

NWX-DOI-FISH & WILDLIFE

Moderator: Eugene Peltola
April 26, 2018
9:30 a.m. AST

Coordinator: Welcome and thank you for standing by. Your lines are open for the duration of today's call. If you'd like to mute your line you may press star 6 to mute and star 6 will open your line again.

((Crosstalk))

Woman: (Unintelligible)...

Coordinator: Today's conference is being...

((Crosstalk))

Coordinator: ...recorded. If you have any objections you may disconnect at this time. And now turn the call over to the Orville Lind. You may begin, sir.

Orville Lind: Morning. (Unintelligible) everyone. This is tribal consultation on fisheries special action 18-03. Folks, I would wish you all a good morning and I know there is going to be some tribes that are probably going to call in just a little bit later, so I'm going to go back and see - and check to see who's called in.

Again, thank you for taking the time. This is an opportunity for government to government consultation with the Federal Subsistence Board. And we have OSM staff here and we will go ahead by introductions. I know I have a person calling in at 9:40 (unintelligible) because his time is only been at 9:40, so I'll ask him to probably to give comments or testimony then.

So my name is Orville Lind. I'm the native liaison for OSM and to my left...

Eva Patton: Good morning everyone. Eva Patton, Council Coordinator for the YK Delta (Reg).

Gary Decossas: Gary Decossas, Fisheries Biologist and Statistician for the (unintelligible) for Office of Subsistence (unintelligible).

Pippa Kenner: Hello. I'm Pippa Kenner and I'm an Anthropologist here at OSM.

Clarence Summers: Hello. My name's Clarence Summers. I'm with the National Park Service. I serve on the interagency staff committee for the Nation Park Service. I'm here today representing our board member (Burt Frost).

Carol Damberg: Well my name's Carol Damberg. I work with the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service and I also serve as an interagency staff committee member and I'm serving the representative for my board member (Gregory Sicanic) for the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service.

Robbin LaVine: Good morning. My name is Robbin LaVine and I'm also an Anthropologist here at the office as Assistance Management.

Orville Lind: Well thank you folks. How are you guys hearing us out there? We coming in pretty clear?

(Rhonda Hipka): Great. This is (Rhonda Hipka), Federal Assistant for a public member.

Orville Lind: Thank you, (Rhonda). Taking the time. I know you're very far away from us right now. I hope you're not getting too sunburned, but thank you for calling in.

I'm going to ask the folks online right now to state your name and which tribe you represent very clearly. Folks go ahead.

(Rob Decander): (Rob Decander) (unintelligible) traditional lead of council. I'm on the statistics board.

Orville Lind: Thank you.

(Robert Decander): Loud and clear.

Orville Lind: (Unintelligible).

Mary Willis: Mary Willis, Stony River traditional council.

Orville Lind: Thank you, Mary.

(Sam Jackson): (Sammy Jackson) II, Akiak Native Community tribal council.

Orville Lind: Thank you.

(Tracy Simian): (Tracy Simian), native (unintelligible).

Orville Lind: Thank you.

Man: (Unintelligible) council (unintelligible).

Orville Lind: I didn't get that. There was some interference there. Could you repeat that please.

(Tim Zicar): My name is (Tim Zicar) and I represent the Crooked Creek traditional council.

Orville Lind: Thank you, (Tim).

Man: Yes.

Orville Lind: Anyone else?

(Walter Morgan): Good morning. I represent the Lower Cascade tribal council.

Orville Lind: And your name?

(Walter Morgan): (Walter Morgan).

Orville Lind: Thank you, (Walker) (sic).

(Anna) Mallette: (Unintelligible) (Anna) Mallette.

Orville Lind: What was your name again?

(Anna) Mallette: (Anna) Mallette.

Orville Lind: Thank you, (Anna).

(Anna) Mallette: (Unintelligible).

Woman: (Unintelligible).

Orville Lind: Quyana. Thank you.

(Sam Jackson): I'm (Sam Jackson) with the Akiak Native Community.

Orville Lind: Thank you, (Sam).

Woman: (Unintelligible).

(Ken Stallmicker):Morning, Orville. This is (Ken Stallmicker) with the Fish & Wildlife Service at Yukon Delta National Wildlife Refuge.

Orville Lind: Good morning, (Ken). Anyone else?

(Dan Gulligan): This is (Dan Gulligan)...

((Crosstalk))

Man: (Unintelligible)...

(Dan Gulligan): ...with the native...

((Crosstalk))

Man: ... (unintelligible).

Orville Lind: (Dan), would you...

((Crosstalk))

(Dan Gulligan): (Unintelligible)...

Orville Lind: ...go ahead and repeat that again please.

(Dan Gulligan): This is (Dan Gulligan) with the native village of Napaimute.

Orville Lind: Thank you, (Dan).

(Janet Ascrebal): This is (Janet Ascrebal).

(Mare Matthias): And this is (Mare Mitthias) from Ursica Mute traditional council, native council.

Orville Lind: Thank you for calling in.

(Mark Larry): (Mark Larry), native village of Napaimute.

Orville Lind: (Larry), thank you for calling in.

(Michael Williams): (Michael Williams) (unintelligible) native community.

Orville Lind: Thank you, (Mark) (sic).

Woman: (Mike Williams).

Orville Lind: (Mike). Oh.

Woman: Yes.

Orville Lind: Anyone else? Well not hearing anything else, folks -- again -- if you would star 6 -- mute -- your phone unless you're ready to speak. We're going to begin with an overview of Fisheries Special Action 18-03.

Gary Decossas: Hi again. My name is Gary Decossas and I'm the Kuskokwim area Fisheries Biologist with the office of Subsistence Management.

Let's begin the discussion on Special Action 18-03. I'll provide a summary here of the request.

Temporary Special Action request 18-03 submitted by the Akiak native community quest the following three things.

One, closed federal public waters of the Kuskokwim river drainage to the harvest of Chinook Salmon except by federally qualified subsistence users possessing a community harvest permit between May 20 and July 1, 2018.

Number two. Reduce the pool of eligible harvesters based on that Alaskan National Interest Lands Conservation Act, Section 804, Subsistence user prioritization (unintelligible) implemented in 2017.

And three, establish a harvest allocation of Chinook Salmon similar to what was implemented at 2015.

So that's a summary of 18-03 and thank you.

Orville Lind: Thank you, Gary.

At this time I know we have one person online who's asked to go ahead and speak and that would be Mr. Walter Jim. Are you on the line?

Man: (Unintelligible).

Orville Lind: Star six to speak.

(Walter Jim): Hello?

Man: We're trying to get online with you. We're calling in from Akiak. We got technical problems a while ago. If you can hear us now I'm here. I'm an (unintelligible) Chief Akiak native community (unintelligible) Vice Chief, (Sam Jackson) and (Sam) wanted to (unintelligible) I believe want to (unintelligible) to (Michael) join us later on from (unintelligible) hospital. He is just (unintelligible) someone down.

But for the record we've got (unintelligible) (Williams) from Akiak (unintelligible) corporation, (Bobby Williams), Akiak native community staff and (Will), our technician (unintelligible) (Robert Lake) and that's all we have here.

Orville Lind: Well thank you. We heard you loud and clear. And I'll try one more time. Mr. (Walter Jim), are you online?

Okay. So I'm now going to open the floor for the tribes to go ahead and voice their comments or have questions for our staff for federal subsistence board members here. The floor is open.

(Tim Zicar): If I had a question about the clarification of what was implemented (unintelligible) in 2015 for the similar, you know, the similar allocations? Could you clarify that for us? This is (Tim Zicar) of Crooked Creek.

Orville Lind: Yes, (Tim). We have our staff here ready to do that. Hang on one second.

Pippa Kenner: Well this is Pippa Kenner and I just had something go down my air-pipe and I think I'm coming back up now. Thank you. This is Pippa Kenner and I work for or with them, I'm a staff member.

I'm just going to take a drink.

Orville Lind: All right. Can you guys hear her?

Man: Yes.

Orville Lind: Okay.

Pippa Kenner: So in 2015 specific community (unintelligible) I have it right there.

Gary Decossas: All right. This is Gary Decossas. Pippa swallowed a fly or something like that. I'm going to read what she was going to read.

Pippa Kenner: I'm (unintelligible).

Gary Decossas: Specific community allocations were based on each community share of the average total subsistence harvest of Kuskokwim River's Chinook Salmon over a 20-year time period, which is 1990 to 2009. That's generally the time period that was considered unrestricted.

Designated fisherman were assigned to harvest Salmon for each participating community and Salmon were distributed to federally qualified subsistence users. In Bethel, the Natural Resource Department of ONC -- organized allocations of Chinook Salmon to over 100 summer fish camps used by Bethel residents who are identified in a Section 804 subsistence user prioritization analysis.

Designated fisherman harvest its Salmon that were then distributed to federally qualified users without access to fish camps were requested allocation.

So that's what happened in 2015.

Orville Lind: Thank you, Gary.

Pippa Kenner: Does the caller have any questions about that? Was that clear?

(Tim Zicar): What was the total number for the allocation?

Pippa Kenner: It was about 7000 Chinook Salmon. That was divided amongst 32 communities.

(Tim Zicar): Thank you.

Pippa Kenner: You're welcome.

Orville Lind: Floor is now open to anyone else.

(Walter Jim): Good morning.

Orville Lind: Good morning.

(Walter Jim): This is (Walter Jim) calling. I'm the tribal council present for the native village of Bethel.

Orville Lind: Good morning, (Walter). Thank you for taking the time to call in. You have the floor. Go ahead.

(Walter Jim): Thank you. Just providing testimony in support of the designated fisherman program that was implemented in 2015. And that's similar to the special action request by Akiak.

The native village of Bethel supports that program similar or identical to that one that was implemented in 2015. And I provided testimony the other week here in Bethel stating that the - that we do support that designated fisherman program or that community harvest program that was implemented in 2015.

That's all I have for now.

Orville Lind: Quyana. Thank you very much for that, (Walter Jim).

Carol Damberg: Mr. (Walter Jim), this is Carol Damberg with the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service as part of the Federal Subsistence Board representative and I just wanted to get a clarifying comment from you if I could. It's - your idea of looking at that particular permit system and how you see that as something that would facilitate your harvest there, what do you see as the advantages of that system for you?

(Walter Jim): When that program was implemented in 2015 each community had designed their allocation. But they offered permits to those fish camp for people that had fish camps.

For instance the Bethel - for Bethel -- I think -- we had a total maybe 150 fish camps and there were 53 permits issued and those permittees also fished for two other fish camps, which would - which totaled critical to 150 or a little bit more than 150 fish camps.

There's a lot of support for that program. We saw it as a success. There is no griping. People were happy. The community was happy. I didn't see any resentment or hear any resentment from nearby communities that implemented this program that was initiated in 2015.

Another reason why we lean towards this is over the last couple years the whole river was opened up -- even in this time of conservation -- everybody was allowed to go out there to fish. That's not conservation, you know. Last year it was open up twice and that first time it was opened up there is maybe 500 fishermen out there. That's not management.

In the times of conservations you want to, you know, have this river -- in my opinion -- have this river sectioned off in sections and certain days for those sections to fish with that designated fisherman program implementing that designated fisherman program.

Like -- for instance -- ONC during 2015 -- like I stated earlier -- there were 53 permits issued, but all those permittees -- let's say -- the odd numbered permit holders were allowed to fish that first opening when it was available. And all those permittees that had the even numbered permits were allowed to fish the next time. And it would - it went back and forth every time they had an

opening and so they got their - a lot of allocation, which at that time I believe was (unintelligible) King Salmon per fish camp.

Carol Damberg: Thank you so much for that explanation. I really appreciate that and that helps me out a great deal in understanding and giving me clarity. Thank you.

(Walter Jim): (Unintelligible).

Orville Lind: Thank you, Carol, and thank you, (Walter Jim). And the floor is...

(Walter Jim): Thank you for allowing...

Orville Lind: ...still open...

(Walter Jim): ...thank you for allowing me to talk.

Orville Lind: Thank you for taking the time. Quyana.

(Walter Jim): Thank you. Good morning.

Orville Lind: Good morning. Anyone else?

Mary Willis: This is Mary Willis at Stony River. Are you able to hear me?

Orville Lind: Yes, loud and clear.

Mary Willis: Okay. Okay. My - I have to say that we are over 300 river miles up the river. We're the - we are so far up the river, we're not close to the Delta. Back in 2015 that did not work out very well for us. And we have, you know, it's a disadvantage to us, because we're so far up the river that by the time what

little fish was caught, you know -- towards down the lower Kuskokwim -- a lot of it didn't make it up here.

I remember when somebody dropped off -- what -- six or seven King Salmon. The whole village had to split it up between what -- what do we have -- like, 58 people in their village. And we had to cut that - those six or seven King Salmon that were given to us to - but we were still happy. We weren't complaining, because we wanted to see our Kings get replenished again.

And then we heard about some people, you know, down river from us catching 100 or whatever and we were, like, "Oh my goodness." But at least we're trying to get, you know, those King Salmon to come back.

And we - up here we do not see, you know, doing that 2015 all over again. I think, you know, a lot of us should quit, you know, saying, "Well we didn't get our 100 for the winter." We should be just happy with letting them replenish it again and go by and give them a chance to go to their spawning grounds again. Because I think that, you know, we're talking about, you know - I can't remember what the last person said that - but I'm kind of really disappointed that we're, you know, trying to do this again instead of trying to wait for it to replenish.

I'm, you know, we're so far up the river like I said. We don't even get hardly anything at all. But what little six or seven that we have for our village everybody splits it up and we're happy for that, because we do know that whatever passes us, which is - we don't know how many, you know, those are the ones we're going to have to count on to go to the spawning grounds.

But we're - we are against the early May or the end of May and early June, which is going to -- we believe -- severely hurt, you know, hurt them from going past and going up to their spawning area. But that's all I have to say.

Orville Lind: Quyana. Thank you very much, Mary, for sharing that information with us and taking the time to call in. Thank you for that.

Carol Damberg: Again this is Carol Damberg with the U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service and thank you so much for that comment, Mary.

I don't know - this is actually for (Walter Jim) again if you're online. I just -- in clarity -- I hear that you're for the permit system. I was curious whether or not you had any idea on the date as to whether or not the June 12 date was appropriate or you were looking or an earlier date. If you could provide any clarification that'd be great.

(Rob Decander): Hello. This is (Rob Decander) with (unintelligible) tribal council. (Walter Jim) is our President, our Council President.

This (unintelligible)...

Orville Lind: Go ahead.

(Rob Decander): Yes. What was the question again there?

Carol Damberg: The question was I heard (Walter Jim) speak to the desire to have a permit system and my question was whether or not there is any thought in regards to the date, which currently is - for the Akiak one -- I believe -- there was for an opening of May 20 versus what was proposed as a June 12 opener by the in-season manager.

So I was wondering if there was any thought process on that as to which date.

(Walter Jim): I been, you know, on this river a long time. I've been fishing (unintelligible) and over the years I've noticed the first run is usually the one that goes up to the head waters of Kuskokwim. And I would think maybe (unintelligible) May 20, maybe 25 or - well it all depends on when the ice goes out. They usually go up right after the ice goes out.

But - and May 25 isn't that far off from 20, the one on the 18-03 Akiak one.

Carol Damberg: Okay. Thank you.

Orville Lind: Quyana. Anyone else?

(Jackson Williams): Hello. This is from Akiak.

Orville Lind: Go ahead. State your name.

(Jackson Williams): (Jackson Williams) from Akiak.

I just want to reply to Stony River that lady was saying that. Three four years ago we had a unit four meeting in (Talstak) and, you know, this guy from (Talstak) -- I won't say his name -- attending the unit four meeting on the fishing and he works at the (AVCP) and that year -- three, four years ago -- was sent up to Stony and (unintelligible) all summer. And when he tell us it was very much a different story from that lady that was speaking from Stony.

((Crosstalk))

Man: (Unintelligible).

(Jackson Williams): That that (unintelligible) this guy had a smoke house, tell him to come and when he check - open the door that smoke house was already almost full of King Salmon, Chinook.

And she told this guy come evening check the (unintelligible) and this guy tell him so many Kings get caught and the (unintelligible) on the (unintelligible) they sink. So many Kings were being caught and that -- to me -- that's not right, but I heard from this guy from (Talstak) telling us. That's all I got. Thank you.

Orville Lind: Well thank you. Folks -- again -- if you're not speaking please star 6 your phone and so -- again -- if you want to speak star 6 again, so anyone else would like to make comments or have questions? Go ahead.

(Michael Williams): This is (Michael Williams) from Akiak.

Orville Lind: Good, (Mike).

(Michael Williams): Yes. We're not - the special action request just simply says to close the river for conservation purposes on May 20 until July 1. And we're not saying that, you know, we're just trying to look at the framework of 2015 that had strengths that had worked.

But - and we try to allow the up-river folks to catch what they needed from their historical fishing sight up river, but the state of Alaska did not allow that to happen up river. We supported that, but they had to come down from Akiak on down to federal waters to get the - that 20-year average allocation.

But I think that this effort we are looking at having the same program and I really appreciate (unintelligible) council observation on what really worked on the river without combat fishing. And the (unintelligible) is the one that we spend a lot of time trying to figure out how we can avoid combat fishing down here that those fish are heading up river.

And I think the (unintelligible) you know, the - I'm very glad that those Kings last year hit the head waters around Nikolai and (unintelligible) and those green they have been hitting there and some of the other (unintelligible) are, you know, there's, you know, trouble with counting those (unintelligible) in the (unintelligible) rivers (unintelligible) and other tributaries.

But I think, you know, those - the special action request simply says that we still have that conservation concern and we have the memorandum of understand between U.S. Fish & Wildlife and (unintelligible) fish commissions that agreed to - that if these negotiation and agreement that we would have a positive program that will benefit everyone from Nikolai all the way down to (unintelligible).

This is one river and we need to keep our fish health and also our people healthy. So those conservation measures that we have adhered to and I really appreciate the conservation efforts up and down the river, the extreme restrictions that our people have been enduring and I think the last two years we had a goal of 40,000 for the whole river of harvest - harvesting happily (ANS) that we talked about.

But I think I - you know, I think those dates are only for conservation purposes that the customary and traditional uses have the first shot at our food that we eat on the river.

And in that meeting in the (unintelligible) last year from post season we heard a lot of comments from our elders, along with those elders from other communities. I just wanted to clarify that and right now the Aniak (unintelligible) if it's closed and they have 10 Kings allocated per household all Alaska residents are permitted to do that in the times of closure after June 11.

But I think if it was allowed in 2015 it would have been fair for everyone up and down the river. Thank you for listening to me.

Orville Lind: Quyana. Thank you, (Mike). Thanks for taking the time to call in.

At this time I'm going to ask anyone online to - who has not yet introduced themselves and which tribe they represent go ahead and do so now.

Man: (Unintelligible).

Orville Lind: Say that again.

(Robert Decander): (Robert Decander) from ONC, which is (unintelligible) traditional native council on the subsistence...

Orville Lind: Got it. Thank you.

(Robert Decander):...member.

(Jackson Williams): Yes. The - we're supporting Akiak's (unintelligible) 18-03. Still we feel for them up-river people, you know. We'd like to give them a chance too.

And down here we're, you know, if a federally qualified fisherman should fish and where we trying to rebuild a Salmon, Chinook Salmon.

Man: (Unintelligible).

(Jackson Williams): And we feel to meet our (unintelligible) needs here. And last year it was kind of late and I had trouble kind of...

((Crosstalk))

Man: (Unintelligible).

(Jackson Williams):...keep my fish. And I would cut it with the start of the raining season.

Man: (Unintelligible).

(Jackson Williams): (Unintelligible) opening your too late in the season.

Man: (Unintelligible).

(Jackson Williams): And...

Man: That's (Jackson).

(Jackson Williams):...and we - I say maybe instead of 20th maybe 25th be okay to open and close her the (unintelligible) on May 25 we do not support.

But another deal was we - conservation to me is the whole river, not just part. I know they open the - above (Aniak) last year and I didn't - that's not

conserving. The - they said there was no impact on the Salmon, because there's not enough people up here. And so they opened it.

Man: (Unintelligible).

(Jackson Williams): And another thing is fish (unintelligible) are on there 24/7.

Man: (Unintelligible) people (unintelligible).

(Jackson Williams): They say they have live things and let them go, but, like, that Akiak guy says or the guy with the (unintelligible) he wouldn't let none go.

Man: Oh man (unintelligible).

(Jackson Williams): You know in nature. Like I said we support...

((Crosstalk))

Man: (Unintelligible).

(Jackson Williams):...that 18-03 that Akiak put through. Thank you.

Orville Lind: Quyana. Thank you, (Robert), for that. We're still open to comments, questions.

(Ralph Nelson): Yes. Hello?

Orville Lind: Go ahead.

(Ralph Nelson): Yes. (Ralph Nelson), native village of (Napontiak). And in 2015...

Man: Why?

(Ralph Nelson): ...the Chinook river was closed. We had an opportunity with permitting where people of (Napontiak) they had - and the elders and everybody had a...

Man: Everybody...

(Ralph Nelson): ...unintelligible of our Chinook that year and if it still could be possible if we could do that again, because we had - we took that opportunity that year and people had food on the table. That's the question in regard.

Orville Lind: (Unintelligible) thank you for that.

(Tim Zicar): Yes. Hello. This is (Tim Zicar) here.

Orville Lind: Go ahead, (Tim).

(Tim Zicar): Hello. Can you hear me?

Orville Lind: Yes. We can hear you.

(Tim Zicar): Yes. I just wanted to say, you know, that guy that was talking about somebody catching fish in Stony, you know, cool story, bro, but what about all that stuff that goes down downriver that we always hear about. You know, you guys commercial fish down there and catching all these fish -- boatloads of fish -- and your nets are all the way across the river and you're talking about somebody in Stony, you know. You know, they don't have a store up there and, you know, subsistence is subsistence all over. We can't just say that, you

know - and we know you guys are doing the same thing down there. We hear it every year.

So trying to laugh about that and you don't hear anybody laughing about all the stuff going on down river. There's a lot more people down there. One person up here is not going to - is not the whole up-river people. You know, we didn't catch any fish here in Crooked that I know of, because I was, you know, out there every day. I see everybody. I don't see no full smoke house here.

We had to - we were told we had to go down to Aniak to get our fish and we didn't get any fish. Who's going to run all the way down to Aniak to get 10 fish. That's 70 miles. We don't have gas money to go that far and by the time we get there the fish will be soft. So laugh about that.

Orville Lind: Thank you for that. Folks -- again -- we're - I'm going to ask if anyone else online who has just chimed in or called in and not introduced themselves yet, if you would please do that now, state your name and which tribe you represent. Go ahead.

Man: (Unintelligible).

(Duane Hoffman): Hi. This is (Duane Hoffman). I'm from Kalskag. I don't know if anybody is online for Kalskag or not.

Orville Lind: Go ahead, (Duane).

(Duane Hoffman): Yes. I'm kind of like what the other people are talking about up river. We - in Kalskag we're right at the boundary to where Aniak could fish and on up and we didn't see hardly any...

Man: (Unintelligible) river working group.

((Crosstalk))

(Duane Hoffman): ... (unintelligible) that was when we had that opening.

But...

Woman: Hello (unintelligible).

(Duane Hoffman): ... I could be in opposition with that, with this proposal.

We - the little fish that we did catch we handed them out to the elders and they were happy for that.

A couple weeks ago the Fish & Wildlife Service flew up here and had a little meeting of what we think should be happening. And everyone that attended that said what fish that we got, because we didn't get any Salmon Kings, but we were grateful for the few that we did get. Thank you.

Orville Lind: Thank you -- quyana -- for that, (Duane).

Woman: (Unintelligible).

Orville Lind: Are you from upper or lower Kalskag?

(Duane Hoffman): Upper Kalskag. Or well it should be upper, because we're just Kalskag...

Orville Lind: Just Kalskag.

(Duane Hoffman): ...there's no in between.

Man: Yes. Come on, (Duane).

Orville Lind: (Unintelligible).

Man: (Unintelligible).

Orville Lind: Okay. Floor again is open for more discussion, questions or comments. I think I want to remind folks online that we do have federal subsistence board delegates available to ask question directly or make comments to.

Man: (Unintelligible)...

Mary Willis: This is Mary Willis...

((Crosstalk))

Man: ... (unintelligible)...

Mary Willis: ...here again at Stony River.

Orville Lind: Go ahead, Mary.

Mary Willis: I just like to say thank you to (Tim) from Crooked Creek for that reminder that -- yes -- we did have to send people to Aniak to go down to Aniak and fish in 2015. So they're - it's absolutely untrue about that story about somebody having a smoke house full of Chinook Salmon and laughing about, you know, laughing about my testimony or whatever. But thank you so much,

(Tim), for saying that and (Wayne) from - (Duane) from Kalskag, yes we are, you know, we are happy for a few handful of fish that we do get and I'll be signing off here in a little bit.

Having - it feels like - it always feels like whenever we have these meetings or, you know, opportunities to have testimony that someone, you know, some individuals always try to make fun of us or try to have, you know, well, you know, put, you know, up river against down river or whatever. And it has that bad vibe, you know. But that's all I'm going to say. Thank you to (Tim) for, you know, sticking to your guns for those few King Salmon that we do get, you know, and we are happy and I know you guys know how we feel.

And (Duane) at Kalskag thank you. And I will sign off at this moment, because I'm not too happy about, you know, but, you know, it is a comment period and the village of Stony River is dead set against 18-03, because we need to let this - the - replenish, you know, so I'm going to sign off again and...

(Michael Williams): Mary...

Mary Willis: that's all I have to say.

(Michael Williams):...before you sign off, this is (Michael Williams). I'd like to respond that the state policy...

Mary Willis: I'm not going to argue with anybody. I'd just like to...

(Michael Williams): No.

Mary Willis: ...(unintelligible).

(Michael Williams): I just wanted to say...

Mary Willis: I just want to be...

(Michael Williams):...the policy...

Mary Willis: ...I just - I feel...

(Michael Williams):...the policy...

Mary Willis: ...I felt disrespected...

((Crosstalk))

(Michael Williams): (Unintelligible)...

Mary Willis: ...when the guy previous...

((Crosstalk))

(Michael Williams):....(unintelligible).

Mary Willis: ...that spoke previously before you did...

(Michael Williams): No.

Mary Willis: ...the last time. So before I get...

(Michael Williams): (Unintelligible)...

Mary Willis: ...upset I'd rather just say, you know, "Okay. This is not going to work." That's exactly why the village of Stony River does not send reps down river, because I was even stopped on the street of Bethel and said, "Well why did you go against us?", you know, so...

((Crosstalk))

(Michael Williams): (Unintelligible).

Mary Willis: ...I'm not going to do that again. So I will let you guys go. Thank you.

(Michael Williams): Mary, can I...

Mary Willis: Bye.

(Michael Williams):...say - I'd like to, you know, I think this - the policy of the state it goes from Aniak all the way up and we were allowed, you know, we try to include the upper before their traditional fishing grounds to harvest Kings at the time.

What we did with Kalskag -- through negotiations -- we put the marker down between Tuluksak and Kalskag and to allow - to include that from that spot to - all the way up to Nikolai and that is - we accommodated that for the people of Kalskag.

And also I would say that those 10 fish that we're...

((Crosstalk))

Woman: (Unintelligible).

(Michael Williams):...talking about, that was okayed by (unintelligible) the fish to allow up-river folks to harvest 10 folks - the households to harvest this coming summer and to a special action request or special action by the state.

But I think, you know, what about down river? I think we need to stay away from, you know, there's different policies that affect us. There are the Aniak rules and also the state regulations are, you know, we have to work together to deal with this issue and to avoid, you know, we have one river and we're all in a related up and down the river.

And we need to work together and that's the goal that we have and only through negotiations and agreements we can move forward and, you know, some of these comments -- I think -- are really out of frustration and et cetera. But that person from (unintelligible) I think, you know, when I go and meet and listen to the people I think those comments have been really in a way that we all need to work together and support each other. And I just really appreciate what, you know, (Tim) has to say.

And only seek communication and information. We're (unintelligible) on regular basis. We'll be avoiding all of these misinformation and misleading comments. But I think, you know, we can work together to do that and - but the (unintelligible) request is simply for conservation purposes that the people on the river that customarily and (unintelligible) depended (unintelligible) has the first crack, not all state residents. Thank you.

Orville Lind: Thank you for that, (Mike). And folks -- again -- I just remind you quickly that this is an opportunity with tribes to consult with the federal subsistence board members. And with that -- again -- we'll open the floor for anyone to make any comments, questions.

((Crosstalk))

Man: (Unintelligible) Hello.

Man: (Unintelligible).

(Rhonda Hipka): Hi. This is (Rhonda Hipka). I just wanted to make a comment...

((Crosstalk))

Man: (Unintelligible) and I would like to comment.

Orville Lind: Go ahead, (Rhonda). I think you were first. Go ahead, (Rhonda).

(Rhonda Hipka): Sorry. I just wanted to remind everyone, you know, to stay focused on the proposal and that this is a government to government consultation. So, you know, please...

Man: Yes.

(Rhonda Hipka): ...keep that in mind.

Man: Thank you. That was sweet.

Orville Lind: Thank you, (Rhonda).

(Jerry Peterson): (Jerry)...

Orville Lind: Go ahead whoever's next. State your name, tribe and...

(Jerry Peterson): ... (Peterson).

Orville Lind: ... go ahead.

(Jerry Peterson): (Jerry Peterson) (unintelligible) tribe.

We do oppose this opening from that period of time. I've - I used to guide here (Tauplok) and I've seen the trend of the fishing at certain openings that do affect our fishing up here.

When they fish at certain openings it wipes out a certain school of fish, it's any fish, not only (Chums). When I guided we had the fish or if I fish net here back in the '80s and '70s when commercial fishing was going on, but now look at the population trend. We are lesser up in the upper Kuskokwim River, then that compared to the lower Kuskokwim on an area.

We see this. We have to fish a lot to catch the few fish that we need in comparison to down river. They - there's a whole bunch of them. They do block a lot of the fish that comes up here. And each tributary one school that they fish for can wipe out a whole tributary. That fish that used to go to that certain tributary.

So I think the (unintelligible) process of opening fishing does affect any fishing, not only (Chums). But still (unintelligible) I see it, there's a lot of them, there's hardly anybody fishing for those. Reds are getting few as well. (Chums) we still have some of those. I think that the - maybe the fishing periods need to be lesser, because they're not only wiping out the (Chums), but the whole other schools.

We - I see that. I've been grown, raised up here in this upper area. We do really oppose that, but I should say maybe lesser hours of fishing. Not a whole 12-hour period. Possibly evenings too and maybe in the mornings. That's all.

Orville Lind: Quyana. Thank you for that.

(Dan Ezye): Could I make a comment. This is...

Orville Lind: Hello.

(Dan Ezye): ... (Dan Ezye). I'm joining late.

Orville Lind: Go - what was your name?

(Dan Ezye): (Dan Ezye) from Nikolia. I'm - I joined late.

Orville Lind: Yes. Go ahead. Go ahead.

(Dan Ezye): Yes. Our village is in opposition of that 18-01 proposition. So don't send no paperwork up to our village to sign or anything like that. They're totally against it.

We work real hard to get our Salmons back up and then there is no use to - if it's not broke why try to fix it? It's - that's the opinion of the folks here in Nikolia and I could talk for people in McGrath and Takotna too. They feel the same way. Thank you. I've got to get back to my subsistence activity.

One of the young people stopped me when I was going out and they went out to my hunting area and told me to voice his opinion, because it's important. Thank you.

Orville Lind: Thank you, (Dan). Go ahead, (Clarence).

Clarence Summers: Hi, (Dan). It's Clarence Summers, National Park Service. I'm glad you're online.

Could you clarify your opposition. That was to 18-03? I believe you said 18-01. Was it...

(Dan Ezye): Oh 18-03. Excuse me.

Clarence Summers: Okay. Thanks. Appreciate it.

(Mark Larry): This is (Mark). I'd like to talk.

Orville Lind: Okay. Your name?

(Mark Larry): (Mark Larry), native village of (Napania).

Orville Lind: Go ahead, (Mark). Good morning.

(Mark Larry): Yes. Good morning. A lot of misconceptions being thrown out this morning from both sides, you know, and causing hard feelings.

I live both up river and down river and I can understand. And I could sit here this morning and clarify all those misconceptions that have been thrown out, but that's not what I'm here to do.

The one thing - the one benefit that I do have living both up river and down river is that I see everybody needs fish. You know, everybody needs fish.

But I've been asked to come here to testify about is really simple. I've been asked to echo a testimony that was given on April 19 from Kalskag to Nikolia and that testimony was to leave the early King Salmon run alone. No fishing prior to June 12.

That's what we believe in. That's what we've seen, the benefit that leaving those early fish alone has brought to the head waters. It's not so much about people up river catching more fish. It's about getting more fish to spawn.

And what's happening in those head water streams is amazing, amazing. And we're on the right path and we should not disturb it at this time. Be a little more patient. Leave those early fish alone. We've heard it from Kalskag to Nikolia and I'm here to echo it again on behalf of the native village of (Napania). Thank you.

Orville Lind: Quyana. Thank you for that, (Mark). Thank you for taking the time to call in. I appreciate it.

The floor again is open to anybody else.

(Anna) Mallette: I'm (Anna) from (unintelligible).

Orville Lind: Go ahead.

(Anna) Mallette: I'm (unintelligible) the proposal, because last year (unintelligible) there's three (unintelligible) split three ways and some farmers they don't get any fish at all, King Salmon at all. And I oppose (unintelligible). Thank you.

Orville Lind: Yes. Could you state your name again please?

(Anna) Mallette: (Anna) Mallette, M-A-L-L-E-T-T-E from City of Lower Kalskag.

Orville Lind: Thank you so much. Thank you for taking the time.

(Anna) Mallette: You're welcome.

(Walter Morgan): Hello. This is (Walter). Can I speak please?

Orville Lind: (Walter), go ahead.

(Walter Morgan): Yes. It's (Walter Morgan) representing Lower Kalskag. I'm - you know, I've been on the boards for quite a while now and seem like in - you know, every organization just I've been in with central (unintelligible) advisory and also inter-tribal, the newly formed board.

You know, we've been working and it takes a lot of effort and a lot of travel, a lot everything, you know, and what we believe what the people say. And I'm representing the people. And we want to work for that June 11 closing, because we want to replenish the first run.

You know, why ruin something that we've been working for years and, you know, with - I, you know, feel for our down-river people, they're - they want to eat fish, but geeze, we just wait I think, you know, it'll benefit in years to come, even for our kids. You can't only think about us. This is for our kids, our little ones we have. You got to think of them too

We're trying to make that run strong. Let's make it strong, then we can move to something, you know, and we're really against this and, you know, I know a lot of people from down river. I have nothing against them, nothing. If they just wait and let the run rebuild.

Look, we work so hard to get this done. Why ruin it? Okay. Thank you.

Orville Lind: Quyana. Thank you for that, (Walter).

Man: Hello?

Orville Lind: Anyone else?

(Darren Deacon): Yes. This is (Darren Deacon), tribal Chief of native village of upper Kalskag.

Orville Lind: Go ahead, (Darren).

(Darren Deacon): Yes. I just wanted to echo what (Mark Larry) had said. I've known him practically my entire life and during that time he's never, ever favored on part of the river or the other. He loves the entire river.

And when he thinks about it he literally thinks about Nikolia down to the coast. You know, I really believe in the words that he says, the information that he has and when he says something I usually try to shut up and listen. He'll know better than anybody.

And I love to talk too much, but we, y0o we definitely want to see the fish rebuild. We want to hang Kings too, but I would much rather us have a little bit now and more in the future. I have two kids and I know they love fish and I know we all have kids. We all have grand - some of us have grand kids and they love fishing too and it's them we need to think about, you know, and I just wanted to say that I support what (Mark Larry) says.

He travels up and down the river constantly, you know. I'm surprised he doesn't have a hovercraft right now for ice travel. But I just wanted to say that, you know, we support what he says. We support the closures for the full run, so that they can get up to the head waters and that.

You know, I'm not sure if fish and games (unintelligible) this meeting, but, you know, it takes a lifecycle of, like, five years. So from the first time that we started saving it'll be five years before we start to see any benefit. It's going to take a long time to rebuild these runs, but I think it's something that the entire river can agree with that needs to be done and we want to do it for our kids.

Orville Lind: Thank you for that. Anyone else?

(Sam Jackson): Yes. (Sam Jackson) here.

Orville Lind: (Sam), go ahead.

(Sam Jackson): (Unintelligible) native community. I really wasn't going to say anything, but with the comments made and all that a lot of repair must be done here. Now if we go keep on this path and go - keep going-- let's say -- 10 years down the road how much damage is going to be done. Not only to the fish, to everybody.

We all, you know, we also have other tributaries down here around my area that these dates reflect - they affect. By my experience the keys are all the Kings kept at a later date. But (unintelligible) Kings (unintelligible) at a later date. Please (unintelligible) can you set at a later date. Are we affecting (unintelligible) those problems to in 10 years.

This up-river, down-river BS, you know, is getting old. But (unintelligible) about the survival of our grandchildren. We also down here too need to sink about that and with the population growing below us we've got to split equally and think equally of these rivers.

And what our proposal, you know, is to give everybody a fair chance at that little bit of fresh taste instead of holding it out and targeting these other rivers by waiting longer, you know (unintelligible) these other tributaries down here. We're not, you know, we've got to somehow come in the middle.

And -- from experience too -- I agree with (Robert Decanders) opening statements that the fish usually go up after break up and we can agree on one thing I believe is that we've been having earlier break-ups. So, you know, I - hopefully there's not too much damage done that we can sew things together, because I also sit in the middle of the river I believe.

I - what's happened down river affects me, what's happen up river affects me. So we need, you know (unintelligible) federal subsistence board, you guys just can't think about the (unintelligible) you got to think about this other tributaries down here too and got to find some kind of a way to equal it out so we, you know, we just - we don't concentrate on the lower (unintelligible) Chinook. Thank you.

Orville Lind: Quyana. Thank you for that.

(Andrew): Hello?

Orville Lind: Go ahead.

(Andrew): (Unintelligible) (Andrew), native village of (unintelligible) and also...

Orville Lind: What village?

(Andrew): Native village of Napakiak.

Orville Lind: Okay. Go ahead (Andrew).

Man: (Unintelligible) native village of Napakiak.

Man: (Unintelligible) native village of Napakiak.

(Rob Nelson): (Rob Nelson), native village of Napakiak.

Man: Okay. Thank you.

Orville Lind: Thank you. Anyone would like to make comment?

(Ivan): Yes. (Unintelligible) and community.

Orville Lind: Yes. Go ahead.

(Ivan): Thank you. My name is (Ivan), I'm (Ivan), Chief Akiak native community.

We said we did - we testified in (unintelligible) to the board, Federal Subsistence Board pretty much trying to get back to the original working relationship with the Bureau of (unintelligible) Affairs and then the U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service that was in existence when they first came. And you have a constitution by law that allow us to speak on our behalf (unintelligible) well-being and food security across the board.

Since 2008, '09, '10, '11, '12, '13, '14, '15, every (unintelligible) my elders will now speak for them. I am 72 years old and I've seen this river for about 65 years, fishing with it and my elders.

We care for this Salmon that's given to us by the higher powers and they - we - everything got confusing in those years. Everybody was in charge of fish. State of Alaska, advisory board fishing, except they didn't listen to us.

Finally we thank you for allowing consultation, your (unintelligible) obligation to us and we want to make that message clear between you and the Federal Subsistence Board and us and the tribal communities and request that you honor the elders that are beginning to ask questions, what's going on? Why can't I eat fish anymore?

They're - they know the river. They look at it and they don't have code or numbers, but they -- with their eyes and their experience -- they know healthy runs when it happens and most of them say -- all of them in fact -- if there's no two days of rain and south wind the fish - the Chinooks usually are not as much as before, because most of them pass by, but we get two days of southern winds and waves that drive the fish into the river that's what they like mostly. They say there'll be a lot of Chinooks and King Salmon.

We would need to begin this tribal consultation process, because they're the most effected and they're basically asking when will - we need to eat this fish. It's a health food for all of us and we care for it and we don't go crazy out there and fish like nobody else. They were controlled by them. They (unintelligible) with the ask, "How's the fish going?", and they make sure the young people understand that.

But thank you for this opportunity to - on our request to hear. There's a minority that are in their homes right now and I'm trying - and I'm speaking for them, that they need an opportunity and the best drying season out the door. We look weather is nice where our fish can dry very easy, couple of days hanging, smoking. That's when they try to beat the rainy weather where house flies really bother us when we - fishing is running heavy.

But we're not going to try and take all the fish in the world, just what we need. The heavy runs normally are (unintelligible) third week of - third and fourth week of June they're really running heavy. We don't - we get the quota of what we need in homes about that time and we don't go down and fill up our boats even they're running heavy.

But those that are late, that's an opportunity for them also. That's all we ask. (Unintelligible) consultation between the indigenous native people from this area and the United States of America government.

State of Alaska (unintelligible) they started 1969 and they got all the so-called data, which sometimes we don't agree with that. All of the fish don't come up the river in one shot and that's the end of them. That's - it doesn't work that way. Come up and pass by, because they go by cycle on who's going to - which Salmon is going to come into the river in each year.

But we celebrate it and we thank you for that (unintelligible) allow us to be heard, because we're minority now all the people left in charge of it don't agree with (unintelligible). It hurts our elders. (Unintelligible) eat that first King.. celebrate it and put away couple of days for (unintelligible) and the rest for (unintelligible) but still try to get other species like (Chumfin), (Redfin) (Silvers) if necessary, but allow us to do our traditional fishing, what was - what we have done and that's basically it.

I believe we have (Jack Williams) here that would like to speak. He's (unintelligible) if you'll allow us.

Orville Lind: Yes. Absolutely. Thank you for those words of wisdom. Thank you for your knowledge and thank you for taking the time to talk about government to government consultation. It's very important especially when you're faced with such a large river system that includes many tribes and -- yes -- we are mandated to listen to hear your voices, so thank you for that.

Go ahead (Jack).

(Jack Williams): Yes. It's (Jack Williams), tribal member. I'm also a Vice in corporation.

And, you know, I fully much agree with (Ivan), you know. We've been together all these years. I'm a little younger than him. I'm (unintelligible) there, I'm 71 and I know this river upside down.

When I say I know this river upside down, very young age my dad taught me fishing and that's how I know this river upside down.

You know, a lot of things that - when (Ivan) mentioned that, you know, fish - the - I - also I'm on the committee (unintelligible) committee fish and game here and none of these things that all of this board of game whatnot, (unintelligible) that really (unintelligible) up. You know, we as a people like (Ivan) stated (unintelligible) uses (unintelligible) and blankly since especially a year ago or 2012 when they close us out (unintelligible)...

((Crosstalk))

Man: (Unintelligible).

(Jack Williams): ...and this was really hard for, you know, me and my family.

((Crosstalk))

Man: Special action (unintelligible)...

(Jack Williams): And we kind of became like cooks to craving on the Chinook that first come. And the board of fish that approved were elders in this (unintelligible) to at least have them a chance to, you know, eat.

And I was thinking these past years that not only test fishery in Bethel should have a test fishery below even (unintelligible) and (Tuksak) that way we'll be...

((Crosstalk))

Man: (Unintelligible).

(Jack Williams): ...of knowing the fish run in the Kuskokwim.

And hopefully, you know, that people, you know, like some years are on whether (unintelligible) you know, spoiler of the fish that we prey, dry them out and when the weather comes, catch the (unintelligible) some seasons is not the same (unintelligible) all the time.

But anyway I appreciate and thanks for input and thanks for, you know, like some kind of agreement and we ask the people of this Kuskokwim up and

down. We're (unintelligible) since -- yes -- you know, people and thanks for information and that we had some - thank you so much.

Man: Next we have (Moses Owen) tribal councilman (unintelligible) from Akiak native community. (Moses)?

(Moses Owen): Yes. Good morning. This is (Moses Owen).

You know, something - we eat fish. We survive on that. And it's pretty hard -- like (Ivan) mentioned earlier -- it's pretty hard on our elders. You know (unintelligible) want to close it completely, like fish are telling me one thing, they don't survive on (Sisuck) River.

We do downhill, that's (unintelligible) lively (unintelligible).

Woman: (Unintelligible).

(Moses Owen): And we want to keep it. We want to keep it open, so that we'll at least get something, you know, for our elders and families.

So -- like (Ivan) said -- we don't do combat fishing once it's open like that. We do it in our own time, taking our time, not everybody going out and trying to catch everything. But we want to keep it open, so that we can practice our right to fish and live off our - the river here.

The Salmon that are provided to us by almighty God is for our use. It's not for anything else. For our good - thank you very much.

Man: (Unintelligible).

Orville Lind: Quyana. Thank you for that. Anyone else? Anyone from Napakiak want to make some comments or have questions?

(Mare Matthias): Hello?

Man: (Unintelligible).

Orville Lind: Go ahead.

(Mare Matthias): Hi. My name is (Mare Matthias) and I'm from Nightmute. I am currently acting as the Natural Resources Director for (Urksa) Nightmute native consult.

Orville Lind: Go ahead.

(Mare Matthias): We too support Chinook Salmon conservation as stated in Akiak's request. We support OSM consulting with 33 federally recognized Kuskokwim River tribes to establish and appropriate harvest allocation among tribes that will work for their communities.

We know designated fisherman's permit didn't work for everyone, which is why we need this consultation. On average that's all test fisheries shows about 14% of Chinook Salmon will have passed Bethel test fishery by June 11. Most people here know Chinook Salmon didn't really start coming in until mid-June.

Regardless we do not want combat fishing and limited block openers again and would rather request a community harvest permit. This strategy will address conservation concerns and allow for Chinook harvest opportunity. Thank you.

Orville Lind: Thank you, Mary. Quyana.

(Greg Jacob): Hello?

Orville Lind: Yes.

(Greg Jacob): Yes, sir. This is (Greg) (unintelligible) from the (Pokiak).

I heard something about four (unintelligible) on this phone lines while we're on the teleconference. And I'm really in oppose of (unintelligible) because I've - I have been a witness of (unintelligible) King (unintelligible) that time when we were using (unintelligible) for our subsistence gathering for (unintelligible) along the Kuskokwim.

I am really opposed to (unintelligible) for (unintelligible). That's all I have to say.

Orville Lind: Quyana. Thank you for that, (Greg). (Greg), what is your last name, (Greg)? (Jacob)? Got it.

Woman: (Jacob)s last name.

Orville Lind: Oh okay. (Jacob). Thank you. Anyone else?

((Crosstalk))

(James Charles): Hello.

Orville Lind: Go ahead.

(James Charles): Hi. My name is (James Charles) from (Tunatulak) and my village (Tunatulak) may be the last one on the Kuskokwim River and the last village anyway and (Eak) is on the other side, but I didn't hear anybody from (Eak).

But I had to cancel my flight reservations this morning to talk to you and I checked the council office and nobody was there, so I'm on my way to this teleconference.

And anyway I live downhill at (Tunatulak)s in the (Siwusuki), like, that guy from the (Pokiak) was - anyway - and I was born and raised on the fish. I survived on the fish, eating black fish too.

But anyway I am fish and game at (unintelligible) committee chairman for lower Kuskokwim and Fish & Wildlife Service advisory council member and inter-tribal fish commission too and a working group member.

Anyway, I survived eating fish, but we (unintelligible) in fish camps like I mentioned the other day at the meeting. We spent time in spring camp all spring and let me think about Chinook fishing.

But the people - my father, uncle, grandmother all died within one year when I was a kid and mom raised me and my sister, my brother. So there was three of us that mom raised us and she was a hard worker too and fished and trapped and so I was just a little boy.

Anyway, this Special Action Request 18-03 we may not support that 18-03, because we at the mouth of Kuskokwim has been closed for a long time and we have been on conservation effort, because we have people up and down the river.

We are all the way up to head waters and we had been on the conservation efforts, because of the fish and game and others (unintelligible) this 18-03 may not work so good down here, because we -- even Bethel and (Pokiak) catch King Salmon before us too.

Anyway we don't start early as the mouth of Kuskokwim, because we get a lot of debris and stuff like that and we don't go catch debris. We catch - we don't want to catch - there's some twigs and the grass and stuff like that and we don't fish early. So that's my comment. Thank you.

Orville Lind: Quyana, Mr. (Charles). Thank you for that and thank you for taking the time to call in.

Again, we're consulting with the Federal Subsistence Board delegates today on fisheries Special Action 18-03 and -- again -- the floor is open to any more questions.

Man: I believe (Jackson) of Akiak (unintelligible) (Jackson Williams) has a - little bit more comments.

Orville Lind: Go ahead, (Jack).

(Jackson Williams): Thank you so much again. (Jackson Williams) from Akiak.

You know, this sanctuary it's - I'll just say personally from my side -- you know, this is a very extended, very too long.

(James) mentioned that also from (unintelligible) and, you know, when I went fishing game in Anchorage is people that I heard -- one person mentioned --

that we should start having an accurate count of our - how the fish
(unintelligible) from (unintelligible) on up and below.

You know, when I heard how many years ago from (unintelligible) people down there -- that (James) mentioned earlier -- he knows the river up from his area. And the way he knows the (unintelligible) fish - there's a creek or (unintelligible) above (unintelligible). They call it (gally).

And when there are so many fish they go in that slew and come out. He didn't say, like, this - when there's fish they go in there and come out. He said like this, "When there are so many fish they go in that (gally) slew and come out.

People are like human (unintelligible), I know this river upside down.

And the one last comment I was thinking I would mention King (unintelligible) and I appreciate it and I always thank my elders that they didn't let the fish and game (unintelligible) in King's (unintelligible). And up to this date that King's (unintelligible) is the provider of Akiak and (unintelligible). There are so many fish.

And hopefully when I testimony there in Bethel how many years ago I mentioned there are a lot of fish up there and hopefully fish and game will conclude that sometime for Akiak and down below open the (unintelligible) maybe or (unintelligible) King's (unintelligible). Thank you.

Orville Lind: Quyana for that.

(Ivan): This is (Ivan) and I'm not trying to hog everything. I just want to close my comments and keep quiet.

But for the record I would like to commend...

((Crosstalk))

Man: (Unintelligible).

(Ivan): ...the (unintelligible) subsistence board to (unintelligible) the opportunity along with the tribes to consult and speak to the board.

((Crosstalk))

Man: (Unintelligible).

(Ivan): That's a big thing for us. We thank you and we'd like to keep this relationship going for the success of our (unintelligible) younger people and us and we - and this greatest nation of ours, please continue the consultation and thank your staff and the board members for that, our appreciation. God bless you. I'll be listening. Thank you.

Carol Damberg: Hello, (Ivan). This is Carol Damberg, representative of the U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service and I guess we would just echo -- I'm sure as the board -- it's really important for us to absolutely have these consultations and to hear the voices, to have the opportunity to ask questions and both ways and to have that really good dialog.

So these calls are extremely important and we really appreciate the time and energy of everybody that takes the time out of their busy day to get on that phone line and listen and participate, for us to all hear what people are saying and their concerns are and what their questions are. So we thank you very much for that, (Ivan).

Man: Carol (unintelligible).

Orville Lind: Anyone else?

(Mark Larry): Yes. Yes. This is (Mark Larry) (unintelligible).

Orville Lind: Go ahead, (Mark).

(Mark Larry): I wanted to clarify our position. We're not opposed to the Special Action Request, the different parts of it. What we are opposed to is an allocation strategy that begins before June 12.

But in thinking that further, you know, maybe, you know, because the allocation strategy that we've heard is for 30,000 fishing today. We heard it was for 40,000 fish. You know, taking that off the front of the run will be detrimental.

But maybe a lower allocation strategy could be considered, a much lower allocation strategy could be considered for that timeframe between May 20 and July - June 12, I'm sorry. Maybe based on the allocation for 2015, which was 7000, you know.

We understand that people need fish a little bit, you know, early on everywhere, but as it stands today if the allocation strategy is to take 30 to 40,000 off the front of the run before June 12 we adamantly oppose that. Thank you.

Orville Lind: Thank you for that clarification, (Mark).

(Michael Williams): This is (Michael Williams).

Orville Lind: Go ahead, (Mike).

(Michael Williams): Yes. Yes. I appreciate that comment, (Mark). And the number came from the last two years, the 40,000. Last year we only have us at 15,000, the whole river and the year before that there was 40,000 and - to harvest, but there was only 32,000 taken the year before that.

But I think what Akiak Special Action is we're not stuck to that 30,000 number or 40,000. We're stuck to conserving the Kings and how much the - you know, we had experienced 1000 allocations from U.S. Fish & Wildlife and the proposal to 3000, but we negotiated with 7000 to that date. And we're not stuck to the number. That is all up to - for negotiation.

And we're not talking free-for-all fishing, no. No. No way that can happen right now. And I - we understand that and -- again -- if this Special Action Request is approved and we'll go into negotiation and (unintelligible) the memorandum, a understanding that we have and whereas, you know, I - you know, with that King fish permit, household permit up river I, you know, that's what we try to accomplish before in 2015 or, you know, when we allowed - when we did that in 2015, we try to do that to accommodate for those people in Stony River, McGrath, Nikolia to harvest in their traditional fishing grounds, but that didn't happen.

But the support is there for everyone in the - up and down the river to have, you know, have something to eat and to make sure that we still conserve and the (unintelligible) are made. And I'm pretty proud that we have been able to make these (unintelligible) goals the last few years and with exception of, you know, our tributary.

And - but I think with that, you know, I just really appreciate, you know, this is not for free-for-all fishing opening at the 20th of May. No. We're - I think we're better than that and we can achieve that when we come down with numbers and still conserve those. And I just really wanted to say that and thank you very much.

Orville Lind: Quyana. Thank you, (Mike). Anyone else?

(Tim Zicar): Yes. This is (Tim Zicar).

Orville Lind: Your name again?

Woman: (Tim).

(Tim Zicar): (Tim Zicar).

Orville Lind: Oh, yes. Yes. Go ahead.

(Tim Zicar): Okay. Yes. I was just wondering, you know, we should have a more, you know, a more clear view of the Special Action Request that is talking about, because all we got - you know, here is the -- you see -- it says, "Establish a harvest allocation of Chinook Salmon to - similar to what was implemented in 2015.", and that's all. That's all we got.

So does that mean that we're going to not be able to fish up here on state waters and, you know, what's the allocation for, you know, down river? You guys are telling us 10 fish were up here. What about, you know, down there? And why can't it, you know, before - you know, be the same for the whole river, because why would they need more?

You know, someone said that, "People up river don't survive on fish." How do they know that? They don't live up here. What, they just make stuff up like that or they just know that? I don't know. I just wanted to know that. Thank you.

Pippa Kenner: Hey, (Tim) (unintelligible). This is Pippa Kenner and I work at OSM and your questions are very good and I'm going to try to answer them one at a time.

I'm not sure if you know this, but the Federal Subsistence Board -- who your consulting now -- generally only will - only use it as authority on federal public waters. And that means the (unintelligible).

So for the purposes of these Special Action Requests and this Special Action Request we can only talk about waters from the mouth to Aniak, because those (unintelligible).

So from the refuge on up to the head waters that is in the - since 2014 those communities and that subsistence fishing has generally been managed by the state of Alaska through the Alaskan Department of Fish and Game.

What happened in 2015 is we got a Special Action (unintelligible) Federal Subsistence Board by the Special Action Request that (unintelligible) this allocation system. And the reason why they wanted (unintelligible) that there were - the run was forecast to be very weak of Chinook Salmon.

And so there were going to be short openers during the Chinook Salmon run. And what was happening during these short openers is that everybody was fishing, because they thought and knew that this would be their only

opportunity to harvest Chinook Salmon from Aniak on down, which is where the federal (unintelligible) was managing.

And so in 2015 we got this request for an allocation system so that throughout fishing a (unintelligible) run people could service Chinook Salmon when they wanted to up to a community quota. So the communities where there are a lot of (unintelligible) and historically have been part of harvest where subsistence had higher allocations and communities - smaller communities got smaller allocations based on their historical harvest.

So there were people in the up-river who could only get their allocations in the refuge waters since the board only was using its authority for refuge waters. And so even though they had allocations they had to go down to Aniak and below to harvest that allocation.

Now the Bethel tribe realized this was a problem and there was an effort on their part to harvest Chinook Salmon and send it up to the up-river villages.

But during that year - after that year a proposal went to the state board of fisheries that said, "We need an opportunity to fish up here when it's otherwise closed.", like they do down below with this allocations system.

When the board of fish agreed and said, "Each household -- even when it's otherwise closed -- (EBF&G) can issue (unintelligible) boarder and allow each household 10 Chinook Salmon."

So right now the system - we appear to be working (unintelligible) above Aniak fish and games can allow each household 10 (unintelligible). And below Aniak the refuge managers managing (unintelligible) for two years he's been allowing short 12-hour openings. Last year there were three 12-hour

openings and one 6-hour opening (unintelligible) fishing was six (unintelligible) Salmon.

So this year what (unintelligible) Alaskan (unintelligible) we're discussing now is (unintelligible) is they want to go back to that allocation system so that they can fish when they want to until they reach their community allocations.

The date that that would start -- whether it would start on May 20 or May 25 or June 12 -- that's not even in the request. The request says nothing about when that would start. It just says we want an allocation system.

And in preparation for that allocation system, because the forecast is similar to recent forecast -- which are near or below historical average Chinook Salmon -- they want the state fishery not be able to harvest. They want (unintelligible) they want - that's what the - this request is about.

It's closing to non-subsistence fisheries. They don't want that (Chum) commercial fishery starting early. They don't want there to be sport fishing. If they can't fish sport fisherman shouldn't be allowed to target Chinook Salmon and that's what this request is about.

A lot of information. Do you have any questions?

Man: Yes. It sounds like a lot a, you know, stuff that's not clear yet, you know, not clarified for something to be, you know, approved on right now. I mean why would we agree to this if, you know, they're not even sure on the numbers, what they want to take down there? What if they go for the maximum of, you know, 40,000 instead of a lower number? They could come to the table with a, you know, a definite number. We could know what we're actually approving or, you know, disapproving of.

Pippa Kenner: Right. (Unintelligible) what's been happening - apparently what's been happening since 2014 is that -- even though we have (unintelligible) forecast that we (unintelligible) is accurate and we know at what strength the Chinook Salmon run is going to be coming in -- there has been conservative management.

And that means they've been - people have been deciding to keep the downriver fishery closed beyond what a reflection of that forecast against (unintelligible) goals is. So they've been keeping it closed maybe more than what the pre-season indicators are telling us.

And the harvestable surplus has been kept - the harvestable surplus meaning what the subsistence fishery can take, that number has been kept lower than what the run forecast is indicating.

So if you see down river fisherman is where the population of people are. They've been choosing to sacrifice more than what the forecast for the (unintelligible) is good for healthy populations of Chinook Salmon.

So that harvestable surplus, we don't know - I can't tell you what that number will be, but based on the past three or four years it will be conservative.

(Michael Williams) Mr. Chairman?

Orville Lind: Go ahead.

(Michael Williams): (Michael Williams). When we did our (unintelligible) research, you know, that's where that 30,000 harvestable surplus came up with as an example. And we've been looking at the data since 1984 and up until now and that number

from the last few years we worked on that number and based on the U.S. Fish & Wildlife and that 40,000 (ANS) was allowable, you know, after - I lost my train of thought.

But I think with that 40,000, you know, we had -- like I said -- 15,000 was taken last year, the year before that 32,000. But there's a buffer and that 30,000 number came up after analyzing those numbers.

But I think what I'm looking at is to be conservative and to feed our families from the first (unintelligible) is what I heard from the elders of their desire to eat a fish. So we're not - we haven't been allowed to eat fish from May 20 until June 12 and this long period of time to be without Salmon.

And now -- of course -- we had the non-tributary, you know, eating white fish or Pike and it just really, really tough. But I just appreciate your explanation about that what the state board official deciding for up river and we support, you know, I personally support that, that permits, household permits that are allocated with 10 King Salmon.

But I think what we did in 2015 I think it was - if it was allowed it would have been - it would have worked for folks above Aniak, but -- again -- I just really know that our relatives up river do not have an impact on the returns of the Chinook, because of the low population.

And I just really appreciate that and I have my uncles, cousins in (unintelligible) and up and down the river all the way to Nikolia, my cousins up there just, you know, I think, you know, we've done a really good job and because of the - what, you know, what we're all sacrificing down here and it shows in that (unintelligible) work and that Nikolia -- above Nikolia -- those - and that's where the good numbers are with green. And I just really appreciate

that and those are my final comments and I just hope that we come down to negotiation and we're not fixed on the number, but that to conserve and to move forward with having everybody have the chance to eat fish.

(Unintelligible) Go on.

Orville Lind: Quyana, (Mike). Thank you for that.

(Ken Stallmicker): This is (Ken Stallmicker). Orville, can I make a - maybe a clarifying comment?

Orville Lind: Absolutely.

(Ken Stallmicker): I keep hearing this number 40,000 being thrown around and I just - I need to put a little bit of perspective on that and maybe it'll help the conversation, maybe it won't.

But when I keep hearing that -- for example -- last year there was a - an objectives to harvest 40,000 and we didn't make that and so forth. I think it's important to point out that the way we set up our management scenario each year is in consultation with the inter-tribal fish commission, the U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service, the state of Alaska.

We identify a target harvest number. And then we begin to develop harvest strategies that might allow for that amount of harvest.

Last year -- at the beginning of the season -- we did identify that potentially 40,000 Chinook Salmon were available for harvest. The way the run came in last year -- being late -- we very quickly into the season modified that harvest objective. In fact we essentially did away with it and our focus became trying to manage openers to make sure that we met the minimum escapement target.

So I think to say that we had -- or to imply -- that we had a harvest objective of 40,000 and because of the way we manage we didn't make that is - that's not the entire story. That number was intentionally changed during the course of the season because of the circumstances that presented themselves.

This year, I'll say essentially the same thing. It looks -- early on -- like, you know, we will begin to structure management with the intent of trying to harvest 40,000 -- roughly 40,000 -- Chinook. But we need to be aware that as conditions begin to reveal themselves we need to be flexible and adjust that either down or up depending on what the actual conditions are. So that - and

I'm saying that mostly -- because if we do get to a point where we are looking at an allocation -- to identify a hard and fast number particularly something at this point in the year -- like 40,000 or even 30,000 or whatnot -- I think we'd be irresponsible until we get a sense -- a better sense -- of what the run is actually going to produce.

So maybe I'll stop there. I don't know -- again -- if I've lent any further clarification to that at all or just muddied the waters, but thanks for your time.

Orville Lind: Thank you for that, (Ken). So any more tribal members have any comments or questions for fish Special Action...

(Tim Zicar): Yes. I had a question.

Orville Lind: Go ahead. Your name?

(Tim Zicar): Yes. Yes. This is (Tim Zicar) again. I just had a question about the, you know, the importance of the (unintelligible) and loading as what we're talking about,

so if all this consultation, because you know I'm on that Kuskokwim inter-tribal fish commission and that's, you know, that's what we're always trying to (unintelligible) closure until the first run the Salmon has passed and that's what we want to - that's what we all agreed upon.

I was, you know, under the impression that that's what we agreed upon and then this seems to be, like, going against that or contradicting that and is that what I'm getting at? Is that kind of going to go against that or...

(Ken Stallmicker): (Tim), I don't think so. I think with (unintelligible) manager's comment, you know, I think these projections and the data that we go through all winter long and, you know, I've been looking at the numbers for many, many years and I think that issue, you know, of - you know, of front-end loading I think it's up to the process with - at (MOU) with Kuskokwim River inter-tribal fish commission, which the - everybody agreed to.

And it's clearly spelled out in that (MOU) about that process and I think for that conservation purposes and to make sure that everybody is healthy I think - and I think the overall goal has been to have one management system on the river, the federal government, the state government and the tribes on the river.

And working together in partnership to achieve all of that so we wouldn't have these hard feelings. And we've discussed it for quite a few years now and I just really appreciate what we've been able to do in the last few years. So I think that goal is still there to have a strong partnership between all three governments and to take care of all of our people and our fish on the river, all the species.

So, you know, I - we haven't seen any commercial fishing in the last few years either down here and we, you know, no commercial fishing since '80s in

the Kings or somewhere around there. But, you know, we haven't - and we haven't seen (Chum) or (Silver) commercial fishing down here.

But I think where the prices we've paid is the high seas and the Bay down there and commercial fishing and we're paying a heavy price for that here on the river historically and hopefully that we'll be rebounding like the Yukon Rivers rebounding right now. But I think these efforts together we can achieve a lot of that. (Unintelligible).

Orville Lind: Thank you for that. I...

((Crosstalk))

Man: (Unintelligible)...

Orville Lind: ...want to remind the tribes too...

((Crosstalk))

Man: ...unintelligible).

Orville Lind: ...that there's another opportunity this afternoon at 1:30 to call in for the government to corporation consultation and that's where corporations can call in at 1:30. And then I will also be facilitating that meeting.

And also if tribes think of something we're certainly open to hear your comments again at 1:30. So with that said does anybody have anything more to comment on Special Action 18-03?

(Darren Deacon): Yes. This is (Darren Deacon) in...

((Crosstalk))

(Mark Larry): This is (Mark)...

(Darren Deacon): ...Kalskag.

((Crosstalk))

(Mark Larry): ...this is...

Orville Lind: Go ahead.

(Darren Deacon): So I agree with what -- I believe it was (Mike) -- was saying about the high seas and the commercial fishing and the traveling fleet, that we're paying the price...

((Crosstalk))

Man: (Unintelligible).

(Darren Deacon): ...but one thing I do want to...

((Crosstalk))

Man: (Unintelligible).

(Darren Deacon): ...say though is earlier I heard somebody was talking about that it was - people are having a hard time waiting the month to a month and a half to fish and I understand, you know, I too want to go out there and fish very badly.

But if we don't do something now, if we don't keep on our toes about this we face a, you know, situation in the future where we might have to wait years or longer to fish. So it's - kind of comes out to a month now and fish more in the future or fish that month now and have fish now and then in the future have to wait for -- like I said -- possibly years for it to come back. Thank you.

Orville Lind: Thank you for that.

Man: Hello?

(Mark Larry): This is (Mark).

Carol Damberg: This is Carol Damberg with the U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service and I just had a quick question for (Mike Williams). I'm trying to get some clarification on the proposal as it reads and the question that was brought up by (Tim) in regards to the potential, you know, are we in conflict and (Mike)'s just saying, "No. We're really not." And I've heard that - you echo that and I greatly appreciate that.

And so looking back on the proposal you're very much interested in trying to do an allocation of some sort. Are you opposed to that allocation as necessary not happening until June 12 or is it something that you strongly feel that there needs to be an allocation of some sort prior to June 12 based on what you know now, (Mike)? Any...

(Michael Williams): Well...

Carol Damberg: ...thoughts on that?

(Michael Williams): Yes. And listening to the elders there is a desire to have taste of fish, to have food on the table to enjoy, to eat after a long winter of no fish. And it's been extremely - we've been having hard times down here and if there is some way that we can have some kind of a, you know, fish to eat from May 20 until June 12 that would be great and it would help to keep us healthy and to have food on the table. Because by the 12th, you know, people are either going down to (unintelligible) somewhere else and it just really, really hard to, you know, to have - you know, eat.

And I think in listening to the elders or we just, you know, I think through - only through negotiation can we achieve that and regardless of what that number is in order to eat I think that is something that the Kuskokwim River Inter-tribal fish commissioner, U.S. Fish & Wildlife can agree to if we (unintelligible) if Federal Subsistence Board approves that through negotiation on government to government negotiation. That's all I have.

Carol Damberg: Thank you so much, (Mike). I appreciate that.

(Mark Larry): This is (Mark).

Orville Lind: Go ahead, (Mark).

(Mark Larry): Yes. I wanted to go back to addressing (Tim)'s...

((Crosstalk))

Man: (Unintelligible).

(Mark Larry): ...comment.

((Crosstalk))

Woman: (Unintelligible).

(Mark Larry): That's been our frustration with this Special Action Request that everything that he brought up...

((Crosstalk))

Man: (Unintelligible).

Woman: Yes.

(Mark Larry): A potential for there to be fishing -- King Salmon fishing -- prior to June 12. That's been our frustration, because -- and this is for the benefit of maybe (Tim) and others that aren't aware of -- how that date came about.

That date was agreed upon at a board official meeting couple of years ago at Fairbanks by the people of the Kuskokwim River. And there were many more lower river representatives than there were middle and upper, many more.

We went into a room and we hashed it out. Managers tried to come into the room, we made them leave. We said, "This is between us. We're going to work this out."

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And some of those same people that are testifying for early opening were the ones that agreed to that date and picked that - and in fact picked that date. So that's been our frustration with this Special Action Request.

((Crosstalk))

Man: (Unintelligible).

(Mark Larry): That change -- how you call it -- turning over. But, you know, here we are. Everything's a compromise and everybody needs some fish. We have to be willing to give a little. So - but that's how that date came about and that's been our frustration, the change in tune I guess you'd call it. So thank you.

Orville Lind: Thank you, (Mark), for that comment.

Man: Yes. I fully agree with that and I think at that time it was agreed to - at looking at the numbers and et cetera. You know, there's...

((Crosstalk))

Man: (Unintelligible). Yes.

Man: So I just really appreciate that. Thanks.

Man: (Unintelligible).

Woman: (Unintelligible).

Woman: Yes.

(Robert Decander): Hello. This is (Rob Decander).

Orville Lind: (Robert)?

(Robert Decander): Yes. With the (unintelligible).

Orville Lind: Okay. Go ahead.

(Robert Decander): I said before well what's the big picture, you know? Well it's (unintelligible) on the river system. What about the ocean out there and (unintelligible) up at (unintelligible) part of good resource. Two weeks ago (unintelligible) and they're trying to preserve the - except weather climate and big picture out there in the ocean. I've said that before. They spend only about a year here and now where were the fish and they go out in the ocean (unintelligible). We're always the ones that are blamed.

Man: (Unintelligible).

(Robert Decander): I (unintelligible) to thank you.

Man: Hello?

Orville Lind: Quyana, (Robert). Go ahead. Anyone else? Yes. I think we're kind of winding down.

Oh and -- again -- the opportunity for anyone who has not made a comment or spoke to us here you have the floor.

Man: (Unintelligible).

(Tim Zicar): Yes. This is (Tim Zicar) again.

Orville Lind: Go ahead, (Tim).

(Tim Zicar): Yes. I just wanted to make it clear that we're opposed of any opening, you know, prior to - or well maybe a certain, you know, not a full opening before June 12. We don't want any, you know, we want to keep it closed, but there could be some sort of compromise -- like you were saying -- you know, for the taste of fish as we call it.

But we don't want this - we want to keep our front-end loading going on. That's our take on it for the native village of Crooked Creek, because I've talked to the council already and they were already in, you know, they're in agreement with that. So I just wanted to make clear. Thank you.

Man: Thank you, (Tim).

Orville Lind: Thank you, (Tim).

Man: Hello.

Orville Lind: Go ahead.

Man: That's for (unintelligible). I like to have (Johnson) River put into Special Action for this summer subsistence fishing all summer long, not a close. I haven't heard it on this radio talk show - I mean telephone - teleconference. That's all I have.

Orville Lind: Okay. Thank you.

((Crosstalk))

Woman: (Unintelligible).

Woman: (Unintelligible) we're done.

Orville Lind: Oh, hey, Mr. (Block), what village are you from?

Man: (Napakia).

Man: (Napakia).

Orville Lind: Thank you. Anyone else like to make any more comments?

Again, for the tribes if you think about something here between now and 1:30 this afternoon we will begin consultation for corporations this afternoon. And -- again -- if tribes would like to call in and certainly can this will give an opportunity to hear your voice.

So...

((Crosstalk))

Man: (Unintelligible).

Orville Lind: ...anyone out there want to make any more comments?

(Michael Williams): Yes. (Unintelligible) to all our relatives up and down the river all the way to Nikolia and I really appreciate it from (Michael Williams), one of your relations down here and for caring for each other and it's - it gets (unintelligible) with our families, but having something to eat is what we've been taught and I really appreciate all the conversation and recommendations and I'm - I just - our heart goes out to our relatives up river. Thanks.

Orville Lind: Quyana. Thank you for that, (Mike).

Myself - so I thought this consultation so far was really meaningful, because we had so many people call in. I think it shows that the process is getting better, it's getting stronger. This is the largest consultation we've had and it's the longest one we've had, so we've made some history in this process.

And with that I would like to ask the board members (unintelligible) to make closing comments.

Carol Damberg: This is Carol Damberg, U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service and on behalf of the board member, (Greg Sicanic), I just want to -- again -- reach out and say thank you very much for all the time and energy and extremely important comments were provided as well as questions and recommendations. All of this will be very helpful for us as we go forward. So thank you again for your time and energy. We really appreciate it.

Clarence Summers: Hello. This is Clarence Summers speaking for (Burt Frost), National Park Service board member and I want to thank each and every one of you for the time taken to provide comments. This is a very important process. And what you've said today will be very helpful in our decision-making process. Thank you again.

Orville Lind: Thank you, Clarence, and thank you, Carol.

Woman: (Unintelligible) (Rhonda) (unintelligible)?

Orville Lind: (Rhonda), are you still with us, (Rhonda)? (Rhonda) may not be with us yet. She had another meeting to attend and so I don't believe she's on.

So anyway folks -- again -- a reminder 1:30 we will start the government to corporation consultation. Any corporations out there would like to voice their comments certainly give us a call and looking forward to hearing that session.

So with that I will conclude this consultation. Again thank you tribes of (Cusko) for taking the time to call in. You know, this process is getting stronger. We're hearing your voices, so keep up the good work. And hopefully things will work out in everyone's favor a little stronger. Quyana. Thank you.

Woman: (Unintelligible).

Coordinator: Thank you and this does conclude today's conference. We thank you for your participation. At this time you may disconnect your lines.

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