with the idea that we need to be able to do a
better job of getting our voice heard.

Thank you.

CHAIRMAN BANGS: Thank you, Mr.
Schroeder.

Mr. Sensmeier.

MR. SENSMEIER: Thank you, Mr.
Chairman.

Initially, when we first got involved
with this SEACC and then the TransTribal Boundary
Mining Workgroup, there were four major rivers that the
Canadians are already constructing large mines. The
one at the head of the Unuk in Ketchikan can be seen from outer space. And when they're mining, they -- up in the valleys they will build an earth and sand dam on the lower part of the valley and a smaller one on the upper part and line it with a rubber matting to contain the tailings pond. And a lot of that is acidic rock and it's necessary to cover the tailings with four feet of water. If that becomes exposed to the air it forms sulfuric acid.

And the size of the dam is astronomical. The lower dam is higher than the Hoover Dam, which is going up to 1,000 feet. 800 to 1,000 feet and up river for 500 feet. And from the upper dam to the lower dam it's five miles. And that's a lot of tailings pond that contains sulfuric acid, carcinogens, you name it. And the mining companies claim that it will last in perpetuity. The Mount Polley Mine in British Columbia that we went over to visit breached after 18 years and went into the Fraser River and into the water supply.

Right now SEACC is working on enforcing the Pelley Agreement with -- EarthJustice has taken this on. And that's the agreement that was made I believe in 1926 that stipulated that neither the U.S. or the Canadians would dirty the waters of the other side. We're trying to put some teeth into that.

Guy Archibald from SEACC has been traveling to different communities. Craig, Klawock -- I believe Angoon, Hoonah, Ketchikan, Wrangell, Juneau, Kluwan. And he gives a presentation that gives pictures that show the damage and what's going on now. And it's shocking. And it will shock you to your core. So I would suggest and hope that this entity can invite SEACC to give that presentation and so everyone can see the enormity of it and the need to do something as soon as we can.

The Tulsequah Chief Mine here in Juneau, up river, 50 miles up river has been leaking for over 50 years. And we talked with Bill Bennett over in the Yukon. He's the mining minister there. And he did fly over here and he and the lieutenant governor flew up there. And you can see the water is yellow-orange. Has been that way for all these years into the Taku. And Bill Bennett promised that they were going to clean it up, but he's since resigned and
is working for the mining company.

So in closing I would just like to say I think it's imperative that we invite Guy Archibald of SEACC to make that presentation before us and help us, you know, recognize what needs to be done.

Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

CHAIRMAN BANGS: Thank you, Ray.

In regards to our -- in our letter, you know, I think this came before this Council, this issue transboundary river, it first came to us in -- well, it's been probably three or four years ago in Ketchikan, where we discussed forming a letter. And we formed a letter.

What I see as in regards to what Mr. Schroeder alluded to is although I like the letter that was signed and it reflects a lot of our concerns that went before our Congressional delegation to be signed and then hopefully sent on to the Secretary of Interior because they're the ones that -- he's the one that -- or she is the one that deals directly with foreign entities.

So I think our Secretary of Interior at that time when we first sent the letter was somebody way different than we have now. I think we've been through three of them. So I have a problem with the time that it takes for our correspondence to get through the chain of vetting. And I just find it unacceptable that we sent a letter three or four years ago and this year -- or late last year we get the response that our delegation has signed it to be sent.

Now, where does it go all that time. I just don't understand how it takes that long to see a letter through the system. And I think that is what Bob is getting at. And I hope that I'm understanding exactly what he's saying. Because our voice may be heard, but if it's four years down the road it may be too late.

And I don't know how we can improve the correspondence between this body and the entities that make the decision. And I'm hoping that OSM speeds things up -- or is able to. I don't know. But I find
there is something missing in the chain of vetting.

Mr. Douville.

MR. DOUVILLE: Thank you, Chairman.

I would just like to concur with Mr. Schroeder's remarks about our ability to communicate. When I first got on this Council we were -- it was much more liberal and it was easier for communication. And it seems like this has all changed. And not only -- it slows things down for us, things are really bogged down. And a lot of the things we address need to be done in a timely fashion, you know.

So I do agree with you.

Thank you.

CHAIRMAN BANGS: Thank you, Mr. Douville.

Any other comments or questions about the letter.

Mr. Howard.

MR. HOWARD: Thank you, Mr. Chair.

I think we need to stay engaged in this. This is something that's going to affect all of us. Maybe not now, but it will. And let me tell you how I know.

We have a mine on -- we're calling it Our Island now. We never thought in our lifetime this thing would affect us. We hunt seal. And I've learned the migratory patterns of seal because I didn't know. I have a 12th grade education, but I learned how to read and how to Google to do what's right for community members who I represent.

What I've learned over probably the last four years of dealing with DEC is I saw a commercial once. Bank's being robbed. The security guy is laying on the floor with the patrons of the bank and they ask are you going to do something. He said no, I'm just here to report when the bank's being robbed. Oh, by the way, the bank's being robbed.
That's my impression of DEC.

There's nothing in place. No guidelines in place. No penalties for anyone. And you can't blame the mining companies because the State sets the water quality standard. And what I learned about the water quality standard back in the '90s. When the minerals weren't priced high enough, they lowered the water quality standard to make it so the mines can do what they do.

So the reason I'm saying this is going to affect all of us is I asked -- the Fish and Game people came out to Angoon and talked to us, so I asked the Fish and Game biologist back then -- well, what causes salmon to come back to a certain stream. Is it the minerals in the stream. What is it in the stream itself that causes salmon to come back. Didn't know. Couldn't answer it.

So the reason I asked that question is the mine on the north end of Admiralty is putting 1.2 million gallons per day of what they call DEC quality standard water into the ocean. That happens right by the mixing bowl. I commercial fished for seven years, so we knew the fish had to come off of Icy Strait. Go north and south right there by Hawk Inlet. It's common sense.

You know, one of the things that bothers me is CBG wants to annex more onto Admiralty, but they didn't engage when Hawk Inlet became an impaired body of water. Their fish goes by there. My fish goes by there. Everyone north and south of Hawk Inlet, their fish goes by Hawk Inlet.

You can't tell me basic science that something that small in the water -- something eats that. A herring eats that. Salmon eats the herring. We eat the salmon. And throughout the whole process of dealing with this, we learned we can only eat six ounces of salmon per day. Anything more than that could be considered harmless because of mercury and everything else that comes out of this.

We learned that we shouldn't be eating more than I believe it's a 12-ounce serving of seal meat a month. You know, if my dad cooked seal meat for me, I'm going to guarantee I'm going to eat more than
12 ounces in one sitting because he knew how to cook it.

Things like these we don't learn until we get deep into it. It's like an old boat. You know, we start working on something, we find something else wrong. And that's what we're finding with the mining companies. Like I said before, it's not their fault. It's the water quality standard. And somehow through the process we need to take a better look at it.

I think when we send this letter back out, let's make sure they do a baseline study. Something, you know, the next generation can look at that was done on these rivers and say oh, this is bad. Because the baseline study, which is the original study of the environment around the areas, indicates how the area was before they started mining. Then you can go back and look at what's happening during the lifetime of the mine. I'd rather not see a mine on a river that doesn't have one, knowing what I know, unless they can change the water quality standard of it.

I think this is an important matter that's going to affect every user group of all resources. So in our lifetime let's not do this to the next generation. We've got to do something and be proactive and not end up being reactive like Angoon is.

Thank you, Mr. Chair.

CHAIRMAN BANGS: Thank you, Mr. Howard.

Okay. Mr. Schroeder, you have a comment.

MR. SCHROEDER: Yes. It just -- it seems that we've talked about this at at least three meetings and maybe four or five issues. The joint issues are the transboundary rivers and how we may have serious problems from Canadian mining.

And then the other is what our duties and responsibilities and authorities are as a Federal Advisory Committee Act charter committee.

And there's something really -- I'm speaking to the second point. And I think Ray and Albert have done a really good job in talking about the
dangers from cross boundary rivers and mining in
general. But I would note at the moment that we are a
FACA committee. We're governed and directed by our
DFO, who is DeAnna Perry.

And a little bit of background on this
correspondence policy.

It's something that John Littlefield
somewhat reluctantly agreed to. We -- prior to some
issues that arose during his tenure, there were
meetings held with OSM and there was a correspondence
policy developed. And the idea of the correspondence
policy was that we would route correspondence through
OSM mainly to avoid potential errors or embarrassment
to the program, which was never our intention as a
Council.

Somehow this has morphed into this
thing where -- you know, like just think about it, any
of us could sit here right now and write anything we
wished to the Secretary of Interior as private
individuals and send it off for the price of a stamp
and know the FBI wouldn't investigate us. Know we
wouldn't suffer any repercussions from that at all.

But here we are as a vetted FACA
committee with authorities and responsibilities to
protect subsistence uses and we cannot have our voice
heard directly. And this just isn't right.

Perhaps to move this on from simply
being a gripe session, Mr. Chairman, could we request
clarification from OSM perhaps tomorrow on the
correspondence policy. And I would suggest that it's
not in any of our -- it's not in the interest of
subsistence users or this Council to allow this
situation to continue. I think if we're articulate,
we're sane, we're reasoned, that we should be able to
send correspondence to whomever we wish on the topics
that are under our charter, which have to do with
providing for subsistence uses and protecting
subsistence in Southeast Alaska.

So my suggestion would be that we get a
clarification and possibly that we act to correspond
directly based on what we hear from OSM.

Thank you.
CHAIRMAN BANGS: Thank you, Bob. And I agree wholeheartedly.

And I'm wondering if Mr. Doolittle has some comments that he could give the Council right now in regards to correspondence.

MR. DOOLITTLE: Tom Doolittle, deputy assistant regional director for OSM.

Yeah. I'm extremely empathetic relative to timing this and getting response. And obviously we've gone through an administrative change and we've also -- we want to see things move quickly as well.

One of my suggestions though is that now with the new administration we also have a new senior advisor, Steve Wackowski. And as an interior liaison to Alaska affairs through interior, I think that the -- and again somebody who works with our program along -- and then also through our Board is that again when a letter goes to the Board for action that we look for that accountability and follow up.

And one of my responsibilities and of course Gene's responsibilities is to make sure that we have some more timely follow up. And so I can share those frustrations and then also -- I can also make sure to take these issues and assure that we have more timely follow up than we have in the past.

But maybe we should look at some improved tracking on that, and I think that would help.

Thank you.
CHAIRMAN BANGS: Thank you, Mr. Doolittle.

I think what we're talking about is we're able to draft a letter or form a letter and speak -- send it directly. I think that's what Mr. Schroeder is getting at is we're highly capable of having letters written up.

And in regards to the correspondence of other entities or individuals with this Council, I would argue that we're not only unable to send correspondence, but we're not able to get correspondence in a timely manner.

The letterhead of this Council has always had the Chairman's address on it. Last year it was changed to OSM. Twice in one year correspondence was not brought to this Council in a timely manner. It was a letter that was lost on someone's desk or something and by the time the letter arrived to the Council, which OSM can't even open because it doesn't have their name on it, it has one of our names on it so we didn't get it in time to respond in a timely fashion to the outside letter coming to this Council.

So I would request that you put either her address or my address back on the letterhead so that we can make sure that we get correspondence sent to this Council in a timely fashion, let alone our correspondence going elsewhere.

And I think that's what Mr. Schroeder is alluding to is why does it have to go through OSM. I mean I understand the point of, you know, graphics of pictures or grammar or something like that, but I mean I thought our letters are fairly well written. We have always had a good coordinator. And I'm just concerned about just it takes forever to get -- I mean it's been three years and now the letter finally gets sent from our State and Congressional delegations to the Secretary.

That seems pretty lengthy and unacceptable from our point of view, especially when it has to do with mines that are being built at this very moment.

And I think it's -- there are some
crucial things that need to have a much quicker
response. And just that's my opinion.

Mr. Schroeder.

MR. SCHROEDER: Yes. I'll just follow
up on that. And I appreciate you being at our meeting
and speaking to this.

I'm kind of going back to our first
chairman, Bill Thomas, who was a really wonderful
chairman. And he brought this Council along quite a
ways. And he used to say it's ANILCA. Focus on
ANILCA. What does ANILCA say. And if I'm channeling
Bill right at this moment, what he said is hey, the
ANILCA talks about forming Regional Advisory Councils.
It doesn't talk about a Federal bureaucracy to
determine exactly what people had to say.

And just reiterating we are a Federal
Advisory Committee, a chartered council. We're
appointed by the Secretary of Interior with the
concurrence with the Secretary of Agriculture
specifically to advise government on all manners of
things that may affect subsistence.

This correspondence policy somehow took
on a life of its own. Just to repeat for the record
and to make it very clear, there was a -- what I
thought was a fairly reasonable and friendly and
cooperative agreement with John Littlefield and the
then OSM Staff to say that we would route
correspondence through OSM specifically for what OSM is
supposed to provide us, which is technical background
because we meet for a few days of the year and two
times a year and we could have something that was
technically wrong in a letter. And that wouldn't
reflect well on us or on OSM. And it's part of OSM's
job -- is to help us out with technical matters. But
there was no notion that OSM was in some way approving,
modifying, rewriting, rephrasing, delaying or deciding
that correspondence from this Council would have to go
through so many hoops.

And I did work for the Federal
government at some time and I'm very aware of how
cumbersome and bulky these things are. I remember
tracking certain processes when I was working and some
things would go through like ten desks before they
would be approved. And then they would have to come back down through ten desks before you could say that today's Tuesday, you know. And I don't think this -- the reason I'm bringing this up and hitting on this is because we do have a very significant issue. If we have mine blowouts on the Canadian side, this -- you know, this isn't some complete nightmare dream, but this could really blow out some of our major fisheries and seriously affect subsistence uses in Southeast.

And, you know, who do we know -- where do we know our correspondence is. Is it number six in the line going up to approval or is it number seven in the line coming down before we can say something. So I would really suggest that this Council get some satisfaction and some action from OSM saying what this -- how OSM sees this process.

And I think the Council may consider going back to the way we operated for most of our history, which is that we wrote things and sent them out. And with no desire to embarrass the Federal government or OSM, but simply to do our duty as -- and follow our responsibilities as a Council and have our voices and the voices of people who speak to us heard.

So if we could get some clarification from OSM perhaps tomorrow. And this could be an action item for our Council before this meeting closes.

Thank you.

CHAIRMAN BANGS: Thank you, Mr. Schroeder.

I would like Mr. Doolittle to have a response if he has one. And then we need to address the letter and what we want to do with it.

So Mr. Doolittle. Thank you.

MR. DOOLITTLE: Really appreciate the comments. And I know the frustrations of bureaucracy just a tad bit. And -- but with that in mind, you know, again as I said before with serious accountability, and one thing I will check into about if there's been a change at least on signatories relative to letterheads from Southeast going or whether things were coming from Southeast then going out on OSM
letterhead -- whether it's been request of the Council
to the Board or directly to -- you know, to others.
Looking at that tracking system. Because many times as
I found out we'll go and do -- the RAC will do their
due diligence, OSM will do their due diligence, and
then it gets sent to other parties and it sits for a
response for a period of time as well.

And so again squeaky -- if there is on
a docket where we can track things in a better way to
make sure that if there hasn't been a timely response
that we can go through that, that seems to be
reasonable. And that you're correct. We're an
advisory body and we're an assistive body. We're not a
directive body. And so that's what DeAnna's position
is in this facilitation of this group. It's also my
position as one of the team leads for OSM as well. And
so we're there not to obstruct. We're there to assist.
We're there to assist you. We're there to assist the
Federal Board and make sure we follow the law of
process relative to what a FACA committee can and
cannot do and relative to what we can do as a
respective organization and what the Board can act on.

And again we have to -- if that
assistance has been over burdened or there's been too
many reviews, usually a letter such as this goes
through a leadership team review, which is -- you know,
there's five to seven people. So -- but again that's
making sure I's are dotted and T's are crossed and not
to change the context or how the -- any RAC is thinking
on a particular issue.

That's not the rule. Will not be the
rule. And at least on my watch.

CHAIRMAN BANGS: Thank you very much,
Mr. Doolittle.

One thing I'd just like to put in. And
there's a couple of other people that -- we do
appreciate the efforts from OSM to try to do what you
do. And understanding that with the cutting of the
budgets for all of us -- for this program especially,
that affects you guys, that it's only going to get
worse for -- you know, the workload isn't going to get
any less and the personnel will probably diminish, is
my guess.
So things aren't going to get better and if there is some way we could make things go faster from this end, I would be sure that this Council would try to do that if we could help that aspect of it. But as it is now, it's not working that well at all. And I'd just like to see things change.

Mr. Howard.

MR. HOWARD: Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

I heard your frustration the first time you mentioned this in the last meeting. And here we are talking about it again and nothing has changed.

In listening to Mr. Schroeder, this kind of makes sense to me. This belongs to us, everyone around the table. This is our responsibility to do what we've been appointed to do. And if we can't do it effectively with our chairman getting the -- I believe he should get the mail first.

And this is how we do this in other organizations. I'll give you an exact one. I'm currently the president of the IRA and the way we fixed this situation was -- okay. Well, when our tribal administrator gets an email, I get the same email. Because the way it works is it's -- the IRA is set up the same way as this is. I'm not allowed to be at the office, but I have to be -- I'm responsible for running the organization from outside the office.

So I'd like to see our Chairman and possibly the Vice Chair get letters and emails the same time as everyone else. There's no reason why they shouldn't. He's appointed the Chair for a reason. And if he can't put his finger on the pulse, that puts us all behind. And it's just a -- and it looks like we aren't doing our job.

So thank you, Mr. Chair.

CHAIRMAN BANGS: Thank you, Albert.

DeAnna.

MS. PERRY: Thank you, Mr. Chair.

I just wanted to provide a little bit
of clarification on this particular agenda item -- this particular letter. In October of 2016 the Council asked Robert Larson and myself to draft this letter. It did go through -- back and forth through OSM, and the division chief for the coordination division instructed me that according to the current correspondence policy, that's why we could not send a letter directly to the Secretary of State.

And I'd be happy to make a copy of that correspondence policy and give that to everybody.

But if you'll indulge me, number ten on this correspondence policy states except as noted in items six, seven, and eight, Councils or individual Council members acting on behalf of or as representative of the Council may not through correspondence or any other means of communication attempt to persuade any elected or appointed political officials, any government agency or any tribal or private organization or individual to take a particular action on an issue. This does not prohibit Council members from acting in their capacity as private citizens or through other organizations with which they are affiliated.

This is a 2004 correspondence policy.

Our work around for lack of a better word was to draft the letter from the Council to the Board, asking the Board under their authority to send that letter to Lieutenant Governor Mallott.

So I don't know if that helps clear up things, but I can make a copy of this correspondence policy and give it to everyone.

Thank you.

CHAIRMAN BANGS: Thank you, DeAnna.

Is the Federal Board able to send letters directly to other entities, such as the Secretary of State or political affiliates?

MS. PERRY: Mr. Chair, I'd have to obtain specific information from OSM, but that was my understanding. The direction given to me, the Council could not, but the Board could. And that's why we were
instructed to go through the Board with our request.

CHAIRMAN BANGS: Thank you.

Mr. Schroeder.

MR. SCHROEDER: Oh, thanks much, DeAnna. I would very much like you to provide us with copies of that correspondence policy.

And I'm virtually certain that the Council will have some things to say about that correspondence policy when we get to review it and will note that -- okay. Well, where does the Council correspondence policy come from. Because I did have the occasion at one time to actually read what FACA said -- the whole statute -- and there isn't anything in there about a Council correspondence policy. And so I think that this policy is probably an outgrowth of that discussion that took place between our Chairman John Littlefield and Staff.

And we will note that just in the part that you read us, that generally Council correspondence that we do send out doesn't ask for people to vote on things in a certain way and may not ask for exact action. Our job is to express concerns and talk about the effects of various things that may be taking place on subsistence needs and uses. We're not a political advocacy group in that respect.

But I'm sure we'll have a lively and interesting conversation on this when we have the copies in front of us.

CHAIRMAN BANGS: Thank you for those comments, Robert. That's very well stated.

Is there any other comments regarding the letter.

Mr. Sensmeier.

MR. SENSMEIER: Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

I'd just like to reiterate briefly on comments I made in prior meetings for those who were not in attendance and for the gentleman from OSM.
And please correct me if I'm wrong, Mr. Howard, I'm somewhat familiar with the Angoon situation through SEACC. Guy Archibald has been to Angoon, as well as many other places.

But in Angoon after the incident with the seal, held meetings with the mining companies and to make a long story short, a hunter from Angoon went to Hawk Inlet, which they've utilized for thousands of years for their food and subsistence, and brought home a seal I understand was shared with 12 families. Something did not seem right and Guy Archibald took samples of that meat to the State lab and it was discovered that it had 232 times the safe level of mercury. And I don't think there's a safe level for mercury. The highest ever recorded prior to that was 2.3.

And what is near Hawk Inlet, as Mr. Howard stated. The Greens Creek Mine is. And they utilize mercury when they're extracting gold and things like that.

The TransTribal Boundary Group is working with SEACC and -- I drew a blank there -- in addressing this issue. One thing we're doing. All the Southeast communities and AFN and Bristol Bay Native Association are signatories to enforce the Pelley Agreement, which was an international agreement between Canada and the United States.

And I'd just like to mention that. And I would like to make a motion when it's appropriate.

Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

CHAIRMAN BANGS: Thank you, Mr. Sensmeier.

Okay. Getting back to the letter that we've hopefully all read. That needs to be either moved forward or changed or -- what -- what's the will of the Council on this letter that was signed by our Congressional delegation and the governor and the lieutenant governor.

And it took us a couple of years to get it this far, so hopefully we can move it forward.
(Laughter)

CHAIRMAN BANGS: DeAnna.

MS. PERRY: Mr. Chair, perhaps it would be a good idea for me to provide the correspondence policy to all and then revisit this a little bit later in our meeting. And possibly find someone at OSM who can fill in some of the blanks to the questions that the Council has specifically on the correspondence policy and its review through OSM.

CHAIRMAN BANGS: Thank you, DeAnna.

Then what we could do is think about this over our lunch break.

I would like to give a chance for the proposal on wolves -- a working group to have time over the lunch period to get together and come up with a presentation for the Council.

And then we can bring this up again after lunch as far as the letter on the Transboundary Rivers goes. We can decide on what to do with that. And then we'll have a correspondence to look at as well.

So if the Council is okay with that, we'll recess for lunch. And we'll take two hours so that we're able to have our workgroup work on the wolf proposal and get back to the Council with a presentation.

So if that works for the Council, we'll recess till 1:30. So it would be an hour and 45 minutes.

Everybody okay with that.

(Council nods affirmatively)

CHAIRMAN BANGS: Okay. We'll recess for lunch.

And let's do the wolf workgroup. Do they want to do it prior to lunch or after.

Mr. Schroeder.
MR. SCHROEDER: I need to do something from about 12:00 to 1:00. So if we could get together after, I can be present.

CHAIRMAN BANGS: So how about if the workgroup meets at 1:00 o'clock back here.

MR. SCHROEDER: That would be 1:15 for me.

CHAIRMAN BANGS: 1:15. That will give a half hour for the workgroup to -- and then they can decide if they need more time.

Okay.

MR. SENSMEIER: Where do we get lunch.

CHAIRMAN BANGS: DeAnna, where do we get lunch?

MS. PERRY: There are some options on the back table. I've got a couple of little flyers.

UNIDENTIFIED VOICE: (Indiscernible).

MS. PERRY: No. That's not the option. Jake, if you would stand up. And Ben. They both have rigs. There are gentlemen from Juneau Ranger District helping us out with transportation. Nearby, within walking distance, we have the hospital cafeteria, and actually I hear they have decent food.

Also, across the street there is Randy's Rib Shack. And they have huge pulled pork and pulled chicken sandwiches. But if you want another spot somewhere near here, you'd probably want a rig, especially with the current weather.

There's a couple of menus back there on the lunch table -- or on the refreshment table though.

Thank you.

CHAIRMAN BANGS: Okay. Thank you, DeAnna.

Okay. We'll break for lunch. Say 1:45 at the latest. We'll try to reconvene right at 1:45,
so that will give the workgroup a little bit of time.

Thank you.

(Off record)

(On record)

**MS. PERRY:** Regional Advisory Council, before we call the meeting to order we'd like to see who is on the phone this afternoon. So if you could state your name and what agency or group you represent or what community you're from.

**MS. KENNER:** Hello, DeAnna. This is Pippa Kenner at OSM.

**MR. LIND:** Hello, DeAnna. This is Orville Lind, Native Liaison for OSM.

**MR. PAPPAS:** George Pappas, OSM.

**MS. OEHLERS:** Good afternoon. This is Susan Oehlers, Forest Service in Yakutat.

**MR. KOLLER:** Hello. This is Justin Koller, Forest Service in Sitka.

**MS. NEEDHAM:** This is Cathy Needham in Juneau.

**MS. PERRY:** Thank you.

So on the line we have Pippa from Office of Subsistence Management.

Orville Lind from Office of Subsistence Management.

George Pappas from OSM.

Susan Oehlers, Forest Service.

Justin Koller, Forest Service.

And Cathy Needham, one of our Council members.

Is there anyone else on the phone.
(No comments)

MS. PERRY: Thank you.

Mr. Chair.

CHAIRMAN BANGS: Thank you.

Welcome back to the meeting this afternoon.

And I'm glad you're on line, Cathy. We miss you here. Sorry to hear about your family problems, but hopefully it will all work out and you'll be back with us at our next meeting.

So with that said, I'd like to move along on the agenda. And we'd like to have Mr. Scott and his team of experts on the wolf proposal for Unit 2.

MR. SCOTT: Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

And thank you for the opportunity to come back before the Council. It's always great to see you guys and have these conversations. Welcome back to Juneau. It looks like it's going to potentially be a nice afternoon after the snow, rain, ice that we've all had and has created some travel difficulties for folks.

This afternoon we'd like to have a discussion with the Council about a new idea on how to move forward with managing the wolf population in game management Unit 2, Prince of Wales and the surrounding islands.

At present as we're all aware and we've talked about it at length many, many times, we utilize a harvest rate system to manage the season. And our regulations -- State regulations currently state that we can allow -- provide for harvest up to 20 percent of the most recent population estimate.

As you're also aware, we've been doing annual population estimates for several years now so we've had the luxury of having a number to apply that 20 percent to.

That creates some angst and it creates
some challenges for trappers and for the department, as well as the Forest Service who has in-season management authority for the Federal government. For instance, a quota may be extremely low if the population estimate comes in and you apply the 20 percent. It might be 20 wolves. Might be 11 wolves.

We also have a delay in the sealing requirement. People harvest a wolf and then they have two weeks to bring in the hides to be sealed. And that's when -- that's the first time we really know that there's been an animal harvested. So we're already -- we're working on a two-week delay to begin with. And over time that can be a -- it can be a real challenge actually to do much in-season and capture the guideline harvest or the quota that we've been searching for.

So what we would like to propose -- and we've taken the very first preliminary steps to move in this direction, is to move away from harvest quotas or annual wolf harvest quotas and manage for a population objective, and I don't want to get down into the weeds of what the number might be. Because that will be -- those numbers will be influenced and defensible biologically, but there's going to be a social aspect associated with that as well. And we've heard numbers thrown out here and there. We just don't know what they will be.

And we kind of -- we intend to put forward a plan -- a management plan -- and I'll talk more about that process in just a second -- that will identify upwards of like three tiers of management strategy where we identify -- we use the population objective, whatever that number is ultimately determined to be, to manage for. And we adjust the season lengths accordingly.

For instance, if we have a -- we'll use X here since we don't -- again don't want to get down into the weeds, if we have a population estimate or -- and when I say population estimate I'm not suggesting we're going to rely only on numbers as far as determining -- you know, actually going out and collecting DNA and doing a mark/recapture study as we've done annually. We'd like to use the concept of local knowledge.
And we want a combined -- not only what we know about what's going on with the harvest, but what people are telling us on the ground. They're seeing lots of wolves. We would incorporate that and we would be able to manage for an abundance of wolves.

So we wouldn't have to -- wouldn't be stuck using a 30 percent or a 20 percent. We would have to ultimately establish what is that threshold going to be. You know, if we think or the estimates show us that the numbers of wolves are above Y in this case, we would use seasonally to let people harvest -- just let people harvest wolves.

The reverse of that would be true as well. That if we are managing for a population objective and we go and do another abundance estimate and the numbers are below or -- and -- and/or I should say, we're hearing from folks on the island in the area that it's harder to find wolves. Trappers especially or people who are not seeing wolves. And combining, you know, not only a numerical estimate, but the local knowledge. We would actually use season links. We would reduce season links to make sure that we didn't over harvest the animals.

So ultimately as the regulation is written now and, you know, all of our discussions have included these, that we don't want to over harvest the wolves to a point that we have a conservation concern; however, we do want to be responsive to an abundance of animals on the ground, as well as to concerns people have about meeting their subsistence needs in terms of Sitka black-tailed deer.

So that's the gist. That's the thumbnail. It's really easy to kind of say all that. There's a lot of work that needs to be done. With any kind of process like this there needs to be input, you know, in the department, the Forest Service, the Council. We have bodies and entities and communities on Prince of Wales, as well as members of the public that will -- they deserve and they need to have some input in this. And that will be -- that frankly will be the way we approach it.

We don't know -- I don't know exactly how -- I don't have a good image for you yet on how that process is going to proceed, but I want to talk
about it in terms of a timeline. And you'll see that, you know, we're going to be moving fast pretty quickly.

The Alaska Board of Game proposals for the 2019 -- January 2019 meeting are due to our regulation Staff by April 1st. It is our intent to put a proposal in that will provide the opportunity to address wolf harvest on Unit 2. I don't have the language for you as I sit here, but essentially we will put something that will take the place of the regulation that says we can take up to 20 percent.

That opens the door for us to have -- to bring the proposal forward in -- for the January of '19 Board of Game meeting.

In October of 2018 -- I don't know, gosh, what is that roughly, eight months from now. We actually have to have the A and Rs, the analysis and recommendations, ready to go. And that would be the time that we would hope that we could present the Board and the public -- it's a public document -- with a map, a sketch of what that -- what the plan would look like. But to get there we're going to have to have input and agreement long before -- you know, to put that product together we're going to have to have all those things happen.

So as you can imagine, things are going to have to move pretty quickly. And that's our intent is to move very quickly. And it will -- in the very near future we'll make sure we reach out to groups that we know we need to have involved in this, but also move to get to Prince of Wales pretty quick. And to have discussions with this with the communities and members of the public.

I would ask that, you know, the Council certainly -- I'm not trying to volunteer anybody or throw anybody under the bus, but we need you to be on -- to be a part of this process for sure and there will be others -- other groups that will, you know, tag along as well.

So that's our -- Mr. Chairman, Members of the Council, that is the intent. I think we can make it. We're going to have to work fast and we're going to have a lot of input to go through, but our intent by January 2019 is to have a wolf harvest
management plan in place that will guide the harvest levels into the future.

Thank you.

CHAIRMAN BANGS: Thank you, Mr. Scott.

Are there any questions or discussion from the Council.

Mr. Schroeder.

MR. SCHROEDER: Thank you, Ryan, again for being here and for being real open to discussing the wolf issue.

I do have a timing thing. We had a subcommittee meeting at our break where we covered some of these things, but the Council wants to submit a proposal to the Board of Game which was intended to be a companion proposal to the one that we submit -- that is in play with the Federal Subsistence Board.

Your deadline is April 1. Our deadline for submitting proposals is May 1, I believe. Is your April 1 proposal -- can we see it or is that just internal?

In other words, if we see it then we could do something with what we propose that either aligns or comments -- relates to the proposal that you guys will be developing.

MR. SCOTT: Through the Chair. Member Schroeder. I don't see any reason why we couldn't share that with you. I don't envision the proposal itself being very detailed at this point. Again it's to make sure that we have the opportunity to address the regulation. I believe it's 5.AAC.92080. And it's terrible that I know those numbers like that, but yeah. I don't have any reason to think that we could not share that with you.

And also to be clear, the April 1 deadline is an internal deadline. And then technically we also have to have our proposals to the Board support section by May 1.

CHAIRMAN BANGS: Follow up, Mr.
MR. SCHROEDER: Just to follow up, in our comments on our proposal to the Federal Subsistence Board, we weigh different sources of information. And we note that the managing for percent harvest level based on the deer population last year is a little bit problematic for reasons you mentioned, which is -- and Chairman Bangs mentioned, which is that you may not always be able to do a really expensive population estimate every year. But then also given that wolves have a really high potential rate of reproduction, lagging that far could be -- have adverse effects on subsistence users.

So the Council relies both on the number data that comes out of population assessments like that, but also what we hear from people who are out there who are trapping wolves, seeing wolves. Who know what's going on in the environment.

Do you see a management plan, which you now are under the gun to create in a pretty short amount of time, would formally recognize that. In other words, if there's strong testimony from people on Prince of Wales and who know wolves who say oh, my gosh, there are just an awful lot of wolves in this area, would you have flexibility in a management plan to really weight that or would that just be anecdotal data, a phrase that fortunately no one uses anymore.

MR. SCOTT: Through the Chair. Member Schroeder. I think a management plan actually does that.

As you alluded to, there is a time coming where we are not financially going to be able to go to Prince of Wales or Unit 2 every year and generate an abundance estimate. We do intend to do it another year and we will have to go back periodically. If we move to this tiered management approach strategy, you know, we need to check ourselves. We need to check everybody and see where the estimate is in terms of the population objective. You know, that's going to be the focal point.

But, yes, we can weight that kind of information. And, you know, I also don't want to over sell it. You know, we're never going to make everybody
happy. So we have to look at all the information, the
data, the information from the trappers, the hunters,
people in the field. And we have to take that and look
at it in totality, both the department, the Advisory
Council, the Forest Service, the in-season Federal
managers. But I actually think this is a good
opportunity to get to that.

And as you might recall, in our meeting
in Craig about a year ago we heard that message loud
and clear. And it was -- it's a challenge to -- you
know, sometimes we get too -- maybe get too much in the
groove as biologists and, you know, we think a lot
about numbers, and it's not that we're not -- we don't
want that information and that it's not valuable by any
means. It's how to incorporate it.

And I think potentially moving in this
direction with a management plan and having to make,
you know, decisions on season length, we -- it's the
opportunity for us to use the local knowledge.

CHAIRMAN BANGS: Thank you.

Any other comments of questions from
the Council.

(No comments)

CHAIRMAN BANGS: And including Ms.
Needham on the phone. If you have anything, please
speak up.

(No comments)

CHAIRMAN BANGS: Thank you very much,
gentlemen.

I appreciate the time and the effort.
It sounds like we're headed in a good direction.

Okay. So Mr. Schroeder, did you have
an idea of the work group for moving our proposal
forward that we had submitted to the Federal Board and
what justification that I can take to the Board with
supporting it in light of this new information?

Mr. Schroeder.
MR. SCHROEDER: Mr. Chair, some of the
discussion that took place with Mr. Scott and Tom at
the break with the group was really things that we had
talked about earlier at our meeting where we passed
this proposal.

And one thing really important is just
how quickly things change on Prince of Wales and how
people on Prince of Wales feel they do need relief from
regulation of wolf harvest that just doesn't meet
people's subsistence needs.

So at our last meeting the Council was
emphatic on how they wanted action for this coming
season. And we're making really good progress in
working with the department on getting long term
action, but the department can't do anything -- the
Board of Game can't do anything for next season because
the regulatory meeting that will address this happens
too late. It happens in January.

So our work group felt that we should
proceed exactly as is with this proposal to the Federal
Subsistence Board because it's the only way there can
be some relief this coming season and some change.

We will note that in the rationale for
supporting this proposal at the suggestion of Board
Member -- Council Member Bangs and others, that we
really did like the idea of developing a management
plan for wolves that would get us out of this 20
percent estimate and that that was a really good way to
proceed, so we're really, really happy that the
department's moving ahead on this.

So key here is that we need some relief
this coming year and that the 30 percent -- up to 30
percent level is justified. And also in our subgroup
meeting over lunch, we asked department staff if they
would work with the Council representatives and with
Forest Service in figuring out what percent could be
harvested, recognizing that the department can't do
much about that on State lands, but as the source of a
great deal of information on wolf populations and
harvest they would be really good -- it would be really
good if they helped inform the decision of Federal
managers in setting a quota for wolves for this coming
season.
So we're saying continue as is with this.

And the subcommittee would suggest that you note when you present this, Mike, that you say that we're working really closely with the department on a long term management of wolves on Prince of Wales. And this timing is just sort of peculiar. It's kind of -- the Federal Board may not immediately understand that there's a -- this timing issue there.

And I'm anticipating that if the Board of Game change in regulations comes a great deal closer to meeting subsistence needs and for management of wolves on Prince of Wales that we may endorse that proposal.

We have the opportunity to comment on Board of Game proposals at our fall meeting because the Board of Game meeting is in January.

Also to put on the record, is that, way in advance so that OSM can plan on making sure that we have Council representatives at the Board of Game meeting, as well as our Tongass subsistence management coordinator.

I think I covered most everything that needed to be covered there.

Thank you.

CHAIRMAN BANGS: Thank you, Mr. Schroeder.

So what is the recommendation of the work group in regards to a companion proposal to the Board of Game.

MR. SCHROEDER: I guess I didn't cover everything, but I believe the work group would like to submit a proposal to the Board of Game that is essentially the same as the Federal proposal.

And I asked Mr. Scott about timing and it appears that if we're willing to do a little work -- if the Council can direct its subcommittee to do the wordsmithing that we could view the department proposal to the Board of Game on April 1 because that was the...
deadline. And that we could possibly modify the wording or the rationale for the proposal we submit to the Board of Game after April 1 and before May 1, which is the deadline for us to submit our proposal.

So that would be -- if we have any discussion -- or we can make a motion to that effect.

That we -- I'll make the motion that we submit a companion proposal mirroring the proposal of the Council to the Federal Subsistence Board. And that we submit that proposal after April 1 when we've had the opportunity to review the ADF&G proposal on this same issue to the Board of Game. And that this would be submitted before May 1.

So that's my proposal.

MR. REIFENSTUHL: Second.

CHAIRMAN BANGS: Okay. We have a proposal to submit a companion proposal mirroring the proposal of the Federal Subsistence Board. And that this would be submitted before May 1.

That's my proposal.

MR. SCHROEDER: That our proposal would be essentially the same as the proposal we have on the table with the Federal Subsistence Board, but that we would submit it after we were able to review the State proposal.

CHAIRMAN BANGS: Okay. The Federal.....

MR. SCHROEDER: Want me to try that again?

CHAIRMAN BANGS: Yeah. Yes.

MR. SCHROEDER: Okay. Just we'll X that out -- all out.

(Laughter)

MR. SCHROEDER: Where we stand right now is we have a proposal to the Federal Subsistence Board which will be acted on possibly next week. And
what the subcommittee would like to do is submit
exactly the same proposal and exactly the same
rationale for that proposal to the Board of Game for
the reasons I mentioned at great length.

I'd like that to be submitted after
April 1 because we may find some way that -- after
April 1 and we see what ADF&G comes up with, we may
modify our rationale in some way to further the process
along.

CHAIRMAN BANGS: Mr. Hernandez.

MR. HERNANDEZ: Yeah. Just as a
discussion topic here I guess for what Bob just kind of
laid out there, that would require some kind of Council
action in April, which of course we don't have any
meetings scheduled. So there would have to be some
kind of a -- I don't know -- Council meeting of some
kind to approve that, I assume, right. Is that how it
would work procedurally.

CHAIRMAN BANGS: Mr. Schroeder.

MR. SCHROEDER: Through the Chair. I
think if we made any significant changes, that would be
the case. I hope that the Council could say -- could
give the committee looking at this some leeway to do
some changes in our rationale, but not in our proposal.

That would be up to the Council to
decide. That would be my suggestion so that we don't
schedule an extra meeting for very little purpose.

CHAIRMAN BANGS: Thank you, Mr.
Schroeder.

I think we'll have to look into the
legalities of how we can go about it legally for
speaking on behalf of the Council. Make sure that it's
legitimate for how we present it to the Board of Game
without the Council's consent.

Or I don't know if we can have a
teleconference on the -- for the Council. I'm not sure
if that's a way -- an avenue that we could have.

I know the Federal Board meets on the
12th of April, so that would be a deadline for any of
my involvement.

Mr. Schroeder.

MR. SCHROEDER: I just think I'm having trouble with the time lines as well, but perhaps to have this really streamlined we could simply submit the proposal exactly as written and then submit our comments on the proposal after our fall meeting. And if we wish to do something at that time, that either modify the proposal, which I don't think is likely, but -- or modify our rationale, we could do it at that time.

I think that would work with the Board of Game system then.

CHAIRMAN BANGS: Mr. Hernandez.

MR. HERNANDEZ: Thank you, Mr. Chair.

I think I'd prefer that route is we put in our proposal now because we have these deadlines to work with. And then come our fall meeting we will have an opportunity to review anything the State submits and possibly, yeah, clarify, modify -- however you want to put it -- our proposal to the State Board at that time.

I think that would be a good way to go about it.

CHAIRMAN BANGS: Mr. Douville.

MR. DOUVILLE: So are we mirroring the -- sending the same proposal then that we have here in front of us. I believe it's 4 -- 04 to the State.

I know our goal was to try to develop a management plan that works for a target number of wolves, not a quota system. But these two proposals then that we're talking about would be a quota system of 30 percent.

So should we agree with the management plan that the State has or is going to propose that does not have percentages in it.

So how are we going to make modification down the road to -- should we agree with
the concept that the department is proposing.

CHAIRMAN BANGS: Mr. Schroeder.

MR. SCHROEDER: Perhaps we could get a
department representative to say how comments are
received on proposals. And if that -- if you have some
ideas on the question again.

MR. SCOTT: Thank you. And again for
the record I'm Ryan Scott, the regional wildlife
supervisor for Fish and Game here in Southeast. And
Tom Schumacher is our management coordinator.

So the -- I think the way that, you
know, potentially this could work is you will have an
opportunity -- you know, we'll have discussions about
the actual proposal that will go in. In your fall
meeting -- and generally it's in October, I don't know
exactly, you know, the dates that you'll have. We've
already been given a hard date to have the plan
especially lined out and delivered. And I think -- I
believe that was like October 19th.

MR. SCHUMACHER: Yeah. It was the
middle of the month.

MR. SCOTT: Okay. So as we move into
the Board of Game meeting, you -- a couple of different
things can happen. As you know, the Board meeting is
going to occur in Petersburg and certainly I hope
there's a representative there. You have someone who's
there, so maybe he's available. Again not to throw
anybody under the bus.

If you have a companion proposal in
that looks just like the proposal you've submitted to
the Federal Subsistence Board, you will actually --
you'll have the opportunity to address the Board of
Game in comments and testimony. And you can -- I mean
you can actually say whatever you want to say, but, you
know, we agree as two entities going forward with this
management approach and you could ask for the proposal
to be withdrawn, potentially to take no action and
deer to the management plan. But those things will
happen -- you could do it in writing after we meet in
October if you feel comfortable with the direction that
we're all going and again in person at the Board
meeting.
Potentially, and I would say, you know, this is more likely than not, for one year we will have conflict between the Federal managers and the State managers and that's a timing issue has been -- has been pointed out here. It's just a cycle challenge that we have with the Federal Subsistence Board and the Board of Game.

In a very practical sense, the majority of the trappers that are engaged in Unit 2 are Federally-qualified trappers and qualify underneath Federal management and Federal regulation. So if we get a new abundance estimate and we're -- by regulation we can provide up to 20 percent and we hit the 20 percent, the State simply closes the season as we've done in the past with emergency order authority. But the Federal season could potentially, you know, continue on to 30 percent if you're in-season manager determines that that's what should happen.

Hopefully, I covered all the bases, but certainly, you know, I -- I'll try to clarify anything that I wasn't clear on.

Thank you.

CHAIRMAN BANGS: Mr. Douville.

MR. DOUVILLE: Yeah. That makes sense. I'm okay with that. However, I would still support 04. It's only up to 30 percent, which is conservative based on the very conservative population estimate that most of us think.

And I would back this by how fast the quota was taken this last year. It didn't take very long. There's an abundant of wolves. And everybody did well. And not only that, there's further evidence there was more wolf taken hunting than I can remember ever. The average has been like five or six. And I think this last year if you counted them all, it was more like sixteen.

So there's just more wolves and more contact for sure, so the wolf numbers are healthy.

CHAIRMAN BANGS: Thank you, Mike.

Any other questions or comments.
(No comments)

CHAIRMAN BANGS: Just for clarification in my mind and anyone else's that's not sure what we're doing here, we're going to go ahead. 04 has been submitted to the Federal Board and we're all on board with that. And we're going to take that same exact proposal and submit it to the Board of Game, which will meet next January 2019. And then we'll meet again this fall at our fall meeting. And then we'll discuss the advance of the management plan the State comes up with. And then give comments regarding our proposal to the Board of Game at that meeting in Petersburg.

But right now we have the motion on the floor to do just that.

If I could get Mr. Schroeder to reiterate what his motion was and then we can carry on.

MR. SCHROEDER: Okay. Let me see if I can avoid stating my -- telling the wrong way here. I don't know. This is a complicated one for some reason.

But I believe what we're -- my motion is that we support submitting a proposal mirroring the proposal that we have before the Federal Subsistence Board to the -- and that we submit that to the Board of Game forthwith. And that we submit our comments on this proposal following our fall meeting this year.

CHAIRMAN BANGS: Thank you.

Do I have a second.

MR. HERNANDEZ: I'll second that.

CHAIRMAN BANGS: Okay. It's been moved and seconded to take Proposal 04 and -- regarding wolves on Unit 2 and submit that proposal to the Board of Game for 2019 meeting in Petersburg.

Any discussion.

(No comments)

CHAIRMAN BANGS: Any more -- DeAnna.

MS. PERRY: Mr. Chair, just to clarify.
This Council does wish to take final action on this motion to move forward with the companion proposal by the deadline of May 1st. And then comments at the fall meeting is what will be discussed.

CHAIRMAN BANGS: Correct.

MS. PERRY: Okay.

CHAIRMAN BANGS: Everyone's clear on that.

(Council nods affirmatively)

CHAIRMAN BANGS: Okay. Any other discussion on that.

(No comments)

MR. KITKA: Question.

CHAIRMAN BANGS: Okay. The question's been called for to submit 04 as we have submitted to the Federal Board. And that proposal will be submitted to the Board of Game at next year's Board of Game meeting.

All those in favor, say aye.

IN UNISON: Aye.

CHAIRMAN BANGS: Opposed.

(No opposing votes)

CHAIRMAN BANGS: Motion carries.

Thank you.

MR. SCOTT: Thank you.

CHAIRMAN BANGS: Okay. Now we have another easy one. Berners Bay moose.

(Laughter)

CHAIRMAN BANGS: So at this point I see -- I know Mr. Casipit -- he was the proponent of the proposal. And I'm not sure how his time sequence is
for travel, but if he would like to come up and speak
to us at this time about Berners Bay moose and explain
your proposal again in a brief summary.

MR. CASIPIT: Thank you, Mr. Chair.

My name is Calvin Casipit. I live in
Gustavus, Alaska. I'm representing myself, although I
do sit on the city council in seat G until 2020.

You know, I listened in to the
discussions at your last meeting over the phone. I
regret I wasn't able to be here in person because I had
conflicting meetings with the City of Gustavus, so I
had to choose. At that time I chose my city. And I
did -- you know, I did modify my travel plans today to
get here in time for the meeting to talk to you all.

You know, I suspect that you're going
to get some more input from the Staff after I'm done
here. And I'm not sure, you know, what Staff is going
to tell you, but I still have a problem with low
priority being provided on this chunk of Federal land.

Now how we -- how you all decide that
priority gets done -- and, you know, that's your
prerogative -- but, you know, I -- there was some -- I
guess at the last meeting there was some concern
expressed by Council members that Staff didn't contact
me or talk to me about my proposal. I think maybe the
reason they didn't is because it was pretty cut and dry
what I asked for.

However, you know, if you guys want to
come up with some sort of harvest sharing arrangement
like similar to what Cordova does with their moose
population, I'd be happy with that. And I think it's
your prerogative to do that if you want. I mean that
harvest sharing agreement in Cordova was done based on
what the Council recommended to the Federal Subsistence
Board. You could do the same thing here.

As long as you comply with those three
little things, and you know what those are, the Board
can't reject your proposal. So, you know, it's up to
you as far as I'm concerned.

I am a little disappointed that, you
know, the recommendation that's going to the Board is
no. And I don't know what the Staff committee has
decided yet. They probably haven't even met to talk to
the Board about what their opinion is going to be. So
there very well could be this be put on a consent
agenda that never even gets discussed with the existing
action you have on the record now.

And maybe I'm talking -- you know, I'm
bringing in some knowledge from my previous life. I'm
no longer part of the Federal system. I just happen to
be a user out there in a rural community that quite
frankly needs moose. And I guess I'll leave it at
that.

And -- I don't know. I'm not going to
go much more. I get on a soap box and I'll monopolize
the conversation. So I'm going to leave it at that and
let you guys go about -- get your proposal -- get your
input from Staff. And if I decide I've got to chime
in, maybe I'll raise my hand, but otherwise I'm going
to sit down.

Thanks.

CHAIRMAN BANGS: Thank you. Thank you,
Cal, for being able to make time and be here and tell
us.

I know from the past meeting that we
had and discussed this, there was a lot of discussion
about this and how we could come up with something
fair. And there was a lot of unanswered questions and
we asked Staff to do a little more research and come up
with some other options.

And I think the sentiment -- and, you
know, correct me if I'm wrong, but we wanted to be able
to provide for rural priority, but I didn't feel in my
mind that the Council was all comfortable with that as
far as excluding all the people that helped put those
moose there. And so I think that what you're saying
about maybe possible quota share or something like that
might be a possibility, but we weren't aware of any
options for us to do that at the time.

So at this time I'd like to hear what
Staff has. I think Mr. Koller's is on the line.

Justin.
MR. KOLLER: Yes, Mr. Chair. This is Mr. Koller -- Justin Koller, in Sitka with the Forest Service.

I just -- hopefully your Council coordinator has a couple of slides up for you to take a look at. I just wanted to give a quick recap and hit on some of the important points of the proposal and/or the issue rather to sort of jog the memory of the Council and get the conversation started.

And I only have two slides. One is a couple of those key points and the other is a table which I think will be helpful for the Council. So I don't know where we're at there, so I'll turn it back over to you and let me know when I can begin.

Thank you.

CHAIRMAN BANGS: Any questions on the first slide from the Council.

(No comments)

MR. KOLLER: I can -- Mr. Chair, this is Justin Koller again.

I can run through that. I just wasn't sure if it was up on the screen there.

CHAIRMAN BANGS: Yes. It's up on the screen. Everybody is looking at it as we speak.

Thank you.

(Pause)

CHAIRMAN BANGS: Did you want to cover points on the slide?

MR. KOLLER: Yes, Mr. Chair.

So the first point I'd like to make out on this issue is that this is a very small area. And as you can see on the map, hopefully you can take a look at that and see that there is a small area of Berners Bay about halfway between Juneau and Haines on the east side of Lynn Canal there.
Ninety-seven percent of this land is Federal public lands. Access can be difficult to this area. It often requires specialized transportation, from what I understand, largely in the form of air boats.

The moose population is really small in this area. It's closely managed. And when I say small, I think the latest population is about 140 animals.

It's administered through a State draw hunt and less than 20 permits have been available annually in the past.

There is no Federal season and there's never been a Federal season for moose in Berners Bay.

Rural residents of Units 1 through 5 were given customary and traditional use determination by this Board back in 2008, I believe. So Federally-qualified-subistence users compete mainly with Juneau residents for these very few permits that are available every year and the pool of applicants is diluted by Juneau residents, leaving Federally-qualified-subistence applicants with little chance of drawing a permit in any given year. So we're talking about between a one and five percent chance of any Federally-qualified applicant drawing a permit. The number of Federally-qualified applicants in any given year is consistently higher than the permits available in that year, so the demand is there.

And this isn't really a matter about when the hunt occurs, but it's who gets to hunt these animals.

And if you go to the slide number two, I'll just briefly explain this table here. It goes back to 1999 to 2016. And the first column here is the number of bull permits available. And you can see it's below ten in all years. And it was actually closed between 2008 and 2013 due to conservation concerns. Again, this is a small population and it's closely managed.

The second column here, towards the middle you can see the number of Federally-qualified applications compared to the next column of non-
Federally-qualified applications primarily from Juneau.

So you can see the number of Federally-qualified applicants is very small.

And the important part of this table here is that the chance of drawing of Federally-qualified applicants during the draw is related to how many actually apply compared to the number -- the total number of applicants. So the chance is very small and it's usually around two to three percent.

And that's all I have right now, Mr. Chair.

Thank you.

CHAIRMAN BANGS: Thank you, Mr. Koller.

Is there any questions for Mr. Koller.

(No comments)

CHAIRMAN BANGS: Thank you, Justin.

MR. DOUVILLE: I might have a couple of questions.

CHAIRMAN BANGS: Oh, okay.

MR. DOUVILLE: But I don't know who to address them for.

CHAIRMAN BANGS: Okay. Mr. Douville.

MR. DOUVILLE: Thank you, Mr. Chair.

I have a couple of questions. So there was five permits available the last hunt. So this is asking for only one, right. This proposal asks for one. It says one.

MR. KOLLER: Through the Chair. This is Justin Koller. I'm not quite following that question about one permit.

MR. DOUVILLE: The OSM preliminary conclusion, it says one bull by Federal drawing permit. Does that mean you're -- this proposal is only addressing one bull. Because permits available are
five on this graph.

And not only that. Non-Federally qualified -- Federally-qualified applicants since there's no -- it says six in 2016.

So I live in a rural area. I'm Federally-qualified. You know, so I know that number is more than six. It doesn't make sense to me.

MR. KOLLER: Mr. Chair. Mr. Douville. It is not -- the proposal was not for one bull or one animal to Federally-qualified users, but to put into regulation a season for one bull moose by Federal permit. Now, the number of Federal permits to be drawn would depend on the recent population status, so it would be one permit, but not limited to a certain amount of permits.

CHAIRMAN BANGS: Does that answer your question, Mike?

MR. DOUVILLE: So it could be five permits issued.

CHAIRMAN BANGS: Mr. Koller, I think there's some confusion on the OSM input in this. And what the actual proposer proposed is to provide for rural preference and not a number.

The OSM conclusion was because there is no Federal draw for this hunt, that their -- if I'm not mistaken here, what they're proposing is one hunt drawn Federally; is that right?

MR. KOLLER: So the -- if we're talking about this proposal, the OSM preliminary conclusion was to create a Federal hunt for one bull moose and possibly even one cow moose, depending on what the population status was.

Now the idea there was that any available animals there were to harvest in Berners Bay depending on population status would be given to Federally-qualified users through a Federal draw permit. So we would use population estimate data and based on that in a given year potentially five or ten moose would be available. All those five to ten moose would be drawn or -- or would be drawn by Federally-
qualified applicants.
So it would be an exclusively Federal hunt based on an unknown number of animals, but the point being all the permits would go to Federally-qualified users.

Thank you.

CHAIRMAN BANGS: Mr. Douville.

MR. DOUVILLE: Okay. Clarification on the Federally-qualified applicants.

So I'm Federally-qualified and I apply for this every year. So the number is only six you have in 2016 there. So how do you get to that number six number.

MR. KOLLER: So this is data that was given to us directly from the Department of Fish and Game. And their numbers indicate that there were only six Federally-qualified applicants for this hunt in 2016, and you were very well likely one of them.

CHAIRMAN BANGS: Any other questions for Mr. Koller.

(No comments)

CHAIRMAN BANGS: And I have a question. You know, there’s been some reference to the Cordova hunt where they allowed for a certain number or a percentage of the allowable number of permits to be issued. And I'm wondering if that could be applied to the Berners Bay population.

Is that something you can answer or is that something Mr. Suminski or -- Mr. Koller?

MR. KOLLER: Mr. Chair, this is Mr. Koller here. I can take a stab at answering that question for you and the Council.

I spoke to our biologist up in Cordova about the Unit 6C Federal draw for moose. He gave me a little bit of background on it and it certainly seems like it's something that could be doable here where you would have -- what they do up there is have a separate
State and Federal draw. And the State is allotted 25 percent of the bulls available and the Federal -- or Federally-qualified users are allotted 75 percent of the bulls that are available.

So the State has their draw first and based on that it -- so each household in -- each Federally-qualified household in Cordova can't draw two permits, so that's why the State has their draw first. So if a Federally-qualified person who has applied for the State permit gets drawn, they drop out of the Federal pool so they can't be drawn twice.

So 25 percent of the permits are drawn to the State draw and then the Federal side has their draw -- draws the other 75 percent of the permits that go to Federally-qualified users.

I think as far as if it's something that we can work for Berners Bay moose, you know, we'd have to work with the State and I think we've had some discussions with them that Mr. Suminski could probably elaborate on that would shed some light on whether or not we could do something like this down in Berners Bay.

Thank you.

CHAIRMAN BANGS: Thank you, Justin.

Any other comments or questions for Mr. Koller.

(No comments)

CHAIRMAN BANGS: I know from my recollection of our discussion, the proposal that we voted down is going to go before the Federal Board and we can't change that at this point, but I think that this is a direction that I felt the Council was leaning towards is creating a rural preference for some sort of a quota sharing if it be in Berners Bay.

And correct me if I'm wrong, but I know that's the feeling that I got from the split vote is that there was a willingness to do that because that's why we're here. But to take all the moose and turn them into a Federal hunt, personally I find that hard to take. That the people that helped put those moose
there would be X'd out of the picture.

So I just want to make sure that the Council understands why we're discussing this again. And maybe we could come up with a proposal for the next go around or do something out of cycle.

Mr. Howard.

MR. HOWARD: I keep hearing, Mr. Chairman, that -- that -- the people that put the moose there. The thing that bothers me about that statement is whether it's State or Federal funds that were used to put those moose there, at the end of the day we're all citizens of the same country, follow the same Constitution, pay the same taxes. And the only designation we have that we're here to represent is the Federal subsistence user group. And 97 percent of this is Federal land, which is our obligation to make sure subsistence users needs are being met.

I wish the gentleman that was here was here to tell us again how he was responsible for moving the moose there and those moose belong to him. Somebody needs to tell the moose that. That those are his moose. I mean I can't sit and listen to that because currently we're in a situation where the national monument was created by elders from Angoon. Yet people that weren't at the table when that was done are allowed to annex more of that.

You know, so there's going to be things here that we don't agree with and we look at differently, but even the State Constitution reads that all resources belong to all residents equally. We have to keep in mind that we're here for the subsistence user that doesn't have access to Costco. Doesn't have access to Fred Meyers. These are people that I see every day that -- man, if I could get a moose that could take care of six or seven elders in my community that can't even afford to go to the store.

I mean I'd like to see one of these meetings happen in Angoon and everybody go shop at our store. This is what this type of Board was created for. To represent that side of the coin. I mean I'm not going to sit here and cry about it. I'm going to go out and hunt and fish with the rights that are given to us in the rural communities to take care of
ourselves. I'm not -- we don't sit and cry about our situation at home because we're blessed with a resource in our backyard. But if we don't have access to it, what is it to us.

I mean we -- so this to me -- whether or not somebody went and put these there, that doesn't belong to them. Because at the end of the day they used State or Federal funds that belongs to all of us. And I'm seeing -- and we heard testimony that a guy -- oh, I don't get paid for it, but sometimes they give me part of a moose to bring them up there. That's bartering and trade that there's strict guidelines on.

So you have one user group saying that this herd of moose belong to them because they put it there, but yet it's all on Federal land. You know, I like the Cordova idea. That meets us halfway. And if that doesn't work we'll go back and revisit it. But to sit here and talk it to death like we're doing with the Prince of Wales wolves or other things we seem to talk about instead of doing something about, I'd like to see us move forward.

And I agree that things aren't happening fast enough. You know, I think let's go with the Cordova draw idea. See how that goes. I mean I'm sure the people aren't going to like it, but I don't think we're here for that. We're here because there's people that actually need access to this.

Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

CHAIRMAN BANGS: Thank you, Albert.

Any other comments.

(No comments)

CHAIRMAN BANGS: I'd just like to add I agree with you. I think we need to share. And by making this a rural priority Federal hunt, we would not be sharing. And then unfortunately there are people here in Juneau that although they're in an urban setting, they still grew up on subsistence foods and they still rely on subsistence foods, although they're not qualified.

And so I think we're all in it together
and I think we need to move forward. And I understand that the proposal that was put before us is going to go to the Federal Board with a no because that's the way the Council voted, but I didn't want to drop this and leave it without trying to move towards a Federally-qualified preference for some part of that draw.

So anyway, that's -- although they're all qualified to put in for the draw, but as you can see the percentage of chance is pretty low.

So as far as the Council affording a little bit of a priority that maybe we could entertain a different permit or a proposal I mean for the next go around, I think the Council would be up for doing something like that, as far as I can gather from the discussion.

Mike and then Don.

MR. DOUVILLE: Mr. Chair, I would support a system where something like 60/40 or something like this when it comes to these moose. I'd be more than happy to do that, but that would give a priority and satisfy that need and still give some support to Juneau.

If we could do that I would be most supportive.

CHAIRMAN BANGS: Don.

MR. HERNANDEZ: Yeah. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

I think I'm trying to clarify what our goal is here at this meeting. And I guess I'm correct in thinking that we don't really have an opportunity to modify what we did in our fall meeting before the Board of Game -- or excuse me -- where the Subsistence Board meets, whatever, in April. So we're kind of stuck with our decision from the fall. For now we're just talking about the future; is that correct.

CHAIRMAN BANGS: DeAnna.

MS. PERRY: Mr. Chair.

Yes, that is correct. This Council did
take final action on that proposal; however, comments
could still be presented to the Board at its April
meeting. But final action has been made on the
proposal.

Thank you.

MR. HERNANDEZ: Okay. So now
especially we have some new information because we
asked the Staff to kind of research this permit quota
system that would provide for a meaningful subsistence
priority without necessarily eliminating non-
subsistence users.

So I guess my question is, you know,
how far can we go in our comments, recommendations to
the Board in this cycle to try and work towards that
kind of a system if we think that's where we want to
go.

CHAIRMAN BANGS: In my way of thinking,
I would hope that there would be interest in forming a
work group and that we could discuss this topic during
the next couple of days and come back with a
recommendation for the Council to move forward with,
possibly to bring to the Federal Board.

But as DeAnna stated, the proposal that
was presented to us is going to go forward as is. But
I think a work group could -- maybe possibly working
with Staff to come up with some other options for the
future or just recommendations to the Federal Board
because they can do what they want without regards to
our proposal.

So if there's an interest in having a
work group on the Berners Bay moose, I would think that
would be a good thing.

Mr. Kitka.

MR. KITKA: Thank you, Mr. Chair.

In working with the Board, I found that
they do deference to the RAC. So whatever you put in
is what they're going to do.

I really think if you wanted to go this
other route then we need to probably come up with a
draft letter and give them an option.

Thank you.

CHAIRMAN BANGS: Thank you, Mr. Kitka.

So what's the will of the Council. Would you like to put together a work group that could possibly work over the next day or two.

Mr. Howard.

MR. HOWARD: Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

I'm wondering through the Robert's Rules of Order if you can go back and revisit this and make an amendment to it.

MS. PERRY: Through the Chair. Member Howard, it is my understanding that once final action has happened, you cannot go back and revisit it. You could make a comment to the Board, but you can't amend it at this point after final action has been taken.

CHAIRMAN BANGS: Mr. Howard.

MR. HOWARD: Thank you, Mr. Chair.

Just for -- the word subsistence kind of bothers me. That non-rural residents try to use it because it -- it's becoming a word that's really cool on TV now. But what subsistence means is you live in a small community and that designation came up a long time ago.

And Juneau likes to use it a lot, but it doesn't pertain to Juneau. I had to explain that to my son. You're going to college. You're going to school in Juneau. You're no longer a subsistence user. You get your subsistence at Fred Meyers and Costco, I told him. And that kind of offended him because he's a lot like his dad, but we can't even -- I try to wrap my head around it.

The only way I could even think of -- we heard the gentleman in the last meeting talk about his subsistence. A lot of people move from Angoon to Juneau. And part of what the decision of having to move to Juneau is to give up your right to access to
the resource that you're used to having.

My son got here and he's like he can't
even go hunting like he does at home. There's
different regulations that apply to him versus what he
had at home. So to try to put Juneau in the same
standing as a subsistence user you're going to totally
eliminate the reason why subsistence is.

If you decide to start saying that the
subsistence user in Juneau -- you're talking away --
there is no such thing. There is no such thing as a
subsistence user in Juneau. Because they're -- the
population size and everything else, it was decided
that they're not designated as subsistence users.
They're welcome to have deer and everything else, but
they're not on the same standing as a rural community.

So I think that we have to mindful of
that law and that regulation. Otherwise it's going to
go away if we start using it in terms of we need to
protect their rights as well. There is no existing
rights for Juneau residents as subsistence users. They
fall under different regulations because of the
population size.

So thank you, Mr. Chair.

CHAIRMAN BANGS: Thank you, Albert.

Mr. Doolittle, did you have some
comments for us?

MR. DOOLITTLE: Yeah. I hope they're
helpful. Tom Doolittle, Deputy Assistant Regional
Director for OSM.

The word due diligence is really
important and new information is a very important part
of any RAC, and that can occur up to, you know, and
including the Board meeting itself.

And I can use an example.

Unit 23 caribou, new population
information came out that showed a substantial, you
know, increase in caribou in Unit 23. So that
information is being presented to the respective RACs
in that affected area relative to past decisions.
Because it's important that we provide due diligence in these serious considerations.

I think the Chair has provided an opportunity to comment on -- you know, through a working group process, a letter that could be formed to the Board. And remembering the parts of what the RAC can operate under under .805(c) and also relative to where deference is to the RAC relative to the management of healthy populations of fish and wildlife. Also what's in the best interest of subsistence users, to name two of the big four.

Again if a Board goes against a decision of a RAC, it usually has to be couched in some of those criteria. And so -- but providing additional comments to a decision is more than welcome, especially to do due diligence to the process and especially when you're working with a very complex issue and with passion in trying to mediate that issue. And I applaud the RAC's ability to do this and work on this and for an amenable solution.

So that would be my advice.

CHAIRMAN BANGS: Thank you, Tom.

Don.

MR. HERNANDEZ: Yeah. Thank you, Mr. Chair. Mr. Doolittle.

Yeah. I guess my concern -- I guess you can call it a concern might be that, you know, trying to look into the crystal ball and maybe predict what the Board will do is kind of a difficult thing. But just kind of reflecting back on our fall meeting, you know, Mr. Casipit's proposal had the support of the Staff and, you know, by all Title VIII's provisions it certainly seemed like his proposal met the qualifications for, you know, a priority hunt for subsistence users.

You couldn't really -- and I don't think -- even though we voted it down as a Council, I don't think we made a really strong argument as to why his proposal shouldn't be enacted. All we really did was kind of express a concern that maybe we'd like to see something, you know, a little less drastic enacted.
So, you know, I guess I don't want to
-- I wouldn't want to see the Board follow, you know,
what is clear in ANILCA and go against our
recommendation and adopt the proposal and create a
Federal season and, you know, lock out Juneau hunters.
That kind of isn't really what the Council wanted to
see, but yet is the Board going to -- which I don't
think they will, I don't think they're going to take up
a discussion of creating a -- you know, a permitting
system for a draw and try and work all that at the
Board meeting. I don't see that happening either.

So I think we're kind of in the
situation where I don't know if we want to ask the
Board to defer on this and be able to take it up again
assuming the proponent Mr. Casipit or somebody else
wants to, you know, resubmit a proposal. Kind of keep
everything -- that would keep everything kind of status
quo for another couple of years, but I don't know.

I don't really see the desired outcome
necessarily coming out of this Board's cycle. So I'm
just going to throw that out there as another
discussion point.

CHAIRMAN BANGS: Thank you, Mr. Hernandez.

Although I think I -- I disagree with
that. I think that the Board -- now, you know, Mr.
Doolittle would probably, you know, correct me if I'm
wrong, but I think they would consider -- if we had a
working group and came up with a plan that was on -- we
had support possibly from the State and our Federal
agencies to move forward with a draw that was similar
to say the Cordova draw, that in your opinion, do you
think the Board would consider that and possibly change
the hunt?

MR. DOOLITTLE: Well, obviously we
can't predict the future.

But to revisit a complex issue like
that and provide those comments, realizing there might
be an outcome. And it could be deferred. It could be
to amend it to what the working group has said or to
just plain oppose the proposal as the RAC had
originally, you know, convened upon before.
So I think, you know, we can't predict what that future will be, but we can -- you can work toward it to make sure you've got all the best available information to the decision makers. Because it is a multi-tiered process of decision. That's why there is a Board for making those decisions.

CHAIRMAN BANGS: Thank you, Mr. Doolittle.

Any other comments.

MS. NEEDHAM: Mr. Chair.

CHAIRMAN BANGS: Yes. Ms. Needham.

MS. NEEDHAM: Thank you.

Something I was wondering is, and this might be a question for Mr. Doolittle, is whether or not -- I guess one thing we talked about -- and Mr. Casipit raised this as a concern, that this proposal might more likely go on to the non-consensus agenda at the Board meeting. And so I wanted to know what the process might be to assure that it doesn't. And then once it's opened up for that discussion whether or not we could put in subsequent comments to our original decision that we made last fall.

MR. DOOLITTLE: Cathy, I'll ask that question. Because it has gone through the ISC, you know, decision and as a consensus item. So I'll have to get, you know, the specifics on that.

But it still doesn't preclude the ability of the RAC to comment during the Board meeting.

CHAIRMAN BANGS: Thank you.

Does that answer your question, Cathy?

MS. NEEDHAM: It does. To less extent, I mean I think it would be important that we bring this back at the Board level to let them know that this new direction of modeling the Cordova hunt, if we can move it back -- we rejected the original proposal, but we think a draw much like the way Cordova has done it is something that we want to enact and that we want to see that sooner rather than the next wildlife regulatory
CHAIRMAN BANGS: Okay. Thank you, Cathy. Anyone else have any comments or questions.

(No comments)

CHAIRMAN BANGS: Okay. I'd like to take a short recess here. Let's do a 15-minute recess. And we'll convene and decide what we're going to -- how we're going to move forward with this. So take a little break here.

Thank you.

(Off record)

(On record)

CHAIRMAN BANGS: Please take your seats so we can continue here.

Okay. Thank you.

We're going to continue the discussion here. I'd like to come to some sort of a consensus on how to move forward with this -- of the wish of the Council on the Berners Bay moose issue. I'd like to know what the will of the Council is.

(Pause)

CHAIRMAN BANGS: Would you like to put together a working group that we could talk over the next day or so on this and come up with a plan to bring back to the Council to write a letter that I could carry to the Federal Board.

But I'd like to ask Mr. Doolittle to come up and explain what we can do and what we can't do as far as this issue goes before the Board.

MR. DOOLITTLE: Tom Doolittle, Deputy Assistant Regional Director for OSM.
When you look at what you can do, what the Chair has suggested putting together a working group, looking for the advisement and the support of the entire RAC to bring a position forward to the Council -- I mean to the Federal Subsistence Board at the time of the Board meeting on April 12th through your Chair. And ask to take that proposal off the consensus agenda assures that the most relevant and most recent information and mediation to the issue has been brought forth to the Board to the best of your ability for decision is a reasonable process.

And so I made sure to confer that through all the powers that be.

CHAIRMAN BANGS: So is there any questions from the Council regarding what we can do taking this forward to the Federal Board.

(No comments)

CHAIRMAN BANGS: Thank you, Tom.

Okay. What's the wish of the Council. Would you like to put together a work group. And if so, I'd like to get some volunteers.

And I think we could probably do this over this evening, possibly tomorrow and over breakfast or however the work group wants to carry it out, but I think we could come up with some ideas to bring forward to the Council and come up with a good plan to bring forward to the Federal Board.

Any discussion.

Mr. Yeager.

MR. YEAGER: Thank you, Mr. Chair.

Well, I feel apparently this is the window of opportunity that we've basically been looking for, so I would be in favor of putting together a working group and forming something that the Council could decide on before the end of the meeting and have you take forward. But I think that otherwise we're probably going to just end up with this being stalled out and the Board will go on with our recommendation from before.
So I think this is that opportunity that we have. Whether we jump on it or not I guess is up to the rest of the Council.

CHAIRMAN BANGS: So is that in the form of a motion to form a work group?

MR. YEAGER: You asked for discussion.

(Laughter)

CHAIRMAN BANGS: Okay. I'm just asking if you want to make a motion to form a work group. If the rest of the Council is....

MR. YEAGER: I would make that in the form of a motion to form a work group to work on this.

MR. KITKA: I'll second that.

CHAIRMAN BANGS: Okay. It's been moved and seconded to form a work group.

And I guess -- John, would you -- are you volunteering as well?

MR. YEAGER: You asked for discussion.

(Laughter)

CHAIRMAN BANGS: Thanks, John.

Okay. Is there any volunteers for the work group.

Mr. Douville.

Anyone else.

I will volunteer.

Mr. Scott.

Mr. Yeager.

Anyone else.

(No comments)
CHAIRMAN BANGS: So we have Mr. Douville, Mr. Yeager, Mr. Scott, myself. And Mr. Scott would be a reference from the State, not obviously from the RAC.

Mr. Howard.

MR. HOWARD: A question before I volunteer. When will you meet.

CHAIRMAN BANGS: It's up to the group.

Mr. Douville.

MR. DOUVILLE: I didn't hear what you said, Albert. Would you just restate?

MR. HOWARD: Through the Chair. I was wondering when the group was going to meet.

MR. DOUVILLE: That would be up to Mr. Yeager. It's his motion.

(Laughter)

CHAIRMAN BANGS: Mr. Yeager.

MR. YEAGER: Maybe we should vote on this first and make sure we're going to have this before we starting times for a committee we haven't voted on yet.

CHAIRMAN BANGS: Okay. Thank you for that, John.

Okay. There's a motion and a second to form a work group. And I think that we definitely have the volunteers enough to make it happen if we do decide to put together a work group.

So I would like to entertain the question.

MR. DOUVILLE: Question.

CHAIRMAN BANGS: Question's been called.

All those in favor of forming a work
group to discuss Berners Bay letter to forward to the Federal Board, respond by saying aye.

    IN UNISON: Aye.

    CHAIRMAN BANGS: Opposed.

    (No opposing votes)

    CHAIRMAN BANGS: Okay. Motion carries.

Thank you.

So we have Mr. Yeager and Mr. Douville, myself.

And Mr. Howard, are you volunteering?

Okay. Mr. Howard.

So we have a group. And Mr. Scott will be there for reference from the State. So I think that would be good.

And then now when do you feel like would be a good time to meet. In the morning, before the meeting or after the meeting. In the morning before the meeting for a half hour say. And if we don't come to a conclusion, we meet at lunch.

Mr. Howard.

MR. HOWARD: Mr. Chair, is Mr. Yeager going to provide breakfast?

(Laughter)

MR. YEAGER: I'll see what's left on the table back there before I leave.

(Laughter)

CHAIRMAN BANGS: Okay. So I guess we'll try to meet in the morning at 8:00 o'clock.

And I don't know. We'll have to get -- I don't know if we're going to be subject to taxis in the morning again or is there going to be rig to haul people.
MS. PERRY: Mr. Chair, my two gentlemen from Juneau Ranger District, Jack and Ben, will be happy to take all Council members in the morning from the hotel to here.

CHAIRMAN BANGS: Okay. Thank you.

Okay. So we'll -- that's settled. I guess we'll have a meeting in the morning at 8:00 o'clock for discussion about the Berners Bay moose. We'll work on a letter we can submit to the Federal Board to allow for bringing in new information.

So okay. Well, thank you for that. Glad we got through that.

Okay. We need to back up just a little bit here. And we need to take action.

I wasn't sure about Cal's time frame so I wanted to make sure we were able to get through some of this Berners Bay stuff before we finished up on our TransBoundary River letter.

And we're -- if you remember, we were just about to decide whether to move forward with it.

And maybe I could get DeAnna to give us a brief background and what we did.

MS. PERRY: Thank you, Mr. Chair.

The action item before the Council is whether or not they would like to write another letter regarding the TransBoundary Rivers issue.

I think I have provided everybody with a copy of the correspondence policy. There were some questions on the Council and their ability to write letters to certain folks.

So my first question was seeing the letter sent from a governor and lieutenant governor and the senators to the Secretary of State. Did that meet the intent that this Council was looking for when it wrote its letter to the Board back in January.
CHAIRMAN BANGS: Council discussion on the letter.

Donald.

MR. HERNANDEZ: Yeah. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

I think that letter that went out, you know, from the governor, lieutenant governor or representatives is essentially what we were requesting in our, you know, letter to the Board. Was that the Board convey that message that, you know, we wanted those -- them to weigh in at the secretary level, which they did by addressing the letter to Secretary Tillerson.

So I know that, you know, we haven't gotten any direct feedback on our request for a letter, but yet a letter was written which seems to meet our request. So I guess I could be satisfied with that and take no further action.

CHAIRMAN BANGS: Any other discussion.

Mr. Sensmeier.

MR. SENSMEIER: Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

I was -- spoke with Guy Archibald from SEACC. I just passed around a flyer there. He's putting on a presentation tonight. But I told him about this letter and who it needs to be addressed to. And he said it needs to be addressed to the Secretary of Interior and the Secretary of Commerce as well.

And I would hope that we -- this entity would support the Pelley Agreement. I'll bring copies of that tomorrow. He'll distribute those at the film tonight. And that's the international agreement between Alaska and Canada.

So thank you.

CHAIRMAN BANGS: Thank you, Ray.

DeAnna.
MS. PERRY: Thank you, Mr. Chair.

Mr. Sensmeier, I just wanted to point out that the letter that went to the Secretary of State from the governor, it was cc'd, a carbon copy, to the Department of Interior and also the administrator of EPA, but there's no mention of Department of Agriculture. So I didn't know if you were aware of that.

MR. SENSMEIER: Department of Commerce. Secretary of.....

CHAIRMAN BANGS: Okay. I think -- I'm not sure how to move forward with that suggestion, but I know the letter has been sent, the one we sent. And I think what we're calling an action item here on this is just to approve the wording that was drafted by the final version of that letter.

MS. PERRY: Well, the letter's been done.

CHAIRMAN BANGS: Yeah. So.....

Okay. So we need to decide if we want to write another letter, or do you think that's sufficient. It would be another two or three years the way it transpired last time.

(Laughter)

CHAIRMAN BANGS: So what's the will of the Council.

Mr. Yeager.

MR. YEAGER: Thank you, Mr. Chair.

Well, for discussion purposes, it's probably -- it probably doesn't hurt to keep something in front of everybody's eyes, the Secretary's eyes, and has it on their radar, but I'm just bringing that up as a -- kind of an opposite direction there. That maybe more is better.

CHAIRMAN BANGS: Thank you, John.

And I think it's important to note that
a lot of communities in Southeast and other TransBoundary River communities have jumped on the letter writing bandwagon and pushed on legislature and our Congressional delegation to do just that.

So I don't know what the wish of the Council is. Whether you do want to craft another letter or would you -- are you, you know, happy with the letter that we had submitted.

(No comments)

CHAIRMAN BANGS: Well, hearing none, I guess we don't need to take action if there's no will to craft another letter at this point. We could always do one in the fall if things change.

So I guess we'll move on to the next business.

New business.

Call for Federal Fisheries Proposal.

Mr. Doolittle.

MR. DOOLITTLE: Tom Doolittle, Deputy Assistant Regional Director for OSM.

Actually, just as an update, final clearances on the fisheries regulatory cycle, along with the non-rural determination proposals were actually mailed out to the Federal Register Office today. And so we're meeting deadlines and so likely will be -- March 21 will be the deadlines for acceptance of those proposals.

And I say likely. There is one last approval from USDA. Since we have to go through multiple -- actually, through two different departments now for the approvals to -- before we go into the Federal Register. But it's looking like we're on track and under the wire.

So the Federal Subsistence Board is accepting proposals for this year to change Federal regulations for the subsistence harvest of fish and shellfish on Federal public lands and waters for the year 2019/2021 regulatory cycle. You can find this in
your books. That describes the regulatory cycle
process in depth.

The Board will consider proposals to
change fishing seasons, harvest limits, methods of
harvest, and customary and traditional use
determinations. The Board will also accept proposals
for individual customary and traditional use
determinations for residents of national park and
national monument resident zoned communities or those
who already hold a Section 13.440 subsistence use
permit.

There are a number of ways that you can
submit proposals.

If you have a fishery proposal that you
would like to submit as a Council or as an individual,
we can discuss that. You can also submit proposals to
OSM through your Council coordinator by hand or by mail
and we can assist in crafting, if you'd like. There is
also an online process outlined more clearly on the
flyer in your books.

I guess we'll leave it right there.

CHAIRMAN BANGS: I'm sorry. I missed
the deadline for submission.

MR. DOOLITTLE: It will be -- likely be

CHAIRMAN BANGS: Okay.

MR. DOOLITTLE: Yep. So we would need
at least 30 days in there. So we're just getting the
wire.

CHAIRMAN BANGS: So what kind of
outreach do -- does OSM do for the public to submit
proposals?

MR. DOOLITTLE: It's published both
through media outlets. It's on our Facebook page.
It's on our website. We mail it out to affected
regions and Councils. To land management users. So
there's a wide, wide list of statewide sources.

Okay. Thank you.
Any questions from the Council.

Mr. Kitka.

MR. KITKA: Yes. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

Does OSM also send it out to Federally recognized tribes?

MR. DOOLITTLE: Yes. Yes, we do. And of course within all that process of anytime requested consultation both from tribes and from ANCSA corporations as well. We try to get the information out to everybody.

CHAIRMAN BANGS: Any other questions.

(No comments)

CHAIRMAN BANGS: Thank you, Mr. Doolittle.

MR. DOOLITTLE: Thanks.

CHAIRMAN BANGS: What’s the will of the Council here. Do we want to think about drafting any fisheries proposals.

(No comments)

CHAIRMAN BANGS: I think it's something we could probably discuss at a later time if someone decides they want to pursue one before the meeting adjourns on Thursday. That we could bring a proposal. If someone comes up with an idea that you want the Council to consider, that would be something we could do. Just a thought.

Okay.

MR. KITKA: Mr. Chair.

CHAIRMAN BANGS: Mr. Kitka.

MR. KITKA: Mr. Chair, I know we wrote proposals to the State Board of Fish on regulating bagging limits for non-guided sport fishermen. I was just wondering about whether we wanted one for Federal lands, which would mean up river.
CHAIRMAN BANGS: I'm not real clear on that. Is that a proposal for non-Federally qualified sport fishermen?

MR. KITKA: Yes, Mr. Chair.

CHAIRMAN BANGS: It's something to consider for sure. I'm not exactly sure which species or how we would go about that, but I know the Federal Board could impose on Federally -- well, on Federal lands and waters, but I'm not sure about how the Board of Fish would consider changes to a State -- I'm not -- I'm not sure how that would work.

Do you have any ideas on how that would work.

MS. KENNER: Mr. Chair, this is Pippa Kenner.

CHAIRMAN BANGS: Yes, Pippa.

MS. KENNER: Hi. This is Pippa Kenner at OSM.

I just wanted to clarify that the State sportfish regulations apply in Federal public waters.

CHAIRMAN BANGS: Thank you, Pippa.

Mr. Kitka.

(No comment)

CHAIRMAN BANGS: Okay. So that was a question that Pippa answered for me.

I'm thinking that that would be something that would have to go to the State Board of Fish I guess if we were going to change sport regulations in streams. That's why we submitted our proposal for our sockeye to the Board of Fish, which they rejected.

But I think that it would be important that we keep in mind, even though it's three years down the road that we start to take note of stream systems that are showing signs of concern over over-fishing by sport anglers and take note of those so that we can
maybe single out troubled stream systems, but that has
to do with the Board of Fish. And like I say, it's
another three years, possibly longer.

But right now we're discussing any
Federal fisheries proposals.

MR. PAPPAS: Mr. Chair. George Pappas,
OSM.

CHAIRMAN BANGS: Go ahead, George.

MR. PAPPAS: Yes. Good afternoon.

Mr. Kitka -- speaking for what he was
touching there for the Federal Subsistence Board
proposal. If you're looking for potential restrictions
in river to non-Federally qualified on Federal public
lands, that would go to the Board and this would be the
appropriate time to discuss systems or species you have
concerns about within Federal public lands.

Thank you, Mr. Chair.

CHAIRMAN BANGS: Thank you, George.

Any discussion or ideas on an idea of
how to move forward, if you want to do that, Mr. Kitka.

MR. KITKA: I just wondered if -- oh,
thank you, Mr. Chair.

I just wondered if we wanted to go to
the streams that would be affected, like the ones
around Kake. I'm not too sure which ones they were.
But there was also the one around Angoon, and Kanalku,
maybe some of the Hoktaheen maybe out in Icy Straits
and -- and I'm sure there's more. And I know there's
some down on Prince of Wales Island.

CHAIRMAN BANGS: Thank you. Thank you,
Harvey.

Don.

MR. HERNANDEZ: Yeah. Just to clarify
in my own mind. So we might entertain a proposal that
would say close, you know, Federal public waters at a
certain stream to non-subsistence users. That might be
the type of proposal you'd be asking about, Harvey?

MR. KITKA: (Nods affirmatively)

CHAIRMAN BANGS: I take the nod as a yes, Harvey.

(Laughter)

CHAIRMAN BANGS: Okay. Well, I think that would be something that maybe in the next -- you know, maybe before tomorrow or the next morning we could make an idea or a list of the streams that you have concern over and we could look at drafting a proposal before the end of the meeting and finalize something like that. I think that would be a good idea.

I know there's one close to Petersburg that definitely needs some attention.

Mr. Howard.

MR. HOWARD: Thank you, Mr. Chair.

Just a quick idea of what we did in Angoon was we sat and talked with the Forest Service because -- and they're the ones that issue the permits to the known resident sports angler, you have to go through the Forest Service process.

And we asked them as part of that process, can you ask them not to take more than two -- as an example, at the time two coho salmon out of the stream per day versus the State regulation of six. The State allows for a non-resident angler to go in and take six per day out of the stream and six per day out of saltwater, but they can't be at the same time.

But what we did through the permitting process was we asked the Forest Service to only allow them two. And to ask them not to take any as part of issuing a permit to a lodge that allows them to fish the stream. I think -- so what we ended up with was they will either take two per day as part of that permit process or they won't take any.

It ended up most of the time they end up -- some of them take two every day and some of them
don't take any at all. They just do catch and release. So I think there's a lot of options there.

So thank you, Mr. Chair.

CHAIRMAN BANGS: Thank you for that, Mr. Howard.

I think it's important that we explore the options and apply them appropriately to certain streams that are probably getting more pressure than what's being accounted for.

So any other discussion.

Mr. Kitka.

MR. KITKA: Thank you, Mr. Chair.

One of the reasons I proposed this was in some cases in some streams where they -- we're allowing the sport fishermen to take up to six per day. And there's no annual limit on how much they can take. And that far outweighs what the subsistence users are allowed to take out of those same streams.

Thank you.

CHAIRMAN BANGS: Thank you, Mr. Kitka.

And I hope that everyone read the comments that I sent to the Board of Fish. And I echoed exactly what Mr. Kitka said. That they're allowed a virtually unlimited of sockeye for instance, as long as they're processed and kept at six a day, twelve in possession. But they can keep processing them and keep harvesting them and they're not accounted for.

And yet as subsistence users, when we get a permit we have to account for every single fish. And it just doesn't seem right to me that there is no accountability on their part.

So I like the idea that Mr. Howard -- the option that he gave. It makes sense that we come up with some system that makes accountability.

And I think the Board of Fish was open
to that idea. I think they really want accountability, but they're not sure how to go about getting there when the department says that there's no conservation concerns. And they identified one stream system in Southeast, the McDonald Lake system, that there was a problem that they felt. But in questioning the department myself about an individual stream, the department said well, we don't walk that stream. We don't know what the carrying capacity is and we don't know how many fish are taken.

So those are the kind of streams that I think need to have protection and at least some sort of accountability. And that's where my whole issue with the non-resident bag limit is -- needs to be accounted for.

So maybe we can think about that and come up with some proposals that we could move forward that possibly go through the Federal avenue and make the non-resident angler go get a permit and then account for them. If that's an avenue, I'm all for it.

But anyway, any other discussion or ideas.

MR. PAPPAS: Mr. Chair. George Pappas again.

CHAIRMAN BANGS: Yes, George.

MR. PAPPAS: This is the excellent time, this is the perfect time to capture, during this meeting, in the next day or so, if you're going to put a proposal together, if you build on record here a place, you know, a time period and a species, that would be a real big bonus for the proposal synthesis process.

Thank you, Mr. Chair.

CHAIRMAN BANGS: Thank you for that, George.

Okay. Any other discussion on this issue.

(No comments)
CHAIRMAN BANGS: Okay. We'll -- hearing none, we'll keep that in mind. And keep that in the back of your minds for possible discussion in the next day or so. And if you come up with an idea and a proposal we could get the Council to back, that would be helpful.

So I would like to move on to the issue of the call for non-rural determination proposals, which Mr. Doolittle covered, and maybe he'll want to talk about it some more.

Tom.

MR. DOOLITTLE: Tom Doolittle, Deputy Regional Director for OSM.

Hmm. Kind of bad directions on my part for -- okay. I'm here to provide you a brief overview of the new call for proposals for non-rural determination in Federal regulations.

If you actually go to your book on page 90, you will find that in your book.

This is not an action item. And as I said before with the fishery proposals, is that these were submitted at the -- as one rulemaking package that occurs in even number years, thus 2018, and, so again there will be likely a March 21st, 2018 deadline on this.

A little bit of history.

In January of 2017 the Federal Subsistence Board adopted a new policy on non-rural determinations that was developed with input from all ten Regional Advisory Councils. We presented the final policy to you at your winter 2017 meeting about a year ago. It lays out requirements for submitting a proposal and a three-year timeline. Proposals submitted during the upcoming call will be considered by the Federal Subsistence Board in January 2021.

The call for proposals has not opened yet. But, again, I'm presuming that that would be as soon as next week. And that would be open for at least 30 days. So I'm projecting that likely considering that everything was mailed off to the Federal Register
that we'd look at a deadline on that around March 21st, 2018 for submission.

I also want to draw your attention to the flyer and how to submit to change non-rural determinations, which is found also on page 90 -- the flyer. It includes a list of requirements a proposal must contain to be accepted for consideration by the Board and provides information on proposal submission. A form is not required.

The anticipated timeline for the process begins on page 99. And actually I found this -- 99 to actually be a little bit more helpful than on page 100. And I just kind of laid that out. And as I was reading this over last night since I wasn't here for this process on -- the new process for non-rural determination, I think one of the things to remember as we go through what happens in the even number year is that the big layover period where public hearings occur, consultation with tribes and ANCSA Corporation is over an 18-month period. So February of 2019 to July of 2020 is where a majority of the public comment occurs. So that's an 18-month duration.

So then you go through the process in 2020 and it's not until when you look at point bullet number nine in 2021 when the Board -- a Board would vote on that. And then again the next round for non-rural determinations would be 2022.

So this is a four year cycle, again to reiterate that, that begins concurrent with every other fisheries regulatory cycle. So the next calls for proposals, as I just said, would not occur until the spring of 2022.

And again this is not an action item for your Council, but an update of where we're at in the process.

Thank you very much.

CHAIRMAN BANGS: Thank you, Mr. Doolittle.

Any questions from the Council.

(No comments)
CHAIRMAN BANGS: Hearing none. Thank you.

I think most of you remember going through this process with Saxman many times, and resolved.

So any discussion.

(No comments)

CHAIRMAN BANGS: Okay. We'll try to get through one more. The Fisheries Resource Monitoring Program updates and discussion.

Terry Suminski and Mr. Doolittle.

MR. DOOLITTLE: Mr. Chair. I think it's really easy for me to -- that I will defer to Mr. Suminski since you've heard my voice enough in the last hour and a half.

MR. SUMINSKI: Mr. Chairman. Terry Suminski with the Forest Service.

So update on the 2018 Fisheries Resource Monitoring Plan. We are currently in the final phases of the 2018 funding cycle. The Federal Subsistence Board will be meeting February 22nd to 23rd and will finalize the Fisheries Resource Monitoring plan. And that will identify the projects that are selected for funding.

And if you remember, that meeting should have already happened, but it was rescheduled due to the -- what is it called -- the lapse in appropriation for the Federal government. However, even though the 2018 plan hasn't been finalized yet, it is time for the Councils to begin to form the priority information needs for this next cycle, which is the 2020 fisheries resource management program call for proposals that is due out in November of 2018.

The priority information needs are an important component of the program. It has identified issues of local concern and knowledge gaps related to subsistence fisheries using input from the Regional Advisory Councils. The priority information needs provide a framework for evaluating and selecting
project proposals.

This will be -- you won't really be
doing the -- that identification for the 2020 plan at
this meeting. That will happen in the fall meeting.
But it's just a heads up to get you thinking about what
kind of priority information needs you want to develop
for this next fisheries resource monitoring cycle.

Sorry. I hadn't practiced this part.
So I think I'll leave it at that.

Unfortunately, we don't have the
projects selected yet. Like I said, the Board has not
met on it. So I think I would have liked to report on
that, but it's just not ready to be reported on yet.

So thank you.

CHAIRMAN BANGS: Thank you, Terry.

Are there any questions from the
Council.

(No comments)

CHAIRMAN BANGS: I just had one
question regarding funding. Is there a future kind of
idea of how funding looks to be with the new
administration and how -- I know OSM was severely cut
and I'm just wondering if it looks like it's going to
continue to go down.

Mr. Doolittle.

MR. DOOLITTLE: Well, one of the
aspects I think that's always a challenge, and even in
times of adversity, and one of the -- I think the
silver linings that it's been an OSM's program is that
beyond regulation, is that, we do have what I call the
most important fisheries outreach funding cycle, or one
of them in the State and that those sorts of
partnership and capacity building sorts of funding
programs are actually in the new administration -- are
quite popular.

And also from support, both from the
Forest Service budget and from the Department of
Interior's budget, for funding FRMP even though this is
a leaner year have still been in general funding fairly stable.

One of the reasons for this being a leaner year is that we also put additional fundings into the previous FRMP cycle that we're paying for as those projects are reaching their fourth year. And so -- and if we see additional fundings come through, then we would of course do our best to try to apply that to additional FRMP projects.

So we're working within a defined box.

But I guess if there's any optimism that I can provide, it's that no matter who we talk to or what we do in our programs, with anything that's a capacity building program for our communities and being involved in fish management and fish monitoring is to talk it up. Because it is one of the great examples of what we do in resource management and it's been a consistent funding cycle and has maintained its funding even through the leaner times.

And actually, I feel it's really an important part of what I call the new business model. And I'm hopeful that we can keep pushing it at my level to encourage not just the stable funding, but even for more funding for these types of programs. Because they're far reaching in support to our State partners and tribal partners and our other non-government organization partners.

And I can't speak, you know, any more highly of it. And that we're having our meetings moving forward. See the regulatory process moving through. It's all that we're -- we're working through normal channels even though there's been adversity in the process.

So I just -- I wanted to make sure to give everybody a pep talk about this, too. And -- because it's really -- it's very cool.

CHAIRMAN BANGS: Thank you.

We've experienced a lot of doom and gloom over the past few years about reducing funding for pretty much all the programs, but that's a good sign. Because it is critical to the program, I think.
And like you say, the capacity building in the communities is a really -- a positive thing.

So thank you for that.

Any other questions.

(No comments)

CHAIRMAN BANGS: Hearing none.

I'd like to thank you for your presentation.

Okay, Terry. We have you for a chinook update on the Stikine River.

MR. SUMINSKI: Mr. Chairman. Terry Suminski, with the Forest Service.

The 2017 Stikine River preseason terminal area abundance forecast was 18,300 large chinook salmon. So -- and according to the provisions of the U.S./Canada Treaty, a preseason terminal run forecast of that size did not allow for a directed chinook salmon allowable catch for either U.S. or Canada when managing for the midpoint of the escapement goal of 21,000.

This last year the Federal in-season managers delegated by the Board to close the subsistence chinook salmon fishery on the Stikine River for conservation reasons; however, the authority to close the subsistence fishery to apply with the allocation provisions of the Pacific Salmon Treaty was outside the scope of that delegation. Therefore, the Federal in-season manager requested that the Board close the Stikine River chinook salmon subsistence fishery and delegate authority to rescind the closure if the in-season abundance estimate was large enough to produce an allowable catch.

A public meeting was coordinated by the U.S. Forest Service and ADF&G and held on April 13th of 2017 at the Wrangell Ranger District Office. Considerable information was presented on Stikine chinook salmon escapement time, size, and age class distribution and it generated prolific discussion.

There was however no resistance to the impending
restrictions for any of the Stikine chinook salmon fisheries.

The Board approved emergency special action request FSA17-02, which closed the May 15th through June 20th subsistence chinook salmon fishery on the river and delegated authority to the Wrangell Ranger to reopen the fishery if in-season chinook salmon terminal abundance allowed a directed fishery.

And just a little bit on the evaluation of the fishery that did occur with the other species. The fishery performance data included fishing additions, the total number of permits issued, and chinook, sockeye, and coho salmon harvest estimates were reported to State fisheries manager on a weekly basis throughout the season. Telephone interviews with permit holders and effort monitoring, which is the number of nets fished, was used to calculate weekly harvest estimates for each species.

In total, 130 permit holders harvested 14 chinook salmon and 46 small chinook salmon. All of these chinook salmon were harvested outside the chinook salmon season as incidental catch. So they were allowed to be kept.

We did have 100 percent of the harvest permits -- or permittees reported their harvest, which was very -- getting better. Chinook salmon escapement to the Stikine River in 2017 was about 10,000 large chinook.

Key respondents were also interviewed regarding the effectiveness of the new net tending regulation and the consensus was that it provided enforcement officers with the necessary tools to prevent fishers from leaving nets unattended.

U.S. Forest Service Staff from the Wrangell and Petersburg District Office and law enforcement officers maintain a regular presence on the river during the subsistence fishery for observation, education, communication, and enforcement. One violation notice was issued to a Federal subsistence permittee found using two nets for a single household.

In October 2017, the Board issued a new letter of delegation to the Wrangell District Ranger.
The change allows the Wrangell District Ranger to open or close Federal public waters on the Stikine River to the taking of fish for subsistence or non-subsistence uses to comply with the terms of the Pacific salmon treaty. This is in addition to the authority already had to close for reasons to ensure conservation of healthy fish populations, to continue subsistence uses of the fish population or for continued viability of the fish populations or for reasons of public safety.

The forecast for 2018 is dismal. It's 6,900 large chinook salmon, which will likely result in restrictions and/or closures of all Stikine River chinook salmon fisheries. And I'm sure you've all seen it, but I've enclosed in your packet the Department of Fish and Game news release regarding the estimates for the main line rivers.

So that was just an overview of last season.

And if you have any questions -- and I don't -- I guess it's not a big surprise what's likely to happen in 2018 on the Stikine either, so -- but if you have questions, I'd be happy to answer them.

Thank you.

CHAIRMAN BANGS: Thank you, Terry.

Any questions.

Mr. Hernandez.

MR. HERNANDEZ: Yeah. Thank you.

Prior to this past year we had, you know, Robert Larson down there in Petersburg kind of wearing two hats. He was our Council coordinator, but he also was the subsistence fishery manager for that Stikine district.

Is there anybody filling that role now? Or who's doing the monitoring and collecting the information and that for Stikine River now?

MR. SUMINSKI: Yeah. Through the Chair. Mr. Hernandez.
Myself and Martin Hutton, who's the
district Staff officer for the Wrangell Ranger
District. He was very active. He participates in the
fishery himself. He's spent a lot of time on the
river. And we just work together to try to fill Mr.
Larson's shoes in that.

Thank you.

CHAIRMAN BANGS: Any other questions
for Mr. Suminski.

(No comments)

CHAIRMAN BANGS: Thank you, Terry.
I just hope that the returns improve.

MR. SUMINSKI: Yeah. I hope there's a
pleasant surprise.

CHAIRMAN BANGS: Okay. We're moving
pretty quickly through the agenda. And I'd like to
maybe step -- I'm not sure how this will set with the
agenda, but what I would like to do is recess here for
the evening, but then allow for the work group to start
at 8:30 and then reconvene the meeting at 9:30.

I know that it's advertised at 8:30
every day, but there will be someone here. Most of us
will be here. But that would give the working group
some time in the morning. And then we'll reconvene the
meeting at 9:30 if that's okay with the Council.

(Council nods affirmatively)

CHAIRMAN BANGS: Do I hear -- see any
objections.

(No objections)

CHAIRMAN BANGS: Okay. So we'll recess
until tomorrow at 9:30 and have the work group meet at
8:30.

So okay. Thank you. We're doing a
really -- a good job of moving through. And I think
we're covering the bases, so thank you guys.
(Off record)

(PROCEEDINGS TO BE CONTINUED)
CERTIFICATE

UNITED STATES OF AMERICA

STATE OF ALASKA

I, Salena A. Hile, Notary Public in and for the state of Alaska and reporter for Computer Matrix Court Reporters, LLC, do hereby certify:

THAT the foregoing pages numbered 02 through contain a full, true and correct Transcript of the SOUTHEAST FEDERAL SUBSISTENCE REGIONAL ADVISORY COUNCIL MEETING, VOLUME I taken electronically on the 13th day of February in Juneau, Alaska;

THAT the transcript is a true and correct transcript requested to be transcribed and thereafter transcribed by under my direction and reduced to print to the best of our knowledge and ability;

THAT I am not an employee, attorney, or party interested in any way in this action.

DATED at Anchorage, Alaska, this 17th day of February 2018.

Salena A. Hile
Notary Public, State of Alaska
My Commission Expires: 09/16/18