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FEDERAL SUBSISTENCE BOARD

REGULATORY MEETING

VOLUME II

LAKEFRONT ANCHORAGE HOTEL  
Anchorage, Alaska  
February 5, 2025

MEMBERS PRESENT:

- Anthony Christianson, Chairman
- Rhonda Pitka, Public Member
- Charles Brower, Public Member
- Raymond Oney, Public Member
- Frank Woods, Public Member
- Sara Boario, U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service
- Sarah Creachbaum, National Park Service
- Erika Reed, Bureau of Land Management
- Jolene John, Bureau of Indian Affairs
- Chad VanOrmer, U.S. Forest Service

Ken Lord, Solicitor's Office

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P R O C E E D I N G S

(Anchorage, Alaska - 2/5/2025)

(On record)

MS. LEONETTI: All right, we're going to start with roll call to establish a quorum.

So Chair Tony Christianson.

CHAIRMAN CHRISTIANSON: Present.

MS. LEONETTI: Public Member Charlie Brower.

MR. BROWER: (In Native)

MS. LEONETTI: Public Member Chief Rhonda Pitka.

MS. PITKA: Here.

MS. LEONETTI: Fish and Wildlife Service, Sara Boario.

MS. BOARIO: Here.

MS. LEONETTI: National Park Service, David Alberg.

MR. ALBERG: Present.

MS. LEONETTI: BIA, Jolene John.

MS. JOHN: Good morning, BIA present.

MS. LEONETTI: Good morning.

Forest Service, Chad VanOrmer.

MR. VANORMER: Good morning, present.

MS. LEONETTI: BLM, Erika Reed.

MS. REED: Present. Good morning.

MS. LEONETTI: Good morning.

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1 Public Member Frank Woods.

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3 MR. WOODS: Here.

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5 MS. LEONETTI: And Public Member  
6 Raymond Oney.

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8 MR. ONEY: Raymond Oney, present.

9

10 MS. LEONETTI: And Public Member  
11 Benjamin Payenna is excused.

12

13 We have a quorum, Mr. Chair.

14

15 CHAIRMAN CHRISTIANSON: Thank you.  
16 Welcome everyone this morning to the second day of the  
17 Federal Subsistence Board to deal with fisheries. At  
18 this time we're going to first call up Orville.  
19 Orville wanted to make a correction this morning, if  
20 you are ready. After Orville speaks we'll go ahead and  
21 move on to the first item in the morning, is to do non-  
22 consensus non-agenda items. And so we testify this  
23 morning on non-agenda items, this is the public's  
24 opportunity to bring to the Board issues that are  
25 outside of what is on the agenda and present, so fill  
26 out the blue card in the back. I got a pile here.

27

28 Orville, you have the floor.

29

30 MR. LIND: Thank you, Mr. Chair. Board  
31 Members. Good morning.

32

33 (In Native) to the audience, everyone  
34 here.

35

36 Yesterday when I gave the summary of  
37 our consultation there was a correction made from the  
38 Ketchikan Indian Community to read that the Unuk River  
39 closed fishery, instead of I said it would -- was  
40 opened, correct, Dr. Vickers.

41

42 MR. VICKERS: They opposed it closing.

43

44 MR. LIND: Oh, they opposed the  
45 closing.

46

47 MR. VICKERS: Yeah.

48

49 MR. LIND: Of the fishery. We got it

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1 cleared up. Thank you. Have a great day.

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CHAIRMAN CHRISTIANSON: All right.  
4 We'll go ahead and start on down the list here. It  
5 looks like the first one we have on the list is Thomas  
6 Smith. That looks like that one this morning is an  
7 agenda item so I'm going to put that up here, yeah,  
8 that's non-rural so. Okay, we'll go on to Jillian  
9 Burchfield.

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MS. BURCHFIELD: Hello, Mr. Chair and  
members of the Board. My name is Jillian Burchfield  
and I'm from Sitka and I'm here to represent myself. I  
am a subsistence user and a resident of Southeast  
Alaska who values and relies on the region's natural  
resources for subsistence and connection.

Living in Alaska I have come to deeply  
respect the culture significance of these resources to  
indigenous and rural communities and recognize the role  
of maintaining traditions and self-sufficiency.  
Harvesting activities such as fishing, hunting and  
gathering is an essential part of life in my region.  
Providing food and connection to the environment I am  
connected. I am concerned about the sustainability of  
key subsistence resources, particularly salmon, halibut  
and other marine species. The loss of these resources  
would not only impact food security but also disrupt  
cultures, traditions that have been passed down for  
generations. I would like the Board to address these  
concerns by implementing and holding sustainable  
management practices by prioritizing subsistence users  
and local communities.

Thank you for your time and  
consideration. I appreciate the work you do to protect  
Alaska's natural resources and the communities that  
depend on them.

Thank you.

CHAIRMAN CHRISTIANSON: Thank you,  
Jillian, any questions for Jillian.

(No comments)

CHAIRMAN CHRISTIANSON: Appreciate you  
guys coming out today, thank you.

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1 (Applause)

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(Applause)

CHAIRMAN CHRISTIANSON: Is that Cayenne or Seinna -- there you go, Cayenne, from Hoonah, you have the floor.

MS. DANIELS: Gunalcheesh, Mr. Chair. Members of the Board.

(In Tlingit)

Good morning everyone my name is Hayden Daniels. My Tlingit name is (In Tlingit) and I am of the (In Tlingit) Clan coming from the (In Tlingit) House in Sitka Alaska. I am child of the Kaagwaantaan and I live in Juneau, Alaska. I'm an enrolled student and I have a strong passion for environmental conservation. I grew up learning how to be a subsistence user and didn't even know what it meant. That's how natural it comes to our way of life, it's our food. My family taught me everything I know about being a subsistence user and I want to pass my traditional knowledge down to the next generations. One of my personal favorite subsistence activities is going out with my family and friends to gather and harvest berries and vegetation, being able to share stories and memories together. These are my favorites but it's not part of my concerns. My concern is the fact that companies can come in from out of state with commercial boats and benefit off of our subsistence food more than Alaska Natives and residents, it's our food, our culture and these commercial boats from companies are benefitting more and more off of our resources than us local residents and Natives. I believe it is affecting our salmon and halibut. I would like to see the Board put pressure on companies that have charter boats. I want to have that opportunity to pass down my knowledge of salmon and fisheries down to other generations and maybe, just maybe, this problem won't stand in the way.

Gunalcheesh.

Thank you for listening.

MS. BOE: Good morning, Mr. Chairman. Good morning, Board Members. My name is Cayenne, I am from Hoonah. And I would like to talk about a hunting problem in my community and so there are like people

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1 from out of our town coming in and taking all our deer  
2 and just like not leaving enough for our community.  
3 And the deer is also important to me because it's a  
4 natural source of vitamins and it can help boost my  
5 immune system and I can also just like make so much  
6 like food and like -- and just make food out of it and,  
7 yeah, just -- that's my main concern is not having  
8 enough deer food -- resources for my community. And I  
9 would like to have this resolved by like having a  
10 limited amount of people from out of town come into our  
11 community and help -- or go hunting for deer season in  
12 Hoonah.

13  
14

Thank you.

15  
16

CHAIRMAN CHRISTIANSON: Thank you. And  
17 I just wanted to echo her concern on Hoonah, we heard  
18 that from the area and this Board did entertain that  
19 the last cycle of wildlife and instituted a rural  
20 priority for hunting for 10 days during the peak of the  
21 season in the area. And so that's the type of stuff,  
22 when we do hear those concerns, we have proposals come  
23 forward and this Board can react in a manner that can  
24 help provide that opportunity, and so that's just a  
25 little -- so I'm glad you brought that up because we do  
26 hear that out of that area, similar to Prince of Wales,  
27 a high competition, it's not that there isn't deer,  
28 it's just that there's a lot of people so thank you for  
29 sharing that.

30  
31

Julian Narvez.

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MR. NARVEZ: Thank you, Mr. Chair and  
34 Board members. My name is Julian Narvez and I'm the  
35 Environmental Education Coordinator for the Hoonah  
36 Indian Association and I want to thank you for  
37 listening to our students and I want to thank everyone  
38 here for making this such an inviting space for them.  
39 They're learning a lot this week and they're growing in  
40 leaps and bounds and it's very obvious to me, just in  
41 the first day, how much it's affected them and how much  
42 this opportunity to present in front of you guys has  
43 affected them, so thank you for the experience.

44  
45

This is something they'll all take back  
46 with them to their communities, their homes, their  
47 families and if you want more engagement in the  
48 Subsistence Board process, you know, this is such a  
49 strong way to do it. So I thank you all and I hope you  
50

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1 continue to keep the youth in mind when planning future  
2 meetings.

3

4 Thank you.

5

6 (Applause)

7

8 CHAIRMAN CHRISTIANSON: Thank you,  
9 Julian. Appreciate all the hard work you guys do. I  
10 used to do the work that Julian's doing. That's the  
11 very job I had at the tribe as well so it's really  
12 rewarding work.

13

14 It looks like we have a threesome here,  
15 Didrich, Mitchell and Kayah Martin -- Lewis?

16

17 MR. LEWIS: Thank you, Mr. Chairman and  
18 the Board members. My name is Didrich Lewis, I live in  
19 Hoonah but I'm originally from Elfin Cove, Alaska. My  
20 dad and grandpa were both commercial fishermen and I'm  
21 a seventh generation Alaskan. While my dad and grandpa  
22 were out fishing my grandma would preserve our salmon  
23 in the smokehouse. My dad always likes to say,  
24 commercial fishing pays my light bill, and subsistence  
25 feeds my family and the two make our way of life  
26 possible.

27

28 While I do not fish personally, our  
29 subsistence rights directly affect my family's ability  
30 to access the resources we need. I would like the  
31 Board to address the issue of overfishing from charter  
32 organizations. One of the charter operations in Elfin  
33 Cove has been caught and pled guilty to overfishing  
34 their quotas and reselling the stock on multiple  
35 occasions. There are also several credible reports of  
36 a certain lodge assisting non-residents in the  
37 harvesting of subsistence sockeye. This directly  
38 affects subsistence users because we have to compete  
39 with lodges that are just trying to line their pockets  
40 for the resources we have fought for and we were  
41 promised.

42

43 Thank you for hearing my testimony.

44

45 MR. MICHAEL: Thank you, Mr. Chair and  
46 the Board. My name is Mitchell Michael. I'm from  
47 Hoonah, I am (In Native). I would like to address the  
48 overfishing salmon in my community and all of Alaska.

49

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1                                 Just like a big portion of the people  
2 at this meeting, the reason I am talking about this  
3 topic because the population has dramatically decreased  
4 and the salmon is a very important subsistence resource  
5 in Alaska and especially to rural communities that  
6 depend on this fish. I know one of the main reasons  
7 the population is decreasing is large scale commercial  
8 fishing and trawling. And I do know commercial fishing  
9 is a very important part of the community and it gives  
10 jobs to people. I am not suggesting we completely stop  
11 commercial fishing, I'm suggesting that we have more  
12 restrictions on how much fish they can catch and the  
13 Board to be more lenient without dramatically changing  
14 their way of life and their businesses.

15  
16                                 One more thing before I close my  
17 testimony, I would like to say this is very important  
18 to me and I really want what I'm saying to be taken  
19 into consideration by the Board for my people in my  
20 community and the future generations to be able to  
21 enjoy this right many people have fought for.

22  
23                                 Thank you for listening to me.

24  
25                                 MS. MARTIN: Good morning, Mr. Chair and  
26 Board Members. My name is Kayah Martin. I am from  
27 Hoonah, Alaska and I'm representing myself. I'm  
28 Kaagwaantaan Eagle Wolf and my relationship with the  
29 natural resources is strong and my love for the  
30 subsistence here is great. Being able to fish with or  
31 for my family is important to me and I can't even know  
32 what it feels like for the people who don't have the  
33 right or who are not able to support for their family  
34 that way. I am grateful to the access we have to this  
35 land that I live in.

36  
37                                 Thank you for listening.

38  
39                                 (Applause)

40  
41                                 CHAIRMAN CHRISTIANSON: Thank you guys.  
42 Next we have Linda Pete.

43  
44                                 MS. PETE: Good morning. Thank you for  
45 all your hard work and dedication. I'd like to  
46 recognize all those young people that came up here and  
47 testified. I think they did good. I know when I first  
48 testified I was really nervous, not like how they were  
49 giving their presentation and testimony. So thank you  
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1 guys for doing that. I think a lot of other places  
2 should do the same thing, bring in their young people  
3 and get them the opportunity to learn. I never got  
4 involved in this until our area was threatened by the  
5 State of Alaska but since then I've been involved in  
6 our customary and traditional rights.

7  
8 But for the record my name is Linda  
9 Pete. I am the President for the Native Village of  
10 Gakona. I currently reside in Copper Center. And I  
11 appreciate the Board's dedication and decisionmaking on  
12 the .804 process for, you know, determining our hunting  
13 area and, you know, Ahtna people have been around for a  
14 long time and we hunted all over Unit 11, 12 and 13.  
15 It's not a small area, it's all accessible by road, so  
16 we are invaded by everybody in the state that comes to  
17 our area and it's big competition. I don't know if you  
18 guys have seen it during hunting season or fishing  
19 season but there's thousands of people at the hub, you  
20 can't even get in there and get gas in the summertime  
21 because there's so many cars coming in and especially  
22 when the dipnetting opens.

23  
24 For the Tolsona C&T determination, I  
25 don't support that. We never -- Tolsona was developed  
26 by the State of Alaska giving out land lottery and they  
27 developed the community by that. You know, I don't  
28 think it's the right way to go about them trying to get  
29 this determination. They have opportunity under the  
30 State of Alaska regulations to get the fish and  
31 whatever they are asking for.

32  
33 When you decide to do a C&T  
34 determination it's a very important decision that  
35 affects our area, our people, our villages that heavily  
36 rely on the fish and wildlife. My parents and  
37 grandparents all come from Ahtna region and their  
38 parents before them, and grandparents before them.  
39 It's -- we are going to be there for the rest of our  
40 lives and my grandchildren's grandchildren are going to  
41 rely on this wildlife and fish just like we do today.  
42 I don't think that people should just come in and think  
43 they have a right to everything.

44  
45 We had to fight for our rights, and  
46 we're still fighting today for our rights. It's  
47 neverending. The State of Alaska failed us. I  
48 testified last month at the Board of Game in Wasilla,  
49 the State of Alaska never took care of us and they're  
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1 working against us. They have all these interest  
2 groups that, you know, they're tailored to them. I'll  
3 just say that, it's not for us Native people or people  
4 that rely on subsistence foods.

5

6                   You know the fish, it's a healing thing  
7 too. It does a lot of things, it brings medicine,  
8 nourishment to your body. I remember my grandparents  
9 making fish oil. My grandpa and grandma. You know a  
10 lot of people don't hardly use that nowadays but, you  
11 know, it's the river and everything has changed and the  
12 weather. I don't know how the fish is going to be this  
13 coming year because of how this weather is, it's too  
14 warm and the ice on the ground, the moose and caribou,  
15 it's unknown. I know times will get tough but, you  
16 know, I hope you guys -- you all make good decisions  
17 for our people.

18

19                   Thank you.

20

21                   CHAIRMAN CHRISTIANSON: Thank you,  
22 Linda. Any questions for Linda from the Board.

23

24                   (No comments)

25

26                   CHAIRMAN CHRISTIANSON: Appreciate your  
27 testimony this morning, Linda. Next we have Benjamin  
28 Houser.

29

30                   MR. HOUSER: Hello Chair and members of  
31 the Board. My name is Ben Houser. I'm a Junior in  
32 high school from Wrangell, Alaska. I am representing  
33 myself and my family. I have lived in Alaska for most  
34 of my life and subsistence is a very important part of  
35 my life. A few of my favorite subsistence activities  
36 are fishing for salmon and halibut to turn into beer  
37 battered halibut and smoked salmon. I have also loved  
38 my annual hunting trips with my friends in the Tongass  
39 National Forest. Along with subsistence I am also a  
40 deckhand on my dad's commercial fishing boat where we  
41 troll on the coast Southeast. Trolling is a commercial  
42 fishery that includes a total of 1,000 permit holders  
43 that fish in Southeast Alaska. This fishery targets  
44 salmon with a hook and line method. The majority of  
45 these commercial fishermen are also subsistence users.  
46 It is very important to me and my family, friends and  
47 fellow Alaskans that we are able to continue making  
48 memories and passing on traditions using subsistence.

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1 Thank you.

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3 CHAIRMAN CHRISTIANSON: Thank you, Ben.  
4 Next we have Ally Martin.

5

6 MS. MARTIN: Thank you, Mr. Chair and  
7 Board members. My name is Ally Martin and I have lived  
8 in Sitka, Alaska my whole life. I am currently a  
9 Junior at Mt. Edgecumbe High School and I've been  
10 around subsistence my whole life. Whether it's being  
11 out on my uncle's fishing boat with my brother, fishing  
12 has always been the go-to activity for me and my  
13 family.

14

15 My grandparents live on a small island  
16 off the shore of Sitka and my cousins and my brother  
17 and I spend all summers out there. I learned how to  
18 fish there off the beach in front of their house. I  
19 caught my first king salmon on my uncle's boat with my  
20 brother telling me to get a better grip on the pole so  
21 I don't drop it in the water. Since I have grown up  
22 around the conversations of subsistence with my Uncle  
23 John Martin, who served on the Fish and Game Advisory  
24 Council, and hearing about his stories and all the  
25 changes that are going on. I worry that our resources  
26 are being depleted and that we need to do something  
27 about it so some more memories can be made and people  
28 can survive. My favorite part of subsistence is that  
29 the memories are made with it.

30

31 I also want to thank Heather for this  
32 class opportunity and thank you to the Board for my  
33 opportunity to speak and let everyone else speak.

34

35 (Applause)

36

37 CHAIRMAN CHRISTIANSON: Thank you.  
38 Next we have Jamie Ericksen.

39

40 MR. ERICKSEN: Good morning Board  
41 members. My name is Jamie Ericksen. I originally --  
42 well, I'm of the Wooshkeetaan Clan of Hoonah. I'm  
43 child of the Teikweidi (In Tlingit). I originally came  
44 up here as a chaperon. I didn't realize the magnitude  
45 of this meeting and I'm very touched by how important  
46 this is and I just felt the urge to say something.

47

48 So I'm from Hoonah, I grew up there. I  
49 grew up on a fishing boat. I didn't get summertime,  
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1 summertime meant work time. I spent my summers on a  
2 boat power trolling. So at a very early age was taught  
3 to work hard and I remember being out in Hoktaheen  
4 getting sockeye and the boat being just flooded with  
5 sockeye and blood all over and, you know, at the time  
6 it was like, ugh, you know, I don't want to do this  
7 and, you know, after becoming an adult and realizing  
8 what hard work I was being taught I grew to appreciate  
9 that and now I have a 14 year old who I'm a single  
10 parent to so I'm mom and dad and I work hard to teach  
11 him our ways of life. He got his first deer when he  
12 was 10 years old and he cried and as soon as we were  
13 done dressing it he wiped his tears and said, mom, I'm  
14 happy I got this deer now I can send meat to grandma  
15 and great-grandma and she loves the heart and liver and  
16 he was so proud of that. And I'm so proud to see him  
17 learn these ways of life. I teach him how to, you  
18 know, get cockles and clams and, you know, smoke fish  
19 and, you know, he loves it and make jerky and, you  
20 know, I always tell him, you know, this stuff that we  
21 can live off of, we know what's in it, and we know what  
22 it's not, it's not store bought, this is fresh, this  
23 comes off of our land, you know, I think that's very  
24 important. I love living off the land. You know when  
25 Covid happened, I went into survival mode. I went if I  
26 had to live off the land what do I need and I went and  
27 bought everything to preserve foods. Of course six  
28 months later I had to give stuff away because I bought  
29 a lot.

30  
31 But anyway one of the focuses, I think,  
32 should be on our salmon preservation, is the population  
33 control of sea lion. There's so many sea lion around,  
34 you see them come up and -- even on a fishing line, you  
35 see them ripping them off your lines power trolling you  
36 can feel the sea lion just ripping them off. So you  
37 look around and you can see pods and pods of sea lion  
38 everywhere and sea otter. I think the restriction on  
39 people who are non-Native to be able to go and hunt  
40 otter, there are otter rafts everywhere and I think  
41 they're decimating our shellfish population, our crab  
42 are becoming lower and lower. I go out and I put my  
43 crab pot out and it's not as abundant as it used to be.

44  
45 As far as deer, I think there needs to  
46 be more control on outsiders coming in to our area. I  
47 recall seeing boats leaving town and they've got a  
48 whole bunch of deer just hanging on their boat and I'm  
49 just like who's regulating these people, who's making  
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1 sure that they're taking what they're supposed to and  
2 not leaving with more than they're supposed to. I see  
3 a lot of wanton waste out the roads. You can drive  
4 along during hunting season and you'll see deer that  
5 are really small, they'll leave ribs and front  
6 shoulders and that's a lot of waste, you know, I mean I  
7 was always taught you eat everything you can, you use  
8 everything you can on any animal you get. There are  
9 fourwheelers that tear up the roads. People bring  
10 fourwheelers and they just have a hayday on our road  
11 system and that cost money to repair, you know. They  
12 leave a lot of trash all the time so -- I mean I know  
13 maybe some of our locals do it too but more often than  
14 not you see locals posting pictures and saying, oh, my  
15 god look at this area there's a whole bunch of trash  
16 left. We were always taught, you know, you bring it in  
17 you take it out, you don't leave trash everywhere. So  
18 I believe that outsiders coming in to hunt or fish need  
19 to be monitored in every way and making sure that  
20 they're not overtaking, you know, more than they should  
21 and every part of a deer should be accounted for.

22

23 So I think preservation of all of our  
24 resources are vital no matter what it is, deer, salmon,  
25 preservation of any rivers or creeks where salmon could  
26 potentially be or are is important to maintain always.  
27 So having resources to maintain rivers that have salmon  
28 make sure that they're kept up really well. You know  
29 we have a program in our community where there are  
30 river restorations and it's really awesome to see  
31 younger people getting involved. I see the group  
32 growing and growing and that makes me proud to see  
33 these kids getting involved and seeing the importance  
34 of preservation of our rivers and making other rivers  
35 more, you know, rivers that don't have salmon that did  
36 at one point, see that come back, and doing whatever we  
37 can to make that happen is very important.

38

39 So thank you for listening.

40

41 CHAIRMAN CHRISTIANSON: Thank you.  
42 Appreciate that testimony. Good luck with your son,  
43 too, good job.

44

45 (Applause)

46

47 CHAIRMAN CHRISTIANSON: Next we have  
48 Karen Linnell.

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1 MS. LINNELL: Consensus.

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CHAIRMAN CHRISTIANSON: Oh, that's  
4 consensus, sorry. Okay. Next we have Winston Davies,  
5 thank you Karen for that.

6

7

MR. DAVIES: Good morning and thank  
8 you, Mr. Chair and members of the Board. Gunalcheesh.  
9 My name is Winston Davies. My Tlingit name is (In  
10 Tlingit) I'm from Wrangell although my family  
11 originally comes from the Glacier Bay area.

12

13

I check a lot of boxes. I'm a  
14 commercial fisherman, sportsfisherman, trapper,  
15 personal use, subsistence user, teacher. I sit on our  
16 local AC. I'd just like to say thank you to Heather  
17 Bauscher for putting this cohort together and giving  
18 the students here the opportunity to learn this process  
19 and provide testimony. I'm very proud of them and  
20 super impressed with the way they have presented  
21 themselves to the Board. Just hanging out with them  
22 the last couple of days, hearing their discussions and  
23 seeing the way they interact with others I can tell you  
24 they are all up and coming leaders.

25

26

Being here reminds me, just by its  
27 physical size, how small and interconnected the state  
28 and its people really are. I bumped into several  
29 people I haven't seen in a long time here at this  
30 meeting and if you don't know someone there's usually  
31 only about one degree of separation between us.

32

33

I wasn't sure what I was going to  
34 testify on but after hearing the different RACs speak  
35 yesterday it made me want to focus my time here to the  
36 bycatch issue.

37

38

Leaving in Southeast we are going  
39 through a parallel crisis with our salmon, particularly  
40 king salmon. And while I believe the causes of our  
41 issues are different than the rest of Alaska I can  
42 sympathize with the villages who rely on the return of  
43 salmon to their natal streams to put food in their  
44 bellies and pass on traditions. I believe that because  
45 of our location and where our salmon feed and grow,  
46 trawler bycatch is not the direct culprit, I'm talking  
47 Southeast fish here, as much as a warmer ocean and an  
48 unchecked population of marine mammals. But  
49 nonetheless, we have been severely restricted on our  
50

0144

1 take of king salmon and my freezer does not have the  
2 year supply that it once did. While considered rural  
3 Wrangell gets a barge once a week, we have two grocery  
4 stores and we have relatively inexpensive fuel compared  
5 to, you know, the villages in the rest of the state.  
6 But I also have the option and the right to walk out  
7 down to the beach in front of my house and harvest  
8 clams, crab, harvest eulachon and pick berries. My  
9 heart goes out to these rural villages. I believe  
10 salmon is soul food. And maybe somebody who's more  
11 social than I can put that on a t-shirt or a bumper  
12 sticker or something. Not only does it feed our soul  
13 and provide us with nutrients it feeds the land. When  
14 I used to teach the salmon life cycle, a book that I  
15 used taught us that what's good for salmon is good for  
16 the spruce tree, the blueberry bush, the squirrel, the  
17 deer, the moose, the bear, et cetera. The return of  
18 the salmon each year ensures that we have an enriched  
19 ecosystem which is created in a rich indigenous culture  
20 for thousands of years. It's sad to think that this  
21 way of life is threatened by groups from out of state  
22 who are just trying to fill their already full pockets.  
23 Time is of the essence. We are at a tipping point.  
24 Right now every single salmon counts.

25

26 I hope that this Board can use whatever  
27 pull it has to put pressure on the politicians who are  
28 bought and compromised and the departments and agencies  
29 who are complicit in this gross waste of Alaska's  
30 resources that is threatening our way of life.

31

32 Mr. Chair, members of the Board. Thank  
33 you for your time today and the time you spend on these  
34 issues.

35

36 Gunalcheesh.

37

38 CHAIRMAN CHRISTIANSON: Thank you,  
39 Winston, appreciate the testimony.

40

41 (Applause)

42

43 CHAIRMAN CHRISTIANSON: I was one of  
44 the guys he bumped in to. We bunked in high school and  
45 cross country in Sitka. The world turns in circles.

46

47 (Laughter)

48

49 CHAIRMAN CHRISTIANSON: I have one here

50

0145

1 from Iphigmia Avantis but it's on the Unuk River so  
2 that is on the agenda so I'm going to move that to  
3 later, just so you guys know.

4

5 Jackie Boyer.

6

7 MS. BOYER: Good morning members of the  
8 Board. For the record my name is Jackie Boyer, or (In  
9 Native) and I am representing Salmon State today.

10

11 I just want to thank this body for  
12 being such a welcoming state compared to other  
13 management bodies, you know, I really appreciate  
14 Heather Bauscher and her class and like being able to  
15 come to you guys as human beings and talk about  
16 subsistence needs and how important it is to our  
17 communities.

18

19 But I also really wanted to highlight  
20 the pause to attend the North Pacific Fisheries  
21 Management Council and all the discussion on bycatch.  
22 Most of my work is focused on fishery management at the  
23 Council and right now there is no designated rural  
24 seat, there is no tribal seat and I would really  
25 encourage this body not only to attend the advisory  
26 panel but to attend the full Council meeting, you know,  
27 the inherent structure of the Council being under the  
28 Department of Commerce instead of the Department of  
29 Interior gears it towards industry and not subsistence  
30 and all of the comments here and all of the, you know,  
31 everything that this body does need to be before the  
32 Council process and I would really encourage that  
33 management body to management body conversation to  
34 have. They're taking public comment over the weekend  
35 and I'd really appreciate, you know, seeing this Board  
36 there to, you know, influence their decisionmaking  
37 process there as well as members of the public. And,  
38 you know, the Council is currently considering a chum  
39 bycatch cap and there currently is none and, you know,  
40 other measures. And I could go into numbers and what  
41 not but I don't want to bore people or take too much  
42 time and we are having a public event later tonight and  
43 invite everyone to as well if you want to learn more  
44 about this issue. But, again, I would really  
45 appreciate the management body conversations on this  
46 bycatch issue.

47

48 CHAIRMAN CHRISTIANSON: Thank you for  
49 your work Jackie, appreciate that.

50



0146

1 MS. PITKA: Jackie, do you have the  
2 flier for the event. Thank you.

3  
4 (Applause)

5  
6 CHAIRMAN CHRISTIANSON: It looks like  
7 the last one we have is Tom Harris.

8  
9 MR. HARRIS: Thank you for the  
10 opportunity. It's wonderful to see so many people I  
11 know and people that know me, primarily as a  
12 troublemaker, so -- but with that said, I have some  
13 serious things to share with you and I'll try to be  
14 brief but time is of the essence, we don't have a lot  
15 of time to solve the issues in front of us.

16  
17 However, you've heard all -- I'm not  
18 going to ask you for subsistence, I couldn't care less  
19 at this moment, because the subsistence being provided  
20 is insufficient, what I'm asking for is consideration  
21 of subsistence management. By that I mean the right of  
22 citizens to participate in the management of wildlife  
23 on public and private lands. This right has been  
24 missing from Alaska from day one and I'm particularly  
25 speaking to the Federal government and the State  
26 government in this regard. We are the only state in the  
27 nation that does not recognize this right. We are  
28 speaking English today on the other side of the planet  
29 because this right was granted by King John 1217, the  
30 right of subsistence and subsistence management to its  
31 citizens. In particular, I will speak of salmon.

32  
33 I encourage all those who are YouTube  
34 aficionados to look up Echoes of Fog Woman. Echoes of  
35 Fog Woman. And that talks about a practice that is  
36 14,000 years old. I'm (In Tlingit) of the Bear Clan.  
37 You will see our representation of our clan on the  
38 mural in downtown Anchorage. It talks about a site  
39 that is 120 meters below the surface of the ocean and  
40 the story of Fog Woman comes from there. It is the  
41 story of restoring salmon and very simply put, taught  
42 to each child at the time when it was outlawed to be  
43 taught. If you were to take a salmon out of the mouth  
44 of the stream, that salmon is giving its life to feed  
45 you, you have a moral, ethical and cultural obligation  
46 to finish the journey for that salmon, to take the eggs  
47 and the milt and take them upstream into sheltered  
48 bubbling waters. Take the carcass up stream that  
49 you're not going to eat so that it will feed the  
50

0147

1 microbes so that when that fry comes out it will be  
2 food for that fry to stay there long enough to form its  
3 (indiscernible) signature. Without that  
4 (indiscernible) signature that fry has no place to call  
5 home. It will not come back. We have lost 1,287 miles  
6 of the Yukon River, no mine did that, no oil company  
7 did that, that salmon stream is dying from the  
8 headwaters down along with the Kuskokwim and the  
9 Susitna and the Kenai and the Unuk River. I encourage  
10 those who are able to look up New York king salmon, I'm  
11 from Ketchikan, the deep south, we're so far south we  
12 have the right to say ya'll.

13

14 (Laughter)

15

16 MR. HARRIS: Okay. But it's  
17 embarrassing to me growing up in Ketchikan, in Saxman  
18 to see bigger king salmon that never ever was caught in  
19 Ketchikan being caught in New York state or Wisconsin  
20 or Ohio or Michigan. I have friends now who are my age  
21 and older who are leaving Alaska to catch their last  
22 big king salmon. You know where they're going,  
23 Patagonia and New Zealand, because they, all of those  
24 places I've just mentioned allow for the reseeding of  
25 salmon. It is a citizen right to reseed salmon and as  
26 you heard here previously if you take care of the  
27 salmon it's amazing what else is taken care of. The  
28 Kenai Peninsula, when Hammond was in office, documented  
29 2,400 moose being harvested in a single year, by 2001  
30 that number had dropped to 66 moose, a 97 percent drop  
31 in moose harvest. Guess where those moose hunters  
32 went, they went to the Ahtna region and other regions  
33 they could get to. How is that moose connected to the  
34 salmon. Well, when that salmon didn't show up in the  
35 rivers to spawn, mamma bear with her cubs went after  
36 moose calves. We documented one bear harvested 37  
37 calves. Okay. There's an old saying, if you feed it  
38 it'll grow, if you starve it it'll die. If our  
39 resource is starving we're not feeding it, we're not  
40 taking care of the salmon.

41

42 I encourage you all to be aware that we  
43 can fix this but we need to have both hands, it's not  
44 enough to just have subsistence you have to have  
45 subsistence management today. We're depending on one  
46 entity, Department of Fish and Game to do it and we've  
47 got 50 years experience that they're -- as my elders  
48 used to say, we need to put those folks in charge of  
49 misquotes, okay. But in addition to that as we wrap up  
50

0148

1 the U.S. Department of Agriculture and RCS has an  
2 annual budget of 10billion dollars. That budget is  
3 paid to private land owners for the purpose of helping  
4 them restore wildlife and wildlife habitat. Alaska  
5 gets one/tenth of one percent of the national average.  
6 It gets one/tenth of the national average because we  
7 don't allow, as Alaskans, our citizens, not Natives,  
8 our citizens to have the right of subsistence  
9 management. You can see now why I don't want  
10 subsistence, if you give me subsistence management I'll  
11 take care of subsistence for myself and family and  
12 others and I urge you all to become aware of what's  
13 happening in the Lower 48. We've documented this in  
14 2001 with help of some in this community to -- and I  
15 appreciate that help, I'm still using that data today,  
16 more wildlife was harvested in 2001 within 15 miles of  
17 Washington, D.C., than was harvested in the entire  
18 state of Alaska by hunters. We can fix this. Of all  
19 places on the planet we should not be running out of  
20 food. Many of you know that Anchorage is running out  
21 of gas. In three years it's anticipated that we will  
22 not have enough gas to keep the powerplants going.  
23 When that happens, this community is going to turn into  
24 a hungry monster that will lead every budget available  
25 in Juneau at the expense of rural communities. We need  
26 to solve that problem but we need to make sure that our  
27 rural communities can survive off the land.

28  
29 You've been very patient with me and I  
30 greatly appreciate it. I see Alaska Natives from all  
31 over and I see Native Europeans from all over as well.  
32 Study our own history there. As a Scott Irish I know  
33 the Charter with the Forest guaranteed those two  
34 rights, they were embedded in the Charter of the  
35 Forest, Charter of Liberties, Magna Carta, the U.S.  
36 Constitution and the Constitution of every state in the  
37 nation except Alaska. Please give us that right. We  
38 want to join the rest of the union.

39  
40 Thank you.

41  
42 (Applause)

43  
44 CHAIRMAN CHRISTIANSON: Thank you, Tom.  
45 I appreciated that perspective -- and he left the  
46 building. That concludes the public testimony this  
47 morning for non-agenda items. We have 9 minutes to a  
48 time to be determined, 10:00 o'clock, for the Ketchikan  
49 rural so let's take a 9 minute break.  
50

0149

1 MS. LEONETTI: And just a reminder to,  
2 please, everyone in the room including Staff, sign in  
3 at the front desk each day. Thank you.

4

5 CHAIRMAN CHRISTIANSON: Break.

6

7 (Off record)

8

9 (On record)

10

11 CHAIRMAN CHRISTIANSON: All right,  
12 we'll get this meeting started again. We're at a time  
13 to be determined, 10:00 a.m., non-rural determination  
14 proposal NDP25-01 Ketchikan. We'll call on the Staff  
15 to present.

16

17 MR. VICKERS: Good morning. Thank you,  
18 Mr. Chair. Members of the Board. My name is Brent  
19 Vickers. I am the Anthropology Division Supervisor at  
20 OSM. We're going to present as a team here. Also I  
21 want to direct your attentions to the screens where we  
22 will have slides for the presentation to follow along  
23 with and we'll do our best to make sure everyone knows  
24 where you can also find tables and pictures that are in  
25 the report itself.

26

27 MS. MORROW: Good morning, Mr. Chair  
28 and members of the Board. My Kristen Morrow. I am an  
29 Anthropologies Pathways Intern with the Office of  
30 Subsistence Management and I will be presenting a  
31 portion of the analysis in just a bit here.

32

33 MR. ROBERTS: Good morning, Mr. Chair.  
34 Members of the Board. My name is Jason Roberts. I'm  
35 also an Anthropologist at OSM and I'll get the ball  
36 rolling here. Non-rural Determination Proposal NDP25-  
37 01 was submitted by the Ketchikan Indian Community and  
38 requests that the Board change the designation of the  
39 Ketchikan area from non-rural to rural or alternatively  
40 that it designates the Federally-recognized Ketchikan  
41 Indian Community service area as rural and there's a  
42 full discussion on this alternative suggestion that can  
43 be found in Appendix A on Page 705 in your meeting  
44 book. But for right now we'll just focus on the first  
45 part of that. The analysis of this proposal begins on  
46 Page 620 of your meeting book and a map showing the  
47 current extent of the Ketchikan non-rural area can be  
48 found on Page 630 of your meeting book. I hope you all  
49 have had time to really take a good look at that, and I  
50

0150

1 apologize in advance it's pretty long but there's a lot  
2 of stuff to go over in there.

3

4

5 So the proponents note that Ketchikan  
6 is the traditional territory of the Tlingit with a long  
7 history of indigenous occupation as well as a long  
8 history of subsistence harvesting, traditional food  
9 practices and overall reliance on natural resources as  
10 key components of livelihood and cultural identity.

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The proponents also explain that Ketchikan is relatively remote with no road access to the rest of Alaska or the Lower 48 and because of this, their supply chains that supply commercial foods and other goods are vulnerable to disruptions and they emphasize the impact of the Covid-19 pandemic and highlighting this issue.

The proponents also note that Ketchikan is fairly comparable in terms of population size and degree of economic development to places like Kodiak and Sitka which the Federal Subsistence Board already recognizes as rural.

So looking at the regulatory history. The history of rural and non-rural determinations within the Federal Subsistence Management Program is pretty complicated. There are many somewhat different definitions of rural used by various Federal, State and local government departments and programs. And they're all pretty relative. Over the course of this Program the concept of rural has been primarily defined by what it isn't. So whatever isn't designated as urban or non-rural has been considered rural by default. And this is why we now refer to this policy and process as non-rural determination. From 1990 until 2015 this determination process was based primarily on quantitative measures, particularly population size and included conditions for grouping communities considered to be socially, economically and geographically related. The Board made its initial rural and non-rural status determinations using the following guidelines.

A community or area with a population of 2,500 or less was presumed to be rural, unless it possessed significant characteristics of a non-rural nature, or was part of an urbanized area. And this metric of 2,500 people was selected because it was the

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1 figure used by the U.S. Census Bureau at the time to  
2 divide rural from non-rural.

3

4

5 A community or area with a population  
6 of 7,000 or more people was presumed to be non-rural.  
7 And the basis for this threshold is a bit more  
8 complicated. This threshold was chosen because  
9 Ketchikan City was the smallest community described as  
10 non-rural in a 1979 Senate report on ANILCA with a  
11 population of just over 7,000 when ANILCA was passed.  
12 So the Board at the time interpreted the rural and non-  
13 rural examples provided in this report as indications  
14 of Congressional intent and 7,000 became the population  
15 threshold for designating non-rural communities in  
16 Alaska.

16

17

18 At the time mid-range communities  
19 between these two figures were not presumed to be rural  
20 or non-rural and their status was determined according  
21 to a combination of factors including harvest and use  
22 of fish and wildlife, development of the economy and  
23 access to commercial goods and services, population  
24 metrics, transportation links, et cetera.

24

25

26 However, the Board changed its policies  
27 on this determination process in 2015 in an effort to  
28 make these determinations more holistically  
29 incorporating a greater number of demographic, economic  
30 and geographic factors and also accounting for regional  
31 variations through greater consultation and  
32 incorporation of input from many different stakeholders  
33 in the process. And so now specific guidelines  
34 regarding things like population size, the aggregation  
35 of communities, status reviews are no longer part of  
36 the process. So essentially we now judge all  
37 communities more according to the combination of  
38 metrics used primarily for mid-range communities at the  
39 beginning of the Program.

39

40

41 And so looking more at the regulatory  
42 history, Ketchikan has been considered non-rural since  
43 the Federal Subsistence Management Program began in the  
44 early 1990s. In 1992, when the initial non-rural  
45 determinations were issued the Board defined this  
46 Ketchikan non-rural area to include Ketchikan city,  
47 Clover Pass census designated place, or CDP, North  
48 Tongass Highway, Ketchikan East, Mountain Pass, Herring  
49 Cove, Saxman East and parts of Pennock Island. At the  
50 time it was believed that these areas encompassed the

50

1 entirety of the paved road system and all residential  
2 communities on Revillagigedo Island except for the  
3 independent town of Saxman. Parts of Gravina Island  
4 and the rest of Pennock Island have been added to the  
5 Ketchikan non-rural area over time but the boundaries  
6 of the non-rural area along the Tongass Highway, on  
7 Revillagigedo have not changed. So the Ketchikan non-  
8 rural boundary is much the same today as it was in 1992  
9 but the road system and residential development has  
10 expanded since this time. So that means that there are  
11 some residents residing along the Tongass Highway that  
12 are considered rural while the majority are considered  
13 non-rural. Another issue with the current boundary is  
14 that the census designated places noted in the current  
15 definition of the Ketchikan non-rural area were  
16 dissolved after the 1990 census. So this means that  
17 the definition of the Ketchikan non-rural area has for  
18 many years been based in part on CDPs that no longer  
19 exist and we can't really track the exact population  
20 size or trends in these areas after 1990.

21

22 So these are complicating issues for  
23 the analysis that the Board may wish to consider during  
24 their deliberations on this proposal.

25

26 And so you can see a map on Page 630 of  
27 your meeting book and on the slides of the current  
28 Ketchikan non-rural area. The map shows the old CDPs  
29 that were dissolved after the 1990 census as well as  
30 portions of the Tongass Highway that have expanded  
31 beyond the boundary on both sides of the Ketchikan non-  
32 rural area. And we bring this to your attention now  
33 because the Board can modify the geographic extent of a  
34 rural or non-rural area based upon changing conditions,  
35 but only when proposals are brought forward for  
36 deliberation. However, modifying the geographic extent  
37 of an area requires the use of distinguishing features  
38 on the landscape and the Board cannot currently specify  
39 a particular group or people within a given community  
40 or area as rural while others remain non-rural.

41

42 Moving on to the next slide.

43

44 So this is the first determination of  
45 Ketchikan's rural or non-rural status to be undertaken  
46 since the Board updated its guidelines on these  
47 determinations in 2015. In the analysis we did our  
48 best to provide a lot of information on multiple  
49 factors like population size and density, economic  
50

50

0153

1 indicators like employment opportunities and income,  
2 use of fish and wildlife and degree of remoteness and  
3 availability of commercial goods and services. And  
4 these were the types of information that the Southeast  
5 Council asked for when preparing to deliberate on the  
6 current proposal. Because of the more qualitative  
7 nature of these analysis now, we now rely heavily on  
8 the input of affected Regional Advisory Councils to  
9 define their concept of a rural community using  
10 information in this analysis and personal experience in  
11 their regions, as well as input from Alaska Native  
12 groups, the public and the State.

13

14 So moving on to the next slide.

15

16 At their October 2024 meeting, the  
17 Southeast Council and members of the public provided  
18 guidance on the types of characteristics that might  
19 distinguish rural and non-rural communities in their  
20 region and so we thought these are important to keep in  
21 mind as we move into a more specific description of  
22 Ketchikan today. And so Council members, and I'll just  
23 focus on their description of rural here, Council and  
24 public testifiers noted that rural communities in the  
25 Southeast typically rely on subsistence resources as a  
26 means of survival and livelihood rather than an  
27 economic supplement or source of recreation. They have  
28 smaller declining populations and are more spread out  
29 and not characterized by noise pollution. Have  
30 histories of Native occupation with historical reliance  
31 on subsistence resources and cultural use of  
32 subsistence resources. Are relatively remote and rely  
33 on barges, planes or ferries to bring in commercial  
34 goods which results in higher costs of living and  
35 vulnerability to supply chain disruptions and limited  
36 access to public services and infrastructure and  
37 generally have limited or declining economies that are  
38 often characterized by fewer or lower paying jobs,  
39 higher unemployment and poverty rates and lower social  
40 services as well as face food insecurity due to lack of  
41 stores, low stock in stores, prohibitive cost of store  
42 bought foods, things like this. And so in this  
43 discussion of rural versus non-rural characteristics  
44 some Council members focus more on how Ketchikan  
45 compared to nearby smaller communities like Metlakatla  
46 and those on Prince of Wales Island. In this  
47 comparison they noted that Ketchikan did not possess  
48 the same number and degree of rural characteristics as  
49 these communities, however, other Council members  
50



0154

1 stated that it would be more appropriate to compare  
2 Ketchikan to larger communities already considered  
3 rural by the Board like Sitka and Kodiak, reasoning  
4 that by this standard Ketchikan could be considered a  
5 rural community. Council members also disagreed about  
6 which characteristics should bear more weight in this  
7 determination. Things like harvest and use of fish and  
8 wildlife and economic factors or demographic factors,  
9 and so their discussion overall really pointed to this  
10 being quite a complicated and difficult case to  
11 determine.

12

13 So with that I will turn that over to  
14 Brent to talk about some key characteristics of  
15 Ketchikan specifically.

16

17 MR. VICKERS: Thank you, Jason. Okay.  
18 Much of the remainder of the presentation is going to  
19 focus on Ketchikan characteristics, also  
20 characteristics of Southeast Alaska in general.

21

22 Next slide please.

23

24 So the first thing I want to do is talk  
25 about characteristics in terms of the perspectives of  
26 those who live in Ketchikan and Southeast Alaska. To  
27 do this we took from the testimonies of the Council  
28 meetings, also the three public hearings on the non-  
29 rural determination proposal and we analyzed the  
30 transcripts. We felt this was important to do because  
31 it's not just people listing what they think are  
32 characteristics but these are how their lives and the  
33 way they talk about their lives and they talk about the  
34 different communities are reflected in how they see  
35 what urban or rural is. Also this really hasn't been  
36 done before for non-rural determination proposal. So  
37 we analyzed the transcripts and found three common  
38 themes addressing perceived characteristics of  
39 Ketchikan and Southeast Alaska in general. The first  
40 theme is economic vulnerability of Ketchikan, which  
41 focuses on the disruptions to supply chain that have  
42 left Ketchikan with limited food supplies and services.  
43 This theme was mainly addressed by Ketchikan Indian  
44 Community, or KIC members, and others supporting the  
45 proposal. In their testimonies they focused much on  
46 the recent events, such as 911 and the Covid pandemic,  
47 the closing of the pulp mill, and other economic  
48 downturns that have left residents of remote Ketchikan  
49 with reduced access to store foods and increase  
50

0155

1 reliance on natural resources such as fish, deer,  
2 plants and marine resources. For example, one KIC  
3 member said, if something happened to us to where we  
4 were shut off, like 911 when they couldn't bring in the  
5 foods, we still have to subsist on what we have here  
6 and we can and we always will.

7

8                   The second key theme on rural  
9 characteristics of Ketchikan expressed by testifiers  
10 was the importance of subsistence resources to meet  
11 traditional and cultural needs. Again, these were  
12 mostly found in testimonies that KIC members and others  
13 supporting the proposal who elaborated on the cultural  
14 meanings and identities that are embedded in  
15 subsistence or traditional food practices, particularly  
16 the harvesting, consuming and sharing of traditional  
17 resources. Several KIC members explained that  
18 subsistence practices maintain their cultural  
19 identities and feelings of personal meaning and that it  
20 was critical to be able to teach subsistence practices  
21 to future generations. It was commonly said that  
22 subsistence is sharing. For example, one elder of the  
23 KIC community who described her life growing up in  
24 Ketchikan said, my neighbors are from Klawock, they  
25 knock on my door to share food with me and I knock on  
26 the door to share food. We share food with them. So  
27 this is still going on today and so in some ways it  
28 looks like times have changed a lot, then in many ways  
29 not so much. Also many of those who discussed the  
30 importances of subsistence for maintaining cultural  
31 traditions also noted that because they were non-rural  
32 in Federal subsistence regulations and in a non-  
33 subsistence area in State regulations they often had to  
34 travel far to harvest their traditional resources.

35

36                   The third key theme captured during  
37 testimonies was the importance of natural resources and  
38 subsistence practices as a basis for livelihood in  
39 rural communities. This theme was commonly expressed  
40 by members of rural communities, particularly those of  
41 Prince of Wales Island as they described the main  
42 differences they perceive between their life  
43 experiences and those of the residents of Ketchikan.  
44 These people explained that costs were higher in  
45 communities -- in their communities than in Ketchikan  
46 and that there were fewer economic opportunities in  
47 their communities, therefore, it was necessary for them  
48 to dedicate much of their time to subsistence  
49 practices. One man from Klawock explained, there's not  
50

0156

1 a lot of economic stimulus here, what we do on the  
2 island is what we -- is we do as well as we can for  
3 ourselves so when you're talking about subsistence my  
4 family needs it and uses it, it's a matter of just  
5 feeding my family. And while this isn't a rural  
6 character, it's important to share that tribal  
7 representatives repeatedly stated that this non-rural  
8 process and ANILCA, which only recognizes whole  
9 communities and does not have specific provisions for  
10 Alaskan Natives or tribes is ultimately pitting tribe  
11 against each -- tribes against each other.

12

13 Next slide please.

14

15 So now we'll start looking at some of  
16 the numbers which actually reflect much of what we  
17 heard in testimonies. This is Table 1, Ketchikan  
18 population over the years can be found on Page 644 and  
19 645 of your books. And you'll see that -- oh, I can't  
20 see here but, yeah, the Ketchikan population and the  
21 population of the Ketchikan area, Gateway Borough and  
22 -- which is approximately about the same as the  
23 Ketchikan area, the Ketchikan area is a little bit less  
24 than just the Borough itself, really have very low  
25 population growth through years, particularly in  
26 comparison to the rest of Alaska and a lot of other  
27 Alaskan communities so they have grown but you can see  
28 that the Ketchikan city, while it started just above  
29 7,000, 7,200 is now just below 8,000. Comparatively,  
30 Alaska as a whole in 1980 was 400,000 and is now  
31 736,000 so that's a much bigger proportion of growth  
32 and so you just really haven't seen proportionately  
33 that much growth in the Ketchikan area over the years.  
34 You can see on Table 2 on the -- in the meeting book  
35 that the proportion that people -- residents in  
36 Ketchikan has decreased from 20.5 percent in 1980 to 19  
37 percent of all Alaska residents in 2022. Is that all  
38 Alaskan, or, anyway.

39

40 Okay, next slide please.

41

42 All right. Before looking at some of  
43 the harvesting numbers I want to note that Ketchikan  
44 has been located in a Federal non-rural area and a  
45 State non-subsistence use area for over 30 years, as a  
46 result Ketchikan residents have generally not had the  
47 same hunting and fishing opportunities as other nearby  
48 communities and areas in Southeast Alaska, including  
49 those under Federal regulations and in nearby State  
50

0157

1 subsistence fisheries. The fact that residents of  
2 Ketchikan area have to travel far to harvest fish under  
3 State subsistence regulations limits the number of  
4 residents who have the capacity to do it. Also because  
5 Ketchikan is in a non-subsistence area ADF&G Division  
6 of Subsistence has not conducted a comprehensive  
7 subsistence survey there as it has done in nearby rural  
8 communities. Therefore, much of the harvesting data  
9 for Ketchikan comes from a 2005 study by the Bureau of  
10 BIA and from the U of A Marine Advisory Program, from  
11 ADF&G sport hunting and fishing surveys and Department  
12 of Fisheries personal use and subsistence reports.  
13 Okay. So this is Table 4 on Page 653, it's taken from  
14 a 2005 survey and shows that Ketchikan area residents  
15 harvest and use a variety of fish, wildlife and plant  
16 resources. Most of the harvesting activities are about  
17 an hour away or less by boat, if not road access in the  
18 Ketchikan area.

19

20 Next table -- or next Page please.

21

22 Table 5 on Page 654 is overall harvest  
23 in terms of pounds. It shows that residents of  
24 Ketchikan do harvest a substantial amount of wild  
25 resources with 231 pounds of wild resources per  
26 household and 91 pounds per person. While this is a  
27 large amount of resources, it is comparatively lower  
28 than nearby rural communities as well as larger rural  
29 communities of Kodiak and Bethel. Of note, salmon was  
30 the main resource harvested and rod and reel was the  
31 principle means of harvesting for Ketchikan residents,  
32 probably because residents are in a non-subsistence  
33 area.

34

35 Next slide please.

36

37 What is -- okay -- okay, can you go  
38 back a slide please. I think so, okay.

39

40 Well, Table 6 on Page 657 shows the  
41 percentages of households and communities using wild  
42 resources. This is measured in terms of estimated  
43 rates of use, attempted harvest and harvest of wild  
44 resources by residents. Again, Ketchikan has  
45 significantly higher number of households using harv --  
46 and has a significantly high number of households  
47 harvesting resources of 80 percent and 17 -- and 72  
48 percent harvesting them. And, once, again, this is  
49 lower -- these are lower percentages or estimates than  
50

0158

1 what you'll find in the rural communities. As  
2 explained earlier, sharing of resources is a main  
3 component of subsistence, both in terms of distributing  
4 resources to others and in terms of maintaining  
5 important cultural ties. The KIC report, which you'll  
6 probably hear more about later, notes that was done --  
7 done in the past summer in 2024 notes that the degree  
8 of resource sharing is higher within networks of KIC  
9 community members than with those of other residents of  
10 Ketchikan. Table 7 on Page 657 displays quantitative  
11 measurements of household sharing. Ketchikan  
12 households shared much less than those in other  
13 communities but there is much less of a gap between  
14 Ketchikan and other households for the number of  
15 households receiving wild resources. A possible  
16 explanation that follows with some of the other -- or  
17 with the testimonies and some of the other data that  
18 we've seen is that because Ketchikan is in the non-  
19 rural and in a State non-subsistence area so hard -- so  
20 it's harder for residents to harvest large amounts  
21 locally and they are receiving resources from friends  
22 and families, who either have the means to travel far  
23 or actually live in the nearby rural areas.

24  
25 Okay, now let's look at some harvesting  
26 statistics through ADF&G which start on Page 658.  
27 Thank you.

28  
29 Table -- which is not up on the screen,  
30 but Table 10 on Page 661 shows the number of salmon  
31 caught by Ketchikan residents from 2011 through 2022.  
32 The average number of salmon caught were 3,000 mostly  
33 sockeye salmon. Now, Table 11, which is displayed on  
34 the screen and on Page 61 -- 661, compares reported  
35 salmon harvest per person in each community under State  
36 subsistence and personal use permits. We can't get  
37 data on residents from sport harvest data so this is  
38 really the only basis of comparison we have on  
39 fisheries harvest. On average, Ketchikan residents  
40 have harvested less but, again, residents live far from  
41 State subsistence fisheries so it's possible that  
42 Ketchikan residents are also catching more fish under  
43 State sport regulations and we don't have the data on  
44 that.

45  
46 Next slide please. Okay, stay there,  
47 sorry, thank you. Jason's helping out a lot with the  
48 slide -- thank you, Jason.

49  
50

0159

1                               Table 12 on Page 662 displays average  
2 deer harvest by communities from 2013 to 2022.  
3 Ketchikan residents hunt close to home with about 90  
4 percent of the deer harvested are taken from Units 12A,  
5 which is the Ketchikan area and Unit 2 which is Prince  
6 of Wales Island. Permitted Ketchikan deer hunters  
7 have, on average, harvest about nearly as many deer as  
8 nearby -- those in nearby rural communities, it's just  
9 that proportionately there are few -- far fewer  
10 permitted hunters by percentage in Ketchikan than in  
11 these smaller communities.

12

13                               Okay.

14

15                               MS. MORROW: Thank you, Brent. For the  
16 record my name is Kristen Morrow and I'm going to be  
17 presenting a summary of the economic data for this  
18 analysis. This portion of the analysis focused on  
19 comparing Ketchikan to the smaller rural communities on  
20 Prince of Wales Island, the larger rural community of  
21 Sitka and the much larger non-rural community of  
22 Juneau. Overall the data on income, poverty,  
23 employment opportunities and availability of services  
24 shows that many aspects of Ketchikan have declined  
25 since it was first designated rural in 1990. Some  
26 aspects of the economy such as the cruise industry are  
27 strong and growing and many other employment sectors  
28 and social services are in decline and have been for  
29 several years. Like many communities in Southeast  
30 Alaska, Ketchikan's economy is vulnerable to  
31 disruptions in economic activity and supply chains. As  
32 Brent was mentioning earlier, the Covid-19 pandemic  
33 really highlighted the percarity of Ketchikan's  
34 economy. During Covid the cruise industry was  
35 essentially non-existent and as a result poverty rates  
36 spiked in 2021. There were similar increases in  
37 poverty rates throughout other communities in Southeast  
38 but Ketchikan was hit the hardest by the change in  
39 economic activity due to Covid and the increases in  
40 poverty rates were higher than those seen in Sitka or  
41 in Juneau. Among Prince of Wales, Ketchikan, Sitka and  
42 Juneau, poverty levels have consistently been the  
43 highest on Prince of Wales Island and consistently been  
44 the lowest on Juneau -- or in Juneau -- excuse me.  
45 Ketchikan and Sitka had very similar poverty rates in  
46 the late 1990s at a time when both communities were hit  
47 pretty hard by the closure of timber mills, however,  
48 since 1999 Ketchikan's poverty rate has consistently  
49 been higher than Sitkas. From 2018 to 2022 the average  
50

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1 poverty rate was 11.3 percent in Ketchikan city, 8.6  
2 percent in the Ketchikan Gateway Borough. In contrast  
3 poverty rates were a bit lower at 7.9 percent in both  
4 Sitka and Juneau and 14.6 percent on Prince of Wales  
5 Island.

6  
7 In terms of other economic data the  
8 cost of living in Ketchikan appears to be a bit  
9 moderate compared to other Southeast communities. The  
10 median home value, median rent price and median  
11 household income is higher on Prince of Wales Island,  
12 but lower in Sitka and Juneau than it is in Ketchikan.

13  
14 Some economists suggest that per capita  
15 income is a more precise measure of income because it  
16 includes wages from multiple jobs and income from  
17 investments and self-employment, and so looking at the  
18 per capita income data from 2018 to 2022. Ketchikan  
19 and Sitka had very similar per capita income at around  
20 \$44,000 per year. The per capita income was higher in  
21 Juneau and lower on Prince of Wales Island. One area  
22 where Ketchikan does fair better than other Southeast  
23 communities in terms of cost of living is barge  
24 expenses. Because Ketchikan is closest to Seattle they  
25 receive barges first and more often and they pay lower  
26 barge fees, which ultimately impacts both the  
27 availability of goods and the cost of goods in the  
28 community.

29  
30 Next slide please. Thank you.

31  
32 Like many communities in Southeast  
33 Alaska and throughout the state, Ketchikan's economy is  
34 highly seasonal and there are more employment  
35 opportunities in summer and fall than there are in  
36 winter or spring. However, employment in Ketchikan  
37 appears to be more seasonal today than it was when it  
38 was designated non-rural in 1990, which is likely due  
39 to the declines in other year-round industries that  
40 provided more stable jobs and also due to the increases  
41 in the tourism industry. The average monthly  
42 unemployment in Ketchikan has been consistently higher  
43 than that of Juneau or in Sitka but has been highest on  
44 Prince of Wales Island. The longer term data on  
45 unemployment shows that in the past Sitka and Ketchikan  
46 had very similar summer unemployment rates so in the  
47 summer when rates would drop Ketchikan and Sitka would  
48 have very similar summer unemployment rates but  
49 beginning in 2011 Ketchikan's summer unemployment rate  
50

0161

1 has been consistently higher than that of Sitka. It is  
2 important to note for unemployment data that it can be  
3 really difficult to interpret because it doesn't  
4 capture self-employment positions.

5

6 Next slide please.

7

8 In terms of employment sectors, there  
9 certainly are more job opportunities in Ketchikan than  
10 in other Southeast communities, however, more of these  
11 jobs are seasonal or lower paying today than they were  
12 in the past. The Ketchikan shipyard is one exception  
13 to this rule, it does provide some stable higher paying  
14 positions but relative to the size of the community  
15 there are not that many jobs at the shipyard. As of  
16 2015 the average annual number of positions was 157.

17

18 Healthcare is another relatively strong  
19 industry in Ketchikan that can provide some higher  
20 paying positions, but like is true throughout the  
21 state, many of the healthcare positions are filled by  
22 short-term contracts like travel nursing positions due  
23 to labor shortages.

24

25 Tourism is the main industry in  
26 Ketchikan. Ketchikan is the second busiest port in the  
27 region after Juneau. Covid-19 did have a major impact  
28 on the tourism industry but by 2023 the number of  
29 cruise ship passengers visiting Ketchikan surpassed  
30 what had been occurring before Covid suggesting that  
31 the industry has now sort of recovered from the impacts  
32 of Covid. Ketchikan is growing in terms of tourism,  
33 they recently opened an additional cruise ship port and  
34 the cruise tourism industry does bring in a significant  
35 amount of revenue but it also puts a lot of strain on  
36 the community. Residents of Ketchikan have expressed  
37 the aging road infrastructure can't sustain the heavy  
38 use by tourism buses transporting passengers to  
39 different excursions and expressed a lot of frustration  
40 that many businesses today are only open seasonally,  
41 are owned by non-locals and really cater to tourists  
42 more than to residents. Emergency services often  
43 become very congested during the tourism industry -- or  
44 tourism season and it has seemed to have exacerbated  
45 the housing crisis because more and more homes are  
46 being used for short-term rentals for seasonal  
47 employees. Residents of Ketchikan and other smaller  
48 communities throughout the Southeast have provided a  
49 lot of testimony expressing concerns about the

50



1 pollution caused by cruise ships and the impacts this  
2 has had in Ketchikan include limiting people's ability  
3 to harvest near and to use beach areas. While tourism  
4 is the largest industry in Juneau and -- in Ketchikan  
5 and it is also quite large in Juneau, tourism is also  
6 growing throughout the Southeast region in general.  
7 Native corporations in Klawock just opened their first  
8 large cruise ship port this summer and in Sitka they  
9 recently opened an additional privately owned port. In  
10 Sitka this has led to the number of cruise ship  
11 visitors doubling from before 2020 to 2023 and these  
12 trends suggest that the development of the cruise  
13 industry in the Southeast may over time lessen the gaps  
14 that currently exist between Ketchikan, Juneau and some  
15 of the other smaller communities.

16  
17                   While the cruise tourism industry is  
18 growing enormously, the timber, commercial fishing,  
19 seafood processing and government industries have all  
20 declined. The timber industry began declining in the  
21 1990s ultimately leading to the closure of processing  
22 mills in Ketchikan in 1997 and in Sitka in 1998. These  
23 closures put huge economic shocks in both communities  
24 and resulted in declines in average earnings, decline  
25 in population size and lower enrollment in local  
26 schools. In Ketchikan it took approximately 10 years  
27 for earnings to return to what they were before the  
28 mill closed in 1997.

29  
30                   Next slide please.

31  
32                   The commercial fishing and seafood  
33 processing industry has long been one of the biggest  
34 private sector industries in the Southeast. Ketchikan  
35 remains an important seafood port but the available  
36 data shows that this industry is perhaps declining more  
37 in Ketchikan than in other communities. Earnings from  
38 commercial fishing have shown only moderate growth  
39 compared to some other communities. The number of  
40 resident permit holders has declined by nearly half and  
41 seafood processing jobs have declined by more than one-  
42 third. The declines in seafood processing jobs have  
43 also occurred on Prince of Wales Island but these  
44 declines began earlier and were proportionately greater  
45 in Ketchikan. Additionally, since 2002 an average of  
46 around 75 percent of all seafood processing wages  
47 earned in Ketchikan are earned by people who do not  
48 live in the Ketchikan Gateway Borough suggesting that  
49 seafood processing wages for quite a long time have not  
50

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1 directly contributed to the livelihoods of people in  
2 Ketchikan. Hatcheries play a notable role in the both  
3 commercial fishing, sportfishing and subsistence  
4 fishing but there doesn't seem to be any particular  
5 advantage in Ketchikan than other Southeast communities  
6 as there are several hatcheries throughout the  
7 Southeast that support commercial, sport and  
8 subsistence fishing.

9

10 Next slide please.

11

12 Government jobs are another sector that  
13 historically provided stable year-round positions and  
14 these may be local government in terms of school  
15 teachers, tribal governments, borough staff but also  
16 State and Federal positions. These positions have  
17 declined 25 percent throughout the Southeast as a whole  
18 since 2012. Ketchikan saw 30 percent declines in both  
19 State and Federal jobs and only small increases in  
20 local positions. There were similar declines in  
21 Federal and State jobs in other communities,  
22 particularly State jobs in Sitka showed very large  
23 declines, but all of the other communities considering  
24 Juneau, Sitka and Prince of Wales, a much larger growth  
25 in local government positions.

26

27 Next slide please.

28

29 In terms of services, the available  
30 data suggests that Ketchikan is sort of acting as a hub  
31 community and does have more services than many of the  
32 other smaller communities nearby. There are more  
33 schools, more grocery stores, more health care  
34 facilities and more social services in Ketchikan than  
35 in these smaller rural communities. Many of the nearby  
36 residents of Prince of Wales and Metlakatla do rely on  
37 these services and will at least occasionally, if not  
38 frequently, travel to Ketchikan to access these goods  
39 and services. Ketchikan does act as a transportation  
40 hub as well. It has one large airport with services  
41 from Alaska Airlines to Sitka, Wrangell, Juneau and  
42 Seattle. It also is the headquarters of the Alaska  
43 Marine Highway System and provides critical maintenance  
44 to ferries and barges. Like all communities throughout  
45 Southeast Alaska, Ketchikan has suffered from some  
46 pretty significant declines in ferry service ability  
47 after Covid due to labor shortages. Barges do arrive  
48 to Ketchikan more often which impacts presumably the  
49 availability of goods in the community, however,

50

0164

1 there's notable testimony from residents of Ketchikan  
2 that grocery supplies can run low as people from other  
3 communities rely on these stores as well and will  
4 travel to purchase food from the grocery store. This  
5 was especially true during Covid when supply chains  
6 were disrupted and goods were less available. And some  
7 of the data shared by KIC in their report highlights  
8 this issue in terms of food access does not necessarily  
9 relate to food security and so there is some data  
10 presented in that report speaking to the rate of food  
11 insecurity in Ketchikan and the usage of SNAP benefits  
12 to try to address that.

13

14 Finally, in terms of services, there  
15 are several public and social services in Ketchikan  
16 that appear to be in decline largely due to funding  
17 constraints. The most accessible and largest shelter  
18 serving homeless populations closed in 2024, which is  
19 particularly challenging due to the high rate of  
20 poverty and the large number of people experiencing  
21 homelessness in Ketchikan and public schools are also  
22 facing shortages and considering consolidations and  
23 major budget cuts.

24

25 And with that I will pass it back to  
26 Brent.

27

28 MR. VICKERS: Okay. Okay, thank you.  
29 That brings us to the OSM conclusion which is found on  
30 689 of your meeting books.

31

32 Office of Subsistence Management is  
33 neutral on the proposal.

34

35 Next slide please.

36

37 OSM believes that the data -- believe  
38 the data and the -- that we have is inconclusive  
39 because there is evidence to suggest Ketchikan area has  
40 both rural and non-rural characteristics. The  
41 community is relatively remote and isolated and nestled  
42 in the very rugged and heavily forested setting. The  
43 population is relatively large for an Alaskan community  
44 but the population growth overall has been very low,  
45 especially compared to the state as a whole. Poverty  
46 has increased and there are housing shortages. Goods  
47 and services are shipped in vulner -- are shipped in  
48 are vulnerable to disruptions from outside events such  
49 as Covid. The economy in general is very vulnerable.  
50

0165

1 Most of the residents of the community use and rely on  
2 wild resources and many of these residents,  
3 particularly those who are Alaska Native clearly use  
4 fish and wildlife for subsistence purposes. It's very  
5 important that KIC members have substantial  
6 opportunities to harvest and share traditional foods  
7 and to teach these cultural practices to their  
8 children.

9  
10 At the same time there are differences  
11 between Ketchikan and nearby rural communities.

12  
13 Ketchikan is an area hub with most of  
14 the services and economic opportunities. The smaller  
15 nearby communities, such as those on Prince of Wales  
16 are more remote and isolated. Most residents of the  
17 smaller rural communities dedicate much of their time  
18 and energy to subsistence, often because economic  
19 opportunities are very limited. Most quantitative  
20 information on the use and harvest of wild resources  
21 demonstrates that the residents of smaller communities  
22 are more dependant on fish and wildlife. Residents of  
23 Ketchikan have more limited opportunities to harvest  
24 large amounts of resources because they are non-rural  
25 and in a State non-subsistence area.

26  
27 Furthermore, this was the first time  
28 that the Council was able to provide recommendation on  
29 Ketchikan's status in this Program.

30  
31 We greatly appreciate KIC members and  
32 everyone else who provided very emotional heartfelt  
33 testimonies at the Southeast Regional Advisory Council  
34 meeting and the Council members for putting themselves  
35 on the line before the public and making a very  
36 difficult decision.

37  
38 Thank you.

39  
40 CHAIRMAN CHRISTIANSON: Thank you for  
41 that analysis, Staff, appreciate it. Any questions  
42 from the Board for the Staff on the presentation.

43  
44 MS. BOARIO: Mr. Chair. Fish and  
45 Wildlife Service.

46  
47 CHAIRMAN CHRISTIANSON: Yes, you have  
48 the floor.

49  
50

0166

1 MS. BOARIO: Thank you, Mr. Chair. I  
2 have a question that is a mix of process and substance,  
3 but I want to make sure I have the process piece  
4 accurate before I go forward so thank you. I believe  
5 this is the first non-rural determination to come  
6 before the Board in my tenure so I want to make sure I  
7 have it right. So my understanding is the last time  
8 the Board reviewed the rural status for Ketchikan was  
9 during the 2005/2007 period, is that correct -- I see  
10 nods, okay -- and at that time the Board used different  
11 criteria -- okay, yep. So our newer policy on non-  
12 rural determination lays out a bunch of information, it  
13 also has those threshold requirements, before a  
14 proposal moves from OSM to the Board. So you guys look  
15 at it first and one of those thresholds is that the  
16 proposal provides new or different information than the  
17 last time that community or area became before us, but  
18 recognizing that the last time that they were before  
19 the Board it was different criteria, did OSM use that  
20 threshold analysis or not? And the reason I ask is I  
21 want to make sure I'm looking at KIC's proposal  
22 accurately when I think about what is new or different  
23 going on in this situation than previously. And as I  
24 read through it I can pick out things, especially the  
25 stuff you've highlighted on supply chain disruptions,  
26 food security and poverty, especially during Covid, but  
27 I just want to know kind of what process OSM, I guess,  
28 used, knowing there was an old one and there was a new  
29 one and reviewing it to bring it to the Board.

30  
31 Does that make sense.

32  
33 MR. VICKERS: Through the Chair. This  
34 is Brent Vickers, OSM. Thank you for that question,  
35 Council Member Boario. So we did a threshold analysis  
36 of the proposal. Now the threshold analysis really  
37 looks at the proposal itself without comparing it to  
38 other data and the -- what the threshold analysis is is  
39 -- the -- the real purpose of it is because this is  
40 such a big process and a big analysis, is making sure  
41 that there is -- that the proponent has provided enough  
42 information to proceed with a full analysis. Like is  
43 there a reason and we don't -- and unlike wildlife or  
44 fisheries regulatory proposals, this isn't necessarily  
45 something a Council probably wants to see or the Board  
46 wants to see repeatedly so it wants to make sure that  
47 there's a real reason to get into it. And so we looked  
48 at the proposal itself and what was contained in the  
49 proposal and the proposal showed that there had been  
50

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1 population declines, that the economy had changed,  
2 other factors, but primarily that this hasn't been  
3 considered -- the Ketchikan area has not been  
4 considered under the new policy as a major reason for  
5 reconsidered before -- under -- under the new  
6 guidelines. And so considering all of those factors  
7 that were in the proposal, both the OSM, the Regional  
8 Advisory Council recommendation and then the Board felt  
9 -- approved that it had passed the threshold  
10 requirements which put it into the full analysis phase  
11 that we just did.

12

13 MS. BOARIO: That's really helpful,  
14 thank you. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

15

16 CHAIRMAN CHRISTIANSON: Any further  
17 questions from the Board for the Staff.

18

19 (No comments)

20

21 CHAIRMAN CHRISTIANSON: Thank you,  
22 Sara. With that, we'll call on the summary of written  
23 public comment.

24

25 MR. VICKERS: Thank you. Brent  
26 Vickers, OSM. There were no submitted written comments  
27 within the regulatory timeframe which ended in July  
28 8th, 202 -- 2024 that were submitted through the reg --  
29 official process for this. So we're -- and I only  
30 bring that up because people did submit emails during  
31 Council meetings and everything like that to be read  
32 into the record and I just want to make sure that  
33 everyone realizes that there's a difference between  
34 those emails that are received during Council meetings  
35 and the written public comment period that we're  
36 talking about right now, which is a separate process.

37

38 Thank you.

39

40 CHAIRMAN CHRISTIANSON: Thank you for  
41 that. Summary of tribal, ANCSA Corporation  
42 consultation. Native Liaison, Orville.

43

44 MR. LIND: Thank you, Chair. Board  
45 members. Again, Orville Lind, Native Liaison for the  
46 Office of Subsistence Management. We had been  
47 contacted by KIC here awhile back to schedule tribal  
48 consultation and we worked with the KIC representative  
49 to set one up. We had one set up but during the

50

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1 process, it was kind of a last minute thing, before we  
2 had the consultation, that they would hold off on that  
3 consultation and meet some of our OSM Staff at the  
4 Southeast Regional Advisory Council meeting at  
5 Ketchikan.

6  
7 CHAIRMAN CHRISTIANSON: Thank you,  
8 Orville. Any questions for Orville on that.

9  
10 (No comments)

11  
12 CHAIRMAN CHRISTIANSON: Hearing none,  
13 tribal Native organization testimony.

14  
15 (Pause)

16  
17 CHAIRMAN CHRISTIANSON: Yeah, this is  
18 the opportunity for tribal governments to speak to this  
19 proposal. The floor will also be open for the public  
20 so you can simply come to the mic. I do have all the  
21 blue cards for you guys too so I'll call you in order  
22 as the blue cards are received, so that's on the  
23 record. Any Advisory group testimony, State AC, SRC or  
24 working groups, this is your opportunity.

25  
26 (No comments)

27  
28 CHAIRMAN CHRISTIANSON: At this time  
29 we'll open the floor to the public and I'll look at the  
30 list.

31  
32 (Pause)

33  
34 CHAIRMAN CHRISTIANSON: First up,  
35 Kenyatta Bradley.

36  
37 MR. BRADLEY: Hello again. Thank you,  
38 again, Mr. Board and Chair for your time. I came up to  
39 speak because I live in Sitka and Ketchikan has been  
40 compared a lot to Sitka. I was like Googling data and  
41 I was surprised to see city of Ketchikan at 8,000,  
42 Sitka 8,400 and then I realized it's because -- like  
43 I've always thought of Ketchikan is up at 15 or 11 or  
44 whatever, I didn't really pay attention but I knew that  
45 they were in a different bracket than us as far as like  
46 basketball and high school and everything. But to  
47 encompass all that surrounding area seems a little bit  
48 unfair to them. Those are some long roads and those  
49 are different communities. And so I would go with  
50

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1 their 8,000 number. And then I looked at their  
2 population growth, that was one of the charts provided  
3 by the KIC, the Ketchikan Indian -- this packet right  
4 here, and all of the other non-rural places had like  
5 growth of over 100 percent and Ketchikan only had 30  
6 percent and it got me thinking like, you know, Sitka is  
7 a coastal community built on the coastal edge of these  
8 mountains that shoot up out of the water, you really  
9 don't have a lot of room to expand, you know, so it's  
10 like you kind of end up with a cap and Ketchikan's  
11 already built all those roads and everything and so I  
12 don't see it expanding a whole ton and being as much of  
13 a problem as people might think.

14  
15 But a couple of issues I see is that  
16 they are -- well, they rely on tourism like we've  
17 talked about and therefore they have big fast boats  
18 which would give them access to a lot of the other  
19 outlying areas. But I think those issues will just  
20 come up at later meetings and you shouldn't take their  
21 sovereignty away from them for that because I think as  
22 subsistence as freedom, especially with their seasonal  
23 income, being able to hunt in the winter and having  
24 that freedom and that time to be able to do it. So what  
25 I do in Sitka, I also work in tourism but I'm fortunate  
26 enough to work at Mt. Edgecumbe in the off-season, and  
27 there can only be so many teachers in Ketchikan so.

28  
29 Those are my points and I just wanted  
30 to lay that down and I'm surprised that Ketchikan  
31 Indian Community didn't just testify but that's all I  
32 got, thank you.

33  
34 CHAIRMAN CHRISTIANSON: Thank you. Any  
35 questions. Appreciate you taking the time today,  
36 Kenyatta. Next we'll call on Oliver Peterson.

37  
38 MR. PETERSON: Thank you, Chair and  
39 thank you Board. My name is Oliver Peterson. Thank  
40 you for the Board for letting me give my testimony.  
41 I'm here representing myself, my family, and my  
42 community. I'm a Senior at Petersburg High School and  
43 I've lived in Petersburg all of my life. I get my name  
44 from my great-grandfather Oliver Hofstad who is one of  
45 the founders of Petersburg Fisheries, Incorporated and  
46 a lifelong fisherman. I am currently a seine tender  
47 for OBI on the OceanMaid.

48  
49 I gave my testimony in opposition to  
50



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1 this issue at the Southeast RAC meeting in October and  
2 I am grateful for the Board and Heather Bauscher for  
3 allowing me and the other students to have their voices  
4 heard on issues that they feel might affect them.  
5 During the RAC meeting in October, the then President  
6 of the Petersburg Indian Association, Deborah OGara,  
7 submitted written testimony to the Council in  
8 opposition to the Ketchikan non-rural determination. I  
9 have spoken with her on numerous occasions regarding  
10 the proposal and I want to share some interesting  
11 points she brought to my attention as well as my own  
12 personal view as someone involved in the commercial  
13 fishing industry and a lifelong resident of Alaska.

14  
15                   Yesterday during the reports from  
16 different regions and during the public testimony the  
17 main topic of concern seemed to be the lack of  
18 subsistence resources all across the state. Ketchikan  
19 Gateway Borough has 13,000 residents but also the 8,000  
20 number from, I think, not including Saxman, as of 2023.  
21 They have abundant access to alternative resources with  
22 three big chain stores like Walmart, Safeway and Three  
23 Bears. They're also first on the milkrun through  
24 Southeast making their prices for food comparatively  
25 cheaper to the rest of Southeast. While it is KIC  
26 fighting for subsistence resources, our Constitution  
27 states laws and regulations governing the use or  
28 disposal of natural resource shall apply equally to all  
29 persons similarly situated with reference to subject  
30 matter and purpose to be served by the law or  
31 regulation. Unless we fight to change the  
32 Constitution, we cannot exclusively give KIC  
33 subsistence rights without giving them to all of the  
34 Ketchikan residents.

35  
36                   I agree with the decision made by the  
37 Southeast RAC to try to assist KIC in fighting for  
38 their subsistence rights. I have no doubt that it  
39 would be a difficult process but nothing is impossible  
40 as Alaskans and humans have proven time and time again.

41  
42                   Alaska is supposed to be a place of  
43 opportunity in abundance. But with the decline in our  
44 resources due to a number of factors like global  
45 warming, the sea lion population and lack of food for  
46 our resources overall, it is dangerous to the rest of  
47 Southeast and the rest of Alaska to allow the people of  
48 Ketchikan to take from the dwindling supply. We need  
49 to do absolutely everything in our power to save our  
50

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1 fish and our wildlife where we could come face to face  
2 with the possibility of destroying our ecosystem. I  
3 believe it should be the inherent right of the people  
4 of KIC to take what they need from the land and our  
5 State has failed them in taking away the rights they  
6 had long before we ever inhabited this land but now we  
7 are living in a different time. Now is the time to  
8 come together and help replenish our resources so the  
9 First People of Alaska and the rest of our rural  
10 citizens can enjoy the resources Alaska has to offer.

11

12 Thank you for your time.

13

14 CHAIRMAN CHRISTIANSON: Thank you,  
15 appreciate that. Any questions from the Board.

16

17 Frank.

18

19 MR. WOODS: Yeah, thank you for your  
20 testimony. Kind of reciting what you had -- your last  
21 part of your testimony was the decline of fish and game  
22 and wildlife resources in Alaska and it's our  
23 responsibility to be stewards of that. It's a well  
24 presented testimony both from your colleagues and  
25 yourself. I encourage you to keep doing what you're  
26 doing, that's what we need, you to have a pulse, like  
27 you said Alaska's resources and access to resources are  
28 changing so I appreciate your statements and keep  
29 coming back and testifying and educating yourself.

30

31 Thank you.

32

33 CHAIRMAN CHRISTIANSON: Ben Houser.

34

35 MR. HOUSER: Hello, Mr. Chair and  
36 members of the Board. My name is Ben Houser, I am from  
37 Wrangell, Alaska. I am representing myself and my  
38 family. I've been a lifelong subsistence user in  
39 Wrangell and in Prince of Wales and I just want to  
40 address my concerns.

41

42 The concern I have is with the proposal  
43 to add Ketchikan as a rural Alaska town. If Ketchikan  
44 becomes rural it will add an influx of thousands of  
45 people into the Subsistence Program. This raises  
46 concerns that there may not be enough to go around.  
47 For example, in Wrangell, deer have been taken  
48 advantage of due to the designated hunter rule. This  
49 rule allows hunters to shoot as many deer for as many  
50

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1 people with tags as they want. This mass harvesting  
2 has not been a problem in past years because we have  
3 not had harsh winters. This may not be the case with  
4 an added 13,000 people from Ketchikan. These problems  
5 have been occurring with subsistence halibut as well.  
6 Due to the rules listed from the subsistence SHARC card  
7 there's no limit on halibut take. This rule is abused  
8 by people sending massive amounts of halibut south and  
9 taking more than they need. Last is salmon. Salmon  
10 are always hard to manage. On the Stikine River  
11 there's a subsistence gillnet fishery that allows for  
12 30 sockeye per household every year. This is abused by  
13 many due to the lack of enforcement. People don't  
14 report the real number of fish they are taking, they  
15 should be taking what they want, not what they need --  
16 or I mean they should be taking what they need, not  
17 what they want. Just like halibut and deer, this has  
18 not been a problem in past years because even if it has  
19 been abused it has not been enough to damage the  
20 population because the number of subsistence users is  
21 low. Yet, again, if Ketchikan was designated rural it  
22 would put an added pressure that may not be  
23 sustainable.

24  
25 If we do make arrangements to add  
26 Ketchikan we need to think about implementing better  
27 enforcement and bag limits for salmon, halibut and  
28 deer. If we do think about long-term -- if we don't  
29 think about long-term effects of Ketchikan being added  
30 as rural subsistence we will lose our beloved resources  
31 right from under our feet. I think this problem needs  
32 to be addressed to save our rural communities from  
33 future cuts to all subsistence. If we take too much  
34 now we will lose our subsistence opportunities in the  
35 future.

36  
37 I would like the Board to take these  
38 suggestions into consideration so that me and my family  
39 and other rural communities can continue to teach  
40 harvesting in a sustainable way.

41  
42 Thank you for your time and  
43 consideration.

44  
45 CHAIRMAN CHRISTIANSON: Thank you, Ben,  
46 for your testimony. Appreciate you taking the time  
47 today. Any questions for Ben, comments from the Board.

48  
49 (No comments)  
50

0173

1                   CHAIRMAN CHRISTIANSON: Thank you. And  
2 I believe I grabbed this stack of blue cards here from  
3 KIC in order you guys want to speak. So we'll call up  
4 Mr. Willard Jackson.

5  
6                   MR. JACKSON: Mr. Chair. My Tlingit  
7 name is (In Tlingit). I am a Tanta Kwaan Teikweidi  
8 Brown Bear. My mother was Esther Shay Totier, she was  
9 a school teacher and taught a lot of the Council  
10 members that I'm with in the school system. I was  
11 raised by my grandma in the village of Saxman. There  
12 was 14 of us. 8 sisters, 6 brothers and there's five  
13 of us left, all boys, and we struggle to meet the  
14 demand of the -- I have 14 grandchildren, 10  
15 grandchildren, 4 great-grandchildren and I have to  
16 split my food up to feed them and others, likewise in  
17 other villages to the north. I understand the  
18 pressure. I'm not here to blame anyone, I'm here to  
19 make a point for myself and KIC in regards to rural  
20 status.

21  
22                   When I was growing up in the village of  
23 Saxman my older brother used to hunt for us. My dad  
24 used to buy the rounds for him, 30 30 rounds. When you  
25 buy those they come in a pack of 30. My brother never  
26 missed on his hunting trips, Milton. Prior to him  
27 going hunting on these trips out of the village of  
28 Saxman, he'd go door to door like his grandma told him,  
29 you got to ask permission, that's not our territory, to  
30 let him go hunting. He always left something for  
31 someone, he always brought food for someone. Two weeks  
32 ago I received some black cod from Tlingit-Haida, Tony  
33 was there, Tony helped distribute that. Last year we  
34 received kelp, herring eggs on kelp from Tlingit-Haida  
35 distributed by KIC as it came in. We received salmon  
36 one time, red -- sockeye as well as coho. I'm  
37 receiving salmon from Clover Pass, already boxed up,  
38 well taken care of, tourists didn't want to take that  
39 pink salmon, they didn't want the pink salmon so I got  
40 it in my refrigerator. There's always a door open  
41 somewhere. I'm not here to beg for my food. I'm here  
42 to say we have problems in Indian Country, we're all  
43 related here, we all look for the same thing in our  
44 life, how are we going to feed our children, how are we  
45 going to feed the ones on the street struggling.

46  
47                   Life is unbearable enough as it is  
48 today and only getting worse. I'm 77 years old. And  
49 my mother always told me to hold my head up, (In  
50

0174

1 Tlingit), go in a straight line, keep going forward,  
2 (In Tlingit). I want to offer a song, it's a prayer  
3 song, it's a song my mother taught us which was gifted  
4 to us by Eva Karluk, Dempsy Bob and ask Irene and  
5 Netta, Trixie to come up and help me with this song.

6  
7 It's a prayer song, we're asking  
8 Creator, everlasting one for strength as we struggle to  
9 keep our feet on the ground and to give the right  
10 information to our children and our grandchildren.  
11 It's not you, you're here to help us, that's what this  
12 Board's about, is to help one another to achieve what  
13 we need to achieve in our lifetime. I'm not well, I'm  
14 dealing with Agent Orange and my time is really limited  
15 and I shared that with my kids at Chirstmastime this  
16 year. I cried. I cried really hard. That's probably  
17 the last time I'm going to see them at a gathering like  
18 that. Now I know why my uncles cried when they went to  
19 the Board at one time, now I know why my grandma tried  
20 when she went to achieve what she needed to achieve for  
21 us. She spoke five different languages and she  
22 accomplished English. I'm not all Tlingit. My great-  
23 grandfather is Richard Harris, the goldminer in Juneau,  
24 that's my grandpa, and I know that. I don't struggle  
25 with racial slurs or slays, I try to get along with  
26 people. (In Tlingit) means honorable one, I'm a  
27 peacemaker (In Tlingit) that's what I do for the tribe,  
28 that's what I do for my tribe.

29  
30 (Song Performed)

31  
32 (Applause)

33  
34 MR. JACKSON: Gunalcheesh. Thank you  
35 very much.

36  
37 CHAIRMAN CHRISTIANSON: Thank you for  
38 that Willy, and bringing the spirit into the house.  
39 Appreciate your leadership and your kind words and what  
40 you're leaving on and good luck with your health, we  
41 need your leadership in our Southeast. He's everywhere  
42 so keep it up Willy, you got strength.

43  
44 Next we'll call on Charles Edwardson.

45  
46 MR. EDWARDSON: For the record my name  
47 is Charles Edwardson. Thank you. I'm from Ketchikan.

48  
49 (In Native)

50

0175

1                   Good people. Greetings. My Haida name  
2 is One Raven, I am from the Raven Clan and Ketchikan is  
3 my home. Nora Cogo\* is my grandmother, Dr. Robert Cogo  
4 is my grandfather, Verna Edwardson is my mother. My  
5 English name is Charles Edwardson, I was born in  
6 Ketchikan, raised in Southeast Alaska. My career  
7 started at the age of 14 as a deckhand on a seine boat.  
8 I spent the first part of my career fishing off the  
9 west coast of Prince of Wales Island and I've worked  
10 hard my whole life ever since then ultimately bringing  
11 me to this table, in fact.

12  
13                   I grew up in a traditional Haida  
14 household. I'm a Ketchikan Indian Community tribal  
15 Council member. I serve on the Sealaska Board of  
16 Directors. I'm currently the Director of Vocational  
17 Education and Cultural Heritage for the Tlingit and  
18 Haida Central Council at Generation Southeast Prince of  
19 Wales Campus located on Prince of Wales in Klawock.

20  
21                   So we've been waiting years, actually  
22 decades so allow me this about 10 minutes.

23  
24                   I would like to say I was very  
25 impressed -- first let me say I was very impressed with  
26 the youth, not only from Hoonah but from other parts of  
27 the region where their message was concise and clear  
28 and I can learn from them because my comments are not  
29 as well polished, I can guarantee you. There's a long  
30 letter here you're going to hear but they're very brave  
31 young men and women and that's our future, and I wanted  
32 to say that, that I was pretty proud even though I  
33 don't know them personally, it takes a lot of courage  
34 to be up here for such a young age.

35  
36                   So the question has been posed what  
37 difference would it make if we are rural or non-rural  
38 in accessing our traditional foods. This was brought  
39 up at the RAC meeting in Ketchikan multiple times.  
40 What difference could it possibly make for you to  
41 access your traditional foods if you are rural or non-  
42 rural. Well, my response, I couldn't think right off  
43 the bat because we don't know all the regulations, but  
44 it's an inherent right to access or food, our  
45 traditional foods. So we didn't have an answer right  
46 off the bat. What difference would it make if we were  
47 rural or non-rural to accessing our traditional foods.  
48 Well, for one thing my response -- because it took me  
49 off guard -- I said if there's no difference in  
50

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1 accessing the resources for rural or non-rural status,  
2 I challenge all you that are rural, that have rural  
3 status, to give up your rural status and then tell me  
4 where that puts you. If we don't need it then neither  
5 do they. That was an interesting question coming from  
6 other rural communities and it's a debate I won't get  
7 into until they can walk a mile in my moccasins and say  
8 we'll give up our rural status because it makes no  
9 difference.

10

11 The practical answer, though, the  
12 realistic answer is if we were rural, it would protect  
13 us as priority users in case special measures needed to  
14 be taken for resource management. A lot of talk about  
15 diminishing resources in our state, well, if we were  
16 rural like we should be, we would be a protected user  
17 group, which we aren't now. It would increase our bag  
18 limits, increase our season, and it would allow us to  
19 participate in Federal activities that are regulated by  
20 the FSB on our island just like everybody else around  
21 us. I'll talk about that a little bit in my coming up  
22 comments here.

23

24 So I want to be clear, we're not here  
25 to fight for our subsistence rights. That's thrown  
26 around a lot. The definition from the Oxford Language  
27 Dictionary is No. 1 definition for subsistence is the  
28 action or fact of maintaining or supporting one's self  
29 at a minimum level. That's not us. We aren't  
30 supporting ourselves at a minimum level and we're not  
31 asking for that. Rather, we are here to discuss FSB's,  
32 Federal Subsistence Board's recognition from your  
33 Federal Subsistence Plan, it was up on the screen  
34 earlier, from your Federal Subsistence Plan, the  
35 recognition that our traditional and cultural use of  
36 our natural resources has gone on for thousands of  
37 years of recorded history. I'm paraphrasing but that's  
38 part of your management plan. It's been going on for  
39 thousands of years of recorded history and literally  
40 hundreds of years just in my household alone, my  
41 grandparents, my great-grandparents and finally with me  
42 over 50 years, just me alone, 50 years in providing for  
43 my extended family. In the last 15 to 20 years our  
44 resources are becoming harder to get, we're getting  
45 pushed farther and farther out to get what used to be  
46 right next to our island, Revillagigedo, we're getting  
47 pushed further and further out by the onslaught of the  
48 charter and sport fisheries industry. They, in fact,  
49 get preference over us. We want simply our priority  
50

0177

1 back as a priority user. We are here to give you, the  
2 Federal Subsistence Board, the opportunity to assure us  
3 safer access to our traditional and customary use of  
4 all of our natural resources. It's the one tool we  
5 have left against economic depression. It's been  
6 discussed here at length, there's data to prove it.  
7 We're an economically depressed region. It's the one  
8 tool we have left against the economic depression in  
9 our region, is our ability to provide and feed the food  
10 that has sustained us for generations and not at a  
11 subsistence level but abundantly.

12

13 Federal Subsistence Board, we are a  
14 Federally-recognized tribe. In our view, people might  
15 have different views, but in our view, my view, my  
16 personal view, your job is to find a way to yes, to  
17 concur with our position that we are rural by your  
18 definition. Your job is to assure our rights to  
19 traditional and customary use of our natural resources,  
20 not to find ways to deny us that. To deny us that  
21 inherent right you all, not the RAC, will be  
22 responsible, in part, for the continued assault in  
23 diminishing of our culture and our way of life if you  
24 deny us rural status.

25

26 It's also important to us that you  
27 understand this point as well, the Regional Advisory  
28 Council is just that, it's advisory, you set policy  
29 they do not. Also it's important to recognize not one  
30 person from Ketchikan is on the Southeast RAC  
31 Committee. The advice that you are getting -- the  
32 advice they are giving you is to protect their  
33 communities. Much of the deliberation in the Ketchikan  
34 RAC Committee a few months ago was concerns on how  
35 Ketchikan being rural will affect their communities,  
36 how it will affect their resources, their way of life,  
37 rather than to deliberate on how this affects our way  
38 of life. So there is no data, or confirmed studies or  
39 any proof of any kind that rural status for Ketchikan  
40 will negatively affect or impact any of the rural  
41 communities, especially the three that surround us.  
42 I'll talk about that a little bit later. We are  
43 literally surrounded by three rural communities and we  
44 sit right in the middle. So there is no proof of any  
45 negative impact. And to make any assumptions on that  
46 assertion is contrary to all of the criteria we have  
47 already met and contrary to responsible policy  
48 decisions that should be based on legal definitions,  
49 not hypothetical assertions.

50



0178

1 I want to put a few things in context,  
2 many from Southeast Alaska have heard this, and this is  
3 just a refresher for context for the people that aren't  
4 from the region just for this discussion today.

5  
6 Metlakatla. Just a mile and three-  
7 quarters to the tip of Metlakatla to Ketchikan is  
8 rural. Saxman, they call it South Tongass, it's more  
9 east really on the road system, Ketchikan sits dead  
10 center of that. Prince of Wales, also rural. Saxman.  
11 Metlakatla. Southwest. West and East. Surround  
12 Ketchikan, you seen the map. We all use the same  
13 infrastructure, we all use the same airport, we all use  
14 the same ferry system and we are as vulnerable as any  
15 community. If we missed a barge, it was discussed  
16 also, we'd be in tough shape, as well as Prince of  
17 Wales Island, Wrangell and everybody in southern  
18 Southeast. If the argument is that we have a Walmart,  
19 and that's going to come up, it sometimes comes up,  
20 well you guys have a Walmart so obviously you are  
21 urban. Well our sister tribe, one mile down the road  
22 past the Coast Guard Base has a Three Bears, it's a  
23 chain, Three Bears is a pretty big chain, they have a  
24 hardware store, sporting goods store, liquor store, as  
25 well as a very large grocery store. Does that rural  
26 community of Saxman lose their rural status because  
27 they have a Three Bear shopping center, or are they  
28 simply a rural community with a Three Bear shopping  
29 center. Saxman also has a -- Saxman, just one mile,  
30 1.5 miles to the south of our very town, Saxman also  
31 has a deep water port, conceptual deep water port, it's  
32 not built yet. They also have the ability and the  
33 wherewithal to apply for an FAA permit for broadband to  
34 serve the broader community high speed internet. That  
35 sounds pretty urban to me. They have Cape Fox  
36 Corporation, Saxman does, has Cape Fox Corporation,  
37 which is a wildly successful corporation. In fact they  
38 own much of the real estate in downtown Ketchikan.  
39 Saxman is very powerful. We're proud to call them a  
40 sister tribe. But all these amenities and successes  
41 don't make them any less rural.

42  
43 Prince of Wales is coming up next.  
44 Now, Prince of Wales, you can see Prince of Wales from  
45 my living room. There's a daily ferry over, in fact, I  
46 commute almost -- sometimes every other day. Prince of  
47 Wales has a Federal scenic byway designation, that is a  
48 huge accomplishment for Prince of Wales. The roads and  
49 the transportation that that provides, a scenic byways  
50

0179

1 designation, I could only wish to have in Ketchikan.  
2 They have the best highway system in the Southeast  
3 Alaska. The best maintained highway system by far is  
4 on Prince of Wales Island for Southeast Alaska. They  
5 have four school districts. They have an airport. FAA  
6 approved airport, instrument flight airport. In fact  
7 when I was going to the RAC Committee in Ketchikan, I  
8 was in Klawock, I went and grabbed a latte from one of  
9 the nice little coffee shops in Craig, rural Craig, I  
10 went to the Klawock Airport five to 7 with my coffee in  
11 my hand, jumped on the plane, flew to Ketchikan, went  
12 up to the Ted Ferry Civic Center where the RAC  
13 Committee was having RAC testimony, I arrived, I was  
14 the first one there, five minutes to 8:00, one hour  
15 from the Klawock Airport all the way to the Ted Ferry  
16 Civic Center in downtown Ketchikan. That seemed like a  
17 pretty urban commute to me, it was phenomenal. My  
18 coffee didn't even get cold, Klawock to Ketchikan. For  
19 a rural community that was a pretty urban commute. We  
20 have better access to our State Capital in Juneau from  
21 Klawock than we do from Ketchikan. It's a one hour  
22 direct flight from Klawock, sometimes three, four hours  
23 from Ketchikan. Prince of Wales also has three large  
24 grocery stores, a vibrant mariculture industry  
25 developing, at least three major Alaska Native  
26 Corporations based there, it's the birth place of  
27 Sealaska Corporation by the way, and a small but  
28 resilient timber industry as well as huge charter  
29 industry, a phenomenal cod industry as well as a  
30 developing tourist industry, not to mention a daily  
31 ferry system from Hollis to Ketchikan, that brings  
32 Prince of Wales residents over daily, we're a shared  
33 commerce, we're almost the same community.

34  
35 What we're talking about today is rural  
36 designation. I've just demonstrated or articulated to  
37 you that all of our rural communities have the same  
38 amenities, the ones I'm talking about Metlakatla,  
39 Saxman, Prince of Wales and Ketchikan. Petersburg's a  
40 little farther up, Wrangell's a little farther up. So  
41 it's not just about shooting deer. A lot of rhetoric  
42 has been thrown around about the deer on Prince of  
43 Wales Island but this isn't about the deer. We can get  
44 our own deer. We seen statistics here, we got pretty  
45 good hunting on Ketchikan. We're not looking for more  
46 access to Prince of Wales, we're looking for access to  
47 our own homeland. We don't understand why we're being  
48 denied.  
49  
50

0180

1                   Alternate resources available. That  
2 came up. I made a note. Well they have alternate  
3 resources, they have more stores. I just told you  
4 everybody has access to those stores. All of those  
5 rural communities and they access them regularly. So  
6 let's talk about the alternate resources a little bit.

7

8                   Alternate resources was mentioned.  
9 Stores and what not. Our population is economically  
10 disadvantaged by many metrics. Just because there's a  
11 big grocery store doesn't mean that it's available due  
12 to the limited incomes of our people. Not just  
13 Natives, non-Natives are also struggling with inflation  
14 and the high cost of living. The cruel irony is though  
15 our natural resources are available right under our  
16 feet and yet still unreachable due to the regulations  
17 promulgated upon us as indigenous, traditional and  
18 customary food gathers that do have indigenous  
19 sovereignty.

20

21                   So in closing I just want to keep this  
22 one thing in mind. Given that we have a neighboring  
23 tribe that is considering rural occupying the very same  
24 island and one mile away, using the same road system,  
25 the same health care facilities, we share the same  
26 schools, it has the same transportation limitation in  
27 and out of our community, it would have to be a very  
28 compelling position, very compelling, remarkable, in  
29 fact, a remarkable position to hold that we don't have  
30 the same right to be a rural community as our  
31 neighboring tribe a mile away. So that's all I have to  
32 say and I'm sorry it took so long but like I say we've  
33 been waiting a long time for this testimony and I think  
34 we've got eight other people but I just wanted to make  
35 the connection with some of you that don't know the  
36 area, that it's not David against Goliath here, it's  
37 not little 'ol Prince of Wales against big 'ol  
38 Ketchikan, it's not it at all. If you know the region,  
39 southern Southeast Alaska, we're a shared economy, we  
40 use the same amenities.

41

42                   How'aa. (In Haida)

43

44                   Thank you. I will see you again, take  
45 good care of yourselves.

46

47                   CHAIRMAN CHRISTIANSON: How'aa. (In  
48 Haida) Brother. Any questions for Charles -- Frank.

49

50

0181

1 MR. WOODS: Boy, thank you for your  
2 testimony. I'm honored to listen, watch. You  
3 mentioned customary and we just witnessed the most  
4 powerful spiritual experience I've ever had in a  
5 meeting, thank you for your elder providing a dance.  
6 Awesome. And thank you for your service as a Veteran.  
7 When you come together like you just did, I've been  
8 fully educated on Western way of management. I've been  
9 involved in this process and I get emotional, for too  
10 long. My grandmother raised me, she didn't have the  
11 written law, she didn't have the regulations we are  
12 faced with today. She fed our family and raised 11  
13 children on what you're talking about. Traditional  
14 use, that's defined by somebody else. And I'll  
15 reference the changes that happened, my experience, on  
16 how this all came to be. Frank Murkowski changed the  
17 word indigenous, that changed this Board that we go  
18 reference -- I could reference the McDowell Decision,  
19 the ANILCA law that implements this process and I am  
20 fully engaged in this process to help feed people.  
21 Back home, here, I have family that live here, my heart  
22 bleeds when I hear stories that you're dealing with.  
23 I'd like to challenge the Federal government that that  
24 we have come to a place, I believe we live in America  
25 where our youth are honored, the most important person  
26 in the room it's my opinion, is the youngest person in  
27 this room. The second is your testimony brings up a  
28 whole bunch of issues that we have a right as American  
29 citizens, state, Alaska residents, especially in all  
30 the different user groups as a Native person  
31 implemented ANILCA, ANCSA Corporations, and it's  
32 separated our people to do what you're doing now. I  
33 call it fighting for a way of life.

34  
35 So we live in America, the law that we  
36 live under is outlined in like the decisionmaking  
37 process we have, the decisionmaking process that we  
38 have to implement so I'm inclined to say yes on your  
39 proposal, to challenge the government that this law  
40 isn't working. We've heard testimony and I'll  
41 reference it over and over and over again in the RAC  
42 process, is that the competition of resources is too  
43 huge. The division of people is too great. That the  
44 tribal entities that were born and raised in Alaska,  
45 not going to separate the user groups or create a  
46 conflict between all the different users of guide  
47 industry, commercial industry to personal use  
48 determinations, whatever it may be, right, we could  
49 define ourselves in every arena, but what we haven't  
50

0182

1 done in the last -- since I've 'been born, is challenge  
2 the Federal government to change -- this might not be  
3 the right time but to challenge the Federal government  
4 to define what you're talking about has been the real  
5 challenge since I've been engaged in this process.  
6 Since I've been engaged. I'm only 59 years old. I got  
7 in this process in 2007, that's a very short period of  
8 time compared to you, all of you. I used to leave it  
9 up to everybody else but I thank you for bringing this  
10 issue forward and challenging us to come up with a  
11 solution.

12

13 Thank you.

14

15 MR. EDWARDSON: How'aa.

16

17 MR. WOODS: Oh, I got to stop. So I've  
18 been studying Federal law, I'm terrified because I'm  
19 going to stick my foot in my mouth. So what  
20 corporation -- what question was, what corporation do  
21 you belong to?

22

23 MR. EDWARDSON: I'm from the Ketchikan  
24 Indian Community Tribal Council but I'm also on the  
25 Sealaska Board of Directors, so Sealaska.

26

27 MR. WOODS: Sealaska Regional, what's  
28 your village corporation?

29

30 MR. EDWARDSON: Ketchikan doesn't have  
31 one. Landless.

32

33 MR. WOODS: That's -- in our region we  
34 have a village corporation and own land it was chosen  
35 for prime subsistence use. I am appalled that you  
36 don't have that, right.

37

38 MR. EDWARDSON: It's a big item on our  
39 agenda every quarterly meeting for Sealaska. They are  
40 pushing but, again, there are laws that we have to  
41 abide by and things of that nature and we were cut  
42 out.....

43

44 MR. WOODS: I am appalled that we don't  
45 have that opportunity, or that Ketchikan doesn't have a  
46 village corporation that's chosen land for prime  
47 subsistence use. That was an Alaska Native Claims  
48 Settlement charge. What I would like -- I try to come  
49 up with solutions in my head and I only got so much  
50

0183

1 information I can pass through but in 2017 for this  
2 Board, reserved Treaty rights designated land is a  
3 village corporation, regional corporation lands so  
4 Sealaska does have R2L designation, it's a Rural  
5 Determination Act. So under that Act, there's an  
6 avenue where we could help do what you're asking and  
7 I'm in support of any change that would help, right.  
8 We see this and I referenced this during our RAC  
9 presentations that subsistence is evolving and we have  
10 to evolve with it, so, thank you.

11

12 MR. EDWARDSON: And I just have to say,  
13 sorry, guys, we'll get out of here in a minute, but I  
14 just have to say subsistence is kind of a misnomer and  
15 it's kind of diminishing to me. Traditional cultural  
16 uses of our natural resources is what we like to refer  
17 to it and I got this terminology from Dave George Nicks  
18 down in Kasaan, he made a presentation at the RAC  
19 Committee and he was a young man, he was very upset and  
20 he inspired me to look into it a little more. He said  
21 I'm not a subsistence user, this is my life, this is  
22 traditional and customary use so I owe that to a young  
23 man, I don't even know how old he is, 30, something  
24 like that.

25

26 Anyway.

27

28 MR. WOODS: One other question before  
29 the comment, Mr. Chair.

30

31 MR. EDWARDSON: He's going to order  
32 coffee.

33

34 MR. WOODS: So in 2011 I joined the  
35 Board of Game and we were doing implementation of  
36 intensive management in Wasilla, some lady referenced  
37 that this morning, you got to watch what you wish for.  
38 In the realm of regulatory process for the state of  
39 Alaska they asked for a community harvest quota to feed  
40 their village, right, that community harvest quota  
41 became a nightmare to manage. There's a lot of things  
42 at play. I would support -- I'll reference again, I  
43 will support you to challenge the Federal government on  
44 finding a solution, so, thank you.

45

46 MR. EDWARDSON: How'aa.

47

48 (Applause)

49

50

1                   CHAIRMAN CHRISTIANSON: Thank you,  
2 Charles. I think we'll have time for one more before  
3 we take a time to be determined noon break for another  
4 dance group so you sung the spirit in here, Willy, so  
5 we'll call on Trixie Bennett at this time.

6  
7                   MS. BENNETT: Gunalcheesh, Mr. Chair.

8  
9                   (In Tlingit)

10  
11                   My English name is Trixie Bennett. I  
12 said I'm a Tlingit from Wrangell and I said I belong to  
13 the (In Tlingit), that's my clan, that's a Raven Frog  
14 Clan, I'm from the Frog House, again, from the Wrangell  
15 area at the mouth of the Stikene River. Our Clan are  
16 among the Raven side of the Shakes lineage that's been  
17 there for hundreds of years. My mother was Minnie  
18 Larson, her mom was Emma Shakes.

19  
20                   I grew up with a Tlingit mother and  
21 father. They raised nine children on subsistence and  
22 commercial fishing lifestyle there in Wrangell. But  
23 I've had the honor to live and work with the Ketchikan  
24 Tribe for the past 30 -- almost 30 years now. I want  
25 to express my gratitude for the opportunity to speak  
26 here today, again, Gunalcheesh, Mr. Chair, Council,  
27 elders, leaders, students and Staff, everyone  
28 participating today.

29  
30                   I'm here on behalf of Ketchikan Indian  
31 Community, one of the two Federally-recognized tribes  
32 in Ketchikan located in the traditional homelands of  
33 the Tanta Kwaan and the Saanya Kwaan people. I'm here  
34 today fighting for our way of life and I'm here to  
35 support KIC's proposal to designate Ketchikan as a  
36 rural area enabling it to reclaim its status as a  
37 subsistence hunting and fishing community.

38  
39                   I am KIC's Tribal Health Administrator.  
40 As someone who has dedicated my career to tribal health  
41 care for our people and who has served as a past  
42 president and Council woman of our tribe I recognize  
43 that our culture is not only a form of medicine but  
44 that our traditional foods are essential for our well-  
45 being. Our community has faced significant challenges  
46 due to historical injustices and ongoing pressures on  
47 our subsistence resources. Since the 1800s, the  
48 Tlingit people have fought for recognition of our  
49 inherent rights to hunt, fish and gather on our  
50

0185

1 traditional lands, our ancestors, my grandfather (In  
2 Tlingit) George Shakes, represented our people in a  
3 landmark lawsuit demanding recognition of our land  
4 rights. Sadly these requests were largely ignored but  
5 the fight has continued for over 130 years. 130 years.  
6 There have been successful legal battles, such as the  
7 Katie John case in 1994 that reinforced our Federal  
8 subsistence right yet the inequities remain.  
9 Particularly in Ketchikan, as was just discussed, they  
10 were left out of the Alaska Native Claims Settlement  
11 Act.

12  
13                   Restricting our access to traditional  
14 resources has profound implications for our culture and  
15 health. Research indicates that Tlingit ancestors  
16 consumed over 400 different traditional foods and today  
17 it's less than 30, on average. Less than 30  
18 varieties. The high cost and lower nutritional food  
19 value of imported foods only exacerbate our health  
20 issues including rising rates of Diabetes and other  
21 diet related illnesses. We know that our traditional  
22 diets are vital not only for our physical health but  
23 our spiritual health and our cultural identity. The  
24 influx of tourism in recent decades has intensified  
25 pressure on our traditional food sources. Without a  
26 rural designation there is no priority for subsistence  
27 users over commercial interests making it increasingly  
28 difficult for our community to thrive. Other Southeast  
29 Alaska communities like Sitka, Saxman, our neighbors in  
30 Saxman, as you know, they've already been designated as  
31 rural and we deserve that same recognition.

32  
33                   I gave pretty much the same words to  
34 the Regional Advisory Council in October, this past  
35 October in Ketchikan, but I wanted to highlight a  
36 couple of things that I heard from the RAC in their  
37 interpretation of what is rural. Overall, many of them  
38 could not do that, I felt, and they relied on their  
39 feelings, that they just felt Ketchikan is just not  
40 rural. Some were focused on the pressure they felt  
41 Ketchikan residents would bring to their territories,  
42 rightly so, I think, mainly on the Prince of Wales  
43 deer. And I felt like they didn't seem to address  
44 that, if approved, if our rural designation was  
45 approved it'd add about 1.5 million acres of the  
46 Tongass would become rural priority for subsistence  
47 users. 1.5 million acres is about what is over on  
48 Prince of Wales is what was said. So 1.5 million acres  
49 on our island. Some of the Council who supported our  
50



1 proposal pointed this out, they cited instances of  
2 using Section .804 to limit outside access and  
3 implement local prioritization through special action  
4 procedures, proposal opponents who were RAC members  
5 cited that the processes of Section .804 were onerous  
6 and didn't see this as a solution, which is in our  
7 proposal. And to tell you the truth I felt like they  
8 didn't desire to shut out non-rural users because that  
9 would mean limiting access to their sportsfishing and  
10 sporthunting, which they rely on. To me, that is wrong  
11 on so many levels and is exact opposite of what we're  
12 trying to achieve with ANILCA. Again, subsistence, as  
13 codified in ANILCA helps sustain not only the physical  
14 but the spiritual culture of Alaska Native people.  
15 Congress established that local rural residents be  
16 given precedence for using fish and wildlife resources,  
17 prioritizing subsistence uses over other uses such as  
18 sporthunting and fishing. In this proposal we were  
19 simply asking the Federal Subsistence Board to  
20 recognize that you must give priority access to these  
21 resources to our local Ketchikan residents.

22

23                   At the recent RAC meeting in Ketchikan  
24 Council members asked us why we need this designation  
25 and what would change for us? This type of  
26 questioning, like Chaz mentioned, kind of took us  
27 aback. They went on to tell us to, you know, get our  
28 people out on the land, teach them about our foods,  
29 tell them our stories, well, of course we are doing  
30 that but it's not sustainable, we need to be able to --  
31 people need to be able to go out on the land without  
32 government intervention all the time and without having  
33 to get those handouts, we don't want handouts, although  
34 we appreciate the black cod, Mr. Chair.

35

36                   (Laughter)

37

38                   MS. BENNETT: And the herring eggs.

39

40                   (Laughter)

41

42                   MS. BENNETT: But, no, seriously, we  
43 should be able to enjoy that eulachon on the Unuk, we  
44 should be able to keep our rock fish, we should be able  
45 to have our king salmon and enjoy larger bag limits  
46 that, you know, can sustain us. Again, it would open,  
47 you know, up over a million acres of Tongass land. It  
48 would give us priority on that land. And just how can  
49 you deny us that.

50



0188

1 MS. PITKA: I'm Rhonda Pitka. You  
2 mentioned Diabetes rates in the Ketchikan area, can you  
3 elaborate a little bit on that, what are the rates for  
4 that area?

5  
6 MS. BENNETT: Sure. We have about 250  
7 active people in our Diabetes cohorts and we have about  
8 a couple thousand active patients so 2,400, so what's  
9 that about 10 percent.

10  
11 MS. PITKA: Thank you.

12  
13 MS. BENNETT: Thank you for the  
14 question.

15  
16 MS. BOARIO: Thank you, Mr. Chair.  
17 Fish and Wildlife Service. This is maybe more of a  
18 follow up question for the Staff at the Office of  
19 Subsistence Management, but to the questions around the  
20 .804, I think it would be helpful to have a sense of  
21 the, like I guess the average time it takes or when we  
22 think about what that process is and if it is a  
23 barrier, if it is onerous, I don't know, I don't have  
24 that information in front of me. I think I've had  
25 alternate experiences in it but I guess looking over  
26 time, what is kind of the average time and process and  
27 how we address .804 issues would be information I'd  
28 really value. Thank you.

29  
30 Thank you, Mr. Chair.

31  
32 CHAIRMAN CHRISTIANSON: Thank you.  
33 We'll have Brent answer then we'll go to Frank.

34  
35 MR. VICKERS: Thank you, Mr. Chair.  
36 Section .804 analysis are mostly -- mostly done through  
37 proposal analysis -- a prop -- submit a proposal so part  
38 of the regulatory framework so, you know, a su --  
39 submitted in March and then go through the review  
40 process and then approved at the Board meeting, be it  
41 fisheries or wildlife Board meeting the following year.  
42 They can be submitted as special action requests, which  
43 would greatly reduce the timeframe. We would really --  
44 really prefer, in that, it would be a temporary special  
45 action request and go through the public process rather  
46 than emergency so it can go through a -- it doesn't  
47 have to go through a regulatory, it can go through a  
48 special action request. And a special action request,  
49 for everyone, would -- is a change in regulation but  
50

0189

1 only last for that regulatory cycle so if at -- two  
2 years at maximum.

3

4 Thank you.

5

6 MS. BOARIO: Thank you.

7

8 CHAIRMAN CHRISTIANSON: Okay. Do you  
9 still have a question, Frank.

10

11 MR. WOODS: Yeah, you mentioned the  
12 economic and you were a part of -- how many tribal  
13 members do you represent, or is in KIC?

14

15 MS. BENNETT: We have about 6,400 tribal  
16 members but they don't all live there, about half of us  
17 do.

18

19 MR. WOODS: Okay. So a question for  
20 OSM, we witnessed your presentation, and great  
21 presentation on this whole -- the use and access the  
22 use and Ketchikan was down compared to other places,  
23 I'd like to ask basically -- so in our region we did a  
24 caribou, moose enhancement -- access to resource was  
25 cut off in the early 2000s, I did an income by zip code  
26 and the growing villages had access to moose and  
27 caribou populations and this pertains to your OSM  
28 report -- and a great report -- what it didn't  
29 delineate was for me the villages that were cut off for  
30 moose and caribou on the Lower Peninsula when the  
31 villages on the east side of Alaska Peninsula were cut  
32 off, the villages that had access to moose and caribou  
33 actually increased. So that delineation for me, I did  
34 this in 2013 for a caribou and moose enhancement  
35 project that we were doing, is there any -- I mean I'm  
36 in support of all your comments, because No. 1 I think  
37 access to resource helps improve populations. Not only  
38 do they want to be there, but they actually can  
39 survive, so I'm trying to figure out how to ask the  
40 question, does your analysis include increased  
41 populations due to access to resource, is there any  
42 formula utilized for that portion or just access to  
43 resource and what's distributed and caught?

44

45 MR. VICKERS: Through the Chair. Thank  
46 you. And I'm trying to make sure I -- I fully  
47 understand, are you asking me if we are able to more or  
48 less estimate what -- how many more -- let's just say  
49 deer, are -- are you asking if we could more or --

50

0190

1 estimate how many more deer might be harvested.....

2

3 MR. WOODS: That too.

4

5 MR. VICKERS: .....if -- if.....

6

7 MR. WOODS: I'll let you finish.

8

9 MR. VICKERS: If KIC's proposal was  
10 approved and Ketchikan area became rural, is that --  
11 well, I guess that too, so.

12

13 MR. WOODS: Am I complic -- I'm a  
14 complicated person and my question gets complicated,  
15 but you're.....

16

17 MR. VICKERS: Yeah.

18

19 MR. WOODS: .....absolutely correct,  
20 there might be an increase in harvest but the  
21 population is basically health.

22

23 MR. VICKERS: Are we talking human  
24 population, residents?

25

26 MR. WOODS: Yes. Residents.

27

28 MR. VICKERS: Okay. And the health of  
29 the residents?

30

31 MR. WOODS: The population increase,  
32 decrease, the population, census data.....

33

34 MR. VICKERS: Uh-huh.

35

36 MR. WOODS: .....is there any  
37 delineation or separation in your data to allow that?  
38 And maybe I'm asking.....

39

40 MR. VICKERS: All -- all right, well,  
41 we did show the population de -- changes since 1980  
42 both Ketchikan that -- that proposed Ketchikan area and  
43 the surrounding communities.

44

45 MR. WOODS: Yes, you answered my  
46 question thank you.

47

48 MR. VICKERS: So, yeah, okay.

49

50

0191

1 CHAIRMAN CHRISTIANSON: Okay. At this  
2 time I'm going to call for an interjection and a break.  
3 We have a dance group at 12:00 p.m., a time certain,  
4 and so we'll start back up at 1:30 and give the time  
5 for the dance group, time for lunch. 1:30 back here.  
6 Thank you guys for your presentation this morning and I  
7 got to go to the bathroom.

8  
9 (Laughter)

10  
11 MR. LIND: Thank you everyone. The  
12 dance group is set up out there in the space area so  
13 this entertainment is for you, and join us here, once  
14 we get out there they will start the dance.

15  
16 (Off record)

17  
18 (On record)

19  
20 CHAIRMAN CHRISTIANSON: Could we get  
21 everyone to take a seat we'll get started here, please.

22  
23 (Pause)

24  
25 CHAIRMAN CHRISTIANSON: Okay, we're  
26 going to start the afternoon, resume with public  
27 testimony. The floor is open, we're discussing rural,  
28 non-rural determination for the Ketchikan proposal  
29 submitted by KIC. Yep, and here comes everybody.

30  
31 (Pause)

32  
33 CHAIRMAN CHRISTIANSON: All right,  
34 we'll start this afternoon testifying, we'll call on  
35 Lloyd Ruaro, you have the floor.

36  
37 MR. RUARO: Thank you, Mr. Chair.  
38 Esteemed Board members. How'aa. Gunalcheesh. (In  
39 Native). My name is Lloyd Ruaro. I'm a current  
40 elected councilman at Ketchikan Indian Community. I'm  
41 on my second term, fifth year, representing 6,557  
42 tribal members. And I know that number because I'm the  
43 enrollment Chair. So as of January that is the correct  
44 number of our tribe.

45  
46 Thank you for the opportunity and the  
47 work that's going into this. This has been a long,  
48 long time coming. I have the honor to serve the  
49 Ketchikan Indian Community for the last five years.

50

0192

1 Today I want to talk to you about the access of  
2 subsistence. And when I say, access, that's more of a  
3 Western word to me, I want to say an opportunity, okay,  
4 an opportunity for subsistence, of hunting, fishing,  
5 berry-picking, and maintain our culture. We hear  
6 subsistence a lot, right, that's a really big word. I  
7 teach my kids our way of life. I say that, it's our  
8 way of life. But you know what, it's also Alaskans way  
9 of life, not just tribal entities, it's Alaskans.

10

11 I want to share a story how I was  
12 taught by my Uncle Percy Frisby by the culture that he  
13 taught me what I am supposed to do on subsistence. He  
14 taught me what I need to do when I fish, when I hunt  
15 and take care of the land and the animals. He's the  
16 one that taught me how to do that. I share. We heard  
17 this earlier in earlier testimonies, I don't go stuff  
18 my freezer, I share with my elders and people in need  
19 first before I even touch it. That's what I was  
20 taught. And I think a lot of Alaskans are taught that  
21 too. And I want to keep that alive, we need to keep  
22 that going because we are unique. We are Alaskans. I  
23 want to thank my Uncle Percy Frisby for teaching me the  
24 ways of our life and it gave me an opportunity and it's  
25 still going to give me an opportunity to teach my  
26 children or my nephews or my nieces or the youth. I  
27 get to pass that on. I get to pass on that torch.

28

29 Last summer, my son Bently Ruaro, he's  
30 11, he was really excited to go harvest and on January  
31 24th we went to go harvest and I want to share a couple  
32 pictures with you guys and the audience, and Mr. IT can  
33 you pull up those pictures please.

34

35 Thank you.

36

37 Pictures are worth a thousand words,  
38 you know. And I want to say that this was one of the  
39 most proud moments, I can't even describe, as a father,  
40 as a person teaching, I mean look at that face. That  
41 was at 7:28 in the morning, right, we got a few fish,  
42 he's happy because on the way over, on our commute  
43 over, you know, he asked me, he goes, Dad, when can we  
44 go and I said, well, son you have to wait until we have  
45 to -- when we get the fish, I said, well, that's when,  
46 right, because he thinks that when we fish, we catch  
47 and I said -- I had to explain to him that's not how  
48 that works, we're going to be lucky if we catch and  
49 that's not even going to be -- I was teaching him that  
50

0193

1 fishing is not catching, the real work is going to  
2 happen soon after you catch.

3

4 So, Mr. IT, can you show the next  
5 couple slides, please.

6

7 And there he is learning how to do it.  
8 I let him do it by himself and then if he had questions  
9 he'd come and ask. And let me just tell you, maybe the  
10 first one looked a little rough but by the third one it  
11 was better than me, you know, really proud moment and  
12 those kind of feelings not only as a tribal member, as  
13 a dad, but as Alaskans, right, teaching how to fish,  
14 process and harvest our food. So I think that was  
15 about 12:40 and there he is at 4:00 o'clock.

16

17 (Laughter)

18

19 MR. RUARO: 4:00 o'clock we tuckered  
20 him out. The best thing about that was he was so  
21 excited after we process -- well, before we caught  
22 fish, he was naming people off who he wanted to give  
23 fish to, right, because like I said, we need to take  
24 care of our people and I said, okay, son, I get that,  
25 but how about you wait until after the work has been  
26 done and then tell me who you want to give your fish  
27 to. Let me just tell you that that list got a little  
28 bit shorter after that.

29

30 Thank you.

31

32 Thank you for allowing me to share that  
33 story with you.

34

35 I want to say, I ask you to do what you  
36 can here today, allow the indigenous people of  
37 Ketchikan and other residents, Alaskans, to preserve  
38 their Alaskan right, their tribal rights on your  
39 decision. I respect -- I will respect your decision.  
40 I also respect the opposition of this, too,  
41 wholeheartedly, because it's balance, right, we have to  
42 have balance. When I see balance, Mr. Edwardson said  
43 it earlier, was, I don't want to keep reiterating that  
44 we are rural, we share the same barges, we share the  
45 same airplanes, it's just out there, one mile away.  
46 Give us the opportunity. Please have trust in  
47 Ketchikan. Please trust us, that's all we could ask  
48 for. Give us the opportunity so I could tell Bently,  
49 we're not going to take the ferry or the plane, no,  
50



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1 we're going to take the skiff out because we have our  
2 own land to go on, we have our own waters to go.

3

4 I want to thank you so much, and I want  
5 to leave this -- since it's so close to Elizabeth  
6 Peratrovich Day, I want to leave you with this quote  
7 that she said: Elizabeth Peratrovich Day is on the  
8 16th of February, and I love this quote.

9

10 Asking you to give me equal rights  
11 implies that they are your rights to give, instead I  
12 must demand that you stop trying to deny me rights all  
13 people deserve. Elizabeth Peratrovich.

14

15 And I want to honor her because her day  
16 is coming up on the 16th of February.

17

18 In closing, I know you guys have a very  
19 difficult decision to make and I respect it and I honor  
20 you. I want you, when you make the decision, to make  
21 it off of facts and not fear, not emotions, off of  
22 thresholds of the law.

23

24 How'aa. Gunalcheesh. (In Native)

25

26 Thank you.

27

28 (Applause)

29

30 CHAIRMAN CHRISTIANSON: Thank you,  
31 Lloyd. We do have a question for you, Mr. Lloyd,  
32 you're good but good enough to field the question.

33

34 MR. RUARO: Sorry, Mr. Chair, go ahead.

35

36 CHAIRMAN CHRISTIANSON: Yeah, Frank,  
37 you have the floor.

38

39 MR. WOODS: Thank you very much for  
40 your testimony. I have a couple questions. First, you  
41 referred to traditional, cultural, you know, I was  
42 approached about 20 years ago and somebody asked me,  
43 you know, what culture are you from, I think it was a  
44 well known surveyor in our area and had a big business  
45 tracking and recording every piece of land, that's why  
46 I work in the Land Department, he said, no -- I said,  
47 well, you know, I'm Native and he goes, no, that's not  
48 correct, that's your heritage. Culture is a set group  
49 of social activities that bond people together. And  
50

0195

1 you pointed out a perfect, your heritage honors you and  
2 your people. And the second part of that is you said  
3 you're passing it on, that's -- you're passing it on to  
4 the next generation, and this is a question for the  
5 young people in the group, what do you have to do in  
6 order to subsist in Alaska?

7

8 First of all, about a month ago we were  
9 asked in our Regional Village Corp -- sorry, you don't  
10 have any ANCSA lands, we're raising a whole generation  
11 under the State system of subsistence and in order to  
12 feed our families sportshunters and sportsfishers,  
13 because in order for me to operate and subsist off  
14 State land I got to get a license, I'm licensed, every  
15 person that has to go to subsist has to get a hunting  
16 license and a permit so what you're touching on is  
17 revolutionary in a sense that, No. 1., I don't want to  
18 have to continue down the road of declaring and  
19 registering and licensing myself in order to feed my  
20 family. It's a necessary rule and I tell you what,  
21 every person back home abides by them rules because if  
22 they don't they get in trouble and can't hunt and fish  
23 anymore; that's the crutch of this. So if my gram runs  
24 out of moose in February and moose season is set from  
25 September and they close the winter hunt, I can't go  
26 hunting anymore, and if I do go hunting I lose my  
27 license and get a thousand dollar fine and we have  
28 people, you know, vetting on that.

29

30 So what you brought up is your -- let  
31 me get my notes, I'm sorry. So you recognize Alaskans,  
32 all Alaskans, we're all part of the same team and we  
33 live here, a beautiful place to leave, and that you are  
34 raising a generation impacts -- hopefully that -- or is  
35 that your cousin, or your nephew?

36

37 MR. RUARO: My son.

38

39 MR. WOODS: Your son.

40

41 MR. RUARO: My son.

42

43 MR. WOODS: So he'll be able to pass  
44 that on to his son hopefully. And I appreciate your  
45 comments and pictures, great testimony.

46

47 That's all I have, Mr. Chair, thanks.

48

49 CHAIRMAN CHRISTIANSON: Thank you,

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0196

1 Frank.

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MR. RUARO: Thank you, Mr. Chair and thank you esteemed Board members.

How'aa.

CHAIRMAN CHRISTIANSON: Thank you. Next we call on Steven Hartford.

MR. HARTFORD: Thank you members of the Board and good afternoon. My name is Steven Hartford and I am honored to be serving as the tribal attorney for Ketchikan Indian Community and I ask for your patience as it's my job to make the -- to lay out the legal position of KIC for the record.

Ketchikan Indian Community is a Federally-recognized tribe located on Revillagigedo Island in Southeast Alaska. KIC's membership is comprised of Tlingit, Haida, Tsimshian and other Alaska Native peoples. KIC's membership is comprised -- excuse me -- KIC has more than 6,500 tribal citizens as has been mentioned, roughly half of which reside in the greater Ketchikan area.

Since the inception of the Federal Subsistence Management Program in the early 1990s most of the Ketchikan area has been designated as non-rural under the Alaska Native Interest Lands Act, ANILCA. In 2022 KIC submitted this proposal NDP25-01 to the Federal Subsistence Board through the Office of Subsistence Management, requesting the Board to rescind Ketchikan's non-rural determination, or alternatively designate KIC's service area as rural solely for tribal members. In late October 2024, OSM presented the Southeast Regional Advisory Council, SERAC, with its analysis of the proposal which yielded a neutral recommendation on KIC's proposal. SERAC members voted 9 to 4 against the proposal. The Council's deliberations heavily emphasized topics outside the scope of what SERAC may permissibly consider when addressing a rural designation request, specifically, concerns that designating Ketchikan as rural would result in increased competition for subsistence resources on and around Prince of Wales Island, a consideration that was outside the scope of OSM's report. We urge the Board to disregard SERAC's recommendation and adopt KIC's proposal. In 2015,

1 following an extensive review process involving public  
2 comment and consultation with tribes and ANCSA  
3 Corporations, the U.S. Department of Interior issued  
4 revised regulations for rural and non-rural  
5 determinations under ANILCA to enable the Board to be  
6 more flexible in making decisions and to take into  
7 account regional differences found throughout the state  
8 and to allow for greater input from the Subsistence  
9 Regional Advisory Councils, Federally-recognized tribes  
10 of Alaska, Alaska Native Corporations and the public.  
11 The 2015 regulations eschewed specific guidelines for  
12 making non-rural determinations such as specific  
13 numerical population limits that delineated a rural or  
14 non-rural community or area, in favor of an open-ended  
15 holistic review process that incorporated the  
16 subjective consideration, multiple factors, in order to  
17 achieve a more accurate and holistic result. In short,  
18 the new process gives this Board broad discretion to  
19 designate a community as rural.

20

21 The Board's 2017 policy on non-rural  
22 determinations provides implementation guidance for  
23 these new regulations and articulates certain  
24 decisionmaking factors for the Board to utilize when  
25 making or rescinding a non-rural determination. The  
26 policy directs military presence, industrial  
27 facilities, use of fish and wildlife, degree of  
28 remoteness and isolation and other relevant material,  
29 including information provided by the public. The  
30 policy further directs the Board to rescind non-rural  
31 determinations based on a comprehensive application of  
32 evidence and considerations presented in a proposal  
33 that has been verified by the Board as accurate and to  
34 base its decision on non-rural status for a community  
35 or area on information of a reasonable and defensible  
36 nature contained within the administrative record. The  
37 policy also provides that the Board shall: quote, rely  
38 heavily on the recommendations of the affected Regional  
39 Advisory Councils, but it does not require the Board to  
40 defer to those recommendations. It is within the  
41 framework of this policy that the Board must assess  
42 KIC's proposal.

43

44 OSM's report verifies that there is  
45 ample accurate evidence supporting the adoption of our  
46 proposal and rescision of Ketchikan's non-rural status.  
47 The report notes that Ketchikan is "an isolated  
48 community with limited road access surrounded by rain  
49 Forest, rugged mountains and the sea." It points out  
50

1 that Ketchikan's local economy has been in decline  
2 since the closing of the pulp mill and that poverty  
3 rates in Ketchikan are substantial and have been  
4 increasing in recent years along with housing  
5 shortages, rising rents and declining social services  
6 and it highlights the precarity of Ketchikan's food  
7 supply chain which the Covid-19 pandemic drew into  
8 sharp focus drawing particular attention to the  
9 critical importance of wild foods to the people of  
10 Ketchikan. Of particular importance the report  
11 emphasizes that Ketchikan is similarly situated to  
12 other Southeast Alaska communities with rural  
13 designations in a number of relevant ways. It  
14 highlights similar economic indicators between  
15 Ketchikan and Sitka, a community designated as rural by  
16 this Board. Ketchikan and Sitka have similar per  
17 capita income and poverty levels. In fact, data  
18 referenced in the report demonstrates that a greater  
19 percentage of Ketchikan's population, 8.6 percent, was  
20 experiencing poverty from 2018 to 2022 than Sitka's  
21 population, which was just over 7 percent. And  
22 although the unemployment rate in Ketchikan is lower  
23 than in some smaller neighboring communities,  
24 Ketchikan's monthly unemployment rates have generally  
25 been higher than those in Juneau and Sitka. Ketchikan  
26 and Sitka have also faced similar economic challenges  
27 since timber processing mills in the respective  
28 communities closed in the 1990s. Ketchikan has  
29 experienced a particularly steep decline in year-round  
30 government employment over the past decade, 25 percent  
31 reduction in State and Federal jobs since 2012. The  
32 OSM report concludes that although Ketchikan generally  
33 has more job opportunities and a stronger economy than  
34 Prince of Wales communities, Ketchikan has experienced  
35 increasing economic vulnerability in recent years.

36  
37 The report highlights another area in  
38 which Ketchikan and Sitka are similarly situated,  
39 availability of services. For instance, Sitka and  
40 Ketchikan have the same number of hospitals and health  
41 care centers, airports, seaplane bases, post offices  
42 and libraries and though the report acknowledges the  
43 greater level of infrastructure in Ketchikan compared  
44 to some smaller neighboring communities, public  
45 testimony noted that grocery stores in Ketchikan still  
46 struggle to stay stocked and have limited supplies due  
47 to barge schedules and competition among residents.

48  
49 Finally, the report observes that the  
50

1 ethnographic data, household survey data and public  
2 testimony shows that harvest of wild foods is key to  
3 many Ketchikan residents cultural identity and can  
4 provide an important supplement to limited cash income.  
5 As the report also notes, use of wild resources is an  
6 important characteristic of rural areas in Alaska.

7  
8                   SERAC's deliberations emphasized  
9 several impermissible characteristics and faulty  
10 comparisons with respect to Ketchikan and surrounding  
11 rural communities in conflict with the Board's updated  
12 rural determination regulations and implementation  
13 policies. These deficiencies demonstrate that SERAC's  
14 recommendation to not support this proposal is not owed  
15 any deference by this Board. A principled application  
16 of the Board's policy on non-rural determinations makes  
17 clear that Ketchikan meets the criteria for rural  
18 status as evidenced by OSM's report and KIC's proposal.  
19 The Board's policy directs the Board, when making or  
20 rescinding a non-rural determination to "consider such  
21 factors as population size and density, economic  
22 indicators, military presence, industrial facilities,  
23 use of fish and wildlife, degree of remoteness and  
24 isolation and other relevant material, including  
25 information provided by the public," from your own  
26 policy. Although larger than some communities in  
27 Southeast Alaska, Ketchikan has comparable poverty  
28 levels, population density, unemployment and other  
29 relevant economic indicators as rural designated  
30 communities like Sitka and Kodiak. All right. is also  
31 highly vulnerable to supply chain disruptions due to  
32 its dependence on barge transports from food and other  
33 resources.

34  
35                   Consistent with its policy on non-rural  
36 determination, the Board should give more weight to the  
37 findings in OSM's report and KIC's comments and less  
38 weight to SERAC's recommendation because SERAC's  
39 recommendation was not based on reasonable and  
40 defensible information but was instead based upon  
41 anecdotal information outside the range of acceptable  
42 considerations under the Board's policy. Although some  
43 Council members gave consideration to the actual  
44 characteristics of Ketchikan such as infrastructure and  
45 availability of services, the vast majority of the  
46 discussion among Council members concerned fears that  
47 competition for subsistence resources would increase if  
48 Ketchikan was granted rural status and a general  
49 sentiment offered without any evidentiary support that  
50

0200

1 Ketchikan just doesn't feel rural.

2

3

4 The OSM stressed, the OSM report  
5 stressed that the potential impacts of a rural change,  
6 a rural status change to fish and wildlife populations  
7 and harvest opportunities are outside the scope of this  
8 analysis, it is the Board's policy that non-rural  
9 determinations should be made solely on the basis of a  
10 community or area's rural characteristics or lack  
11 thereof. The report emphasized that other policy and  
12 management tools exist to manage the effect of change  
13 in rural status, such as in-season closures and .804  
14 analysis, and Member Boario did highlight this in her  
15 question, that there are legitimate and viable tools to  
16 deal with any type of impact on resources.  
17 Nevertheless, Council members at the SERAC opposed  
18 KIC's proposal, they repeatedly emphasized the spectra  
19 of increased competition among subsistence users as a  
20 reason that KIC should remain non-rural. For instance,  
21 one Council member echoed the concerns expressed in  
22 public testimony that granting KIC's rural status would  
23 put too much pressure on the deer population on Prince  
24 of Wales Island. Another member expressed a similar  
25 sentiment explaining that the current resources are  
26 finally balanced and that any further influx of  
27 resource users will dramatically affect their ability  
28 to support themselves. Again, not consistent with the  
29 guidelines and also based on anecdotal reports. Not  
30 evidence. Not evidence based. One Council member put  
31 it bluntly, in my mind given the economics of Angoon  
32 and what I see on a daily basis I'm going to protect --  
33 I'm going to protect our weakest link and that's  
34 Angoon. On the other hand Council members in favor of  
35 KIC's proposal took great efforts to ground the  
36 Council's decisionmaking in the sort of criteria the  
37 Board's policy mandates pointing out that public  
38 testimony from Southeast Alaskans demonstrated that the  
39 strongest case for opposition is specifically related  
40 to the competition to resources that the affects that  
41 this proposal might have on resources in rural areas as  
42 stated by Council Member Needham: We are not supposed  
43 to be defining rural based on competition for  
44 resources. She was exactly correct under your own  
45 policy. Several SERAC members also emphasized that  
46 services available in Ketchikan relative to smaller  
47 communities on Prince of Wales Island should disqualify  
48 Ketchikan from rural status but that analysis is not  
49 legally correct. What the Board must assess is whether  
50 Ketchikan satisfies the criteria for rural

50

0201

1 classification when compared to similar Southeast  
2 Alaska communities that already hold rural status.  
3 Ketchikan has certain hub-like characteristics but  
4 instead of comparing Ketchikan to places like Tenakee  
5 Springs and Pelican, the Council should be comparing  
6 Ketchikan to communities that have similar  
7 characteristics that also have rural status and that  
8 would be communities like Sitka and communities like  
9 Kodiak. Factors like geographic isolation, lack of  
10 connection to the road system, and economic struggles  
11 all support designating Ketchikan as rural. The  
12 considerations driving the Council's opposition to  
13 KIC's proposal were not "of a reasonable and defensible  
14 nature" from your policy. Nor were they based on the  
15 sort of verifiable evidence the Board's policy  
16 requires. Throughout the Council's deliberation,  
17 Council members focused on how Ketchikan was not a  
18 "rural" community, contrasting it with smaller  
19 communities like Craig, Kake, and Point Baker. One  
20 Council member said he could imagine what a non-rural  
21 community in Southeast looks like defined by the  
22 presence of at least a traffic light or two as opposed  
23 to a rural community which he characterized as having  
24 no traffic or noise pollution. The mere fact that some  
25 communities in Southeast Alaska may be more rural than  
26 Ketchikan judged by this sort of vague metric does not  
27 mean that Ketchikan itself is not rural. The Board's  
28 policy requires that non-rural determinations be made  
29 on a case by case basis, based on a comprehensive  
30 application of evidence and considerations presented in  
31 the proposal that have been verified by the Board as  
32 accurate. Comparing Ketchikan to similar Southeast  
33 Alaska communities with rural status like Sitka  
34 supports redesignating Ketchikan as rural because of  
35 the numerous relevant qualities Ketchikan shares with  
36 such communities. One Council member rejected the  
37 notion that Ketchikan and Sitka are similarly situated  
38 explaining that increasing property values and rent  
39 prices caused by the steadily growing tourism industry  
40 is constricting Sitka residents and forcing many to  
41 leave, but the OSM report makes clear that Ketchikan is  
42 experiencing precisely the same phenomenon with  
43 residents struggling to find affordable housing as  
44 seasonal rentals become more common, driving increases  
45 in rental prices and making it more common for rentals  
46 to only be available for six months at a time.

47  
48  
49  
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The Council members reasoning for  
distinguishing between Ketchikan and Sitka concerning



1 rural characteristics is completely unmoored from the  
2 reality of the situation as evidenced by objective data  
3 in your own OSM report. This insupportable conjecture  
4 falls well short of the reasonable and defensible  
5 evidence required under the Board's policy.

6  
7 SERAC relied on impermissible factors  
8 and insufficient evidence in reaching its decision to  
9 oppose KIC's proposal. SERAC's conclusion, one that is  
10 reiterated verbatim in resolutions received by the  
11 Federally-recognized tribes of Craig, Klawock and  
12 Kasaan merely focusing on Ketchikan's population size  
13 and how that size compared to other Prince of Wales  
14 Island communities doesn't feel rural. That rationale  
15 is insufficient to deny KIC's proposal and it is  
16 insufficient to comply with both the Board's 2017  
17 policy and the revised 2015 non-rural determination  
18 regulations. KIC urges the Board to account for this  
19 in considering its proposal and weigh the evidence that  
20 supports redesignating Ketchikan in both the OSM report  
21 and the proposal itself against the Council's  
22 recommendation.

23  
24 Recent precedence supports reversing a  
25 longstanding non-rural determination based on new  
26 relevant information. The Board's adoption of Proposal  
27 RP19-01 redesignating Moose Pass as rural demonstrates  
28 that a community's historic non-rural designation need  
29 not foreclose a future rural designation supported by  
30 the data. KIC urges the Board to confine its analysis  
31 to the criteria and factors detailed in the Board's  
32 policy on non-rural determinations and to redesignate  
33 Ketchikan as rural.

34  
35 Thank you.

36  
37 CHAIRMAN CHRISTIANSON: Thank you,  
38 Steven. Any questions from the Board for Steven on his  
39 presentation. Sara, yes, you have the floor.

40  
41 MS. BOARIO: Thank you, Mr. Chair.  
42 Fish and Wildlife Service. I don't know if it's now or  
43 at a different point in the process, whether Staff or  
44 SERAC can speak more to the process concerns, it was a  
45 question on my mind -- the process concerns that Mr.  
46 Hartford drew our attention to. I'll just note that in  
47 our -- on Page 620, our InterAgency Staff Committee  
48 comments, they noted, the Council's action was not  
49 based just on the consideration of Ketchikan's rural  
50

0203

1 characteristics which represents a significant  
2 departure from the approach the Board has used for  
3 prior determinations. So I just -- if someone could  
4 address that more fully at the appropriate time,  
5 whether that's -- it looks like Robbin is, thank you.

6  
7 CHAIRMAN CHRISTIANSON: I was just  
8 wondering if we could continue with the public  
9 testimony and then we'll get to that answer when we get  
10 to the RAC representative -- yeah, so I was just  
11 looking at process here, we'll just continue with the  
12 public testimony. If there's any more questions for  
13 Steven we'll do it at that time Sara, thank you, Staff.  
14 Any more questions.

15  
16 MR. HARTFORD: Thank you.

17  
18 CHAIRMAN CHRISTIANSON: None, thank  
19 you, Steve, for your thorough testimony.

20  
21 (Applause)

22  
23 CHAIRMAN CHRISTIANSON: Next we'll call  
24 on Irene Dundas.

25  
26 MS. DUNDAS: Thank you, Mr. Chair. My  
27 name's Irene Dundas, my Tlingit name is (In Tlingit)  
28 from the House that anchored the village of Kake. I am  
29 (In Tlingit) I am a child of the (In Tlingit). My  
30 father's people are (In Tlingit). I'm telling you that  
31 my father's people are the Saanya Kwaan people and I am  
32 a child of my father's people. My grandfather's people  
33 are the Teikweidi of the -- also of the Saanya Kwaan  
34 and the Tanta Kwaan people. My grandfather's people  
35 are from -- that owned the -- actually my testimony  
36 kind of goes hand in hand with kind of the Unuk River  
37 and also with rural status, it's kind of -- both are  
38 kind of together.

39  
40 I wasn't prepared to really speak on  
41 the rural status issue right now so I'm going to try to  
42 collectively put them both together.

43  
44 A couple years ago -- so I'm here --  
45 first of all let me back up. I'm here with Ketchikan  
46 Indian Community and I work for KIC as the Cultural  
47 Heritage Specialist and I am tasked to infuse culture  
48 into all aspects of the tribe and I serve on the  
49 Smithsonian Repatriation Board and I also serve as a  
50

1 Commissioner for the Ketchikan Historic Commission and  
2 I get -- I do repatriation. I get artifacts back from  
3 museums across the country. So I do a lot of research  
4 of our cultural history. And I was more prepared to  
5 give testimony about the Unuk and how this relates to,  
6 I guess, rural status.

7  
8                   A couple of years ago my son was asked  
9 to do a project and he actually wrote a children's book  
10 and the children's book was about the Unuk River. And  
11 the book is called A Dream of My Great-Great Ancestors  
12 Land. And so I talk about the Unuk and I talk about, I  
13 guess, on, all the time I go home and, you know, I try  
14 to share with my family about all the adventures I do  
15 because I do repatriation I try to talk about, you  
16 know, clan property and the stories of what I have --  
17 of the things that I learn and all the research I do  
18 and some of the recordings that I listen to and I bring  
19 those recordings home and I play them on the -- like we  
20 have these big speakers at home and I play those  
21 recordings and we have these recordings of this old  
22 man, his name is Henry Denny and he -- him and his  
23 mother talk back and forth in Tlingit and -- and I  
24 repeat it and repeat it and repeat it so I know the  
25 history and there is one story where he talks about the  
26 Unuk River and I -- I tell the story about the Unuk  
27 River because -- and I was telling the story about the  
28 Unuk River to my son after I learned the story from  
29 this recording and so when my son was tasked to write  
30 this book he ended up listening to it and he ended up  
31 writing this book and I'm going to share just a -- it's  
32 not very long -- it's only -- it was only a couple --  
33 it's only a couple of pages long. My mom shared a  
34 story with me of my grandpa's people, the Tlingit from  
35 here, Ketchikan, Alaska. She said the story was told  
36 to her by her great-uncle and her great-great aunt,  
37 they are the same clan as my grandpa's Tlingit people.

38  
39                   In a winter village at Kah Shakes Cove  
40 before Ketchikan and before Revillagigedo Island was,  
41 when there was little daylight, hundreds of years ago  
42 an old Tlingit man had a dream, this old man was my  
43 grandpa's people. This old man had dreams of land,  
44 coves, inlets where the animals were plentiful, deer,  
45 moose, sea eggs, groundhog, beaver, brown bears,  
46 grouse, even the salmon are plentiful, and the  
47 eulachons are plentiful. So the old man sent his  
48 nephew out in the cedar canoe to look for these  
49 beautiful places that were so bountiful with everything  
50

0205

1 they need to live a good life. The old man even dreamt  
2 of Misty Fjords, he dreamt in Tlingit. He dreamt of  
3 Walker Cove, Nahan, Smeetin Bay, Redgurd\*Bay, Chickaman  
4 River, Lorring, he named them all even before seeing  
5 them, before there was full daylight hundreds of years  
6 ago. He finally dreamt of the Unuk River, Ketchikan's  
7 River, our river. In Tlingit it's called (In Tlingit)  
8 meaning to dream. This is my grandfather's peoples  
9 land. This is Tlingit land. My history. My  
10 ancestor's history. Yesterday, today and the future.

11

12 So the Unuk River, Ketchikan Indian  
13 Community does water quality testing, partners with the  
14 Forest Service, partners with other agencies to do  
15 various testings on the Unuk River and a couple of  
16 years ago we had partnered, I guess, maybe to open the  
17 river up so we could fish for eulachon and  
18 unfortunately KIC cannot -- or KIC tribal citizens  
19 cannot fish the eulachon from the Unuk because it is  
20 only open to Federally-designated areas and KIC has  
21 invested 1.62 million dollars into managing and  
22 stewarding the Unuk River. And it is unfortunate that  
23 we have to have rural status to be able to go and fish  
24 eulachon on the Unuk River, which is we consider our  
25 river. Earlier our President, what was it, two days  
26 ago, our President had handed out this map and there is  
27 the documentary that we had created that talks further  
28 about the Unuk River. It also has the historical  
29 landscape that talks about the history of the Unuk  
30 River that belongs to the Saanya Kwaan and the Tanta  
31 Kwaan people and we will continue to steward the Unuk  
32 River as we have done for the last several years and  
33 even though we cannot fish the Unuk River because we  
34 are not Federally -- in that designation, or considered  
35 rural, but the two do go hand and hand. So I guess  
36 when the question is asked what could you do that, you  
37 know, that question that was asked at the Southeast  
38 RAC, I don't know what it was, but this is one thing  
39 that we could not do if -- or what was -- if we were  
40 designated rural we would be able to fish the river,  
41 and right now what I feel like is we are managing this  
42 river, we are doing water quality testing for the river  
43 and I know the Unuk is on another subject, or on  
44 another part of the agenda, but I feel like, you know,  
45 we're doing all of this stuff, and we will continue to  
46 do water quality testing and we will continue to do all  
47 the things for the Unuk River, but I feel like we're  
48 doing this, you know, to allow other people to do it  
49 for our river, so other people can eat off of what we  
50

0206

1 are doing.

2

3

4 But rural status is important, I do all  
5 the things in my family. We harvest sockeye. We do it  
6 -- we harvest sockeye at Yes\*Bay. Hugh Smith. We go  
7 out hunting. My family does all the things. On  
8 Mother's Day, gosh I don't even know how long ago, 20  
9 years ago, my husband built me a smokehouse for  
10 Mother's Day, which I don't think that was the best  
11 thing he could have done for Mother's Day, which holds  
12 about 90 fish.

12

13

(Laughter)

14

15

16 MS. DUNDAS: And anyways, I teach my  
17 kids to process food and they could do it all by  
18 themselves. They have done it all by themselves. I  
19 will continue to teach my children how to process food.  
20 Nothing stops us. Nothing stops my family from  
21 harvesting. I do do tutorials. I have my Facebook  
22 page filled with tutorials where I do videos and show  
23 family members, show the community. I do tutorials  
24 about even how to brine fish, smoke fish, how to  
25 process herring eggs. How to cook fish patties. All  
26 kinds of things. And it's just little things because  
27 in our community, you know, I don't want our families  
28 and I don't want the young people to lose those kinds  
29 of things or even to forget how those things -- how to  
30 do those things because I don't know if, you know,  
31 we're teaching those things to our younger people.

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And, anyways, thank you and I don't  
know, I will probably have another opportunity to speak  
probably officially on the Unuk River again.

Mr. Chair.

CHAIRMAN CHRISTIANSON: Yes, that will  
be on the agenda.

MS. DUNDAS: Okay, thank you.

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

(No comments)

CHAIRMAN CHRISTIANSON: Thank you.  
Hearing none and seeing none, thank you.

0207

1 (Applause)

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CHAIRMAN CHRISTIANSON: Next we'll call up Meta Mueller, or Mudler, sorry.

MS. MULDER: Hello Board. Thank you, Tony, you almost got it right, it's Mulder, as in XFiles.

(Laughter)

MS. MULDER: And so I am here traveling with Ketchikan Indian Community and I was actually inspired to come up here because of my Auntie, Irene Dundas. When I was at the last KIC meeting and they showed the documentary that she mentioned about the Unuk River I wanted to participate in that and I wanted to make sure that our people could have access to it because for me, I am Saanya Kwaan Teikweidi, most of my family lives out in Saxman. And for my father's people, he is (In Tlingit) which translates to Snowman aka White Man and for my mother's side, again, Teikweidi and I am also a child of (In Tlingit) that was my grandfather's people. And I'm also a descendent of the Inupiaq Tribe from Teller, Nome, so I'm also a member of Sitnasauk and Bering Straits. And so like my Auntie I wasn't originally planning on testifying about the rural status but, again, realizing the importance that it has involved with Unuk River I want to make sure that our family can have that access, that we can continue to fish, that for my future children I want them to be able to learn how to make eulachon grease, to know what it tastes like. And I was so inspired that I plan on heading up to UAF to get a degree hopefully in wildlife conservation and research so that I can continue to study the eulachon as well as other important wildlife around our area and to continue to help KIC in managing the eulachon population as well as the other wildlife. And I also do want to thank the other youth members that are here today, for the ones that did also bring concern towards Ketchikan getting rural status, I do want to say Gunalcheesh, I see you and I recognize you, and hopefully I will be able to reassure you as well, with my family, that overharvesting, that is not something we want to do at all. In fact, like my Auntie was mentioning, with the eulachon, KIC, they are doing the water testing qualities, they're doing the fish counts and I'll talk about the eulachon more later, but the eulachon are

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1 recovering in the Unuk River and so I think that we're  
2 doing a pretty decent job in species repopulation and  
3 recovery, at least we're trying the best that we can.

4  
5                   And something that was also brought up  
6 by the other youth members that were here was, you  
7 know, with us being here with KIC, talking about all  
8 the traditions with the subsistence harvesting, about  
9 the Native culture and wasn't brought up so much of the  
10 other community members in Ketchikan, other (In Native)  
11 but I wanted to share my childhood, the childhood of my  
12 friends and family who are also (In Tlingit), again  
13 with my father being a White Man, he was the one that  
14 brought me out fishing, hunting, we went after shrimp,  
15 we went after halibut, I learned all of that from my  
16 father and we did only subsistence and when we got food  
17 we also shared it with our family, with our friends, we  
18 made sure not to overharvest either and as well as  
19 that, my partner, his family, they've always done  
20 subsistence since they've been in Ketchikan. He grew  
21 up that way and they were also taught to be grateful  
22 and appreciative of the wildlife around them, how to be  
23 clean and how to be respectful and especially with  
24 Ketchikan having the issue with poverty and lots of  
25 families have always gone through poverty and my  
26 hometown, Native, non-Native, having that subsistence  
27 resources available to us, again, helps us to save  
28 money, helps us to get the food that we need to survive  
29 and if we do not have access to that, I mean things  
30 would just continue to spiral out of control, and if we  
31 are able to make sure that our hunting, fishing rights,  
32 everything like that, are protected to make -- even to  
33 expand the hunting seasons because I know with me and  
34 my work, when I am busy working, helping friends,  
35 helping family, I haven't had enough time to give to  
36 myself to go out hunting and fishing, I would like to  
37 have more time so I can do that, so I can continue to  
38 fill my freezer, but I've been so busy helping out  
39 friends, family trying to save up my money. I want to  
40 be able to give more food to my relatives. I want to  
41 learn from my relatives. The whole reason I came here  
42 to Anchorage today was to continue to learn not just  
43 with KIC, but also from all of you, to get to meet all  
44 of you wonderful people that are here to hopefully help  
45 us figure out a good resolution on this matter and I  
46 hope to keep working with KIC on this matter and  
47 similar ones and hopefully with all of you on the Board  
48 here.

49  
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0209

1                                 And, I, again, want to say Gunalcheesh,  
2 and if there's any questions for me I'll be happy to  
3 hear them.

4

5                                 CHAIRMAN CHRISTIANSON: Thank you. Any  
6 questions from the Board for Meta.

7

8                                 (No comments)

9

10                                CHAIRMAN CHRISTIANSON: All right,  
11 thank you, Meta, for your testimony today, appreciate  
12 it.

13

14                                (Applause)

15

16                                CHAIRMAN CHRISTIANSON: Iphignia --  
17 Jenn.

18

19                                MR. HARTFORD: Mr. Chair, she's  
20 actually going to testify on the Unuk.

21

22                                CHAIRMAN CHRISTIANSON: Oh, Unuk.

23

24                                MR. HARTFORD: Yes.

25

26                                CHAIRMAN CHRISTIANSON: Okay. I'll  
27 move you over to the Unuk. There you go, thanks for  
28 the clarification. We've got a stack of those going.  
29 Naomi Michaelson.

30

31                                MS. MICHAELSON: Good afternoon, Mr.  
32 Chairman and members of the Board. I'd like to start  
33 by acknowledging my relatives, the Dena'ina, as I'm a  
34 visitor here today.

35

36                                (In Tlingit)

37

38                                My name is Naomi Michaelson. My  
39 Tlingit name is (In Tlingit) after my grandmother and  
40 that means Higher Voice. I am Eagle Wooshkeetaan from  
41 the Shark House from Berners Bay and I am a child of  
42 the (In Tlingit) from the Hoonah area. For the last 36  
43 years I have lived in Ketchikan, the beautiful land of  
44 the Saanya Kwaan and Tanta Kwaan peoples. This is a  
45 place where I raised my five children and today I am  
46 blessed to have nine grandchildren. I am here as a  
47 Ketchikan Indian Community tribal member but most  
48 importantly as a grandmother.

49

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0210

1 I am here in support of the proposal  
2 from the Ketchikan Indian Community for rural status.

3  
4 Our people face significant changes  
5 with most lacking access to traditional foods and  
6 medicines leading to poverty and a wide variety of  
7 health and social issues. For millennia Alaska Native  
8 Peoples have relied on these foods as essential  
9 components of our identity and well-being. As stewards  
10 of the land we also have a responsibility to care for  
11 it and we are in a unique and unfortunate situation as  
12 a community without rural status and as one of the  
13 landless communities which means that we have been left  
14 out of ANCSA, as was mentioned before, leaving us  
15 without land and a local corporation. So it's a  
16 double-whammy for our people.

17  
18 In addition, I thought it was -- I just  
19 thought of this today, that the entire Tongass National  
20 Forest was named after the Tongass Tribe in Ketchikan,  
21 maybe without their permission, and yet the Tongass  
22 Tribe from Ketchikan does not have access to subsist  
23 hunt and fish on their own lands due to this injustice  
24 of being non-rural. In order for justice to occur --  
25 I'm going to share a quote, one of my favorite quotes  
26 -- we need three things -- the truth be told. So we  
27 are here today telling our truth. We're sharing our  
28 truth with you. And second thing is to whatever extent  
29 possible the harm repaired. And we're asking that this  
30 can change. And the third is that the conditions that  
31 produced the injustice be changed, and that is by  
32 Desmond Tutu.

33  
34 Our foods and medicines are essential  
35 to who we are as tribal peoples. Relationship with our  
36 lands, our plants, our animals, our medicines, our  
37 languages and our ceremonies are the best protection we  
38 can give to our children and future generations. Our  
39 Native foods can heal our bodies and they can also feed  
40 our spirit.

41  
42 After working over nine years for the  
43 tribe and economic development and nine years as the  
44 Director of the Domestic Violence Shelter in Ketchikan,  
45 I started a business called KasaaIndigeneous Food Ways,  
46 and it's not much of a money maker, it's more of a  
47 service, and I look at it as prevention and it's -- I  
48 started it because I saw, as I was traveling throughout  
49 the state working on violence prevention, bringing up  
50

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1 our foods, our medicines and how to put up fish and  
2 just sharing with people, finding out how their -- you  
3 know, all the different recipes and just letting people  
4 know that these are really strengths that you have.  
5 You know, these are things that not all of us know or  
6 were taught. And so I -- the reason why I do it is to  
7 help inspire people to learn more about our traditional  
8 foods and plants and the land and our people and each  
9 other. And, again, I look at that as this work as  
10 prevention. Prevention of violence, suicide,  
11 addiction, health and social diseases and more.

12

13                   So as indigenous people of Alaska we  
14 are on a journey of healing. Lack of truthful and  
15 culturally appropriate education and narratives around  
16 our Alaska Native peoples and the land, the food and  
17 the medicines have harmed us and still contribute to  
18 the suppression of our identity. Continued limits on  
19 accessing our foods will threaten the health, well-  
20 being, stability and growth for our indigenous  
21 communities and all of us. And I think about my nine  
22 grandchildren and going out to get foods, berries or  
23 plants and being out on the land and how I've seen it  
24 help people just by getting out on the land and people  
25 could swear by it. You know, doctors are telling us to  
26 get out in nature now, and the science is there to back  
27 it up, some of the things that we've known for a long,  
28 long time. But I look at these things as protective  
29 factors. Our culture is a protective factor. Our  
30 foods are a protective factor. And the opposite of a  
31 protective factor is a risk factor, which is, you know,  
32 the boarding schools, the loss of our languages, the  
33 separation of our family and even this division of our  
34 tribes when we talk about our foods because we really  
35 are all one people.

36

37                   So I guess I'm a promotor of protective  
38 factors and I think about some of my most favorite  
39 memories are with my grandchildren and I have another  
40 opportunity to make sure that they don't have to grow  
41 up not knowing a lot of these things, that I'm just now  
42 learning today, and I have so much to learn still.

43

44                   As Trixie mentioned earlier, that we  
45 have over 400 traditional foods in the Tlingit culture  
46 and most people only access or even know about 30 of  
47 them and so we're really learning about all of those  
48 things today and we're wanting to pass that on but our  
49 people were and are pretty brilliant. I think about

50

0212

1 everything that we have is here and everything that we  
2 need is here.

3

4 Thank you.

5

6 And when I think about the foods that I  
7 love, I don't think about a grocery store, I  
8 automatically think about our traditional foods and I  
9 think about our ancestors and the connectedness to the  
10 land. Besides putting nutritious food on the table,  
11 which is actually also the best food we can give  
12 ourselves because we know our foods are superior to  
13 anything that we can buy, our wild plants and foods  
14 make spinach and kale look bad. You can't buy anything  
15 -- and you can't buy anything compared to what we can  
16 actually get on our lands.

17

18 Through discovering the wonders of  
19 plant life and animal life we also we also build the  
20 skills in food security, health, social and emotional  
21 intelligence and land stewardship. And so we know that  
22 our foods are going to help us spiritually, physically,  
23 emotionally and mentally bringing back balance. In  
24 order for balance to exist today we must understand and  
25 move towards food justice, food security and  
26 sovereignty. In our culture it's about sharing and  
27 caring for each other. A clan leader's status wasn't  
28 measured by how well -- how much wealth they had, it  
29 was how well the communities were and if everyone in  
30 the community was okay then the children are okay. And  
31 the children are the most precious treasure that a  
32 community has.

33

34 You, the Board, are our leaders and we  
35 rely on your leadership to care for all the Alaskan  
36 communities. Respectfully engaging with the land  
37 offers vital lessons that bind us to our ancestors and  
38 community. Elevating the value of our traditional  
39 knowledge creates a healing environment and fosters  
40 conversations that address our common challenges and we  
41 have many challenges but I think, you know, talking  
42 about them and having these meetings and asking  
43 questions and being open about the challenges are the  
44 only way to get through some of these things and to  
45 move forward. Your decisions made this week are  
46 important for our collective well-being. It's  
47 important to you as well. And so you have the  
48 opportunity to help our community today because as was  
49 mentioned earlier we suffer from some of the highest  
50

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1 rates of these social ills that we do not want and we  
2 all want to be well and you have the opportunity to  
3 help us to continue our journey of healing and  
4 remembering who we are, our families are healing and  
5 the land is also healing. Our children need access.

6

7

8 I would like to end with a quote from  
9 one of my mentors Valerie Segrest and I've shared this  
10 before but I really love it and she works a lot in the  
11 Washington State with food sovereignty and she's a  
12 nutritionist and a wonderful friend.

12

13

14 Food is a gift. Elders remind us that  
15 true wealth is having access to Native foods along with  
16 the knowledge of how to gather, prepare and serve them.  
17 Our values and food traditions are a living legacy that  
18 links us to the past, present and future generations.  
19 Several times a day we encounter opportunities to  
20 reflect on what we eat and how our choices change our  
21 world. When we harvest Native foods and incorporate  
22 them into our modern lifestyle we strengthen our  
23 cultural identity, our relationship to the land and  
24 tribal sovereignty. It will take all of us to feed the  
25 next seven generations.

25

26

Thank you for your valuable time.

27

28

Gunalcheesh.

29

30

CHAIRMAN CHRISTIANSON: Thank you,  
31 Naomi, any questions for Naomi. Frank.

32

33

34 MR. WOODS: Thank you for your  
35 testimony. First testifier that I heard talk about the  
36 health and well-being. In early 2000 I ran a cultural  
37 camp that had traditional treatment, which -- I'll  
38 explain because in rural Alaska has the highest  
39 domestic violence, suicide, alcoholism, all the ills  
40 that you mentioned are rural, we all share the same  
41 issues and problems. I was going to ask you how to  
42 expand on, but I think you hit it, that, you know, we  
43 all live in Alaska but the burden sometimes gets put on  
44 the those with the most issues. So maybe on a side  
45 note I'll sit down and talk to you. Because I think  
46 this Board recognizes that rural Alaska has the highest  
47 social ills in the country in every arena and I thank  
48 you for bringing that forward and healing your people.  
49 Food and food security is what you just mentioned.  
50 That was the biggest avenue where we get people

50

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1 together, and Native people, love the potluck, love  
2 have the share recipes, love to share food, so I  
3 appreciate your charge in this and keep charging is  
4 what I guess I wanted to say, and I appreciate it.

5

6 Thank you.

7

8 MS. MICHAELSON: Gunalcheesh.

9

10 MR. WOODS: Thank you.

11

12 (Applause)

13

14 CHAIRMAN CHRISTIANSON: Gloria Burns.

15

16 MS. BURNS: (In Tlingit)

17

18 I have had the honor to speak before  
19 you previously regarding this issue. I'd like to thank  
20 the Chairman and the Board for this opportunity to  
21 share Ketchikan Indian Community's perspective. My  
22 name is Gloria Burns, I'm the President of Ketchikan  
23 Indian Community. And I want to speak and reiterate  
24 just a few items that I think were brought up much more  
25 eloquently by a variety of different testifiers.

26

27 But first I wanted to acknowledge that  
28 it's okay for tribes to have different perspectives  
29 about this. It's okay for our relatives and loved ones  
30 who live on Prince of Wales to submit resolutions for  
31 the best interests or what they find to be the best  
32 interests of their people. It's also completely within  
33 Ketchikan Indian Community's rights to have access to  
34 our land and our traditional and our food, our  
35 subsistence, our traditional and cultural practices and  
36 to be self-governed and neither of those things are  
37 exclusive of each other. And so while we honor and  
38 recognize our neighbors just as we honor and recognize  
39 the Dena'ina people whose land we speak on, we have to  
40 really look to address the injustice that we really  
41 feel that exists for the Ketchikan Indian Community and  
42 for the Ketchikan area at large.

43

44 You know we would implore all of you to  
45 really look at the criteria of our application to be  
46 designated as rural based upon our characteristics  
47 against Sitka and Kodiak, rather than our amazing  
48 neighbors on Prince of Wales and in Metlakatla. We do  
49 have, if you look at the new guidance, we meet those

50

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1 criteria, and we emphatically say that this is an  
2 injustice that has gone on for too long, that the  
3 designation that was made was just -- that we were  
4 just, just over the amount of people to be designated  
5 rural, right. And then if you look at all the  
6 statistics that were talked about I think it's really  
7 very clear that we really meet that definition. And so  
8 people are talking about health and well-being and  
9 holistic people and how do we heal from these traumas,  
10 and Naomi did bring up the fact that, you know, we have  
11 all these social ills, I like to -- you know, Ketchikan  
12 is in a lot of ways the armpit of Alaska when it comes  
13 to domestic violence rates and poverty and all those  
14 things, rate of our ability to educate our kids, we  
15 really sit in the situation that we kind of have all of  
16 those things that are exacerbated and exacerbated, I  
17 think, in no small way in our area due to historical  
18 trauma, loss of land, loss of access. And so I would  
19 talk about the amenities that we have compared to  
20 everyone else but I think Chaz really did a great job  
21 of kind of dispelling that and saying, wait a second,  
22 you know, look at us -- if you want to look at us as a  
23 hub, look at the other folks and really that is, you  
24 know, in my mind, according to your report, a non-  
25 issue.

26  
27 But I want to talk about what it's like  
28 to eat 95 percent of my food out of a freezer. In my  
29 house, as was in the house of my mother and my  
30 grandmother and my great-grandmother we have onions,  
31 potatoes, rice, bacon, butter and carrots. Sometimes  
32 rutabaga and turnips and then my Nonni's got a sweet  
33 tooth so everything sweet that she wants and Pepsi.  
34 But, really that we are eating out of our freezer and  
35 then I grew up eating was that so I was lucky, in that,  
36 I came from a household where the first language spoke  
37 was (In Native) so I'm in a language speaking home,  
38 which is unfortunately not the experience of the  
39 majority of the indigenous people in Ketchikan or in  
40 Alaska. And I want to say that food is a primar --  
41 that food is not just my spiritual health, that is the  
42 way that we feed ourselves.

43  
44 I want to give a couple of stories that  
45 are very brief because I think it's important.

46  
47 So when Saxman received -- first of  
48 all, my family has always gone out on the colder days  
49 and we get our clams and our cockles, it's been a main  
50

1 way when I was young that we made sure that we could  
2 eat. When Saxman received rural status -- and it was  
3 our habit, we would go out, we would get our clams and  
4 cockles and then we would bring the clams and cockles  
5 that we got first to a couple of families in Saxman  
6 because we were harvesting in an area that was in  
7 Saxman and so you would bring them to the traditional  
8 land owners and other folks and then we would go ahead  
9 and we would do that. So just after Saxman got rural  
10 status, before we did water quality and realized how  
11 poisonous our beaches were becoming in Ketchikan, my  
12 Nonni decided that she wanted smoked cockles and so my  
13 mother got a couple of friends, they went out to Saxman  
14 and they went ahead and they dug cockles and the VPSO  
15 -- somebody turned them into the VPSO so she got a \$400  
16 fine and each of the three people that went with her  
17 got the \$400 fine from an area that we've always  
18 harvested from that has always gone ahead and taken care  
19 of the food, right. So imagine what that's like,  
20 that's like crazy. And so, you know, we had no money  
21 to pay the fine but we certainly weren't going to let  
22 our neighbors pay it so you pay it. We have always  
23 used that area, it is a normal act, right. And I guess  
24 when you say, why rural status, I'd say because I'd  
25 like my relatives not to be doing things illegally.  
26 I'd say that when you're hungry you get your food. And  
27 I would love for the people who go ahead and take care  
28 of my family, for my brothers and my relatives, not to  
29 decide that when Nonni wants a cockle that they're  
30 going to go get it and, you know, excuse my language,  
31 be damned, what's the -- the consequences. I think  
32 that when you look at the numbers for Ketchikan, you'll  
33 find that there are actually quite a few people in  
34 Ketchikan that are doing that. That they are still  
35 feeding themselves but we can't be honest about the  
36 numbers of what we're using because there's no way to  
37 report those, right, because you're going ahead and  
38 you're going over to your families somewhere else and  
39 you're still doing it. And so I would say that when  
40 you say, that oh my gosh it's going to be this influx  
41 of people over the place, I'd say Ketchikan's already  
42 doing it. We're already doing it. We're already  
43 there, we're already participating, we're just not  
44 participating as effectively as we could and as legally  
45 as the rest of the world would wish you would. And I'm  
46 just saying that for myself, you know, I'd say, why  
47 rural status, it would give Ketchikan another tool in  
48 the tool box, it would give Ketchikan residents  
49 priority over sportshunters and others on Federally-  
50

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1 managed land on our own island, it would make us  
2 eligible for longer seasons and higher bag limits. It  
3 would give us the same access on Federally-managed  
4 lands on Revillagigedo that other rural communities  
5 have on their own areas. I'll tell you not -- our  
6 tribal citizens, and not our non-tribal citizens in  
7 Ketchikan are looking to go anywhere else. We would  
8 love our area opened and we'd like to be able to use  
9 the resources that were there and we'd like to be able  
10 to use that mechanism as a way to protect our area as  
11 well. I think it's clear from our application for this  
12 that it brought up a real fear about us versus somebody  
13 else, what's Ketchikan going to do to my space. Well,  
14 the reality is is that we should have never had our  
15 rural status taken. It should have never been  
16 designated -- first of all, the Alaska Native Claims  
17 Settlement Act, which is this is predicated on, right,  
18 we didn't receive our settlement, so we don't have the  
19 extra economics of an ANCSA village corporation that's  
20 bringing more funds into our area that every other  
21 place does and I don't think that's been appropriately  
22 evaluated. So as you're going through this process and  
23 thinking, one way or another, I think that you can look  
24 at all those things together.

25  
26 But more importantly, besides the  
27 spiritual aspect and the cultural genocide that happens  
28 when you don't have access to your foods and your  
29 ability to promote and keep your culture going, our  
30 language is greatly embedded in that, we're all human  
31 beings who deserve to eat, and Ketchikan, whether you  
32 are Native or non-Native is food insecure. People are  
33 starving in places, SNAP benefits, we all know the SNAP  
34 benefits have not been going through. And so, you  
35 know, when we're looking to grow a community and make  
36 sure that a community just exists, subsists, literally,  
37 just barely exists, the basic thing is all human beings  
38 that we should have is a right to the land and a  
39 priority to the land, which is what is stated in the  
40 Constitution for Alaska. That primary right of  
41 everybody to have it.

42  
43 I would just say that there is so many  
44 determinations that you have. We have tremendous  
45 respect for the very tough decision that you will all  
46 have to make but I would argue that I'm not the only  
47 person who eats out of their freezer all year long.  
48 There are far more in Ketchikan and then there are  
49 people that are starving for their culture to be  
50



0218

1 revitalized within them and they know that their food  
2 and their plants are that access.

3

4

5 We just want to lift up our Saanya  
6 Kwaan and Tanta Kwaan relatives and honor this land  
7 that we're trying to herald and take care of is theirs  
8 and that one of the tools in the tool box to make sure  
9 this happens in this imperfect system, until we amend  
10 ANILCA, is for Ketchikan to be placed as rural as it  
11 should have been and I think is a better management  
12 tool, frankly, for everybody else because you might get  
13 more honest numbers about what Ketchikan is actually  
14 using.

14

15

How'aa.

16

17

UNIDENTIFIED VOICE: Gunalcheesh.

18

19

20

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

21

22

(No comments)

23

24

25

CHAIRMAN CHRISTIANSON: Hearing and  
seeing none, thank you Gloria.

26

27

(Applause)

28

29

30

CHAIRMAN CHRISTIANSON: John Smith --  
or Thomas Smith, I meant, sorry. Is Thomas Smith here.  
I know John Smith from Juneau.

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Okay.

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And that paper is written based on the  
SERACs discussion over the non-rural determination so  
feel free to read that. If you have any opinions,  
please feel free to let me know.

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1                   Quyana.

2

3                   (In Native)

4

5                   Hello everyone. My name is Thomas  
6 Smith and I am Yup'ik and Athabascan from Iliamna  
7 Alaska. My Athabascan name is Kidikii, which means Too  
8 Much. My grandmother always called this in English  
9 because I have always done too much and I still do. I  
10 am a tribal member of Iliamna Village Council and I  
11 grew up practicing my subsistence ways of life and I  
12 will be representing myself today.

13

14

15                   I stand before you all in support of  
16 NDP25-01, the Ketchikan non-rural determination. I  
17 testified in favor of this proposal at the Regional  
18 Advisory Council in Ketchikan but I wanted to come  
19 forward and help my brothers, sisters, aunties and  
20 uncles in their fight for rural status again. Not being  
21 from Southeast myself I understand I cannot fully  
22 comprehend the values of the resources in the Ketchikan  
23 -- sorry -- the value of the resources in the area that  
24 Ketchikan has. However, I do understand the impact of  
25 subsistence harvest around Alaska communities seeing as  
26 though I'm originally from Iliamna Alaska and I have  
27 many friends that practice subsistence year-round from  
28 Mt. Edgecumbe High School. I support the Ketchikan  
29 Indian Community in their efforts to make the greater  
30 Ketchikan area a rural space for the residents.

30

31

32                   I grew up split between Kenai and  
33 Iliamna helping both my grandparents and parents in  
34 their respective towns. I caught my first sockeye when  
35 I was four and started processing sockeye when I was  
36 six. Rural status has always been important to me even  
37 if, at the time, I didn't know it. The difference  
38 between my life and Kenai and Iliamna has always been  
39 drastic. I watched my city friends grow up on their  
40 phones and go shopping while my friends from Iliamna  
41 asked me to pick berries and go fishing. Maybe in some  
42 spots we shouldn't have but.

42

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(Laughter)

MR. SMITH: As I got older I watched  
many of my friends lose their effort -- lose their  
communities and find themselves alone. They turned to  
drugs and alcohol to solve these problems. Meanwhile,  
my friends from Iliamna kept picking berries and going

1 fishing. They found new ways to have fun in Alaska's  
2 vast wilderness. We drove our fourwheelers and cooked  
3 traditional foods. I laughed a lot more in Iliamna.

4  
5 Alaska Natives around Alaska have  
6 practiced their traditional ways of life since time  
7 immemorial. We have always been taught how to pass  
8 down our traditions and subsistence is a vital part of  
9 our lives. Subsistence helps us to who we are and  
10 bridges us to the future. In denying Ketchikan's rural  
11 request for rural status we are denying them rights to  
12 who they are as a community blocking their community  
13 harvest practices and crippling their indigenous ways  
14 of life. According to the National Library of Medicine  
15 compared to other racial/ethnic groups in the U.S.,  
16 American Indians/Alaska Natives have the highest rates  
17 of alcohol and marijuana, cocaine and Hallucinogenic  
18 disorders and the second highest methamphetamine abuse  
19 rates right after Native Hawaiians. The study was  
20 published in 2011 and the numbers have only increased  
21 since then. We can see this in places like Anchorage  
22 where many are scared to walk alone or live and later  
23 my parents moved me away from Anchorage to see the same  
24 phenomenon happen in Kenai. We do have to acknowledge  
25 that villages as well have drug and alcohol abuse,  
26 however, it has been shown that subsistence acts like a  
27 cultural medicine. Subsistence is a form of healing  
28 and it helps develop people.

29  
30 There was a quote from the Alaska  
31 Beacon that says subsistence acts as a cultural  
32 medicine for Alaska Native children, youth, nurturing  
33 them through a connected framework, by one, teaching  
34 them their cultures and developing their identity, two,  
35 engaging them in traditional activities, three  
36 nurturing their relationships to the natural world and,  
37 four, fostering social connectedness with their  
38 families and communities. This quote was published in  
39 2024 and shows that these practices can promote a sense  
40 of community and self. Practicing our traditional ways  
41 of life builds community and strength against drugs and  
42 alcohol.

43  
44 I would formally ask the Board to  
45 consider what it means to the residents of Ketchikan  
46 and what they are keeping by denying this proposal. We  
47 need our ways of life. Ketchikan is fighting to keep  
48 their peoples traditions and help them in the future.  
49 People who do not have access to these resources are  
50

0221

1 more likely to turn to unhealthy habits. We need  
2 subsistence to not only keep our ways of life but to  
3 sustain future generations. We have the power now with  
4 Ketchikan and I strongly believe that the rural status  
5 is a key factor in Ketchikan's healthy and vibrant  
6 cultures and traditions continuing.

7

8 I strongly encourage the Board to  
9 listen to diverse voices when making these decisions.  
10 I have experienced rural and non-rural communities  
11 throughout Southeast, Southcentral and Bristol Bay. I  
12 support all of your decisions throughout this process  
13 and I would like to make it known to the public that  
14 this is precedent setting. We are watching history  
15 being made and I commend the Board for this. Please  
16 ask questions and investigate what it truly means to be  
17 a rural community.

18

19 Quyana. Chin'an. Thank you.

20

21 (Applause)

22

23 CHAIRMAN CHRISTIANSON: And we do have  
24 a question here for you Tom.

25

26 MS. PITKA: Yeah, Heather, I hope he  
27 gets an A on this report.

28

29 (Laughter)

30

31 MS. PITKA: That was very well thought  
32 out and I'm really curious if you had your plan in  
33 place what else would we have heard. That was awesome,  
34 thank you.

35

36 MR. SMITH: Thank you.

37

38 CHAIRMAN CHRISTIANSON: Plans go out  
39 the window when your heart's involved. Good job.

40

41 MS. BAUSCHER: He got an A on that  
42 paper.

43

44 MS. PITKA: Okay, good.

45

46 (Laughter)

47

48 CHAIRMAN CHRISTIANSON: And it's way  
49 funner in the woods than your cell phone.

50

1 MS. LAVINE: Mr. Chair. I just want to  
2 note that the front desk, the receptionist is printing  
3 out more copies of his paper because I think more of  
4 you were interested in receiving it. So if there still  
5 is not enough for everyone let me know and we'll print  
6 out more. Thanks.

7  
8 CHAIRMAN CHRISTIANSON: All right,  
9 thank you for that. Calling on the next Jack Carney.

10  
11 MR. CARNEY: Thank you, Mr. Chair and  
12 members of the Board. I came to this meeting not  
13 expecting to talk on this topic. I mean I love  
14 Ketchikan and all but it doesn't really apply to me as  
15 part of Wrangell. I'm impartial to what the end  
16 verdict is on this one and I completely see both sides  
17 of the story. I would say that if I lived in Ketchikan  
18 and because I lived on the wrong side of a line I  
19 couldn't get my clams, my eulachon, set my gillnet, I  
20 actually gave my testimony yesterday on being able to  
21 catch my own salmon, like anyone who has been able to  
22 have that opportunity knows how just -- it's like --  
23 it's an experience in itself, it's something you never  
24 forget and you want to do again and again and again,  
25 and if I lived in Saxman -- or if I lived in Ketchikan  
26 and my buddy lived in Saxman and he got that  
27 opportunity and I couldn't, it'd be an issue for me.  
28 And so there is that side of the story.

29  
30 At the same time we all know we have  
31 resources here and the resources we -- it's our job to  
32 protect those resources, if allowing thousands more  
33 people easier access to these resources could cause  
34 those to go away and actually do the opposite of what  
35 we're hoping for and make it harder for future  
36 generations to get their food, that would, at the same  
37 time be an issue.

38  
39 So all that, it's kind of contradicting  
40 each other. And I just wanted to say I am very  
41 impressed with what the Board is doing here today. You  
42 guys -- Ketchikan's future is kind of placed in your  
43 hands and you have to make a very important decision  
44 and that decision, in some ways, is going to help to  
45 improve Ketchikan no matter what you decide, and I hope  
46 you guys make a great decision and that everybody here  
47 in this room realizes what you did was very hard and  
48 you did what you thought was right and I guess we will  
49 see what the outcome is.

0223

1 Thank you.

2

3 CHAIRMAN CHRISTIANSON: Thank you,  
4 Jack. Any questions for Jack from the Board here.

5

6 (Applause)

7

8 CHAIRMAN CHRISTIANSON: I was just  
9 going to comment, I do have a comment, I was going to  
10 say, Jack, are you in my head.

11

12 (Laughter)

13

14 CHAIRMAN CHRISTIANSON: Like Ken just  
15 gave you a compliment here about that was pretty good  
16 off the cuff there and I think you described the  
17 challenge that we've all been faced with here almost to  
18 a T, so thank you. Because we're here to try to assist  
19 all of our residents of Alaska, rural and non-rural  
20 meet their needs, right, and I know we have a priority  
21 here but I mean just because my dad moved to Seattle  
22 didn't mean he didn't need to hunt and fish and live,  
23 you know, so I had that, 25 years of feeding a family  
24 in an urban center off the backbone of my community.  
25 So just because our people were nomadic and we went  
26 thousands of miles in canoes didn't change where our  
27 smokehouse was.

28

29 Gloria Wolfe.

30

31 MS. WOLFE: Good afternoon.  
32 Gunalcheesh to the Chair and for everybody sitting here  
33 listening to testimony. That was sort of a breath of  
34 fresh air in recognizing the moments that you all are  
35 facing here today.

36

37 (In Tlingit)

38

39 I probably should say that in English.

40

41 My name is Gloria Wolfe and I'm from  
42 Yakutat. I have two sons that are Jackson and Jayce  
43 and we've raised them in Yakutat most of their lives  
44 because I want them to know what it means to be from a  
45 village. I want them to know what it means to harvest.  
46 I grew up on the sandy banks of Yakutat in my brother's  
47 cabin spending days gillnetting on the Situk River and  
48 that's what I wanted for my kids. I wanted them to  
49 live in a place that they could experience that.

50

1                   My grandparents and my aunties and  
2 uncles, they were born on Johnson Slough. That's how  
3 close we have been to our ways, most of us, our  
4 grandparents were born in a cabin or some clan house,  
5 because we have just been living our ways. We know our  
6 ways. We're so familiar with who we are and what it  
7 could have been like to live that way of life and I  
8 stand here today in support of Ketchikan and the folks  
9 who live and want to live their Tlingit way of life in  
10 Ketchikan.

11  
12                   It was really profound to hear today  
13 the idea that if rural status versus non-rural status  
14 is so easy to give up, I cannot imagine us, in Yakutat,  
15 giving up our rural status and the impact that would  
16 have on my family.

17  
18                   And other things I want to bring  
19 forward that have already been said today are profound  
20 facts that have to do with the people who are living in  
21 Ketchikan, the way they're living their lifestyle and  
22 who is living there, all supporting that reinstating  
23 their rural status really is in the best interest of  
24 tribal communities and Ketchikan and the rural  
25 communities surrounding Ketchikan.

26  
27                   I want to point out the Federal Trust  
28 responsibility and the Federal Trust responsibility  
29 supporting this. The foundational principle in the  
30 U.S., Indian Law mandates, that the Federal governments  
31 acts in the best interest of Native people protecting  
32 our culture, subsistence and economic well-being. Our  
33 sovereignty. The fact that we, as indigenous people,  
34 have lived here and we had our own government. This is  
35 brand new. These are brand new ways. This is a new  
36 thing. And what I think is beautiful is how our Native  
37 people have come to this table, even though it's brand  
38 new, we're figuring out how to be a part of these  
39 conversations and our allies are standing with us. The  
40 rural status recognition helps to ensure Federal  
41 policies to prioritize subsistence are being met.  
42 You're prioritizing these Federal laws that already  
43 exist by granting Ketchikan their rural status.

44  
45                   This community of Ketchikan, as we  
46 heard already, from the other Gloria, we're both  
47 Gloria's, up -- like it brings up this issue that  
48 they've already been disrespected by not being given  
49 lands. This is a really beautiful opportunity that you  
50

1 have to uphold Federal law by allowing them to have  
2 Federal status of being rural. The tribal members in  
3 this area did not ask for colonization to come into  
4 their tribal community. They were already living  
5 there. And as you were sharing just now, Tony, where  
6 we have our smokehouse, that's where we harvest. The  
7 people who live in Ketchikan and the Native people who  
8 are subsisting there are the same families that have  
9 been there subsisting there so where are they doing  
10 that now. A lot of the time they're having to go to  
11 other places because of what this is creating. And  
12 then we're also hearing complimentary testimony of  
13 others from other villages saying, we keep having  
14 people come into our community and harvest, where are  
15 they supposed to go, they should be able to harvest in  
16 their community and put up a smokehouse and filet fish  
17 where you have all your fish, you just got 120 fish and  
18 you have all of your maternal lineage doing it with you  
19 and you're showing all of your ways because I know the  
20 way that we harvest our salmon is different than the  
21 way that they do in Hoonah and all the other Tlingit  
22 communities even though we're saying we're unique, and  
23 our dialects and the way that we do things, and so  
24 what's happening to the ways that they're doing it in  
25 Ketchikan, how are they going to uplift their own ways  
26 if they're not able to do these things in their  
27 community.

28  
29 I've heard some concerns about  
30 overharvesting. And I just want to point out that  
31 that's not our way. Overharvesting is a symptom of  
32 colonization. And I think that concerns over  
33 overharvesting can come from a worry that, us, as  
34 indigenous people, as tribal people, will be doing what  
35 colonizers did when they came to our area. That's  
36 projecting. That's not necessarily what we're doing.  
37 We're not known for overharvesting. So giving this  
38 opportunity for tribes to meet with you in the time  
39 after they become rural to have those discussions and  
40 say what does this mean now. It's not an end all where  
41 it's just going to be a free for all. As you know  
42 there's things that come with it and there is  
43 guidelines and there is partnerships that come along to  
44 ensure the sustainability of these resources while  
45 allowing them to harvest on their own lands.

46  
47 Allowing them rural status will allow  
48 for local harvest, better consultation with the tribes  
49 and this Board, and strengthen protection of those who  
50



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1 rely on these resources. Ketchikan is open for sport  
2 and commercial harvesting, prioritizing colonial ways.  
3 So it's open for other types of harvesting but not  
4 subsistence harvesting. I invite you today to uplift  
5 Federal law and tribal governance by using your voice  
6 to vote and determine Ketchikan is rural.

7

8 Gunalcheesh.

9

10 CHAIRMAN CHRISTIANSON: Thank you,  
11 Gloria. Questions -- I see Frank.

12

13 MR. WOODS: Thank you for your  
14 testimony. You mentioned the management of this  
15 resource. The alternative, I believe, was mentioned  
16 before -- oh, I guess you said that, you know, it's not  
17 our responsibility to manage the resource, it would be  
18 partners with you in a collaboration and the way I look  
19 at it is consultation with the tribes -- Native people  
20 have always managed the resource, now we leave it up to  
21 the State and the Feds to manage waters, land, land use  
22 policy, whatever can -- I appreciate your comment that  
23 this brings out better consultation with the tribes.  
24 Because No. 1 in our area, we've always been blamed for  
25 under-reporting because we were afraid of breaking the  
26 law and we were always reporting -- people comply and  
27 I'm going to quote, the responsibility of tolerance  
28 lies with those that have the higher vision, that was  
29 by John Elliott. And what you bring is a higher vision  
30 for everyone, that bringing this to the table and  
31 addressing the issues isn't creating any more problems,  
32 it's actually aligning with what we should be doing  
33 together. That's my take. And I really appreciate  
34 that quote and your outlook and your testimony.

35

36 Thank you.

37

38 MS. WOLFE: Gunalcheesh.

39

40 CHAIRMAN CHRISTIANSON: Thank you,  
41 Frank. Anybody else on the Board.

42

43 (No comments)

44

45 CHAIRMAN CHRISTIANSON: Thank you,  
46 appreciate it Gloria.

47

48 (Applause)

49

50

0227

1                                   CHAIRMAN CHRISTIANSON: All right.  
2 Joe Jackson.

3  
4                                   MR. JACKSON: Thank you, Mr. Chair and  
5 honorary Board members. My name is Joe Jackson, I'm  
6 from Ketchikan. My uncle is Willard Jackson. I am a  
7 (In Tlingit). Tanta Kwaan is People of the Sea Lion.  
8 It was anglicized to Tongass Tribe probably after  
9 Tongass Island, Ft. Tongass where our people had a  
10 village. (In Tlingit) is Brown Bear.

11  
12                                   I grew up in Ketchikan. I was born  
13 there. Kindergarten through 12th grade. Graduated  
14 from KI in 1976. I'm 67 years old. Willie was 10 when  
15 I was born. And so I had 10 uncles and 4 aunties and I  
16 was pretty much raised as a little brother with all my  
17 uncles. I was a, you know, they fought like cats and  
18 dogs but they left me alone, I was the protected one.  
19 To my aunties I was always a nephew. When I was  
20 growing up in Ketchikan -- I would assume most of the  
21 Board members have been there, to Ketchikan and they've  
22 walked across the Ketchikan bridge and seen the basin,  
23 well, as a little boy, primarily me and two of my other  
24 uncles, Norman, Willie's youngest brother, he was born  
25 six months before I was so we grew up really like  
26 brothers, Norman, Jimmy and I, we'd go fishing down the  
27 Ketchikan Creek and we'd go hooking, and we did it for  
28 food, there was no catch and release, like so many of  
29 our elders all over the state, we don't play with our  
30 food, we take it home and we eat it. Before my time  
31 that whole Ketchikan Basin, we had mud flats and there  
32 were tribal houses there and then later on, you know,  
33 they'd play baseball there in the mud flats down there  
34 where you see all the boats moored up and basically  
35 everything going east or south of town from the  
36 Ketchikan bridge was Indian Town, that's where all the  
37 brown people stayed, Japanese Americans, just about  
38 every door you went by was a Japanese owned store,  
39 Tanino's, Datsuto's, and we had a big Filipino  
40 population and a Japanese American population and, of  
41 course, a Tlingit population, and at any rate just  
42 giving you a little perspective of that part of  
43 downtown Ketchikan, most of that was restricted deed  
44 land. And that, too, got usurped.

45  
46                                   I spent over 43 years flying  
47 professionally, 35.5 years flying Boeing 737s from  
48 Ketchikan to Barrow, to Adak Island, and all of the  
49 passengers and scheduled freight operations and you  
50

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1 could probably figure out who I flew for. So I had  
2 over 35,000 hours by the time I was forced to retire at  
3 65 because that's Federal law. And prior to flying  
4 jets, I had about 7,000 hours flying to Bush  
5 communities and I'd venture to guess that just about  
6 everyone of the Board members here, I've flown you to  
7 and from home and to meetings at one time or another.  
8 And what I've learned in flying the entire state, I've  
9 been to the majority of the 212 recognized villages  
10 when I flew the Bush is that they have -- just about  
11 all communities, probably 95 percent of our communities  
12 in Alaska are not on the road system. Of all the other  
13 communities, the rest of us, we have one common  
14 denominator, we're on a river or we're on the sea. The  
15 community of Ketchikan is not on the road system. And  
16 just about all the villages that are throughout the  
17 state, whether it's the Yukon Kuskokwim or the  
18 Northwest region or the Arctic Slope or the Peninsula,  
19 they get barge service. Well, so does Ketchikan. So  
20 we have a lot of similarities in this business of non-  
21 rural versus rural. And I've heard comparison between  
22 well, what's the difference between Ketchikan and Sitka  
23 and Kodiak. Well, to me there's really none.

24  
25 Now, going back to Ketchikan there's  
26 been oral history as well as written and documented  
27 history that the Tanta Kwaan, which is the Tongass  
28 Tribe people, the Saanya Kwaan, which is Cape Fox,  
29 these two Tlingit tribes have a history at the  
30 Ketchikan Creek and thank goodness they got along.  
31 Now, it became -- I hate to use that word, non-rural,  
32 it urbanized around us, it was a Tlingit community  
33 before it became a non-rural, an urban community. Our  
34 people, Saanya Kwaan and Tanta Kwaan, Tongass people  
35 and Cape Fox people, we were there and then the people  
36 came. And what did they come for, they came for fish.  
37 Canneries were set up. It confuses me that we  
38 differentiate Ketchikan from any other community that  
39 is recognized as rural when there should be no  
40 disparity. We have historical data that shows that,  
41 hey, we've been there, and we hope to -- the reason  
42 this is -- I came here today, not to speak, but to  
43 listen to my Uncle Willard speak and I decided to  
44 approach this panel to speak because it was so  
45 important to my uncle, and it's important to my family  
46 in Ketchikan.

47  
48 And I think that's really all I have to  
49 say is, is that, I hope this Board will consider  
50

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1 granting the community of Ketchikan and the Ketchikan  
2 Indian Community a rural determination because to me  
3 that's only fair when we compare it to what we have to  
4 compare to which is the other communities that are  
5 recognized.

6  
7 Thank you.

8  
9 CHAIRMAN CHRISTIANSON: Thank you, Mr.  
10 Jackson. Any questions for Joe.

11  
12 (No comments)

13  
14 CHAIRMAN CHRISTIANSON: All right,  
15 appreciate your testimony here today.

16  
17 MR. JACKSON: Thank you.

18  
19 (Applause)

20  
21 MS. LEONETTI: Quick announcement  
22 before we take a break. At the end of today we're  
23 going to recess until 1:00 o'clock p.m., tomorrow, and  
24 that is for any folks who wish to attend the Advisory  
25 Panel at the North Pacific Fisheries Management Council  
26 on chum bycatch. If you would like to do that and  
27 testify there tomorrow, for ease of getting people into  
28 the cue, please leave your name at the front desk,  
29 Bernard or Glenn will write that down and we'll get you  
30 in the cue there tomorrow.

31  
32 Thanks.

33  
34 CHAIRMAN CHRISTIANSON: Five minute  
35 break, we'll come back and see if there's anyone online  
36 yet to testify and then we'll move down the list.

37  
38 (Off record)

39  
40 (On record)

41  
42 CHAIRMAN CHRISTIANSON: All right, it  
43 looks like we're all back to our spots. Operator, at  
44 this time I'd like to ask if there's anybody online in  
45 the cue who would like to raise their hand or be  
46 recognized. There's a few buttons you push.

47  
48 MS. LEONETTI: Star five to raise your  
49 hand if you're online.

50

0230

1 (Pause)

2

3

CHAIRMAN CHRISTIANSON: We'll ask one  
4 more time if there's anybody online who would like to  
5 be recognized at this time, star five.

6

7

(Pause)

8

9

CHAIRMAN CHRISTIANSON: We'll move on.  
10 That concludes the public testimony for this action  
11 here today. Regional Advisory Council recommendation,  
12 Chair or designee. I believe we have that online. I  
13 think he -- I believe Don should be online.

14

15

REPORTER: Don is, yes, but I think he  
16 may have disconnected instead of star six.

17

18

(Pause)

19

20

21

CHAIRMAN CHRISTIANSON: Star six to  
unmute if you're available Don.

22

23

(Pause)

24

25

26

CHAIRMAN CHRISTIANSON: We're just  
going to wait a minute for Don to get on.

27

28

(Pause)

29

30

31

MS. WESSELS: Mr. Chair, if Don is not  
on within.....

32

33

MR. HERNANDEZ: Mr. Chair.

34

35

36

MS. WESSELS: .....the next couple of  
minutes I can present the Council's recommendation.

37

38

39

40

CHAIRMAN CHRISTIANSON: I thought I  
heard Don. Hello, Don, if you're back online you have  
the floor.

41

42

43

44

45

MR. HERNANDEZ: Yeah, yeah, sorry, I  
don't know, I was hitting the star six prematurely  
there, I guess I wasn't waiting for the signal. So you  
can hear me okay.

46

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CHAIRMAN CHRISTIANSON: Loud and clear,  
you have the floor.

0231

1 MR. HERNANDEZ: Okay, thank you. So,  
2 yes, Don Hernandez, Chairman of the Southeast RAC.  
3 Thank you, Council Member -- Chair Tony and welcome  
4 Board. So I am going to do my presentation in a couple  
5 different phases here. First of all, I'm going to read  
6 the justification that the Staff wrote up which we  
7 believe is a pretty good summation of what the  
8 Council's justifications were on this proposal. And  
9 then I'll have some additional points that the Council  
10 would also like included. And then I'd also be glad to  
11 answer any questions. So I'll start with the  
12 justification from the Staff, which I said, I think was  
13 a pretty good summation of our whole deliberation here.  
14

15 So Southeast Council opposed non-rural  
16 determination Proposal 25-01 by a split vote of 9-4.  
17 The Council emphasized that they did not want tribes  
18 pitted against tribes and they voiced support for  
19 Ketchikan Indian Community's request for tribal  
20 citizens have a subsistence priority in their  
21 traditional lands and waters. However, many of the  
22 Council members were opposed to the proposal, in that,  
23 they did not believe that supporting rural status for  
24 the entire Ketchikan area was the best way to address  
25 the issues being experienced by the Ketchikan Indian  
26 Community. These Council members also explained that  
27 Ketchikan possessed a degree of economic development,  
28 employment opportunities, social services and access to  
29 commercial goods that made it unlike nearby rural  
30 communities. Some Council members also noted that  
31 Ketchikan was characterized by traits they considered  
32 non-rural, including relatively high population  
33 densities, substantial traffic, tourism and charter  
34 fishing industry and large expensive housing  
35 developments for seasonal residents. Some Council  
36 members described other characteristics they associate  
37 with rural communities, including the presence of  
38 Native communities who rely on traditional subsistence  
39 practices, being isolated, having limited road access,  
40 declining or little economic opportunities, high  
41 poverty rates, reliance on barges for access to goods  
42 and materials and vulnerable supply chains. In  
43 identifying these traits of rural areas some Council  
44 members stated that Ketchikan was similar to rural hub  
45 communities like Kodiak and Sitka and should be  
46 compared to these larger rural communities rather than  
47 the ones on Prince of Wales Island. One Council member  
48 voiced that the rural status of a community should not  
49 be determined based on the use of land and traditions  
50

1 rather than -- or should be -- should be determined  
2 based on use of land and traditions rather than  
3 economic matters.

4  
5                   Throughout their discussion,  
6 competition for resources and impacts on resources in  
7 rural areas are the main reason provided for opposing  
8 rural status for Ketchikan residents. The Council  
9 expressed concern of the tools currently available in  
10 the Federal Subsistence Management Program to address  
11 resource competition and conservation concerns, harvest  
12 limit reductions, changes to harvest seasons, closures  
13 to non-Federally-qualified users and Section .804 user  
14 prioritizations would be slow and ineffective  
15 approaches to ensuring that residents of nearby small  
16 communities not be negatively impacted if all residents  
17 of Ketchikan were to become Federally-qualified. In  
18 Council discussions Title VIII of ANILCA does not  
19 provide a definition of rural and that the concept has  
20 evolved within the Federal Subsistence Management  
21 Program over time. The Council stated that more  
22 specific definitions or criteria of rural would better  
23 facilitate non-rural determination processes and  
24 Council decisions in the future. In their decision,  
25 the Council crafted a motion to send a letter to the  
26 Board requesting that rural is redefined for the  
27 purposes of the Federal Subsistence Management Program  
28 to include all members of Federally-recognized tribes  
29 occupying their ancestral lands.

30  
31                   This justification was put together by  
32 Staff and does a good job of capturing much of the  
33 Councils intent and thoughts. However, I would like  
34 to, as I said, provide a few other clarifications and  
35 things that the Council would like to be included.

36  
37                   So I hope the Board understand and  
38 getting a good sense of it now just how cumbersome it  
39 was for the Council to provide a recommendation to the  
40 Federal Subsistence Board on this proposal. The Council  
41 is submitting a comprehensive written statement on this  
42 issue through the annual report process. I talked  
43 about that yesterday. I would also like to bring  
44 several more important reasons for the Council's  
45 recommendations to your attention.

46  
47                   So first of all, I mean the OSM having  
48 a neutral recommendation and not being conclusive put a  
49 lot more burden on the Council to make their own  
50

0233

1 determination. We'd also like to point out that past  
2 actions on rural determination are convoluted and have  
3 been acted on on a case by case basis. Also, there is  
4 no formal definition of rural in Title VIII of ANILCA.  
5 This recent determination process highlighted the need  
6 to clarify the distinction between rural and non-rural  
7 characteristics. The regulatory tools in ANILCA and,  
8 therefore, OSM, do not let the Council to support KIC's  
9 rural designation as Federally-qualified for  
10 subsistence harvest resources. Customary and  
11 traditional wild foods -- customary to Alaska Native  
12 health and survival and the Council supports KIC tribal  
13 community in efforts to steward its resources and  
14 continue to hunt and fish in the customary and  
15 traditional use areas in traditional territories. The  
16 Council is conflicted on how best to support KIC under  
17 existing processes and regulations. And pointing out  
18 that, you know, there is language in the Congressional  
19 record on the history of this Title VIII of ANILCA that  
20 we think if looked at closely could maybe provide some  
21 remedies for (indiscernible).

22

23                   Also as I had mentioned yesterday, the  
24 AFN also has a resolution which recognizes the  
25 traditional and customary use of natural resources by  
26 the -- uses are foundation of the Alaska Native  
27 culture, economy and well-being and providing food  
28 securities, spiritual connection and a way of life that  
29 has sustained Native communities across the state for  
30 millennia. Now, AFN has suggested amending subsistence  
31 priority in ANILCA to provide for a subsistence  
32 priority for all Alaska Natives and rural residents.  
33 So I just, you know, want to point that out that, you  
34 know, our Council is seeing the same thing that the AFN  
35 is pointing out here. We just have to go about it in a  
36 different way, we have to stick within the limitations  
37 of what statutes and regulations are in effect  
38 currently under Title VIII of ANILCA.

39

40                   (Interruption Ferry Announcement)

41

42                   MR. HERNANDEZ: So hopefully I'm.....

43

44                   MS. PITKA: Don is on the ferry if you  
45 didn't already get that.

46

47                   CHAIRMAN CHRISTIANSON: Did we lose  
48 you, Don, or were you finished with your testimony?

49

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0234

1 (Pause)

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MS. PERRY: It looks like Don has been muted if someone could please unmute him or remind him to press star five or star six, rather.

7 (Pause)

9 MR. HERNANDEZ: So I'm back.

11 CHAIRMAN CHRISTIANSON: We got you.

13 MR. HERNANDEZ: Okay. I guess someone muted me, we had some background noise here. Ah, the challenges of not making it to a meeting.

17 So our Council has made some specific requests to the Board. We would like to review the Programs non-rural determination policy and clarify the distinction between rural and non-rural. We'd like to give serious consideration to whether a rule change request would be necessary to meet the intent of Title VIII of ANILCA to protect subsistence needs of Alaska Natives. The Board -- we suggest that the Board should study the Congressional record for ANILCA to offer constructive solutions to address the reasons that seem to behind KICs non-rural determination request and AFN's resolution providing tribal citizens access to their traditional subsistence resource land. The Council asks that the original purpose and intent of Title VIII be further reviewed at the Secretarial level to explore actions that can be taken by the Secretary of Interior to provide tribal citizens access to their customary and traditional subsistence resource lands. And this wording, partially comes from the Congressional record, Secretary of Interior could perhaps withdraw appropriate lands and classify them in a manner which would protect Native subsistence needs as a review of ANILCA's Congressional history found, that the conference committee expects both the Secretary and the State to take any action necessary to protect the subsistence needs of Alaska Natives. This guarantee of indigenous access to customary and traditional use areas could change the way subsistence is practiced throughout the state, however, this process is a continuation of the intent of ANILCA, Title VIII can provide for the subsistence uses of Alaska Natives.

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1                   So that concludes all of my statements  
2 that I wanted to make to the Board from our Council so  
3 I'll be standing by for any questions.

4  
5                   CHAIRMAN CHRISTIANSON: Thank you, Don,  
6 for that. Any questions from the Board for Don.

7  
8                   MR. WOODS: Yep, Frank Woods here.  
9 Asking, your statement on initiating a 404c assessment,  
10 can you expand on that a little bit?

11  
12                   MR. HERNANDEZ: I think you're talking  
13 about an .804.

14  
15                   MR. WOODS: The impacts, yes.

16  
17                   MR. HERNANDEZ: Okay. Section .804,  
18 yeah. Well, Section .804 of ANILCA that would be --  
19 well, let's assume that Ketchikan were declared rural,  
20 you know, the Board took that action, we would  
21 immediately see some action necessary if all of  
22 Ketchikan residents were afforded the same subsistence  
23 priority as what the current residents -- I'll use  
24 Prince of Wales as an example because that was really  
25 -- that is really the focus, Prince of Wales Island.  
26 And right now there is a difference in regulations  
27 between subsistence and non-subsistence on Unit 2,  
28 Prince of Wales Island. You know the Council  
29 recommended and the Board has approved more bigger bag  
30 limits for subsistence users, and a longer season for  
31 subsistence users and a doe hunt in Unit 2. I think  
32 everybody agrees, even KIC agrees, that if all  
33 Ketchikan residents were afforded that level of hunting  
34 on POW it could not be sustainable. So right away we'd  
35 have to go to that .804 process and make a  
36 determination of how to prioritize amongst the  
37 qualified subsistence users on how best to manage that  
38 area for the benefit of all. So that's where the .804  
39 process would come in. You would have requests for  
40 that almost immediately from the residents of Prince of  
41 Wales Island.

42  
43                   MR. WOODS: Thank you for expanding on  
44 that, I just wanted some clarification, the criteria  
45 and the determination process. So as a new Board  
46 member I appreciate your expansion on that.

47  
48                   Thank you.

49  
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0236

1 MR. HERNANDEZ: You're welcome, Frank.

2

3

4 CHAIRMAN CHRISTIANSON: Thank you,  
5 Frank. Any other questions here, Sara, yes, you have  
6 the floor.

7

8 MS. BOARIO: Thank you, Mr. Chair.  
9 Fish and Wildlife Service here. Thank you, Don, and  
10 Mr. Chair I hope this is the right time to ask my  
11 question from earlier.

12

13 I was just wondering, Don, if you could  
14 elaborate on or respond to the InterAgency Staff  
15 Committee comments they noted that the Council's action  
16 was not based just on the consideration of Ketchikan's  
17 rural characteristics, which represents a significant  
18 departure from the approach the Board has used for  
19 prior determinations. I was just wondering if you  
20 could help me understand that a little more, and, I  
21 apologize, I'm struggling to hear you a little bit.

22

23 MR. HERNANDEZ: Sorry. I'll try and  
24 speak a little more closer to the microphone here. I  
25 guess I was a little bit unsure of what they were  
26 getting at there. I am not all that familiar with how  
27 these recommendations have been done in the past other  
28 than the fact that, you know, at one time it was  
29 strictly a population based criteria. And I know it  
30 got a little more complicated than that. I think the  
31 only example that I'm familiar with is when we dealt  
32 with the city of Saxman, which was referenced a number  
33 of times, about them being, you know, included in the  
34 general area of Ketchikan and they have a rural status.  
35 So maybe if you could pose a question maybe in another  
36 way I might be able to better answer.

37

38 MS. BOARIO: Yeah, I'm not quite sure  
39 if anyone else posed a question, it sounds like Don  
40 you're not quite sure -- and, yeah, go ahead. Thank  
41 you.

42

43 MS. LAVINE: Thank you, Mr. Chair.  
44 Through the Chair. This is Robbin LaVine, Subsistence  
45 Policy Coordinator. And part of our public process is  
46 getting all of the comments on record and then the  
47 Board is free to discuss with the liaisons to the  
48 Board, so that's the Chairs and that's our State  
49 liaison and you can ask questions of Staff so I think  
50 we still have to get the ADF&G comment on the record

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1 and then the ISC comment on the record and then we're  
2 open to actually discuss and respond, all of us, if you  
3 wish.

4

5 Thank you, Mr. Chair.

6

7 MS. BOARIO: Okay. I just wanted to  
8 make sure that since it's regarding the RAC's work, the  
9 RAC had the opportunity to elaborate or respond.

10

11 MR. HERNANDEZ: Okay. Well, maybe just  
12 in a more general way. I think I heard a lot of  
13 questions raised in testimony about whether or not the  
14 Council was considering this proposal based on the  
15 observable, quantifiable criteria that applied to  
16 Ketchikan, you know, all the demographics and use and  
17 all that or whether or not we were paying more  
18 attention to other subsistence users concerns about  
19 what the impacts of Ketchikan becoming rural would be.  
20 And there seemed to be maybe some concern that the  
21 Council was weighing more impacts, which a lot of  
22 people felt were not relevant, and that goes back to  
23 that .804 determination, you know, that would deal with  
24 impacts, and there's a process to do that. So if  
25 that's the question and it was probably one of the  
26 thorniest things we've had to deal with, I think I will  
27 have to say that even though -- and, here, I'm kind of  
28 referencing the resolutions that came from the seven  
29 tribes that were opposed to this.

30

31 (Interruption Ferry Announcement)

32

33 MR. HERNANDEZ: Sorry, again. Am I  
34 being interrupted by a loud speaker again?

35

36 (No comments)

37

38 MR. HERNANDEZ: Am I being muted again?

39

40 UNIDENTIFIED VOICE: We can hear you  
41 but we can hear the loud speaker too.

42

43 MR. HERNANDEZ: Yeah, that's  
44 unfortunate. They'll be done here shortly.

45

46 CHAIRMAN CHRISTIANSON: Go to the  
47 muster station.

48

49 MR. HERNANDEZ: Yeah.

50

0238

1 (Laughter)

2

3 MR. HERNANDEZ: Yeah, I missed all my  
4 flights so here I'm on a ferry. Anyhow.

5

6 So all of those reservations did also  
7 make mention of the relative differences between life  
8 in a really small rural community compared to  
9 Ketchikan. So I know there was a lot of reference to  
10 impacts but they did also talk about just -- just the  
11 relative differences between living in a very small  
12 rural communities compared to people that live in  
13 Ketchikan. So I don't know if that's any help.

14

15 CHAIRMAN CHRISTIANSON: So Don, I think  
16 I heard you correct, just for the room here I'll try to  
17 speak over that. The differences, including the  
18 impacts that might happen to the user groups on POW and  
19 outlying rural areas if we were to go over to rural,  
20 you heard some testimony that it would drastically  
21 change the access to places that are -- have  
22 protections for the rural to hunt earlier, hunt longer,  
23 shoot does, fish different rivers on POW, so I think  
24 that's what Don's alluding to in his conversation there  
25 as to why they kind of had trouble applying the matrix  
26 that they had because it had changed and then not being  
27 allowed to incorporate some of those in the discussion  
28 as a meaningful way to evaluate whether the proposal  
29 held merit or not.

30

31 Did I get that right, Don?

32

33 MR. HERNANDEZ: That's correct.

34

35 CHAIRMAN CHRISTIANSON: Were you  
36 finished?

37

38 MR. HERNANDEZ: So I just also want to  
39 make the point, Tony, that the smaller rural  
40 communities, they kept pointing that out and that was a  
41 strong part of their testimonies. But they did also  
42 want to draw attention just to the fact that, you know,  
43 the life in their rural communities, the smaller rural  
44 communities is vastly different than Ketchikan and they  
45 also just don't think Ketchikan would meet a non-rural  
46 -- or excuse me, would meet a rural standard in their  
47 view. So wasn't just all based on their concerns about  
48 impacts to their subsistence uses. I did want to make  
49 that point.

50

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1                   CHAIRMAN CHRISTIANSON: Thank you, Don.  
2 Any questions from the Board to Don.

3  
4                   (No comments)

5  
6                   CHAIRMAN CHRISTIANSON: Appreciate you  
7 taking the time to call in, Don, and thank you for  
8 making that work on the ferry.

9  
10                  MR. HERNANDEZ: Yeah. Okay. Well,  
11 you're welcome, I don't know maybe there'll be some  
12 more questions later on in deliberations. I will be  
13 listening in and available.

14  
15                  CHAIRMAN CHRISTIANSON: Thank you, Don,  
16 for your service, and willingness to stay on while  
17 you're traveling. Appreciate that.

18  
19                  MR. HERNANDEZ: Thank you.

20  
21                  CHAIRMAN CHRISTIANSON: Next, we'll  
22 call on the Alaska Department of Fish and Game, State  
23 Liaison, Mr. Mulligan.

24  
25                  MR. MULLIGAN: Thank you, Chairman.  
26 For the record my name is Ben Mulligan, Deputy  
27 Commissioner for the Alaska Department of Fish and  
28 Game. The Department is neutral on the proposal,  
29 similar to other ones that you've seen in the past,  
30 C&Ts, .804 analysis, you know, the data that you've  
31 seen, the OSM analysis have given you is data that  
32 would have come from us. We are guided by our own  
33 statute, which pertains to our non-subsistence areas,  
34 and so I mean it's kind of an apples and oranges thing.  
35 There's a lot of similarities but there's some key  
36 differences in how our areas are distinguished, you  
37 know, non-subsistence areas doesn't distinguish between  
38 people, it distinguishes between the activity. Non-  
39 subsistence areas can have non -- or can have  
40 subsistence hunts or fisheries within them, there's  
41 still general hunt regulations in there, there's  
42 personal use fishing opportunities still in there but  
43 it doesn't distinguish between people.

44  
45                  I guess I would say that if you have  
46 any questions about our process I will do my best to  
47 answer that but given the differences, I don't know how  
48 much help I will be.

49  
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1 Thank you.

2

3 CHAIRMAN CHRISTIANSON: Thank you, Mr.  
4 Mulligan. Any questions for the State from the Board.

5

6 (No comments)

7

8 CHAIRMAN CHRISTIANSON: Thank you.  
9 InterAgency Staff Committee comments, ISC Chair, you  
10 have the floor.

11

12 MS. LAVINE: Thank you, Mr. Chair.  
13 Members of the Board. My name is Robbin LaVine. I am  
14 the Subsistence Policy Coordinator and the InterAgency  
15 Staff Committee Chair. The ISC comments is as follows:

16

17 The Ketchikan Indian Community has a  
18 well documented interest in the non-rural status of  
19 their tribal homelands. The InterAgency Staff  
20 Committee acknowledges the extensive efforts made by  
21 KIC to provide substantive and relevant information to  
22 the Federal Subsistence Board for consideration. As  
23 with previous non-rural determinations made by the  
24 Board, consideration of a community's unique  
25 characteristics has been the main focus and provides  
26 the primary basis for their decisions. Potential  
27 impacts on subsistence resources and/or affects to  
28 other Federally-qualified subsistence users that could  
29 result from revisions are outside the established  
30 procedures used by the Board and addressed through  
31 separate regulatory processes that are already in  
32 place, for example, like a Section .804 prioritization  
33 process, C&T use determinations, et cetera.

34

35 The Southeast Alaska Subsistence  
36 Regional Advisory Council discussed at length what the  
37 definition of rural should be when describing whether  
38 or not a community such as Ketchikan should be  
39 considered rural because it exhibits both rural and  
40 non-rural characteristics. In addition, the Council  
41 expressed their concerns regarding the addition of  
42 Ketchikan residents to the pool of Federally-qualified  
43 subsistence users and the possible affects on  
44 subsistence resources. The Council's action was not  
45 based just on the consideration of Ketchikan's rural  
46 characteristics which represents a significant  
47 departure from the approach the Board has used for  
48 prior determinations. A majority of the Council also  
49 indicated a desire to revise eligibility for the

50

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1 Federal subsistence priority so that tribal  
2 affiliations could be considered in addition to or in  
3 lieu of the geographically based determinations  
4 currently used by the Federal Subsistence Management  
5 Program. Such a change would require a revision to  
6 ANILCA, Title VIII through Congressional action versus  
7 rulemaking by the Secretaries as suggested by some of  
8 the Council members.

9

10 Thank you, Mr. Board -- or Mr. Chair  
11 and members of the Board.

12

13 CHAIRMAN CHRISTIANSON: Thank you,  
14 Robbin. Any questions from the Board for the ISC.

15

16 Yes, Sarah, you have the floor.

17

18 MS. CREACHBAUM: Oh, Robbin. Can you  
19 help me understand what the process might be if a rural  
20 designation was given, non-rural designation was given  
21 to Ketchikan and then as been discussed in other  
22 conversations and I'm sorry I just couldn't understand  
23 Don well enough while he was speaking to kind of get  
24 this, but to understand what then would happen if there  
25 was a requested .804 analysis and then what bearing a  
26 C&T analysis would have on that. How would that work?

27

28 MS. LAVINE: Thank you. Through the  
29 Chair, I'm thinking for just a moment.

30

31 (Pause)

32

33 MS. LAVINE: The first response I want  
34 to provide is that the Board is not necessarily giving  
35 the -- the Board is recognizing, recognizing the rural  
36 characteristics of a community or recognizing that a  
37 community is primarily non-rural just like they would  
38 be recognizing patterns of customary and traditional  
39 uses, right. Should the Board recognize that Ketchikan  
40 is a non-rural community, as other people have noted  
41 along with that recognition of the community you're  
42 going to have additional rural lands to consider and  
43 additional users to consider. That should not prevent  
44 you from recognizing a community as rural. As noted, I  
45 think, in the analysis and in many of the discussions,  
46 consideration for what happens next is outside of your  
47 rural determination. We have tools that are -- we have  
48 tools to help. I would note a lot of people have been  
49 talking about the .804 prioritization process. The

50



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1 .804 prioritization process is usually triggered after,  
2 first, the Board closes Federal public lands to non-  
3 Federally-qualified subsistence users first. Then if  
4 that is still too much pressure on the existing  
5 resources and it may vary because there are many  
6 resources in the area, then the Board must consider  
7 prioritization among Federally-qualified subsistence  
8 users based on locality, customary -- patterns of  
9 customary and traditional use and availability of  
10 alternative resources. So an .804 process is a  
11 reduction in access to Federally-qualified subsistence  
12 users after we've closed to non-Federally-qualified  
13 subsistence users. A C&T is an acknowledgement, it is  
14 usually broad and inclusive and it is an  
15 acknowledgement of a pattern of customary and  
16 traditional uses that exist, you recognize, similar to  
17 rural. And I would just note that while Southeast, in  
18 general, in that region, has an approach to C&Ts that  
19 is very broad and inclusive, anyone who is rural has  
20 C&T in Southeast. It's been a very open, gracious  
21 region. But I would note that Ketchikan has never been  
22 rural and, therefore, a consideration of Ketchikan's  
23 customary and traditional use patterns, where they go,  
24 how they harvest, additionally the lands on which they  
25 harvest probably immediately surrounding their  
26 community, which would go from non-rural to rural, that  
27 is all unknown and a C&T might help you to identify  
28 that pattern of use.

29

30 And, again, I would just say these are  
31 tools that the Board can use and is going to be helpful  
32 if there are management considerations once the Board  
33 either recognizes or not, the rural characteristics of  
34 Ketchikan.

35

36 Okay, thanks.

37

38 MS. CREACHBAUM: Thank you.

39

40 MR. VANORMER: Mr. Chair, thank you.  
41 This is Chad VanOrmer with the Forest Service. So,  
42 yeah, taking a look at that a little bit different. I  
43 know the ISC said in the report here that, you know,  
44 the Council may have gone a little bit outside of just  
45 looking at the rural characteristics or non-rural  
46 characteristics of Ketchikan to start talking about  
47 impacts on outlying areas. The way I see that is  
48 that's a consequence of what I think they're looking  
49 at, is the non-rural characteristic of the population  
50

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1 density of Ketchikan being 13,000 residents that would  
2 suddenly become Federally-qualified subsistence users.

3

4

5 So while they were deliberating and  
6 talking about it and even right now we're going down  
7 that road in discourse as a Board, well, can we do a  
8 future C&T or can we do an .804, that points to me that  
9 there is a non-rural characteristic that's kind of  
10 beaming out there which is the population density or  
11 the 13,000 residents in Ketchikan that would become  
12 Federally-qualified subsistence users.

12

13

14 So that's kind of how I'm looking at  
15 it. I'm looking at like what's the causal effect of  
16 implementing an d.804 or a C&T and back to the non-  
17 rural characteristics that we're supposed to be  
18 pointing to here.

18

19

20 So I wanted to put that in there, thank  
21 you, Mr. Chair.

21

22

23 MR. WOODS: Crash course in Section  
24 .804. Section .804, thank you Robbin for addressing  
25 that because at least a Board decision isn't decided on  
26 the impacts, we should be -- that would be the cart  
27 before the horse, or chicken before the egg kind of  
28 analysis, and somebody else's job besides ours  
29 according to what you just told me.

29

30

31 So I put down traditional use  
32 determinations, community to rural and incorporating  
33 all users and I like that we're not asked to address  
34 the impacts with this decision, that makes it a lot  
35 easier for me because I could -- I'm one of those  
36 people that'll get stuck in the weeds and I'll figure  
37 out how much deer are going to get shot extra, I asked  
38 -- my comments earlier were in that arena because I  
39 wasn't fully understanding the .804 -- when I read the  
40 RACs comments in their report that was the biggest  
41 question in my head, that's why I asked the RAC  
42 Chairman to address and expand on that because it's out  
43 of my purview as a Board member to make that decision  
44 for them.

44

45

46 Thank you, Mr. Chair.

46

47

48 CHAIRMAN CHRISTIANSON: Thank you,  
49 Frank. Any other questions from the Board for ISC,  
50 it's your opportunity. Thank you guys for your

50

0244

1 detailed explanation.

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(No comments)

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CHAIRMAN CHRISTIANSON: Board discussion with Council Chairs and State Liaison, this is the opportunity for us to ask further questions. I think we've kind of teased that out here, we've done a good job, I'll thank you guys for that. If there is any more this is your opportunity if you want to.

Rhonda, yes, you have the floor.

MS. PITKA: Yeah, I have a question for the State. So we talked briefly about, like, the effects of this proposal and the high population, so do you happen to have the information on how many hunting and fishing licenses are sold in the area?

MR. MULLIGAN: Through the Chair. Member Pitka. I could probably look that up but I don't know if we have it split out online, if not I'd have to try to find that out from Staff and I could not give you a timeframe in which I would find that out.

MS. PITKA: Thank you. Thank you for that answer, I appreciate it. We've been given a lot of information today and a lot of, I guess, data, and different reports. I really appreciate how thorough the Regional Advisory Council's deliberations were and I'd like to commend Mr. Hernandez for, you know, really hanging in there and giving us that testimony from the ferry, even through all that he managed to maintain composure, I probably would have just hung up and cried a little bit.

(Laughter)

MS. PITKA: I truly appreciate that. I really appreciate all of the lengthy testimony and the tribal consultation provided. I think, you know, being as thorough as we can on this particular proposal is important because, you know, it hasn't been enough but this is precedent setting. There are a lot of different precedents that are going to be set today and I appreciate the Staff's ability to list out all of those factors, you know, the neutrals, the support, and then the pointing out by the Ketchikan Indian Community of that disconnect that, you know, they are a tribe

0245

1 that people came to because of their region because  
2 they had a fishing resource that they wanted to exploit  
3 and that has been exploited, like the timber, all of  
4 that stuff, the outsiders come in and they extract all  
5 the resources that they possibly can and when they  
6 leave we're still left with those consequences of their  
7 historical population use.

8  
9 I was thinking about what was said  
10 earlier today and including in the analysis the long  
11 history of occupation of that area by the residents of  
12 Ketchikan. That's one of the factors that are under  
13 consideration also, that long history of Native  
14 occupation of that land. I don't think that can be  
15 overstated enough. And I really, really appreciate how  
16 lengthy the Regional Advisory Council's discussion was  
17 because they're about 15 steps ahead, you know, when  
18 this is, I guess, to my mind, a very different -- a  
19 different process than those particular analysis are,  
20 the .804 analysis, the C&T, those are all very  
21 different than this particular process, and I  
22 appreciate them pointing out all of the inadequacies of  
23 the system that have been repeatedly pointed out today,  
24 the inadequacies of Title VIII to address Native  
25 hunting and fishing rights. You know, the inability of  
26 the State to recognize those rights, to recognize the  
27 First People, I really appreciate that heartfelt  
28 testimony from everybody, from the Regional Advisory  
29 Council, from their discussions, from their  
30 transcripts.

31  
32 And I think my only question about the  
33 permits was, you know, would that provide us with  
34 evidence that there's going to be an additional 13,000  
35 hunting and fishing users or would that provide us with  
36 evidence that there may be 5,000 permits, you know.  
37 That was my -- that was sort of the rationale behind  
38 that question.

39  
40 Thank you.

41  
42 And, thank you, I love to throw  
43 questions to Mr. Mulligan at the end of the day when  
44 most of his Staff has gone home. Thank you so much for  
45 that. And, thank you for really searching for that  
46 answer.

47  
48 MR. VICKERS: I don't know if this  
49 helps, through the Board, this is Brent Vickers, OSM,  
50

0246

1 but we do have data on average deer hunters from each  
2 of the communities, it's on Page 662, Table 12, I also  
3 presented it. I can just say that between 2013 and  
4 2022 there was, an average of 1,247 hunters from  
5 Ketchikan and an average harvest of 1,186 deer from  
6 Ketchikan. There's also estimates for Klawock, Craig,  
7 Sitka and Juneau on that same table. If you just want  
8 to talk hunters on Klawock there's an average of 218,  
9 Craig 355, Sitka 1,110 and Juneau 2,000.

10

11

Thank you.

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MS. PITKA: Thank you so much for that answer. I knew it was in the analysis but I couldn't quite remember where and I didn't stickie note it like I usually would. Thank you for that. It's much lower than my 3,000 number I had in my head for some reason.

CHAIRMAN CHRISTIANSON: I think that's the number of animals harvested. Any other Board discussion, Sarah, yes, you have the floor.

MS. CREACHBAUM: Thank you, Mr. Chair. I'm struck by the -- kind of brings things into focus on the argument for me that the -- on one hand we can say that the population of Ketchikan is 13,000 people, and that's a number, that's a hard number and you could use that as your only criteria, and then we've listen to hours of testimony of people who's heart and soul comes from the land and the heartbreak of not having access to those resources in a legal way. And I don't -- I'm kind of bringing this up maybe to spur more discussion amongst the Board because I'm having a hard time resolving a hard fact of 13,000 people with large stores and robust developments in some parts of town with this other description of this place that's connected, that the people are connected so deeply and they need the access to those subsistence resources.

So I'm looking to the people who are at this table who are a heck of a lot smarter than me to have a robust discussion on this topic so that I can understand it better. Because I, too, I want to say, I am so proud of the RAC, they worked so hard on this issue and that's the way it's supposed to work and I want very much to take their recommendation because they worked so hard on the deliberation but there's heart and there's realities of what's happening on the land and it's a very difficult place to try to make a

0247

1 yes or no vote on so I'm going to be quiet now and  
2 hopefully my colleagues will enlighten me.

3

4 CHAIRMAN CHRISTIANSON: Nobody's  
5 jumping Sarah. Well, we'll let Chad go, Chad could be  
6 enlightening.

7

8 MR. VANORMER: All right. Thank you,  
9 Mr. Chair. Chad VanOrmer with the Forest Service. I  
10 think the best I can do is commiserate with you quite  
11 honestly. I sat in a full day of testimony at the  
12 Resource Advisory Council meeting, I was hoping they'd  
13 get all the way through a decision in a single day but  
14 it took them two days, two full days, to get through  
15 it, a day of testimony and then another day of the  
16 Council actually deliberating to get to the conclusion  
17 that they got it. And what I witnessed is exactly what  
18 I witnessed today, you have this tension point that is  
19 stuck in statute where you have a tribe and I heard Mr.  
20 Jackson say it well when he was giving testimony, they  
21 had a community build up around them that has been  
22 through statute, through ANILCA, as an example, of a  
23 non-rural community and it's just -- there's an -- I'm  
24 not quite sure what the word is there but there's  
25 definitely, a significant tension point there because  
26 I'm with the heart. Like if I had to simply vote on  
27 the heart it'd probably be a very different decision  
28 than when I have to vote based on what the statute says  
29 and the criteria I have to be bound to in order for  
30 making a decision here.

31

32 I want to find a decision, I want to  
33 find that path forward, I really do. I did the if then  
34 scenario with my Staff, you know, if this then, you  
35 know, .804, or if that then maybe C&T, and still having  
36 a hard time with reconciling all of that in my mind and  
37 in my heart as we move forward here. So I am just  
38 continuing to move forward based on, you know, kind of  
39 the Council struggled with this and I highly value the  
40 Council's experiential knowledge that they brought to  
41 the table because it's not -- they're representatives  
42 from all over Southeast Alaska and they provide that  
43 very important context in taking a look at this  
44 particular situation of the non-rural determination.  
45 And I know there was a lot of talk about impacts but,  
46 again, I think if you look at the causal factors of  
47 those impacts that they're talking about it points back  
48 to the characteristics of the community that they're  
49 asked to deliberate on.

50

0248

1                   So that's no immediate wisdom and I'm  
2 sure I'm not giving anyone any super ah-ha moments but,  
3 really, just commiserating with the struggle I think  
4 we're both feeling here.

5  
6                   So, thank you.

7  
8                   MS. BOARIO: Just to build on Chad and  
9 Sarah's comments. I, too, am struggling and speaking  
10 of the characteristics of the community, not the  
11 impacts, just to the characteristics, a piece that I'm  
12 working through in my mind still is, and asking also  
13 for your help so I'm no help to you right now Sarah as  
14 I'm thinking through this, but help me to understand  
15 about the similarities and differences between  
16 Ketchikan non-rural, Sitka rural and Kodiak rural, and  
17 that's just speaking to the characteristics, not the  
18 impacts. And there's tons of tables, I mean thank you  
19 to our OSM Staff, incredible work, to the RAC to  
20 everyone here from KIC today, there's so much  
21 information in here and there's tables just looking at  
22 those three communities and it's like this on every  
23 measure from demographics to median income to you name  
24 it, it's not like Ketchikan's way over here and Kodiak  
25 and Sitka, I mean there's a lot of similarity and  
26 slight differences and that's what I'm struggling with  
27 right now and the consistency of how we make these  
28 decisions. I recognize the policy changed in 2015 and  
29 our guidance as of the date of 2017 and it asks us to  
30 take a much more holistic approach to this and that's  
31 what I'm struggling with right now.

32  
33                   MS. PITKA: I feel a little bit less  
34 struggle because I was there in 2017 when we had to  
35 liberalize those regulations. That was probably one of  
36 my first Board meetings and it was pretty contentious  
37 then too. Everybody, honestly, okay, so this is really  
38 funny, but like all the Feds, they wanted like a clear  
39 cut number, you know, and all of the other people were  
40 like, no, but there are these unique characteristics of  
41 the communities that we need to take into  
42 consideration, you know, like -- and I don't even know  
43 what specific one that they were talking about but  
44 there's two or three that are sort of in the same boat,  
45 but not exactly, all of these communities are on a case  
46 by case basis, honestly, because they all have  
47 different characteristics. Like when you talk about  
48 Kenai, that has much different characteristics than,  
49 you know, than Ketchikan.  
50

1                               So in my mind it just seems like  
2 Ketchikan and Sitka are sort of very similar. I only  
3 know that I've been to Sitka because of high school  
4 and, you know, high school things, but to me coming  
5 from a rural village of 75 people that's pretty clear  
6 cut. It's a little bit different down in Southeast  
7 where there was tons of exploitative timber harvest in  
8 that area. There was tons of commercial fishing that  
9 exploited the resources in that area. So, you know,  
10 historically in that perspective it just puts me to  
11 mind of I guess like these huge communities growing up  
12 around a tribe, it's rough. It's sort of like that one  
13 place on Las Vegas where they have that one tribe and  
14 they have like one square block and then they're  
15 surrounded by Las Vegas, that's not a very good  
16 accurate description.....

17  
18                               (Laughter)

19  
20                               MS. PITKA: .....but that's exactly  
21 sort of what I was thinking of is like, you know, that  
22 one little health center in the middle of Las Vegas  
23 that's supposed to service all the Natives in the state  
24 of Nevada and it just speaks to like the long history  
25 of colonization in this state and the history of  
26 development and resource development and extraction and  
27 things that are very, you know, negative to the people  
28 that are the original inhabitants of the land.

29  
30                               So I feel a whole lot less conflicted  
31 than the people that are right there so thank you.

32  
33                               MR. WOODS: So looking at the personal  
34 use and subsistence salmon fishing and historical from  
35 '13 to '22 it looks like it actually dropped in most  
36 areas including coho. The only one that rose was pink  
37 salmon it looks like for a few years, and pink salmon  
38 are on a two year cycle I know. And what I'm looking  
39 at is, you know, actual use of the fishery, that even  
40 if -- you know, I'm looking at this as a guide for me  
41 to actually -- so personal use and subsistence permits  
42 from the State, there's going to be almost -- for me,  
43 it's a wash because personal use and subsistence in the  
44 State arena is our Federally-qualified subsistence  
45 users -- I'll get to the -- the point is, the residency  
46 requirement for the State are basically the same for  
47 Federally-qualified subsistence, year residency, I  
48 don't know what the criteria is.

49  
50



0250

1 MR. VICKERS: Are you asking the  
2 criteria for our Federal Subsistence Management  
3 Program?

4  
5 MR. WOODS: Yep.

6  
7 MR. VICKERS: You have to be an Alaska  
8 resident, which means have lived in Alaska for a year  
9 and you have to have your primary residence in a rural  
10 community to be recognized as rural.

11  
12 MR. WOODS: I get it, thank you.

13  
14 MR. VANORMER: Thank you, Mr. Chair.  
15 Get back to Sarah's question around the difference  
16 between Sitka and Ketchikan, I'm a little tepid to take  
17 a shot in answering that one but I've never been to  
18 Kodiak before so I can't speak at all to Kodiak, but  
19 I've been to Sitka and Ketchikan multiple times. And I  
20 think about the roles that communities play and I'm  
21 thinking in particular the transportation systems in  
22 Southeast Alaska and how they work. Ketchikan is, my  
23 experience, a hub for a lot of the communities on  
24 Prince of Wales. They've got, you know, regular ferry  
25 service, flight service, I think there's healthcare  
26 services that go back and forth and so it -- it kind of  
27 serves as almost like an urban center for multiple  
28 rural communities that are in the immediate vicinity of  
29 Ketchikan. When I take a look at Sitka, it's kind of  
30 out there, it's kind of on the edge. And I don't  
31 really see it as a hub for rural communities, it really  
32 kind of sits out there like many other rural  
33 communities. You know the nearest rural community I  
34 believe is probably, you know, Angoon. And the  
35 Angoon's economic hub is Juneau, it's very clear,  
36 that's where the regular ferry services goes back and  
37 forth. There's no ferry service between Angoon and  
38 Sitka. And so when I think about that, I think about  
39 the transportation systems in Southeast Alaska and how  
40 that interconnects the economies and that's the  
41 distinction I can draw from my experience between Sitka  
42 and Ketchikan and that's how I make that distinction in  
43 my mind between the two of them. One of the factors  
44 anyway.

45  
46 Thank you, Mr. Chair.

47  
48 CHAIRMAN CHRISTIANSON: And as Chad  
49 said that, I guess to throw food into thought and I'll  
50

0251

1 pick on anywhere, isn't that what Bethel is, so then --  
2 I mean we're throwing the criteria out there for Bethel  
3 to be considered the same as Ketchikan because it's a  
4 regional hub with all the access and medical, a size  
5 comparable to Sitka and Kodiak. So I mean that's what  
6 complicates this, is there is no clear criteria. So in  
7 my mind I've been to Bethel and it's a big village, you  
8 know, similar to what we're discussing here so I'm not  
9 picking on them, I'm just saying, we're talking  
10 context, we're talking trying to create an avenue here  
11 and a lane that's transparent to the public which I  
12 don't think we can do right here right now because all  
13 I'm hearing is grinding and trying to figure out where  
14 we're pulsing each other so we're going to figure out  
15 who's going to take the fall -- I'm just teasing -- but  
16 from my perspective, I'm a Prince of Wales resident and  
17 this has been a lifetime issue for me, so talking about  
18 from the heart I have a vote there but also being a  
19 manager and working in the confinements of a role and  
20 sitting here as a Chair, there's policy and procedure  
21 and I know I've been fairly consistent in who I support  
22 and how I vote, you know, but again you sit here and  
23 you listen to the compelling evidence and the  
24 testifiers here and you get pulled by the strings and  
25 then you come back to the table and you look at the  
26 book and then you hear each other deliberate so it's  
27 not an easy one, again, for me I'm a resident of Prince  
28 of Wales. This would drastically change some things  
29 we've worked on entirety of our lives so but not  
30 disconnected from them because that is our family and  
31 the things that we did protected their way of life as  
32 well so we're interconnected as communities obviously.  
33 I think I have 100-plus Hydaburg residents that  
34 probably live in Ketchikan and reside there as a  
35 community within a community. So I'm also speaking --  
36 oh, 200, see they're correcting me there, which is half  
37 the size of my community so one-third of the population  
38 of the Hydaburg people live over in Ketchikan. And  
39 like they state here there's a lot of us just doing  
40 what we do to maintain our way of life irregardless of  
41 regulation in place and time and space, that's just  
42 what people do. Not myself, for the record, but, you  
43 know.

44

45 (Laughter)

46

47 CHAIRMAN CHRISTIANSON: Ethically I  
48 have to maintain standards that -- you know they watch  
49 you close when you're me, you know, basically. But

50

0252

1 it's a tough one because I'm looking at family members  
2 on both sides, I'm looking at tribal presidents on both  
3 sides, it's pitting community against community for  
4 resource in a pretty rich area, I mean it's rich, I  
5 mean we're not talking about lack of resource here,  
6 we're talking about there isn't a real big conservation  
7 concern except maybe on some salmon streams here and  
8 there intermittently mixed out seasonally, or  
9 cyclically, so maybe a little deer here and there  
10 depending on the competition. But as far as the  
11 characteristics, you know, that's why I had to throw  
12 that out there. But I'm struggling here too, again,  
13 it's pretty close to home, I live on Prince of Wales, I  
14 live in a rural community of 400, I subsist and I rely  
15 on those early opportunities to feed my family and to  
16 fish in these places.

17  
18 A little bit about our culture as well,  
19 I don't go fish in Klawock unless I'm fishing with  
20 someone from Klawock and you better believe it they  
21 better not pull into my creek without asking. That's  
22 just me, culturally, being who I am, and they better  
23 get my permission too or else they'll get a corking,  
24 and that might be a little bit off base here but that's  
25 just who we are and if we don't take that defiant  
26 stance then people come in and just ramshod you like  
27 what you're hearing about these sport industries that  
28 show up to these creeks called, like you can go down to  
29 Cape Shack and take a look at it for the summer and  
30 watch what happens to one of our traditional streams  
31 that we just stopped accessing because of the over  
32 commercialization of the area, we just don't go there,  
33 you know, we go a little -- right down to Hunter's Bay,  
34 which is close, but we stopped going to traditional  
35 places based on constant commercial use.

36  
37 So for me it's a tough one.

38  
39 I'm going to vote however I vote here  
40 in a minute because we're just about done talking, I  
41 think.

42  
43 Anybody else want to discuss.

44  
45  
46 (No comments)

47  
48 CHAIRMAN CHRISTIANSON: If not I'm  
49 going to call for a motion. We're going to have a  
50

0253

1 moment of silence.

2

3 (Laughter)

4

5 CHAIRMAN CHRISTIANSON: Give us five  
6 minutes to deliberate. The suspense is killing me.  
7 We're going to take like a five minute break.

8

9 (Off record)

10

11 (On record)

12

13 MS. LINNELL: Can I pray for you.

14

15 CHAIRMAN CHRISTIANSON: You come on up  
16 here, you know it.

17

18 (Laughter)

19

20 UNIDENTIFIED VOICE: Make it a long  
21 prayer, Karen.

22

23 (Laughter)

24

25 CHAIRMAN CHRISTIANSON: We forgot to  
26 start this with a prayer, that's probably why I'm still  
27 sweating up here.

28

29 (Laughter)

30

31 CHAIRMAN CHRISTIANSON: Thank you,  
32 Karen for that offer.

33

34 MS. LINNELL: Thank you. I know this  
35 is a very difficult decision and I was just thinking I  
36 don't know what I would do if I was on that side of the  
37 table right now, today, and so I just wanted to offer a  
38 prayer that we do what is right for Alaska, we do what  
39 is right for our Native people, and we do what is right  
40 for land and our resources.

41

42 (Prayer)

43

44 CHAIRMAN CHRISTIANSON: Thank you,  
45 Karen. I feel way better, whew, at least I know Jesus  
46 is going to love me after.

47

48 Roll call.

49

50

0254

1 MR. LORD: Well, we don't have a motion  
2 yet.

3  
4 CHAIRMAN CHRISTIANSON: Oh, see how  
5 excited I am.

6  
7 (Laughter)

8  
9 CHAIRMAN CHRISTIANSON: I'll open up  
10 the floor now for a motion, woo-hoo.

11  
12 Ken wants to say something here real  
13 quick.

14  
15 MR. LORD: Yeah, I was asked to explain  
16 to the room about how Council deference works in this  
17 situation. What Title VIII of ANILCA requires is for  
18 the Board to give deference to Regional Advisory  
19 Council recommendations on the taking of fish and  
20 wildlife, if those recommendations pertain to the  
21 taking of fish and wildlife. With this being a  
22 rural/non-rural decision, it isn't directly related to  
23 the taking of fish and wildlife, so what the Board has  
24 said is that when there's a Council recommendation in  
25 this situation, they'll give great weight to that  
26 recommendation, but just to explain, they're not  
27 required as a matter of law, to give the Council  
28 deference on its recommendation.

29  
30 So, yeah, there was some confusion  
31 about that and I was asked to explain.

32  
33 CHAIRMAN CHRISTIANSON: Thank you. The  
34 floor is now open for a motion.

35  
36 MR. VANORMER: Mr. Chair. I would like  
37 to make the motion please.

38  
39 CHAIRMAN CHRISTIANSON: Yes.

40  
41 MR. VANORMER: Mr. Chair. I move to  
42 adopt Proposal NDP25-01. If I get a second I will  
43 explain why I intend to oppose my motion.

44  
45 MR. WOODS: Second.

46  
47 MR. BROWER: Second.

48  
49 MR. VANORMER: All right, thank you,  
50

1 Mr. Chair. I wish to begin by saying that this is one  
2 of the weightiest decisions that the Board could  
3 possibly make. The OSM analysis is excellent. And the  
4 Council and the Board have received a large amount of  
5 testimony, both supporting and opposing the Ketchikan  
6 Indian Community's non-rural determination proposal for  
7 Ketchikan area. In reaching my decision, I have done  
8 my best to consider all information and follow the  
9 Board policy, nevertheless, I want to say this was not  
10 an easy decision at all.

11  
12 However, after completing a thorough  
13 review of the Board policy on the non-rural  
14 determination process, a careful study of the extensive  
15 analysis done by OSM, a full review of the transcripts  
16 from the Southeast conferences, discussion and  
17 deliberations at their October 22nd through 24th, 2024  
18 meeting, and consideration of all testimony and  
19 comments received from the public, I believe that the  
20 weight of the evidence supports a finding that  
21 Ketchikan area should remain non-rural. Additionally,  
22 the Board is not required to defer to the Regional  
23 Advisory Council on making or rescinding non-rural  
24 determinations. I'm relying heavily on the Southeast  
25 RAC's recommendation, both, because of Board policy and  
26 because I think the RAC got it right here though my  
27 rationale is not necessarily the same. Thus, the  
28 Forest Service opposes NDP25-01 for the following  
29 reasons.

30  
31 First by policy, the Federal  
32 Subsistence Board relies heavily on recommendations  
33 provided by the Alaska Subsistence Regional Advisory  
34 Councils. In the case of the Ketchikan area non-rural  
35 determination proposal, the Southeast Council's  
36 deliberation was critical to the Forest Service by  
37 discussing rural characteristics of the region and  
38 assessing if Ketchikan fit the rural classification for  
39 Southeast Alaska. Nine out of the 13 Southeast Council  
40 members voted in opposition of rescinding Ketchikan's  
41 non-rural status. I'll do my best to summarize the  
42 views and concerns of the Council and the wealth of the  
43 public testimony while recognizing that this is a very  
44 complex issue with a multitude of views.

45  
46 The Council opposed the proposal for  
47 two main reasons. They believed Ketchikan exhibits  
48 overall more non-rural characteristics than rural  
49 characteristics and competition and conflicts for  
50

1 resource would become a major problem for the much  
2 smaller, existing rural communities if Ketchikan were  
3 to become rural. While all Council members expressed  
4 their desire to help KIC's members practice their  
5 traditional way of life, they also recognized that the  
6 Federal Subsistence Board cannot grant a Native  
7 preference under Title VIII. Multiple tribal  
8 governments and commenters from Prince of Wales Island  
9 expressed frustration with this limitation as well as  
10 concerns about competition if all 13,000 Ketchikan  
11 residents became Federally-qualified subsistence users.  
12 After inquiring about potential affects to resources  
13 and how a rural designation would change the  
14 availability of cultural and traditional resources in  
15 Ketchikan residents. Many Council members did not  
16 believe that rural status would increase Ketchikan  
17 residents ability to practice their culture and  
18 traditions. I found the judgment and expertise of the  
19 Southeast RAC, tribal letters and testimony from rural  
20 residents in the region to be particularly credible and  
21 compelling. Southeast Council members provided many  
22 good examples as to why Ketchikan should not be  
23 considered rural. Many tribes in Southeast Alaska have  
24 spoken out in opposition to Ketchikan area non-rural  
25 determination proposal under the framework of ANILCA,  
26 including Craig, Klawock, Hydaburg, Kasaan, Kake,  
27 Wrangell and Petersburg. Finally, public testimony  
28 documented concerns from neighboring rural communities  
29 over the added pressure to subsistence resources in  
30 their area and reasons why they felt Ketchikan does not  
31 display rural character in the region.

32  
33 I have also considered that ANILCA's  
34 Legislative history identifies Ketchikan as an example  
35 of a non-rural community as well as the Ninth Circuit  
36 Court's decision on the Kenaitze Indian Tribe case  
37 including that the term rural used in Title VIII is  
38 commonly understood to refer to areas of the country  
39 that are sparsely populated. Even though the  
40 Legislative history indicates that a community's rural  
41 nature can change over time it does not seem to me that  
42 this has occurred here. Ketchikan is not more sparsely  
43 populated today than it was in 1980 and while it's  
44 economy has changed, Ketchikan's qualities considered  
45 comprehensively are more in line with what the RAC and  
46 public commenters identified as characteristics of non-  
47 rural community than of rural community. In  
48 particular, I found convincing, the record evidence,  
49 that Ketchikan residents do not generally depend on  
50

0257

1 subsistence resources to the same degree as residents  
2 in nearby rural communities as well as the fact that  
3 Ketchikan has several supermarkets and a hospital, a  
4 university, Coast Guard Base, a large shipyard and  
5 certain State and Federal offices. These facilities  
6 and attributes seem more in line with an urban than a  
7 rural community. Similarly, Ketchikan's very  
8 substantial cruise ship tourism which resulted in  
9 nearly 1.2 million visitors in 2019 and about 652 port  
10 of calls by cruise ships in 2024 does not strike me as  
11 rural in nature.

12

13 It's for these reasons the Forest  
14 Service opposes NDP25-01.

15

16 Thank you, Mr. Chair.

17

18 CHAIRMAN CHRISTIANSON: Thank you,  
19 Chad. The floor is now open for discussion.

20

21 MR. LORD: A second.

22

23 CHAIRMAN CHRISTIANSON: Oh, a second.  
24 He got a second.....

25

26 MR. LORD: No, it wasn't, I  
27 thought.....

28

29 MR. VANORMER: Yes, it was seconded.

30

31 CHAIRMAN CHRISTIANSON: .....yeah, we  
32 got a second, no, we're on Board deliberation,  
33 discussion, a motion and a second, any further  
34 discussion from the Board here between each other

35

36 Yeah.

37

38 MS. PITKA: Okay, Rhonda Pitka. I just  
39 wanted to agree with much of what our colleague at the  
40 Forest Service said, the Regional Advisory Council  
41 discussion was very thorough and it lasted two days. I  
42 have to respectfully disagree with some of the  
43 characterizations of what constitutes a rural  
44 community. Just because of the unique characteristics  
45 of this area, the declining economic base and changes  
46 in the population, the areas around in this particular  
47 region have grown considerably while it looks like the  
48 Ketchikan population has stayed pretty static. There  
49 are remote characteristics of Ketchikan. I have been  
50



0258

1 on the milkrun, like a lot of people have, I really,  
2 really appreciate that thoughtful justification and I  
3 hope we come to a very good decision soon.

4  
5 Thank you.

6  
7 Oh, wait, I know one more thing that I  
8 wanted to say. That you didn't include in your  
9 justification is that there's a long history of  
10 occupation and use by Ketchikan Indian Community and  
11 people in the region.

12  
13 CHAIRMAN CHRISTIANSON: Any other Board  
14 discussion, comments, deliberation.

15  
16 (No comments)

17  
18 CHAIRMAN CHRISTIANSON: Call for the  
19 question.

20  
21 MR. BROWER: Question.

22  
23 CHAIRMAN CHRISTIANSON: Question's been  
24 called. Roll call please.

25  
26 MS. LEONETTI: Okay, Mr. Chair. Please  
27 state clearly a yes or no vote. First is Public Member  
28 Chief Rhonda Pitka.

29  
30 MS. PITKA: I vote in support of NDP25-  
31 01 for the reasons that I just said. And also because  
32 the guidance is solely on the Board right now so this  
33 is definitely a Board decision. I appreciate the  
34 Regional Advisory Council and all of their discussions  
35 and the lengthy testimony that we received today and in  
36 the past.

37  
38 MS. LEONETTI: Thank you.

39  
40 Next is BIA, Jolene John.

41  
42 MS. JOHN: The Bureau of Indian Affairs  
43 votes to adopt the Ketchikan Indian Community's  
44 proposal to change the status of the Ketchikan area  
45 from non-rural to rural.

46  
47 The evidence that they have provided to  
48 the Board through their detailed written reports and  
49 the abundant oral testimony regarding their community's  
50

0259

1 rural characteristics supports their request. This  
2 change will provide them with a Federal subsistence  
3 priority that will be important to expand their  
4 resident's ability to address harvesting needs and food  
5 security concerns, plus support their longstanding  
6 traditions and culture. It's been unfair to pit  
7 neighbors against each other, based on the earlier  
8 definition of rural, which created an undeserved  
9 outcome. The tribal people of Ketchikan have been  
10 oppressed as a result of a capture of time that is no  
11 longer relevant. Based on the testimony today it's not  
12 hard to decipher that there is certainly customary and  
13 traditional use on the very land, the name places, the  
14 oral stories we've been hearing.

15

16 Ketchikan Indian Community, your  
17 backyard should be your table, your source of food  
18 securities.

19

20 Quyana.

21

22 MS. LEONETTI: Thank you.

23

24 Next, BLM, Erika Reed.

25

26 MS. REED: Sorry, this is kind of gut  
27 wrenching. The Bureau of Land Management votes to  
28 oppose this proposal. Ketchikan is a large town that  
29 serves as one of the main hub communities in Southeast  
30 Alaska with many services and a level of economic  
31 development that do not exist in smaller rural villages  
32 in that region. In these smaller communities  
33 employment opportunities are much more limited than in  
34 Ketchikan with higher levels of poverty and these areas  
35 spend more of their time engaged in subsistence  
36 practices as a means of livelihood because of more  
37 limited access to food resources than those available  
38 in Ketchikan.

39

40 Although the Board is not required to  
41 give deference to the Regional Advisory Councils on  
42 non-rural determinations, BLM has relied heavily on the  
43 recommendation of the Southeast Alaska Subsistence  
44 Regional Advisory Council when making this decision on  
45 this proposal. BLM appreciates the extensive  
46 deliberative effort the Council took in carefully  
47 considering this proposal and believes that their  
48 rationale provides compelling justification for  
49 opposing this proposal.

50

0260

1 Thank you, Mr. Chair.

2

3 MS. LEONETTI: Thank you.

4

5 Next, is Chair Tony Christianson.

6

7 CHAIRMAN CHRISTIANSON: Thank you for  
8 putting me in the middle so somebody else could be the  
9 break. I -- tough position, I stated on the record.  
10 My heart feeling, I also stated on the record, you  
11 know, working in a box. So my point of view is the box  
12 isn't got all the tools in it. I don't see the  
13 criteria being clear enough that our Regional Advisory  
14 Council struggled, our ISC struggled and we're sitting  
15 here struggling and to me that's grey area and I have a  
16 hard time moving forward in a positive way when I don't  
17 understand what it is I'm moving into.

18

19 I oppose.

20

21 MS. LEONETTI: Thank you.

22

23 Next, Public Member Frank Woods.

24

25 MR. WOODS: Thank you. There's been a  
26 lot of information that was passed down in the last  
27 week, since the orientation. During orientation and  
28 reviewing this proposal, I reviewed like 195 pages of  
29 OSM's well documented and information that was thrown  
30 at us, I am looking at the RAC, even though we don't  
31 have to have a justification, is that, they removed the  
32 impacts of this and they also removed, for me -- it  
33 brought back that, you know, all the determinations  
34 that -- that criteria that was thrown at us was pretty  
35 unclear, remove population, that was the biggest one,  
36 but it -- as a user it justified for me that there's  
37 actually use that we need to start documenting and  
38 clarifying for the residents.

39

40 So with that I'll move in positive with  
41 this, and I'm in favor of helping move forward. I  
42 think it's time we address -- it's the change of  
43 subsistence use in Alaska and this is one of the  
44 positives, I think, as seeing as moving forward, at  
45 least addressing the issue.

46

47 So, thank you.

48

49 MS. LEONETTI: Thank you.

50

0261

1 National Park Service, Sarah  
2 Creachbaum.

3  
4 MS. CREACHBAUM: First just let me say,  
5 thank you to everyone in this room for bringing their  
6 best hearts and minds to this issue and being  
7 transparent and honest and giving us everything that we  
8 would need with which to deliberate this really, really  
9 difficult decision.

10  
11 The National Park Service votes to  
12 support NDP25-01. The NPS acknowledges the extensive  
13 efforts made by the Ketchikan Indian Community to  
14 provide substantive and relevant information to the  
15 Federal Subsistence Board for consideration and that  
16 the Ketchikan Indian Community has a well documented  
17 interest in non-rural status of their tribal homelands.  
18 As with previous non-rural determinations made by the  
19 Federal Subsistence Board, consideration of a  
20 community's unique characteristics has been the main  
21 focus and provides the primary basis for their  
22 decisions. The Southeast Alaska Subsistence Regional  
23 Advisory Council discussed at length what the  
24 definition of rural should be when describing whether  
25 or not a community such as Ketchikan should be  
26 considered rural because it exhibits both rural and  
27 non-rural characteristics. In addition, the Council  
28 expressed their concerns regarding the addition of  
29 Ketchikan residents to the pool of Federally-qualified  
30 subsistence users and the possible affects on  
31 subsistence resources, however, the potential affects  
32 on subsistence resources or affects to other Federally-  
33 qualified subsistence users that could result from  
34 revisions are outside the established procedures used  
35 by this Board and are addressed through separate  
36 regulatory processes that are already in place such as  
37 the .804 prioritization.

38  
39 Thank you to the Ketchikan residents  
40 for their diligence and details provided in your  
41 testimonies we have heard previously and then  
42 specifically today. I believe this new testimony today  
43 provides compelling justification to support this rural  
44 determination.

45  
46 MS. LEONETTI: Thank you, Sarah.

47  
48 Let's see, U.S. Forest Service, Chad  
49 VanOrmer.

50

0262

1 MR. VANORMER: I provided my  
2 justification. I oppose the motion to make Ketchikan  
3 rural.

4  
5 MS. LEONETTI: Thank you. Don't forget  
6 your mics.

7  
8 Fish and Wildlife Service, Sara Boario.

9  
10 MS. BOARIO: Let me first join my very  
11 kind and sincere colleague from the Park Service in  
12 thanking everyone for being here today and for all your  
13 time and for the many years of work that have gone into  
14 this process and to our colleagues in the room and on  
15 the Board and everyone on the RAC as well.

16  
17 For reasons far more eloquently  
18 articulated by my colleagues who have preceded me, the  
19 Fish and Wildlife Service votes to support NDP25-01.

20  
21 I've heard the request of the Ketchikan  
22 Indian Community to change the status of Ketchikan to  
23 rural from non-rural. Ketchikan has demonstrated in  
24 their submitted documents and testimony, including  
25 today, plus the data supplied in the OSM analysis that  
26 they do, in fact, have rural characteristics and that  
27 the Board may compare information from other similarly  
28 situated communities or areas such as Ketchikan --  
29 excuse me -- such as Sitka and Kodiak. I see  
30 similarities in these rural characteristics. The Board  
31 heard from the Southeast RAC and members of the public  
32 and KIC today, there were those who are concerned about  
33 the conservation of wild resources, KIC has shared that  
34 they want to hunt nearby on lands that they will have  
35 closer proximity to where they live. While this is  
36 something that was raised as a concern by people, I  
37 note it as important to recognize. Also important is  
38 the continuation of subsistence and that is something  
39 we heard strongly from KIC as well.

40  
41 In addition to this there is the  
42 Section .804 process that OSM can initiate to help  
43 prioritize among those who rely most on the resources.  
44 There's always room to improve and if this process is  
45 challenging for the public to access, takes too long or  
46 needs to be reviewed for efficiency we can take that on  
47 too.

48  
49 Thank you, Mr. Chair.

50

0263

1 MS. LEONETTI: Thank you.

2

3 Public Member Raymond Oney.

4

5 MR. ONEY: Thank you, Mr. Chair. I'd  
6 like to thank everyone that came before us to provide  
7 testimony on this very important proposal. I thank you  
8 for traveling this far to come to this forum to listen  
9 to you, to your concerns, to your needs to identify who  
10 you are as Native people of your area. I'm from the  
11 Yukon. I've served at least over 20 years on the RAC.  
12 We've made decisions, hard decisions for our people in  
13 our area too and a lot of times, you know, they did  
14 oppose too, but we go on and we live with it. I want  
15 to thank the young people, too, for being here, it  
16 takes a lot of team effort, a lot of coordination to be  
17 here in this meeting and I'm glad that you are in this  
18 forum to listen to the deliberations that we're taking  
19 now to define rural and non-rural. I think it's up to  
20 the Board based on OSM's being neutral, so I'm hearing  
21 you, that's what I'm here for. I'm hearing what you're  
22 saying. You guys are a strong people and you'll  
23 continue to be strong people and your children and  
24 grandchildren.

25

26 So in this matter I am in support of  
27 NDP25-04 [sic].

28

29 Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

30

31 MS. LEONETTI: And last but not least  
32 Public Member Charlie Brower.

33

34 MR. BROWER: Thank you. I.....

35

36 REPORTER: Charlie, your mic.

37

38 MR. BROWER: Sorry about that. I want  
39 to take this time to thank all the people that came and  
40 testified on behalf of the proposal NDP25-01. I think  
41 their testimony and their wish was heard and I  
42 appreciate that very much and I believe your land is  
43 your land, you should keep it the way you want to keep  
44 it so I appreciate that very much.

45

46 So I'm in support of this motion.

47

48 Thank you.

49

50

0264

1 MS. LEONETTI: Mr. Chair. The motion  
2 passes 7-3.

3  
4 CHAIRMAN CHRISTIANSON: Congratulations  
5 to KIC and the Ketchikan community, you're now rural.

6  
7 (Applause)

8  
9 CHAIRMAN CHRISTIANSON: I just want to  
10 thank the Board, that was a tough one, we ground  
11 through it, I think that was probably one of the longer  
12 deals we've had. A lot of -- what'd you say, two days  
13 down here and almost a day here, three -- three days to  
14 deliberate to figure it out. Again, I think on the  
15 record we talked with Staff here, we produced a lot of  
16 good dialogue between the Board here, to discuss it, to  
17 vett it out, to get our feelings out on the table but  
18 to also, you know, try to feel out the process and so  
19 appreciate everybody and thank you guys for your  
20 wonderful testimony, you know, you guys did a good job.

21  
22 Thank you.

23  
24 At this time we're going to recess the  
25 meeting until 1:00 o'clock tomorrow. 1:00 o'clock  
26 here. So that means if you want to go testify at the  
27 Pacific Salmon thing they got your name out here,  
28 they'll get you in the cue and then have a good night  
29 every -- oh, Charlie has something to say.

30  
31 MR. BROWER: Mr. Chair, is that at Egan  
32 Center?

33  
34 CHAIRMAN CHRISTIANSON: Egan Center in  
35 the morning. Egan Center.

36  
37 MR. BROWER: 10:00 o'clock.

38  
39 MS. LAVINE: Sorry, through the Chair.  
40 The invite is for -- we are recessing so that people  
41 from our meeting may testify to the Advisory Council  
42 of the North Pacific Fisheries Management Council.  
43 They are meeting tomorrow from 8:00 a.m., until noon,  
44 and anyone here is invited to attend. I think that's  
45 -- thank you.

46  
47 CHAIRMAN CHRISTIANSON: Recess.

48  
49 (Off record)

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0265

(PROCEEDINGS TO BE CONTINUED)

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C E R T I F I C A T E

UNITED STATES OF AMERICA )  
 ) ss.  
STATE OF ALASKA )

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

THAT the foregoing, contain a full, true and correct Transcript of the FEDERAL SUBSISTENCE BOARD MEETING taken electronically by our firm on the 5th day of February 2025;

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

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

DATED at Anchorage, Alaska, this 20th day of February 2025.

\_\_\_\_\_  
Salena A. Hile  
Notary Public, State of Alaska  
My Commission Expires: 09/16/26