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SOUTHEAST ALASKA SUBSISTENCE
REGIONAL ADVISORY COUNCIL

PUBLIC MEETING

VOLUME II

THE NOLAN CENTER
Wrangell, Alaska
December 18, 2025

COUNCIL MEMBERS PRESENT:

Calvin Casipit, Acting Chair
Harvey Kitka
Larry Bemis
Michael Douville
James Slater
Theodore Sandhofer
Albert Howard
Donald Hernandez
Patricia Phillips
Louie Wagner, Jr
John Smith III
Lewis Hiatt

Regional Council Coordinator, DeAnna Perry

Recorded and transcribed by:

Lighthouse Integrated Services Corp
787-239-0462
Info@lighthouseonline.com

P R O C E E D I N G S

(Wrangell, Alaska - 12/18/25)

MS. PERRY: Good morning, everyone. This is the Southeast Subsistence Regional Advisory Council. Our Council members are getting assembled, and we will start the meeting shortly. Thank you.

ACTING CHAIRPERON CASIPIT: Okay. Welcome to the second day of the Southeast Regional Advisory Council meeting. We are going to try to get back to our agenda. We're going to start working on action items this morning, but before we start on these -- just to let you know, as far as the action items, I prioritized them for the closure review for Yakutat moose, the delegated authority letters into specific regulation, then we'll move right into developing our Board of Game comments and continue on the agenda from there. Some of the things -- we're -- also the Council Training, I think we're going to put off till next meeting if necessary. I think most of us know how -- most of us have -- most of us are pretty familiar with the subjects that DeAnna was going to go over -- excuse me. But before we start that, there's a couple items that I needed to do first. One is I would like Harvey here to introduce himself and give his community report. When he came in last night, I apologize, I neglected to have him introduce himself and give his Council report. So at this time I'll ask Harvey to do that and thank you.

MR KITKA: Good morning. My name is Harvey Kitka. I come from Sitka, Alaska. I want to talk a little about Sitka. We had probably had a fairly good year. We don't have really any hunting problems with deer in our area because we don't have the road systems and a lot of people seem to use our road systems and boats, and they're pretty limited in when and where they can go. But the hunting season has been pretty fair. As far as fishing, the sockeye seem to be improving in Redoubt. They improved a bit in (In Native) Bay, but Redoubt being -- is a lot closer, it was a lot easier for people to go there and get theirs. The herring is always a concern. We now have roughly 200 gray whales that come and feed on the herring eggs; where it was only a couple, now it's 200. So, no one tell us how much they eat and how much eggs have been taken. It seemed like since the hatchery is gone in and since the -- we don't get the bigger king salmon that we used to get. I

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1 don't know if there's a territory restriction that the
2 fish obey or what, but we seem to get all -- all we get
3 now is -- are ones that are barely legal, so. Pretty
4 much that's all I have to say about what's happening in
5 Sitka. Thank you.

6
7 ACTING CHAIRPERON CASIPIT: Thank you,
8 Harvey. DeAnna passed me a note and asked that we do a
9 roll call, so we're going to do that real quick, right
10 now.

11
12 MS. PERRY: Okay. Larry Bemis.

13
14 MR. BEMIS: Here.

15
16 MS. PERRY: Frank Wright.

17
18 (No response)

19
20 Michael Douville.

21
22 MR. DOUVILLE: Here.

23
24 MS. PERRY: Jim Slater.

25
26 MR. SLATER: Here.

27
28 MS.PERRY: Ted Sandhofer.

29
30 MR. SANDHOFER: Here.

31
32 MS. PERRY: Albert Howard.

33
34 MR. HOWARD: Here.

35
36 MS. PERRY: Patricia Phillips.

37
38 MS. PHILLIPS: Here.

39
40 MS. PERRY: Louie Wagner.

41
42 MR. WAGNER: Here.

43
44 MS. PERRY: Harvey Kitka.

45
46 MR. KITKA: Here.

47
48 MS. PERRY: John Smith.

49
50 MR. SMITH: Here.

1
2 MS. PERRY: Lewis Hiatt.

3
4 MR. HIATT: Here.

5
6 MS. PERRY: Don Hernandez.

7
8 MR. HERNANDEZ: Here.

9
10 MS. PERRY: And Cal Casipit.

11
12 ACTING CHAIRPERON CASIPIT: Here.

13
14 MS. PERRY: And Cal, as the Vice Chair,
15 as the Acting Chair for this meeting, continues to do
16 so. Mr. Acting Chair, you have 12 of your 13 seated
17 Council members present. You do have a quorum.

18
19 ACTING CHAIRPERON CASIPIT: Thank you,
20 DeAnna. Okay. This is time of our agenda that I'm going
21 to call for public comment on non-agenda items. If you
22 have a public comment on a non-agenda item, please raise
23 your hand, come to the table, introduce yourself and
24 begin your testimony. Thank you.

25
26 MR. ANDERSTROM: Chair and members of the
27 Regional Advisory Committee, thank you for the
28 opportunity to speak today. (In Native). Forgive me, I'm
29 a little nervous here. My name is Matthew Anderstrom.
30 I'm the Yakutat Tlingit Tribe Traditional Food
31 Sovereignty Coordinator, the President of Alaska Native
32 Brotherhood, Camp 13, Second VP of the Alaska Native
33 Brotherhood Grand Camp, and a lifelong subsistence
34 hunter from the Yakutat area. Above all that, I'm a
35 father, an uncle, a husband, and I speak today not only
36 for myself but for my family who depend on me, this land
37 and these animals. Not for recreation, not for profit,
38 but for survival, culture and continuity. I strongly
39 oppose the Safari Club International petition to weaken
40 Federal Subsistence Protections under ANILCA. This
41 petition frames Federal Subsistence Management as
42 overreach. But from where we live, it is fulfilling the
43 law exactly as Congress intended. ANILCA was passed
44 because of the state of Alaska failed to protect Alaska
45 Native and rural subsistence ways of life. Federal
46 management exists because subsistence users were being
47 displaced by road systems, aircraft access, outside
48 pressure that overwhelms local lands and wildlife.
49 Safari Club argues that federal closures create hunter
50 against hunter conflict, but that's not our conflict.

1 That did not start in our villages. It started with non-
2 local, well-funded hunters arrived by plane, boat and
3 guide into small, finite landscapes like Yakutat; places
4 where families have harvested sustainably for thousands
5 of years. They also argue that the RAC Councils and
6 public board members represent federal stacking. I want
7 to be clear, RACs are the only place where our local
8 voices are heard at all. Removing or weakening them will
9 silence the very people ANILCA was written to protect.
10 The claim that Councils are rubber stamps is an insult
11 to our elders, hunters, and community members who spend
12 decades observing changes on the ground; changes that
13 don't show up in statewide data sets. Safari Club wants
14 to require deference to the state of Alaska, but the
15 state of Alaska has repeatedly demonstrated that it
16 cannot legally or practically protect subsistence
17 priorities. Alaska still does not comply with ANILCA.
18 The federal system exists because the state chooses to
19 support sport and commercial interests over subsistence
20 rights. The petition also attacks emergency and
21 temporary special actions. In rural Alaska, emergencies
22 are not abstract. They're failed salmon runs, unsafe
23 ice, weather changes, rising fuel costs and food
24 insecurity. Federal flexibility is not abuse. It is
25 necessary to keep our people fed. The Safari Club speaks
26 often about Alaskans, but their organization represents
27 1200 members statewide, many of whom are not rural and
28 not subsistence users. They do not live the consequences
29 of reduced access; we do. ANILCA is not broken. It is
30 doing exactly what it was meant to do, protect
31 subsistence first based on local knowledge, local need
32 and conservation. On behalf of YTT Food Sovereignty
33 Program, Alaska Native Brotherhood Camp 13, and the
34 Yakutat Subsistence Community, I urge this Council to
35 reject efforts to weaken federal subsistence authority,
36 defend the role of RACs, and uphold the subsistence
37 priority promised by law. Thank you for listening.

38
39 ACTING CHAIRPERON CASIPIT: Okay.
40 Council members. Questions? Comments?

41
42 UNIDENTIFIED: Hey, I just want to really
43 thank you for your testimony. Well said. We need to hear
44 those kinds of things from individuals like you that
45 have a long, long history of using the lands and the
46 game, So I really appreciate your testimony. Thank you.

47
48 ACTING CHAIRPERON CASIPIT: Any other
49 members?

50

1 UNIDENTIFIED: Oh, I just wanted to
2 second that. I feel it was very moving and sincere. I
3 appreciate it, thank you.

4
5 ACTING CHAIRPERON CASIPIT: Thank you,
6 sir. And I third that. It's very important for folks to
7 put your thoughts on the record, like you just did, and
8 believe me, I'm sure that folks are going to read those
9 transcripts and they'll take it to heart. I could feel
10 -- I could feel you and I really appreciate you coming
11 forward and giving this testimony, so thank you. Any
12 other public that would like to comment on non-agenda
13 items, please come forward, introduce yourself and begin
14 your testimony. Thank you.

15
16 MS. PHILLIPS: Mr. Chairman, this is
17 Patty.

18
19 ACTING CHAIRPERON CASIPIT: I'm sorry
20 Patty, I forgot about that. Go ahead, Patty.

21
22 MS. PHILLIPS: Yeah. So I'm curious. I
23 was very moved by our public comments just presented.
24 Is there a mechanism within our meeting that
25 automatically forwards those comments on, you know, for
26 you know, for the scoping or, you know, can the commenter
27 please be given the information on where his comments
28 should be sent to be included in the Federal Registry?
29 Thank you.

30
31 ACTING CHAIRPERON CASIPIT: We have Scott
32 Ayers coming up to answer that, so thank you. Thank you,
33 Patty.

34
35 MR. AYERS: Through the Chair. Thank you
36 Member Phillips, for that question. I don't believe that
37 there is a direct way for us, as part of this meeting,
38 to incorporate those comments into response back to this
39 review that's occurring right now in the open notice. I
40 do have an update, though, that the issues with the
41 Federal Register and being able to put comments into
42 that system have been resolved. And so, we would
43 definitely appreciate if the speaker that was just here
44 was able to submit those comments, if they'd like, then
45 they would be very welcome. Thank you.

46
47 ACTING CHAIRPERON CASIPIT: Yes, I
48 encourage everyone who has comments on this Secretarial
49 Review scoping process to get on the -- get those
50 comments in and ensure that the Secretary's Office has

1 those comments. Thank you. Please proceed.

2
3 MS. LEKANOF: Good morning. I'm Melenda
4 Lekanof with the Yakutat Tlingit Tribe Council member,
5 and I was sent here to be able to share our comments
6 from the Yakutat Tlingit Tribe. To whom it may concern.
7 Thank you for the opportunity to provide comments on the
8 routine Unit 5A closure review. We're writing to express
9 our support in maintaining the current closure as is and
10 oppose any shortening of the subsistence season. The
11 existing closure continues to play an important role in
12 protecting subsistence resources for the Yakutat
13 residents. This year Yakutat experienced an unusual
14 increase in hunting pressure due to a new air taxi
15 service that will be flying hunters across the river. A
16 significant number of moose harvested in the area were
17 non-subsistence users, which reduced the opportunities
18 for local families who rely on the resources for food
19 sovereignty and security. Historically, the average of
20 43% as high as 81% of total harvest of the moose taken
21 in 5A East in 2012 to 2014, or 2024, were taken by
22 federal qualified subsistence users, which shows how
23 reliant we are on the resource. It is also important to
24 acknowledge that a large portion of our subsistence
25 users in Yakutat are full time Monday through Friday.
26 Many can only access the hunting on the weekends or by
27 using limited personal leave. These individuals are
28 trying to provide for their families while maintaining
29 a steady employment, and any reduction in the season
30 further restricts their ability to harvest the resources
31 they depend on. The cost of living in Yakutat is already
32 extremely high. The food prices continue to rise. The
33 fuel prices continue to grow. For many households,
34 harvesting a moose, along with other subsistence fishing
35 and hunting, is essential for getting through the
36 winter. Shortening the subsistence season would create
37 additional hardship for local residents and offering no
38 demonstration of biological benefit, leaving us in
39 competition with nonfederal users. Maintaining the
40 closure can help ensure that Unit 5A moose population
41 remains stable, the local subsistence needs are met, and
42 the Yakutat residents retain meaningful access to the
43 resources they depend on. I encourage Forest Service to
44 keep existing closure in place and continue prioritizing
45 the protection of subsistence and opportunities in
46 Yakutat. In response to proposal WP26-02 prohibit to
47 take civil sunset and sunrise Unit 1 through 5, we have
48 regulations in place for light restrictions and feel
49 that Unit 5 does not have the congestion use, as Units
50 1 through 4 may be dealing with, and feel like the

1 regulations existing in the matter are inadequate for
2 the safety of our hunters. Thank you for the continued
3 work and considering our comments, the Yakutat Tlingit
4 Tribe.

5
6 ACTING CHAIRPERON CASIPIT: Thank you. I
7 noticed that you had some comments on the closure review
8 as well. That's an agenda item. We'll definitely take
9 your comments for that as well. I let you do that. That's
10 fine.

11
12 MS. LEKANOF: It was a letter from the
13 tribe, so I needed to make sure.....

14
15 (Simultaneous speech)

16
17 ACTING CHAIRPERON CASIPIT: Okay.

18
19 MS. LEKANOF:that I added it and
20 was doing what I was sent here to do.

21
22 ACTING CHAIRPERON CASIPIT: Okay.

23
24 MS. LEKANOF: But as somebody local who
25 grew up in subsistence lifestyle, I think this is
26 something that is really concerning to us. The amount
27 of how high the grocery costs, and a lot of the times
28 we don't get barges, so our stores are empty, and the
29 amount that we need to be able to survive every month -
30 - and as a single mom with kids, I rely on that moose.
31 And if I don't get one, then I'm really lucky to be able
32 to have a family and friends that be able to provide
33 that for me. And the same thing goes for fish. So this
34 is something that is really important to us, and I am
35 really concerned about our community. With the drop of
36 benefits and everything else, such as SNAP, this is
37 something that I think will be beneficial -- that leaving
38 our moose closure, or having this in place and not
39 changing anything and being able to not have to compete
40 with other hunters that are from not -- that are not
41 from Yakutat, I think is concerning, and not having the
42 access that they do, where they could be able to fly
43 through all these places and have the funding to do
44 that, we don't. We work full-time, we have limited
45 daylight a lot of the times, and so this is kind of
46 stuff that is concerning for our kids, for our elders
47 and everybody that's in need in our community.

48
49 ACTING CHAIRPERON CASIPIT: Thank you for
50 bringing this to us. And also thanks for your letter

1 too. It's -- thanks for bringing that to us. Any other
2 any other comments from Council?

3

4 (No response)

5

6 Thank you very much.

7

8 (Pause)

9

10 Okay. Any other non-agenda item, public
11 comments. Please come forward, introduce yourself and
12 begin your testimony. Thank you.

13

14 MR. GUGGENBICKLER: Thank you, Chair.
15 Members of the RAC, I'm Chris Guggenbickler, a longtime
16 local resident, Wrangell. I'm the Chair of our local
17 Advisory Committee. I have some non-agenda items and
18 then some agenda items as well, so I'd like to give you
19 our position on some proposals you're dealing with, and
20 then some that we submitted to the Board of Game. So I
21 see you moved your WP26-02, the Civil Twilight Proposal,
22 to your March meeting. However, we took a position on
23 that for you and, as well, the statewide proposals one
24 and two. We felt this was just another regulation. If
25 there's a loophole, you know, hunters are shooting these
26 deer at night; we think that should be closed. But we've
27 had a lot of animosity between our moose hunt and the
28 state troopers and stuff, and we're really not into
29 further regulations. However, we don't condone pit
30 lighting, so. We submitted proposal eight on cougars to
31 have kind of a hunt on cougars here. I know that there's
32 probably not a surplus biomass, however, we see them as
33 an invasive species and another predator on our deer
34 herd that we're dependent on. We submitted a proposal
35 57, which is to have kind of a hard restriction on elk
36 on Zarembo Island. When the elk were first transplanted,
37 the intent was to keep them on Etolin and then shoot
38 them on any other island they got on. There was a lot
39 of controversy back and forth. They ended up -- a big
40 herd of them swam to Zarembo. Zarembo is Wrangell, and
41 to an extent Petersburg's number one subsistence use on
42 deer. That's probably the most productive island that
43 we have. Since then, the elk -- there's been a hunt, and
44 then that hunt's been closed down for over 20 years, and
45 it's been turned into a kind of an elk reserve. And the
46 habitat, especially on the north and west side, has been
47 decimated, and it's something that can't sustain deer
48 because the elk will eat it down to something that won't
49 sustain a deer, which hasn't been a problem since we've
50 been enjoying mild winters, and our deer population has

1 been growing. However, my concern is that this year those
2 deer are going to go to the beach and there's nothing
3 for them to eat, and we're going to lose that herd
4 because of the elk sanctuary that we've created. So, the
5 intent of this proposal is to have kind of a limited
6 hunt. Our Advisory Committee wants to keep that
7 population low. There's two different types of hunters
8 on our Advisory Committee. There's the sport hunter that
9 just wants to shoot a four-point, and then there's the
10 more the subsistence user that just wants to harvest a
11 mature deer. Doesn't really care about the antlers but
12 just trying to fill our -- feed our families. So that
13 was our intent with that one and we moved to get rid of
14 a broken, damaged and altered proposal that's on the
15 books for our moose hunt. It's mainly only in this area
16 that has to deal with that. We had some guys abusing it
17 before, they were altering horns. It's unfortunate that
18 the troopers didn't bust them for altering those horns.
19 And we all ended up with this regulation, but there's
20 this horn restriction on the Stikine, and has really
21 created a lot of animosity. There's a lot of hunters as
22 well that -- they're just afraid to go hunting because
23 of how some of the hunters are being villainized. So
24 that's pretty much all I have. We're going to write a
25 letter to the Forest Service asking them to maintain
26 some of our dock access to Zarembo and Etolin Island so
27 that our hunters can get their four wheelers on there
28 and harvest those animals. That's kind of how we do it
29 around here, so. Thank you.

30
31 ACTING CHAIRPERON CASIPIT: Council.
32 Council Comments. Questions? Go ahead, John.

33
34 MR. SMITH: And just you know, to drop
35 the numbers down, I've been at your AC meeting, and I
36 really believe that, you know, a special permit for
37 education or even the tribe, the community, you know,
38 harvesting, you know, 4 or 5 of them to bring into town
39 and just educate the kids how to process them. Just an
40 idea.

41 MR. GUGGENBICKLER: Was that on the elk?
42 What was that on?

43
44 (Simultaneous speech)

45
46 MR. SMITH: Yes. Yeah.

47
48 MR. GUGGENBICKLER: On the elk? Okay.

49
50

1 MR. SMITH: Yeah, yeah. Yeah, yeah. To
2 drop some of the numbers down. Yeah.

3
4 MR. GUGGENBICKLER: You know one other
5 thing I wanted to mention, you know, just from my own
6 views, the Stikine is, you know, a large, large system
7 right here. We have a very large hooligan run and one
8 of the things that I noticed is that every spring, all
9 of the seagulls, all the eagles, all the sea lions and
10 seals, all the predators from the whole area end up on
11 the river. And it's just an abundance of wildlife,
12 predators. And a lot of those animals are there when the
13 hooligan back out and that's when our king salmon smolts
14 are going out. So I just want to recognize that after
15 two life cycles, after the blob that our king salmon
16 finally made escapement again on the Stikine, and I think
17 that's something positive. But you know, one thing we're
18 noticing around here is more and more predators, and the
19 sea otters are right here on our doorstep, and this is
20 probably one of the largest Dungeness areas in Southeast
21 Alaska. So these predators are -- I don't know how we're
22 going to really get to deal with them, but they're taking
23 our opportunities.

24
25 ACTING CHAIRPERON CASIPIT: Okay. Thank
26 you. Thank you. Patty, I have your -- I see your hand
27 up. Do you have question? Please proceed.

28
29 MS. PHILLIPS: Thank you, Chairman
30 Casipit. Thank you, Chris Guggenbickler. I listened in
31 on your last Alaska Department of Fish and Game Advisory
32 Committee meeting and found it very informative. And the
33 local knowledge that was shared at that meeting really
34 was insightful, so thank you. I have a question for you.
35 I was just reviewing the Federal Subsistence Management
36 Regulations for the Harvest of Wildlife on Federal
37 Public Lands in Alaska, and I see for Unit 2, for elk,
38 that all rural residents have one elk by federal
39 registration permit. But then you go to Unit 3, and it
40 shows residents of Units 1, 2, 3, 4 and 5, Unit 3, Etolin
41 Island areas, Zarembo, Bushy, Shrub and Kashevarof
42 Islands, no open season; and the remainder of Unit 3,
43 one elk by federal registration. Has your AC considered
44 submitting a proposal to the federal program and to, you
45 know, provide that priority for residents of Wrangell,
46 federal qualified subsistence harvesters in Wrangell?

47
48 MR. GUGGENBICKLER: We have not, Patty.
49 I know we've all considered how we could, you know, get
50 more local harvest on those animals and not have, you

1 know -- it would be -- yeah. If it would turn into a
2 drawing or something, there'd be a lot of users, but -
3 yeah, I'll have to talk to you on that because we are
4 interested in trying to do something more for locals on
5 that herd.

6
7 MS. PHILLIPS: So, what I understood from
8 listening-in on your AC meeting is that your subsistence
9 needs for deer are not being met from your traditional
10 area you harvest from, which is Zarembo Island. Is that
11 correct?

12
13 MR. GUGGENBICHLER: I think they're being
14 met. I think, you know, people are getting their deer
15 you know, it's a highly productive island. Like I say,
16 we've had warm winters, we've had good deer
17 productivity, so the concern is what's going to happen
18 next year after -- we just haven't had a winter like
19 this in a lot of years, and you know, we might lose a
20 deer herd regardless of whether the elks are there or
21 not. But it's a shame that it's our number one island
22 and it's just an elk sanctuary. There's a fair amount
23 of animals on there.

24
25 MS. PHILLIPS: So I took notes and please
26 correct me, so protect the deer herd. The Wrangell AC
27 state that the elk are outcompeting the deer for forage
28 food; browse and recommend reducing the population of
29 elk. Elk and deer overlap with what they eat; compete
30 with each other. The shore habitat is heavily browsed
31 on Zarembo Island. The deer are 10 to 15 pounds less in
32 weight than deer harvested from other areas.
33 Additionally, subsistence need by Wrangell federally
34 qualified users are not being met; cannot harvest elk
35 to meet the needs of subsistence that deer provides.
36 It's -- you know, is that kind of accurate from, you
37 know, I was taking notes and, you know, would that be
38 accurate?

39
40 (Simultaneous speech)

41
42 MR. GUGGENBICHLER: I think that's our
43 concern. I really think that's our concern after a hard
44 winter, which we haven't experienced until now.

45
46 MS. PHILLIPS: Okay. Thank you. Yeah. So
47 the next proposal time -- wildlife proposals will be not
48 this next year, but the year after that. If you if your
49 AC is interested in submitting a proposal on elk. Thank
50 you.

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MR. GUGGENBICHLER: Thanks, Patty.
Appreciate it.

ACTING CHAIRPERON CASIPIT: Any other
questions or comments from the Council? Go ahead, John.

MR. SMITH: Just real quickly on the
hooligan issue. You know, I see a partnership and
relationship with the community and the tribes and
actually taking the kids out and educating them how to
harvest the sea otter. You know, even sea lion, you
know, is an item that could be harvested through the
Alaskan Native Tribes or whatever and even a sewing class
and those type of things. I really encourage that, and
the community would actually get more people out there
to kind of knock the numbers down of the predators you're
saying. *Gunalchéesh*.

MR. GUGGENBICHLER: Yeah, I know they've
done a program where they went out and taken a seal and
went through the process with that, but we need more
than one taken out.

ACTING CHAIRPERON CASIPIT: Okay. Any
other comment from Councils?

MR. GUGGENBICHLER: Thank you.

ACTING CHAIRPERON CASIPIT: Does
anybody? Okay. Any -- there's an opportunity for anybody
to provide comments on non-agenda items. If anybody
wishes to present a comment or comments on non-agenda
items, please come forward, introduce yourself and begin
your testimony.

MS. CHURCHILL: (In Native). My name is
Sandy Churchill. I am the Alaska Native Sisterhood Grand
President, and I'm also the local President of ANS and
Tlingit Haida Local Camp, as well as the Tribal Vice
President of Wrangell Cooperative Association. And so
I'm supporting the subsistence programs. My father
fought for the Alaska Native land claims back in the
70s, and I'd like to see our subsistence upheld,
especially for the villages. I really support the
speakers that were before me. And I just wanted to
introduce myself and be of any kind of service I can to
keep our federal regulations, *Gunalchéesh*.

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1 ACTING CHAIRPERON CASIPIT: Thank you.
2 Comments from Council? Questions?

3
4 (No response)

5
6 I don't see any. Thank you very much.

7
8 MS. CHURCHILL: Thank you.

9
10 ACTING CHAIRPERON CASIPIT: Yeah. Okay.
11 We have somebody coming forward. Thank you. Please
12 introduce yourself and begin your testimony. Thank you.

13
14 MS. STEVENS: Good morning, I'm Sue
15 Stevens. My Tlingit name is (In Native) Clan, and Chief
16 John Ketchikan was my great grandfather -- our great
17 grandfather and (In Native) the Seventh, was our other
18 -- Ketchikan was married to his sister. So we're
19 descendants of both. And also Chief Shotridge up in
20 Chilkat country. Well, I just wanted to say, several
21 years ago, my sister and I wrote a proposal for this
22 Board to have the elk as a subsistence, and it got shot
23 down. And anyway, I think it's a good idea, especially
24 since they're overtaking the deer. And I also wanted to
25 say that a few years ago, I testified when you guys were
26 over on Prince of Wales, and it was really hard. There
27 was a lot of static, and I couldn't see anybody or feel
28 any feedback, so I felt that your technology could have
29 been improved. Anyway. Thank you.

30
31 ACTING CHAIRPERON CASIPIT: Please sit
32 down. John has a question for you. Sorry.

33
34 MR. SMITH: Not more than question, but
35 just -- even Ms. Churchill and yourself are coming up
36 here. I'm a great-great-grandchild of Shotridge.
37 Kaagwaantaan, Eagle Nest House, Kaagwaantaan. So your
38 words aren't just floating around; that we heard you and
39 appreciate you coming up and sharing your concerns.
40 Gunalchéesh, hoho.

41
42 ACTING CHAIRPERON CASIPIT: Any other
43 Council members?

44
45 (No response)

46
47 I echo John's comments. I appreciate
48 these -- I appreciate you guys coming forward and giving
49 us your thoughts. We do take them. We do take them into
50 consideration whenever we can, and I do remember some

1 of those early elk proposals that came out of here.
2 Yeah. We can still work on them though. Any other -- oh,
3 I see. Thank you, Heather. Introduce yourself for the
4 record. Begin your testimony. Thanks.

5
6 MS. BAUSCHER: Good morning, members of
7 the Council. My name is Heather Bauscher. I'm the
8 Fisheries Community Engagement Specialist for the Sitka
9 Conservation Society, and an adjunct professor of
10 Biology and Fisheries Technology for UAS. And I just
11 wanted to come here this morning. I know some of you --
12 well, I should have had -- I would have had two students
13 -- there were students trying to participate this fall.
14 They persevered pretty hard through the semester to try
15 and find ways to participate. You heard Ava call-in
16 yesterday. When we couldn't go to the Southeast RAC
17 meeting, there was a Salmon Treaty meeting in Sitka of
18 The Bilateral Panel of the Commissioners, so we took the
19 girls over there, and they ended up giving testimony to
20 that body, which was pretty amazing because they never
21 heard from a rural Hoonah winter hand troll family
22 before, and that was really impactful. And then Ava came
23 with me to the North Pacific Council meetings a week or
24 so ago, too. So even though they didn't get to come to
25 this meeting, we tried to give them as much meeting
26 opportunities as possible and it was good to see the
27 subsistence themes in all of those spaces. Some of you
28 are aware that I have a draft copy of the curriculum
29 guide that I've been sharing around and it was Rob's
30 idea to help get enough copies for all of you to review.
31 So Joe's over at the Forest Service right now printing
32 those out. I was helping him this morning a little bit.
33 And you guys will have your own black and white draft
34 copy of that curriculum guide. And I'm really, really
35 excited to share that with you at this meeting. That's
36 been a huge undertaking that's only been possible with
37 the support of the Forest Service, and the Forest Service
38 would not have supported it if it wasn't for the advocacy
39 that came from this body here. So that whole draft
40 curriculum guide, the whole student program really, is
41 because of all of you and your continued support in
42 bringing young people into these spaces. So thank you
43 so much for supporting those efforts over the years,
44 because if you hadn't then we wouldn't have had the
45 support from Rob and support from Ashley and the
46 community workshops and everything that is in that guide
47 is a combination of everything that was developed for
48 the class over the years and developed for the community
49 workshops and vetted through, you know, taking those
50 workshops on the road to all of the communities. So

1 thanks to the members of the communities that helped us
2 get that material as well, and I just want to let that
3 know -- let you know that that will be arriving. And
4 thank you. And please, let me know your feedback and I
5 can leave my email if you want to send anything later.

6
7 ACTING CHAIRPERON CASIPIT: John,
8 please.

9 MR. SMITH: I really appreciate that. I'm
10 a educator, a retired educator in the district of Juneau
11 and also of Hoonah. And so, I echo your -- our children
12 are very important, and even talking to the tribes and
13 the community, that's here today how important our
14 children need to be educated to take the seats of the
15 people that are up here. I think that's very important.
16 And I do echo your appreciation to the Fish and Game,
17 and all the team that's here in this building. And I
18 know that we have on the floor of actually having
19 somebody on the seat up here sitting with us in the
20 youth, but also educate that, you know, funding is really
21 tough to find. But, you know, for our children, you
22 know, I echo that really loud. I have 11 kids. Two of
23 them are girls, 15 grandchildren. And how important it
24 is for us to fund what you're doing. And so I echo that
25 out very loudly that, you know, our children need funds.
26 They need money for education, Gunalchéesh hoho.

27
28 ACTING CHAIRPERON CASIPIT: Thank you,
29 John. Any other comments from Council? Oh. Go ahead.

30
31 MS. BAUSCHER: And through the Chair. I
32 just wanted to say thank you for reinforcing that. It's
33 been continued funding from the Forest Service, support
34 from the Sitka Conservation Society, University of
35 Alaska Southeast, this program is now integrated in the
36 Fish Tech program. Kids get policy credit for that. And
37 you're absolutely right, the funding that has been the
38 most difficult is the travel money because those costs
39 just keep going up, but we keep finding creative ways
40 and keep having conversations, and with your support,
41 this has persevered, so thank you. We'll continue to
42 persevere.

43
44 ACTING CHAIRPERON CASIPIT: Well, I want
45 to take this opportunity to thank you personally as well,
46 Heather. Your hard work is not unnoticed. Go ahead, Mike.

47
48 MR. DOUVILLE: Thank you, Mr. Chair. And
49 yes, thank you, Heather. So one of the highlights of our
50 meetings is to have those kids in front of us giving

1 testimony and it is really -- it is a really great thing.

2

3 MS. BAUSCHER: Thanks, Mike. I know Ava
4 really wanted to be here in person, but she was still
5 able to call on the phone, so thank you for that.

6

7 ACTING CHAIRPERON CASIPIT: Okay. Thank
8 you, Heather. Okay. Any other comment on non-agenda
9 items?

10

11 (No response)

12

13 On the phone line as well. If there's
14 anybody on the phone listening-in who wishes to provide
15 comment on non-agenda items, please do so. Identify
16 yourself and do so.

17

18 MS. PERRY: Through the Chair. And I just
19 remind folks on the phone who want to speak to remember
20 to press star five. That'll show in our system that
21 you'd like to speak, and then once you are recognized
22 by the Chair, you can press star six to unmute your
23 line. Again, star five if you'd like to speak at this
24 time. Thank you.

25

26 ACTING CHAIRPERON CASIPIT: Okay, I see
27 a number. Last two -- last four digits are 7737. Please
28 identify yourself and begin your testimony.

29

30 MR. QUINTO: Yeah. This is Marcelo
31 Quinto. I live in Juneau, Alaska. I am a past Grand
32 President of the Alaska Native Brotherhood, and I'm also
33 -- lived in Alaska all my life. I'm 84 years old. I've
34 been -- lived on subsistence, and I have also, you know,
35 I do not do that now. But as a youngster growing up in
36 the early 40s, we lived on what we got and caught in the
37 cannery. My testimony really is this, you know, and
38 you're trying to change rules. I know that in the past
39 80 years, we have always been on the back seat of these
40 arguments. I want to know that -- I want you to know
41 that when these issues come up, you cannot answer that
42 issue -- discuss, without having a full knowledge of the
43 Alaska Native people, and I see where you wanted to
44 change rule from Barrow to Ketchikan. And I believe that
45 in order to do that, you need more of a testimony from
46 the people that utilized the subsistence lifestyle and
47 certainly the people that have had to move away from the
48 villages into the major communities so they can make a
49 living, and because things have changed dramatically.

50

1 I have watched where over the years our
2 subsistence lifestyle has been eroded many times by the
3 people who decided they want to use it as a recreational,
4 you know, use or for other people who say that this is
5 my livelihood. Well, the livelihood that you're making
6 here with us is that the fish and the game are the
7 lifelines of our people that are in the rural areas. I
8 expect that, if anything, that you're group of people
9 who are going to try to change the rules would have the
10 respect to call on the people who have to live by that,
11 those rules. And I just don't believe that this can be
12 done at this time, but needs to have a start and say,
13 hey, we will have a major meetings with the users and
14 the people who want to recreate or make a living from
15 it. So sit down and discuss, because I know good and
16 well that without the representation, we will find the
17 short end of the stick. And so, I really don't have much
18 to say because I've not had the opportunity to really
19 study the changes, but I know changes are made without
20 our representation or total representation -- does not
21 help us, it hinders us. Thank you.

22
23 ACTING CHAIRPERON CASIPIT: Thank you.
24 Council questions or comments?

25
26 (No response)

27
28 Okay. Seeing none, move on here. Are
29 there any other public comments on non-agenda items,
30 either from the audience...?

31
32 MS. STEVENS: Sue Stevens again. I
33 thought of a question. I was talking about our
34 subsistence elk proposal to Brooke, who works at the
35 Forest Service, and she said that we should have
36 presented it to the state because they're in charge of
37 the elk. So I was wondering if that's true. Nobody knows?
38 All right.

39
40 ACTING CHAIRPERON CASIPIT: Yeah. It's -
41 yeah. The elk issue is something that's been kind of a
42 burden on our saddle for a while, so. But -- and we work
43 through it as we can. John, real quick, please.

44
45 MR. SMITH: Yeah. I just want to --
46 Marcelo Quinto, just want to let you know that we heard
47 your words and appreciate your time to come in and --
48 for your testimony. Thank you very much. It's good to
49 hear your voice.

50

1 ACTING CHAIRPERON CASIPIT: I see Mary
2 Jack on the line who wishes to speak. Please introduce
3 yourself and begin your testimony.

4
5 MS. JACK: (In Native) Good morning,
6 everyone. My name is Mary Jack. I work for Hoonah Indian
7 Association. I was one of the students that was attending
8 the program, the education program with Heather Bauscher
9 over in Sitka. Also testified at the Pacific Salmon
10 Commissioners. I have a few requests that we would have
11 a youth seat to be added to the Board. I took a lot of
12 information from working in these spaces, and as I'm
13 learning, I'd like to bring a lot of traditional
14 knowledge and to get all of our youth educated on how
15 we could be more thorough in these spaces and how we can
16 take our own land and our life -- our way of life into
17 our own hands, and how to navigate that. I would also
18 like to request that we have community 810 hearings as
19 well. Thank you.

20
21 ACTING CHAIRPERON CASIPIT: Okay. Thank
22 you. Questions or comments from the Council?

23
24 (No response)

25
26 Online? We do have another person
27 online. Oh, no, that's my that's not a member. Okay.
28 Sorry. Don, go ahead.

29
30 MR. HERNANDEZ: Yeah. Thank you, Cal. I
31 just wanted to answer the question of the previous person
32 who came up to the table there from Wrangell, that there
33 is a customary and traditional use determination for elk
34 for all residents of Units 1 through 5. So, yes, the
35 federal system could enact some elk hunt regulations,
36 so just to answer that question. Thank you.

37
38 ACTING CHAIRPERON CASIPIT: Okay. Thank
39 you, Don.

40 (Whispered conversation)

41
42 Mary, did you have anything else?

43
44 MS. JACK: No, I did not.

45
46 ACTING CHAIRPERON CASIPIT: I see
47 somebody online with their hands up that would like to
48 provide testimony on non-agenda items. I apologize in
49 advance for butchering the name, but 'Láaganaay Tsiits
50 Git'ane.

1
2 MS. TSIITS GIT'ANEE: (In Native)
3 Gunalchéesh. Can you hear me okay?

4
5 ACTING CHAIRPERON CASIPIT: Yes, we can.
6 Please proceed.

7
8 MS. TSIITS GIT'ANEE: Okay. Wonderful.
9 And you didn't butcher my name. Actually, you're really
10 close, so I really appreciate you doing that
11 Gunalchéesh. Thank you, Mr. Chair and members of the
12 committee. My name is La guen na'ay Tsiits Git'anee. I'm
13 speaking today as a member of the Tribal Council and
14 Vice President of the Organized Village of Kake, a
15 federally recognized tribe whose people have lived in
16 and stewarded the Tongass since time immemorial. I
17 offer these comments for the official record recognizing
18 the legal importance of RAC transcripts, under ANILCA.
19 The Tongass National Forest is our homeland. Everything
20 about who we are and makes us who we are is there.
21 Without it, we cannot exist. To do damage to it
22 jeopardizes us, our children and our future. It is not
23 simply a multi-use landscape. Growing up in Southeast,
24 practicing our ways of life, other people call it
25 subsistence, you are taught from the very moment that
26 you can help and that you are aware to be part of that
27 system of supporting all the efforts of our providers
28 as we are grown and taught to become a provider
29 ourselves, to put up the foods respectfully. This is how
30 we are able to not just survive, but to carry forward
31 our cultures. Any weakening of the protections in the
32 Tongass directly harms us, as I said. Withdrawal or
33 erosion of the Roadless Rule fragments habitat increases
34 access for outside users and permanently impacts our
35 deer, our salmon and other non-human relatives that our
36 communities depend on. These impacts fall hardest on
37 small communities like my Village of Kake.

38
39 At the same time, we are experiencing
40 increasing pressure from commercial fishing, sports
41 fishing, sport hunting interests from outside our
42 region. These users do not live with the long-term
43 consequences of depletion, we do. Our communities do.
44 Federal Subsistence Management must continue to
45 prioritize local, tribal and rural users consistent with
46 ANILCA's intent. I'm also concerned about the regulatory
47 frameworks that criminalize Native ways of life and
48 interfere with indigenous knowledge systems that have
49 managed abundance for thousands of years. Predator prey
50 balance is a subsistence issue, and predator management

1 is best led by tribes closest to the land who are
2 careful, not wasteful, and accountable to future
3 generations. Tribes are not stakeholders. We're not a
4 public interest group. We're not serving a non-profit,
5 non-governmental role. We are sovereign governments.
6 Subsistence Management must move toward formal tribal
7 co-management and compacting, not away from it. I want
8 to clearly state concern regarding proposals prompted
9 by a letter from a non-profit organization called the
10 Safari Club International that would remove all six
11 public seats on the Federal Subsistence Board, eliminate
12 subsistence knowledge requirements, and shift deference
13 to the state of Alaska. These proposals would
14 fundamentally undermine ANILCA. The Federal Subsistence
15 Program exists because the state failed to uphold rural
16 subsistence protections and continues to do so. While
17 RACs are written directly into ANILCA and protected, the
18 Board's composition is more vulnerable, and it's clear
19 from what's happening now that there's an intent to do
20 so. This makes defense of those public seats especially
21 critical. I heard recently that the National Congress
22 of American Indians has already passed an emergency
23 resolution calling for protection of all six public
24 seats, reflecting our widespread tribal concern.

25
26 Finally, I'm deeply concerned about the
27 timing of proposed program changes ahead of the
28 holidays, with the 60-day comment period happening over
29 a time when not only are we really busy with our family
30 life and celebrating our holiday season, but also
31 Southeast is under an extreme weather event. As you folks
32 know, being in Wrangell. Unprecedented for us in at least
33 50 years in our village, this weather is having extreme
34 impacts on our community. Our communities are under
35 duress. So the comment period needs to be extended beyond
36 the 60 days. No structural changes should occur. Also,
37 before the wildlife actions and any changes must involve
38 full tribal consultation. I urge this committee and the
39 Federal Subsistence Board to retain all six public
40 seats, preserve subsistence knowledge requirements,
41 oppose any shift of deference to the state of Alaska,
42 protect the Roadless Rule and tribal subsistence in the
43 Tongass, and advance tribal co-management. The record
44 matters. Our homelands and future generations depend on
45 it. (In Native) gunalchéesh, for allowing me a few
46 moments on your agenda time. Thank you.

47
48 ACTING CHAIRPERON CASIPIT: Okay. Excuse
49 me. Any comments from -- okay. Go ahead, Ted.
50

1 MR. SANDHOFER: Thank you, Mr. Chairman.
2 Hey, thank you for your comments. I just encourage you,
3 if you haven't already, to submit those comments to the
4 portal for the Federal Register, if you can. I guess
5 it's fixed now, so that would be really good. Thank you.
6

7 ACTING CHAIRPERON CASIPIT: Any comment
8 -- any more comments from Council, either online or at
9 the table?

10
11 (No response)
12

13 Okay. I would like to thank the speaker
14 to -- those were very heartfelt comments, and I agree
15 with all of them. I think involving local tribes in co-
16 management agreements is vital, and we've -- this
17 Council has submitted many letters to all different
18 kinds of organizations trying to encourage that co-
19 management. So, and it's -- I remember there's been a
20 letter, at least in the last year where we've done that.
21 So anyway, thank you for your comments and I do take
22 them to heart, and I agree with you, so I'll leave it
23 at that. Any other comment on non-agenda items from
24 either the audience here in the room or on the line?
25 Please come forward. Introduce yourself.
26

27 MS. BURNS: Good morning. Gloria Burns.
28 Ketchikan Indian Community. I am -- would like to speak
29 this morning on a concern that I have, which was the
30 delay of the conversation around the 804 action for Unit
31 2. Ketchikan Indian Community really strongly supports
32 the ability for communities to be able to make those
33 determinations, and in order for a determination to be
34 made about some population issues, an 804 analysis is
35 really critical. We really feel that the longer we kick
36 this down the can, the more tension builds in our area
37 between folks. And we believe that an 804 analysis is
38 going to show that we have an issue with sports fishermen
39 and not Ketchikan residents. And until that happens, we
40 can't prove the point of something that we know, which
41 is our people don't have the money and the ability to
42 get on that ferry to go, that the bad actors who have
43 been creating this hardship have been bad actors that
44 have been there for a very long time, that we know who
45 those families are and that we should be focusing on
46 those folks. And so we also want to know that the 804
47 analysis mechanism works in a good way because now that
48 we are federally qualified users, we've opened up more
49 than a million federal lands on Revillagigedo spaces and
50 places that we intend to hunt and take care of our

1 families on, and we need to know that this 804 analysis
2 system that it happens, is robust and works well, because
3 we are going to need that someday in the future to
4 protect the lands that we are will be hunting and fishing
5 on.

6
7 And so I'm just I'm just concerned about
8 that and wanted to say that I know that you guys are in
9 a rock and a hard place with everything that's going on,
10 but it's always been our intention to hunt as close to
11 home as possible. And we just believe that as that
12 analysis happens, it's going to prove out what Ketchikan
13 knows about the makeup of the people going on that ferry
14 system and what that looks like. The longer it delays,
15 the longer there's more pressure between all of us that,
16 we don't feel, needs to exist. And so we wanted to just
17 go ahead and make sure to do that. And, you know, for
18 us, we really do feel as though there is a preference
19 right now to sports fishing above the ability, and we
20 understand why, like it's if there's no income, there's
21 no income, and so you have to do what you have to do to
22 eat. But we have fought this fight for rural status
23 three times. And, you know, I just want to say something
24 is that we're focusing on why we're rural, how we make
25 that, not upon the pressures that everybody else has.
26 And so I just want to say that when ANCSA happened, we
27 were promised a land claim settlement that we never got.
28 So, Ketchikan never received the economic impetus, and
29 that we were left out of being considered a rural
30 designation by 100 population at the very last minute.
31 And we have an incredible rate of drugs and alcohol
32 situation. And we believe it is correlated directly to
33 our people not taking care of their responsibility the
34 way they should; of the lands that their people took
35 care of for millennia. And so -- so much so, is this
36 important to us that we have bought Salmon Falls, which
37 used to be one of the largest resorts sending out sports
38 fishing items to other places. We bought it, and we're
39 turning it to a treatment center and all the fish boxes
40 that used to leave Ketchikan in that space will now be
41 going to the freezers of our elders and our people.
42 That's how important it is for us to take care of that,
43 to acknowledge that that is a real thing for us. And so
44 just really we want this 804 analysis, you know, to
45 undergo, be undergone as soon as possible because we
46 need to come to a solution. And this is a sacred charge
47 that was put since we've been a tribe. We fought it
48 three times. We'll fight it till our last breath. Our
49 people deserve access to the land that they've taken
50 care of, and we have a responsibility to our non-human

1 relatives. Thank you.

2

3 ACTING CHAIRPERON CASIPIT: Thank you,
4 Ms. Burns. Please stay there. I wanted to see if there
5 was comments from the Council or on the Council online
6 or at the table.

7

8 (No response)

9

10 I've seen none. Thank you for your
11 testimony. I'm about as -- I'm probably as frustrated
12 as you with 804 being -- the 804 stuff being delayed
13 till next meeting. It is what it is. We gotta [sic] deal
14 with it. And I hope you're -- I hope you'll provide us
15 testimony when that 804 actually comes to our table, and
16 we actually have to deliberate on it. I really appreciate
17 your comments. Thank you.

18

19 MS. BURNS: Thank you.

20

21 ACTING CHAIRPERON CASIPIT: Okay. Any
22 other comment on non-agenda items?

23

24 MS. METZ: Yes. My name is Brian Metz
25 from Yakutat, and I have a proposal that's somewhere in
26 there about a possibility in the Yakutat area, either
27 both West or East side of better access for disabled
28 people to hunt for the moose. Here we -- since it's
29 pretty limited on the west side, things like that.
30 Anyway, it's there somewhere. It's just difficult to
31 cover ground. There's no real -- since they took the
32 wheeler's -- being able to hunt on the wheeler's out of
33 the equation, you're limited on the -- basically the
34 roads, unless you get to the east side and there really
35 is no access there, except Buck wheeler. Just looking
36 for maybe some help to make it a little more accessible,
37 either like an earlier season a week before, kind of
38 like they did the Yukon, or I think they still do on the
39 East side. Or maybe, not that I think it'll be possible,
40 but a possibility of hunting from a wheeler, if you get
41 a special permit for people with disabilities. It just
42 would be nice to have a little more ease and with less
43 competition to be able to maybe provide for myself and
44 have to rely on things like, you know, the proxy hunt.
45 That's all I have.

46

47 ACTING CHAIRPERON CASIPIT: Thank you.
48 Any other comment -- any comments for the speaker from
49 the Council or online?

50

00025

1 (No response)

2

3 I'm seeing none. Thank you very much.
4 Any other agenda -- either -- any other public testimony
5 on non-agenda items either online or in the room?

6

7 (No response)

8

9 Okay. Seeing none we're going to move
10 on, on the agenda. I think I want to take a quick break.
11 Ten minutes. Come back at 9:15 and we'll start right in
12 on WCR2602 the moose closure review in in the Yakutat
13 area, and I believe there was a yellow or blue slip for
14 public testimony on that one. Can I get that back?

15

16 MS. PERRY: I think they already
17 testified.

18

19 ACTING CHAIRPERON CASIPIT: No, there was
20 one that didn't. I think this one. Yeah.

21

22 MS. PERRY: And Matt.

23

24 ACTING CHAIRPERON CASIPIT: Yeah, both of
25 these, both of these. Melinda and Matt Anderstrom. I
26 just wanted to let you know that we haven't forgot [sic]
27 about you. We see that you do have comment on WCR2602
28 and we'll take your comments when we get to that
29 proposal. There's a special spot on our proposals where
30 we take public testimony on that specific item. So you're
31 here. I'm going to call you up later, so thank you.
32 We'll take a quick bio break and be back at 9:15. Thanks.

33

34 (Off record)

35

36 (On record)

37

38 ACTING CHAIRPERON CASIPIT: Okay. Thank
39 you. Just wanted to let folks know that before we start
40 working through these proposals that normal process is
41 that we ask that the staff give us a wildlife report.

42

43 (Whispered conversation)

44

45 Okay. For wildlife report -- so I'll ask
46 staff to go ahead and begin that wildlife report update.

47

48 MS. BOLWERK: All right. Thank you, Mr.
49 Chair. For the record, my name is Ashley Bolwerk. I'm a
50 Subsistence Biologist with the Tongass National Forest,

1 and I'm going to give you a very brief wildlife update.
2 I was just planning to cover kind of moose updates,
3 because that's where we're going to focus this meeting.
4 I do have other information queued up, if you decide at
5 some point you all want to see that, but given the short
6 time frame, I thought we would just focus on the moose
7 for today. So here on this slide, we have kind of moose
8 across Southeast Alaska, the different harvest
9 opportunities that we have. This top table is through
10 the state registration permit process. So that's the
11 data you're looking at there over the last four years.
12 You can see that much of the harvest that's occurring
13 is fairly stable from year to year. And that the --
14 there's just a couple of spots where we've seen a little
15 bit of increase; the 1B is one of the areas and then
16 also in 5B as well. And then on the bottom there is our
17 federal moose harvest that we have in 1A, pretty standard
18 that there's just the one moose every year. And then I
19 wanted to provide some preliminary data from this year's
20 moose harvest in 5A before we dive into that closure
21 review because you won't see that in your packet. It
22 wasn't available before this was all printed for you
23 all, so this is 2025 harvest numbers. The quota for both
24 the West and the East side of 5A were set at 30 moose
25 and both did reach the quota this year. Both were then
26 closed through special action mid-season. So, the West
27 side closed October 19th and the East side closed on
28 October 18th. Okay. Does anybody have any moose
29 questions?

30 (No response)

31
32 ACTING CHAIRPERON CASIPIT: I'm not
33 seeing any, so go ahead.
34

35 MS. BOLWERK: Okay. Did you want me to
36 cover other wildlife topics, or would you like to switch
37 then to just the closure review at this point, and see
38 if you have time for the rest of it later?
39

40 ACTING CHAIRPERON CASIPIT: Since we're
41 not going to discuss the other wildlife proposals until
42 next meeting, we'll hold your additional species till
43 then when we actually -- and it'll be fresh in our mind,
44 we'll be able to deal with that.
45

46 MS. BOLWERK: Okay, great. Then I'm going
47 to.....
48

49 ACTING CHAIRPERON CASIPIT: Thank you so
50 much, Ashley.

1
2 MS. BOLWERK: You bet. And I can leave
3 those up there if you have interest in that, but I'll
4 go ahead and switch to the closure review then.
5

6 ACTING CHAIRPERON CASIPIT: Before you do
7 that, I think -- DeAnna, you had -- you wanted to go
8 over the process real quick. So, if you want to do that
9 and then we'll then we'll bring it to the table. Thank
10 you.
11

12 MS. PERRY: Thank you, Mister Chair.
13 Since we didn't do our Council member training and go
14 through the presentation process on how to make motions,
15 I just wanted to give folks in the room and online a
16 quick reminder of how we go through the closures and the
17 proposal regulatory process. On page 23 of the meeting
18 book, you can follow our process. It'll be a document
19 named Presentation Procedure for Proposals and Closure
20 Reviews. The Chair will announce each step of this
21 process. That will provide an opportunity for agencies,
22 Councils, committees, commissions and the public to
23 participate. I did want to mention that on step number
24 one, this might look just slightly different than in
25 years past. You'll see that along with the presentation
26 of Draft Staff Analysis listed, there's an addition and
27 that is the Summary of Public Comments received during
28 the open comment period. So the analyst will give a
29 presentation of the analysis and then separately, just
30 right after that, we'll share the open comment period;
31 comments that we received. Under step 3C, there will be
32 time for tribal public comments. And under number 6,
33 there will be time for public testimony. We do have a
34 couple of blue testifier pages here so that we know
35 those folks want to testify. If anyone has joined us,
36 please fill out a blue testifier form on the intake
37 table and give it to one of us staff so that we know
38 that you'd like to speak. Once we start going through
39 this process for public testimony, folks online can use
40 the raise hand feature in Teams or star five if you're
41 joining us by phone. That way we'll know that you would
42 like to speak. So, yeah. Mr. Chair, I just wanted to
43 remind everybody of our procedure and how to
44 participate. Thank you.
45

46 ACTING CHAIRPERON CASIPIT: Okay. It's a
47 practice that we have a motion introduced for this first
48 closure review. Correct?
49

50 MS. PERRY: Not yet.

1

2

ACTING CHAIRPERON CASIPIT: Not yet.
Okay. Patty, you had a -- you had your hand up.

4

5

6

MS. PHILLIPS: Thank you, Chairman Casipit. A question for Ashley Bolwerk. Is there a -- population estimates and, you know, are we seeing an increase in population for moose or a decrease? And that's -- how do we get that info? Thank you.

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MS. BOLWERK: Thank you. Through the Chair, Ms. Phillips. On the federal side of things, we don't do any -- or we're not currently doing any moose population estimate work. In Yakutat, they've been trying to work with partners or do their own surveys through the years but haven't had any recent moose surveys. I think the last one was in 2020. That information is in your book coming up here for this closure review. All the other moose population data, we don't tend to get raw data, but we talk to the state about moose populations to try to determine if there is need for management action.

MS. PHILLIPS: Thank you.

ACTING CHAIRPERON CASIPIT: Okay. Please proceed, Ashley.

MS. BOLWERK: All right. Thank you, Mr. Chair. For the record, my name is Ashley Bolwerk, and I'm a Subsistence Biologist for the Forest Service on the Tongass National Forest. Federal Wildlife Closure Review 26-02 can be found on page 207 of your meeting book, and is a standard review of the closure of the federal public lands in Unit 5A, east of the Dangerous River, from September 16th to the 30th, and west of the Dangerous River from October 8th to the 21st; and this is for the harvest of moose by non-federally qualified users. For these hunts, only residents of Unit 5A, which encompasses the community of Yakutat, are considered federally qualified subsistence users. Neither of these closures impact the Nunatak bench area, and a map of Unit 5A can be found on page 209 of your meeting book. The annual harvest quota for moose hunts in Unit 5A are set in partnership with the Alaska Department of Fish and Game, and once the quotas are hit, the hunts are closed using special actions within the season. Since 2017, the quota for Unit 5A east and west has been 30 bull moose each. No population surveys have been conducted since 2020, and data from the surveys that are

1 present in your book are often hard to compare and
2 condition dependent. Unit 5A west, each year from 2012
3 to 2025, the moose hunt has been closed for the season
4 prior to the end of the federal closure, which indicates
5 that only federally qualified subsistence users were
6 allowed to harvest in this hunt. In Unit 5A east, which
7 is farther from Yakutat and harder to access, from 2012
8 to 2024, the moose hunt had never been closed prior to
9 the end of the federal closure and had only been closed
10 prior to the end of the season one time. However, as we
11 just saw in 2025, Unit 5A east did close before the end
12 of the season, that was on October 18th, but it did not
13 close before the end of the federal closure. The moose
14 harvest quota has been met twice since 2012, and the
15 average annual harvest was 21 moose over that time frame.
16 From 2018 to 2024, the proportion of moose harvested by
17 federally qualified subsistence users that took place
18 in Unit 5A east during the federal closure ranged from
19 0 to 50%, averaging 39%. The preliminary OSM conclusion
20 is to modify the closure, to rescind the closure in Unit
21 5A east, and retain the status quo for the closure in
22 Unit 5A west. And we also suggest to replace the
23 regulatory language that says except by residents by of
24 Unit 5A with except by federally qualified subsistence
25 users. Federally qualified subsistence users account for
26 100% of the moose harvest in Unit 5A west in most years,
27 as this moose population is closely managed by harvest
28 quotas. And these quotas are quickly met in Unit 5A
29 west, usually before the end of the federal closure to
30 non-federally qualified users, maintaining the closure
31 in 5A West is necessary for the continuation of
32 subsistence uses of moose, as mandated by Title VIII of
33 ANILCA. In Unit 5A east, federally qualified subsistence
34 users account for 43% of the moose harvest, from 2012
35 to 2024, and over the last four years, that's not
36 including 2025, and 16% of the overall moose harvest
37 from the east has taken place during the September
38 closure, which equates to roughly 2 to 4 moose each of
39 those years. So modifying the closure to rescind the
40 closure in the east may eliminate an unnecessary
41 restriction on non-federally qualified users as little
42 federally qualified subsistence user harvest occurs
43 within the current east closure dates, and in most years
44 the moose harvest quota on the east side is not met. The
45 majority of moose harvest by all user groups in 5A east
46 occurs outside of the closure dates. Additionally, the
47 state moose season in Unit 5A east does not open until
48 October 1st. Therefore, as the Federal Subsistence Board
49 policy states that federal public lands and waters
50 should be reopened as soon as practicable once the

1 conditions that originally justified the closure have
2 changed to such an extent that the closure is no longer
3 necessary, keeping a closure in Unit 5A east is counter
4 to the Board's closure policy and section 815 of ANILCA.
5 Lastly, the suggested language modification for the Unit
6 5A moose regulations to change residents of Unit 5A to
7 federally qualified subsistence users is consistent with
8 other federal wildlife closures and does not alter the
9 current C&T for this closure. The current regulatory
10 language implies that there is an 804 restriction in
11 place, rather than just a limited, customary and
12 traditional use determination. Thank you, Mr. Chair. I
13 can take questions from the Council at this time.

14
15 ACTING CHAIRPERON CASIPIT: Okay.
16 Council members, questions for Ashley. This is our
17 chance to get clarification on any points that we need
18 from the staff analysis.

19
20 (No response)

21 I don't see Council members raising
22 their hands online. Don't see anybody here at the table.
23 Oh, go ahead, Larry.

24
25 MR. BEMIS: I am from Yakutat. I'm aware
26 of this, and the only thing I would like to question
27 that has changed is the accessibility for the quick hunt
28 of 2000 - 2025. It is based on an air taxi and outside
29 resident hunter and non-resident hunters coming in and
30 had full access, which speeded up the hunt. And if this
31 practice continues, the hunters that had a good time are
32 going to bring more hunters. There's an air taxi taking
33 the literally drop one airplane load off while he's
34 picking up the one that is in the camp because there's
35 nice cabins, runways and facilities that can take the
36 influx, so we'd be cutting that even in half of what it
37 is. If this thing goes through and the moose are there,
38 this is going to be a cleanup call, because Yakutat
39 hasn't had a full-service air taxi that would work for
40 the hunters. It's always been fish and sport fishing,
41 and then the plane would leave in October 1st, and that's
42 just right when the season started. So nobody really
43 hunted down there, except for a few outside airplanes
44 that would fly from Juneau and Southeast and whoever had
45 their own aircraft or seaplanes. So what we got here is
46 the first introduction of a full-on outside influence.
47 And before we take this early hunt away, two things
48 here, the influx of new hunters and no survey of the
49 area since 2020. So I kind of feel before we take
50 something away that's been -- and look at what the next

00031

1 year brings for the amount of influx of the hunters
2 going to take, I'm thinking we're kind of jumping ahead
3 what's going to happen here. I know we're on cycle. I
4 just want to bring that to your attention of what I see.
5 And I'd like just to -- that for the record. Thank you.

6

7 ACTING CHAIRPERON CASIPIT: Yeah. Larry,
8 that's --some of these discussions need to be handled
9 during our actual.....

10

11 (Simultaneous speech)

12

13 MR. BEMIS: Okay.

14

15 ACTING CHAIRPERON CASIPIT:
16discussion and justification when it's actually on
17 our table for action.

18

19 MR. BEMIS: Okay.

20

21 ACTING CHAIRPERON CASIPIT: So this is
22 an opportunity for Council members to get clarification
23 on anything that was written in the staff process.

24

25 MR. BEMIS: All right.

26

27 ACTING CHAIRPERON CASIPIT: Thank you.
28 Okay. Any questions? Any more questions for Ashley?

29

30 (No response)

31

32 Seeing none -- oh. Go ahead, Ashley.

33

34 MS. BOLWERK: I just wanted to offer a
35 piece of clarification there. Our closure window on the
36 east side in particular is from September 16th to the
37 30th, and there is no state hunt until October 1st. So
38 we sort of have two layers, right? There's like we have
39 a closure, but there is no opportunity for anyone else
40 until October 1st anyhow. Right? So it's like a closure
41 to a hunt that doesn't exist at this point. So just to
42 clarify, all of that piece is like if this closure in
43 the east side went away, no one else can still harvest
44 until October 1st. It's like a administrative, confusing
45 piece there.

46

47 ACTING CHAIRPERON CASIPIT: That
48 prompted a question, from -- so what you're saying is
49 that that area is closed under federal regulation, even
50 though there -- I understand that part, but who -- would

1 it be possible in the future that fishing -- that under
2 the state system, those two weeks could be put on a
3 season?

4
5 MS. BOLWERK: Yes, Mr. Chair, that's
6 absolutely possible. And I think the reason we're
7 bringing this up is because the Board policy says we
8 shouldn't have a closure if we don't need a closure. And
9 so at this moment that's what it appears to us, and
10 that's where this is coming from. But you're absolutely
11 right. The next Board of Game process will happen in
12 three years for southeast and so they could change that
13 regulation.

14
15 ACTING CHAIRPERON CASIPIT: If we wanted
16 to maintain that closure for that first two weeks, we
17 would be putting another regulation onto the docket for
18 us to consider?

19
20 MS. BOLWERK: Yes. That's correct.

21
22 ACTING CHAIRPERON CASIPIT: Okay.
23 Thanks, Ashley. Okay. Any other questions for Ashley on
24 the analysis?

25
26 (No response)

27
28 Okay. Next we have a report on Board...

29
30 (Whispered conversation)

31
32 If somebody can provide us the written
33 summary of the written public comments that were
34 submitted within the Board's time frame.

35
36 MS. BOLWERK: Thank you, Mr. Chair. This
37 is Ashley Bolwerk, for the record. Yes, I have the
38 summary of public comments. There were 23 public
39 comments submitted regarding this closure review. They
40 can be found starting on page 266 of your meeting book.
41 All but one of the comments generally supported
42 maintaining both of these closures. Although several
43 indicated that the east of the Dangerous River is
44 available to non-locals to hunt moose. The final comment
45 explicitly noted that the west closure was necessary but
46 did not mention the east closure. All of these comments
47 came from residents of Yakutat.

48
49 ACTING CHAIRPERON CASIPIT: Okay. Thank
50 you. Okay. I would like to ask Scott Ayers to give us a

1 report on tribal consultations.

2

3 MR. AYERS: Thank you, Mr. Chair. Members
4 of the Council. Unfortunately, OSM's Native Liaison,
5 Orville Lind, is unavailable today to provide summaries
6 of the Tribal and ANCSA Corporation consultations that
7 were held earlier this year, so you get me. Related to
8 this particular closure, that was a tribal consultation
9 that occurred on August 19th of this year, there was a
10 single comment provided from the Yakutat Tlingit Tribal
11 President, that they are in support of keeping Wildlife
12 Closure 2602 closed. And they also asked that the Federal
13 Subsistence Board support their request. And they also
14 respectfully ask that the Board to retain that same
15 closure and uphold the protections. Thank you.

16

17 ACTING CHAIRPERON CASIPIT: Excuse me.
18 Any questions from Council on Tribal Consultations?

19

20 (No response)

21 Okay. Seeing none online and none at the
22 table, we'll move on to the next item, which is Agency
23 Comments. Is there any ADF&G comments?

24

25 (No comment)

26

27 I see heads shaking. No. Is there any
28 other federal agency comments?

29

30 (No comment)

31

32 I see a no. Okay. Tribal comments? I
33 believe -- his would be a tribal comment, right? Okay.
34 I'd like to call forward. Matt Anderstrom and Linda
35 Lekanof. They are going to provide comments from the
36 Yakutat Tlingit Tribe.

37

38 (Pause)

39

40 MS. LEKANOF: Hello again. I see that
41 everybody got a copy of the Yakutat Tlingit Tribe letter
42 and comment and, again, I read it this morning. So I
43 just kind of want to just brief on that. We are in
44 support of making sure that we are not in competition
45 as non -- with the non-federal subsistence users and our
46 subsistence users as we're hunting those. As we
47 explained, the high cost of living is very high in
48 Yakutat, and we have big concerns making sure that our
49 local subsistence users are making sure that or -- that
50 we have meat in the freezer. With the cost of living,

1 of oil, rent and food, we do have concerns of making
2 sure that our people are fed. And we do have our food
3 sovereignty here, and he does a lot of the work with our
4 community. Do you want to share?

5
6 MR. ANDERSTROM: Sure. Hello again. My
7 name is Matt Anderstrom. Born and raised there. Been a
8 lifetime subsistence hunter, subsistence fisherman,
9 commercial fisherman. WCR 2602, this review is to see
10 whether the closure should remain in place and to
11 determine if the closure is still warranted. Nothing has
12 changed. ANILCA is still valid. It still exists. The
13 only change is how much more expensive living in the
14 village is today. Our ground beef at our store is over
15 \$10 a pound. Fresh milk is \$22 a gallon. As a father
16 with three kids under 18 living at home and one more on
17 the way, this adds up faster than you can even imagine.
18 Without subsistence food, we'd have to leave our home.
19 My household specifically survives on 95% subsistence
20 protein. We harvest everything we possibly can in order
21 to make it work. And this is a household with two full-
22 time incomes. And we're doing better than most. We
23 harvest everything from clams to fish, to deer, to seal
24 to moose, to birds. We collect seagull eggs. We live off
25 of this land, and it is hard. I hunt the area that's in
26 question. I've been hunting there since the 90s. In those
27 days it opened on October 15th, and some years you
28 couldn't even hunt because there was so much snow. The
29 numbers don't reflect that. They're just numbers. This
30 does not account for the days when it opens up, and you
31 get one day to hunt. You go back out there the next day,
32 and you have to abandon your hunt because it's snowing
33 so fast you will be stuck out there for weeks. The
34 numbers don't show this. When they moved it forward, it
35 did help. And when they moved it, the date to open on
36 the 16th for us, it made it much more accessible.

37
38 For those of you that don't know the
39 area that we're talking about, 5A east, just in the
40 lower elevations, it's 200,000 acres. Most of the people
41 that live in Yakutat cannot afford to access any more
42 than what is at the end of the road. With restrictions
43 on federal lands, we can drive to the end of the trail,
44 hike in from there and carry meat out. Now when this
45 opens, there's usually about eight of us that are out
46 there at the end of the road on the first day. Now there
47 is some older gentleman at home who are not as able as
48 the rest of us are, and they get the first
49 (indiscernible) and the rest of us hike back. I ranged
50 probably the farthest out of all of them. And the area

1 that we hunt is still only 700 acres out of 200,000.
2 This is how much of it that we're able to access from
3 our area because of the price of fuel, the price of an
4 airplane flight. We do not have access to these
5 airplanes. We just can't afford it. This is why this
6 closure is important to us. We don't have the money to
7 go out and do this. This is why we're out there hunting.
8 Because it is the only way that we can afford to survive
9 there. You know, even though we're only using this small
10 area, if you look at the numbers, 43% over a 12-year
11 period where moose that were taken by federally
12 qualified subsistence users. We use it. We take
13 advantage of it. You know, in the last 30 years, I've
14 seen more people move in and out. The warming weather
15 in the earlier season does give us a little bit longer
16 out there, and it's become kind of a safety net so that
17 the folks who are hunting on the west side, when they
18 do not get moose and they're not successful in their
19 hunt, they lean on the east side for this. Well, we
20 don't have that option anymore. If you look at the
21 numbers from this year, having that air taxi out there,
22 the east side closed before the west side, for the first
23 time that I can remember. So that option is taken away.
24 Now we know this. We didn't expect it and we have family
25 members that went without getting moose this year, and
26 it's going to be a long, miserable winter because of
27 that. You know, knowing that this is going to be an
28 issue with the air taxis we'll adjust, but it just shows
29 that we need this head start because if we don't have
30 this closure in place, we will have no opportunity to
31 harvest over there at all. It happens so fast with these
32 folks moving in. And there is a runway right at the head
33 of the trail where we locals hunt, and you can guarantee
34 that they will be using it. If we do not have this
35 closure, we will not have a chance to even hunt there.
36 That's all I've got. Thank you for your consideration
37 on this matter.

38
39 ACTING CHAIRPERON CASIPIT: Okay. Okay.
40 Thank you for your testimony. It was really good. That
41 cleared up a lot of things for me. Any other comments
42 or questions from the Council?

43
44 (No response)

45
46 I don't see any online. Is there anybody
47 else online? Doesn't look like it. Okay. Thank you very
48 much for your comments. Like I said.....

49
50 MS. PHILLIPS: Mr. Chair.

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ACTING CHAIRPERON CASIPIT: Oh, go ahead,
Patty.

MS. PHILLIPS: Thank you, Chairman Casipit. So a question for the testifier. I got an echo on my end. Sorry. So, what I'm understanding is that you and several other federally qualified harvesters hunt on area 5A east, about 700 acres, because it's accessible from Yakutat without incurring a lot of expense. Is there a way to further put a subunit within 5A East that would, you know, include that runway that you mentioned and from, you know, from that area east that could be possibly part of the subsistence only, and yet the rest of 5A east could be not closed, or is that unrealistic?

MR. ANDERSTROM: You know. This would help the folks that are in town, but we do have federally qualified subsistence users that do harvest moose in the Dry Bay area. Folks who have summer homes and cabins down there that fish there and survive off of the land down there. And I think that creating a subunit just for access for the folks from Yakutat would be unfair to them. And I feel like the entire area should be open so that everybody who has cabins across there that actually live here, live in our Unit, can still access this resource.

MS. PHILLIPS: So are you saying they're not federally qualified then? Those other those other persons? [sic]

MR. ANDERSTROM: No, I believe that they are federally qualified users and that they have camps in these areas for commercial fishing and for subsistence reasons. And they do hunt in those areas down along the Italio, the Akwe, and the Dry Bay area.

MS. PHILLIPS: Thank you.

ACTING CHAIRPERON CASIPIT: Any other questions or comments from Council? Yes, Mr. Anderstrom. I remember distinctly talking with (indiscernible) about that and the importance of Dry Bay. So I totally agree with you on that. They are federally qualified and it is really important for those folks who, you know -- they have commercial camps. They have subsistence camps out there. Yeah. I heard (indiscernible) talk about that all the time. So thank you.

1 MS. LEKANOF: We do also have a letter
2 from the Yakutat. Yakutat Kwaan. If we'd like -- if you
3 give us time to share.

4
5 ACTING CHAIRPERON CASIPIT: Yes, please.
6 That was on -- next on my list. I wanted to make sure
7 that all the tribal entities in Yakutat got their chance,
8 so thank you. Go ahead, please.

9
10 MS. LEKANOF: To whom it may concern. On
11 behalf of the Yakutat Kwaan and the Yakutat Village
12 Corporation for Yakutat, I submit these comments to
13 accompany the materials before the Southeast Alaska
14 Subsistence Regional Advisory Council and the Federal
15 Subsistence Board. Yakutat Kwaan is a steward
16 approximately 23,000 acres at the Yakutat Tlingit home
17 and represents a collective interest of our
18 shareholders, many whom are subsistence users whose
19 ability to feed their family is directly tied to these
20 healthy wildlife populations. From this role, a land
21 steward and economic guardian for present and future
22 generations, we write in support in maintaining existing
23 federal closures and protections that prioritize
24 subsistence users and opposition to actions that would
25 further restrict subsistence opportunities and
26 demonstrate biological necessity. Yakutat has
27 experienced increase in hunting pressure from non-local
28 and non-subsistence users, including the expansion of
29 the airway taxis access into areas historically relied
30 on by local families. These pressures have tangible
31 impacts when federal lands are open or seasons shorten
32 without sufficient analysis and burden falls
33 disproportionately on local subsistence users, many of
34 whom work full time jobs, face limited hunting windows,
35 and rely on the resources to offset the extremely high
36 costs of living in Yakutat.

37
38 From Yakutat Kwaan perspective,
39 subsistence is not a recreational activity. This is a
40 cornerstone for food security, cultural continuity, and
41 community stability. Any reduction in access
42 reverberates through household shareholder families and
43 the local economy. Importantly, these proposals that
44 shorten seasons or reduce opportunities without clear
45 biological justifications risk undermining the trust of
46 the federal subsistence system. Therefore, we urge the
47 Council and the Federal Subsistence Board to: one
48 maintain existing closures and protections where they
49 are demonstrated supporting subsistence priority; two,
50 fully account for localized impacts, including the

1 access constraints and local non-local hunting pressure.
2 Three, continue to prioritize subsistence and required
3 -- that is required under ANILCA, particularly in the
4 communities such as Yakutat, which alternatives are
5 limited and the costs are high. We stand in solidarity
6 with our community members, and calling it for a decision
7 that is -- that are grounded in both sound science and
8 lived reality. Protecting our subsistence access is not
9 only legal obligation, it's a responsibility to the
10 people who have stewarded these lands and waters from
11 time immemorial. Thank you for your consideration.
12 Gunalchéesh (In Native). President, Chair of the Board
13 of Directors of the Yakutat Kwaan.

14
15 ACTING CHAIRPERON CASIPIT: Okay. Thank
16 you. I just wanted to let Council know that we have a
17 copy of that testimony for us to have. So thanks for
18 bringing that to us; appreciate it. Any other questions
19 for -- Oh go ahead.

20
21 MR. SANDHOFER: I have some questions
22 just to try to get this together. So, in the OSM
23 Preliminary Conclusion says they want to rescind that
24 closure in 5A east because there's no state hunt at that
25 time. So, I mean I fully support keeping the closure. I
26 mean because redundancy ain't [sic] a bad thing; the
27 state could change regulations in the next cycle to allow
28 hunting during the closed or the open season now. So I
29 guess it's just a redundancy issue, but I don't think
30 that's a bad thing. And I hear full support to keep the
31 closure as it is now. So, I guess that's where I'm
32 leaning. I just want to get that together to figure that
33 out. I mean, to clarify it, I guess -- I'm so -- that's
34 right, right?

35
36 MS. BOLWERK: Through the Chair. Yes.
37 There's a redundancy piece and then just the piece about
38 the -- yeah, use of the.....

39
40 MR. SANDHOFER: Okay.

41
42 MS. BOLWERK: Yeah.

43
44 (Simultaneous speech)

45
46 MR. SANDHOFER: Yes. Thank you.

47
48 ACTING CHAIRPERON CASIPIT: Thanks, Ted.
49 I'm glad you put that on the record for clarification.
50 That's what I was trying to get at earlier with my

1 question with Ashley. And I really appreciate comment
2 from the tribe on that. Any other questions or comments
3 for the testifiers, from Council members online or at
4 the table?

5
6 (No response)

7
8 Okay. Thank you. Thanks for your
9 testimony. We really appreciate it. Thank you.

10
11 MS. LEKANOF: Gunalchéesh.

12
13 ACTING CHAIRPERON CASIPIT: Okay. Next we
14 have advisory group comments. Other regional advisory
15 Councils. I saw a message where there are no comments
16 from other regional advisory Councils, is that correct?
17 I see -- yeah, I see the heads. Thank you. Any Fish and
18 Game Advisory Committee comments?

19
20 (No comment)

21
22 Again, I see no --anything from the
23 Wrangell-St. Elias Subsistence Resource Commission on
24 this one? No, I think I heard that since that commission
25 doesn't have a representative from southeast that they
26 didn't feel comfortable in providing comment.

27
28 (Whispered conversation)

29
30 What? You do have? Okay. Sorry.

31
32 MS. PERRY: Mr. Chair, there were two
33 RACs that have met so far. There are two others that are
34 meeting this week with us as well. The North Slope
35 supported -- I'm sorry. Scratch that, Mr. Chair.

36
37 ACTING CHAIRPERON CASIPIT: Yeah, we are
38 talking about the Closure Review at Yakutat. I'm kind
39 of wondering why North Slope wouldn't comment. Okay.
40 Summary of Written Public Comments. This is for comments
41 after the proposals were published, is there any
42 additional public comments?

43
44 UNIDENTIFIED: I am not aware of any, I
45 think. I don't know if DeAnna got any since the meeting
46 started, but that is all I had.

47
48 MS. PERRY: Through the Chair. The only
49 two written comments that we have received since the
50 initial public comment period opened were the two

1 letters given to the Council and spoken to already. Thank
2 you.

3
4 ACTING CHAIRPERON CASIPIT: Okay, we have
5 those comments before us. Thank you. Okay. This is the
6 point where we take public testimony, public testimony
7 from the audience and I don't see anybody out there
8 raising their hands, and I didn't see any other blue
9 slips other than the ones we just heard from. Is there
10 anybody online who wished to speak to this closure
11 review?

12
13 (Whispered conversation)

14
15 Okay. I see Sasha Anderstrom online. Go
16 ahead and introduce yourself for the record and begin
17 your testimony. Thank you.

18
19 MS. ANDERSTROM: Yes. Hi. My name is
20 Sasha Anderstrom. I'm from Yakutat. Lifelong resident
21 here. Tribal member; work for the regional tribe Tlingit
22 and Haida. Subsistence user. Grew up commercial fishing
23 as well. My husband testified earlier and I just --
24 couple of comments that I wanted to make on what was
25 said earlier when they were talking about, you know, us
26 not meeting our quota about our moose population and
27 things like that. They mentioned the moose population
28 has not been evaluated since 2020 and something that I
29 wanted to bring to your attention, that was a big issue
30 last year, is we had a really hard time getting to the
31 point of meeting our quota. And we had a huge boom in
32 our wolf population that I think was affecting this. A
33 lot of the people that had to drive the 36 miles to the
34 end of the road for the other side of the river opening
35 were running into wolf packs everywhere. My husband
36 harvested a potlatch moose, and it took -- there was no
37 other hunters out there other than him at this time. And
38 this was on this side of the river. And when he finally
39 did get the moose it -- there were wolves howling around,
40 there were gnaw marks on the back of its legs, and it
41 had a dead calf in the water, you know, nearby that was
42 obviously killed by wolves. Traditionally, our
43 population of moose and Yakutat, the predators have been
44 majorly like 80% identified as bears. But, you know, as
45 mentioned, they haven't done a study on that population
46 since 2020. And we have this larger wolf population now.
47 Even the guys that were hunting on this side of the
48 river last year we're having a hard time finding them.
49 You know, we didn't have as much snow, so it was easier
50 for the wolves to get to the moose. The moose were mostly

1 harvested in one area on this side of the river that was
2 more protected. And not only are these experiences from
3 the hunters and observations from the hunters, but also
4 we had state troopers that were monitoring the hunters,
5 and they had a helicopter and were dropping on these
6 hunting parties and checking their credentials and
7 everything. And from the troopers own mouth, he was
8 saying that, you know, there were lots of moose around,
9 but they weren't seeing any calves anywhere. And so, you
10 know, having another study on this population, I think,
11 would be important to our area before we start opening
12 up the access to people that aren't, you know, locals
13 to Yakutat and, or federally qualified users. And so I
14 just kind of wanted to bring that to your attention as
15 well. And that's all I have to say.

16
17 ACTING CHAIRPERON CASIPIT: Thank you,
18 Ms. Anderstrom. Is there any comment -- any questions
19 for the testifier?

20
21 (No comment)
22 Seeing none at the table and not online,
23 thank you very much for your testimony. We are also
24 concerned about lack of ability to do wildlife studies.
25 That's something that's been on our radar for quite a
26 while. Thank you. Just for folks in the audience, this
27 is at the point where we close public testimony and I'll
28 ask for a motion to be put on the table so that we can
29 just provide discussion and justification on our actions
30 on this wildlife closure review.

31
32 MR KITKA: Mr. Chairman, I move that we
33 enter into a discussion phase.

34
35 ACTING CHAIRPERON CASIPIT: Usually we
36 just do a support the motion. Just to get it on the
37 table so -- and then when voting, we have a clear
38 understanding of what we're voting for. So I would
39 entertain a motion to support wildlife closure review
40 22-02.

41
42 MR. SLATER: Mr. Chair, I move that we
43 enter or support, what was the number again?

44
45 ACTING CHAIRPERON CASIPIT: WCR26-02.

46
47 MR. SLATER: WCR26-402.

48
49 MR. SANDHOFER: Second.

50

00042

1 ACTING CHAIRPERON CASIPIT: Moved by Mr.
2 Slater. Seconded by Ted Sandhofer.

3
4 (Simultaneous speech)

5
6 UNIDENTIFIED: Question.

7
8 ACTING CHAIRPERON CASIPIT: Before we
9 move to the question, I would like us to put -- go ahead,
10 Ashley.

11
12 MS. BOLWERK: Sorry. I think DeAnna can
13 correct me on this, but because it's a closure review,
14 there's no supporting. Its retaining status quo, I
15 believe, is what you would be assuming or rescinding or
16 maintaining. Yeah.

17
18 ACTING CHAIRPERON CASIPIT: Okay. I think
19 the motion, with the consent of the person who made the
20 motion -- I was wrong, would be to support the status
21 quo for ECR 26-02.

22
23 MR. SANDHOFER: I agree, Mr. Chair.

24
25 ACTING CHAIRPERON CASIPIT: Yes. Second
26 agrees.

27
28 (Simultaneous speech)

29
30 MR. SANDHOFER: Yes, sir.

31
32 ACTING CHAIRPERON CASIPIT: And before we
33 call for the question, I would like the Council to
34 provide a little justification and discussion for the
35 record. And if folks are prepared to do that, then we
36 can call for the question.

37
38 UNIDENTIFIED: Mr. Chair.

39
40 ACTING CHAIRPERON CASIPIT: Sorry. Go
41 ahead.

42
43 UNIDENTIFIED: Yeah. I mean, I've only
44 heard unanimous support for this to keep the status quo
45 on this. I'm not sure why we would do anything different.
46 I know there is a redundancy issue, you know, with the
47 state not having a hunt for non-rural individuals, but
48 I think this is working well, and the users obviously
49 want to want to keep it, so I don't know why we'd do
50 anything different. And that's just my comments. Thanks.

1
2 ACTING CHAIRPERON CASIPIT: Any other
3 Council members? Go ahead, Mike.

4
5 MR. DOUVILLE: Thank you, Mr. Chair. I
6 speak in favor of supporting the motion. We've heard a
7 considerable amount of testimony as to how important
8 this resource is. And the testimony is given by what I
9 would consider a considerable amount of TEK involved in
10 the testimony.

11
12 ACTING CHAIRPERON CASIPIT: Okay. I see
13 Don Hernandez has got his hand raised. Go ahead, Don,
14 please.

15
16 MR. HERNANDEZ: Yeah. Thank you, Cal.
17 Yes, I was also going to speak in support of maintaining
18 the status quo. I was going to echo exactly what Mike
19 Douville just said. I think this is a good instance of
20 where the local knowledge and public testimony was
21 actually far more informative than what the numbers
22 show. It gave it a lot more context to what the situation
23 actually is and what can be revealed with just analysis
24 of the numbers available. So yes, I then support.

25
26 ACTING CHAIRPERON CASIPIT: Okay. Thank
27 you, Don. Any other comments from Council or either at
28 the table or online? I see Patty, go ahead.

29
30 MS. PHILLIPS: Thank you, Chairman
31 Casipit. I support maintaining WCR26-02 the federal
32 subsistence wildlife closure to the harvest of moose by
33 non-federally qualified users on federal public lands
34 in Unit 5A and -- thank you.

35
36 ACTING CHAIRPERON CASIPIT: Go ahead,
37 Larry.

38
39 MR. BEMIS: I'd like to apologize for
40 speaking out of turn. You pretty much heard what I would
41 have to say. I was kind of -- turn it into a directive
42 rather than a question, and I apologize for that. I'm
43 in support of this. I lived there. I know what is going
44 on there, and I just wanted to put out there what was
45 stated -- what the status was of it currently, and I
46 thank you for that.

47
48 ACTING CHAIRPERON CASIPIT: Okay. Any
49 other Council comment before the Chair speaks?
50

1 (No comment)

2

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Okay. I'm actually going to go through our criteria. I think this is really important. Oh. I'm sorry. Albert, please. Please proceed. Thank you.

MR. HOWARD: Thank you, Mr. Chair. I just -- I'd like to make sure that the testimony is part of our justification and the reference Mr. Douville and Mr. Hernandez made to TEK is also a part of our justification. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

ACTING CHAIRPERON CASIPIT: Yeah. Thank you, Albert. I was about to pile on, yeah -- pile on there on it. Well, I was going to go through these criteria that the Board likes us to put on the record, and I'm just going to do that here real quick. First question. Is there a conservation concern? How will the recommendation address the concern? I think we did hear from local residents and I consider this TEK, that there could be a conservation concern, especially with increased use of -- by non-federally qualified users, especially on the other side of the river. Is this a recommendation supported by substantial evidence? Yes, it is. I heard plenty of traditional ecological knowledge at the table here and I feel (In Native) behind me saying, you know, I remember what he told me about conditions there on the other side of the river. So I think there's more than substantial evidence. There's significant evidence that supports this -- supports my position of maintaining the status quo. Will the recommendation be beneficial to subsistence -- beneficial or detrimental to subsistence needs and users? I think this recommendation to maintain the closure status quo does benefit subsistence users, and it's important and it needs to be continued. Will the recommendation unnecessarily restrict other users? I don't think so, because apparently due to this new air taxi service non-federally qualified users are hunting on the other side of the river and they're doing just fine, it sounds like according to the numbers. So yeah, I fully support to retain the closure as is, maintaining the status quo. And I've gone through the criteria for the Board so they can have that on the record. I would entertain a call for the question.

MR. SMITH: Question.

ACTING CHAIRPERON CASIPIT: Question has been called by John Smith. I think we will take a roll

00045

1 call vote.
2
3 MS. PERRY: Ted Sandhofer.
4
5 MR. SANDHOFER: Yes.
6
7 MS. PERRY: Albert Howard.
8
9 MR. HOWARD: Yes.
10
11 MS. PERRY: Don Hernandez.
12
13 MR. HERNANDEZ: Yes.
14
15 MS. PERRY: Patricia Phillips.
16
17 MS. PHILLIPS: Yes.
18
19 MS. PERRY: Louie Wagner.
20
21 MR. WAGNER: Yes.
22
23 MS. PERRY: Harvey Kitka.
24
25 MR. KITKA: Yes.
26
27 MS. PERRY: John Smith.
28
29 MR. SMITH: Yes.
30
31 MS. PERRY: Lewis Hiatt.
32
33 MR. HIATT: Yes.
34
35 MS. PERRY: Larry Bemis.
36
37 MR. BEMIS: Yes.
38
39 MS. PERRY: Frank Wright.
40
41 (No response)
42
43 Mike Douville.
44
45 MR. DOUVILLE: Yes.
46
47 MS. PERRY: Jim Slater.
48
49 MR. SLATER: Yes.
50

1 MS. PERRY: And Cal Casipit.

2
3 ACTING CHAIRPERON CASIPIT: Yes.

4
5 MS. PERRY: Mr. Chair, the motion to
6 retain status quo of WCR2601 -- I'm sorry, 02, does pass
7 unanimously.

8
9 ACTING CHAIRPERON CASIPIT: Thank you.
10 That was very good counsel, appreciate all your work on
11 that one. And I do appreciate all the testimony from the
12 public on this one. It really helped me on this one.
13 Okay. Next on the agenda is WP26-01 Move authority for
14 delegated -- Move authority delegated through letters
15 into unit specific regulations. Who is going to present
16 this one? Okay, Rob. Let's proceed.

17
18 MR. CROSS: Thank you, Mr. Chair. For the
19 record, my name is Robert Cross. I'm the Subsistence
20 Program Manager for the Tongass with the U.S. Forest
21 Service, and I'll be presenting a summary of wildlife
22 proposal WP26-01 regarding delegation of authority
23 letters statewide. The analysis can be found on page 235
24 of your meeting book. This proposal from the Office of
25 Subsistence Management seeks to move authority for
26 managing federal hunts out of delegation of authority
27 letters and into unit specific regulations. If adopted,
28 the 61 delegation of authority letters currently in use
29 across Alaska would be rescinded. Delegation of
30 authority letters were originally meant to provide
31 meaningful flexibility over time -- and over time,
32 they've created inefficiencies. Any action taken under
33 a delegation of authority letter counts as a special
34 action which triggers requirements for public hearings,
35 tribal consultation, and Regional Advisory Council
36 recommendations. These processes are important for
37 unusual or emergency situations, but they add
38 unnecessary burden when applied to routine in-season
39 management actions like closing a hunt when a quota is
40 met. As a result, federal in-season managers and OSM
41 staff spend significant time on procedural requirements
42 for decisions that are already expected every year. High
43 staff turnover also makes consistency difficult. On top
44 of that, OSM must maintain 61 delegation of authority
45 letters, some of which overlap, conflict or contain
46 outdated guidance.

47
48 By moving these authorities into
49 regulation, in-season management actions would no longer
50 trigger the special action process. Approximately four

1 pages of boilerplate delegation of authority letter
2 requirements would be replaced with one clear paragraph
3 and regulation. Public transparency improved, since
4 changes to delegated authority would go through the
5 standard regulatory proposal process, and oversight
6 becomes simpler with clearer responsibilities and
7 reduced administrative workload. Importantly, the Board
8 retains authority over emergency closures and broader
9 decisions, but in-season managers would still be able
10 to act quickly within the parameters set by the Board.
11 This proposal is not expected to affect wildlife
12 populations or subsistence opportunity. It is primarily
13 administrative, streamlining how recurring decisions are
14 made. It increases efficiency, strengthens coordination
15 with state and local users, and makes the process more
16 transparent for the public. The southeast region was
17 analyzed in WP26-01a. The Southeast Alaska region has
18 several delegation of authority letters that convey
19 broad authority to manage moose, deer, and mountain goat
20 hunts across the region by ranger district. Not specific
21 routine annual actions by hunt area. Therefore, this
22 delegated authority was put into the regulations for the
23 entire unit rather than for specific hunt areas.

24
25 This broad authority for wildlife is
26 unique to the U.S. Forest Service lands within the
27 Tongass National Forest. These broad delegation of
28 authority letters also include the authority to close
29 federal public lands to the take of these species by all
30 users. Similar to the boilerplate authority for closures
31 to non-subsistence users, OSM did not transfer the
32 authority for closure to all users into unit specific
33 regulations. For the southeast region, in-season
34 management authority for Unit 2 wolves, Unit 4 mountain
35 goats, Unit 5A mountain goat, and Unit 5 moose are being
36 proposed to move into unit and species specific
37 regulations as listed at the beginning of page 247 of
38 your meeting materials. Broad in-season management
39 authority for the remaining species and units will be
40 moved into unit specific regulation, and these can be
41 found on page 246 of your meeting materials. One
42 alternative to consider for WP26-01, so the overarching
43 proposal, the statewide proposal, is replacing the
44 phrase coordination with, in regulation -- sorry.
45 Replacing the phrase coordination with, in regulation
46 with seeking input and considering feedback from. This
47 clarifies the expectation for in-season managers to
48 communicate their actions and consider feedback without
49 adding the confusion that has developed around the word
50 coordinate. An alternative considered for WP26-01a, so

1 the southeast addendum, is to modify the regulatory
2 language for Unit 5B moose. Both the authority already
3 delegated and the unit specific regulations for Unit 5B
4 moose, and the existing delegation of authority letter
5 state [sic] the season will be closed when 25 bulls have
6 been taken from Unit 5B. This language only halts moose
7 harvest by federally qualified subsistence users hunting
8 under federal regulations. Closure of the federal moose
9 season still allows harvest to occur under state
10 regulations on federal public lands modifying the
11 authority delegated for Unit 5B moose to close federal
12 public lands, versus only the season when 25 bulls have
13 been harvested in Unit 5B.

14
15 This modification will prevent
16 additional harvest and help protect the moose population
17 after the harvest quota has been met. OSM's preliminary
18 conclusion is to adopt WP26-01 with modification to
19 replace coordination with seeking input and considering
20 feedback from, and to modify 20 -- WP26-01a and WP26-
21 01b with region specific regulations. The OSM
22 preliminary conclusion for the southeast addendum is to
23 support WP26-01a with modification to retain the broad
24 authority to manage some moose, deer, and mountain goat
25 hunts across Southeast region by ranger district within
26 the Tongass National Forest in delegation of authority
27 letters, and to clarify the Unit 5B moose regulations.
28 Adopting these changes would reduce administrative
29 burden, resolve inconsistencies, and improve efficiency
30 while maintaining transparency and accountability in
31 federal subsistence management. That concludes my
32 summary.

33
34 ACTING CHAIRPERON CASIPIT: Thank you,
35 Rob. Any questions from the Council for clarification
36 on Rob's presentation? Okay. Patty, I see your hand's
37 come up. Please proceed.

38
39 MS. PHILLIPS: Thank you, Mr. Chair. So
40 where is the language we should put in the motion
41 specifically? Thank you.

42
43 (Pause)

44
45 ACTING CHAIRPERON CASIPIT: Thanks,
46 Patty. I was -- DeAnna was whispering in my ear. I think
47 page 251. Oh. 244 shows the suggested language for the
48 one part, and then on page 251 is the language that
49 suggested for the 1A part. Apparently we have to split
50 our motion into two. There's the WP26-01 and then the

1 WP26-01a, both of them we have to deal with. Did I make
2 that as clear as mud? I think so. Jim, go ahead.

3
4 MR. SLATER: So clarification question.
5 I read through this and try to understand the intent.
6 It looks like it's where before it required an official
7 exchange between OSM and ADF&G, now it's a solicitation
8 only and they don't receive any kind of input. You can
9 still proceed?

10
11 MR. CROSS: Through the Chair. Member
12 Slater, so yes, it doesn't change the requirements, it
13 just -- there's some, I think confusion, or implication
14 that coordinate with, implies concurrence. And so, if
15 there's a in-season management decision that's being
16 made that the state does not agree with, their feedback
17 will be considered and included in the decision-making
18 process, but there's no requirement for concurrence.

19
20 MR. SLATER: Thank you. That clears it
21 up.

22
23 ACTING CHAIRPERON CASIPIT: Any other
24 questions from the Council?

25
26 (No response)

27
28 Okay. Next would be Written Public
29 Comments Received, right?

30
31 (Whispered conversation)

32
33 Okay. Okay. Go ahead. Who's going to
34 handle that part? Oh, Rob? Go ahead.

35
36 MR. CROSS: Yeah. Thank you, Mr. Chair.
37 So we received one written public comment in support,
38 and the comment came from Ahtna Intertribal Resource
39 Commission, who supported the proposal. However, AITRC
40 recommends that any delegation of authority must be
41 paired with meaningful Tribal Consultation, transparency
42 and accountability consistency across units and
43 limitation and scope of authority.

44
45 ACTING CHAIRPERON CASIPIT: Okay. Thank
46 you. Next. I think Scott is next with -- again, a report
47 on consultations with tribes.

48
49 MR. AYERS: Thank you again. This is
50 Scott Ayers. I am the OSM's Deputy Director of Sciences,

1 stepping in today for the OSM's Native liaison Orville
2 Lind. For WP26-01, there is one comment that was received
3 during the consultation that occurred on August 19th,
4 2025. This was from out of this region from South
5 Central. The resident representative from Ahtna
6 Incorporated shared that they supported WP26-01. They
7 support the delegation authority letter to unit specific
8 regulations giving, in this case BLM, the authority to
9 open or close caribou hunts in Units 11 and 12 and also
10 supported the monitoring conditions. And that is the
11 only comment that we received during the consultations
12 that occurred earlier this year statewide on this
13 particular proposal. Thank you.

14
15 ACTING CHAIRPERON CASIPIT: I have a
16 quick question. So, there were no written public
17 comments in regards to the A part? Okay. Thank you. On
18 to agency comments. Any comments from last Alaska Fish
19 and Game?

20
21 (No comment)

22
23 I see no -- any other federal agencies
24 wish to comment?

25
26 (No comment)

27
28 I see no. Tribal? Any tribal comments
29 in the room who wish to comment? Any tribes wish to
30 comment that are in the room or online?

31
32 (No comment)

33
34 I don't see any. Okay, we're on to
35 advisory group comments. Other regional advisory
36 Councils? Go ahead, Scott.

37
38 MR. AYERS: Thank you, Mr. Chair, and
39 members of the Council. Hopefully I'm a little bit louder
40 this time. This proposal, the main proposal, 2601, has
41 been taken up by two other Councils already and there's
42 two others that are considering it this week. The first
43 Council that took it up was the North Slope Council.
44 They supported 2601 as modified by OSM. The Council
45 stated the proposal will reduce the administrative
46 burden on federal land managers. Additionally, the
47 Council shared the change will not have an impact on
48 subsistence uses. The Kodiak Aleutians Council took this
49 up and also supported as modified by OSM. The Council
50 stated the proposal would streamline the process, reduce

1 unnecessary red tape, and make regulations clearer and
2 more transparent by placing all relevant information
3 directly in regulation, rather than in the delegation
4 of authority letters. They felt this would make it easier
5 for the public to find and understand the rules, and
6 noted that if conservation concerns arise later, the
7 regulations can always be amended. There were concerns
8 the change could reduce opportunities for public comment
9 and tribal consultation, which they view as essential
10 to the Federal Subsistence Management Program. They
11 emphasize the importance of maintaining strong public
12 involvement and felt that any internal efficiency issues
13 could be addressed within the program, rather than by
14 altering established public processes. Thank you, Mr.
15 Chair.

16
17 ACTING CHAIRPERON CASIPIT: Thank you,
18 Scott. Any questions from Council?

19
20 (No response)

21
22 Seeing none online or at the table.
23 Okay. Any comment from Fish and Game Advisory
24 Committees?

25
26 (No comment)

27
28 I see heads shaking no. Any comment from
29 the Subsistence Resource Commissions? This one includes
30 Wrangell-St. Elias SRC. Oh. Go ahead. Amber Cohen, I see
31 you come up. Go ahead and start your testimony.

32
33 MS. COHEN: Thank you, Mr. Chair. For the
34 record, this is Amber Cohen, Cultural Anthropologist at
35 Wrangell-St. Elias National Park and Preserve. I just
36 wanted to mention that the Subsistence Resource
37 Commission for Wrangell-St. Elias did not comment
38 specifically on the southeast addendum, but they did
39 support the overall proposal, WP26-01, and they believe
40 that moving delegated authorities into unit specific
41 regulations would be a better and more efficient system.
42 Thank you.

43
44 ACTING CHAIRPERON CASIPIT: Thank you,
45 Ms. Cohen. Okay, DeAnna, I'll let you handle this next
46 one. The summary of written public comments received
47 after the initial comment period.

48
49 MS. PERRY: Mr. Chair, I have received
50 no additional comments on this proposal. Thank you.

1

2

ACTING CHAIRPERON CASIPIT: Okay. Now is the time for public testimony on this proposal. I haven't got any blue cards in front of me on this one. And I'm looking at the screen now to look for comments online. And I'm looking in the audience to see if there's anybody in the audience who wishes to provide public testimony on this one. Either 1 or the addendum 1A. I don't see any. Okay. We're at the point to put it on the table, so would entertain a motion.

10

11

12

MR. SANDHOFER: Mr. Chair, I make a motion to support WP26-01 with the modifications recommended by OPM [sic].

14

15

16

17

18

MR. SLATER: I second.

19

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22

23

ACTING CHAIRPERON CASIPIT: Okay. Moved by Ted Sandhofer, seconded by James Slater. It's on the table for discussion and justification. Would like to hear from the Council for discussion and justification. Go ahead, Ted.

24

25

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MR. SANDHOFER: Yeah. Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Yeah. You know, this just seems like just a housekeeping proposal to streamline it, maybe take a little bit of workload off of the agencies. And as long -- it doesn't appear to change any actions; it's just housekeeping. So I move to -- I think we should support it.

33

34

35

36

37

38

ACTING CHAIRPERON CASIPIT: And just for the record, I want to make sure that folks know this is for the main proposal, WP26-01. We'll have to do a separate motion for the addendum, 26-01a, so, yes. Any other comment or justification for the zero one main motion, or main regulation? Go ahead, Jim.

39

40

41

42

43

44

45

MR. SLATER: Yeah. I just wanted to say that it seems like it could also -- not only streamlines it, but in the case of events where quick action is required, it allows it to be more responsive to needs. That's my question -- that was my statement. So I support it.

46

47

48

49

50

ACTING CHAIRPERON CASIPIT: Any other Council comment? Justification?

(No comment)

1 I just have one quick addition, and I
2 just heard it briefly through the presentations, but I
3 do believe that if -- I am in favor of this. I think
4 putting this stuff in regulation makes it easier for the
5 public and us to change things, and if something happens
6 we don't have to figure out who wrote the letter and
7 what the delegation was and blah, blah, blah. It's pretty
8 clear how we would change something in the regulatory,
9 in the regulations, because we do it all the time. So
10 I'm in support of this for that reason only. I think
11 it'll -- it's going to help this Council in the future,
12 especially in terms of in-season -- the in-season
13 management stuff that comes down the line. So I think
14 it provides better opportunity for the public to comment
15 and provide changes in regulation that we can all
16 understand how it works and, yeah. So I'm in support of
17 this, the 01. Yeah. Any other justifications or comments
18 from the Council either online or at the table?

19
20 (No comment)

21
22 Seeing none, I would entertain the
23 question.

24
25 UNIDENTIFIED: Call for the question.

26
27 ACTING CHAIRPERON CASIPIT: Question has
28 been called. I just want to be sure that everybody --
29 the motion was to support WP06-01, as suggested by OSM.
30 And that appears, where does that appear?

31
32 MS. PERRY: 244.

33
34 ACTING CHAIRPERON CASIPIT: Okay. Sorry.
35 244, the actual language. We will have a roll call vote.
36 Go ahead, DeAnna.

37
38 MS. PERRY: Thank you, Mr. Chair. Again,
39 this is to -- the motion was to support proposal WP26-
40 01 with modification to replace the term coordination
41 with seeking input and considering feedback from. Don
42 Hernandez.

43
44 MR. HERNANDEZ: Yes.

45
46 MS. PERRY: Patty Phillips.

47
48 MS. PHILLIPS: Yes.

49
50 MS. PERRY: Albert Howard.

1
2 MR. HOWARD: Yes.
3
4 MS. PERRY: Frank Wright.
5
6 (No response)
7
8 Harvey Kitka.
9
10 MR. KITKA: Yes.
11
12 MS. PERRY: Louie Wagner.
13
14 MR. WAGNER: Yes.
15
16 MS. PERRY: John Smith.
17 MR. SMITH: Yes.
18
19 MS. PERRY: Larry Bemis.
20
21 MR. BEMIS: Yes.
22
23 MS. PERRY: Mike Douville.
24
25 MR. DOUVILLE: Yes.
26
27 MS. PERRY: Jim Slater.
28
29 MR. SLATER: Yes.
30
31 MS. PERRY: Ted Sandhofer.
32
33 MR. SANDHOFER: Yes.
34
35 MS. PERRY: Lewis Hiatt.
36
37 MR. HIATT: Yes.
38
39 MS. PERRY: And Cal Casipit.
40
41 ACTING CHAIRPERON CASIPIT: Yes.
42
43 MS. PERRY: Mr. Chair, this motion passed
44 unanimously with 12 votes. Thank you.
45
46 ACTING CHAIRPERON CASIPIT: Thank you,
47 DeAnna. Next, since these were analyzed together, we can
48 just go right to a motion to get this on the table. So
49 I would entertain a motion from the Council on this one
50 as well. And just for your information, the suggested

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1 OSM Preliminary Conclusion appears on page 251 of our
2 book.

3

4 MR. SLATER: Mr. Chair, I move that we
5 support WP26-01a.

6

7 MR. SMITH: Second.

8

9 ACTING CHAIRPERON CASIPIT: Okay. It's
10 been moved and seconded to support W6210A. I would ask
11 the maker of the motion is that with the modifications
12 shown there for Unit 5B.

13

14 MR. SLATER: Mr. Chair, I move that we
15 support WP26-01a with the modifications shown in the
16 book for Unit 5A -- B.

17

18 (Simultaneous speech)

19

20 ACTING CHAIRPERON CASIPIT: B.

21

22 MR. SLATER: B, I'm sorry. Okay.

23

24 ACTING CHAIRPERON CASIPIT: Okay. With
25 the second.

26

27 MR. SMITH: Second.

28

29 ACTING CHAIRPERON CASIPIT: Okay. It's
30 been moved by Mr. Slater, seconded by Mr. Smith to
31 support proposal FP -- WP26-01A with modification. The
32 language appears on page 251 of our book. The
33 modification regards Unit 5B moose. And I don't think I
34 need to repeat that right now. So go ahead with a roll
35 call vote, DeAnna. Oh did I get a question? I thought.

36

37 MR. SMITH: Question.

38

39 ACTING CHAIRPERON CASIPIT: Yeah, I
40 thought John had asked for the question. Sorry.

41

42 MS. PERRY: This is a roll call. Vote on
43 WP26-01A. Albert Howard.

44

45 MR. HOWARD: Yeah.

46

47 MS. PERRY: Don Hernandez.

48

49 MR. HERNANDEZ: Yes.

50

00056

1 MS. PERRY: Patty Phillips.
2
3 MS. PHILLIPS: Yes.
4
5 MS. PERRY: Louie Wagner.
6
7 MR. WAGNER: Yes.
8
9 MS. PERRY: Harvey Kitka.
10
11 MR. KITKA: Yes.
12
13 MS. PERRY: John Smith.
14
15 MR. SMITH: Yes.
16
17 MS. PERRY: Lewis Hiatt.
18
19 MR. HIATT: Yes.
20
21 MS. PERRY: Larry Bemis.
22
23 MR. BEMIS: Yes.
24
25 MS. PERRY: Frank Wright.
26
27 (No response)
28
29 Mike Douville.
30
31 MR. DOUVILLE: Yes.
32
33 MS. PERRY: Jim Slater.
34
35 MR. SLATER: Yes.
36
37 MS. PERRY: Ted Sandhofer.
38
39 MR. SANDHOFER: Yes.
40
41 MS. PERRY: And Cal Casipit.
42
43 ACTING CHAIRPERON CASIPIT: Yes.
44
45 MS. PERRY: Mr. Chair, this also passed
46 unanimously with 12 votes. I would remind the Council
47 that we probably need to put some justification into the
48 record as well on this one. Thank you.
49
50

00057

1 ACTING CHAIRPERON CASIPIT: Okay, so you
2 want us to go through the list of five? Yeah, probably.

3
4 (Simultaneous speech)

5
6 MS. PERRY: Maybe just some
7 justification.

8
9 ACTING CHAIRPERON CASIPIT: Okay. I'll
10 take those.

11 (Simultaneous speech)

12
13 MS. PERRY: It doesn't necessarily need
14 to be those, but there needs to be.....

15
16 (Simultaneous speech)

17
18 ACTING CHAIRPERON CASIPIT: Well, I -
19 yeah. It's best to just -- I'm going to go ahead, and
20 just on the record, based on what I've heard from folks
21 I'll go through and do this real quick. Is there a
22 conservation concern with this recommendation? I don't
23 think so. This actually helps. Conservation helps us be
24 more efficient in reacting to conditions on the ground.
25 It does provide understandable way for the public to
26 change some of these things that we're normally in
27 delegation of authority letters. Recommendation
28 supported by substantial evidence? I think we've heard
29 enough from staff that this would be a good idea because
30 it helps them incorporate information and from the
31 public and us to put this stuff in regulations makes it
32 easier for folks to understand, and there's a way for
33 us to change things that happen to be in delegation
34 letters that are now going to be in unit specific
35 regulations. Be beneficial or detrimental to subsistence
36 users? I think it's beneficial. Gives a -- basically,
37 again, it's kind of like the public involvement process,
38 it makes it easier for people to understand how to change
39 things if they don't agree or they see a problem; and
40 will this recommendation unnecessary restrict other
41 users? No, I don't think it does. It just helps us do
42 our job more efficiently and better, and more
43 understandable for the public. Does that satisfy your
44 need for justification? Thank you.

45
46 MS. PERRY: Thank you.

47
48 ACTING CHAIRPERON CASIPIT: Okay. That
49 gets us through the proposals and closure reviews that
50 we had before us. Let me go through here real quick and

00058

1 figure out if there's any more action items we need to
2 do before we get to Board of Game. Do we want to?

3
4 MS. PERRY: The annual report, and
5 confirming your meeting dates?

6
7 ACTING CHAIRPERON CASIPIT: Okay. And
8 then what about this FRNP? Do we need to?

9
10 MS. PERRY: Yes. They will also get some
11 feedback on that as well.

12
13 ACTING CHAIRPERON CASIPIT: Okay. Before
14 we -- we have a little bit of time before lunch. Maybe
15 what I'll do is we'll hold on the Board of Game stuff
16 until after lunch. But let me get some of this small,
17 other action item stuff done real quick. First one here
18 that I see would be identify issues for the 25 Annual
19 Report to the Federal Subsistence Board. This is the
20 point where we just maybe identify stuff, our annual
21 report -- correct me if I'm wrong, DeAnna, but you kind
22 of keep notes on issues that we want on our report. She
23 builds a draft, and then we -- next meeting in March,
24 we would adopt it and put our -- and adopt it and send
25 it forward to the Board. Is that correct? Okay. So this
26 is our opportunity to identify issues for our report to
27 the Board. Scott, you had something.

28
29 MR. AYERS: Thank you, Mr. Chair. Again,
30 Scott Ayers, for the record. I just have a quick rundown
31 of a little bit of information for you before you jump
32 into the Annual Report topic, if that's quite all right
33 with you. So we've previously spoken with you about
34 considering separating out topics into items for the
35 Board's awareness kind of informational items, and those
36 that you're requesting specific feedback on. And we
37 found -- we've done this across the state that it seems
38 to be working pretty well. Continuing in that
39 conversation, we'd like to highlight just a couple of
40 other things for you as you develop this year's report.
41 So Title VIII of ANILCA gives the Councils the authority
42 to submit annual reports. These reports should highlight
43 subsistence trends and issues in your region. Annual
44 Reports, along with Council recommendations on the
45 regulatory proposals, are key -- are the key means by
46 which Councils prepare the Board to make important
47 decisions on regulatory matters. While you can certainly
48 discuss issues outside of the program's regulatory
49 authority, items under purview of the Board are issues
50 of take of fish and wildlife on federal lands, federal

1 public lands, specifically. If you are requesting a
2 Board response or action we ask that you make sure to -
3 - the issue and your request for action are clearly
4 defined, which makes communication with the Board more
5 effective as the Council decides if the issue should be
6 in an annual report. Oh, yes. Please do let us know if
7 this is something you'd like in an Annual Report item
8 or in a letter instead. And we ask if possible, given
9 all the time constraints that we're dealing with this
10 particular round, with our delayed meetings now and the
11 next set of winter meetings that are coming up very
12 soon, is a compressed schedule for us to be able to take
13 all of this information, compile it into a report, and
14 then get it back in front of you again. So we're just
15 trying to make sure that things are not duplicative,
16 that items don't end up both in the Annual Report to the
17 Board and in a letter to the Board. Sometimes that
18 happens in different Councils across the state. And then
19 we please ask, if possible, to identify FY25 issues this
20 time and that to remind you that there won't be new
21 items added when this comes back up before the Council
22 in a couple of months for the winter meeting. So just a
23 couple of things for you to consider as you develop the
24 Annual Report, and I appreciate your work and the time
25 that you put into this. And we really do use these Annual
26 Reports. They're very important to us. So would it be
27 respectful of your time and that information. Thank you.

28
29 ACTING CHAIRPERON CASIPIT: Thank you,
30 Scott. Okay. Annual Report items. I think we can just
31 get on record and give our thoughts. And I think DeAnna
32 is here prepared to take some notes to make sure it's
33 captured properly. So Annual Report, annual report
34 items. Council, it's on you. Both the Council online and
35 at the table. Go ahead and start with anybody who wants
36 to speak. Okay. Oops. Don, I see your hand up. You want
37 to go ahead?

38
39 MR. HERNANDEZ: Yeah. Thank you, Cal. I
40 have a couple items listed here. And first and foremost,
41 I think we want to continue to request that the -- we
42 have some funding available for the students attending
43 Council meetings program. I think that's important. I
44 guess I had a question. I don't know where we are in the
45 effort to get youth representatives on the Council. I
46 know that's kind of been in the works. I don't know if
47 we need to put that in our report that we are still
48 looking forward to having a youth representative
49 appointed to the Council. I don't know where -- what
50 status that is in now, but might not be relevant to an

1 Annual Report, but it's something I have a question on.
2 But another major issue that I've been hearing
3 throughout this meeting is there seems to be more
4 concerns about unguided non-resident hunters, the
5 increase in their activities in Southeast Alaska. And I
6 think we need to make the Board aware that we have
7 concerns about that. And a lot of that activity may fall
8 under special use permits issued by the Forest Service
9 for activity on, like, the Tongass Forest, and I think
10 that needs to be reviewed. And we may have, you know,
11 the Council may have some serious questions on that
12 moving forward about that whole process of, you know,
13 how these permits are issued and how many and, you know,
14 how they assess the impacts and a number of questions
15 there, but I want to put that on the on the Board's
16 radar. And we've also heard that there's still a need
17 for more wildlife monitoring projects here in Southeast
18 Alaska. And that might require funding for -- to add
19 some more area biologists, Wildlife Biologists to the
20 staff in Southeast Alaska, so those are some ones that
21 I had written down so far.

22
23 ACTING CHAIRPERON CASIPIT: Yeah. Please
24 come forward. I think you have an update on the youth
25 representatives.

26
27 MS. WESSELS: Thank you, Mr. Chair. Good
28 morning, Mr. Chair, Council members. For the record,
29 Katya Wessels with OSM. I have an update on the status
30 of the young leaders that applied to serve on the
31 Councils. So last year, it was the first year when we
32 opened the call for young leaders, ages between 18 and
33 25, to exhibit their interest to serve on the Councils.
34 Your region received actually three applications for one
35 non-voting seat that was created on your Council. We
36 conducted the interviews and collected all the
37 information, put the packet together. The concurrence
38 of the Secretary of Agriculture was obtained, and the
39 packet is now with the office of the Secretary of the
40 Interior for the final stages of vetting. And hopefully
41 you will get young leader, non-voting member, on your
42 Council for your next meeting. That's what our hopes
43 are. Thank you. If there is any questions, I would be
44 happy to answer.

45
46 ACTING CHAIRPERON CASIPIT: Thank you,
47 Katya. That's good news. Any questions for Katya? Either
48 online or at the table?

49
50 (No response)

1
2 Okay. Don, I had -- I'm looking up
3 here, your -- the bullet that we have up here is increase
4 in non-resident unguided hunters or increase in non-
5 resident guided hunters? Or is it both? I'm not sure.
6

7 MR. HERNANDEZ: Thank you, Cal. I want
8 to focus on the unguided. These are the people that are
9 just being outfitted essentially with, you know, boats
10 or trucks or vehicles by lodges to go out and hunt. I
11 don't really want to interfere with the guided system.
12 I think that's already pretty well regulated, but, you
13 know, as we've seen with the unguided, outfitted might
14 be the proper term, fishing impacts we're also starting
15 to see that with hunting as well. So, I just want to
16 limit it to unguided outfitted hunts.
17

18 ACTING CHAIRPERON CASIPIT: Thanks.
19 Thanks, Don. I appreciate that. And yeah, that clears
20 it up for me. You know, personally, I'm still concerned
21 about the unguided outfitted, non-resident, self-guided
22 type fishing. I don't think it's been adequately
23 addressed by anybody at this point, but I think we still
24 need to be bringing that attention to the Board. Albert,
25 you're -- I see your hand come up. Do you have something?
26

27 MR. HOWARD: Thank you, Mr. Chairman.
28 Just a testimony; seems to be that there's growing
29 outside influence on a subsistence resource that could
30 create future conservation concerns if allowed to
31 continue. I also agree that there's a growing unlimited,
32 unguided, non-resident fishing fleet. And if that's also
33 allowed to continue, will create a conservation concern
34 in the future. I think we should encourage the state to
35 address these issues before they become an issue. Thank
36 you, Mr. Chair.
37

38 ACTING CHAIRPERON CASIPIT: Thank you,
39 Albert.
40

41 (Simultaneous speech)
42

43 MR. HOWARD: Also I better mention king
44 salmon or I won't be able to leave the house. Angoon's
45 really concerned with no allocation of king salmon when
46 the local IRA hasn't seen data to show that Angoon is,
47 in fact, having an impact on king salmon.
48

49 ACTING CHAIRPERON CASIPIT: Okay. Thank
50 you, Albert. Any other items from the Council? Sorry, I

1 heard Larry first. Oh.

2

3 MR. BEMIS: All right. Maybe to add to
4 that is as we're going down the road here and as the
5 stress increases on both subsistence and subsistence
6 hunting, and regular hunting, that when we come to make
7 a decision some of this is based on the information of
8 the area -- the amount of animals that are available,
9 in other words being able to survey them. When you've
10 got a problem coming up, if you don't have a survey, you
11 really don't have all the information. Along with --
12 like this, you know, I wasn't aware of the status of the
13 wolf population in Yakutat, which is abundant. And it
14 was brought up to have a specific incident of several
15 types in different areas with different people. And with
16 this being unlooked at and unregulated, it's really hard
17 to see the impact that we might be facing. So, I would
18 like to say that surveys and possible influx of other
19 animals or predators has an impact on hunting in general.
20 Thank you.

21

22 ACTING CHAIRPERON CASIPIT: Okay. Ted, I
23 saw your hand.

24

25 MR. SANDHOFER: Yeah, I know We discussed
26 it yesterday, you know, a lot, but I think it's worth
27 mentioning that any changes to the subsistence program
28 and the programmatic review does not affect the
29 subsistence people in the region from gathering, hunting
30 and fishing. Just something to that. Thanks.

31

32 ACTING CHAIRPERON CASIPIT: Mike,
33 please.

34

35 MR. DOUVILLE: Thank you, Mr. Chair. I'd
36 like to speak to what Chairman Hernandez said is the
37 need for more biology. In the southeast, fish and game,
38 we've been lacking for a long time. I don't think we
39 have a Fish Biologist on Prince of Wales anymore. I
40 believe we have -- might have a game one, but I think
41 we're lacking in that respect, and I think it needs to
42 be beefed up, and I mentioned that earlier in my
43 comments.

44

45 ACTING CHAIRPERON CASIPIT: Go ahead,
46 Jim.

47

48 MR. SLATER: I just wanted to reiterate
49 what was already said as far as the importance of looking
50 at the outfitted, both hunting and fishing. We've talked

1 about fishing now for several meetings and nothing's
2 ever really been achieved with that, and it's continuing
3 to get worse. So I think we have to maintain the focus
4 on that. With regard to monitoring, I know that at some
5 points we've input -- each of us have put -- input areas
6 of concern in our local communities, and I don't think
7 anything's ever been followed up with that. If we could
8 somehow put a mechanism in place that allows us to
9 address concerns of specific areas and have studies done
10 potentially on areas that are -- that each of us are
11 concerned about. That's it. Thanks.

12
13 ACTING CHAIRPERON CASIPIT: Thank you.
14 I'm going to -- oh, Patty, please, go ahead.

15
16 MS. PHILLIPS: Thank you, Mr. Chair. One
17 of the things that I've heard a lot about. I mean, we
18 at the RAC have heard a lot about is on Prince of Wales
19 Island and the impacts of past logging practices and the
20 need to do some cleanup of you know, second growth areas.
21 And so, I don't know what the status is of the Tongass
22 revisions, but if we can, you know, put into our annual
23 letter that we would request that the Forest Service,
24 you know, resume. I don't know if they're doing adaptive
25 management of the forest down there or what? But we do
26 need to start cleaning up those hundreds of thousands
27 of acres that have been clearcut in the past so that we
28 can improve the habitat for deer. So it needs to be done
29 because we're seeing we're, you know, we're hearing from
30 island residents that, you know, they're not seeing as
31 much deer. So that's my concern. Thank you. Oh, also --
32 oh, Mr. Chair, so I think there should be some co-
33 management research with tribes like, when they were
34 talking about wildlife, you know, studies, population
35 estimates, I think, you know, because the villages and
36 the tribes are already in the villages, they're already,
37 you know, it's a perfect opportunity for federal
38 programs to work with them, to build capacity, and to
39 find out what you know, what the status is of wildlife
40 populations are in their area. Thank you.

41
42 ACTING CHAIRPERON CASIPIT: Yeah. Patty,
43 I agree. I know we've talked about this many times here
44 at the Council level, but it seems like because we've
45 lost funding, we've also lost the ability to engage
46 tribes in this type of co-management. I know, you know,
47 we built out a lot of capacity in the tribes in southeast
48 early on in the program and now it seems to be we can't
49 invest in continuing those relationships. And I that
50 really concerns me. So that that can just be added on

1 in there also. Just I also wanted to have -- wanted to
2 call -- I know Scott talked about we, you know, about
3 calling attention to certain things that are going on,
4 but I really think we need to let the Board know about
5 this work that Heather is doing with her curriculum
6 development and getting young people involved in the
7 program in the process. I know she has a draft curriculum
8 that's - oh, there she is. She's handing them out. A
9 final -- close to a final draft of that curriculum, and
10 I really would like to see some support given to her
11 efforts from the Board or the agencies to continue on
12 with their work and get this finalized and get it
13 distributed and published so that it's available to use
14 for everybody, not just us. So anyway, I just wanted to
15 bring that -- maybe if we can provide some sort of
16 information to the Board on this, I think it's really
17 important that this continues, and I really want to see
18 this finalized, published and out there for people to
19 use, so thank you. Go ahead, John.

20
21 MR. SMITH: Thank you. I just want to
22 echo, you know, what James and Michael and Larry, you
23 know, about studies and analysts and just want to echo
24 even what the community of Yakutat were sharing about
25 the wolves. And, you know, even the studies that Don did
26 with the rubbings and stuff like that and, you know, and
27 the moose and -- so I just echo that and encourage the
28 studies in that area, over southeast.

29
30 ACTING CHAIRPERON CASIPIT: Okay. Any
31 more items?

32
33 MS. PHILLIPS: Mr. Chair, this is Patty.

34
35 ACTING CHAIRPERON CASIPIT: Go ahead,
36 Patty.

37
38 MS. PHILLIPS: Thank you. So, I'm sort
39 of concerned about -- I'm very grateful that the -- in
40 the Division of Subsistence that the state of Alaska,
41 you know, did the community surveys on, you know, what
42 our community takes, you know, in terms of fish and
43 wildlife, and it's really helpful information. But I
44 just want to make it clear that the federal program is
45 not locked in on that -- the number needed for, you
46 know, subsistence allocations. I mean, we're -- we take
47 what we need and, it's going to be even more important
48 that we have access to those resources because of, you
49 know, we've heard it in the public testimony today, the
50 programs that families tap into have been very difficult

1 to work with. And so, they're really relying on our
2 natural resources close to their villages, homes -- so
3 the federal program isn't locked into that, but the state
4 program is. But, you know, we still, you know, want to
5 have the working relationship with the, you know,
6 Division of Subsistence to come out with the sort of
7 reports that give us a baseline of from that the time
8 they did it, you know, of what resources our communities
9 are taking. But we're not -- it's not locking us into
10 that number, if that makes sense. Thank you.

11
12 ACTING CHAIRPERON CASIPIT: Thank you,
13 Patty. Any other items? There's a whole big list. I
14 think DeAnna's going to be pretty busy on this one. Any
15 other comments or items? Go ahead, John.

16
17 MR. SMITH: Kind of in the same topic I
18 might mention is encouraging, you know, if there's high
19 numbers of the wolves actually getting our children and
20 being a good uncle and an auntie, or grandma, to educate
21 them. And I just see a lot of funds that can be developed
22 for the community and education on harvesting the
23 wolves. The hides are worth a lot of money. So just kind
24 of echoing the community effort, but also a good way to
25 get our kids out in the air, land and sea. You know, the
26 oxygen is very healing, so encouraging, getting them off
27 the couch or out of the house. Yeah.

28
29 ACTING CHAIRPERON CASIPIT: Okay. Any
30 other items? Either online or at the table?

31
32 (No response)

33
34 Okay. I'll need -- we'll need a motion
35 to direct or ask staff to prepare these talking points
36 and do a letter and -- or into our report. So if, if I
37 can get a motion to approve these items for our Annual
38 Report.

39
40 MR. SMITH: So move, Mr. Chair.

41
42 (Simultaneous speech)

43
44 UNIDENTIFIED: Second.

45
46 ACTING CHAIRPERON CASIPIT: Okay. It's
47 been moved and seconded, to prepare a report with these
48 bullet points. And DeAnna will do that and have a draft
49 for us to review at our next meeting.

50

1 MR. SMITH: Call for the question.

2

3 ACTING CHAIRPERON CASIPIT: Question has
4 been called. We don't need to discuss or justify this.
5 It's just our business with the Board. Voice -- can I
6 do a voice vote? Okay. I would ask for a voice vote on
7 this. All in favor, say aye.

8

9 IN UNISON: Aye.

10

11 ACTING CHAIRPERON CASIPIT: All those
12 opposed, nay.

13

14 (No response)

15

16 Sounds like motion carries. Thank you.
17 Okay. Next agenda -- oh.

18

19 (Whispered conversation)

20

21 Okay. I guess I'm going to provide an
22 opportunity for Heather to come forward and provide some
23 input on -- it's a non-agenda item, but she has some
24 information on unguided boats and her activities with
25 the North Pacific Fisheries Management Council. So if
26 you can come forward. Oh, there you are.

27

28 MS. BAUSCHER: Hi.

29

30 ACTING CHAIRPERON CASIPIT: Just, you
31 know, just a brief update on where we are on that, or
32 what's going on with that?

33

34 MS. BAUSCHER: I just -- thank you.
35 Through the Chair. My name is Heather Bauscher. I'm
36 speaking for myself. I just happen to be at the North
37 Pacific Fishery Management Council meetings a week or
38 two. I was there because of the Skipper Science Program
39 and presenting on that, but the unguided boat issue
40 bubbled up in that space in a new and different
41 interesting way than we'd seen in the past. And it was
42 because there'd been some Halibut Treaty meetings a week
43 or two before, and the numbers of the removals from to
44 sea were pretty dramatic. The guided quota is 800,000
45 pounds in 2C, I believe, and the estimated unguided
46 removals was potentially like 1.4 million pounds. I
47 don't know how they get those numbers, but 2C way
48 exceeded their take of halibut and there's going to be
49 treaty impacts of that. And I think the quote is going
50 to go down for the whole region, is what they were

1 saying. So there's a new person on the advisory panel
2 in the Charter Halibut seat, and he brought this up. It
3 was because of him, from Homer, the AP made a motion --
4 the Council made a motion. What they agreed to do --
5 this is new and different. A meeting between the various
6 different management bodies. I mean, I'm here speaking
7 because, you know, I used to be on the Sitka AC, and we
8 worked together to help try and advance this at the
9 Board of Fish, and other spaces, and you guys have come
10 to the various management bodies, so basically when we
11 went up there, we just said like this issue has been
12 ping-ponged back and forth between these different
13 management bodies. And there was an agreement to hold a
14 meeting between representatives of the North Pacific
15 Council, the state, I think the Coast Guard, maybe
16 others, but Rebecca Himschoot will be leading that, so
17 the legislature is also involved. And if they can have
18 that meeting, then they can at least discuss a way
19 forward on that issue. So I just wanted to give you guys
20 that update that that just happened a week or two ago,
21 and maybe get in touch with representative Himschoot,
22 if you guys would want to be part of that conversation.

23
24 ACTING CHAIRPERON CASIPIT: Okay. Thank
25 you, Heather. Oh. I'm sorry. Go ahead, Mike.

26
27 MR. DOUVILLE: Thank you. I got a
28 question. What was the one-point number?

29
30 MS. BAUSCHER: I would recommend -- I can
31 try and find the exact document, I don't want to misstate
32 those numbers, but it was -- we took more than double
33 what was supposed to be taken out of 2C, when they
34 calculated what they estimated to be the unguided
35 removals on top of the guided quota. I believe the guided
36 quota is 800,000 pounds. What I had heard at the meetings
37 was that the unguided removals was potentially estimated
38 at 1.4 million pounds, on top of that 800, so that's
39 what caused concern at the Treaty, and the guide industry
40 is on board to address this now because everybody's going
41 to have a lower quota because of these unaccounted takes.

42
43 ACTING CHAIRPERON CASIPIT: Yes. Please,
44 go ahead.

45
46 MR. SMITH: Okay. Was there any mention
47 of the subsistence Halibut take?

48
49 MS. BAUSCHER: I can't speak to that, but
50 I can put you in touch with somebody who is at that

1 meeting, potentially even that chart -- that Charter
2 Halibut representative, and then you guys could have
3 more detailed conversations about that. If that works.

4
5 MR. SMITH: Yeah. Okay. Thank you. I just
6 wondering, I was curious if the subsistence take was
7 maintaining a level or going up or down. I doubt if it
8 would go down, but you know how much it went up. Anyway,
9 thank you.

10
11 MS. BAUSCHER: Through the Chair. I think
12 that number is taken off the top. But if the whole quota
13 for everybody's going to go down, then I think
14 everybody's quota goes down, right? I don't know exactly
15 what that looks like. I think you should -- I can try
16 and connect you to those documents, but I just want to
17 let you guys know that that meeting was happening, and
18 that was like, the first time that there seems to be
19 movement on that issue, even if it is just a meeting of
20 the various regulatory bodies.

21
22 ACTING CHAIRPERON CASIPIT: Before you
23 leave, I've got two hands up from Council members on the
24 phone. I see Albert first and then Patricia. So go ahead,
25 Albert.

26
27 MR. HOWARD: Thank you, Mr. Chair. I'm
28 just suggesting maybe making this a agenda item for the
29 next meeting, Mr. Chair. Thank you.

30
31 MS. PHILLIPS: Yeah. Mr. Chair, I was
32 wondering if we could ask our -- one of the issues we
33 brought in our Annual Report was that the U.S. Fish and
34 Wildlife Service has a designated seat on the North
35 Pacific Fisheries Management Council, and maybe we
36 should ask that representative about, you know, what is
37 the information about subsistence halibut. Thank you.

38
39 ACTING CHAIRPERON CASIPIT: I think Don's
40 online as well, but I would think that in developing the
41 agenda for next meeting Don can work with DeAnna to try
42 to get some of those answers for us, regards to
43 subsistence halibut use. So I think we can handle that.
44 Also, just for staff, I was handed a note that I wasn't
45 clear on what our action on 2601A was, and it was my
46 understanding that what we voted on and approved appears
47 on 251 and it goes from support 2601 with modification,
48 and it goes -- talks about retaining broad authority to
49 manage moose, deer and mountain goats. And from that
50 paragraph, it goes all the way down to the end where we

1 talk about 5B. So it was that entire section of page 251
2 under the OSM Preliminary Conclusion. Is that good
3 enough for staff to understand what we're talking about?

4
5 MR. CROSS: Yes. Thank you, Mr. Chair.
6 For the record, this is Robert Cross. There was just
7 some confusion when the motion was made, it specifically
8 talked about the Unit 5B moose regulation modification
9 but didn't talk about the retaining delegation of
10 authority letters. So if that was the intent of the
11 Council to accept the modifications as listed on 251,
12 then that's good enough for us.

13
14 ACTING CHAIRPERON CASIPIT: Yeah, I
15 probably wasn't clear about that. But when I was trying
16 to summarize the motion, I was trying to go kind of
17 begin from here and it's going to end down there. So if
18 I was -- if I confused you guys, I apologize. But that's
19 what I was voting on.

20
21 MR. CROSS: No, that's good. Thank you,
22 Mr. Chair.

23 (Simultaneous speech)

24
25 ACTING CHAIRPERON CASIPIT:staff
26 was as well. Or the rest of the Council was as well.

27
28 MR. CROSS: Yeah. We just want to make
29 sure that we're capturing the intent of the Council
30 effectively. So thank you, Mr. Chair.

31
32 ACTING CHAIRPERON CASIPIT: Thanks for
33 bringing that to me and making sure we're -- got all our
34 I's dotted and T's crossed. Okay. We've got a bunch of
35 items for the annual report. Are we ready to provide or
36 -- have we done this already?

37
38 MS. PERRY: You did a voice vote.

39
40 ACTING CHAIRPERON CASIPIT: Oh. Voice
41 vote. Okay. We did do a voice. I'm sorry. It's getting
42 close to lunch or past lunch. Is there anything we can
43 do here real quick before we go?

44
45 MS. PERRY: Meeting dates.

46
47 ACTING CHAIRPERON CASIPIT: Oh, yes.
48 Let's do that. I want to go ahead and put that up on the
49 screen. Just wanted to confirm our meeting dates for the
50 next couple meetings. Do you want to handle that, or

1 should I just do that?

2

3 MS. PERRY: You can do that.

4

5 ACTING CHAIRPERON CASIPIT: Okay. So the
6 first one is our next -- our meeting in a couple months.
7 We're scheduled for March 10 to 12 in Juneau and we just
8 need to confirm that. My note is we're on there for
9 three days. We have a huge agenda and it's also the call
10 for proposals for fisheries proposals. I know there's
11 some interest on the Council to have some fisheries
12 proposals to deal with on issues on Prince of Wales, or
13 Unit 2. I don't know if maybe Don can work with you,
14 DeAnna, on talking about if we're going to have enough
15 time to deal with all -- everything on our agenda in
16 those three days. So I'll leave that for you and Don to
17 work out, but I think three days might not be enough for
18 everything we have, especially all these Unit 2 deer
19 proposals and all. So go ahead, Scott.

20

21 MR. AYERS: Thank you, Mr. Chair. I just
22 wanted to note that if the Council is interested in
23 extending that meeting by a day, they can submit a
24 request to OSM for that, with the justification that you
25 were just providing on the record. But just to clarify
26 process and then that will be considered, and we'll let
27 you know as soon as possible, so that preparations can
28 be made for that.

29

30 ACTING CHAIRPERON CASIPIT: Okay. Would
31 it be okay just for Don just to work with DeAnna on
32 that, or do I need to have a motion to go to four days?

33

34 MR. AYERS: I don't know that we need a
35 formal motion, but I think that just having a small
36 discussion on the record here about the Council's intent
37 and why they feel like that needs to happen would be
38 good. And then DeAnna can work her magic on the back
39 end.

40

41 ACTING CHAIRPERON CASIPIT: Well, I think
42 I provided some justification for another day, and it
43 was because we got a lot of stuff on the agenda. We have
44 some pretty big staff analyses to go through and
45 understand; I know I'm going to have a ton of questions
46 on 804. I don't think I'm going to be alone in that. It
47 just seems like we're trying to cram a whole heck of a
48 lot into three days, and I don't want to get into a
49 situation like I'm in right now, so. And I'm sure Don
50 doesn't want to be there. So is that -- that provide enough?

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1
2 MR. AYERS: That was perfect. Thank you
3 very much.

4
5 ACTING CHAIRPERON CASIPIT: Okay. Thank
6 you. So can I have a motion to confirm the week of March
7 9th, either 3 or 4 days, depending on what Don is able
8 to work out.

9
10 MR. SANDHOFER: Make a motion to support
11 the meeting and Juneau from March 10th to March 12th.
12 Or one more day, if needed.

13
14 MR. SMITH: Second.

15
16 ACTING CHAIRPERON CASIPIT: Been moved by
17 Ted, seconded by John, to do the week of March 9th,
18 either 3 or 4 days, depending on what Chairman Don and,
19 and DeAnna can work out with OSM. Can I have a voice
20 vote on that? Okay. John called for the question. We'll
21 do a voice vote. All those in favor say aye.

22
23 IN UNISON: Aye.

24
25 ACTING CHAIRPERSON CASIPIT: Those
26 opposed?

27
28 (No response)

29
30 Motion carries. The next one would be
31 the fall meeting, and I think I suggested going to
32 Gustavus. I still - I am really excited about that. I've
33 talked to folks in town. Everybody else is excited about
34 it. I'd like to keep it there. So can I get a -- can I
35 have a motion on that?

36
37 MR. SMITH: So, move, Mr. Chair.

38
39 MR. SANDHOFER: Second.

40
41 ACTING CHAIRPERON CASIPIT: Okay. It's
42 been moved and seconded to hold our fall meeting and to
43 Gustavus, and I'll be -- I'll work with DeAnna to try
44 to help her with that cost comparison that we need to
45 do to have it there, and be happy to act as a facilitator
46 with the lodge owners, restaurant owners, to ensure that
47 there's plenty of opportunity for places -- for people
48 to stay, not just Council, but staff and interested
49 members of the public, and also to ensure there's places
50 for folks to eat. So I will make that commitment to work

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1 with DeAnna to make that happen so -- we still need to
2 vote, so it's been moved. Like I said, it was moved and
3 seconded, and I'll entertain a call for the question.

4

5 MR. SANDHOFER: Call for the question.

6

7 ACTING CHAIRPERSON CASIPIT: Question has
8 been called by Mr. Sandhofer. I'm going to do a voice
9 vote. All in favor, say aye.

10

11 IN UNISON: Aye.

12

13 ACTING CHAIRPERSON CASIPIT: Those
14 opposed, nay.

15

16 (No response)

17

18 No opposition. Motion passes. Go ahead.

19

20 MR. BEMIS: Yeah. It's been brought to
21 my attention that it's been ten years since Yakutat has
22 had a Board visit. So we'd like to get on the list now
23 that Gustavus is getting theirs. Yakutat would like to
24 announce -- would be more than glad to host a Board
25 meeting at some date in the future. Just wanted to put
26 it out there. Thank you.

27

28 ACTING CHAIRPERSON CASIPIT: At the next
29 meeting, we'll be talking about the one after and
30 locations, all that would be the perfect time to bring
31 this up. And I really would like to go back to Yakutat
32 for one of these meetings, and if we can make that
33 happen, we'll make it happen.

34

35 MR. BEMIS: Okay.

36

37 ACTING CHAIRPERSON CASIPIT: Thank you.

38

39 MR. BEMIS: Thought I'd throw it in
40 there.

41

42 ACTING CHAIRPERSON CASIPIT: Yeah.

43

44 MR. BEMIS: Thank you.

45

46 ACTING CHAIRPERSON CASIPIT: Okay. Don, I
47 see your hand up. Do you want to say something?

48

49 MR. HERNANDEZ: Thank you, Cal. Yeah. I'm
50 really excited about meeting in Gustavus. And as far as

1 this next meeting goes, yeah, it -- I'm sure I can work
2 with DeAnna, and if we need to extend the meeting time,
3 we could probably do that. I don't want to kind of
4 infringe on your time here, but while we're talking about
5 that next meeting, I don't know if it made it as an
6 agenda item or not, but I did request that maybe we have
7 a little bit of a discussion on some business. It's
8 going to come up with that next meeting, our 804
9 determinations. I thought we needed maybe a little bit
10 of guidance from staff on that before we actually get
11 to the meeting. And I know we have some OSM staff there
12 at this meeting. I don't know if they are available for
13 answering questions, but I don't want to impose on your
14 time constraints here, but if you're looking for another
15 item to do before lunch, it might be a good time to do
16 that.

17
18 ACTING CHAIRPERON CASIPIT: Sure. Why?

19
20 MS. PERRY: I did reach out to staff.

21
22 ACTING CHAIRPERON CASIPIT: Is there
23 anybody at the staff table that could maybe address Don's
24 question about having a primer on 804 analysis before -
25 - at our next meeting, before we start the actual
26 analysis?

27
28 MS. PERRY: Mr. Chair, this is DeAnna
29 Perry, for the record. I just wanted to let you know I
30 have reached out to Brent Vickers. He's also juggling
31 some of the other Regional Advisory Council meetings
32 going on at the moment. He is aware that the Council did
33 want kind of a primer, so I have just now reached out
34 to him -- it might take a minute for him to respond.
35 Thank you.

36
37 MR. HERNANDEZ: Okay. If I may, Cal, just
38 maybe a little more explanation here while we're waiting
39 to hear if Brent's available, but, you know, going into
40 this 804 determination, my concern has been -- or maybe
41 it's a question that needs to be answered. I think it
42 is expected that the Council will make some kind of a
43 determination -- 804 determination here at this next
44 meeting. And we have an analysis, and kind of the history
45 of this is, you know, the Council requested an analysis
46 to be done so that we would have good information to
47 work with, but the Council never actually put any
48 proposals forward to do this. We only asked for the
49 analysis. And I guess my question is, is it, you know,
50 within our authority to make a determination without

1 actually starting with a proposal? You know, we're new
2 to this process and we've never done one before, so are
3 we just expected to work with the analysis and develop
4 a, you know, a whole 804 allocation based on the analysis
5 or -- I guess, my initial kind of understanding -- or
6 maybe impression of how this would all work, would be
7 we get an analysis, we'd develop proposals, we, you know,
8 have all the public comment on the proposals, you know,
9 normal process, and that would take more than one cycle.
10 And I guess I kind of envisioned that we might have to
11 operate under, you know, a special action, you know, to
12 deal with any immediate concerns until we actually went
13 through that whole process. And now I'm kind of in the
14 understanding that we can just work with this analysis
15 and do a whole allocation. Do a whole allocation, I
16 guess the proper term, just based on the analysis,
17 without actually working from a proposal. But we -- I
18 mean, we do have a proposal from Ketchikan Indian
19 Community that kind of puts forward some, you know,
20 proposals on how to allocate. I don't think it covers
21 everything. It covers some issues involved. I don't know
22 if we can take that one proposal and start doing a bunch
23 of amendments to make it work for us, or do we just work
24 on -- work through the analysis and do the allocation
25 from that -- that's kind of my quandary here, you know,
26 moving forward is how are we going to approach this when
27 we actually come to the table at our next meeting?

28
29 (Pause)

30
31 ACTING CHAIRPERON CASIPIT: I see Scott
32 coming forward. So hold on here.

33
34 MR. AYERS: Thank you. Through the Chair,
35 Mr. Chair. Those are good questions. And I'm certain
36 that our group of folks within our program can come
37 together and develop a brief primer for this process to
38 be presented prior to taking up the analysis that we
39 have going on, and if there are other specific questions
40 that you have, Mr. Chair, through the Chair, that -- on
41 this particular topic, they can be sent through DeAnna
42 into our office for -- probably some of that information
43 on the front end before the meeting actually happens.
44 But I think it's perfectly reasonable for us to have a
45 small, kind of Q&A session, before we get into the meat
46 of this one, just given the sheer amount of thought and
47 energy that's gone into this, and just to kind of
48 understand the basic bounds of what this process looks
49 like. We'd be happy to help provide that.

50

1 MR. HERNNDEZ: Okay. Through the Chair.
2 Thank you, Scott. I think the Council would really
3 appreciate, you know, having some guidance as we move
4 into this process. And if you could have, you know,
5 something prepared, or at least have people prepared to
6 answer questions before we actually, you know, undertake
7 this, that would be -- that'd be really helpful to the
8 Council. And if any other, you know, questions come up
9 between now and the meeting that we might need to forward
10 to you to kind of make things a little more clearer
11 [sic]. I think we could do that through our coordinator,
12 DeAnna. So, yes, I just wanted to put that on your radar,
13 that I really think there needs to be some preparation
14 done here prior to that next meeting, so I appreciate
15 your answer. And I think that's -- that settles my
16 questions about this. So thanks, Cal.

17
18 ACTING CHAIRPERON CASIPIT: Albert, you
19 had your hand up?

20
21 MR. HOWARD: Thank you, Mr. Chair. I'm
22 sitting here thinking about the staff. I mean, we seem
23 to be adding so much to their plate when their budgets
24 are shrinking, and their staff size is getting smaller
25 with no -- it seems to be, no daylight in sight for
26 them. The 804 process was part of my concern when the
27 community wanted rural status. And I appreciate the fact
28 that they are getting ahead of the potential
29 conservation concern, but that doesn't address the
30 concern on Admiralty Island, because there are now
31 federally qualified subsistence users that can come and
32 hunt in the area that this Council saw fit to close for
33 ten days. So, when you look at the 804 process, you now
34 have to do it in every area that we've never had it done
35 before -- do before they became a considered rural. So
36 those are just my thoughts. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

37
38 ACTING CHAIRPERON CASIPIT: Thank you.
39 Thank you, Mr. Howard. That's food for thought, and I
40 didn't really think about that before, so thanks for
41 bringing that up. Go ahead, Harvey.

42
43 MS. PHILLIPS: Mr. Chairman, oh.....

44
45 (Simultaneous speech)

46
47 MR. KITKA: Thank you, Mr. Chair. And
48 listening to all this talk on 804 and -- I just want to
49 see something in the clarification and definitions of
50 long-term use. Basically, the reason I say this is

1 because our Native people have used these foods for
2 thousands of years. Our bodies are adapted to it. Without
3 the proper food, without this food in some of our
4 communities, even though they're now considered non-
5 rural, without the proper foods that we've -- our bodies
6 long-term adapted to, we start to get sicknesses that
7 appear because some of the food is not there for our
8 subsistence use anymore. This has been a long-term thing
9 that been kind of bothering me for some time because I
10 realized, the long-term use is something that it's been
11 kind of looked over and we kind of haven't really defined
12 it. And I want to hear a little more talk on that. Thank
13 you.

14
15 ACTING CHAIRPERON CASIPIT: Okay. I think
16 it's clear to staff of what we're, we're expecting for
17 this 804 primer, so like, I'll trust staff to work on
18 that over the intervening few months. And, you know, I
19 appreciate Albert's concern about overtaxing staff, and
20 I kind of share that, but sometimes it just has to happen
21 that way. So, I -- yeah, I appreciate you guys, I know
22 the work you guys do, and it's -- yeah. So, anyway.
23 Okay. I think we're done with this topic. Correct? Okay.
24 The meetings, we don't have to do anything more about
25 our meetings. Hopefully. And if anything comes up, maybe
26 you and Don can just work out and let us know. I have
27 one more action item here, and maybe we can do this
28 before lunch. I sure hope we can, but the 2024 Fisheries
29 Resource Monitoring Program, apparently, this this is
30 an action item.

31
32 (Pause)

33
34 MR. CROSS: All right. Thank you, Mr.
35 Chair. For the record, my name is Robert Cross, and I'm
36 the Subsistence Program Manager for the Tongass with the
37 U.S. Forest Service. I'll be presenting a brief overview
38 of the Fisheries Resource Monitoring Program's funding
39 process. So after describing the funding process, we'll
40 request the Council's comments on projects submitted for
41 the southeast region. This is not a action item, but
42 your comments are important for this process. Monitoring
43 Program materials start on page 387 of your Council
44 books, and the goal of the monitoring program is to fund
45 research on federal subsistence fisheries, to enhance
46 management, and to work with rural Alaskans to sustain
47 these fisheries. The Monitoring Program funding starts
48 with the Council's identifying information gaps and
49 developing priority information needs for each of their
50 regions, and those are listed on the bottom of page 390.

1 Your Council updated the priority information needs for
2 the southeast region last fall, and that list is on page
3 396. We took this list and requested projects that
4 address these priorities. Investigators then submitted
5 project proposals to OSM. For the southeast region,
6 seven proposals were submitted for funding. The
7 proposals are listed on the table on page 397. Those
8 proposals are going through the review process right
9 now. The first step in the review process is for the
10 Technical Review Committee to assess the projects. The
11 Technical Review Committee is a panel of expert
12 scientists that review the proposals based on five
13 criteria. The criteria are strategic, priority,
14 technical scientific merit, investigator ability and
15 resources, partnership, capacity building, and cost
16 benefit. The Technical Review Committee requires
17 justification or -- sorry -- writes justifications that
18 summarize what they thought of the projects. The
19 justifications can be found at the end of each project's
20 executive summary in your Council books.

21
22 After the Technical Review Committee
23 review, we collect the Council's comments on the
24 projects, and that's what we're doing today. Your
25 comments and the Technical Review Committee's
26 justifications are combined and presented to the
27 Interagency Staff Committee, or ISC. The ISC, who are
28 the Federal Subsistence Board staff, also provide
29 comments on the projects. The Federal Subsistence Board
30 will meet early next year, and they will be presented
31 with all the information from the Technical Review
32 Committee, Councils and the Interagency Staff Committee,
33 and will then add their recommendations on what projects
34 to fund. The final selection of projects will be
35 determined by the director of OSM, based on all the
36 provided input and how much money is available. OSM funds
37 as many projects as possible based on their budget. The
38 funding -- the funded projects will start next year in
39 the spring of 2026, and this whole process happens every
40 two years, and projects can be funded for up to four
41 years. Again, this is not an action item, but your
42 comments are important -- an important part of the
43 funding process. We're requesting the Council's thoughts
44 and comments about the proposed projects in the
45 southeast region that are listed again on page 397. We
46 want to know if the Council has any specific concerns
47 or comments about the proposed projects, and if the
48 Council wishes, we can go through each project and
49 provide a brief summary, or the Council can simply work
50 through the comments on the projects -- work through and

1 comment on the projects.

2

3 ACTING CHAIRPERON CASIPIT: Okay. Thank
4 you, Rob. Is there any comments on these project
5 proposals from the Council? Go ahead.

6

7 UNIDENTIFIED: Just a question, Rob. From
8 the list of priority information needs to the actual
9 plan proposals. How did you whittle that down and come
10 up with this list? I see some of the things were --
11 obviously didn't make the cut. What was the rationale
12 for that?

13

14 MR. CROSS: Through the Chair. So the way
15 the process works is we go to the Council, we ask for
16 priority information needs, which, you know, for the
17 Southeast Council specifically -- that I have experience
18 with, is sort of an exhaustive list, right? And so you
19 know, there's a list of priority watersheds and species,
20 but then further on down the list, it kind of says, or
21 any other species or watershed that would be important.
22 And so we put that out in a call for proposals letting
23 people know what the priorities of the Regional Advisory
24 Council are, and then interested parties will then
25 submit proposals. So I don't think for southeast that,
26 that there were any proposals that were submitted that
27 didn't capture some or address some part of the priority
28 information needs, so it's not like we eliminated a bunch
29 of projects because they didn't hit the priority
30 information needs. So I don't know if that addressed
31 your question.

32

33 UNIDENTIFIED: Who are the entities
34 submitting the proposals?

35

36 MR. CROSS: Through the Chair. So it can
37 -- it's sort of a wide variety.....

38

39 (Simultaneous speech)

40

41 UNIDENTIFIED: Are most private
42 individuals or government agencies or.....

43

44 MR. CROSS: Yeah, so it can be all the
45 above. So you know, we'll have some agencies that have
46 partnered with a community or tribal entity that submit
47 a proposal. Oftentimes the Forest Service staff will
48 work with a tribal or community entity that's interested
49 in monitoring a project. And that's one of the things
50 that -- that's one of the criteria that these projects

1 are vetted and ranked on, as well as their, I guess,
2 ability to address community capacity building and
3 partnership. And so that's one of the things that you
4 know, if we just had a government entity that applied
5 for funding with no participation from a community or
6 tribal entity, then that's part of the ranking system.

7
8 UNIDENTIFIED: Okay. Thank you.

9
10 MR. CROSS: So, Mr. Chair, if you'd like,
11 I can go through really quickly the list of southeast
12 proposals or -- you know, it's up to you.

13
14 ACTING CHAIRPERON CASIPIT: John, you had
15 a question. Go ahead and ask your question. That's fine.

16
17 MR. SMITH: Yeah. Just -- you know the
18 question is basically, I see other streams like the
19 Chilkooot, Chilkat, Chilkooot, you know, even Basket Bay
20 some of those areas on there that -- are they still
21 monitoring or are they just doing well that they're not
22 needing that support? Just a thought.

23
24 MR. CROSS: Through the Chair. Member
25 Smith, so again, the Council comes up with priority
26 watersheds, if there's not a partner that has the
27 capacity or the interest in monitoring that system, then
28 it just doesn't show up on this list of projects.

29
30 ACTING CHAIRPERON CASIPIT: Okay, Patty,
31 you had a question for Scott, or a comment for Scott --
32 or Rob, I'm sorry.

33
34 MS. PHILLIPS: Yeah. Thank you, Mr.
35 Chair, and Rob. I was looking at the (In Native). I
36 mean, is the -- Is genetic sampling a part of all that?
37 I mean, I see, you know, stock assessment and age
38 analysis through scale sampling, but is genetic sampling
39 part of that?

40
41 MR. CROSS: Through the Chair. Member
42 Phillips, you're testing my memory here. I don't believe
43 so. I think that this was just a stock status and trends
44 assessment. You know, oftentimes we will get contacted
45 by ADF&G, you know, as part of their genetic monitoring
46 for certain sites that they're interested in, So that's
47 not to say that there won't be any genetic monitoring,
48 but I think the, you know, sort of the meat of this
49 project is just the stock status and trends with sex,
50 age and length monitored as well.

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MS. PHILLIPS: I mean, I'd like to see, you know, genetic sampling as a part of any study. I mean, since you're already handling them. But that's just my opinion. Thank you.

MR. CROSS: Through the Chair. Member Phillips. So I -- you know, when the staff asks the Regional Advisory Council for priority information needs, that's certainly something that can be addressed through those you know, and I don't know if you necessarily want to limit projects that don't have a genetic component, but I think there's some way to you know, cleverly craft a -- some language in there that says, you know, the Regional Advisory Council would you know, encourage these stock status assessments to have a genetic component.

ACTING CHAIRPERON CASIPIT: Okay. John, I see your hand up.

MS. PHILLIPS: Thank you.

MR. SMITH: Yeah. Just to show on page 396 on the bottom bullet point, it says use the DNA to determine the contribution of sockeye and mixed stock fisheries of Southeast Alaska. So that's what I see on the bottom right there. Yeah. 396. Page 396.

(Pause)

ACTING CHAIRPERON CASIPIT: So, is [sic] there any more comments that we need to provide to Rob before we break, on this? Oh. Oh, I see -- Albert. Go ahead.

MR. HOWARD: Thank you, Mr. Chair. I guess my question is, do the does the program need anything from us to help them do their job that we're asking them to do? I guess that's my question. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

ACTING CHAIRPERON CASIPIT: I have two - - I'll get to you, Harvey, in a minute, but I -- Apparently, the Wrangell-St. Elias Resource Commission has a comment so, go ahead.

MS. COHEN: Thank you, Mr. Chair. Yeah, I wasn't sure when would be appropriate to give the comment, but I'm happy to do so right now. The Wrangell-

1 St. Elias National Park Subsistence Resource Commission
2 did meet on September 25th and 26th, and as part of the
3 meeting they did learn about the different project
4 proposals that were submitted for the 2026 Fisheries
5 Resource Monitoring Program for Southeast Alaska. And
6 they have one comment to share with the Council. They
7 only commented on and supported proposal 26-51, and
8 that's understanding sockeye salmon harvest locations
9 through traditional ecological knowledge, because that
10 was the only submission with a direct nexus to a
11 community eligible for subsistence use in Wrangell-St.
12 Elias. The -- sorry. The Commission found it important
13 to document knowledge of fishing and harvest locations
14 to transmit that knowledge to the next generation. The
15 data that is compiled from this project could be used
16 for educational materials to teach the next generation
17 about fisheries in the region. And while the SRC did
18 support this project unanimously, they did have a
19 concern about the high cost of the project. And I forgot
20 to mention, for the record, this is Amber Cohen from
21 Wrangell-St. Elias National Park and Preserve. Thank
22 you.

23
24 ACTING CHAIRPERON CASIPIT: Thank you.
25 Harvey.

26
27 MR. KITKA: Thank you, Mr. Chair. I just
28 -- looking at the Redoubt Bay, where there -- those --
29 part of the Natural Resource Protection Department and
30 for the tribe, I realized they're going with a liquid
31 electronic video of the stream. Is this one step toward
32 -- I would say, where you guys are going to probably go
33 in a different direction? I realized that it's been a
34 lot of years of monitoring escapement. I just was
35 wondering at some time if they go into the habitat to
36 find out whether it's a stream habitat that's causing
37 the declines in some of the streams that have sockeyes
38 that are so important to our subsistence. Is this a
39 change in direction? That's all I'm asking.

40
41 MR. CROSS: Through the Chair. Member
42 Kitka. So that's a good question. So the entity that
43 submitted this proposal is the Sitka Tribe of Alaska,
44 and I there's not a direct partnership with the Forest
45 Service on this proposal. And so as far as their methods
46 and means of using a video, we're -- I think that that's
47 just what they thought that they had capacity to do, or
48 maybe the best way to monitor that for that partner. As
49 far as, you know, if that's the way that we're moving
50 forward, or if that's the direction that we're going, I

1 think in a lot of these systems, it's a way to sort of
2 spread the funds around and the amount of staff that
3 entities have, you know, so we have a couple video
4 monitoring systems for the Forest Service with partners
5 that, again, they, they cost a little bit less and they
6 require less staff to actually attend the weir. I don't
7 think that that's the general direction that all of these
8 projects are going. We still have staffed weirs, both
9 with the Forest Service and with partners, and it really
10 just depends on the system. You know, some of them really
11 don't lend themselves to doing video monitoring. I don't
12 want to partner, but potentially at Redoubt, it could
13 be the number of years that that monitoring has occurred,
14 and so using, you know, a subset of video sampling, or
15 video monitoring, is enough to provide that partner with
16 an index for what that run is doing. So I guess all that
17 is to say, in a really complicated way, I think it just
18 depends on the system, and it depends on the capacity
19 of the partner as to whether they use video monitoring.
20

21 And then also in your question there was
22 a question about looking at habitat, I know Redoubt
23 specifically, they look at the limnological data of the
24 lake to see what the productivity of that lake is, or
25 if there's changes in condition. I don't know if they're
26 looking at the stream itself. No. They're not currently
27 looking at the stream habitat. I can say for that system,
28 you know, it's order -- an order of magnitude higher
29 than we ever thought it would be as far as sockeye return
30 now, so we don't think there's currently an issue with
31 it. For general sockeye systems around the Tongass, I
32 think that, again, that's a really important thing to
33 add to the priority information needs. If there are
34 systems where you think it's a habitat issue that's
35 causing the decline in sockeye, then I think that that's
36 something to highlight in the priority information needs
37 that are provided to potential applicants of this
38 funding. And they can take that and build a study around
39 it. And then, one last thing that I'll add is in the
40 meantime, if there's particular systems that you're
41 interested in then then that's something to talk to the
42 Forest Service staff about. And we can see if we can't
43 do habitat monitoring through our fisheries crew or
44 something like that.

45
46 MR. KITKA: Thank you.
47

48 ACTING CHAIRPERON CASIPIT: Okay. Any
49 more input for Mr. Cross? It's my understanding we don't
50 need a formal motion or anything. It's just information

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1 gathering for you.

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MR. CROSS: That's correct, Mr. Chair.

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gathering for you.

MR. CROSS: That's correct, Mr. Chair.

ACTING CHAIRPERON CASIPIT: There's somebody online who wishes to speak. Is there -- Karli Tyance Hassell, is this in pertain -- does this pertain to the FRMP?

MS. HASSELL: Sort of. I just saw -- sorry, this is Karli with Tlingit & Haida. I saw that there was maybe an update on the partners for Fisheries Monitoring Program. I didn't see or hear any updates on that, though. I just wonder if it would be included in the update. And this is in regards to the 2026 Funding.

ACTING CHAIRPERON CASIPIT: We haven't got to the partners program yet. That's still on our agenda. We're trying to move through our agenda as quickly as possible for action items before we get to informational items. So that's where we are right now. Hopefully, we get to that later this afternoon. We have one more big action item yet to do, and a small one. Okay. Is everybody -- everybody's got -- everybody's okay, we don't need to have anything for Rob anymore?

(No response)

It looks that way. We're going to break for lunch. We'll come back at 1:00. It's only an hour. And Nicole? I'm sorry.

(Pause)

Okay. I'm sorry. I'm just working with the coordinator try to -- try to get this done, but I just want to make sure that people know that -- Okay. There's early this morning -- earlier this morning DeAnna distributed our draft letter on the Secretarial Review capturing all our thoughts and stuff. Hopefully people can look at this, maybe over lunch, or if you haven't looked at it already, look it at lunch. I'm I got a chance to review it just before -- just when I got here this morning, but we need to review this, approve it -- that's going to take a motion. And also part of that motion as well was appointing two members to attend the listening session in Anchorage at the beginning of February. I don't think we have the exact date yet, but we would have to work that out. But, yeah, we need to take care of both of those things. I'd like to take care

1 of both these things before Cara has to leave. So I want
2 to have that done as soon as possible after lunch, before
3 you leave. And as far as another -- and then after that,
4 we, I know there's some interest in hearing from our
5 Deputy Regional -- the Deputy Regional Forester about
6 the Roadless Rule. I think there was a lot of interest
7 in that. And she's only available between 1:00 and 2:00,
8 is that correct? So yeah, when we come back after lunch,
9 we got a handle [sic] a couple things real quick and be
10 efficient with our time there. So if you haven't reviewed
11 this yet and looked it over, please do over lunch. When
12 we come back after lunch, we're going to -- this is the
13 first thing that we're going to do and we're going to
14 appoint the two members, and then we'll hear from Ms.
15 Grewe on the Roadless Rule. So let's get back by 1:15
16 and we'll proceed from there. I hope we can get lunch
17 and get back here within an hour and 15 -- hour and ten
18 now. So, we stand adjourned till after lunch. Thank you.

19

20 (Off record)

21

22 (On record)

23

24 ACTING CHAIRPERSON CASIPIT: Okay. We're
25 going to come back to order and handle a couple things
26 here real quick before we go to Ms. Grewe for the
27 Roadless Rule. I hope everybody had a chance to review
28 the draft letter that DeAnna put together for us, for
29 the Secretarial Program Review. I've had a chance to
30 review it, so -- and it looks good to me. Council, do
31 you have any -- Council have any edits or additions for
32 DeAnna?

33

34 UNIDENTIFIED: Yeah, thank you, Mr.
35 Chairman. You know, the only thing I didn't see in it,
36 and I'm not sure where you could put it, but you know,
37 except for topic number one, all the testimony we heard
38 was opposed to any changes to the Subsistence Program,
39 so I didn't -- I know that that testimony will probably
40 be public record, and hopefully it will get into the
41 Federal Register if they submit that but I think it'd
42 be nice to say that. I didn't see that in there, maybe
43 I missed it.

44

45 ACTING CHAIRPERSON CASIPIT: Okay, I
46 believe DeAnna is catching that, and she'll get it
47 incorporated there. Sorry. Any other -- oh, Albert.
48 You're up.

49

50

1 MR. HOWARD: Thank you, Mr. Chairman.
2 Under rule -- no, royal -- rural. Not sure what's going
3 on there, priority. And it, at the very end, it says,
4 on federal lands. Could we also include federal waters
5 because of (In Native) Island and what we're dealing
6 with there? Thank you, Mr. Chair.

7
8 ACTING CHAIRPERSON CASIPIT: Which page
9 was that? And page and paragraph was that?

10
11 MR. HOWARD: Rural priority. That.....

12
13 MS. PERRY: Through the Chair. This is
14 DeAnna Perry, Coordinator. Albert, are you referring to
15 page two? The fourth bullet? Rural priority and legal
16 clarity?

17
18 MR. HOWARD: Yes. At the very end, it
19 says -- it just says federal lands, and I'd like to add
20 water to that as well.

21
22 ACTING CHAIRPERSON CASIPIT: Yeah, thank
23 you. Thank you, Albert, I see that too. It's just right
24 there. Yeah, okay. DeAnna has that changed. Has that on
25 her -- any other Council members with edits?

26
27 (No response)

28
29 Okay. Seeing none. I think we're ready
30 to attain a -- entertain a motion to approve this draft
31 for finalization and sending it to the Federal Register
32 and the Secretary's Office.

33
34 MR. HOWARD: So move, Mr. Chair.

35
36 UNIDENTIFIED: Second.

37
38 ACTING CHAIRPERSON CASIPIT: Okay. It's
39 been seconded and moved to approve this letter to be
40 finalized and to be sent to the Federal Register and the
41 Secretary's Office. I'm going to ask -- I think we can
42 just ask for a voice vote on this. After I get a call
43 for the question.

44
45 MR. SMITH: Question

46
47 ACTING CHAIRPERSON CASIPIT: John Smith
48 asked for the question. All those in favor say aye.

49
50 IN UNISON: Aye.

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ACTING CHAIRPERSON CASIPIT: All the --
All those opposed, nay.

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(No response)

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8 Motion carries unanimously. Sounds
9 like. Okay. Next part. Part of what we wanted to do was
10 appoint two members to attend the listening session in
11 early February. Don't have an exact date yet, but we'll
12 get that figured out and let our volunteers know about
13 when and where that will occur. Can I ask for a couple
14 of volunteers?

14

15

16

UNIDENTIFIED: Mr. Chair, can you repeat
the dates of when you expect that to be?

17

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ACTING CHAIRPERSON CASIPIT: It's going
to be early February. I heard they're working, like, for
the 7th. Oh, the third now, okay. The 3rd of February.

20

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22

UNIDENTIFIED: In Anchorage?

23

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ACTING CHAIRPERSON CASIPIT: In
Anchorage. It'll be around there and it's that listening
session that they want to have.

26

27

28

UNIDENTIFIED: Right. Yeah.

29

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ACTING CHAIRPERSON CASIPIT: And I
think it's important that we go there, somebody goes
there. At least one person.

32

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34

UNIDENTIFIED: Right.

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37

ACTING CHAIRPERSON CASIPIT: I know
that we said two but if we can't get two, at least
one. Okay, I see Don's hands up. Go ahead, Don.

38

39

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MR. HERNANDEZ: Yeah, thank you, Cal. I
would attend virtually if somebody else wanted to go in
person, but I would not commit to traveling in early
February, my track record on getting out of here for
meetings in the wintertime is getting pretty poor.

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ACTING CHAIRPERSON CASIPIT: I hear the
train coming, I got -- somebody pointed a finger at me.
I'll volunteer to attend in person, and hopefully it'll
be -- I have better travel options than most. Is there
any other person who would like to attend? I -- maybe

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1 just Don and I is good enough.

2

3 (No response)

4

5 Okay, I'd entertain a motion to send two
6 members, and I think we've got a couple of names, so I'd
7 entertain a motion for attendance at that listening
8 session.

9

10 MR. HOWARD: I'll move, Mr. Chair.

11

12 UNIDENTIFIED: Second.

13

14 ACTING CHAIRPERSON CASIPIT: Okay, it's
15 been moved and seconded to send two members to the
16 listening session. It'd be -- the person it'd be me to
17 be -- attend in person, and then Don has committed to
18 at least be online for that, so. Be happy to entertain
19 a question.

20

21 MR. SMITH: Question.

22

23 ACTING CHAIRPERSON CASIPIT: Question
24 was called by John Smith. All those in favor of the
25 motion to send me, and possibly Don, but Don, at least
26 on the phone for the listening session. And I'll just
27 do a voice vote. All those in favor say aye.

28

29 IN UNISON: Aye.

30

31 ACTING CHAIRPERSON CASIPIT: Opposed
32 nay.

33

34 (No response)

35

36 No opposition. Motion carries. I'd like
37 to thank -- really thank the Council for really digging
38 in on this, going on record and spending the time to
39 develop the -- these -- this letter. I think it was time
40 well spent on the record with all of us. And I think it
41 serves the people we serve well. So, thank you for all
42 that work and all your attention, and bringing this to
43 fruition. Okay. With that.....

44

45 MS. PHILLIPS: Mr. Chair.

46

47 ACTING CHAIRPERSON CASIPIT: Yes, Patty.

48

49 MS. PHILLIPS: I would like to thank
50 DeAnna Perry for compiling our comments in such a concise

1 and well-written letter. Thank you.

2

3 MS. PERRY: That was a team effort with
4 Ms. Wessels.

5

6 ACTING CHAIRPERSON CASIPIT: Okay. I
7 recognize the staff work on that one, that was a lot of
8 work. And trying to listen to all our talking and putting
9 together what I thought was a really well-crafted
10 letter, so thank you to both of you for your work on
11 that. Okay, I think we're ready to have Ms. Grewe talk
12 to us about the Roadless Rule, so Ms. Grewe, you are on
13 the -- you are ready, and we're ready to hear your update
14 on the Roadless Rule. I think there's a lot of folks
15 here really interested in that.

16

17 MS. GREWE: Okay, thanks. Glad to join
18 the meeting today, thank you for the time. At today's
19 meeting, I'm going to provide a broad overview of the
20 proposed 2001 Roadless Area Conservation Rule Rescission
21 Project and related Forest Service activities. And a
22 quick acknowledgement here, an introduction. First of
23 all, I understand this meeting's gone to overtime and
24 you have a long and meaningful agenda and that you might
25 be running late, so I'll keep my comments brief because
26 I would like to have some time for discussion as well.
27 So, I'm going to provide a broad overview here. Feel
28 free to interrupt me either audibly or raise your hand,
29 or DeAnna can tag me via chat. But I have some background
30 information here I will share and then hopefully we have
31 some discussion. I think I have likely met -- I know
32 I've met many of you in person, but for those of you
33 that I have not met, my name is Nicole Grewe, I am Deputy
34 Regional Forester for the Forest Service Alaska Regional
35 Office. I am a social scientist, economist and planner
36 by education and training, and I have worked for Forest
37 Service, Regional Office, for the Research Station and
38 also for the State of Alaska, early in my career. Always
39 working on rural community well-being, resiliency, and
40 local, social and economic issues. Excuse me. Today,
41 though, I am here on Roadless Rule making business. So,
42 I sort of have three objectives here with my talking
43 points. I want to provide an overview of the current
44 proposed rescission of the 2001 Roadless Rule, discuss
45 the Forest Service timeline, and highlight next steps.

46

47 Let me see here. So, if I could just
48 back up for a moment. In 2000 roadless rule conservation
49 -- Roadless Area Conservation Rule, maybe a little quick
50 summary here. It was adopted in 2001. It established

1 prohibitions on road construction, road reconstruction
2 and timber harvesting and inventoried roadless areas on
3 national forest lands. And, you know, the original
4 intent of this rule, that is nearly 25 years old now,
5 was to provide lasting protections for inventoried
6 roadless areas within the national forest system, within
7 the context of multiple use management. In total, Forest
8 Service wide, there are nearly 60 million acres that are
9 considered inventoried roadless areas, which is about
10 30% of all National Forest System lands, primarily in
11 the western states. Today, like today, the Roadless Rule
12 applies to nearly 45 million acres, there's a difference
13 between 59 and 45 because Colorado and Idaho have state
14 specific roadless rules. And so, they're treated a
15 little bit differently. But nonetheless, it's nearly a
16 25-year-old rule that applies to nearly 45 million
17 acres, about a third of the Forest Service lands
18 nationwide.

19
20 Alaska's journey. Maybe just a quick
21 moment here for our 25 year journey with the 2001
22 Roadless Area Conservation Rule, there's been a lot of
23 change in 25 years, as I know many of you are familiar
24 with. In 01, the rule was adopted immediately applied
25 to both the Chugach and Tongass National Forests. In
26 2003, so, two years later, the US Department of
27 Agriculture exempted the Tongass National Forest from
28 the national rule. In 2011, the Federal District Court,
29 a federal district court, vacated the Tongass National
30 Forest exemption, so we had an exemption for about eight
31 years from the 2001 Roadless Rule in which road
32 construction, reconstruction and timber harvest happened
33 in inventoried roadless areas. So, we had this exemption
34 for eight years. In 2015, the Ninth Circuit Court
35 decision upheld the Federal District Court ruling to
36 vacate the Tongass National Forest exemption so, we lost
37 the exemption. And then, fast forwarding to 2020, which
38 is the last time I actually came before the RAC to talk
39 about roadless rule making. In 2020, the Alaska Roadless
40 Rule was adopted. So, when I was before you five years
41 ago, probably nearly to the month, we were having the
42 same discussion about the 2001 Roadless Rule application
43 to the Tongass National Forest in particular. Anyway,
44 by the time the Trump administration ended their four-
45 year term, the Tongass had again been exempted from the
46 2001 Roadless Rule, and as you might remember, we had
47 six alternatives that ranged -- there was a whole
48 environmental analysis that went along with that 2020
49 Alaska Roadless Rule that ranged from no action, as the
50 first alternative, and a full exemption as the sixth

1 alternative. And then there were four alternatives in
2 the middle that kind of all varied from each other, and
3 there were different magnitudes of impact. I won't go
4 into the details of that other than to say at the very
5 end, after a lot of public input, tribal government and
6 Alaska Native Corporation consultation and subsistence
7 hearings that, despite all the environmental analysis
8 and public input that expressed a lot of concern, the
9 Trump Administration ultimately opted to exempt the
10 Tongass National Forest, well, to adopt an Alaska
11 Roadless Rule that exempted the Tongass from the
12 national rule, so. Three years later, under the Biden
13 Administration, that, the Alaska Roadless Rule was
14 rescinded and the 2001 Roadless Rule went back into
15 effect on the Tongass National Forest.

16
17 So here we find ourselves two years
18 later, and in June 2025 the USDA Secretary, Brooke
19 Rollins, at a Western Governors Association meeting,
20 announced her intent to rescind the 2001 Roadless Rule
21 at the national level. So, she expressed this intent to
22 eliminate the 2001 Roadless Area Conservation Rule and
23 to do so nationally. So not specific to Alaska and not
24 specific to the Tongass, but to just rescind the rule
25 altogether. She noted it was overly restrictive, impedes
26 local economic development, and restricts local decision
27 making. By mid-summer, the Forest Service had started
28 working on another roadless rulemaking project, this
29 time national in scope. So, again, much broader than the
30 Tongass National Forest, thinking about rescinding the
31 2001 Roadless Rule in whole or at least seeking to
32 explore rescinding the 2001 Roadless Rule in whole. By
33 August 25th a Notice of Intent was published in the
34 Federal Register on August 29th, which provided notice
35 to the public that an environmental analysis and
36 decision was forthcoming, and when I finished talking,
37 I will post that Notice of Intent to our chat. By fall
38 2025, so the past few months, quite frankly, we've been
39 pretty focused on government-to-government consultation
40 with Tribes and Native Corporations in Alaska and tribes
41 across the nation. Forest Supervisor Monique Nelson for
42 the Tongass and Forest Supervisor Jenn Youngblood for
43 the Chugach, and myself have been completing this work
44 for both the Chugach and National Tongass National
45 Forest Tribal Governments and also the Native
46 corporations, and we'll continue to consult with Tribal
47 governments throughout the process at the request of
48 Tribal governments and Native corporations. And so, here
49 we find ourselves in December, quickly approaching the
50 holidays.

1
2 So, kind of like, what's the current
3 status in the bottom line here? So, this is a proposed
4 rescission of the 2001 Roadless Rule, in whole, not
5 specific to Alaska, although we will be impacted by this,
6 potentially. It implicates all the national forest
7 roadless areas across the nation. And I will say there
8 are two exceptions to this: Idaho and Colorado. They
9 have state specific roadless rules. So, that 2020
10 process, when you last saw me, we were striving to adopt
11 an Alaska specific roadless rule and considering six
12 alternatives. Ultimately, we ended up with an Alaska
13 specific roadless rule that exempted us from the
14 national rule. It was, for all practical reasons, an
15 exemption from the national rule. But nonetheless, where
16 are we at? The agency is taking a really hard look at
17 rescinding the 2001 Roadless Rule in whole; Idaho and
18 Colorado will not be impacted because they have state
19 specific roadless rules.

20
21 Let me see here -- and then I'll just
22 highlight a couple passages from the Notice of Intent.
23 So, the Notice of Intent posted on August 29th with the
24 stated purpose to rescind the 2001 Roadless Rule, with
25 Idaho and Colorado state specific roadless rules to be
26 retained. The stated intent is to return decision making
27 regarding road construction, road reconstruction, and
28 timber harvest to local officials. Public comment closed
29 on the Notice of Intent on September 19th. Project team:
30 so, who's actually doing the work this time? The last
31 go around well, in 2020 and 2023, there was kind of a,
32 you know, a hybrid team between Washington office and
33 Alaska. Alaska Forest Service employees, this go-around.
34 It's largely being implemented by a Washington office
35 team with local Forest Service employees, like myself,
36 carrying out public engagement. The final decision maker
37 will be the USDA Secretary, so Secretary Brooke Rollins,
38 who is the one who announced her intent to try to rescind
39 the 2001 Roadless Rule in June of 2025. And then to
40 think a little bit about -- so, you know, with our
41 experience on trying to establish an Alaska Roadless
42 Rule or rescind the Roadless Rule in Alaska like, what
43 does this really mean? The Notice of Intent, you know,
44 announced there will be an environmental analysis with
45 this intent to explore rescinding the national rule. And
46 I think that that Notice of Intent is very clear that
47 the agency is looking to rescind or repeal, you'll hear
48 those words used interchangeably. So, kind of these two
49 alternatives are no change, which is retain the 2001
50 Roadless Rule, or rescind the 2001 Roadless Rule. There

1 is some chatter about introducing additional
2 alternatives. For instance, the easy example to point
3 at is what we call roaded roadless areas. So, inventoried
4 -- areas that were once inventoried as roadless, that
5 did end up with some road construction and sometimes
6 timber harvest, that all of a sudden stopped. So, these
7 are lands that are impacted. Should they really be
8 subject to the 2001 Roadless Rule? And, you know,
9 honestly, that was one of our alternatives in 2020. I
10 think it was alternative number two. There's also
11 concern down in western states around wildfire and where
12 wilderness and urban areas intersect and, and whether
13 the roadless rule should really apply in those areas
14 because they, you know, in many times impedes our ability
15 to, you know, work proactively to fight wildfire and to
16 treat landscape to be more wildfire resilient. I'm not
17 really sure where this is going to go and how large the
18 range of alternatives will be. I only mentioned that,
19 while a lot of the language around rescinding the rule
20 and the Secretary was really quite clear about her intent
21 on that, there's also the responsibility of federal land
22 managers to look at a range of alternatives and to kind
23 of study the impact of those alternatives to landscapes
24 and people. And that's what's happening right now.

25
26 So, maybe a little bit about the
27 rationale. So why rescind the 2001 Roadless Rule? You
28 know, there's really two executive orders, and I will
29 drop their numbers in the chat as well, you can Google
30 them and read more. But the first is Executive Order
31 14192 under President Trump, Unleashing Prosperity
32 Through Deregulation'. So, the whole nut of that
33 executive order is to deregulate, to alleviate federal
34 agencies from unnecessary regulatory burden. There's
35 another executive order that is actually equally as
36 powerful in Alaska, and it's specific to Alaska. It's
37 Executive Order 14153. The title of it is 'Unleashing
38 Alaska's Extraordinary Resource Potential' which directs
39 the Forest Service to reinstate the 2020 Alaska Roadless
40 Rule. So, the rule from five years ago that essentially
41 exempted the Tongass from Roadless rule, so that's quite
42 a long executive order, and it covers multiple natural
43 resource areas, but there is a small section dedicated
44 to the Forest Service, and the intent of that is to draw
45 attention to, you know, the impacts of the 2001 Roadless
46 Rule in Alaska.

47
48 So, really, aside from those executive
49 orders, what are some of the intended outcomes? So, what
50 does leadership believe rescinding 2001 Roadless Rule,

1 what will be the outcomes of that? One is wildfire risk
2 reduction. Second is economic development. So, this
3 current administration is very much proactive about
4 enabling job creation and economic development in rural
5 America through responsible timber production. Local
6 decision making, so there is a lot of narrative and text
7 and discussion regarding the 2001 Roadless Rule's,
8 impact on forest supervisors in particular, and that it
9 limits their ability to make decisions about what
10 happens in inventoried roadless areas, so in many ways
11 -- and Secretary Rollins has been very explicit about
12 this, if you lift the 2001 Roadless Rule, it doesn't
13 necessarily mean road construction, reconstruction and
14 timber harvest will happen immediately in inventoried
15 roadless areas. What it does is it returns decision
16 making to the forest to manage those inventoried
17 roadless areas in a way that meets the forest plan and
18 what local communities need. It enhances local
19 collaboration. So, it's better alignment of land and
20 resource management with regional and localized economic
21 and environmental goals, so again, it's the idea that
22 it returns decision making to the local or regional level
23 at the Forest Service, that allows us to be more adaptive
24 to what's happening in real time in communities,
25 especially rural communities.

26
27 Let me see. And so, you know what this
28 really means for those of you that are curious about the
29 policy framework, the Forest Service is proposing
30 revisions to 36 Code of Federal Regulations. So, CFR
31 part 294, specifically, the primary revision would
32 rescind subpart B, while maintaining state specific
33 roadless rules for Idaho and Colorado at subpart C and
34 D. So again, that's 36 CFR part 294, a revision to
35 rescind subpart B. I can also put that citation in the
36 chat when I'm done speaking.

37
38 Let me see here. And so, what's next?
39 Kind of like what is our next steps here. So, the Notice
40 of Intent went out in August to September 19th public
41 comment closed on the notice of Intent, and they -- the
42 Washington office team is projecting to publish in the
43 Federal Register, probably in March or April, a Notice
44 of Proposed Rulemaking and draft Environmental Impact
45 Statement. So, it'll probably be quiet here for a few
46 months while analysis is occurring, and we continue to
47 do consultations by request with Tribal Governments and
48 Native Corporations, municipalities, community
49 associations, we will continue to do outreach and to
50 talk about this, but right now, the team is working on

1 an Environmental Impact Statement and a Proposed Rule.
2 We won't know what the Environmental Impact Statement
3 or Proposed Rule note until March or April 2026, I like
4 thinking plus or minus a month there, but nonetheless,
5 in spring is probably when we're going to see some
6 forward action, early spring, not late spring.
7

8 The Final Rule and final Environmental
9 Impact Statement is expected to publish in the Federal
10 Register during late 2026 or early 2027. So again, in
11 the spring, we should probably be looking in in the
12 Federal Register for the Proposed Rule and availability
13 of a draft Environmental Impact Statement, with a final
14 decision to be made in late 2026 or early 2027. So,
15 again, it's another you know, it's a controversial
16 project, as we know from a 25 year journey here in Alaska
17 with the 2001 Roadless Rule that's seen a lot of change,
18 change in decision making, litigation exemptions,
19 reapplications and here we are with another milestone,
20 but this time looking at repealing the 2001 Roadless
21 Rule in whole across the nation, including the Tongass,
22 which is different than what we have looked at before.
23 And with that, I'll just take a pause here, those were
24 the only comments that I really had and maybe open it
25 up for questions or comments. And whatever, I will note
26 whatever you say here, I will be taking notes and
27 returning your input to the committee that is working
28 on this project.
29

30 ACTING CHAIRPERSON CASIPIT: Okay,
31 thanks, Ms. Grewe. Any comments or questions for Nicole
32 from the Council, either at the table or online?
33

34 (No comments)
35

36 Patty, go ahead. Patty, if you can hear
37 me, unmute your.....
38

39 (Simultaneous speech)
40

41 MS. PHILLIPS: Oh, yes, sorry.
42

43 ACTING CHAIRPERSON CASIPIT: Okay, thank
44 you.
45

46 MS. PHILLIPS: Thank you, Chairman.
47 Hello, Nicole. Yes, Patty Phillips from Pelican. One of
48 our public comments today, and it's a common sentiment
49 is asking for, you know, 810 hearings in communities.
50 Do you anticipate that occurring?

1
2 MS. GREWE: I do, and you know, back in
3 2020, when we did the Alaska Roadless Rule that
4 essentially exempted us from the 2001 Roadless Rule, we
5 carried out 19 Subsistence hearings, 19 hearings in 19
6 communities over probably a three-week period, it was
7 very busy. I don't know if we'll do that many this time
8 around. And to be honest, I am part of those discussions
9 you know, with the Washington office team around Section
10 810 -- ANILCA Section 810, Subsistence hearings. I
11 expect there to be hearings, but probably not 19. I'm
12 speculating a bit here, but just, you know, kind of
13 sensing the tenor of the Administration and looking to
14 expedite environmental analysis. You know, we're
15 required to do Subsistence hearings before decisions are
16 made, but it isn't necessarily detailed to the level of
17 doing them in every single community. And now we're in
18 this post pandemic era where there's conversation
19 happening about whether they should be happening in
20 person or whether we can do them virtually, and I share
21 that here as a Southeast resident myself, having
22 designed the prior go at it, with 19 hearings in 19
23 communities -- at that time, we were pretty adamant to,
24 you know -- the Alaska Forest Service office was adamant
25 that we do as many as we can in an expedited time frame
26 and to do it on site. And this time around, we'll see
27 if the Washington office goes a different route. But
28 yeah, I fully expect there to be Subsistence hearings,
29 maybe not of the magnitude as they were before.

30
31 MS. PHILLIPS: Thank you. So, you had
32 mentioned -- follow up, yeah, you had mentioned, you
33 know, wildlife -- wildfire risk management. And that
34 seems like something that would happen stateside. But
35 here, you know, on the Tongass, we really don't have a
36 wildfire issue, so I mean, we have the largest forest
37 in the U.S. I just don't, you know.....

38
39 MS. GREWE: Yeah.

40
41 MS. PHILLIPS: I don't get why we're
42 being lumped in with something that, you know -- forced
43 nationwide, but our ANILCA says that, you know, one of
44 our duties, you know, as a Regional Council is to, you
45 know, make recommendations concerning policy standard
46 guidelines and regulations to the Forest Service. Well,
47 it doesn't say Forest Service, but it does say, you
48 know, we are to be -- you know, provide comments, so,
49 will there be an opportunity for the RAC to, you know,
50 have -- provide specific comments when, when that is

1 available, and at the next stage. Thank you.

2
3 MS. GREWE: Yes. No, I fully expect there
4 would be opportunity for the RAC to provide comment. I'm
5 not very good at multitasking, but I'll at least post
6 the Notice of Intent to the chat here. When my agenda
7 item is up so, you can kind of read what the rationale
8 is behind it and prepare yourselves. There will be a
9 Proposed Rule and the Environmental Impact Statement,
10 which will publish in March or April of 2026, and that
11 will start the next official public comment period. But
12 I would recommend that, you know, you prepare yourselves
13 for early spring, but there's no reason why you can't
14 start thinking about these matters right now. I think
15 the one advantage here, I would have to say, is that the
16 Administration has been really clear about their intent
17 to rescind the 2001 Roadless Rule. So, while there may
18 be a limited range of alternatives, I think we know
19 where they're driving, the executive orders are really
20 clear, and so -- and I will post those numbers in the
21 chat as well, so you can pull down the one around Alaska
22 and read it more specifically and start thinking about
23 what a rescission of the 2001 Roadless Rule would mean
24 towards restrictions on subsistence resources and
25 activities, and I wouldn't necessarily wait that you,
26 you know -- recommend that you wait until March or April
27 either, I think that, you know, another thing that's at
28 play right now is kind of that move to deregulate and
29 streamline NEPA regulations in particular, things are
30 moving quickly at minimal time frames, you know. And
31 that includes the 2001 Roadless Rule Rescission project,
32 likely the Tongass Forest Plan revision, and so, every
33 time I speak about either of these things, I encourage
34 people to stay informed and be ready because the windows
35 are likely to be small. And yes, I hear you on the
36 wildfire. But I don't, you know -- when I read all of
37 the content from the Department of Agriculture, I think
38 wildfire is one issue, but you know, their explicit
39 stated intent is to eliminate the national rule and defer
40 the management of inventoried roadless areas to the
41 forest supervisors, essentially. So, they, you know --
42 the Administration feels they are empowering forest
43 supervisors to make those decisions that are specific
44 and customized to the region and to the forest and to
45 the local communities, so I wasn't really here to speak
46 about the Forest Plan revision, but we have two things
47 that are happening at once in Southeast Alaska Forest
48 Plan, you know, potentially a Forest Plan revision and
49 a repeal of the 2001 Roadless Rule, which is different
50 than before, we didn't have two things at play at once.

1 So, you kind of have to think about what each of those
2 could mean for the region and the intersection of them,
3 so if the 2001 Roadless Rule is repealed, it's even more
4 important that you think about the Forest Plan revision
5 and how management of the inventoried roadless areas
6 should play out into the future.

7
8 I think I probably gave you more than
9 you wanted, Patty, but, you know, there will be
10 opportunity for the RAC, and I am happy to continue
11 engaging with the RAC just as before. I don't think it
12 will be as complicated as 2020, like I said, we had six
13 alternatives in 2020, from no action to full exemption.
14 And then, like the range of alternatives from no action
15 to exemption, just like kind of, you know, increased in
16 their overall magnitude and impact, so like alternative
17 one was road and roadless only meaning that we were
18 removing road and roadless areas from the 2001 Roadless
19 Rule protection; then road and roadless plus kind of
20 like these adjacent lands. I don't expect to have six
21 alternatives this go around, it could be as simple as
22 no change or full rescission or maybe some middle
23 alternatives around lands that are already impacted. Or,
24 like I said, the wildland urban interface areas around
25 major cities that are looking for wildfire -- increased
26 wildfire treatments. I'll take a pause there because I
27 see another hand.

28
29 MS. PHILLIPS: Thank you, Nicole.

30
31 ACTING CHAIRPERSON CASIPIT: Okay. Don
32 Hernandez, I see your hand up. Please proceed.

33
34 MS. GREWE: I think you're muted, Don.

35
36 MR. HERNANDEZ: Sorry, I was -- yeah, I
37 forgot to unmute. I want to thank you for a really good
38 concise, informative presentation. And I guess one other
39 factor that's in play here. I guess we also had a ban
40 against old growth timber harvest that was -- I think
41 that was also an executive order from the previous
42 Administration. Is that now gone? And you know, how does
43 that play into this as well?

44
45 MS. GREWE: Yeah, this -- the current
46 Administration is not retaining that ban on old growth
47 harvest. But, you know, I would defer to the Forest
48 Plan, you know, the plan amendment that we did in 2016
49 that expedited the transition from old to young growth
50 essentially calls for an annual average harvest of 46

1 million a year, with five of that being old growth
2 intended for local processing of high value products.
3 So yeah, I don't think the current Administration is
4 interested in carrying forward with that protection and
5 so, for me, it brings me back to the Forest Plan and
6 what does that say around old growth harvest, and it was
7 intended to, you know, transition us from old to young
8 growth harvest, but always, you know, allowing a little
9 bit of space for old growth harvest, which I don't think
10 that was incredibly controversial across the region.
11 Yeah, and I know, there's other Forest Service folks
12 here online that are going to give an update around the
13 plan revision. Yeah. I'll just take a pause there, Don.

14
15 MR. HERNANDEZ: Okay. Just, I think you
16 just kind of highlighted that yes, we.....

17
18 MS. GREWE: He froze up. Maybe to Don,
19 while Don's bandwidth catches up, I'll just say a little
20 more like, there's really three -- if you're worried
21 about timber harvest in the Tongass, there's three
22 things that are happening at once here: an attempt to
23 rescind the 2001 Roadless Rule; a revision of the Forest
24 Plan, the 2016 -- well, the Forest Plan that's in effect
25 today. And then also another long-term timber demand
26 study that will set timber harvest into the future, and
27 it's -- those three things are kind of happening here
28 at once that has opened the door to conversation around
29 market demand for Tongass Timber like, what is it? How
30 much should we be harvesting? How are we going to satisfy
31 Tongass Timber Reform Act? But these three things are
32 happening at once. With the Trump Administration and the
33 Dunleavy Administration in place so, there is room for
34 change, for sure. But, you know, probably the most
35 strategic thing is to kind of track all of those efforts
36 and provide input where you have opportunity. Sorry,
37 Don, I don't know if I want a direction you didn't expect
38 there, but.

39
40 MR. HERNANDEZ: No, that that's fine,
41 that's all very informative so, thank you.

42
43 ACTING CHAIRPERSON CASIPIT: Okay. Any
44 other comments questions from Council on this topic,
45 Roadless Rule. You know, I have a quick one, this is Cal
46 Casipit acting as Acting Chair, Vice Chair of this group.
47 I heard you on the 810 hearings, and whether or not
48 those will occur, apparently. Hopefully some of those
49 will occur, maybe not to the level that happened last
50 time around. However, I did have a question of the

1 comments that have been submitted in that last go around.
2 I know I submitted some personally on the website, the
3 Register website. Have you all done any content analysis
4 on those comments, and what are some of the findings
5 there? I mean, I read an article, I don't know if it's
6 true, but, you know, 90 some percent of the comments
7 opposed changing the Roadless Rule and keeping the
8 Roadless Rule in place. Is that true? Am I -- did I read
9 something that was not right? Or -- I recall somewhere
10 reading that somebody did some sort of content analysis
11 and found a high, very high percentage of opposition to
12 change, of rescinding the rule. If you can address that
13 for me, please.
14

15 MS. GREWE: Yeah, I think you're
16 referring to the ANILCA Section 810 Subsistence hearings
17 that were conducted during late 2019, that was related
18 to the 2020 Alaska Roadless Rule. And you know, when we
19 do these Subsistence hearings, we take oral testimony,
20 it's recorded and transcripts are produced. And I think
21 you're referring to a report that's in the planning
22 record of that project, which I can also post to this
23 chat when we're done. But, yeah, there was widespread
24 opposition. I'll just say, that I'm the one that did the
25 analysis, actually, of the transcripts, I was actually
26 on another project down in Portland, Oregon. I'd go home
27 at night and I would listen to audio files from these
28 Subsistence hearings, while I was a little bit homesick
29 and wondering what was going on with the Roadless Rule
30 Project. And so, I'm the one that analyzed the oral
31 testimony and quantified it and wrote the report that
32 yeah -- interestingly enough, I will say we didn't have
33 a whole lot of oral testimony that was like directly
34 speaking to impact subsistence resources or the
35 restriction to access to subsistence resources. All of
36 the input was just -- it was really good input, but it
37 was by far and large, in opposition to exempting the
38 Tongass from the 2001 Roadless Rule, and ultimately,
39 because that Subsistence hearing process was so robust,
40 we went to 19 of 32 communities, recorded it all,
41 analyzed it, we ultimately published a paper in a peer
42 reviewed journal. I'll post that to the chat as well.
43 But yeah, the 2020 Alaska Roadless Rule Project, the
44 planning record is steeped with public comment, much of
45 it in public -- in opposition. And I expect that a lot
46 of that will be carried forward, especially if they're
47 talking about a full rescission of that Rule, because
48 if that's where they stick, that's what we were talking
49 about in 2020. And so, a lot of that input that was
50 given then, remains valid today, and that's what the

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1 project team is struggling with quite frankly, it's how
2 much more analysis do they need to do on Alaska if the
3 situation hasn't dramatically changed, like if
4 conditions in our communities haven't dramatically
5 changed? Like the -- earlier the question was will
6 Subsistence hearings occur? I'm rather confident they
7 will. Probably not all night -- we won't -- probably
8 won't go to 19 communities again. It might be
9 abbreviated, but there will be opportunity. And you can
10 always request for Subsistence hearings to happen in
11 communities. I mean, part of the reason we got to 19 is
12 we had individual communities reaching out and
13 requesting assis -- Subsistence hearing in their
14 community. I think the times have changed a little bit
15 because we're post pandemic and used to working
16 virtually. So, we'll see what the project team does with
17 technology and how we do Subsistence hearings. But yeah,
18 I'll post the summary report, plus the journal article
19 that was eventually written on who speaks for
20 subsistence resources in Southeast Alaska, it's pretty
21 interesting stuff. Thanks, Cal.

22
23 ACTING CHAIRPERSON CASIPIT: A follow-
24 up. I was specifically interested in the comments that
25 were submitted in this -- that were submitted by the
26 public in this latest round that -- that latest effort
27 that recently.....

28
29 (Simultaneous speech)

30
31 MS. GREWE: (Indiscernible).

32
33 ACTING CHAIRPERSON CASIPIT: Yeah, the
34 one that initiated all this stuff from the -- the newest
35 request for comment. I believe it was on.....

36
37 MS. GREWE: The Notice.

38
39 ACTING CHAIRPERSON CASIPIT: Yeah. The
40 Notice of Intent or whatever. I can't remember the exact
41 name, but.....

42
43 MS. GREWE: Yeah.....

44
45 (Simultaneous speech)

46
47 ACTING CHAIRPERSON CASIPIT: There's --
48 I know there was a bunch of comments submitted on that,
49 and I was just asking if there was content analysis that
50 was conducted on that round of comments. And if there

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1 was some content analysis and if there was, what was the
2 result of that? I know what the result of the content
3 analysis from that first effort was a few -- couple
4 years ago. What I'm asking about is this latest round
5 for this latest ask for input at the national level, you
6 know, was there content analysis done, and what's the
7 result of that analysis?

8
9 MS. GREWE: Yeah, I'm sure they are, and
10 that would be the comments that were due to the Notice
11 of Intent on September 19th. And I have not seen a
12 summary report of the comments that were submitted, I'm
13 sure that work is underway and will be available. And
14 when it is available, I will forward it to DeAnna to
15 circulate it out to the RAC. But I haven't seen a summary
16 report yet, so I don't really know what the content,
17 what the summary is of all the comments that were
18 submitted, I expect there were tens of thousands, if not
19 hundreds of thousands of comments submitted.

20
21 ACTING CHAIRPERSON CASIPIT: Thank you.
22 Okay, any other comments or questions?

23
24 (No comments)

25
26 Okay, I don't see any more comments or
27 questions. I -- like I said, like you mentioned, we're
28 kind of under time constraints, so we're going to move
29 on to the next presentation, I think we have Barb Miranda
30 on the phone to talk about the Forest Plan revision.
31 Barb, go ahead.

32
33 MS. MIRANDA: Yeah, thanks so much, Mr.
34 Chairman. It's good to be here virtually with you all.
35 For those of you that don't know me, I am Barb Miranda,
36 Deputy Forest Supervisor for the Tongass National
37 Forest. I have been asked to come here in lieu of Aaron
38 Matthews, who's our Forest Plan Revision Project
39 Manager, to talk to you about what's going on with the
40 Forest Plan. I know we did some broad outreach with you
41 guys about the assessments, the last time the RAC was
42 together, and Ashley and Rob really carried some weight
43 for us there.

44
45 The assessments that we just released
46 in the fall of last year are available for your viewing.
47 There are 22 assessment sections. It took about a year
48 and a half for us to compile that best available
49 knowledge and indigenous science to build the foundation
50 for the Forest Plan revision that we're working on right

1 now. I will drop that assessment in the chat here. If
2 you guys have not had a chance to look at it, there are
3 22 different sections, including topics such as
4 "Subsistence and Other Harvest", "The Tongass, as an
5 Indigenous Place", "Salmon and Species of Conservation
6 Concern". So, those are just some of the 22 assessments
7 that were conducted, which sets the stage for us to move
8 forward with Forest Plan revision. We too, are waiting
9 for a Notice of Intent to get published in the Federal
10 Register. We do expect that to happen in the beginning
11 of the new year. We're hoping earlier rather than later,
12 but we are expecting that Notice of Intent in the Federal
13 Register to be the kickoff for this next phase in the
14 Tongass Plan revision, which is developing the plan
15 content, along with -- in collaboration with the public.

16
17 We have a team. So, let me just back up:
18 that NOI, when that does get published, will kick off a
19 30-day scoping period. So, that is an opportunity for
20 RAC members or this RAC to provide some content. We do
21 have a team comprised of Tongass National Forest
22 employees, regional office employees from the Alaska
23 region, and the planning service organizations that have
24 been stood up across the country, working on plan
25 content. They're developing plan content. We have a
26 draft outline of what that plan will look like, and we
27 have actually started developing plan content based on
28 what we got in the -- we have in the assessments. We are
29 looking really carefully at the existing Forest Plan and
30 moving things forward that we think can stay intact. So,
31 that 2016 transition that Nicole mentioned from old
32 growth to young growth harvest, we are in at least one
33 alternative going to be moving that collaboratively
34 developed content forward into this new plan, since it
35 seems to be working and people have collaborated
36 strongly to develop that plan content. So, we're really
37 looking at what needs to change, and that is what's
38 going to be part of the Notice of Intent, and part of
39 what we're developing here is what really needs to be
40 changed, we'll be looking for that information in that
41 30-day scoping period after the Notice of Intent is
42 published this -- in early this next year.

43
44 We are working to have planned materials
45 developed by February-March that we can use in community
46 outreach. We visited 25 communities in 2024 when we
47 started developing the assessments for the Forest Plans.
48 We plan on doing that again this spring, visiting 25
49 communities again across Southeast Alaska to get input
50 on draft plan content and letting folks see what the

1 vision is that we have for this preliminary draft plan
2 as we move forward. So, look for that in April. We are
3 hoping to have those materials ready for the April
4 workshops. And we plan to have a preliminary plan and a
5 draft EIS this coming fall. And then, finalizing the
6 plan in 2027. We know that the plan is moving forward.
7 And we know that you guys are having a spring Southeast
8 RAC meeting, and we would like to, if you would be
9 willing, to bring planned content to the RAC. We would
10 welcome an invitation to come and show you in depth
11 what's been developed and get your contents on specific
12 plan material. I do know that you guys are pressed for
13 time. We can provide more detailed, you know, plan
14 contents at your next RAC meeting, but at this moment,
15 I'm going to pause and see if there's any specific
16 questions about where we're at right now with developing
17 the Tongass Forest Plan.

18
19 ACTING CHAIRPERSON CASIPIT: Okay. Is
20 there any questions for Barb at this point? Oh, go ahead
21 Ted.

22
23 MR. SANDHOFER: Thanks, Chairman. Hey,
24 Barb, this is Ted Sandhofer. In the last meeting we had
25 -- where we had Forest Service come and talk about the
26 plan, there was talk about getting rid of land use
27 designations in the plan. Is that still the idea? I was
28 just struggling with how that's going to work, you know,
29 so.

30
31 MS. MIRANDA: Well, they're going to be
32 called something different, you know, so the 2012
33 planning rule has them called Management Areas, so we'll
34 be moving from Land Use Designations to Management
35 Areas. There's something -- they're essentially the same
36 thing, but we're going to radically reduce the numbers
37 of Management Areas. One of the 2012 planning rule
38 requirements is that we modernize and streamline the
39 plan. And one of the ways that that is being done
40 throughout the country is reducing the number of
41 Management Areas. I think our current thought has us
42 going from like 22 different Land Use Designations to
43 around five. Once again, this is something that we would
44 bring forward for comment and in the April community
45 workshops and would be happy to show you in your next
46 RAC meeting. And some of these have more -- like there's
47 a general forest -- there's a possibility of a General
48 Forest Management Area and then the desired conditions
49 for certain resources, and then the standards and
50 guidelines would dictate what could happen within those,

1 within those General Forest Areas. So, stay tuned for
2 more details. But yes, there will definitely be
3 something along the lines of Land Use Designations, but
4 they will be called Management Areas and there will be
5 fewer of them.

6

7 MR. SANDHOFER: Thank you for the
8 explanation, Barb, appreciate it.

9

10 MS. MIRANDA: Yep.

11

12 ACTING CHAIRPERSON CASIPIT: Okay, is
13 there anyone else, any other Council members?
14 Clarification -- oh, Patty. Go ahead.

15

16 MS. PHILLIPS: Thank you. Thank you, Ms.
17 Miranda. So, we've been -- as a RAC, we hear a lot from
18 Subsistence users, especially on Prince of Wales Island
19 about the old clearcuts causing stem exclusion stage,
20 and I'm wondering if there's going to be anything in the
21 plan about adaptive management of forest down there to
22 improve habitat for deer, which is a critical
23 subsistence resource down there on the island. Thank
24 you.

25

26 MS. MIRANDA: Yeah, thank you, I
27 appreciate that question. I will start with the expert
28 in the room on planned content related to subsistence
29 resources is probably Rob Cross, if he's sitting in
30 there. So, you might want to hit him up on a break, but
31 I will say that one thing to remember about a forest
32 plan is that it's very high level, right. There will be
33 desired conditions that will address what you're talking
34 about right there. And then standards and guidelines on
35 how to achieve those. But the actual prescriptions and
36 how that will be achieved are project level, guided by
37 the plan, but implemented in a separate NEPA document
38 for that specific project. So, I can tell you, from what
39 you're describing there, that we -- that is a known
40 concern and issue, and I'm certain that we will have a
41 desired conditions to try to, you know, to get to remedy
42 that situation, to increase wildlife habitat in those
43 excluded stands and then those desired conditions and
44 standards and guidelines would be applied on a project
45 by project basis.

46

47 MS. PHILLIPS: Thank you. A follow up,
48 please. Like over at near Hoonah, they do like forest
49 management with the tribe. Do you envision, you know,

1 partnerships with the tribes in some of this forest
2 management? Thank you.

3
4 MS. MIRANDA: Yes. Thanks for that
5 question. We do envision having, in the plan contents
6 that we're drafting, some type of desired condition or,
7 or standard and guides or management approach around
8 partnerships, around shared stewardship, whether that's
9 with tribes, tribal corporations, other governmental
10 entities. That has been something we've heard loud and
11 clear throughout the materials that we've collected
12 through developing the assessment, and we just saw some
13 materials that are being used in other forest plans that
14 describe exactly what you said. So, how do you set up,
15 what are the intentions behind sharing stewardship of
16 lands, and co -- you know, managing those areas in
17 collaboration. Of course, you need all to remember, we
18 need to stay within our authorities. But yes, that is
19 top of mind right now for this Administration too, is
20 the shared stewardship opportunities that present
21 themselves as we look at Forest Service land management.

22
23 ACTING CHAIRPERSON CASIPIT: Okay, any
24 other questions for Ms. Miranda?

25
26 (No response)

27
28 Looking around the table, don't see any
29 looking on the screen. I don't see any hands raised.
30 Okay. Did you have a little bit more, or are you done?

31
32 MS. MIRANDA: No, just let us know if you
33 would like us to come to the next RAC with plan
34 materials, we'd be happy to do so. Thank you.

35
36 ACTING CHAIRPERSON CASIPIT: Okay, yeah.
37 Chairman Don and DeAnna will be working on agenda topics
38 and the agenda we've already talked about, possibly of
39 another day, because of all the stuff we've got that
40 that meeting -- because I don't know if you know, but
41 all the wildlife, pretty much all the wildlife proposals
42 from this meeting was postponed to that one, so it's
43 going to be a full fun agenda, so.

44
45 MS. MIRANDA: All right. Well, thanks for
46 all the work you're doing for Southeast. It's much
47 appreciated.

48
49 ACTING CHAIRPERSON CASIPIT: Okay,
50 thanks, Barb, I really appreciate your input. Okay, I

1 think that brings us back around to Board of Game
2 proposals. I -- is everybody okay? We don't need to do
3 another break, I hope. I want to start digging into
4 these Board of Game proposals, we'll start cruising
5 through it and if -- we will take another break here
6 later, but I feel real -- I feel like we need to, at
7 least, get started on the Board of Game stuff. And let
8 me pull open my book here. I did a -- I spent some time
9 last night trying to organize my thoughts on this and
10 how we might want to approach preparing a letter for the
11 Board of Game. Oh, are we going to have a -- I'm sorry,
12 okay. Apparently, we're going to have a presentation
13 first. Okay. Go ahead, Ashley.

14
15 MS. BOLWERK: I was just going to help
16 facilitate taking notes on these, so we just have the
17 spreadsheet up here of all of the Board of Game
18 proposals. And then Rob prepared sort of a rundown of
19 the current state regulations and the current federal
20 regulations for your reference. And so, I'm just going
21 to take notes as you go, on what your stance is and sort
22 of your justification, so that we can write that up for
23 you all later. So, I'll just take notes on the screen
24 here while you guys go.

25
26 ACTING CHAIRPERSON CASIPIT: Good, okay,
27 I thought we're going to have another presentation.
28 Thank you. So, I was doing some thinking about how we
29 could organize this. I was -- in, specifically in terms
30 of organizing a letter. I noticed going through here,
31 there's a lot of similar proposals that I -- that we
32 probably -- we might be able to just have one comment
33 for several proposals that are similar, that sort of
34 thing, just trying to be efficient with our time. I kind
35 of went through the list and tried to pull out the
36 highest priority things that I thought we might want to
37 talk about, but I'll just throw this out on the table,
38 if folks have other ones that I missed or something, we
39 can talk about that. But just to get the conversation
40 started, I thought maybe proposals 1 and 2 could be
41 addressed as one. And we would deal with those --
42 Proposal 12 and 13, deal with those together. You know,
43 proposal 23 is kind of a standalone thing. Proposals 37
44 through 43 are, again, fairly similar and all deal with
45 the same issue, which is Unit 2 deer hunting. 48 through
46 54 is another group that I suppose we can put together
47 at all, kind of, they're all related to one another. And
48 then, I thought maybe folks would be interested in -- I
49 heard public comment this morning in non-agenda items
50 about the issues with the antler restrictions in Unit 3

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1 and 1B. So, with that if folks have anything more than
2 that, maybe we can talk about it as we go, but I was
3 going to focus pretty much on those, if that was the
4 wish of the Council, and I'm looking around for head
5 nods or thumbs ups.

6
7 UNIDENTIFIED: Mr. Chair, I wanted to
8 make sure you had 23 in your list.

9
10 ACTING CHAIRPERSON CASIPIT: Yes, I have
11 23 on the list. That was kind of a standalone thing.

12
13 UNIDENTIFIED: Yeah, okay, thanks.

14
15 ACTING CHAIRPERSON CASIPIT: Okay. So,
16 let's just start from the top. The region wide, multiple
17 unit ones. Proposal 1 and 2 to me are really similar:
18 prohibit the take of big game animals between civil
19 twilight of sunset until civil twilight of sunrise in
20 Units 1 through 5. I'm not sure what we want to do with
21 that, but kind of, you know, something we might want to
22 talk about. To me -- I, you know, I'm not sure. I'm not
23 sure what the intent or what the proponents want to do
24 with that, but -- and what the Council wants to do with
25 that, but I don't hunt at night. Hard to see the animals
26 at night. So, I'm not sure what that's all about, I
27 don't know if it's trying to get at spotlights or what
28 -- you already can't use artificial light at night, so
29 I'm not awful sure what all that means. So, one was
30 submitted by East Prince of Wales Advisory Committee,
31 the other one -- well, I guess they're both submitted
32 by East Prince of Wales?

33
34 UNIDENTIFIED: Mr.....

35
36 ACTING CHAIRPERSON CASIPIT: That's
37 weird.

38
39 UNIDENTIFIED: Mr. Chair, one talks about
40 all big game animals, the other ones just deer.

41
42 ACTING CHAIRPERSON CASIPIT: Oh, deer,
43 okay. I leave it to the Council if we want to prepare a
44 comment for that and whether we oppose or support and
45 maybe a little justification, so if some -- oh, there I
46 see Mike. Go ahead.

47
48 MR. DOUVILLE: Mr. Chair, this was
49 thoroughly discussed by the Craig AC and it was -- both
50 of those were opposed unanimously. One of them stated

1 that he was out after civil twilight and before civil
2 daylight, if you will. But he said he could see clearly
3 without any artificial means. So, you know, it was
4 opposed.

5
6 ACTING CHAIRPERSON CASIPIT: Go ahead, go
7 ahead, Ted.

8
9 MR. SANDHOFER: Yeah, I think I just want
10 to echo what Mike said, you know, I think there's times
11 when it's real bright outside that you can see past
12 civil twilight and earlier, so -- and I was a little
13 confused that there's a statement here about, they
14 thought that juries wouldn't convict somebody if
15 somebody had a spotlight on a deer, and then they'd --
16 somebody aimed at the deer, okay, turn the spotlight
17 off, and then boom! I'm not sure if anybody's ever been
18 not convicted for shooting at nighttime, even if they
19 turn the lights off, so I just, I don't know, maybe
20 somebody else has some -- Lewis, you have some insight
21 on that. But I oppose it, too, so.

22
23 MR. HIATT: Yeah, they have -- that's the
24 reason this came about. The troopers were having a
25 horrible time prosecuting because -- and it's common on
26 Prince of Wales. They shine with a light, they turn it
27 off, shoot. Said, I didn't use the light. And so, that
28 that's one of the reasons it came about, and it has been
29 an issue where, I didn't use a light even though it was
30 midnight. And the law said, no artificial light. And I
31 understand that there are times when it's brighter, but
32 most of these civil twilight, sunset, and sunrise, it's
33 very dark. So, I mean, it could go either way, but it
34 has been an issue in Prince of Wales and I understand
35 from a law enforcement issue. Thank you.

36
37 ACTING CHAIRPERSON CASIPIT: I saw Larry
38 before you, John. Thanks. Larry, go ahead.

39
40 MR. BEMIS: I'm speaking on behalf -- I
41 don't too much about the other units and how you guys
42 handle it, but in Yakutat, on Unit 5, it's always been
43 a standard from daylight to dusk. I mean, if you can --
44 if you can't see, you're not shooting. They got sounding
45 monitors out. They can tell when you're shooting. And
46 if you shoot -- and you usually got somebody showing up
47 in about 15 minutes or 20 minutes, wherever they hear
48 the sounding devices that a gun's being shot, so they
49 would pretty much know whether you're shooting in the
50 dark, in the morning, or in the evening. And the other

1 thing I can say about shooting in the dark or being in
2 the dark is -- with a rifle and having other people out
3 thinking that they could do the same, I don't think it's
4 very safe at all when you're hunting in close proximity,
5 like a lot of the places we are. You can have as many
6 as 5 or 6 hunters within a couple mile stretch or a mile
7 stretch in a field, so. I'm not really for this. Thank
8 you.

9
10 ACTING CHAIRPERSON CASIPIT: Go ahead,
11 John.

12
13 MR. SMITH: It'd be real curious, just
14 to hear what the definition of sunset civil twilight and
15 sunrise civil twilight is actually, what that is. I mean,
16 even -- I talked with the gentleman earlier, you know,
17 what is that definition? You know, when is it dark enough
18 to where I shouldn't be shooting at all? And when is it
19 okay? Because, like, it could be -- I could still see
20 and I take a fire and I shoot a deer. And then five
21 minutes later it's dark outside and I'm cleaning that
22 deer, all of a sudden, the officer comes. But I was able
23 to see when I shot him, you know, that kind of thing.
24 So, actually defining it a little better for the
25 community so they'd understand, you know what that may
26 be. But I know there's a lot of people who do the --
27 that I -- I've seen before get reprimanded because they
28 were using the light like you're talking about, and you,
29 know, it shocks the deer where it won't move. And then
30 they're -- you know, to me that's not hunting.

31
32 ACTING CHAIRPERSON CASIPIT: Oh, excuse
33 me, I see Don's hands up. Go ahead, Don.

34
35 MR. HERNANDEZ: Thank you, Cal. I have a
36 bit of a process question that maybe staff can answer.
37 And proposals or regulations like these, essentially
38 methods and means, if the State were to adopt this as a
39 regulation, would it apply to all hunters, both
40 Subsistence and non-subsistence alike, as opposed to
41 like, you know, season or bag limit?

42
43 MS. BOLWERK: Through the Chair, member
44 Hernandez. No, it would not. You're going to look at a
45 similar proposal that came through our process at the
46 next meeting, so we have this exact same proposal in
47 front of our federal program at the next meeting. But
48 that -- the reason for that is because they own -- this
49 would only apply to the state harvest, not subsistence
50 users.

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MR. HERNANDEZ: Okay. Follow up then. So, if this were adopted by the State, then it sounds to me like it would affect maybe about a half of 1% of the hunters on in Unit 2 so, I don't, you know, without addressing it on a federal level, I just really don't know why we need to spend much time on it.

ACTING CHAIRPERSON CASIPIT: Rob, you have a comment to that?

MR. CROSS: Yeah, just -- through the Chair. This is Rob Cross. I would just say, as Ashley pointed out, there's a companion proposal for the federal side for this exact same proposal. Another thing I would point out is that on the state side, it is explicitly prohibited to use night vision and forward facing infrared versus the federal side we have no prohibition against that and so, I know one issue moving forward for the Regional Advisory Council is if there isn't a similar restriction for civil twilight on the state side of things, it's probably unlikely that the Regional Advisory Council would support a, you know, a greater restriction than the state restrictions on the federal side. So, it's just something to consider. If there's any desire to have a similar restriction on the federal side of things, it may be something to support on the state side.

MR. HERNANDEZ: Okay, thank you, Rob and Ashley. That gives us something to ponder so, appreciate it.

ACTING CHAIRPERSON CASIPIT: James, Jim, go ahead.

MR. SLATER: Yeah. In listening to this, it's a little bit confusing. Is the real intent to stop people from using spotlights and then turning them off and shooting and getting, you know, effectively spotlighting deer? Or is it to stop people from shooting at night, when it's dark and maybe unsafe? It seems to me it's the prior. And so, we're using one regulation to kind of go around and stop an activity that doesn't directly apply to it, I guess. So, I do believe in other states, they have rules that if you have a gun in your car, you can't have a spotlight. Or if you have a gun with you, you can't have a spotlight. Maybe something like that is more appropriate than just putting this blanket rule to try to cover up the spotlighting technique.

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1
2 ACTING CHAIRPERSON CASIPIT: Well,
3 that's a really good suggestion, but we're not the Board
4 of Game. And, you know, I don't know, I suppose we could
5 make that suggestion in our comments, but.....

6
7 MR. SLATER: Yeah, just be a response.
8 If we weren't to support this, we could say that we
9 believe this would be a more direct approach to solving
10 that issue. Something along those lines.

11
12 ACTING CHAIRPERSON CASIPIT: I.....

13
14 Simultaneous speech)

15
16 MS. PHILLIPS: Mr. Chair, I'd like to
17 move on.

18
19 ACTING CHAIRPERSON CASIPIT: Okay. So.
20 Oh, Albert, I see your hand came up. You want to you
21 want to make -- you go ahead and speak.

22
23 MR. HOWARD: Just a comment, a real quick
24 comment, Mr. Chair. When I go hunting, I take my rifle
25 and a spotlight because sometimes I'm heading back home,
26 it's dark so, I don't want to get penalized for my own
27 safety purposes. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

28
29 ACTING CHAIRPERSON CASIPIT: Well, it
30 sounds like maybe the best course of action on these
31 first two is just not provide any comment at all on it,
32 see what the Board of Game does and then we react to it
33 when it comes to us next spring. So, if that's the wish
34 of the Council, we can move on. Okay, I'm seeing nods
35 of heads so, we won't prepare any comments for 1 and 2,
36 and we'll just see what happens with the Board of Game
37 and deal with it when we get it on our table, in March.

38
39 This other -- the next set of two that
40 I had was proposal 12 and 13 and it deals with the use
41 of night vision devices for taking furbearers in 1
42 through 5. And then it's -- yeah, prohibit the use of
43 night vision devices for taking furbearers in 1 through
44 5, that's number 12. And then prohibit the use of night
45 vision for taking furbearers in Units 1 through 5 during
46 state and federal deer seasons. I think maybe folks are
47 concerned about someone going out saying they're
48 trapping, but they're actually deer hunting with night
49 vision glasses. Anyway, okay, let's -- I hear, I see
50 nods from staff that that's what the issue is. Mike, did

1 you have, did I see you raise your hand on this one or
2 -- no, I didn't. Okay. That'd be fine, yeah. Go ahead,
3 Mike.

4
5 MR. DOUVILLE: Okay. Thank you, Mr.
6 Chair. The Craig AC was divided on this one, 9 supported
7 prohibiting the use, and 5 supported, and there was one
8 undecided. I was one of the ones that was in favor of
9 having night vision for predators. But the others felt
10 that there was room for misuse of that. However, there's
11 misuse of a lot of things. And I think that it would be
12 a plus if you were actually out hunting for furbearers.
13 It would be pretty nice. But I was one of those in
14 opposition, so -- but it was a 9 to 5 vote.

15
16 ACTING CHAIRPERSON CASIPIT: John.

17
18
19 MR. SMITH: Yeah. You know, I don't agree
20 with a lot of the items here, I mean, I believe they
21 should be exempt, but when I see the laser sight, you
22 know, we have people that can't see very well, you know,
23 and as long as you're using it during the day, you know,
24 that's just something I'm just thinking about. If you're
25 disabled, you know, and needing that to actually get
26 yourself a deer. Just something to think about. But I
27 don't agree with all these other devices and light and
28 all that. But as far as the laser sight during the day,
29 I don't see any issue with that, but that's just my
30 opinion, you know. I don't use that, but I can see
31 somebody who can't see very well that -- maybe even
32 disabled that they're, you know -- I've had friends that
33 got permission to shoot from their truck because they
34 were in a wheelchair, and they're out hunting by
35 themselves. And so, just sharing a perspective. Thank
36 you.

37
38 ACTING CHAIRPERSON CASIPIT: Mike.

39
40 MR. DOUVILLE: These devices are used in
41 many of the other states, you know, to hunt pigs, hunt
42 coyotes and things like that, you know. In many states
43 it's totally legal. But here we're kind of being a judge
44 and jury or, you know -- this is anticipating too much
45 illegal stuff. And we haven't even had a chance to
46 actually try it.

47
48 ACTING CHAIRPERSON CASIPIT: Louie, go.
49 Louie, please.

50

1 MR. WAGNER: I would -- one thing I would
2 agree with Mr. Douville is, if you're going to be
3 illegal, you're going to be illegal, so. I don't think
4 this will really make a big difference. Thank you.

5
6 ACTING CHAIRPERSON CASIPIT: Well, this
7 might be another two proposals we just not provide any
8 comment and just see what Board of Game does and react
9 when it comes. I -- this is -- one of these is on our --
10 -- no, it's not. We don't have this on our...?

11
12 MS. BOLWERK: No, we don't have this one
13 on ours.

14
15 ACTING CHAIRPERSON CASIPIT: Okay. Yeah,
16 I just saw the federal deer season there, and I figured,
17 well, there must be a companion proposal. Albert, do you
18 have a question or comment?

19
20 MR. HOWARD: Just a quick comment, Mr.
21 Chair. I'm becoming an expert on wolves, even though we
22 don't have any on Admiralty, and I'm wondering Mr.
23 Douville might have a better answer for me. It seems to
24 me like wolves are predators and they move at nighttime.
25 If you're going to set something in place to restrict
26 any night vision equipment, it should be specific to bag
27 limit animals, as an example, for deer and bear and
28 whatever else has a bag limit. It'll be useful to manage
29 the wolves and so on and so forth. So, it's just my
30 thought. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

31
32 ACTING CHAIRPERSON CASIPIT: Okay. Not
33 seeing a whole lot of support for providing comments on
34 these two either. Maybe the best course of action is
35 just to see what the Board of Game does, and then we'll
36 have to react at some point afterwards, and may or may
37 not have proposals to deal with this at the table. I
38 prefer kind of wait, I kind of like the idea of waiting
39 too because, if it does pass and we do get another
40 proposal into this group, we'll have a full staff
41 analysis, be able to take public testimony, be able to
42 go through the process or established process and work
43 through the issues. So, I think maybe -- I'm convinced
44 by the rest of the Council to just see what happens with
45 this and move on.

46
47 Okay, boy, we're moving fast. Ah, yeah.
48 Okay, the next one I had was proposal 23. And this was
49 increasing the non-resident bag limit for deer in Unit
50 4. And I believe this was a Fish and Game proposal,

1 right? Yeah, it was. It's for all of Unit 4, and it
2 would increase the non-resident bag limit for Unit 4.
3 Remainder. Outside of that Chichagof specially -- I
4 forget what we call it. (In Native) It's the (In Native)
5 area. So, I guess they're proposing to increase the non-
6 resident bag limit for non-resident. From two bucks to
7 four deer, so that would -- that's a significant
8 liberalization for non-residents in Unit 4. And like I
9 said, it was proposed by Alaska Fish and Game. Comments
10 from the Council? Go ahead, Ted.

11
12 MR. SANDHOFER: Yeah, I have comments.
13 You know, at our AC meeting, we talked about this one
14 quite a bit, you know. Usually, those non-resident
15 hunters are trophy hunters, you know, a lot of times
16 they don't even take the meat. They give it to local
17 people. So, do you need to take four if you're a non-
18 resident, I don't know. I mean, that's taken away from
19 our subsistence users. I'm sure those communities in
20 Unit 4 would be against this. Also, you know, I mean,
21 right now the biologists for the state said there's a
22 really healthy population right now in Unit 4. But shoot,
23 that could change, it could change this winter, with the
24 snow we're getting, you know, so you make a regulation
25 and then we get some heavy snow and that -- or that
26 population really dies, it could really affect our
27 subsistence hunter. So, I would oppose this, I know our
28 AC opposed this so, those are my comments. Thanks.

29
30 ACTING CHAIRPERSON CASIPIT: Albert, I
31 see your hand up. Please, your thoughts.

32
33 MR. HOWARD: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I
34 believe -- I'm not sure, I couldn't see who was talking,
35 but I support his thoughts. This seems to be a trophy
36 hunter idea, that we heard from the state that if a bear
37 hunter doesn't get a bear, they're allowing them to get
38 a deer, so they take something home. Now, why do they
39 need four when they already get two? I don't understand
40 that part either. I think opposing this is pretty
41 important. Otherwise, we'll be opening the door across
42 the state for this type of thing to happen. The state
43 isn't -- the state -- this, in my mind, the state is
44 violating the Constitution by allocating a state
45 resource to a non-resident of the State of Alaska. And
46 they're also not helping with subsistence priority in
47 that manner as well. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

48
49 ACTING CHAIRPERSON CASIPIT: Yep. Thank
50 you, Albert. And both Ted and you, I mean, that's kind

1 of where I'm at. That's -- those are my feelings. I know
2 on occasion I've gone to sportsman shows down south for
3 different purposes, and you walk through those shows and
4 you see outfitter guides from Southeast marketing, you
5 know, big trophy bucks and that kind of stuff, and going
6 up and getting trophy bucks and I, you know, the non-
7 residents who come up here, I think you're completely
8 right, they're after those big antlers to fill out their,
9 you know -- there's this thing about having a grand slam
10 of blacktail. You want to get a California blacktail, a
11 Columbia blacktail, a Sitka blacktail and a mule deer.
12 You get all those and you get what they call the grand
13 slam, right. So, I'm -- I really wonder why those type
14 of people need to be able to shoot does, number one,
15 because that's what this does, allows them to shoot,
16 does and increases, you know -- I think two bucks, that
17 gives you plenty of chance to get your big rack for the
18 for the Grand Slam or whatever. I'm with y'all, I think
19 we should be opposing this. I think has some -- has
20 potential for some severe negative effects on
21 subsistence users. And like Ted said, I mean, sure, the
22 populations in Unit 4 look good now, but, you know,
23 there's plenty of times when you get a couple bad winters
24 in a row and we're down to, you know, restricting
25 subsistence users and that sort of thing. So, yeah, I
26 agree this should be an oppose and I hope that there's
27 -- was enough said on the record right here today that
28 -- right here, just now, that they can -- the staff can
29 find the justification in those -- in that -- in what
30 we've just talked about. Go ahead, John.

31
32 MR. SMITH: Definitely opposed to that
33 and definitely what brought our deer back in many
34 different locations was keeping the does safe and taking
35 low numbers. But also, you look at these trophy hunters
36 that do come in, they don't come by themselves. They
37 come with five, six, seven, eight folks that are coming
38 in and, you know, six times, you know, this is like,
39 it's a lot of deer. So, I don't agree with that and I
40 think that's plenty.

41
42 ACTING CHAIRPERSON CASIPIT: Okay. Is
43 there anything more there on those -- that proposal
44 number, proposal 23, is there any additional
45 justification that folks need to see up there or
46 anything?

47
48 (No response)
49
50

1 Seeing none, let's move on to the next
2 set of proposals 37 through 43. They all talk about
3 reducing bag limits for deer in Unit 2 from -- well, 32
4 is reducing the bag limit for deer in Unit 2 from 4 to
5 3 bucks. 38 is reducing the resident limit for deer in
6 Unit 2 from 4 to 3, reducing the limit for deer in Unit
7 2 from 4 to 2, four bucks to two. There's quite a few
8 in here about just, you know, non-resident bag limits,
9 reduction in Unit 2 from 4 to 1. And then there's a
10 proposal about changing resident start dates from August
11 -- to August 15th, instead of August 1. I'm really -- I
12 don't know about that one. Increased deer bag limits and
13 extend the seasons for residents and non-residents in
14 the Cleveland Peninsula. Again, all these are actions
15 that the Board of Game would take to change their
16 regulations for the take of deer. None of these would
17 apply to the federal program unless there was a companion
18 proposal that we also looked at and deliberated on. I
19 mean, what's the wishes of the Council on this one? I'm
20 kind of in the boat on this one, to just let the Board
21 of Game do their thing and whatever gets passed, I'm
22 sure somebody, at some point, would issue a -- would put
23 a proposal into the federal program to match that. And
24 again, we would be able to have a staff's analysis,
25 conduct a public hearing. Hear from the people before
26 we take action. Don, you have something?

27
28 MR. HERNANDEZ: Yes, thank you, Cal. I
29 agree with you on all of those, except for the one,
30 proposal number 40. Now, that one deals with non-
31 resident bag limits again and -- actually 40 and 41, and
32 I would like to support the states' -- on the state
33 side, reductions to non-residents. You know, in our
34 system, we have federally qualified and non-federally
35 qualified and you know, since Ketchikan became rural,
36 you know, most of the hunters on Prince of Wales are now
37 federally qualified and come under our federal
38 management. But non-residents, I think, should be
39 separated out as a different user group. And the state
40 can do that and we can't. So, I think we should draw
41 attention to that. And I'm all in favor of reducing the
42 non-resident bag limit to one buck for non-residents in
43 Unit 2. You know, we had previous discussion about, you
44 know, why people are coming to, you know, hunt deer in
45 Southeast Alaska and, you know, for our federally
46 qualified hunters, it's all about the why. You know, the
47 who, the what, the when, the where of where we hunt.
48 That's, you know, those are one factor that's kind of
49 common to all of us but why? Why are we hunting? And we
50 all know why our subsistence hunters are out there

1 hunting. Why are these non-residents coming to hunt? And
2 it's, you know, it's purely for sport. And in an area
3 like Unit 2 where we have, you know, all these issues
4 with subsistence hunters having difficulty meeting their
5 needs, we should do everything we can to discourage non-
6 resident hunting, I believe. And, you know, it ties into
7 our earlier concerns about the growing outfitter
8 businesses that are starting to advertise for hunters
9 coming to the island. I mean, I don't spend much time
10 on the road out here. I don't hunt on the road, I didn't
11 do any hunting on the road this year, but I was out
12 there every week checking my hair boards. And, you know,
13 I see the traffic and, you know, I run into these big
14 vehicles driving around with, you know, 4 or 5 guys in
15 them. And one of them stopped and wanted to chat, you
16 know, and see what I was up to in my state rig and, you
17 know, they were a bunch of guys from Idaho and I don't
18 know how many there are now, but I know we have, you
19 know, some lodge operations that are providing vehicles
20 and catering to people like that. And you know, even bed
21 and breakfast, you know, people can come up and stay at
22 a bed and breakfast and rent a vehicle and go hunting,
23 and it's starting to grow. And, I don't know, I don't
24 think it should be encouraged with generous bag limits
25 that just kind of advertise the fact that, you know --
26 they market these hunts and they make it sound like, oh,
27 come to Prince of Wales Island, you know, it's so
28 abundant with wildlife and, you know, you can take four
29 deer if you want, you know, and all this kind of stuff.
30 And I don't know, it's got to be discouraged. And if the
31 state would, you know, make the statement that non-
32 residents are only entitled to one deer in Unit 2, I
33 think would go a long ways to kind of help alleviate the
34 situation. So, I'm in support of that one.

35
36 ACTING CHAIRPERSON CASIPIT: Okay, thank
37 you, Don. I see Patricia's got her hand raised and I
38 know Ted wants to say something, but before I do that,
39 Jim Slater has to leave. I wanted before he left, I
40 wanted to thank him for all his service on this Council,
41 as he's been a great contributor to these meetings. And
42 apparently, he didn't, he did not reapply for
43 membership, so. But, yeah, I wanted to personally thank
44 you on the record for your work and your help with us.
45 And we greatly -- I greatly appreciate I'm sure all the
46 Council does, too. So, before you leave, I want to give
47 you a round of applause. Thank you.

48
49 (Applause)

50

1 MR. SLATER: Thank you everyone, I really
2 have enjoyed serving with you and in the future, hope
3 to do so again. Thanks.

4
5 ACTING CHAIRPERSON CASIPIT: I'm glad I
6 got a chance to do that before you left. Thank you. I'm
7 going to have Ted speak first. And then after Ted, I'll
8 go to Patricia on the line.

9
10 MR. SANDHOFER: Yeah, thanks, Mr.
11 Chairman. You know, I totally agree with Don for those
12 reasons and also the reasons that we talked about for
13 proposal number 23. Thanks.

14
15 ACTING CHAIRPERSON CASIPIT: Okay,
16 Patricia, Mrs. Phillips, go ahead.

17
18 MS. PHILLIPS: Yes. Thank you, Chairman
19 Casipit. I agree with Don Hernandez. I believe we should
20 be supporting proposals 40 and 41. Thank you.

21
22 ACTING CHAIRPERSON CASIPIT: Mike.

23
24 MR. DOUVILLE: The Craig AC supported
25 proposal 40 unanimously. I guess I'll stop there, but
26 that was -- oh, I know what I was going to say. They did
27 not support the previous ones because they didn't
28 address what we really wanted, so they were all opposed.
29 But this one was supported unanimous. So, the previous
30 three proposals were all dealing with bag limits and
31 didn't support any of those but supported 40 as of
32 (indiscernible). That was the end result.

33
34 ACTING CHAIRPERSON CASIPIT: Thank you,
35 Mike. Before Ms. Moriarty leaves, I wanted to say
36 something before she leaves. I wanted to thank Ms.
37 Moriarty for coming to our Council meeting. I -- it's
38 been a long time since we've seen this -- the Special
39 Assistant to the Secretary at these meetings. I think
40 the last time I remember seeing somebody in her position
41 at our meeting was Pat Pourchot, and that was years ago.
42 So yeah, I wanted to thank you for coming here and
43 hanging with us. This -- it's -- it was very good to
44 have you here listening to us, seeing what we do. And I
45 wanted to thank you again for being here and for
46 listening to us and being so gracious when for us, a
47 pretty tough, tough subject. So, again, thank you very
48 much, and I want to give her a round of applause, too,
49 because.....

50

1 (Applause)

2

3 It's -- to me, it's refreshing to have
4 the Secretary's Office here interacting with us like
5 this. It was very good. Thank you.

6

7 MS. MORIARTY: Well, thank you, Mr.
8 Chairman. And all the members. I enjoyed getting to visit
9 with many of you during the breaks, and I look forward
10 to learning through this process. And I really
11 appreciated the opportunity and your hospitality and
12 look forward to seeing you in Anchorage in February. The
13 tentative date, things can change, but we're targeting
14 the listening session for February 3rd, which is the day
15 before the Federal Subsistence Board workshop in
16 Anchorage on the 4th and 5th to try to be mindful of
17 people's travel and take advantage of the Board being
18 in Anchorage that week. So, that's the game plan. We
19 haven't locked that in so, that is subject to change.
20 But that's the goal. So, thank you very much and look
21 forward to seeing all of you again and have a blessed
22 holiday and a happy New Year.

23

24 ACTING CHAIRPERSON CASIPIT: Thank you
25 very much.

26

27 (Applause)

28

29 Oh, Katya is leaving too. Well, thank
30 you, Katya. Thanks for all your work. Thanks for all
31 your help. You were -- you and DeAnna put together a
32 super letter for us, and we really appreciate it. Thank
33 you.

34

35 MS. WESSELS: Thank you so much for kind
36 words, Mr. Chairman. And members of the Council, thank
37 you for your hard work. We really appreciate you.

38

39 ACTING CHAIRPERSON CASIPIT: Okay. John.

40

41 MR. SMITH: Yeah, just some
42 clarification, and I'm going through all the ones that
43 we're looking at, and I see different issues, like, just
44 like Don was saying, what was the why? And of course,
45 some of the -- is the reducing the bag limits for our
46 non-rural, but also for concerns of the low numbers that
47 decline. So, I don't know if we need to go through one
48 step at a time. I'm just curious, are you going to nail
49 them all at one shot? Some are for the non-residents,
50 dropping them from 4 to 3, and then some of the other

1 ones is actually local folks that we're dropping it
2 because of the decline in the deer. So, I see different
3 whys there. So just.....

4
5 ACTING CHAIRPERSON CASIPIT: I think if
6 you read between the lines of Don's input on this and,
7 you know, I think the big issue for us right now is
8 reducing the non-resident bag limit in Unit 2 to just,
9 to one buck, I think that's really important, we go on
10 the record as supporting -- I think they've got a pretty
11 good justification there. So, we're maybe okay on that.
12 And these other ones, we'll just let the Board of Game
13 do their thing and, like I said, we'll probably -- at
14 some point they'll have to be a proposal submitted to
15 us to this regulatory program, and we would have a fully
16 thought out staff analysis, be able to take public
17 testimony and go through all our steps to ensure that
18 we consider all points of view and that sort of thing.
19 So, I think we would not -- we probably wouldn't provide
20 comments on the rest of that group. Just 40 and 41. If
21 that's -- I've seen nodding there, thank you.

22
23 Okay, the next group of proposals that
24 I kind of grouped together for us to talk about was all
25 these -- there's a whole bunch of wolf stuff, proposals
26 48 through 54. I know we have -- there's some wolf
27 proposals that are under our -- that are going to be
28 under our consideration for next meeting. What's the
29 wish of the Council on this? There's one here that's
30 exactly like our -- the one we're going to be -- the 45
31 days -- the extended wolf trapping season for 45 days
32 in Unit 2. We might want to consider a support on that
33 one. I'm not sure about the other ones, though. I yield
34 to our experts from Unit 2 to help us with those. So,
35 go ahead, Mike.

36
37 MR. DOUVILLE: 47?

38
39 ACTING CHAIRPERSON CASIPIT: Well, yeah,
40 we're starting with 48, but the one that I was most
41 interested in hearing about was maybe 51. We might --
42 definitely want to -- you might want to submit a proposal
43 for supporting the 45-day season. I was saying I'm not
44 sure if we want to do something about these other ones,
45 but I'm open to what the Unit 2 people would like to see
46 with this.

47
48 MR. DOUVILLE: Okay.

49
50

1 ACTING CHAIRPERSON CASIPIT: Was I clear
2 as mud?

3
4 MR. DOUVILLE: Okay. I think first of
5 all, the Department pointed out that the season is 130
6 days long or something like that. And this is regulated
7 by emergency action or emergency -- anyway. So, in 30
8 days they call an emergency closure and -- but they
9 didn't think that trying to change the season to 45 days
10 was a good idea, because it's already 130, but it's
11 regulated by emergency order. So, I think that maybe the
12 AC might withdraw that proposal. The problem -- can I
13 go a little bit farther? The problem we're having here
14 is we have a depressed deer population. It went up --
15 like it's 50% lower than it was early -- a few years
16 back. So, we have half the deer population, according
17 to all their hunter reports and so on. This -- we had
18 quite a discussion in this group of what the wolf
19 population should be, and I suggested 100 to 150, I
20 remember clearly doing that, and the RAC did not agree.
21 And then it was changed to 150 to 200, was the population
22 goal. The Department is -- their population goal and
23 they have been regulating the season to have a population
24 of 200 to 300. And we have a depressed deer population,
25 which will not come up because we have a high -- higher
26 number of predators that are holding it down, if you
27 will. So, I guess the issue is we wanted -- the residents
28 there wanted a longer season to fix that. But how do we
29 fix the other part, where the Department is not -- their
30 population goal is considerably different than what we
31 recommended? So, it's a problem, we don't know what to
32 do with it. And we thought -- the thought was that a
33 longer season like this would work better. But it's point
34 -- there's some -- it's problematic. So, how do we deal
35 with this situation? And we don't know how to deal with
36 it yet. And they publicly stated that they are willing
37 to sacrifice a deer to raise wolf, you know, and the
38 state DNA -- narrowing of DNA and all this, but
39 scientifically, it hasn't been proven yet, or we haven't
40 got there yet. But still, we have this problem, so I
41 don't know how to solve it. Maybe somebody else does.

42
43 ACTING CHAIRPERSON CASIPIT: Okay, I'll
44 get back to you, Lew. I see Don has his hand up for
45 quite a while, so I'll go to Don first online, and then
46 I'll come back to you, Lewis, thanks. Don, go ahead.

47
48 MR. HERNANDEZ: Thank you, Cal. And,
49 yeah, no, I was just kind of standing by here hoping
50 that Mike would go first on this, but I did want to

1 point out that, you know, it is proposal 48 where the
2 Department is proposing raising this population range
3 guideline. Like I said, and Mike pointed out previously,
4 he's 150 to 200, and they're proposing to raise it to
5 200 to 300 now. So yeah, that's problematic. And I did
6 want to ask -- I gather that there's nobody there from
7 the Department of Fish and Game to answer any questions
8 on some of the rationale for this, it was proposed by
9 the Department, so. Am I correct that there's nobody
10 there to answer questions on this from the Department?

11
12 ACTING CHAIRPERSON CASIPIT: Yeah, you
13 are correct Don, there are no representatives from Fish
14 and Game at this meeting.

15
16 MR. HERNANDEZ: Okay. I don't know, maybe
17 some of our staff might be familiar, hopefully they're
18 working with Fish and Game on this, but you know, in
19 their -- in the justification, you know, they --
20 accompanies this proposal, you know, they say, and I
21 think we've heard this at our previous meeting, that
22 initially when they started this wolf management method
23 of assessing the population and setting guideline
24 harvest goals and whatnot, they admit that the initial
25 population estimates were likely underrepresented.
26 Underrepresented the true population size so, I don't
27 know for how long we've been working under the guideline
28 that is underrepresenting the true population size of
29 the wolf population. And to now, at this point say,
30 well, you know, we want to increase the management goal
31 number. But I don't know if we have, you know, really
32 accurate information on what the population size is.
33 That's been my question all along. So, I think that we
34 probably just need to -- I think Mike was probably
35 getting to this -- oppose this proposal to raise the
36 desired population range for wolves. And maybe I'll hear
37 what Lewis has to say about that as well.

38
39 ACTING CHAIRPERSON CASIPIT: Okay, thank
40 you, Don. Lewis, please proceed.

41
42 MR. HIATT: Thank you, Mr. Chair. At our
43 recent AC meeting, Fish and Game was there, and they're
44 already managing for 2- to 300. And I asked them, if
45 this didn't pass at the Board of Game, what would they
46 do? And he said emergency order, they would continue to
47 manage the 2-- to 300. So, like Mike, I don't know how
48 to fix it because they'll continue to manage it 2- to
49 300. I did ask him. And then, a comment on the 45 days.
50 We don't want that, we'd be shooting ourselves in the

1 foot because it's already 100 and some, emergency order
2 is 30. If we put 45, you know, we can't do that, you
3 know. So, that was my comment. Thank you.

4

5 ACTING CHAIRPERSON CASIPIT: I -- oh
6 yeah. Go ahead, Mike.

7

8 MR. DOUVILLE: They also stated that for
9 the last 5 or 6 years, they've been managing for from
10 2- to 300 instead of the 150 to 200. So, if you look at
11 the graphs of our deer, it's got to have a significant
12 decline to where it's kind of bottomed right now,
13 according to them, and maybe a small uptick last year,
14 but there was more hunters on the other hand. So, they've
15 been managing for 2- to 300 for the last 5 or 6 years.
16 They admitted that at our meeting. Without this -- now
17 they're asking for a blessing, but they're doing it
18 anyway. So, how can we correct that on federal land?

19

20 ACTING CHAIRPERSON CASIPIT: Yeah, I find
21 myself in that -- in the same place. And this is another
22 perspective I wanted to put on the record before we, you
23 know, go much further. And I, you know, I -- last couple
24 of meetings, 2 or 3 meetings, you know, we've talked
25 about this a lot and based on the traditional knowledge
26 that was shared with us from the public in recent
27 meetings, it's like -- according to that traditional
28 knowledge, there's a harvestable surplus of wolves that
29 are that's going unharvested, a harvestable surplus
30 going unharvested. And at the same time, I was hearing
31 from subsistence users, tribal people in various
32 villages on the island, that they're having trouble
33 getting their wolf pelts to do their handicrafts and
34 repair of regalia. And to me that -- well, to ANILCA,
35 that is a subsistence use. And so, if subsistence needs
36 are not being met for wolves on the island and there is
37 a harvestable surplus out there, and some of these folks
38 have to go out and buy a wolf pelt for them -- to repair
39 their regalia or make their regalia or make handicraft
40 items, I really think that's wrong. Because here's
41 something that they can go out and harvest and support
42 themselves and their families, and they're not being
43 allowed to because, for some reason, there's this
44 harvestable surplus that's not being used. You see what
45 I'm saying? You see what I'm saying there? And that kind
46 of bugs me because traditional knowledge saying that
47 they have -- there is a harvestable surplus that's going
48 unharvested and yet we have to go buy wolf pelts to do
49 our subsistence, to have our subsistence uses met. And
50 that bugs me, and I don't -- you're right, I'm kind of

1 at that point, how are we supposed to fix this? But
2 yeah, go ahead, Mike.

3
4 MR. DOUVILLE: It has become like a
5 commercialized sort of derby for 30 days that the
6 trapping season opens. The hunting season opens a little
7 bit earlier, but it closes at the same time by emergency
8 order. And while the hunting take is relatively small,
9 I, you know, I don't agree with the hunting season
10 closing at the same time the trapping season does. It
11 just takes away a lot of subsistence opportunity. I mean,
12 that happens occasionally. I mean, you do run across
13 them and, if you had the opportunity, you could take 1
14 or 2 of them, but that goes away. So, the way it's being
15 done is not okay, but I don't have a simple answer
16 because the state differs so much from what the
17 subsistence users would like to see.

18
19 ACTING CHAIRPERSON CASIPIT: So, I hear
20 some support for opposing the increase in the wolf
21 population objective, whether it has an effect or not,
22 I guess is a question. Oh, go ahead, Don.

23
24 MR. HERNANDEZ: Oh, yeah, I think you
25 were just saying what I was going to say, Cal, I think
26 we're hearing some support for opposing this proposal
27 48. I just don't know if we have full consensus on that
28 yet.

29
30 ACTING CHAIRPERSON CASIPIT: So, I'm
31 looking at the screen here, and I'm looking at the number
32 48 for the justification and suggest -- TEK suggests
33 there's a surplus of wolves that are not being harvested.
34 subsistence needs are not being met for wolf pelts. Okay,
35 yeah. Deer population concerns. You know, I'm okay with
36 that, I think the rest of the Council, I hope, is okay
37 with that. I, like I said, I don't know if it'll have
38 any effect, but go ahead, Mike.

39
40 MR. DOUVILLE: Thank you, Chairman. The
41 Craig AC opposed it unanimously.

42
43 ACTING CHAIRPERSON CASIPIT: So, Council
44 for the rest of these that that deal with wolf, do we
45 want to go ahead and put in a comment for any of those,
46 or do we just kind of, like some of these other ones,
47 just see what the Board does and whatever happens we'll
48 have a -- oh, go ahead.

49
50

1 MR. CROSS: Sorry, Mr. Chair, I just, I
2 think I captured a comment for the 45-day season, and I
3 just want to see if that's something that would, the
4 Council would want under maybe a neutral stance but --
5 so I think from Member Douville's comments I captured
6 the Regional Advisory Council recognizes that the
7 trapping season is already, I think it's 130 days, but
8 I'll do the math, already 130 days long and a 45-day
9 season would be a reduction. However, the Regional
10 Advisory Council supports extending the standard 31-day
11 trapping season enacted through emergency order every
12 year. The Regional Advisory Council feels that the wolf
13 population is too large and not managed to the current
14 state population goal of 150 to 200 wolves. So, that
15 would be under a neutral comment, perhaps.

16
17 ACTING CHAIRPERSON CASIPIT: That would
18 probably okay, but I think the justification needs to
19 be added that harvestable surplus of wolves are not being
20 harvested and subsistence needs are not being met. If
21 we're going to do a neutral on that one, I would ask
22 that we put that justification in that one as well. Go
23 ahead, Lewis.

24
25 MR. HIATT: Just like this year, you
26 know, we had our 30 days and then the bitter cold and
27 snow came. And so those of us that trapped, pulled our
28 traps after three weeks. So, we got a three-week season
29 because you can't go over and we wouldn't be able to get
30 to them. So, we would like to see emergency order for
31 more than 30 days, but leave the season at 100 and
32 whatever it is. Thank you.

33
34 ACTING CHAIRPERSON CASIPIT: Okay, Don,
35 I see your hand up. I'm sorry, I should have seen you
36 earlier. Go ahead, Don.

37
38 MR. HERNANDEZ: Thank you, Cal. I don't
39 know if we're still talking about proposal 48, but I did
40 want to point out that there was one other proposal that
41 I wanted to talk about here in regards to wolves. That
42 would be proposal 52, submitted by our own Patricia
43 Phillips. So, when we wrap up this discussion on 48, I
44 just want to talk about that one for a little bit.

45
46 ACTING CHAIRPERSON CASIPIT: I think
47 we're there so, if you want to talk about that one, go
48 ahead. 52.

49
50

1 MR. HERNANDEZ: Well, I was pretty
2 interested in this one myself. And maybe I should start
3 by maybe asking Patty, Patty Phillips what she had --
4 what her intention was with this proposal. But I could
5 talk about my thoughts on it as well, but maybe I'll
6 defer to Patty here first if she wants to say something.
7

8 MS. PHILLIPS: Yeah, thank you, Mr.
9 Chair. Thank you, Don. So, you know when it was the
10 proposal will open time when you can submit proposals.
11 Excuse me. Sorry, the phone's going to ring in the
12 background. So, I was going through Fish and Game's,
13 like regulations. And, you know, this wolf issue -- I
14 feel like, Albert, you know, I'm an expert on wolves,
15 but I'm not. I don't live on P.O.W, so, not real familiar
16 with what you guys live with down there, but I do hear
17 about it, you know, on -- at the RAC level. So, you
18 know, looking through the regulations and looking at
19 past proposal books I was like, something's got to be
20 done about this, they're not, you know, they took away
21 days and amount of wolves that could be taken. And, you
22 know, I kind of got annoyed about that because it's like
23 they take it away, they're not going to give it back and
24 they haven't. But anyways, so proposal 52 adds Unit 2
25 as an area for intensive management of wolves, and the
26 1994 Intensive Management Law designates areas where
27 human consumptive use is the highest priority used of
28 wildlife. And if you broaden -- it's -- my intention is
29 to broaden wolf hunting and trapping on state lands on
30 P.O.W. Unit 2, because I -- isn't that what Board of
31 Game is, the hunting on state lands and I -- and then
32 we cover, I mean, the federal program covers hunting and
33 trapping for wolf on federal land. You know, I'm not,
34 that to me isn't clear, so, My intent is to provide a
35 stable season with additional harvest, increase the bag
36 limit, tap into stakeholder coordination efforts already
37 in place, stakeholder meetings, tribal consultation and
38 implement ongoing habitat enhancement projects
39 specifically intended to enhance the habitat capability
40 of deer populations on Unit 2. Require slash removal and
41 timber sales. Conduct regeneration of second growth
42 forests, thinning young growth, second growth to delay
43 stem exclusion stage. Increase forage vegetation, and
44 improve wildlife corridors with connectivity to old
45 growth stands. You know, have some intensive management
46 objectives. You're not only, you know, managing the
47 wolves, you're managing holistically, the forest around
48 them as well. So, Prince of Wales Island, as of 2018,
49 had 360,000 acres of old growth cut and 169,000 acres
50 are in stem exclusion stage, and 115,000 acres will soon

1 be in stem exclusion stage. Forest management of these
2 areas will provide deer access across the landscape that
3 currently has limited wildlife access corridors.
4 Liberalized hunting and trapping regulations for wolves
5 on state land will result in more deer for harvest and
6 increased harvest opportunity overall. The increased
7 wolf harvest would be a targeted, limited removal, and
8 the intent would be to provide more deer for subsistence
9 harvesters. So, that's my spiel, thank you.

10
11 ACTING CHAIRPERSON CASIPIT: Okay. Thank
12 you, Patty. Don, you want us -- want to begin? Thank
13 you.

14
15 MR. HERNANDEZ: Yeah, great
16 introduction, Patty. And my background information on
17 this is that you know, me and Mike and a good number of
18 other people, maybe Lewis was there as well, we all
19 attended that deer summit down in Klawock a couple years
20 ago and had a lot of discussions, various things on how
21 to improve the deer populations on P.O.W. And of course,
22 that led to a lot of discussion on wolves. And I had a
23 conversation with you know, the local Fish and Game area
24 wildlife biologists and, you know, talking about wolf
25 management. And, you know, I started talking about a lot
26 of the factors that you just mentioned there. And, you
27 know, I also talked about kind of the inefficiency of
28 the way we go about this trapping season. I guess I'd
29 describe it as kind of a random harvest and, you know,
30 Mike Douville kind of described it as kind of a derby.
31 And it's just not necessarily a very effective way to
32 go about wolf management if you have dual objectives.
33 You know, one objective from the Fish and Game Department
34 is to protect the wolf population from, you know,
35 depletion. And they're really concerned about genetic,
36 you know, lack of genetic diversity in the wolves. And
37 you also want to manage to, you know, keep the wolf
38 population at a reasonable level because it impacts the
39 deer populations. So, you know, we had this discussion
40 and I was talking about, you know, what would be a better
41 way to manage wolves. And we were talking about, well,
42 you know, you might want to target your trapping efforts
43 as like some areas, you know, might have a really, really
44 healthy, overabundant wolf pack that for various
45 reasons, nobody's been impacting with hunting or
46 trapping because of accessibility and time and all these
47 factors. And then you have other wolf packs who are
48 probably really getting hit pretty heavy. And that can
49 kind of affect the overall health of the, you know, the
50 wolf populations and just kind of a reference in the

1 proposal 48, the write-up by the Fish and Game
2 Department, they said the available information
3 indicates a sustainable management of Unit 2 wolves
4 requires consideration of both demographic and genetic
5 factors, along with public sentiment and other
6 information. So, to me, I'm pretty sure that demographic
7 factor is, you know, the social structure of wolf packs
8 and how they interact. And you know, how that affects
9 their breeding patterns. And that all affects their
10 genetic makeup. And, you know, it's complicated. And
11 having this, you know, random derby style trapping
12 effort just doesn't really do anything to address those
13 problems. So, you know, in the course of the discussion,
14 I said, well, you know what if you could work with the
15 local trappers and, you know, identify areas that, you
16 know, they need to focus their efforts on and instead
17 of having the season close, you know, on December 15th,
18 you say, okay, we want to take ten wolves out of this
19 area and, you know when that area -- when that's
20 achieved, well, you know, then we'll work with the
21 trappers and say, you know, no, let's lay off of that
22 area and, you know, all these things. And the biologist
23 said, well, what you're talking about there is intensive
24 management. And he said, yes, that's something we do.
25 It could be done, but it would be a really hard sell to
26 get through the Board to, you know, commit the resources
27 and to make that happen. That would require a lot of
28 cooperation between harvesters and biologists. And yeah,
29 it would be, it would be difficult. And then -- but it
30 would also be effective, in my view. And I think if we
31 were to, you know, support Patty's proposal and at least
32 get that discussion on the table, it might lead
33 somewhere. Probably not right away, but it could lead
34 somewhere. And I think we're also kind of headed in the
35 future is potentially, two wolf seasons you know, a state
36 season that, you know, they have different parameters
37 that they can do, you know. The state can do predator
38 control, we can't, that's just kind of an extreme example
39 but this, you know, intensive harvest is something --
40 the intensive management is something the state can do,
41 but it's not really in our system. So, you know, if we
42 eventually move towards where the -- we could
43 potentially have like a state season and then a separate
44 federal season, which, you know, Mike Douville was just
45 talking about, it might just involve an extended hunting
46 season, you know, for subsistence only, something like
47 that. I don't know. I think we might want to start laying
48 the groundwork for, you know, moving in that direction.
49 So, I don't know, kind of a long-winded explanation,
50 but, you know, it's a big topic. It's complicated. And

1 maybe there's an opening to start the conversation here.
2 So, I like Patty's proposal. Thank you, Patty, for
3 thinking of that and actually putting in a proposal. So,
4 that's all I have for now.

5
6 MS. PHILLIPS: Mr. Chair, this is Patty.
7 And thank you, Don. I you know, I was like, I don't
8 know, are they going to throw it out or what? I mean, I
9 was hesitant too, but I'm really encouraged to hear that.
10 Also, you know, the biologist, the ADF&G biologists
11 constantly compares P.O.W. wolves with Island Royale
12 wolves. And it really is no comparison. Island -- Isle
13 Royale is 45 miles long by nine miles wide, with an area
14 of 206.73mi². P.O.W. is 135 miles long by 65 miles wide,
15 with an area of 2,577mi². P.O.W. is nearly ten times
16 larger than Isle Royale, and also they had a parvo virus
17 outbreak in the 1980s which decimated their wolf
18 population. And so, they've had to recruit wolves in.
19 It's a national park. So, I mean, to compare us to that,
20 you know, to compare Prince of Wales Island with an
21 island that, yeah, they have wolves on it, yeah, they're
22 isolated, but they're so small. It's really isn't a
23 comparison. So, the high extents of inbreeding indicated
24 on Prince of Wales Island may not be indicative of it
25 inbreeding depression, which is one of the things that
26 they worry about. So -- but I like, you know, we talked
27 about this in our comments to the Secretary about the,
28 you know, review is that, you know, sometimes it takes
29 us a while to get where we want to go, but we just make,
30 you know, do a step by step, you know, process to get
31 there. And the first step is to introduce the proposal
32 and then we'll go from there. So, thank you.

33
34 ACTING CHAIRPERSON CASIPIT: Thank you,
35 Patty. Ted, you had a comment?

36
37 MR. SANDHOFER: Yeah, this just kind of
38 overall comment. You know, I've been -- this is my fourth
39 meeting, and we've talked about wolves every meeting,
40 especially in Sitka. It was talked about a lot. And I
41 think there's another factor that plays a role in this
42 whole management, you know, and I think that's both the
43 federal and the state agencies are afraid that the wolves
44 can be listed as an endangered species. I mean, that's
45 a factor that's in the back of their mind. And I think
46 that their management is not just for the deer and the
47 viability of that species, but it's for the ESA list,
48 and it's been listed at least twice, maybe more in the
49 past. And right now, there's a petition I believe, that
50 they're working on. So, I mean, that just clouds the

1 whole thing. And I think that that's a huge factor in
2 the conservative management by both the state and the
3 feds, and I don't know how to get around that. So, I
4 just wanted to throw that out there. That's a huge factor
5 in all this deer controversy.

6
7 ACTING CHAIRPERSON CASIPIT: Thank you,
8 Ted. Mike.

9
10 MR. DOUVILLE: There's no question that
11 that is a factor. But also you have to look at a couple
12 other things. A few years ago, they said there was 87
13 wolf [sic] on Prince of Wales. That was way short of
14 really what was there. So, then we have a new management
15 system, we're going to -- we're not going to go by a
16 quota because we haven't been able to keep the quota or
17 keep it under, it always went just a little over. So,
18 what we're going to do is, here's a population of 174
19 mid-range. We're going to open it for two months and we
20 harvested 164. But the next year we're right back, and
21 that caused ESA, because everybody believed there was
22 only somewhere between 6 and 8 wolves left on Prince of
23 Wales Island. But the -- and it's all due to flawed
24 science, you know, and that -- I mean, that's exactly
25 what it was. Because the next year we had a normal type
26 season, I can't remember what the population was then,
27 but being a smart ass, I said, well, those 6 or 8 wolves
28 are really resilient because they really populated back
29 in one year. But the ESA was caused by flawed science.
30 It's pure and simple as that.

31
32 ACTING CHAIRPERSON CASIPIT: Okay, thank
33 you, Mike. I think I'm hearing support for this one, and
34 I think we can put support in that column, and I --
35 there's probably -- unless you all were taking notes
36 there so, I -- there's probably enough of a justification
37 there for you. Is there any other -- one of these
38 proposals that deal with wolf that we want to submit or
39 actually submit a stance on, or comments? Doesn't sound
40 like it, but. Go ahead, Mike.

41
42 MR. DOUVILLE: I want to make one comment
43 on Patty's proposal. I think the AC looked at it as
44 intensive, meaning that you're really going to go after
45 and try to harvest more wolves and stuff. But really,
46 after listening to all this, it's not what it meant. It
47 was more of a it was a much different approach than what
48 the AC was reading into it. And they were opposed to it
49 for that reason. But, you know, further explanation
50 gives clarity to it.

1
2 ACTING CHAIRPERSON CASIPIT: Well, Patty
3 may be hearing the train a coming for her, too. Then
4 maybe she might want to be our representative when we
5 go to the Board of Game with this, but I'll leave that.
6 I don't want to volunteer Patty. She has to volunteer
7 herself.

8
9 MS. PHILLIPS: Hey, I've been stuck here
10 19 days, no planes in the Pelican. I doubt I'll be
11 getting out anytime soon.

12
13 ACTING CHAIRPERSON CASIPIT: Okay.
14 Anything else on Unit 2 wolves, that we want to discuss?

15
16 (No response)

17
18 Not seeing any. Let's go to these last
19 two that deal with moose in Unit 3 and 1C and B -- 1C
20 and 1B. Okay, proposal 64 was to eliminate the
21 regulation that excludes broken, damaged, or altered
22 antlers from the definition of spike-fork for Unit 1B,
23 1C and 3. I heard testimony from member of the public
24 this morning during agenda -- or non-agenda items that
25 he thought this might be a good idea. Anyway -- oh,
26 there we go. Hey, Don. You have something to say?

27
28 MR. HERNANDEZ: Thanks, Cal. I just also
29 wanted to maybe talk about elk. But continue on with
30 this proposal. Maybe we want to go back to elk.

31
32 ACTING CHAIRPERSON CASIPIT: Well,
33 actually, Don, let's -- I got ahead of myself, sorry.
34 We will -- let's go back to elk. What was the particular
35 number of the proposal that you wanted to discuss? 62?

36
37 MR. HERNANDEZ: I think -- I put my check
38 mark there on proposal 57: Change the Season Bag Limit
39 Permit Requirements for Elk on Zarembo Island. I think
40 that one best addressed what the Chair of the Wrangell
41 Advisory Committee was talking about this morning. Yeah,
42 no, maybe not. Let me check again here. Proposal 57, I
43 think, would be the best one to look at.

44
45 MS. PHILLIPS: Mr. Chair.

46
47 ACTING CHAIRPERSON CASIPIT: Oh, sorry
48 Patty, go ahead.

49
50

1 MS. PHILLIPS: Yeah, this is Patty
2 Phillips. So, this was the -- I questioned the -- Chris
3 Guggenbichler, Chair of the Wrangell local Fish and Game
4 Advisory Committee. And, you know, I attended their last
5 -- you know, I was on the phone listening to their AC
6 meeting and they discussed proposal 57, they had
7 discussed this in a previous meeting, spent two hours
8 on it and said, hey, let's rest on this and then we'll
9 -- at our next meeting, we'll bring it up again. So, I
10 had taken notes, and I had read the notes to him and
11 asked if they were correct, and he gave me one, you
12 know, one further clarification, but I support proposal
13 57, which changes the season bag limit and permit
14 requirements for hunting elk on Zarembo Island in Unit
15 3. That -- my notes on their meeting was to protect the
16 deer herd, the Wrangell AC state that the elk are
17 outcompeting the deer for forage food browse and
18 recommend reducing the population of elk. Elk and deer
19 overlap with what they eat, competing with each other.
20 The shore habitat is heavily browsed on Zarembo Island.
21 The deer are 10 to 15 pounds less in weight than deer
22 harvested from other areas. Additionally, subsistence
23 needs by Wrangell federally qualified users are not
24 being met and cannot harvest elk to meet their
25 subsistence needs that deer provides after a hard
26 winter. So, that's my comments. Thank you.

27
28 ACTING CHAIRPERSON CASIPIT: Don, I see
29 your hand up. Is that -- so what Patty just talked about
30 for 57? Go, just go ahead, yeah.

31
32 MR. HERNANDEZ: Yeah. I would agree with
33 Patty on that. I think we should support the proposal
34 by Wrangell Fish and Game Advisory Committee on this. I
35 would think that, you know, the -- our Council might
36 even want to go further than this with a proposal at
37 some point, you know, to address elk on Zarembo Island
38 but, I don't think we have any proposals before us right
39 now but. Yeah, I don't know why Zarembo Island was
40 included with (In Native) Island as a place where, for
41 some reason, elk are -- should be considered essentially
42 a sport hunting animal. So, yeah there -- there's
43 apparently a pretty good population of elk, and they're
44 impacting the deer and we had a discussion a number of
45 years ago about whether we should have a customary and
46 traditional use determination for elk, seeing as how
47 they are an introduced species. And we did decide that
48 -- we did -- the Board did decide that there would be a
49 customary traditional use for elk in Southeastern units
50 -- in these units. And yeah, I think we should be allowed

1 to take elk on Zarembo Island so, let's support this
2 proposal.

3
4 ACTING CHAIRPERSON CASIPIT: Go ahead,
5 Ted.

6
7 MR. SANDHOFER: Yeah, thanks, Mr.
8 Chairman. You know, I also support this. You know Chris
9 was pretty convinced that they do compete with the deer
10 for forage, especially in the winter, when they have bad
11 winters, they're all down on the shore. And right now,
12 he called it a sanctuary, you know, you can't hunt --
13 although there is -- you could, there was one draw last
14 year and I think it's two this year, I believe. So, you
15 can -- there's a drawing hunt for two animals on Zarembo
16 Island. But that's two and there's a lot more. You know,
17 I know the Fish and Game has a real hard time of counting
18 the elk because it's heavily timbered and you really
19 can't see them. But I think they've started using trail
20 cams where they're getting a little bit better
21 population estimate. But you know, when you have Zarembo
22 Island, which is -- it's probably the the heaviest hunted
23 island in this area, at least for Wrangell, it's huge
24 for Wrangell. And then you have this other animal that
25 you can't hunt that's competing with that deer for food,
26 for groceries. I support it fully. And that's where I
27 stand. Thanks, especially with Chris' comments and the
28 AC here. Thanks.

29
30 ACTING CHAIRPERSON CASIPIT: Okay,
31 thanks. Other Council members?

32
33 (No response)

34
35 It sounds like we have a support on this
36 one for a stance as well. And staff, do you have enough
37 for a justification there? It sounds like we do.
38 Especially in terms of effect on deer, so. Okay. Now
39 we'll go back to 64. Again, some concern about the --
40 how -- some concern about how the broken, damaged or
41 altered antlers are causing issues for folks to meet
42 their subsistence needs here in Units 1B, 1C and 3. Any
43 thoughts on that one? Oh, go ahead. Yep.

44
45 UNIDENTIFIED: Thank you, Mr. Chair. You
46 know, I talked to Chris last year, you know. There was
47 a real concern last year because there was quite a few
48 animals that were broken and broken early in the year
49 so it's hard to really tell if it's broken until you get
50 right up to it and you see that there's this old scar.

1 It could have been broken in velvet. But according to
2 the the law, if you read it black and white, it says if
3 it's broken, it's illegal. So, there was a lot of deer
4 -- or moose taken from individuals. They were trying to
5 feed their family last year. And Chris was coming to me
6 trying to see, hey, should we put in some federal
7 proposal to have a subsistence on for moose? Later on,
8 he said, well, let's just hold off and wait and see what
9 happens. Now, this year, it's totally different, you
10 know, we had 147 moose, record moose. I think we said
11 that before taken, with only 5% that were illegal,
12 broken. So, you know, it's working pretty good. Good
13 population. So I kind of on the fence with this one,
14 either to support it or not. But last year was tough on
15 Wrangell, because they got a lot of moose taken by the
16 state because it didn't meet the antler restrictions.
17 This year was a much better -- so, it's kind of calmed
18 down a little bit so, I'm not sure to support or not.
19 So, that's kind of where I'm standing right now. Thanks.

20
21 ACTING CHAIRPERSON CASIPIT: Thank you.
22 Patty, I see your hand up.

23
24 MS. PHILLIPS: Thank you, Mr. Chair.
25 Yeah, I support the proposal, but I ask -- my question
26 is why? Why can't it be only an alt -- only an antlered
27 bull may be taken. Why does it have to have these spike
28 forks? I mean, I've been asking that the - all -- the
29 whole time we've been dealing with this. How many years
30 it's been? You know, it would -- if it was only an
31 antlered bull maybe taken, then you wouldn't be having
32 these moose that people eat being taken away from them
33 because it doesn't meet the criteria.

34
35 ACTING CHAIRPERSON CASIPIT: Go ahead,
36 Ted.

37
38 MR. SANDHOFER: I can try to answer that,
39 Rob might be better to answer but, you know, Patty,
40 they're trying to preserve the good breeding aged bulls.
41 So, if you take all the bulls, which you could take
42 quite a few bulls, because there's a lot of bulls, seeing
43 that you can't hunt because they're illegal. But if you
44 take all the bulls, the population might crash a bit.
45 They're taking the young bulls and the old bulls and
46 those bulls in the middle that are prime breeding bulls,
47 they want to they want to keep. So, that's the reason
48 why the antler restriction is there. And like I say,
49 Rob, if you can explain it better, go ahead.

50

1 MR. CROSS: Through the Chair. Member
2 Sandhofer, no, I think you did a great job of explaining
3 it. You know, as the Chair or member Casipit is -- has
4 brought up, you know, it's sort of considered often to
5 be, like the lazy way to manage. You know, if you don't
6 know the exact population numbers or the sex ratios or
7 you know, occurrence of twinning calves and things like
8 that. You know, as you know, Southeast is kind of hard
9 to do population estimates on and so, this is -- sort
10 of serves two purposes. You know, as member Sandhofer
11 said, it protects some demographic of the bulls to allow
12 for breeding to occur and keep that sex ratio somewhere,
13 you know, in the, you know, 33 to 100 or some --
14 somewhere around there. And then the other thing is that,
15 you know, if this population can't sustain an any bull
16 permit, then it's going to turn into a draw hunt, and
17 then that turns into a lottery to subsist. And so, under
18 these regulations, for better or worse, it lets
19 everybody go out and have a shot at getting a moose. You
20 know, instead of it being a luck of the draw, literally,
21 for a draw hunt.

22
23 ACTING CHAIRPERSON CASIPIT: Thank you,
24 Rob. Yeah, I think some -- when we had this discussion
25 the other day, you also mentioned to me that it also
26 allows a large amount of hunters to hunt and be able
27 to have a fairly long season and plenty of time in the
28 field for hunters. I know in spike forks (indiscernible)
29 restricted hunts you end up looking a lot of animals.
30 You look at a lot of animals, and you're up in the tree
31 with your binoculars, looking for those brow tines and
32 making sure you're not getting a mid-day point, there's
33 a brow tine, that sort of thing. So, yeah, it's -- it
34 provides a lot more opportunity for people to hunt.

35
36 Yeah. And yeah, I concur. It's -- you
37 can manage them, you can have a hunt and have lots of
38 people hunting and you don't have to know a whole lot
39 about population dynamics. You just, you know, you're
40 providing enough bulls to do the breeding, and you kind
41 of let it go at that. So, what's the wish of the Council?
42 Do we want to support this or just remain neutral and
43 see what happens? I'm kind of I'm -- I can go either
44 way, but I sure hate the idea of making criminals out
45 of subsistence users, subsistence users who are just
46 trying to feed their family, and they -- and I, you
47 know, I've been in the tree before and I've, you know,
48 looking at spikes and forks and stuff and, you know, it
49 would be hard to, you know, 300 yards away, seeing the
50 moose come towards your tree and you're trying to figure

1 out if it really is a spike fork or it's just got one
2 of its points broken off, it's a (indiscernible) bull
3 and you got a point broken off, it's difficult so.....
4 Puts users in a difficult situation, especially when
5 they're looking for food. Go ahead, John.

6
7 MR. SMITH: Just more of a question.
8 That's disappointing to hear about that but, you know,
9 when somebody does make that decision, is it just the
10 officer out in the field that makes this judgment in
11 this deal, or does it come to the seat of a Council that
12 actually decides whether they get to keep their harvest
13 for their family? I just, I really -- and I think I've
14 said this at the meeting at the same with Wrangell, I've
15 sat at their table and heard this is actually inviting
16 that officer to be part of the community, coming to
17 their meetings, sitting there and actually educating
18 them on the process of keeping an eye out for that, but
19 just for them to build a community with them and, and
20 understanding just some words and perspective.

21
22 ACTING CHAIRPERSON CASIPIT: Mike.

23
24 MR. DOUVILLE: You have to understand why
25 this was there to begin with. Is that you had some very
26 good, talented people that were very good at
27 manipulating the horns and making them legal, and it was
28 sometimes hard to tell. So, that's why this regulation
29 was put there to begin with. And I think you'd be going
30 back there again if you made the change. I don't support
31 it.

32
33 ACTING CHAIRPERSON CASIPIT: Thank you.
34 You know, we can remain neutral on this one, but still
35 keep that justification there, because I think it's
36 important for the Board of Game to know that we have a
37 problem with subsistence users, for no fault of their
38 own, getting in trouble with the law and getting their
39 getting their moose taken away from them and, you know,
40 they're not one of those bad guys who started this
41 problem, they're just out there trying to feed their
42 family. And I'm okay being neutral, but let's keep that
43 justification in there so that the Board of Game knows
44 that, hey, we're concerned about this, this is -- we
45 shouldn't be penalizing people who are trying to comply
46 and do the right thing.

47
48 MS. PHILLIPS: Okay. Sounds good.

49
50

1 ACTING CHAIRPERSON CASIPIT: I only have
2 one more here, 65. It says, Remove the Antler Restriction
3 for the Moose Hunts in 1B and 1 -- 3 and Replace with a
4 Shorter Any-bull Hunt in October. And, does anybody want
5 to comment on that? Okay, go ahead.
6

7 MR. SANDHOFER: Thank you, Mr. Chair.
8 Yeah, I don't support this. I know there's a lot of
9 people that it's part of what they do in the fall. They
10 go out and set up a camp or have a cabin and want to
11 spend those 30 days in the woods. If you rest -- if you
12 just had a [sic] opening from the first to the 15th, you
13 could overharvest animals and then people that were used
14 to going out -- because it's not just harvesting the
15 animal, for some people it's going out with your buddies
16 and talking around the campfire and bs-ing [sic] at night
17 and having a few drinks for a month. I know my father-
18 in-law, that's what, you know, that's what he does. And
19 it's part of his lifestyle, has been for a long time.
20 So I hate to just say, okay, we're going to go from the
21 first to the 15th, then cut off, because I'll tell you
22 what, it's going to -- I think we start wearing orange
23 in the woods because it would be -- it'd be crazy for
24 15 days, and I just don't support that. Thanks.
25

26 ACTING CHAIRPERSON CASIPIT: Thank you,
27 Ted. And my experience hunting in 1C, Gustavus is that
28 -- and in any bull hunt like that, you'll end up with a
29 season three days long before they close it by emergency
30 order. And then you have a whole bunch of people who
31 didn't even get a chance. So, I kind of agree with you.
32 Go ahead, Louie.
33

34 MR. WAGNER: Thank you, Mr. Chair. In the
35 hotel this morning, there was 5 or 6 Wrangellites having
36 coffee, and I asked them what they thought of this, and
37 they said no. They said it would be a war zone and there
38 would be dead moose everywhere. And they did not agree,
39 so, I agree with Ted and yourself. Thank you.
40

41 ACTING CHAIRPERSON CASIPIT: Yeah, I
42 guarantee I hunted in those -- I hunted moose in 1C
43 Gustavus (indiscernible) when it was in any-bull hunt,
44 and it was a zoo. I mean, it got down to the point where
45 the season was open for one and a half days, and you
46 were -- we were getting 40 to 50 bulls on the ground on
47 the first day. And it was just -- it -- yeah. I don't
48 think anybody wants that. Yes, I'm totally okay with
49 opposing on this one.
50

1 Okay, I -- this was the list that I had.
2 Is there any other proposals that the Council wants to
3 address for the Board of Game?

4
5 (No response)

6
7 I don't -- oops! I don't see anybody
8 online and I don't see anybody at the table raising
9 their hands. At this point what we need is a motion to
10 direct Council -- direct staff to work this up into a
11 letter for Don and -- for Don to approve and will -- oh,
12 go ahead.

13
14 UNIDENTIFIED: I'm sorry, you know, I did
15 have a call from a [sic] individual in Petersburg, Caleb,
16 that submitted proposal 69 about grouse hunting. Can we
17 just discuss that one for just.....

18
19 (Simultaneous speech)

20
21 ACTING CHAIRPERSON CASIPIT: Yeah, go
22 ahead, I'm -- I didn't really pay attention.

23
24 UNIDENTIFIED: Yeah, I'm sorry, it was,
25 yeah. He just liked to extend the season for grouse from
26 -- to close June 15th instead of May 15th. I know there
27 was some discussion about harvesting hens during that
28 time. They had started the gestation period and stuff,
29 and that was why there was some people that were
30 concerned in Petersburg, but I wanted to bring it up for
31 discussion and say, see what the rest of the Council's
32 [sic] thinks about it. Thanks.

33
34 ACTING CHAIRPERSON CASIPIT: Go ahead,
35 Louie.

36
37 MR. WAGNER: I'd love to hunt blue
38 grouse. And I'm glad you brought this up. We talked
39 about it in our AC meeting and Fish and Game was
40 concerned with clutches and hens but, I don't think I've
41 ever shot a hen. And you're after the males because
42 they're hooting. And my problem -- I mean, I absolutely
43 love hunting these. And my problem is a lot of times
44 there's so much snow that you can't get to them. And so,
45 if the season was extended a little bit longer there'd
46 be more opportunity. And again, I don't think I've ever
47 shot a hen. I think one time I saw a nest. It's the
48 males that are hooting that you're after so, I agree
49 with this, would support it. Thank you.

50

1 ACTING CHAIRPERSON CASIPIT: Well, I used
2 to hunt grouse a lot and I had -- been in the fall, not
3 in the spring, yeah. Oh, Patty, go ahead.

4
5 MS. PHILLIPS: Thank you, Mr. Chair. So,
6 I was looking at proposal 18, which is the Wrangell AC
7 proposal. It shifts the hunting season for grouse in
8 Unit 1 through 5 to August 10th through May 31st. So, I
9 preferred that proposal, but I, you know, really, I don't
10 hunt grouse so, I was just liking their justification.
11 Maybe, Louie, you could talk about that one.

12
13 MR. WAGNER: Yeah, either one I, they
14 just extending the season is what we're after. Just for
15 more opportunity, especially in inclement, you know,
16 when you have a big snowy year so, I think that's what
17 we're after is extending the season. Thank you.

18
19 ACTING CHAIRPERSON CASIPIT: Ted, go
20 ahead.

21
22 MR. SANDHOFER: Yeah, thanks. Thanks, Mr.
23 Chair. Yeah, I think one other reason. You know, May
24 15th, the kids are still in school, you know, so if you
25 extend it out to June 15th, it has -- the children that
26 are in school, maybe get to do a little bit more hunting.
27 So, I think I support this proposal by Caleb. Thanks.

28
29 MS. PHILLIPS: Mr. Chair, this is Patty.

30
31 ACTING CHAIRPERSON CASIPIT: Go ahead,
32 Patty.

33
34 MS. PHILLIPS: Maybe we could support
35 both.

36
37 ACTING CHAIRPERSON CASIPIT: Yeah,
38 Patty, that's exactly what I was thinking. We just
39 support both and let the Board decide which way they
40 want to go, whether they want to keep it to Unit 3 or
41 bigger, and I'm sure they'll mess around with the dates
42 if they feel they need to, but I'm okay with supporting.
43 That's fine.

44
45 Okay. Is there any other proposal we
46 need to develop a position on?

47
48 (No response)

49
50

000140

1 It looks like we're done. We're not
2 seeing any raised hands or over here. So, let's get back
3 to what we need for a motion. I'd like to have a motion
4 to direct staff to develop a letter based on what we've
5 just done here on the spreadsheet. And then, would be
6 submitted to Don for approval and signature.

7

8 MR. SANDHOFER: So moved.

9

10 UNIDENTIFIED: So moved.

11

12 MR. SMITH: Second.

13

14 ACTING CHAIRPERSON CASIPIT: Got two
15 moves and a second so, I'll give the move to Ted and the
16 second to John. So, I entertain a question, I think
17 we've talked this one enough.

18

19 UNIDENTIFIED: Question.

20

21 ACTING CHAIRPERSON CASIPIT: The
22 question has been called. I will do just a voice vote
23 on this. All those in favor say, aye.

24

25 IN UNISON: Aye.

26

27 ACTING CHAIRPERSON CASIPIT: Opposed
28 nay.

29

30 (No response)

31

32 No opposed. Unanimous. Now, the next
33 step is, I think -- I'm sure the Council wants to have
34 somebody go to this meeting and represent us and present
35 this information. Do I hear any volunteers? It's going
36 to be in Wrangell the last week in January.

37

38 UNIDENTIFIED: You know, I apologize. I'm
39 going to be gone for a couple of months, that's why I
40 didn't throw my name through this one or the other
41 meeting. I just.....

42

43 (Simultaneous speech)

44

45 ACTING CHAIRPERSON CASIPIT: I
46 understand, you know, a lot. You know, folks have other
47 things, but yeah.

48

49 MR. SMITH: Mr. Chair, I echo what he
50 says. January. February. You know, pretty busy time of

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1 the year, or I'd jump in there.

2

3 ACTING CHAIRPERSON CASIPIT: I know Don
4 is -- I know Don -- it's really hard for him to travel
5 at that time. I know that, and he'd get stuck somewhere
6 forever trying to get back to Point Baker. Okay, I hear
7 the train a coming.

8

9 MS. PHILLIPS: Someone can call in. We
10 don't have to go, you could call in.

11

12 ACTING CHAIRPERSON CASIPIT: Yeah, I you
13 know, I appreciate that, Patty, but yeah, it just seems
14 like if -- for us to get our points across and be able
15 to interact, it's really nice to have somebody in person.
16 Okay, I'll volunteer. My, yeah, oh I'll need a motion
17 and a vote to send a person, me, to the Board of Game
18 meeting.

19

20 MR. SANDHOFER: I make a motion to for
21 you, Cal, to attend the Board of Game meeting here in
22 Wrangell, to represent the Council.

23

24 ACTING CHAIRPERSON CASIPIT: Do I hear a
25 second?

26

27 MR. BEMIS: Second.

28

29 ACTING CHAIRPERSON CASIPIT: Moved by
30 Ted. Seconded by Larry. To send me to the federal -- to
31 the Board of Game meeting, to carry our comments and to
32 interact with the Board. Question.

33

34 (Simultaneous speech)

35

36 MR. SMITH: Question.

37

38 ACTING CHAIRPERSON CASIPIT. Got it. Got
39 a call for the question from John. I'll do a voice vote.
40 All those in favor say aye.

41

42 IN UNISON: Aye.

43

44 ACTING CHAIRPERSON CASIPIT: Those
45 opposed?

46

47 (No response)

48

49 Motion carries, unanimous. All right, I
50 think that's all of it. No? You're kidding me.

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MS. PERRY: Mr. Chair, you will need to ask the Council for a motion on asking Office of Subsistence Management to provide funding to send you to that meeting. Thank you.

ACTING CHAIRPERSON CASIPIT: Okay. Can I get a motion from somebody to ask them to provide money to do that?

MR. SANDHOFER: I make the motion for OSM to provide you with the funds to go to the Board of Game Meeting in Wrangell.

MR. SMITH: Second.

ACTING CHAIRPERSON CASIPIT: Moved by Ted, seconded by John to ask OSM to provide the money to provide representation at the Board of Game meeting in Wrangell at the end of January. I'll entertain a question.

MR. SMITH: Question.

ACTING CHAIRPERSON CASIPIT: Question by John. Do a voice vote. All in favor, say aye.

IN UNISON: Aye.

ACTING CHAIRPERSON CASIPIT: Those opposed?

(No response)

No opposition. Motion carries. I think that -- now, I think that gets all our action items. Okay. Thank you.

MS. PHILLIPS: Mr. Chairman. Yes.

ACTING CHAIRPERSON CASIPIT: Yes, Patty, go ahead.

MS. PHILLIPS: Did we have to do that kind of motion to send you to the review meeting? Ask OSM for money to send you -- to approve sending you to the review meeting?

ACTING CHAIRPERSON CASIPIT: Thanks, Patty. I've got DeAnna looking at the papers now.

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MS. PHILLIPS: Thanks.

ACTING CHAIRPERSON CASIPIT: Okay, we got to do funding for sending the two members to the listening session on February 3rd-ish.

MR. SANDHOFER: I make the motion for OSM to provide the funds to send two individuals to the listening meeting in Anchorage.

MR. SMITH: Second.

ACTING CHAIRPERSON CASIPIT: Okay. Moved by Ted, seconded by John to ask OSM for the money to send two Council members to the listening session in Anchorage around the 3rd of February. Entertain a -- got the question from John. I'll do a voice vote. All in favor, say aye.

IN UNISON: Aye.

ACTING CHAIRPERSON CASIPIT: Those opposed, nay.

(No response)

No opposition. Motion carries. Is there anything else I missed that we need to have motions? Danny or -- DeAnna indicates to me that everything -- we don't have any more motions. Okay. We have 45 minutes before -- oh. Go ahead, DeAnna, you have an announcement.

MS. PERRY: Mr. Chair, just something for the Council to consider. As you mentioned earlier, the Council will be looking at providing or developing rather proposals for the fish cycle next year, at our March meeting. And as has been also indicated, it's going to be a very full agenda. We are not guaranteed to have a fourth day granted to us, so it might be worth considering forming a work group to meet virtually between now and the March meeting, to perhaps rough-draft some proposals to bring to the Council for consideration. It would maybe speed up that process at the March meeting. Again, it would have to be the number under quorum. But they would be able to meet virtually, we've done that in the past. All decisions would be made at the meeting, so it wouldn't be a RAC meeting, but just something to consider since we will have quite a full agenda in March.

1
2 ACTING CHAIRPERSON CASIPIT: Okay. Thank
3 you, DeAnna. Is there anyone who wishes to participate
4 in such a work group for -- I assume the fisheries
5 proposals are -- oh, that's the Board of Fish statewide.
6 I just don't see us.....
7

8 UNIDENTIFIED: Mr. Chair.
9

10 ACTING CHAIRPERSON CASIPIT: Go ahead, go
11 ahead.
12

13 UNIDENTIFIED: Thanks. I know there's
14 just some proposals on the trawl fisheries and types of
15 gear. I think, you know, we're very interested in that
16 trawl fishery, and I don't know if you want to address
17 them or not, but I did see some in there. I guess it's
18 up to you, Mr. Chairman, and maybe the rest of the
19 Council, but I know that that's -- it's scheduled for
20 March 17th through the 20th in Anchorage, the finfish
21 meeting. I'm not sure when proposals are due, but just
22 a comment.
23

24 MS. PERRY: Through the Chair. Are we
25 switching from talking about the federal proposals for
26 next federal fish cycle to, I guess, kind of backing up
27 and looking at the statewide state fish proposals?
28

29 UNIDENTIFIED: I, you know, my only
30 comment was it was on trawls fisheries. And we always
31 kind of had a, an interest in the trawl fisheries with
32 the bycatch especially. You know, I mean we wrote a
33 letter in Anchorage, I think we - I - actually, we all
34 got together, I think, all the ten Councils and talked
35 about it. I'm not saying that we need to do it. I'm just
36 throwing it out there. Should we -- I guess I don't want
37 to increase our workload, but just a comment.
38

39 ACTING CHAIRPERSON CASIPIT: Okay. Would
40 it be -- yeah , we would have to act today on these. You
41 know, if I remember, I -- this would be trawl fisheries
42 under state management. So, this would be trawling
43 within three miles. I think most of the concerns I've
44 heard about trawling has been the federal trawl
45 fisheries that are in federal waters. I mean, we could
46 just maybe submit a -- just a letter, just -- we've
47 already, correct me if I'm wrong, Deanna, but haven't
48 we already, wrote up letters about trawl fishing and our
49 concerns about it and sent it to the North Pacific
50 Fisheries Management Council? I don't know if we -- I

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1 think we have, maybe we can just -- yeah.

2

3 UNIDENTIFIED: I'll withdraw comment.

4

5 MR. SMITH: Mr. Chair.

6

7 ACTING CHAIRPERSON CASIPIT: Go ahead.

8

9 MR. SMITH: Yeah, I do remember we did.

10 I really thought because we were addressing the killer
11 whales and stuff that were killed and stuff, and I think
12 we did move on some topics there.

13

14 ACTING CHAIRPERSON CASIPIT: I don't --
15 I'm not sure, but we'll have to have a motion but I was
16 just going to suggest that DeAnna just do some research
17 into what we've done before. And if we've already
18 approved and sent letters regarding trawling, the trawl
19 fisheries to North Pacific Fisheries Management Council
20 we could use that and just put a cover letter on it to
21 the Board of Fish and just say, you know, we've been
22 concerned about trawling for a long time. And this is
23 previous work that we've sent to other management
24 boards. And please consider this in your deliberations
25 or something like that. Maybe that's the best way to
26 handle that. And we can have Don and DeAnna work together
27 on pulling that together and getting it out before March
28 3rd. Okay. I'm going to -- as -- I normally don't when I
29 sit in a, in the Chair position, I generally don't make
30 motions, but I'm going to take an exception, and I'll
31 just make a motion to ask DeAnna to review the record
32 that we've done over the past few years, find anything
33 we've written about trawling and put a cover letter on
34 it to the Board of Fish and say these, this is past
35 actions we've taken on trawling, and we appreciate you
36 if you consider these, this input in your deliberations
37 on your trawl -- the trawl proposals, I don't know what
38 number it is, but I'm sure staff can figure it out for
39 us and go from there.

40

41 MR. SANDHOFER: Second.

42

43 ACTING CHAIRPERSON CASIPIT: Ted seconds
44 my motion. Do we need any discussion? I don't think so.

45

46 MR. SMITH: Question

47

48 ACTING CHAIRPERSON CASIPIT: Oh.

49

50

1 MR. BEMIS: Before you do. Well, what was
2 it last spring? There was a letter written to -- I'm not
3 sure what department was, but it was about interceptor
4 fishery of the king salmon and chum and the Kuskokwim.
5 And it seemed like we went from spring to fall till next
6 spring. And don't remember -- I asked if we'd ever
7 received, in the department that we sent it to, never
8 responded back, and I've [sic] haven't seen anything,
9 unless there's been another one or the one I missed
10 about the Kuskokwim. And I didn't hear anything about
11 the killer whales, but it seems like we kind of getting
12 dogged on that, and they kind of remind me of one thing.
13 The trawlers don't have anybody really putting any
14 burden on them and force them to do whatever we want
15 them to at least change a little bit. Kind of reminds
16 me of the tour ship thing. When's anybody going to stop
17 them from dumping? And when are they going to slow them
18 down in serious waters? The state lets them have them
19 in their water, and we never do nothing about what they
20 are in the fed water. And it's just kind of like, I
21 brought this up to the EPA. They came to visit us, sent
22 a representative from Washington, D.C., and said, oh,
23 you know, the EPA, your water is good, your land is
24 good, your recovery of your waste and environmental
25 stuff. And I'm sitting on the Council of my Tribe, and
26 I says, what about the pollution in in the bay here, in
27 the water, with all these tour ships? And she
28 automatically said, I am not in that department, I will
29 not speak on it and I couldn't tell you if I wanted to.
30 And I just, I was really surprised to have somebody
31 blurt out when she was the person coming that was
32 supposed to be talking about it so, anyway, I just want
33 to bring that up because it just annoys me. Those two
34 things don't have any control, and there's nobody
35 pushing back on them hard enough to make any changes.
36 And we just dance around them. And right now, with
37 getting close to 300 boats in Yakutat Bay, is -- and
38 these things are huge, all makes and models from all
39 different countries. And, at some point we're going to
40 have a disaster. And it could have been avoided by
41 slowing things down and monitoring things better. And I
42 just feel that we're going to have a crash on something
43 when it comes to the trawlers, and we're going to have
44 environmental catastrophe when it comes to the tour
45 boats. And it's just a matter of time. And like I say,
46 these are two things that don't have anybody being able
47 to put a stop or question anything they're doing, and
48 they're either tied-in real good or somebody's paying
49 them off, one of the two, I don't know. That's all I got
50 to say, thank you.

1
2 ACTING CHAIRPERSON CASIPIT: Okay, thank
3 you, thank you, Larry. We do have a motion on the table
4 and a call for the question, so.

5
6 MR. SMITH: Question.

7
8 ACTING CHAIRPERSON CASIPIT: Yeah, okay.
9 We got a question. I'll do a voice vote again. All those
10 in favor, say aye.

11
12 IN UNISON: Aye.

13
14 ACTING CHAIRPERSON CASIPIT: All those
15 opposed, nay.

16
17 (No response)

18
19 No opposition, motion carries. And
20 thanks, DeAnna for taking that on. Taking some pressure
21 off. Excuse me. The motion was that they would just go
22 back to the record, find what we've written already on
23 and sent to agencies on the trawl issue, and then just
24 putting a cover letter on it saying, hey, this is what
25 we've discussed in the past, please consider our points
26 when you talk about your proposal number whatever. You
27 guys will figure that out. Okay.

28
29 (Off record comments)

30
31 Oh, that's -- I forgot about that, we
32 got off track, didn't we? Okay. DeAnna makes a good
33 point about the federal fisheries proposals and whether
34 or not we should have a work group to talk about what
35 we might want to submit ahead of time through a work
36 group that we would, you know, I assume would have a,
37 you know, a zoom meeting or two to discuss what kind of
38 fish proposals we might want to introduce. Are there,
39 is there an interest in doing that on the part of the
40 Council? And if so, is there some folks who would
41 participate in a meeting such as zoom meetings such as
42 that?

43
44 MR. SMITH: Yeah, Mr. Chair, I'd be all
45 in on doing a zoom.

46
47 ACTING CHAIRPERSON CASIPIT: Okay, so we
48 got.....

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50 (Simultaneous speech)

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MR. SMITH: So, then that way everybody from, you know, wherever they're at, they can bump in. Yeah.

MR. SANDHOFER: Mr. Chair, I'd participate if needed.

ACTING CHAIRPERSON CASIPIT: Okay. So, we have John and we have Ted. Anybody else? Oh, we got Louie. And let's see Larry, Louie and Larry. Anybody else would like to? No, I think that's a good spread of folks from south to the north. And four people is a really good number of folks to work together, I think you get bigger subcommittees than that, and you spend a lot of time just spending, you know. Yeah. So, with four people just kind of getting their thoughts together on what kind of fish proposal we might want to submit. Maybe that -- and doing some homework ahead of time, that would be, I think that would help us get through our next meeting a lot quicker. So, I leave it to DeAnna and the four work group members to coordinate schedules and make that happen.

Oh, okay. I'll need a motion to fund that working group -- form the working group. And that -- okay. We need a motion to form the working group. I've provided those four names that would be on the working group from the Council, and yeah, let's go from there.

MR. SANDHOFER: Before that, I mean, I'd encourage any other Council members that have some ideas, you know, to let us know.

ACTING CHAIRPERSON CASIPIT: Okay. That's that's a good idea. Any Council members that have some ideas on fish proposals, why don't you just go ahead and send them to DeAnna, and she can share them with the rest of the group. That way everything's going to one person, so we don't get confused about what we're dealing with. So, if all of us that are on the work group have some ideas, we send those to DeAnna and she can make sure that gets discussed. Oh, Albert, you got something?

MR. HOWARD: Just volunteering to be on the work group, Mr. Chair, so I can get.....

(Simultaneous speech)

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ACTING CHAIRPERSON CASIPIT: Oh, good!
Well, no, that's great. Let's, let - Albert, that would
be wonderful, thank you. I think that gives some really
good geographic representation. That's really good.
Okay. Go ahead.

MR. SANDHOFER: Make a motion to have the
five individuals named, I don't think I need to name
them, to be in a work group to develop some fish
proposals for the next cycle.

MR. SMITH: Second.

ACTING CHAIRPERSON CASIPIT: It's been
moved and seconded to form this five person work group
with necessary staff to develop this -- to develop fish
proposals to bring to us for our consideration in our
next meeting. I call for the question.

MR. SMITH: Question.

ACTING CHAIRPERSON CASIPIT: John called
for the question. All those in favor say aye.

IN UNISON: Aye.

ACTING CHAIRPERSON CASIPIT: Those
opposed, nay.

(No response)

Okay. Sounds like we have another motion
for you. Successful motion. Okay. Done with federal fish
proposals. We have a half an hour.

MS. PERRY: We have a couple reports that
we haven't heard from: National Park Service and Hoonah
Indian Association Partners Report.

ACTING CHAIRPERSON CASIPIT: Oh! Okay.
Then oh -- and we -- that you -- I'm going to take Hoonah
Indian Association, if -- you're online, I think it --
that's - yeah, okay. That's Jackson, okay. Go -- if you
would, if you're prepared, go ahead and start --
introduce yourself and start your presentation on the
Partners Program that you had prepared for us. I'm sorry
we've got you this late, but please go ahead.

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1 MR. COMBS: Okay, yeah. Can you hear me
2 okay?

3
4 ACTING CHAIRPERSON CASIPIT: Yes, we can
5 hear you.

6
7 MR. COMBS: Okay, great. Oh, well,
8 there's kind of playing with my connection, so I'm going
9 to leave my video off. I was really hoping to be there.
10 But, yeah, I'll be quick. We're Jackson Combs, Hoonah
11 Indian Association Partners.

12
13 ACTING CHAIRPERSON CASIPIT: Jackson,
14 I'm sorry, you're coming in real garbled over here. I
15 don't know what the technical issues are. Oh, apparently
16 our recorder is saying it's on your end. Can you try
17 again, maybe?

18
19 MR. COMBS: Yeah. Our internet's been
20 kind of a finicky with the weather.

21
22 ACTING CHAIRPERSON CASIPIT: We can hear
23 you now, I think, with my mic. Okay, go ahead.

24
25 MR. COMBS: Okay. Once again, Jackson
26 Combs, Hoonah Indian Association, working under the
27 Partners for Fisheries Monitoring Program. The last time
28 I actually spoke to the Council as a whole, I was -- it
29 was at the All RAC, and I was about three weeks into the
30 job, and I was asking for changes to the Basket Bay bag
31 limits. And now, I'm about almost two years into my
32 position. So, I think it'd be a good time to kind of
33 update you on, you know, a high-level overview of what
34 I've done so far. It's been a interesting year, I'll say
35 that this year, but -- slowly been working, the building
36 -- strengthening connections and building a fisheries
37 division within our environmental department that can
38 address community concerns and advocate for management
39 of our resources. This office is pretty small. There's
40 actually only about five of us. And so, I'm the fish
41 guy, but I'm also working directly with my coworker
42 Jeremy Grant on our subsistence program designated
43 harvester programs that utilize the, you know, federal
44 wildlife policies and things like that. Through that
45 program, we've managed to provide deer and fish to the
46 community, including getting deer, halibut, and coho
47 into our school and Head Start programs, which I'm pretty
48 happy with. I used to fish in the summers, and cook at
49 the school in the winter, and it was pretty frustrating
50 feeding them frozen fish sticks, so.

1
2 We've been actively working to get more
3 involved in the management processes. Working with
4 Heather Bauscher and Ashley Bolwerk, we brought another
5 group of students to the Federal Subsistence Board this
6 year, as well as hosted a class in our local City Hall,
7 which had a really good turnout. And now our own Mary
8 Jack, who you heard earlier, is working directly with
9 Heather. So, that's that, yeah. Well, my position is
10 mainly geared towards sockeye and salmon. The status of
11 how the crab, herring are all community concerns, and
12 they've been echoed in this meeting yesterday and today
13 so, I've been looking at some of that as well. I
14 established a working relationship with a handful of
15 people in NOAA Fisheries and the International Pacific
16 Halibut Commission. We put a lot of hours, including
17 nights and weekends into designing a rather large
18 halibut research proposal that involves both traditional
19 and local knowledge, as well as piloting new
20 technologies and ideas. The proposal was submitted to
21 the North Pacific Research Board and scored very highly.
22 It was the first proposal they'd actually received from
23 a tribe in Southeast Alaska, and they were pretty excited
24 about it. Unfortunately, federal funding was hacked to
25 pieces, which is kind of a common theme this year, and
26 they were unable to fund us. Most of the co-authors from
27 NOAA that helped me write this have since been let go.
28 But I was encouraged to submit the proposal again, which
29 I'll be doing. And many of those NOAA Fisheries people
30 are still working with me, more as a consultant level
31 so, I'm pretty excited.

32
33 Our friends in Kake are one year into
34 their Herring Reintroduction Program. They have
35 graciously shared information with us and allowed us to
36 join in on their effort. This next spring, with
37 assistance from NOAA Fisheries, we will be doing
38 genetics -- genetic sampling on our herring, as well as
39 hemlock branches in multiple locations near Hoonah to
40 study and understand the quality of any herring spawn
41 in local waters, to begin looking at the feasibility of
42 rebuilding herring stocks in Port Frederick, Icy Strait
43 and Lynn Canal to historic levels. Rebuilding this
44 keystone species will positively affect every other
45 species that relies on them, and I'm really happy and
46 excited that this is happening. There's a large
47 community concern over our Dungeness crab. This last
48 year especially has been difficult for crabbers in Port
49 Frederick, both subsistence and commercial, and I'm
50 starting to work towards establishing stock assessments

1 and preseason surveys that will lead to a more localized
2 management. Finally, the meat and potatoes of my work
3 is, of course, sockeye and these FRMP programs. In the
4 Fort Yukon and the larger ones, I'd like to mention that
5 we have two sockeye restoration projects in the works
6 generated through traditional and local knowledge,
7 focusing on small, local systems near town.

8
9 The Forest Service (indiscernible) had
10 been operating in (indiscernible) FRMP for over 20
11 years. This was the second year I was able to work
12 alongside Jake Musselwhite, and I think it's official
13 now that he's no longer with the Forest Service so, I
14 just want to recognize the knowledge and expertise he
15 provided. I really looked up to him, and I learned a lot
16 from him in a short amount of time. I'm actually hoping
17 to keep him involved as well on a consultant level, if
18 he's up for it. But I look forward to working more with
19 Rob, Ashley and whomever else in the Forest Service. I
20 hope this is a good time to also emphasize the increasing
21 role and capacity of HIA, and I look forward to
22 continuing this work in general. This summer I hosted
23 two fisheries interns, one through the ANSEP program at
24 UAA and another through Sealaska Stem program. We got
25 them involved in all sorts of different projects. It was
26 a great experience for them. One thing they were able
27 to go to (indiscernible) Lake with us along with our
28 Alaska Youth (indiscernible) crew, Jake Musselwhite,
29 another anthropologist from the Forest Service and
30 actually one of those NOAA Fisheries education
31 specialists. We caught over 100 sockeye, and Jake taught
32 them how to do scale sampling. It was the most high-
33 quality and extensive set of scale samples that Jake had
34 got in recent years. In the past, he's been picking them
35 off of dead fish. Those fish we then took to Hoonah,
36 where they were traditionally processed. Each Alaska
37 Youth Steward was able to take a case home. It also
38 provided sockeye to a (indiscernible) in Glacier Bay
39 Park, as well as our traditional food fair.

40
41 We had some technical difficulties this
42 year that required Jake and I to both do a couple of
43 repair trips, which unfortunately were unsuccessful but
44 honestly, you kind of learn more from your failures. And
45 it was a good experience for me. We finally settled on
46 just retrieving the camera footage every two weeks and
47 going over batch footage which was a lot easier for me
48 to do now that we have a new boat that the park had
49 donated to us. That footage was then sent over to Ashley
50 and put onto the U.S. Forest Service new subsistence

1 dashboard and that was kind of cool to see.

2

3 In September we had some big storms, and
4 then we also had the government shutdown. So, I went to
5 winterize the weir and realized that the power system
6 had failed, and the computer was having issues. Thinking
7 the shutdown would be short, I left the computer over
8 there for Jake because he was most likely going to come
9 and grab it and get the rest of the data that way. Of
10 course, the shutdown lasted longer. Weather kicked up.
11 That footage is still there, which has a couple of weeks
12 of sockeye accounts that I need to still grab and send
13 to Ashley. But preliminary data shows that this year was
14 pretty good on par with last year. So, I'll be looking
15 to complete that. And (indiscernible) mentioned the dock
16 and access and we've been working with the caretakers
17 quite a bit, and I'll be speaking with Silver Bay, the
18 new owners, and trying to ensure that subsistence users
19 have better access in years to come. And just trying to
20 figure out what the general plan that Silver Bay has for
21 that area.

22

23 The next one, the last one, the big one,
24 the one I'm most excited about is (In Native). (In
25 Native) is probably the single most important site
26 specific location for Hoonah resources in need of
27 monitoring and stewardship. Well over 80% of our
28 documented subsistence sockeye comes from (In Native).
29 A stock assessment of any sort hasn't been done in over
30 20 years. And that was a short three-year study by
31 (indiscernible). Before that, it was aerial surveys in
32 the 1960s that they admit were completely ineffective.
33 Partially due to their turbid waters and just the
34 weather, etc., etc.

35

36 (In Native) is increasing -- (In Native)
37 was facing increasing pressure from sport and charter
38 as well as experiencing environmental changes. There
39 were multiple leaks of algae blooms in Lisianski and (In
40 Native) Cove. This year and working with
41 (indiscernible) Labs in Sitka. We identified them as
42 non-harmful to humans, but they did affect the sockeye
43 and they did affect fishing. A lot of our people had hit
44 or miss trips. A lot were forced to go to (In Native).
45 A lot were forced to go to (In Native), to (In Native),
46 etc.

47

48 Well, I did submit an FRMP proposal to
49 establish monitoring in (In Native). Because of the
50 timeline of everything, I wasn't going to wait a year

1 for that proposal window so, shortly after I started
2 this position, I put together a tribal wildlife grant
3 proposal with the U.S. forest -- or U.S. Fish and
4 Wildlife and earlier this year, we were awarded nearly
5 \$200,000 to design, build and install a monitoring
6 system similar to the one we've been operating in Neva.
7 With the federal volatility, Jake Musselwhite being
8 stretched thin with Unit 2 analysis and our own Hoonah
9 district being basically wiped out, the project was
10 delayed by months, but we were eventually able to scout
11 the creek and system with our active ranger and fish
12 biologist at the time Neil (indiscernible), and identify
13 a suitable location. I've since designed the rear system
14 to follow the minimum impact guidelines of working in
15 this designated area, I've begun actually building the
16 weir, the computer monitor and solar power systems in
17 Hoonah and on my desk behind me, actually, and finally
18 establishing a new relationship with First Nations
19 Development Institute. They have granted us \$30,000 to
20 hire two full time seasonal fisheries technicians for
21 this next season. I'm putting together the finishing
22 touches on both the federal and state permit
23 applications, and to have the project counting sockeye
24 this coming season.

25
26 The opportunity to have programs running
27 at both Neva and (In Native) at the same time is going
28 to give us a really complete data set and picture of
29 what's happening with our sockeye, and it's going to
30 give us a really nice tool for managing and advocating
31 for our people and users. Earlier, when discussing FRMP
32 proposals, Patty asked about genetic sampling. When
33 writing the (In Native) proposal, I only included scale
34 sampling because that's what we were doing with Jake. I
35 would like to note, however, that while Jake was sending
36 scale samples out to the state for analysis, my goal is
37 to begin doing them in-house here at HIA, which would
38 include using our fisheries technicians, interns, and
39 including the (indiscernible) kids. That said, you know,
40 we were looking at stable isotope analysis and genetic
41 sampling in the halibut, and we're doing genetic
42 sampling and herring so, we can and certainly will
43 implement it with all of our sockeye projects as well.
44 I've been really happy and excited with this job. I
45 wanted to thank OSM and also thank the RAC for the
46 support and the employment opportunity. It's definitely
47 been better than like winter fishing in this weather so,
48 that's about all I have for you. Thank you.

49
50

1 ACTING CHAIRPERSON CASIPIT: Thank you,
2 Jackson.

3
4 UNIDENTIFIED: Good job.

5
6 ACTING CHAIRPERSON CASIPIT: Thank you,
7 Jackson. Any questions from the Council?

8
9 (No response)

10
11 John made a good suggestion, and it
12 would be great if you could -- you must have had a
13 summary written up for your testimony, because it was
14 really good. And we were wondering if you could share
15 that with DeAnna, be able to send it to the rest of the
16 Council so that we can have it in writing in front of
17 us. That would be great if you could do that.

18
19 MR. COMBS: I definitely could. I will
20 say I'm a much better writer than I am a speaker,
21 especially in front of a crowd so, even when I'm at a
22 computer right now. But I could definitely send it along.

23
24 ACTING CHAIRPERSON CASIPIT: Yeah, just
25 send it at your convenience and she can forward them on
26 to us. Thank you. Thank you very much for your
27 presentation. Oh, I got John too.

28
29 MR. SMITH: Yeah, I really appreciate it.
30 And.....

31
32 (distortion)

33
34 Is the letters just because I can hardly
35 hear what you're saying in some points. But I heard most
36 of it. And then that way I didn't miss anything. It's
37 good to hear you, your voice. And thank you for that and
38 maybe getting yourself a mic for your system or -- I
39 encourage that because, your words are very important
40 to us. Gunalchéesh hó hó (In Native).

41
42 MR. COMBS: Thank you, John. Yeah.
43 Between the mic and this weather, I'm sure it's been
44 hard to hear me. I want to note that I saw you cruising
45 around in your Cadillac around July 4th this year so, I
46 wanted to say it was pretty cool to see.

47
48 ACTING CHAIRPERSON CASIPIT: Okay.
49 Thanks again, Jackson, great presentation. We'll look
50 forward to your written documentation, too. So, thank

1 you very much for hanging with us. Okay.

2

3 Okay, the next I had on my list was the
4 Park Service. Amber, did you have something to report
5 for us?

6

7 MS. COHEN: Yes, I do. Thank you, Mr.
8 Chair, and thank you to the Council. Good afternoon
9 everyone. My report starts on page 419 of your meeting
10 book. For the record, this is Amber Cohen, Cultural
11 Anthropologist at Wrangell-St. Elias. Let me just pause
12 and make sure, can you all hear me?

13

14 ACTING CHAIRPERSON CASIPIT: Yes, we can
15 hear you well.

16

17 (Distortion)

18

19 Oops. Yeah, we can hear you.

20

21 MS. COHEN: Okay, perfect. Awesome, okay.
22 So, I'm just going to do some quick highlights because
23 I have another quick report and we're kind of near the
24 end of your meeting. So, I just want to highlight that
25 we have been doing some construction out on the Yakutat
26 Bay area and Disenchantment Bay. We installed a weather
27 tower on the Hubbard Overlook, and it's not live quite
28 yet, but it will be live this upcoming summer. And the
29 goal of that will be to collect weather data and to
30 monitor changing climate conditions on the fjord,
31 monitor iceberg production and see harbor seal use and
32 monitor ship traffic in that area. And then another tower
33 is also planned in the Samovar Hills in summer 2026.

34

35 Other construction we've been doing, or
36 more like rehabilitation, is that we did some work on
37 our Eskaq stream cabin, which is located outside of
38 Yakutat. And there's a photo of the rehabilitated cabin
39 on the bottom of that first page in the report. Related
40 to that, Kyle Cutting, who's our Wildlife Biologist here
41 at the park, spent two weeks out along the
42 (indiscernible), doing field work, both collecting
43 samples from 32 shorebirds that represented six species
44 to look at microplastics, but also collected fecal
45 samples and hair samples for wolves. However, they
46 didn't see a ton of wolf presence during the survey
47 period, which was from May 13th to May -- sorry, May 3rd
48 to May 14th. They only saw one set of tracks. And they
49 walked over 51km. So, what Kyle was theorizing was that
50 the limited sign of wolves during this period might be

1 because it was their denning season, and so he is looking
2 to go back to the (indiscernible) and do this research
3 again, outside of that May period. And looking ahead to
4 the 2026 field season, he's once again going to do that
5 microplastic sampling and do additional cabin
6 maintenance activities on the Eskaq Stream Cabin.

7
8 At the bottom of the page, we are
9 continuing to work on our coastal, ethnographic and
10 cultural landscape project, which is in cooperation with
11 Yakutat Tlingit Tribe, Native Village of Eyak and
12 Portland State University. And we have done a bunch of
13 planning meetings this year, which was awesome, and
14 transferred funding to get ready to start field work
15 this upcoming year in 2026. And one exciting thing that
16 is coming up is that in March, we'll be going to Yakutat
17 and bringing elders from Cordova there to do two talking
18 circles, one on landscape change and one on the
19 ethnographic landscape. So, we're excited to do that
20 field work and get started with that. And then finally,
21 I just want to highlight that we have about 20 to 30
22 research projects that happen at Wrangell-St. Elias
23 every year, and there are two right now that take place
24 around Yakutat. One looks at accessing and maintaining
25 existing seismic stations, and the other one is looking
26 at the Turner Glacier and glacier dynamics during its
27 surges. So that is my really quick report, highlights
28 of that, and I will pause for any questions before moving
29 on to the next report.

30
31 ACTING CHAIRPERSON CASIPIT: Okay.
32 Amber, that -- number four there, your -- the Eyak
33 Yakutat Tlingit Tribe thing. I'll have to relate this
34 story to you. A few years ago, it's been a while now,
35 was up on the Copper River Delta with Bert
36 (indiscernible) and Robert (indiscernible), they've both
37 have passed on, but I remember I wish I would have had
38 a video camera to film them because we were driving down
39 the Copper highway and, Bob (indiscernible) said, pull
40 over here. So we pulled over and he got out and, he and
41 Bert started talking about this one site there along the
42 Copper River, where he said there was a meeting between
43 the (In Native) and the Yakutat Tlingit. And they talked
44 about that meeting and what went on and everything that
45 was, you know, all -- the whole nine yards. And I wish
46 I had them on tape for that or videotaped them because
47 it was inspiring, it was way cool. But anyway, I just
48 thought I'd pass that on. I think you'll be real pleased
49 with the results of your work on that one. Thank you.

1 MS. COHEN: Thank you, Mr. Chair, and
2 thank you for sharing that. We're really excited to get
3 work started on this project.

4
5 ACTING CHAIRPERSON CASIPIT: Go ahead,
6 Larry.

7
8 MR. BEMIS: This is Larry Bemis, I'm on
9 the RAC here. And also, I'm a Council member on the
10 Yakutat Tlingit Tribes. And I'm glad to see the work
11 you're doing. And we just got all the De Laguna books
12 from the White Horse stored in Yakutat now. So, we've
13 got all that she had gifted to the tribe. We've got it
14 in our Cultural Center. So, my question is the -- when
15 is this tower -- is going to be installed sometime, you
16 said in the summer of '26? Or do you have it installed?

17
18 MS. COHEN: Through the Chair, thank you,
19 Member Bemis. With the tower on the Hubbard Overlook is
20 installed already. And as far as I'm aware, there was
21 no damage from that earthquake that happened recently.
22 And then another tower is going to be installed in the
23 summer of 2026 on the Samovar Hills.

24
25 MR. BEMIS: Okay.

26
27 MS. COHEN: So, two different areas. We
28 have one up already.

29
30 MR. BEMIS: Okay. And you can monitor the
31 traffic and the couple of those (indiscernible) running
32 around in the Disenchantment Bay?

33
34 MS. COHEN: Through the Chair. That is
35 the goal. I will say our geologist, Michael Loso, can
36 talk a lot more to this topic, and I'm really happy to
37 connect you to him.

38
39 MR. BEMIS: Sure.

40
41 MS. COHEN: He really likes talking about
42 the weather stations.

43
44 MR. BEMIS: Okay.

45
46 MS. COHEN: I would be very happy to
47 connect him to you.

48
49 MR. BEMIS: And one other question. Your
50 Eskaq Stream Cabin. Do you have a visitor log? Who's

1 coming and going there?

2

3 MS. COHEN: Through the Chair. That is a
4 really good question. And I don't know that off the top
5 of my head, I think people can write in when they come
6 and visit, but I'm really not sure how much we are
7 keeping track of that, to be honest, and that's something
8 I can look into.

9

10 MR. BEMIS: Well, I see you got a \$25 fee
11 there for the use of the recreation. I was just wondering
12 what kind of people you've got renting it, that's all.
13 Thank you.

14

15 (Pause)

16

17 MS. COHEN: Mr. Chair, can I go to my
18 next report?

19

20 ACTING CHAIRPERSON CASIPIT: Oh, yes. I
21 believe that's going to be your Subsistence Resource
22 Commission report?

23

24 MS. COHEN: Yes, that is correct. It's
25 on page 423 of your meeting book. This will be really
26 quick.....

27

28 ACTING CHAIRPERSON CASIPIT: Oh, wait,
29 I'm sorry to interrupt you. Hold on a minute. John,
30 what? Did you have something?

31

32 MR. SMITH: Yeah, just thank you for your
33 introduction. (In Native). I really am looking here in
34 Frederica de Laguna under Mount St. Elias, the resource
35 that you have there. I just love that. I love that
36 reading there so, just wanted to share that. Thank you
37 for all what you're doing and I believe these cameras
38 are a good resource of monitoring what's happening in
39 the area. Gunalchéesh hó hó.

40

41 MS. COHEN: Through the Chair. Thank you
42 so much, Member Smith, I appreciate that.

43

44 ACTING CHAIRPERSON CASIPIT: Okay, let's
45 proceed with the SRC part.

46

47 MS. COHEN: Okay, thank you, Mr. Chair.
48 Again, for the record, this is Amber Cohen, Cultural
49 Anthropologist at Wrangell-St. Elias, and I just am
50 highlighting that at your next meeting in the late or

1 early spring, I'll be coming back to you with some
2 nominations for the Southeast RAC appointment to the
3 Subsistence Resource Commission for Wrangell-St. Elias
4 National Park. Previously, the RAC did appoint Daryl
5 James, and we loved having Daryl on the SRC. However,
6 his eligibility lapsed because his eligibility on the
7 AC had expired. So, we've been working with Annie, the
8 Yakutat AC Coordinator, to find any interested members
9 of the AC. We're still looking. So, I will also say, if
10 you know anybody who lives in Yakutat and does
11 subsistence activities in the national park and would
12 be interested in serving in the SRC, we would love to
13 talk with them. You can give them my contact information,
14 which is on the bottom of the -- well, it's on the second
15 page of the report. We're really hoping to fill this
16 appointment by your spring meeting and have someone to
17 be appointed so that we can have a full commission. So
18 that's what I have for that one.

19
20 ACTING CHAIRPERSON CASIPIT: Okay, thank
21 you, Amber. Does that conclude your reports?

22
23 MS. COHEN: Yes, Mr. Chair, that
24 concludes my reports. Thank you.

25
26 ACTING CHAIRPERSON CASIPIT: Thank you.
27 Next on my list, I have Yakutat Tlingit Tribe. You wanted
28 to provide something to us so, come on and introduce
29 yourself. Begin your presentation.

30
31 MS. LEKANOF: Melenda Lekanof with the
32 Yakutat Tlingit Tribe on the Council. I will make this
33 real quick. I just wanted to be able to come up and brag
34 about all the great things and partnerships that we have
35 going on and thank you for today and letting us testify
36 and listening to our food sovereignty Matt Anderstrom
37 giving us testimony. For our tribal report, we have 820
38 members and at least 230 households. So, the decision
39 today is definitely going to help our people so I want
40 to say gunalchéesh. We have a lot of partnership with
41 the Yakutat Tlingit Tribe, working with the Yakutat
42 Forest Service, and some of the projects that we've been
43 working on is Egg Island, our goat surveys and our moose
44 surveys. Our Egg Island is a place where our -- all of
45 our tribal people used to go to. And long ago, we used
46 to burn the island and with seal oil, it was a great big
47 deal. And that's where we would go and gather our seagull
48 eggs. It's been years, decades that we've been able to
49 do that and with the work with Susan Oehlers and the
50 Yakutat Tlingit Tribe, and we were able to secure the

1 funding and we got to go up and survey the island. And
2 I myself got to be able to go up there, and we camped
3 up there and we saw beautiful birds, moose -- or not
4 moose, sea lions and a lot of glacier calving so I
5 thought it was pretty, pretty amazing. Our ancestors had
6 talked about how we used to be able to go up there and
7 get eggs and be able to harvest. So now, with that,
8 moving forward, we're really excited to move on with our
9 project with Forest Service.

10
11 The other thing, working with National
12 Park Service. Again, like Amber said, we're working on
13 the ethnographic and we will be having that meeting, and
14 we're really excited to have all of our elders come
15 together. And this is something that we've never really
16 done before with the Eyak tribe so, we're excited about
17 that. We're also dealing with landslides. I don't know
18 if you guys have heard or seen a lot of the landslides
19 that had gone on around in the National Park Service
20 area above the Hubbard Glacier, but after the earthquake
21 that we had, we had identified with Mike Lasso and
22 Brentwood Higgs and there was a lot of posts on social
23 media where we're seeing a lot of landslides that are
24 going around in that -- above in the mountains. For us,
25 near the water, we've been monitoring the Logan Bluff.
26 And one of our concerns is the cliff, the bluff, falling
27 into the water and causing a big tsunami. And we're
28 looking at over 100-foot wave headed towards Mamby side,
29 over towards Icy Bay, towards Malaspina and then having
30 about a 15-foot wave coming into town. But we are
31 protected by the islands. But our big concern is having
32 the cruise ships up there. We have commercial fishermen
33 up there, so we are trying to be able to work with all
34 the agencies to be able to put up some sort of warning
35 system, to be able to let our people know if that bluff
36 goes, whether it's going to be just a regular landslide
37 due to like weather or just natural disasters or with
38 the earthquakes. And these are big concerns for us. And
39 so, this is something I want to put on your guys' radar.
40 The other thing that we are also monitoring is the
41 Ahrnklin, the estuary of the Ahrnklin, over by the Situk
42 River and Lost River. We had this river that's been
43 moving within my lifetime, over 50 years. And it's been
44 over a mile, and it's going down the coast and it's
45 taking out -- it's going to start taking out a lot of
46 salmon rivers. And so, our concern is that it's going
47 to continue going down the coast. And it's about less
48 than two miles away from our airport. We have talked
49 with Himschoot, we talked to Lisa Murkowski. And we're
50 trying to be able to put this on the radar. With this

1 last year, I did a landslide induced tsunami workshop
2 and we brought a bunch of scientists that came in and
3 we've been monitoring it, and we have big concerns
4 because we got full on trees and it's -- we're losing
5 about 30 to 20ft a month, and it's just continuing down
6 the coast. And as it continues, it's going to be going
7 through Forest Service land, through two Native
8 allotments, the Corporation land, and it eventually will
9 go out all the way to the point of the bay. A lot of the
10 sand that's being removed is now starting to fill up in
11 between the two islands of Kanatak Island and the point
12 of (In Native), and we -- that's where our barge comes
13 in. And so, at high tide -- the barge waits until high
14 tide so the barge could come in. We do have boats --
15 because the sand builds up in that area so fast, we do
16 have boats that end up hitting the sand because the maps
17 are not updated. So, I think that's something that's
18 important to be able to share.

19
20 We are at the Yakutat Tlingit Tribe very
21 proud of our food sovereignty and our Guardians Program,
22 and we would really like to be able to encourage them
23 to work with all the agencies, and we're very happy that
24 we have them working within our community and protecting
25 our lands. And we're working on MOAs and co-management
26 with Forest Service and other agencies in the community
27 so we're very excited about that. I guess one of my
28 concerns is the funding cuts in the U.S. Forest Service.
29 We are surrounded by the Tongass and these are our roads.
30 This is all where we hunt, this is where we live, this
31 is where we do ceremony, how we access all of our places
32 that are special to us. With the cuts, for me, I find
33 very concerning since Forest Service's fiduciary
34 responsibility is to be able to support subsistence,
35 support the communities that surround them. Right now,
36 we had concerns -- when they did furlough, the local
37 agency in Yakutat that it was right before the moose
38 season. And so, this is something that was concerning
39 to me, to -- why the government would cut the funding
40 and to be able to back off when this is something that
41 they should be leaving in place. And so, these are
42 concerns for us because along with that is the moose
43 part or the moose habitat projects. That is your
44 culverts, that is your people who do your moose biology
45 so, these are kind of big concerns for us as a tribe,
46 because, for us in Yakutat, we work all together with
47 the Fish and Game and for -- local Fish and Game and
48 local Forest Service. So, I don't know if this is a
49 great place to advocate, but we want to be able to
50 continue working together and co-managing our lands. We

1 have a great place, and I hope you guys decide to come
2 to Yakutat and we'd be happy to welcome you guys. And I
3 just want to tell you, thank you for letting me share
4 the things that are going on in our community.

5
6 ACTING CHAIRPERSON CASIPIT: Okay, thank
7 you very much. Okay, one last report, OSM.

8
9 MR. AYERS: Thank you, Mr. Chair, and
10 members of the Council. Again, this is Scott Ayers with
11 OSM. I have an option for you. I can either provide the
12 report orally to you, or I have printed copies that you
13 all can take. We don't normally do it this way, but I
14 thought we might be a little short on time for this
15 meeting, so I did that. So, I will leave it up to you
16 how you'd like this presented.

17
18 ACTING CHAIRPERSON CASIPIT: Well, we're
19 only five minutes so, go ahead and we'll -- go ahead and
20 give your report. We also will take the paper as well,
21 I think that that would be good for us to have as well.

22
23 MR. AYERS: Okay, that's what we'll do.
24 I have -- let's see, a few updates from this program for
25 the last year. For regulations, on July 21st, the Federal
26 Subsistence Regulations were moved from one part of the
27 Code of Federal Regulations specific to the U.S. Fish
28 and Wildlife Service, where we had been previously
29 housed, which was at 50 CFR, to a new location specific
30 to the Department of the Interior, which is 43 CFR. This
31 change in the location of our regulations reflects OSM's
32 administrative move to the Office of Assistant Secretary
33 for Policy, Management and Budget, but the regulations
34 themselves did not change. On that same day that that
35 published, OSM published the final rule codifying the
36 Federal Subsistence Regulation amendments made by the
37 Board in February related to the take of fish and
38 shellfish. So, we were excited to have those two things
39 published.

40
41 The Federal Subsistence Board had a
42 summer work session on July 23 and 24, and reviewed and
43 approved replies to Fiscal Year 24 Annual Reports from
44 the 10 Councils. They also adopted Deferred Wildlife
45 Proposal WP24-01, as modified by OSM, to allow the sale
46 of Brown Bear hides harvested by federally qualified
47 subsistence users. Implementation of that particular
48 regulation will proceed once the regulations are
49 published in the CFR, as part of this Wildlife Final
50 Rule that will be this coming summer. Additionally, the

1 Board reviewed recommendations for charter -- changes
2 to the Council Charters and received briefings on recent
3 Council Correspondence. Related to Council appointments,
4 during the 2025 appointment cycle, the board received
5 50 applications from incumbents and new applicants to
6 fill 48 seats which were vacant or terms were expiring.
7 The Board also received eight letters of interest from
8 young leaders that are interested in non-voting
9 positions on the Councils. Your region received eight
10 membership applications and two non-voting leader
11 letters of interest. The Board held their Executive
12 Session again in mid-July and developed their
13 recommendations on the appointments to the Secretaries.
14 And we're still waiting to hear word on what's going on
15 with those. But the new application period will begin,
16 probably right after the start of the new year. And we,
17 as usual, are requesting your help with soliciting
18 applications in your region. And we are also still
19 seeking non-voting leader seats in the Kodiak Aleutians
20 Bristol Bay Western Interior, Seward Peninsula,
21 Northwest Arctic and North Slope regions.

22
23 There's a new permit application
24 database that has been a huge headache, to be quite
25 honest with you. But in 2024, OSM initiated the
26 modernization of the federal subsistence permitting
27 application. Part of this modernization was to make
28 permits more readily available to users through an
29 option to obtain permits online. The new system was
30 released for agency use on September 30th, however, the
31 permit portal is not functioning, so users are unable
32 to request profiles and permits online for the moment.
33 Users should continue to obtain permits by contacting a
34 local issuing office until the portal is ready. When the
35 online option becomes available, we'll broadcast that
36 all through a news release, and links to the online
37 portal will appear in the program's website.

38
39 I have some staffing updates. Currently
40 we have a vacancy rate of about 25%. And so, that's
41 causing a lot of us to cover multiple roles. It was
42 announced in early December that this might be starting
43 to change as related to the government-wide hiring
44 freeze, but we're still awaiting guidance on that.
45 However, we had several OSM employees opt to retire early
46 this year through the deferred retirement program. This
47 included OSM's Fisheries Biologist Karen Hyer, who was
48 a specialist in Northwest Arctic region for many years,
49 and was heavily involved in the Partners for Fisheries
50 Monitoring Program; OSM Council Coordinator Lisa

1 Hutchinson, who coordinated the Kodiak, Aleutians and
2 Northwest Arctic Councils; OSM Cultural Anthropologist
3 Pippa Kenner, who covered Bristol Bay, Yukon-Kuskokwim
4 Delta and often was down here for your meetings. OSM
5 Permit Specialist Derek Hildreth, who is responsible for
6 the permitting database. We also lost our Liaison to the
7 State, George Pappas, who did not retire but moved back
8 to the Department of Fish and Game and is now the
9 Director of the Subsistence Division there. Two lateral
10 staffing moves from other DOI agencies into OSM were
11 recently approved, Karen McKee came back to OSM as the
12 Subsistence Outreach Specialist, and Anna Senechal has
13 joined OSM Fisheries Division to fill one of the three
14 vacant fisheries positions. And we're really excited to
15 have them on.

16
17 We are working on strengthening our
18 collaboration with the State of Alaska. The OSM director
19 and deputy directors have been conducting monthly in-
20 person meetings with the Alaska Department of Fish and
21 Game Deputy Commissioner and Federal Subsistence Board
22 Liaison. These meetings are helping to ensure strong
23 communication and collaboration, especially with data
24 sharing and analysis reviews. In addition, OSM in the
25 Interagency Staff Committee held a workshop earlier this
26 year to identify opportunities for strengthening the
27 agency's relationship with the state, which has produced
28 several action-oriented results.

29
30 Let's see. Tribal ANCSA Consultations on
31 wildlife regulatory proposals and closure reviews took
32 place on August 19th and 21st, in person and
33 teleconference. The Federal Subsistence Board will hold
34 an FRMP work session on February 5th to review the draft
35 Fisheries Resource Monitoring Plan, to accept additional
36 oral comments and to make a recommendation to the
37 selecting official who is the OSM Director on Projects
38 to include in the final plan for the FRMP. The Board is
39 going to hold their Wildlife Regulatory meeting in April
40 of this year, the 20th through the 24th, to consider all
41 the closure reviews and proposals that you've started
42 discussing at this meeting and are going to complete
43 finishing discussing at the next meeting.

44
45 And then I have a couple of litigation
46 updates. The United States versus the State of Alaska.
47 In 2022, the U.S. brought this action against the State
48 of Alaska to resolve a dispute over the regulation of
49 subsistence fishing on the Kuskokwim River within the
50 Yukon Delta National Wildlife Refuge. In March of 2024,

1 the grant -- the Court granted summary judgment to the
2 US and issued a permanent injunction against the State.
3 The State appealed. On August 20th, 2025, a Ninth Circuit
4 panel ruled in favor of the U.S. The Court upheld its
5 previous holdings that ANILCA defines public lands to
6 include navigable waters in which the United States
7 holds reserved water rights, based on the three previous
8 Ninth Circuit decisions commonly referred to as the
9 Katie John cases. The Court rejected the State's
10 arguments that the Katie John cases were clearly
11 irreconcilable with Sturgeon versus Frost, and Sackett
12 versus EPA. The State of Alaska has petitioned the
13 Supreme Court to consider the case, and the U.S. and
14 Intervenors filed an opposition brief, and we expect to
15 hear sometime in January whether or not the Supreme Court
16 is going to take up this case. And for a second one, the
17 State of Alaska Department of Fish and Game versus the
18 Federal Subsistence Board et al. On June 2nd, 2025, a
19 Ninth Circuit panel ruled in favor of the United States
20 in this lawsuit, followed by the State of Alaska, after
21 the Board authorized an Emergency Subsistence Hunt in
22 2020 for moose and deer on federal public lands in the
23 vicinity of Kake. The court (indiscernible) for
24 upholding the Board's decision was twofold. First, the
25 Alaska National Interest Lands Conservation Act provided
26 the Board with the authority to provide access to
27 subsistence resources on federal lands. And second, the
28 Board has the authority to authorize an Emergency
29 Subsistence Hunt to ensure that rural residents of
30 Alaska have a reasonable opportunity to reach and use
31 subsistence resources found on federal lands in Alaska.
32 The panel also concluded that the State's claim that the
33 Board improperly delegated the administration of the
34 Kake hunt to a tribe were not properly before the court.
35 And that's what I've got. So, thank you. Let me know if
36 you have any questions.

37
38 ACTING CHAIRPERSON CASIPIT: Thank you.
39 Any questions?

40
41 (No response)

42
43 Don't see them, thank you very much.
44 Okay, I think that covers all our business. And we did
45 miss some things that are kind of here and there, but
46 we'll pick those all up and move them to the next
47 meeting, as we have to. Trust DeAnna to help us out with
48 that, working with Don for the next -- for developing
49 of the agenda for the next meeting. Go ahead, Harvey.

50

1 MR. KITKA: I want to take this
2 opportunity to say this is my last meeting. I just got
3 too hard to read. I can't read anymore. It's nine. Losing
4 my hearing, my eyesight. I just -- that's really hard
5 to do. I'll miss you guys.

6
7 ACTING CHAIRPERSON CASIPIT: We're going
8 to miss you, Harvey. I know I'm going to miss you. I've
9 just really enjoyed working with you through all the
10 years, and I just wish you the best, and I want you to
11 know that you have had a huge impact on me, on this
12 Council and the people of Southeast Alaska. We owe you
13 a huge debt. And I really thank you for your work. So,
14 thank you. Thank you very much. Gunalchéesh.

15
16 (Applause)

17
18 Okay. Is there any other Council members
19 -- you want to say anything else or provide some closing
20 comments?

21
22 (No response)

23
24 Okay. I wanted to thank staff for all
25 their hard work. This was a tough one, and you guys
26 helped us get through a lot of stuff, and couldn't have
27 done it without you. So I, again, I want to say thank
28 you to the staff. I want to thank the audience who hung
29 in here with us for the whole meeting. And I really
30 appreciate the help from everybody and helping me be a
31 Chair for the first time on this Council. So, I really
32 appreciate all your cooperation and work. And like I
33 said, thanks to the staff. Can't do it without you. So,
34 with that, I guess we will stand adjourned. Oh, wait a
35 minute. Go ahead. Oh, yeah. I don't -- okay, Don, I'm
36 sorry I -- now, now you're back up there. So please,
37 Don.

38
39 MR. HERNANDEZ: Thank you, Cal. I just
40 wanted to also, you know, tell Harvey, you know, I'm
41 really going to miss him on the Council. I think Harvey
42 and I got appointed about the same time, and you know,
43 I've just learned so much from Harvey Kitka over the
44 years. He's taught me so much about cultural practices
45 and traditions and just a just a valuable education that
46 was really helpful in all of my Deliberations before
47 this Council and I'm going to miss them on the Council.
48 But, you know, I hope to see him when we go and visit
49 Sitka from time to time. So, yeah. Thanks again for all
50 your years of service, Harvey. And Cal, I really want

1 to compliment you on -- compliment you and thank you for
2 running this meeting in my absence. I mean, I hope you
3 enjoyed it. It's -- I enjoy, you know, chairing the
4 meetings. It's always challenging, and I kind of enjoy
5 that. And this was a challenging meeting, and I just
6 wanted to tell you that I think you did a really great
7 job. So, much appreciated.

8
9 ACTING CHAIRPERSON CASIPIT: Thank you,
10 Don. Yep. I need a motion to adjourn. Oh, sorry. Go
11 ahead, Mike.

12
13 MR. DOUVILLE: I want to thank you,
14 Harvey, for being on this Council for so long and sharing
15 your knowledge. You really have a lot of experience that
16 you brought to the table. It's really important to us,
17 and I really appreciate it. And you Cal, did a good job
18 as Chair. Very good, appreciate it. And for the staff,
19 I don't know how much they pay you, but it's not enough,
20 you really do work hard. I'm impressed. We got by so
21 short-handed and done an excellent job. Anyway.....

22
23 ACTING CHAIRPERSON CASIPIT: I just
24 wanted to say one more thing to Harvey. You're
25 responsible for finding your replacement. And we want
26 to have somebody as good as you. Probably not possible,
27 but I want to have somebody as good as you. I -- it's
28 like, I can't say enough about the contributions you've
29 made to this Council. It's phenomenal. So, thank you
30 again.

31
32 Okay. I've got a motion to adjourn from
33 from Mike.

34
35 MR. KITKA: Second.

36
37 ACTING CHAIRPERSON CASIPIT: And we got
38 a second from Harvey. His last last act on this Council.
39 I'm not opening it for discussion. And I'll ask for
40 unanimous consent for us to adjourn.

41
42 (No response)

43
44 Seeing no objections, we're adjourned.
45 Thank you.

46
47 (Off record)

48
49 END OF PROCEEDINGS
50

C E R T I F I C A T E

I, Rafael Morel, for Lighthouse Integrated Services Corp, do hereby certify:

THAT the foregoing pages numbered 1 through 168 contain a full, true and correct Transcript of the SOUTHEAST ALASKA SUBSISTENCE REGIONAL ADVISORY COUNCIL MEETING, VOLUME II recorded on the 18th day of December;

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 Isabela, Puerto Rico this 9th day of January 2025.

Rafael Morel
Chief Project Manager