

0001

1
2
3
4
5
6
7
8
9
10
11
12
13
14
15
16
17
18
19
20
21
22
23
24
25
26
27
28
29
30
31
32
33
34
35
36
37
38
39
40
41
42
43
44
45
46
47
48
49
50

SEWARD PENINSULA SUBSISTENCE
REGIONAL ADVISORY COUNCIL

PUBLIC MEETING

VOLUME II

January 21, 2026

COUNCIL MEMBERS PRESENT:

Martin Aukongak, Acting Chair

Louis Green

Elmer Seetot

Kelsi Ivanoff

Robert Moses

Regional Council Coordinator, Gisela Chapa

Recorded and transcribed by:

Lighthouse Integrated Services Corp

787-239-0462

Info@lighthouseonline.com

1
2
3
4
5
6
7
8
9
10
11
12
13
14
15
16
17
18
19
20
21
22
23
24
25
26
27
28
29
30
31
32
33
34
35
36
37
38
39
40
41
42
43
44
45
46
47
48
49
50

P R O C E E D I N G S

(Nome, Alaska - 1/21/2026)

(On record)

MS. CHAPA: All right. Good morning again, my name is Gisela Chapa, and I am the designated federal officer for this meeting. And I think that while we wait for our Council members, we can go ahead and just do introductions as well. And we're going to start with people online. If you can please give me a minute. We'll start by agency. Okay. We'll start with OSM.

MR. STONE: Good morning. Jarred Stone, Fisheries Biologist with the Office of Subsistence Management.

DR. VOORHEES: Good morning. This is Hannah Voorhees, Anthropologist with OSM.

MS. CHAPA: Anybody else from OSM joining us online?

(No response)

Okay, National Park Service. We're just doing introductions.

MR. JOLY: Good morning, everyone.

(Simultaneous speech)

MS. PATTON: Good morning.

MR. JOLY: Go ahead, Eva.

MS. PATTON: Go ahead. No, you go ahead.

MR. JOLY: Okay. Good morning, everyone. This is Kyle Joly, Wildlife Biologist for the National Park Service.

MS. PATTON: Thanks, Kyle. Good morning. This is Eva Patton, Subsistence Program Manager and ISC member for the National Park Service, Regional Office in Anchorage. Good morning, everyone.

0003

1 MS. CHAPA: Good morning. Thank you for
2 joining. Anybody from BIA?

3
4 MS. DEBENHAM: Yes. Good morning. This
5 is Rosalie Debenham, Biologist for the Bureau of Indian
6 Affairs, Alaska Region. Good to be here.

7
8 MS. CHAPA: Good morning, Rosalie. All
9 right, we'll go with BLM introductions.

10
11 MR. TOWNSEND: Hey. Good morning. This
12 is Craig Townsend, Wildlife Biologist for the Anchorage
13 Field Office, BLM. Thanks.

14
15 MS. CHAPA: Good morning, Craig. Fish and
16 Wildlife Service.

17
18 (No response)

19
20 All right, we'll move on. ADF&G. And
21 we're doing introductions, thank you.

22
23 MR. POETTER: Yeah. Good morning. This
24 is Aaron Poetter, the Federal subsistence Liaison with
25 the Alaska Department of Fish and Game.

26
27 MS. CHAPA: Good morning, Aaron. All
28 right, we'll move on. Tribes or Native corporations.

29
30 (No response)

31
32 Okay. Other organizations and members of
33 the public.

34
35 (No response)

36
37 All right. Thank you again for joining
38 us and I will just briefly share who is in the room.
39 With OSM, we have Orville Lind, Brian Ubelaker, Brent
40 Vickers, but he just went to do an airport run. With
41 BIA, we have Glenn Chen. With Park Service, we have
42 Nikki Braem -- Braem -- thank you. I'm gonna butcher
43 your last names. Letty Hughes. With ADF&G, we have Alicia
44 Carson and Sara Henslee and I am Gisela Chapa with OSM
45 as well. Thank you. And Mr. Chair, Kelsi, just got here.
46 Do you want me to do a roll call? Okay, we'll get started
47 with roll call and give me a second to find that. All
48 right. Kelsi Ivanoff. If you can please state on the
49 mic, we have mikes today here.

50

0004

1 MS. IVANOFF: Here.

2

3 MS. CHAPA: Thank you. Louis Green. Louis
4 you are.....

5

6 (Simultaneous speech)

7

8 MR. GREEN: Yeah. Good morning.

9

10 MS. CHAPA: Thank you. Martin Aukongak.
11 On the mic.

12

13 ACTING CHAIRPERSON AUKONGANK: Good
14 morning.

15

16 MS. CHAPA: Thank you. Robert Moses.

17

18 MR. MOSES: Good morning.

19

20 MS. CHAPA: Good morning. And Mr. Seetot
21 should be joining us soon. And Mr. Kirk wasn't able to
22 attend the meeting. So, Mr. Chair, we do have 4 Council
23 members present, and we do have a quorum. So next up in
24 the agenda is wildlife reports. So, we will -- I think
25 Letty Hughes has a presentation for the Council. I'll
26 share my screen, give me a sec.

27

28 (Pause)

29

30 MS. HUGHES: Okay. Good morning. For the
31 record, I'm Letty Hughes, Wildlife Biologist for Bering
32 Land Bridge National Preserve, based in Nome. For those
33 of you fairly new to the Council and don't know me, I've
34 been out in Nome for just shy of 20 years now. Worked
35 for the state, and then I moved over to National Park
36 Service here in Nome about mid-2018 and that's where
37 I've been since. So, originally, we had 2 handouts that
38 we provided in the original packet here on page 19 and
39 20. And then this presentation in front of you was given
40 at the Western Arctic Caribou Technical Committee
41 meeting in December. And it was decided, since Member
42 Gray was not at the Technical Committee and hadn't seen
43 this presentation, that we would bring it to the RAC for
44 him to see. So, we're still going to present it's good
45 information and a little bit more like versus what's in
46 the page 19 and 20. So additionally, I just want to say
47 that this project has been a long, long time ask of this
48 Council. It's like many years that this Council has
49 requested that this project happen. And in addition, I
50 would like to say that this project was possible through

1 funding with the National Park Service Subsistence
2 Advisory Committee, but it couldn't have happened this
3 past year with all the kind of the craziness that went
4 on, like we were like, we don't know if this collaring
5 project is going to happen. We -- there was a silver
6 lining, and we just kind of went for it at the last
7 minute. And I have Alex Hansen, Western Arctic Herd
8 Caribou Biologist with Fish and Game to thank, and
9 Cameron or Matt Cameron with Park Service Wildlife
10 Biologist like we -- without them being able to go out
11 there and do the net gunning this would not have
12 happened. Next slide.

13
14 Okay, so for reference and context where
15 Bering Land Bridge National Preserve is, I just threw
16 up this familiar game management Unit 22 hunt area that
17 most all of you should be familiar with. Just to kind
18 of give you an idea that where Bering Land Bridge is.
19 Largely up in Unit 22E, comes down into 22D Kuzitrin a
20 little bit of 22B, and then there's some 23 Southwest
21 as well. But it's almost entirely within Unit 22. It's
22 a -- Bering Land Bridge National Preserve is 2.7 million
23 acres. And many of the communities affiliated that
24 utilize Bering Land Bridge as well, Shishmaref and
25 Deering are our closest affiliations but also, we have
26 folks from Brevig Mission and also Nome residents that
27 go into the area as well. Okay, go on the next slide.

28
29 Okay. So, the Seward Peninsula is still
30 considered the winter range for the Western Arctic
31 Caribou Herd, even though collared Western Arctic
32 animals overall herd have not been into this section of
33 the Seward Peninsula for approximately 7 years now. The
34 Seward Peninsula did receive heavy use of northern --
35 up in the Northern Seward Peninsula from about mid 1990s,
36 but then as the Western Arctic Herd population declined,
37 so did some of the use of the winter range by collared
38 animals and or the overall herd. However, there still
39 continues to be reports from local hunters of groups of
40 caribou on the peninsula, and this has been documented
41 by past RAC members and also state AC members. Okay,
42 next slide please.

43
44 So, this is a 3-year project that was
45 funded and -- for caribou present on the Northern Seward
46 Peninsula. And once again, it's was a very long, long
47 time request of the Seward Peninsula Advisory Committee
48 here. So, we are currently collaborating with Alaska
49 Department of Fish and Game. Alex Hansen is very much
50 involved in this, and we do tribal consultation and also

1 Hunter interviews with Native Village of Brevig Mission,
2 Deering and Shishmaref. So, some of the objectives for
3 this project include understanding caribou movement of
4 those collared animals, potentially a minimum count and
5 local knowledge. So, what I want to mention is this
6 photo right here, it's not the most clear but it actually
7 -- our animals up in Serpentine Hot Springs and it was
8 taken by the camera that's inside one of our climate
9 stations up in Serpentine, so that was about April. Okay,
10 next slide please. So, this project is a combination of
11 traditional knowledge mapping, radio collar and
12 overflights. So, I'm going to stop talking for the
13 moment. I'm going to pass the microphone on to Nikki
14 Braem to speak on the hunter interviews that she did
15 this past year.

16
17 MS. BRAEM: For the record, I'm Nikki
18 Braem. Yes, so we did want to have a traditional
19 ecological knowledge component of this project. It's
20 just the way that biological projects are done now. It's
21 understood that that has to be a part of a project, and
22 that there's a wealth of information out there, because
23 those folks are out on the land in a way that we are not
24 present. They're out there all the time. So, recognizing
25 that we did consult with each tribal government about
26 whether they wanted us doing this project. And they said,
27 yes. We are adhering to accepted guidelines of working
28 with indigenous people and traditional knowledge. You
29 know, just because the village said yes, it doesn't mean
30 anybody has to talk to us. We compensate for them for
31 their time. We maintain confidentiality. We did make it
32 -- give the option of those who spoke with me on the
33 record to decide how their data would be ultimately
34 stored. So, for example, we kind of envisioned Kawerak
35 EHP Program being a place for those who wanted to have
36 their interviews archived. And it was great, they were
37 very -- there were some really great detail from some
38 young active hunters. We can find our time frame, we
39 were thinking about to, like, the last 5 years when
40 there quote were no caribou, but there were no collared
41 caribou on the Seward Peninsula, right. So, we tried to
42 confine our time frame to that. And we'll be talking,
43 going back and visiting and talking, giving an update.
44 We also would like to do another round of interviews
45 this year based on the first year's results. So, we'll
46 be talking with the tribal governments and those
47 communities again. But that summarizes what we did.

48
49 MS. HUGHES Okay, thank you. Thank you
50 Nikki. So, this is Letty, back to Letty. So, we'll say

1 on slide 5 here for the moment. So, in addition to the
2 hunter interviews, there was 25 adult cows that were
3 collared in early April. The method of this was done by
4 net gun, which is what the overall Western Arctic Herd
5 is captured to in the springtime with net gun and putting
6 radio collars on. Okay, so these collars have been on
7 the air for just under 12 months now. Right now all 25
8 cows are still alive. Preliminary movements at this time
9 show them just moving back and forth in proximity to
10 their capture location in Bering Land Bridge National
11 Preserve. So, some of our activities plans for year 2
12 going now into 2026 is, as Nikki said, continue with the
13 community visits and Nikki will continue doing another
14 round of hunter interviews. We'll be doing some spring
15 and summer aerial flights and we'll be working with our
16 partners on preliminary blood results, so we'll have
17 some more information and provide later at the next RAC
18 meeting. I don't know about March, but maybe later in
19 the fall. And so -- and then the plan is to submit an
20 article for Caribou Trails for 2026 as well. Okay. Thank
21 you.

22
23 ACTING CHAIRPERSON AUKONGANK: Roy?
24 Yeah, I think you could come up here and speak, right
25 here.

26
27 (Pause)

28
29 MR. ASHENFELTER: Thank you, Mr.
30 Chairman and the RAC. One of the things you might want
31 to consider is interviewing people from Nome. And the
32 reason for that is this location that you're looking at
33 is accessed by the Nome residents, not necessarily, I'm
34 not putting the communities down, not necessarily by the
35 people from Brevig or Shish [sic] during the fall season.
36 The reason for that is the river barriers and the huge
37 distance from Shish to the to the (In Native) Mountains
38 or range. The area there is accessed by Nome hunters via
39 the trail system, road system, four wheelers, side by
40 sides and six wheelers on an annual basis in the fall
41 time. And the reason is because it the location isn't
42 barriered by huge rivers. There's the (In Native) River,
43 you can generally cross. The rest of them are small
44 drainages. They make it challenging but you can still
45 cross them even during rain. And you could access these
46 areas where the caribou are in the fall time that I just
47 mentioned earlier, the people from Brevig or Shish or
48 even Wales don't go to. That distance is really far.
49 It's really challenging, that would be a challenge for
50 anyone from any one of those villages to get there. So,

1 this particular herd that stays on Seward Peninsula is
2 an important, valuable component to your study and would
3 really appreciate that. I've hunted this particular herd
4 year after year is the reason I know that, you just
5 heard me explain what goes on.

6
7 Not now, but before, it was really
8 challenging to get the Western Arctic Caribou Herd
9 managers to look at a component of caribou staying on
10 the Seward Peninsula in this particular area throughout
11 the year. That has changed since then. And this study
12 helps add to whether or not there's validity in this
13 idea that that caribou stay in this region year-round.
14 I know they stay there year round because otherwise in
15 the fall time, if according to the previous argument
16 that all the caribou migrate up into the up into the
17 Brooks Range and leave Seward Peninsula and during the
18 spring migration, then we -- the argument is that from
19 their point of view, there's no caribou to hunt in Seward
20 Peninsula in a fall time. Well, that is not true. And
21 that has changed, the mindset has changed. This study
22 that you're planning on doing is important. I'm hoping
23 that you would consider interviewing people from Nome
24 who accessed this herd in the fall time, spring,
25 wintertime too. There's some huge challenges on this
26 herd, huge, significant, I think it's down to less than
27 175,000, I think, and still falling. And it's going
28 downhill. So, any data that could add to the numbers,
29 whether they are on Seward Peninsula or other places is
30 going to be really helpful. You know, there's some
31 challenges as to what management strategies might be
32 added to minimize taking a female caribou. That would
33 be a real important component at this point in time but
34 those are just my personal ideas. But anyway, I wanted
35 to get back to my main thought was to try to add to your
36 data list by entering people, interviewing people that
37 hunt in this area in the fall time.

38
39 MS. BRAEM: Thanks for the feedback, Roy.
40 That's a really good idea.

41
42 ACTING CHAIRPERSON AUKONGANK: Kelsi.

43
44 MS. IVANOFF: I know you brought up --
45 oh, this is Kelsi. I know you brought up interviewing
46 people from Nome but I'm curious if people from other
47 Northern Norton Sound communities access this herd too,
48 I know it's kind of far, but, I mean, you have people
49 from Unalakleet going all the way to Buckland, so it's
50 something to think about too.

1

2

MR. ASHENFELTER: Excellent question. Right now, annually, White Mountain and Golovin people go to this particular herd in the wintertime. Soon as soon as the days get longer in the in the winter gets more stable. There are hunters in this particular part of the -- in going further and further west, if you will, if there's none in the Fish River Flats or Death Valley, they just cross over into Kuzitrin, into the Kuzitrin area. You know, the snow machine rigs now, and the ability to travel is just as mentioned earlier -- yesterday it's just made it really, really easy to get places with the type of equipment that's available and the reliability and they're, you know, they're just more sound. And so, Kelsi's question is really valuable in terms of what you might want to add, because there are hunters from those villages that once they take off, you know, they just keep going, you know, they're out there. That's what we all mainly do, is we just, you know, they're not in the particular area that we think they are because most of us that go out to these areas and hunt have a have a way to go discover different areas. Days are longer and you don't see them, you just keep moving. So, that's an excellent question and something you might want to consider adding.

26

27

28

29

30

31

32

33

34

35

36

37

38

39

40

41

42

43

44

45

46

47

48

49

50

MS. BRAEM: This is Nikki Braem for the record again. I'm trying to remember to do that. Yeah, thanks, Roy. And actually, I had a question for Roy, but maybe I'll ask him off the mic. One last thing and this -- I don't want to divert us from our agenda too much further but have you -- I don't know if you've been over in the McCarthy Marsh, Death Valley area. I recall that being pretty important to White Mountain and Golovin in the past. Have you seen any caribou over there in the last few years?

MR. ASHENFELTER: My nephew Scotty just said that there caribou are right behind Council right now. So, anyway, no, this is how, you know, we talk like this. So, this is not -- even at RAC meeting. This is how we talk. We just tell each other what's going on. And the idea there is to share the information among us hunters so that we minimize and maximize our opportunity. Minimize meaning, you know, where to go, how to get there. And because the eyes and ears of other hunters have been there, you've maximized your opportunity. So, it's not like -- when we're talking among each other, we're trying to help each other -- we're, you know, that's the opportunity here. So, back

1 to your question about Fish River Flat and McCarthy Marsh
2 or Death Valley. That's where I used to go all the time
3 because the herd annually, not the whole herd, but about
4 5- to 10,000 would hang out in McCarthy's Marsh. It's
5 real easy to get in there from White Mountain or Golovin.
6 It's a day's trip and I've done that quite a few -- over
7 time, quite a few years. So more often than not, they're
8 there. But right now, I'm just letting you know that,
9 you know, from my own -- And by the way, behind Council
10 means Fish River Flats. You know, because Council is
11 here, and just the range over is the Fisher Flats. So,
12 to answer your question, yes, the message is out there
13 that they've -- there's animals in that direction and
14 that it's an annual thing now, we've been doing this for
15 many, many years, you know, and its food on the table
16 for us. It's a healthy resource and like I said, I have
17 real concerns about management ideas that would help
18 change the herd dynamics and so thanks.

19
20 ACTING CHAIRPERSON AUKONGANK: All
21 right.

22
23 MR. GREEN: Mr. Chair, this is Louis.

24
25 ACTING CHAIRPERSON AUKONGANK: Go ahead,
26 Louis.

27
28 MR. GREEN: Yeah, thank you, Mr. Chair.
29 Yeah, I'd add some information to this conversation
30 because I was always trying to raise the issue of this
31 residential herd, and there were a lot of pushback, but
32 we finally got her over the hill. Tommy and I pushed
33 hard on it. This herd -- I've been hunting on this herd
34 since the early 80s, I learned of this herd from Maggie
35 Olson and actually Stinky Hardy. And they were rooted
36 in their area was, like, in the Bendeleben's and comes
37 down to it. It's it was probably Barb Trigg and Dorothy
38 Isbell's herd, and that's how it got started. The herd
39 was just left to go wild or whatever. Way back in the
40 70s. And since then, it's grown, of course. I've utilized
41 animals out of this earth, pretty much, all that time
42 since the, you know, you're talking 40 years here. So,
43 it's good to know. What I didn't get was -- I was writing
44 notes down here, was it -- did you say there was 12
45 collars?

46
47 MS. HUGHES: This is Letty, through the
48 Chair to Member Green. 25 adult females were collared.

49
50

1 MR. GREEN: Okay, thank you, I knew I
2 didn't quite have that right. Yeah, so well I'm delighted
3 to see that this is happening. And the worry that I had
4 and Tommy had was the fact that these animals were
5 getting targeted by local hunters around the Nome area.
6 And we thought that the impact on that herd was going
7 to be a negative impact, because there'd be too many
8 taken out at any given time, year after year. So, having
9 known that the collars haven't been showing back up for
10 several years, Mr. Ken Adkisson alerted me to that fact
11 here a while back, and I'm delighted to see that there's
12 a study going now. But that's the history, I'm pretty
13 sure it's how it got started out of the reindeer herd.
14 That was often the -- I think it's the (indiscernible)
15 there's an old corral up in there, and I've been there
16 back in the day, used to fly in and out of there in the
17 early 80s. So anyway, thank you, that's what I've got
18 for that. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

19
20 ACTING CHAIRPERSON AUKONGAK: All right,
21 thank you. I know back in 99 was the last time the
22 caribou were in the Golovin Mountain area, and I remember
23 my dad saying, if our people didn't hunt them right away
24 and let them stay around for a year, that caribou herd
25 would still be there. I was there because I came home
26 from college in Fairbanks and I did hunt with them too.
27 And a friend of mine, we got 5 caribou. But had we left
28 that herd alone for a year, that herd would still be
29 around. And a prime example look at what Unalakleet did,
30 they didn't hunt moose for what was it, 5 years? That's
31 a prime example of, you know, bringing them back. But
32 now, fast forward. Now we're dealing with this issue.
33 And you can put X amount 250 grand, 3 million, toward a
34 project but you hear our people and that's half of your
35 project for free.

36
37 MR. MOSES: Mr. Chair, this is Robert
38 Moses. Could I add something?

39
40 ACTING CHAIRPERSON AUKONGANK: Go ahead,
41 Robert.

42
43 MR. MOSES: I want to add what Roy and
44 Louis said about the herd. It's been back there, they
45 said, since Buffy and Martin OSM days. Martin Olson was
46 Maggie's husband long ago. And they had planes them days,
47 and they flew around. And McCarthy Marsh back in the
48 day, the 90s, we would go there 38 to 42 miles and catch
49 our caribou. Now we have to go over 200, we passed
50 McCarthy Marsh and we go north side of Paragon. Before

1 we started going there. We would catch our caribou by
2 Windy Creek and Death Valley. They would cross from the
3 north mountains of -- Bendeleben Mountains Crossing to
4 Death Valley and go to (In Native) River. In the last 4
5 or 5 years. Every year I go back there and check Death
6 Valley and I have not seen no tracks at all. Until
7 recently, I found out from some Elim people that there
8 was a mining site, other side Death Valley on the north
9 facing ridge around (In Native) River, there is like
10 about 6 mining cabins on that side. I did not know that
11 until a couple of years ago, and now I know -- now I
12 know why the caribou don't cross into Death Valley no
13 more because of them campsites. And we caught caribou
14 in Death Valley from (In Native), McCarthy Marsh to go
15 further. And there hasn't been any caribou in Death
16 Valley area for about 5 or 6 years now. And we looked
17 up on the map, and we did see like 6 regular houses,
18 like a campsite, a mining site. And now I know why the
19 caribou don't go there. Golovin, Elim and White Mountain
20 people go to McCarthy Marsh and father, we've gone past
21 the Paragon into Kuzitrin, Marsh. That that north side
22 of Paragon and we -- people went to Monument Mountain
23 and (In Native) mountains. And a couple of years ago, 2
24 of my cousins went kind of late caribou hunting, and
25 they went all the way to -- halfway to Deering and came
26 back and they did not see no caribou. I think they were
27 already taking off north. But there is a caribou here
28 that sticks around above Nome area and Pilgrim around
29 that drainage. And I believe them because I've hunted
30 that from that caribou and we've caught from that bunch.
31 And they should be able to interview people from Elim
32 also, along with Koyuk because they do a lot of caribou
33 hunting going northeast and north of Koyuk also towards
34 Buckland. Now, I've heard that the caribou are passing
35 Buckland but just to let you guys know that. We do go
36 further than McCarthy Marsh and Death Valley now, like
37 they say, we have to find a good food. Thank you.

38
39 ACTING CHAIRPERSON AUKONGANK: Thank
40 you, Robert. Good morning, Elmer. Welcome. All right,
41 will you conclude your report?

42
43 MS. CHAPA: Thank you, Mr. Chair. And
44 next up we have a presentation by Kyle Joly on the
45 Western Arctic Caribou Herd status.

46
47 (Pause)

48
49 Kyle, are you online?

50

00013

1 MR. JOLY: Hello, Mr. Chair.....

2

3 (Simultaneous speech)

4

5 MS. CHAPA: Oh.....

6

7 MR. JOLY: I am.....

8

9 MS. CHAPA: Excellent, thank you.

10

11 MR. JOLY: Good morning, Mr. Chairman and
12 Council members. My name is Kyle Joly, I'm a Caribou
13 Biologist with the National Park Service. I first
14 presented to this Council more than 20 years ago, but I
15 haven't been to a meeting recently, so thank you for
16 having me, I really appreciate it. I did want to send
17 out my condolences to Tom Gray's family, I've worked
18 with Tom for more than 20 years and I was sad to hear
19 of his passing. Today I'm going to give you a
20 presentation that I gave to the Western Arctic Herd
21 Working Group. Next slide please.

22

23 So, just a quick update from the
24 highlights of the working group. The big announcement
25 was from Fish and Game. They completed a census in 2025,
26 so, last summer. We're down to 121,000 caribou in the
27 Western Arctic Herd. That's about a 75% decline from the
28 population high, back in 2003, which was 490,000. The
29 herd's been declining about 10% a year for the last 5
30 or 6 years, pretty steadily. The working group decided
31 to move into what's known as critical management level,
32 that's the most conservative level of management. They
33 also passed a few resolutions. They're suggesting to
34 both the Federal Subsistence Board and the Board of Game
35 that the harvest limit be reduced to 4 caribou per person
36 per year, only 1 of which can be a cow. They also
37 recommended not giving out any non-resident permits in
38 Game Management 23 and also create a threshold where no
39 harvest would be allowed. Their proposal at the moment
40 is that threshold would be 75,000. So, if the herd
41 reached 75,000 animals there would be a cessation of
42 harvest. And these are just recommendations from the
43 working group. They are not anything that's been enacted
44 yet.

45

46 I also want to provide some information
47 on some of the other Arctic herds. 2 other censuses were
48 completed by Fish and Game. So, the Porcupine Herd, that
49 was the largest. It still is, but it's down 33% from
50 2017 and they're down to 143,000 caribou. The other one

00014

1 that they were able to do a census on was the Central
2 Arctic Herd, there's now 26,600 animals, and that's a
3 25% decline since 2022. And so, most of the herds that
4 we have information on in the state are declining at
5 this time. Next slide. Slide 3, please.

6
7 So, this is a slide that shows the
8 population size and trajectory of the Western Arctic
9 Herd. So, the black line is that precipitous decline
10 from 1970 to 1975, which was the low point for the herd.
11 And then we had many great years from 1976 to 2003,
12 where the population increased and reached 490,000. In
13 2007, we got our first indication that the herd was
14 declining. That was a census estimate. And looking at
15 the herd's trajectory and knowing a bit about other
16 Arctic herds, they're known to what's called oscillator
17 or go up and down. And so, I was concerned at that time
18 that we were on the downslide. And I had commissioned
19 this study and it looked at the potential harvest effects
20 of females. And so, the red line is 20% of the harvest
21 being females and the purplish-magenta line being 40%
22 females, and it runs out to basically today's date. And
23 what you see there, is if we harvest less females, we
24 would have had about 70,000 more caribou in the herd.
25 And so really trying to avoid -- harvesting cows is
26 really important, especially at this time. I think as
27 few harvests of females is really important to try and
28 help bring back the herd. The star on the graph there
29 is about where we were last year in the populations. And
30 so these models are, you know, just exercises are not
31 perfect, but they do show that, you know, we're
32 continuing this trend and we're actually a little worse
33 off than we had expected back in 2007. Next slide. Slide
34 4 please.

35
36 So, everyone likes to know where the
37 herd was. And so, I provide some information to the
38 working group about movements of the herd during fall.
39 As is typical, in most years, we had animals far north
40 up by Wainwright. And those animals tend to stay up on
41 the North Slope. The animals that crossed over there on
42 the east side on the Colville, those animals kind of
43 petered out before they made it to Anaktuvuk. We did
44 have animals kind of migrate in what people think of as
45 a typical path through Kobuk Valley National Park and
46 Onion Portage just west of Ambler. But it wasn't too
47 many of those animals that did that. And also, they were
48 very late and I'll get to that in a minute. For the
49 first time since we started putting out GPS collars back
50 in 2009, we had the majority of the heard over on the

1 west side crossing the Red Dog Road. Those animals about
2 half of them crossed, half of them didn't. And the
3 animals that crossed they ended up right now, kind of
4 in the Noorvik, Kiana and almost to Selawik area. So
5 those areas are seeing a lot of caribou right now. Next
6 slide please.

7
8 So, this is looking at results from
9 September 2024 through August 2025. As Letty pointed out
10 all of our collar deployments now are via net gunning.
11 We used to deploy exclusively at Onion Portage. When the
12 river the caribou were swimming across the river, we
13 would just catch them by hand, give them a collar and
14 then let them continue swimming on their migration
15 south. But due to delayed migrations and less use of
16 Onion Portage, we'd had to switch to net gunning. And
17 so we do that in the spring when there's an adequate
18 snow cover. And we -- in conjunction with Alex Hansen
19 with Fish and Game, deployed 34 GPS collars on adult
20 females. In the fall, we had about 80% of our collars
21 using Noatak National Preserve, which is a little bit
22 above average and similar to last year. Kobuk Valley we
23 only had 43% of the animals come through there. It's
24 very variable the last few years, how many are using
25 Kobuk Valley, and it's about half as many as it did last
26 year. As Letty mentioned, we had zero, none, caribou
27 coming into Bering Land Bridge. This is the 7th year in
28 a row where we didn't have any collared Western Arctic
29 Herd caribou make it into Bering Land Bridge National
30 Preserve. This is a stark contrast to 8 or 9 years ago,
31 when we had 75% of the collars making it into Bering
32 Land Bridge. We did have 9% of the animals using Noatak
33 in -- during the winter months. This was about average
34 but for the first time, it was the highest use of any
35 park. Usually there's higher uses, either in Bering Land
36 Bridge or Gates of the Arctic or other places, but Noatak
37 actually had the highest percentage of collars in it --
38 of any park unit.

39
40 We also track how many miles an animal
41 a caribou walks every year. And for this year it was
42 about 2300 miles that an animal walks. That's about
43 average. They made -- some animals, made it a little bit
44 further south than other years. So it is a little higher
45 than we've seen lately. And just to kind of put this
46 into context, an animal, a caribou taking some of their
47 longer migrations that we saw, you know, maybe 10 or 20
48 years ago, they could -- if you straightened out that
49 line, they could walk around the equator of the planet
50 in about 10 years. Next slide please.

1
2 So, here we're looking at the
3 distribution of caribou for this monitoring year,
4 September 2024 to August 2025. And so, the orange areas
5 are areas of high use. And then the areas of dark orange
6 are the highest use, and heavy winter use of the Selawik
7 Hills, the northern Nulato Hills and the Purcell
8 Mountains, kind of bring that area of clustered use
9 together. And you can see there that animals really
10 didn't make it out onto the Seward Peninsula very much
11 at all during this time frame. Next slide please.

12
13 So, this is a graphic looking at where
14 the caribou crossed the Noatak River during the fall.
15 The top one is where they crossed in 2024. This was a
16 really unusual flow of caribou. So, the 36% coming
17 through the orange segment, so kind of the Grand Canyon
18 of the Noatak area, that's more than twice the previous
19 record high. And so that was really unusual, and very
20 few animals made it across the Noatak in 2024 on that
21 western segment over by Kotzebue. And the graphic below
22 is just kind of the average to give you a feel of how
23 different 2024 was from what we've seen in many years.
24 Next slide please.

25
26 So, this is looking at the percentage
27 of animals that cross the Kobuk during fall migration.
28 And so, the yellow bars are kind of the early years of
29 our GPS monitoring. And we felt that this was pretty
30 normal. About 82% of the animals crossed the Kobuk River
31 during fall migration. We always have seen a certain
32 percentage of animals stay up on the North Slope for
33 whatever reason. And so that seemed to be about normal.
34 And then things really changed starting in 2016. And
35 from 2016 on, we've only had about 46% of the collared
36 animals crossing the Noatak. So, a little more than half
37 of what we thought was normal. This year -- in this
38 reporting year, 2024, 74% of the animals crossed. And
39 it's the first time that we had 2 years in a row above
40 70% of the animals crossed the Noatak in a decade. So,
41 that was encouraging to see. Next slide, please.

42
43 So, this slide is looking at the timing
44 of the crossing. So, we just looked at how many were
45 crossing. This one's looking at the timing of crossing.
46 And there's similar type of issues here. So, in the
47 early years of monitoring 2010 to 2016, we -- the average
48 time of crossing the Kobuk River was October 6th and you
49 can see in more recent years it's more than 3 weeks
50 later. The average is now October 27th. And October 29th

00017

1 is when -- was the average time that they crossed. And
2 it's one -- it's the 4th latest average crossing despite
3 so many caribou coming -- such a high percentage of
4 animals coming across. Next slide please. So, this slide
5 is that same slide, but I've added on the red bars,
6 which is when the 1st animal crosses the Kobuk River
7 rather than the average. And so, when you look at when
8 the 1st animal crossed, you can see in the first couple
9 years we had animals crossing the Kobuk River in August.
10 And the average in those early years, 2010 to '17 was
11 September 8th. And then you fast forward to more modern
12 times, 2018 to present. It's more than a month later.
13 It's October 8th. And that's a really dramatic change
14 in a very short time period. This has a lot of impacts,
15 you know, a lot of times the rivers start freezing
16 beginning of October and so, hunting availability to
17 subsistence hunters changes dramatically. And also, the
18 animals start arriving in villages when they're in the
19 rut and people start changing their focus to cows. And
20 again, you know, trying to minimize cow harvest is really
21 important but we realize how difficult that is with these
22 later migrations. And in October of 2024 the 1st animal
23 crossed on the 23rd. It was the second latest crossing
24 ever in 2020. We didn't have an animal cross until
25 November 2nd. But with so many animals, you know, 74%
26 of animals crossing the Noatak having them cross so late
27 is something that we haven't seen before. Next slide
28 please.

29
30 So, this is also looking at migration
31 but it's spring migration so they're flowing from their
32 winter range north to their calving grounds. And it's
33 looking at the Selawik rather than the Kobuk River. And
34 the average crossing was May 6th, and this is the average
35 that we've had over the long term. There's a lot of
36 variability. Mostly in 2012 and 2013, those were late
37 springs with very deep snow and those held the caribou
38 back. But we're not seeing much of a trend here on spring
39 migration, and we believe that that's because caribou -
40 - these are all females, they want to get to their
41 calving grounds and there's a really strong drive to get
42 there. And so, we're not really seeing much of a trend
43 in the timing of spring migration. Next slide please.

44
45 So, this is a shot from a camera collar
46 in 2021 and '23. We put out camera collars on
47 individuals. So, it's a GPS collar but it just has a
48 camera added to it. And we were able to get a lot of
49 really good footage. The primary purpose of this is to
50 figure out what caribou are eating during the summer,

00018

1 which is something that we've don't have a lot of good
2 information for, for the Western Arctic Herd. Currently,
3 we have botanists that are working on determining what
4 those specific items they are eating and we hope to have
5 some results to you by this time next year. And with
6 that, I'll end my presentation. I'll be happy to take
7 any questions.

8
9 ACTING CHAIRPERSON AUKONGANK: Mr.
10 Elmer.

11
12 MR. SEETOT: Elmer Seetot, Brevig
13 Mission. I just came in. Slide 3, you showed the
14 estimated population number with 15,000 and the percent
15 female. Is that the harvest you were talking about are
16 shown on the 15,000 plus 20% female. Is that what you
17 are referring to? The harvest level of the number 15,000?
18

19 MR. JOLY: Yes, thank you. This is Kyle
20 Joly for the record. Elmer, nice to hear your voice. I
21 miss you at the working group. Yes, so this is -- those
22 different colored lines are this population model that
23 we put together. And so, we don't have very good
24 estimates on how much harvest was being taken for this
25 model back which was created in 2007. 15,000 seemed like
26 a reasonable number that the harvest could be. I assume
27 it's much lower than that now. Because the herd has
28 declined by 75%. So, yes, that is for the model, what
29 we put in as the estimated harvest -- total harvest of
30 the of the population and then the different colors are
31 different percentages of females being harvest. The red
32 line, which is not as steep as 20% females, and the
33 magenta line is 40% females, which shows the estimated
34 decline going quicker.

35
36 MR. SEETOT: Thank you.

37
38 ACTING CHAIRPERSON AUKONGANK: Anybody
39 else? Louis, you got anything?
40

41 MR. GREEN: No, Mr. Chair. Finally got
42 myself on my iPad now. Thanks. I can see what's going
43 on.
44

45 ACTING CHAIRPERSON AUKONGANK: Yeah, I
46 worked up in Kotzebue last summer. It was pretty cool
47 that you know, Drake. You know, they shut down their
48 barging September 15th, I believe, for the caribou, and
49 I, you know, it's pretty awesome. We know -- we're
50 working in the Noatak pit in the river there. We were

1 all told to be on the lookout for caribou. If we did see
2 caribou, we'd have to shut down our plant. So, it was
3 great to work with the local people there, and I thought
4 I was in Council every day. Roy.

5
6 MR. ASHENFELTER: Yeah, thank you, Mr.
7 Chair. My name is Roy Ashenfelter. I attended the local
8 advisory committee meeting held last week here in Nome.
9 And the report is what -- exactly what you reported on
10 here on caribou decline. As you are in the, I think, the
11 worst category. And I forgot the name of that one. One
12 of the things that I offered and, of course, there's no
13 regulation yet. But so to try to offer an idea that may
14 be controversial but at the end of the day, a declining
15 herd is controversial and it's at a critical mass right
16 now or not a good mass. So, one of the things I would
17 like to offer is no female hunting after March. And I
18 know, you know, that hasn't been offered very often
19 because like the conversation I just had about 20 minutes
20 ago on this particular opportunity, March is an
21 excellent month to get out in our part of the world. The
22 days are longer, the snow is more harder, and you can
23 get a lot places faster and not have to worry about the
24 darkness or anything anymore. The daylight being that
25 long, you can hunt many more hours and not have to worry.
26 The reason I offer this is, you know, obviously as a
27 point of view -- of personal point of view, but at the
28 end of the day, a female caribou in March is pretty --
29 has a baby in it, and it's very, very hard to run.
30 There's the most easiest ones to get because they trail
31 behind the herd as you are going after them. And it's
32 not that -- I offer this because I want to try to see
33 this herd turn around and repopulate. But the critical
34 conversation here is saving the females. And if we're
35 at that point now where ideas that are brought to the
36 table should be of consideration. And my goal or my
37 personal thoughts are to get this herd so it's back up
38 to the numbers that we all appreciate having, because
39 when the caribou is up to the 400,000-ish, they migrate
40 down into Koyuk over toward Unalakleet. They migrate,
41 you know, onto the Seward Peninsula, go west all the way
42 to Shishmaref, you know, and so the opportunity when the
43 herds that large is very, very successful for all the
44 villages in in Seward Peninsula. But we're not there
45 because it's totally opposite now. The data shows the
46 migration is later, and hence the -- probably global
47 warming has a lot to do with that. You know, stays warmer
48 longer in the fall, they're not going to move as quickly
49 as they done before when the falls were normal, that the
50 weather would start to change and the cold temp would

1 would be a critical component for caribou to start to
2 migrate to Seward Peninsula. But I just want to offer
3 that, I know you're not a manager or a decision maker
4 on take of caribou but I just wanted to offer that to
5 the RAC as a consideration to try to minimize the take
6 of female.

7
8 MR. SEETOT: Elmer Seetot, Jr., again.
9 The summer count, is this a summer count of the Western
10 Arctic Caribou Herd? Every year or whenever possible?
11 And the other is that we just talk about the human
12 removal of animals. Air, land, water. What about the
13 predators? I know for a fact that wolves do not
14 discriminate between bulls or females. They will go
15 after the weakest or the injured to keep the herd at a
16 healthy state. I -- even though I'm not a reindeer
17 herder, I've been with the reindeer or with the ungulates
18 for a long time since I was growing up. And the herders
19 from the 15 communities within Seward Peninsula, they
20 shared a lot of information. Not only information about
21 movement and the population, but I also got gathered
22 information from local elders that were here when the
23 when the caribou first came here. And most of our talk
24 is just like in the meetings 1: human removal of animals.
25 We have to think about the predators on the other side,
26 they do a lot more indiscriminate killing of their food
27 than we do. I seen that before with the reindeer herds,
28 where they just slashed the throats and just drank the
29 blood, 20 years ago. So, I know that that's a sticking
30 point for many of the animals that we subsist on, moose,
31 caribou. I'm not too sure about musk ox, but I know that
32 muskox will be attacked right from the front by grizzly.
33 And this is witnesses to certain things that happen out
34 in the wild, but.

35
36 That was the sticking point. I guess,
37 that human removal we pretty much know about because we
38 got the tickets or the agencies got the tickets. With
39 the predators, it's a year-round business for them. So,
40 that's something that we really don't take into
41 consideration is the animal removal by predators or
42 other weather events, extreme weather events, rain over
43 their food. Like we have drizzle right now, I know it's
44 going to be a hardship for many of those animals. But
45 many places are pretty much windblown so they have access
46 to the lichen. And talking to the elders that the animals
47 will vacate that area for a while because there's no
48 food available. They say lichen takes 50 years to grow,
49 they'll be there. And that was the first time I heard
50 the caribou being around the -- or Nulato Hills. I heard

1 a lot about the Nulato Hills over the years. Where the
2 winter caribou -- caribou overwinter before they start
3 coming into the Seward Peninsula. So, the estimated
4 population might not be the real number because caribou
5 move around due to food availability, predators, wind
6 direction, and pretty much late snow. And that's
7 something that we always argue about. My elders thought
8 -- say about knowledge, that if you talk about the
9 animals in a certain way, you know, they won't be there
10 for you, you use it wisely, it will be there constantly
11 for you. So, that -- that's what I was trying to point
12 -- or that's what I didn't include in my first comment.
13 Thank you very much.

14

15 MR. GREEN: Mr. Chair. Louie.

16

17 ACTING CHAIRPERSON AUKONGANK: Go ahead,
18 Louie.

19

20 MR. GREEN: Yeah, I was just going to
21 point to the predation level. I'm glad that Elmer brought
22 that up. You know, he talked about the wounding of the
23 animals. I witnessed reindeer herd, Davis's herd, up in
24 the Crater Creek area back when they moved way back in
25 there in the late 70s. And where the Wolves would
26 hamstring the animal and leave it sitting there, come
27 back later and then take it when they wanted. But I
28 think the wolf problem is pretty serious. It was just
29 about 4 or 5 years ago when the Board of Game Chair and
30 Vice Chair had approached me about wolf hunting, and I
31 said we should have aerial wolf hunting at this time of
32 the year, down from 490,000 in the Western Arctic Caribou
33 Herd and 121,000. We should be really considering
34 predation control. There's no reason not to. We didn't
35 have any wolves really on the Seward Peninsula in my --
36 to the best of my knowledge. I flew around quite a bit
37 from 1981 on. After I learned how to fly, I spent a lot
38 of time cruising the Bendeleben's. They herded reindeer
39 up in Shishmaref, with airplanes. So, being familiar
40 with that country back there never saw a lot of wolves.
41 Now it appears that that may be the case. And when the
42 herd exploded there in the late 90s, I want to say, I
43 seen caribou all the way to the Imuruk Basin. Also
44 started hearing wolves up the river from the Pilgrim,
45 from Pilgrim, Springs, and over in Mary's Iglu up to
46 Kuzitrin, you could hear wolves howling in the night,
47 over the years. So, you know, if we want to do something
48 for this deer besides taking these drastic steps on
49 removing the human factor out of there, we should be
50 really concentrating on the animals. Bears are another

1 predator. Even foxes, I've seen foxes around calf musk
2 ox trying to get to them, so I can just imagine what
3 they would do with reindeer fawns. Trapping is not as
4 prevalent as it used to be, but still predators are a
5 big concern of mine, and which should be all of our
6 concern. So, I wanted to plug that in there, and I thank
7 Elmer, for bringing it to the table first. Thank you.

8
9 MS. IVANOFF: This is Kelsi. Just to
10 continue on the topic of predator control. In
11 Unalakleet, we saw an issue with wolves and bears and
12 that prompted people to start hunting them and trapping
13 them. And they're -- the wolves are super elusive,
14 they're not -- I know people in Unalakleet who have
15 never even seen a wolf before. But then you go up into
16 the Upper Kobuk area, and the wolves are going into
17 town. That's how brave they are, and how they're not
18 scared of humans because they're not hunted. And I just
19 wanted to bring up that, you know, the behavior
20 differences between the wolves up there versus the
21 wolves where we do have -- you know, we don't have an
22 established predator control down where we are, but it's
23 been an understanding that's an issue for our moose and
24 that's helped our moose population. And I think I would
25 really, you know, strongly support predator control for
26 our caribou. Thank you.

27
28 ACTING CHAIRPERSON AUKONGANK: All
29 right. Thank you for the report. And thank you for the
30 comments, everybody. We're going to move on.

31
32 MS. CHAPA: Thank you, Mr. Chair. Next
33 on the agenda, we have action items, developing
34 recommendations of wildlife proposals and wildlife
35 closures. And we're going to start with the statewide
36 proposal, WP26-01. And that presentation is going to be
37 given by Brian Ubelaker.

38
39 ACTING CHAIRPERSON AUKONGANK: And last
40 night he promised 2 minutes. Thank you.

41
42 MR. UBELAKER: Do you have the stopwatch?
43 We're on.....

44
45 MS. CHAPA: Page 24.

46
47 MR. GREEN: I do.

48
49 MR. UBELAKER: Thank you, Mr. Chair.

50

1 (Simultaneous speech)

2

3

MR. GREEN Just kidding.

4

5

MR. UBELAKER: For the record -- sorry,
6 Louis. Go ahead.

7

8

MR. GREEN: No, I said I'm just kidding.

9

10

11

12

13

14

15

16

17

18

MS. CHAPA: 21.

19

20

21

22

23

24

25

26

27

28

29

30

31

32

33

34

35

36

37

38

39

40

41

42

43

44

45

46

47

48

49

50

MR. UBELAKER: 21. This proposal submitted by the Office of Subsistence Management, seeks to move authority for managing federal hunts out of delegation of authority letters, or DALs, and into Unit specific regulations. If adopted, the 61 DALs currently in use across Alaska would be rescinded. DALs were originally meant to provide management flexibility, but over time they've created inefficiencies. Any action taken under a DAL, counts as a special action which triggers requirements for public hearings, tribal consultations, and Regional Advisory Council recommendations. These processes are important for unusual or emergency situations, but they add unnecessary burden when applied to routine in-season management actions like closing a hunt when a quota has been met. As a result, federal in-season managers and OSM staff spend significant time on procedural requirements for decisions that are already expected every year. High staff turnover also makes consistency difficult. On top of that, OSM must maintain 61 DALs, some of which overlap, conflict or contain outdated guidance. By moving these authorities into regulation, in-season management actions would no longer trigger the special action process and approximately 4 pages of boilerplate DAL requirements would be replaced with 1 clear paragraph in regulation. Public transparency would also improve. Excuse me. Since changes to delegated authority would go through the standard regulatory proposal process. Oversight also becomes simpler, with clearer responsibilities and reduced administrative workload. Importantly, the Board would retain authority

1 over emergency closures and broader decisions, but in-
2 season managers would still be able to act quickly within
3 the parameters set by the Board.

4
5 This proposal is not expected to affect
6 wildlife populations or subsistence opportunity. It's
7 primarily administrative, streamlining how recurring
8 decisions are made. It increases efficiency, strengthens
9 coordination with the state and local users, and makes
10 the process more transparent for the public. One
11 alternative that was considered for the master analysis
12 is replacing the phrase "coordination with" in
13 regulation, with "seeking input" and "considering
14 feedback from". This clarifies the expectation for in-
15 season managers to communicate their actions and
16 consider feedback, without adding the confusion that has
17 developed around the word "coordinate". The OSM
18 preliminary conclusion is to adopt WP26-01 with
19 modification to replace the phrase "coordination with"
20 with "seeking input" and "considering feedback from" and
21 to adopt WP26-01g as written, which is the amendment for
22 the addendum for Seward Pen, specifically. Adopting
23 these changes would reduce administrative burden,
24 resolve inconsistencies, and improve efficiency while
25 maintaining transparency and accountability in Federal
26 Subsistence Management. And with that, I'm happy to
27 answer any questions anyone may have.

28
29 ACTING CHAIRPERSON AUKONGANK: I don't
30 think we have any. Moving on. Kelsi.

31
32 MR. GREEN: Louis after Kelsi, thanks.

33
34 MS. IVANOFF: This is Kelsi. I think for
35 reasons that he stated, the uniformity, the less
36 paperwork, I think our Council should support this.

37
38 ACTING CHAIRPERSON AUKONGANK: Go ahead,
39 Louis.

40
41 MR. GREEN: Yes, thank you, Mr. Chair. I
42 agree with Kelsi, it's a housekeeping. Thanks.

43
44 MS. IVANOFF: Mr. Chair. This is Kelsey,
45 and I moved to support Wildlife Proposal WP26-01.

46
47 MS. CHAPA: Mr. Chair, if I may. Gisela
48 Chapa for the record. So, the -- yeah, the Council needs
49 to go through the presentation procedures. So now that
50 you've gotten the introduction the proposal, it's an

1 opportunity to -- for the Council to receive additional
2 information before actually getting into the action and
3 voting on in on your motion.

4

5 ACTING CHAIRPERSON AUKONGANK: And we
6 don't have any tribes or corporations that are on the
7 line, right.

8

9 MS. CHAPA: Exactly, I believe that we
10 did not receive any, excuse me. Any comments from tribes
11 or ANCSA Corporation on this proposal or any proposal
12 that the Council is going to see today. So then, next
13 up we have an opportunity for agencies to provide
14 additional comments on that proposal, and we have a list
15 of agencies listed in the back of your nameplate. We can
16 start with ADF&G.

17

18 ACTING CHAIRPERSON AUKONGANK: You have
19 any?

20

21 MR. POETTER: Yeah. Good morning, Aaron
22 Poetter with the Alaska Department of Fish and Game. We
23 do not have any comments related to this proposal. Thank
24 you.

25

26 ACTING CHAIRPERSON AUKONGANK: Any
27 federal?

28

29 (No comment)

30

31 ACTING CHAIRPERSON AUKONGANK: Any
32 tribal?

33

34 (No comment)

35

36 Regional Council from a different
37 region? Go ahead, Brian. Kelsi.

38

39 MS. IVANOFF: Oh, I was just going to ask
40 what other -- what other Councils had voted on this.

41

42 MR. UBELAKER: Thank you, Mr. Chair.
43 Sorry, I am ready to proceed now. So, starting with the
44 Southeast Regional Advisory Council, they supported
45 WP26-01 as modified by OSM. And they supported WP26-01a,
46 with modifications shown in the Council book. Also,
47 modification for OSM. Southcentral Regional Advisory
48 Council supported WP26-01 with their modification. They
49 did not like the changing the language from "consult
50 with" to "seek input" and "consider feedback from" so

1 they preferred the original language to consult with and
2 they also supported WP26-01b with modification that they
3 made. Kodiak/Aleutian RAC supported as modified by OSM.
4 I do not have Bristol Bay listed. Did they? They
5 supported as modified by OSM? Okay. YK Delta is currently
6 meeting. Western Interior supported as modified by OSM.
7 Northwest Arctic supported as modified by OSM. Eastern
8 Interior supported as modified by OSM -- 2601, they
9 supported as modified by OSM. Excuse me. 26-01i, they
10 supported as modified by their Council which added
11 Fortymile Caribou to the to a DAL. The North Slope
12 supported as modified by OSM. Thank you.

13
14 ACTING CHAIRPERSON AUKONGANK: Any with
15 Fish and Game Advisory committee?

16
17 (No comment)

18
19 Subsistence.

20
21 (No comment)

22
23 Anything written by public?

24
25 MR. UBELAKER: Thank you, Mr. Chair. Yes.
26 Ahtna Inter-tribal Resource Commission supports
27 expanding delegated authority to local federal land
28 managers for timely wildlife management, contingent upon
29 mandatory tribal consultation, transparency and
30 accountability. This proposal emphasizes the necessity
31 for consistent application, limitations on scope, and
32 embedding ATRIC consultation into decision making
33 frameworks for effective conservation management. This
34 approach aligns with the precedent set by WP25-01 and
35 aims to ensure responsive and culturally appropriate
36 wildlife management decisions. ATRIC urges the Federal
37 Subsistence Board to adopt these conditions to improve
38 trust and relevance in wildlife management. Yes, that
39 was the only written comment submitted to this -- during
40 the open comment period.

41
42 ACTING CHAIRPERSON AUKONGANK: Public
43 testimony. Have anything, Roy?

44
45 (No comment)

46
47 Alright. Regional Council.
48 Recommendation. Motion. Go ahead -- oh.

49
50

1 MR. UBELAKER: Sorry to interrupt. Thank
2 you, Mr. Chair. Just want to point out that this will
3 take 2 motions. One on WP26-01 and then another motion
4 on WP26-01g, which is the Seward Peninsula specific one.
5 And if there's any questions on what that is regarding,
6 I'm happy to answer those.

7
8 MS. IVANOFF: This is Kelsi and I move
9 to support proposal WP26-01 with modification. With OSM
10 modification.

11
12 MR. GREEN: Mr. Chair, Louis, I'll
13 second, her motion. But I did have a question about the
14 verbiage of the change. You said "consult to" what was
15 the.....

16
17 (Simultaneous speech)

18
19 ACTING CHAIRPERSON AUKONGANK: We have a
20 motion, a second, we have discussion and a question. Go
21 ahead.

22
23 MR. UBELAKER: Thank you, Mr. Chair,
24 through the Chair.

25
26 MR. GREEN: Sorry, Martin.

27
28 The OSM preliminary conclusion is to
29 replace the term "coordination with", with "seeking
30 input" and "considering feedback from" and I believe the
31 intent was that there is there's more of a set of
32 expectations with the term coordination. Whereas seeking
33 input and considering feedback means that you are asking
34 the people that should be involved in the decision making
35 and then actually considering what they have to say,
36 what their input is.

37
38 ACTING CHAIRPERSON AUKONGANK: You get
39 that, Louis?

40
41 MR. GREEN: Yes, Mr. Chair. Thank you.
42 sorry about -- (indiscernible).....

43
44 (Simultaneous speech)

45
46 ACTING CHAIRPERSON AUKONGANK: All right
47 Going to vote. Aye.

48
49 MR. GREEN: We're doing a vote, Mr.
50 Chair?

1
2
3
4
5
6
7
8
9
10
11
12
13
14
15
16
17
18
19
20
21
22
23
24
25
26
27
28
29
30
31
32
33
34
35
36
37
38
39
40
41
42
43
44
45
46
47
48
49
50

ACTING CHAIRPERSON AUKONGANK: Yes.

MS. CHAPA: Well, if I may, Mr. Chair. So, as part of the discussion of the motion the Council should develop their justification in support of your recommendation. And also in the back of the nameplate, there's some questions in green, blue and yellow that can help you develop that justification. Or it can just be simply that, you know, since this is a proposal to do some housekeeping, you know it might simplify the process, etc.

ACTING CHAIRPERSON AUKONGANK: I think we're in a vote here, right?

MS. CHAPA: In discussion.

MR. GREEN: Mr. Chair, this is Louis, I guess we're in the in the housekeeping section here, right?

ACTING CHAIRPERSON AUKONGANK: Yeah.

MR. GREEN: It sounded like Kelsi had something to say I'll mute.

MS. IVANOFF: This is Kelsi. I think we should support this because it was submitted by OSM. This -- they are the ones doing the work behind these. I think we should support their housekeeping -- this housekeeping proposal as they request.

ACTING CHAIRPERSON AUKONGANK: Alright, where are we at here, this a little more confusing than Congress here.

MR. SEETOT: Elmer Seetot, call for question.

ACTING CHAIRPERSON AUKONGANK: All right. Question called. Let's vote. Aye.

IN UNISON: Aye.

MR. MOSES: Robert, aye.

ACTING CHAIRPERSON AUKONGANK: All right, motion passes. Hallelujah.

00029

1 MS. IVANOFF: This is Kelsi. I move to
2 support proposal 26-01g.

3
4 ACTING CHAIRPERSON AUKONGANK: May I have
5 a second?

6
7 MR. GREEN: Louis. Second.

8
9 MS. CHAPA: Mr. Chair. Now, since you're
10 already in the action in making the motion, I think you
11 can just discuss your justification and then you vote.

12
13 ACTING CHAIRPERSON AUKONGANK:
14 Discussion.

15
16 MS. IVANOFF: This is Kelsi. As
17 justification, I think again, supporting OSM and their
18 housekeeping specific to the Seward Peninsula region.

19
20 MR. GREEN: This is Louis, I concur.
21 Calling for the question.

22
23 ACTING CHAIRPERSON AUKONGANK: Question
24 called.

25
26 (No response)

27
28 Hearing none. All in favor, aye.

29
30 IN UNISON: Aye.

31
32 ACTING CHAIRPERSON AUKONGANK: The
33 motion passed. Moving along.

34
35 MR. UBELAKER: Thank you, Mr. Chair. For
36 the record, Brian Ubelaker and I will be presenting --
37 excuse me. I'll be presenting a summary of Wildlife
38 Proposal WP26-52 regarding brown bear in Unit 22, and
39 this analysis begins on page 37 of your meeting books.
40 This proposal, submitted by the Alaska Department of
41 Fish and Game, requests aligning federal brown bear
42 regulations in Unit 22 with state regulations.
43 Specifically, the proposal would extend the federal
44 season to close -- excuse me, would extend the federal
45 season by 30 days to close June 30th in Units 22A,
46 remainder 22B, 22C, 22D and 22E, would also increase the
47 harvest limit in 22A, B, D and E to 2 bears per year and
48 eliminate the federal permit requirement in Unit 22D
49 Southwest. The proponent states, current federal
50 regulations are not aligned with state regulations,

1 creating confusion for users. They note very little
2 subsistence harvest occurs under the state permit.

3
4 Historical actions by management
5 agencies are pertinent to evaluating the current
6 request. Both federal and state regulations since the
7 1990s have progressively liberalized Unit 22 brown bear
8 regulations in response to increasing bear populations.
9 These changes included extending hunting seasons,
10 raising harvest limits, and establishing special subunit
11 hunts. The most recent state actions in 2024 extended
12 the seasons in Units 22C through E, until June 30th to
13 streamline regulations. Biological information
14 indicates brown bear numbers in Unit 22 have increased
15 since the 1970s, due to reduced hunting and more prey
16 availability. Aerial surveys in 2015 and 2021 estimated
17 between 420 and 527 adult bears, with stable to
18 increasing abundance. Harvest averages about 96 bears
19 per year, with over 60% males meeting state management
20 goals. Subsistence harvest under RB699 has been
21 extremely low, with almost no use since 2018. The
22 available federal permit has not even been issued since
23 the mid-1990s. Most harvest occurs under state
24 registration permits and harvest tickets. Local resident
25 harvest has declined in recent years, while non-local
26 resident harvest has increased.

27
28 One alternative considered was to
29 eliminate the state registration permit requirement for
30 subsistence harvest, since it adds little benefit and
31 has not been utilized. Adopting WP26-52 would align
32 federal and state regulations, reduce confusion and
33 extend opportunity. No conservation concerns are
34 anticipated because subsistence harvest is minimal and
35 harvest already occurs under the more liberal state
36 permit. So, it is OSM's preliminary conclusion to
37 support WP26-52. Extending season lengths and increasing
38 harvest limits will expand subsistence opportunity,
39 while alignment with state regulation reduces regulatory
40 complexity without threatening brown bear populations.
41 And with that, I'm happy to answer any questions.

42
43 ACTING CHAIRPERSON AUKONGANK: Anybody?

44
45 MR. MOSES: Yeah. This is Robert at
46 Golovin. I had a question.

47
48 ACTING CHAIRPERSON AUKONGANK: Go for it,
49 Robert.

50

1 MR. MOSES: Would it be possible for the
2 bear limit for Seward Peninsula region to up it, up
3 to 1 more to, 3 per year since we've been having a lot
4 of bear problems with people's campsites? The bears have
5 been getting into campsites in Fish River, and I know
6 there's some probably other places as well. But we heard
7 a lot on the Fish River that the bears get into their
8 cabins, and they totally wrecked the whole thing. The
9 whole cabin. They clean it out, they're hungry and
10 looking for food. And those are some -- some of them are
11 pretty big bears. One year when we went caribou hunting,
12 April 20th, the last time we tried to go, we seen a big
13 bear, like, 3 miles away. And then others boys thought
14 it was a wolverine walking to us until I tell them look
15 through my binoculars. So they looked through my
16 binoculars and they couldn't believe how big a bear that
17 was. Like about 3 or 4 miles away, they thought it was
18 a wolverine. But I think it would be good if we could
19 up the bear catch limit to 3, if that's possible. That's
20 my opinion and my idea to try and help with predators.
21 Thank you.

22
23 ACTING CHAIRPERSON AUKONGANK: I agree
24 with Robert. We had -- I believe we had 3 right, inside
25 Golovin, right, Robert?

26
27 MR. MOSES: Yeah. And they've been --
28 last few years they've been coming into town pretty --
29 walking right through town, and they're getting to be
30 not afraid of people or they're just too hungry and
31 wandering all over. But yeah, you're right, Martin.
32 Thank you.

33
34 MR. GREEN: Mr. Chair, this is Louis.

35
36 (Simultaneous speech)

37
38 MS. IVANOFF: This is Kelsi, I had a
39 question -- oh.

40
41 MR. GREEN: Go ahead, Kelsi.

42
43 MS. IVANOFF: I just had a question. I
44 know we have some hunts up for closure and was curious
45 what the reasoning for aligning rather than just closing
46 the federal hunts. Aligning the state hunt in the federal
47 hunt, whereas, like some of the other ones, you're
48 completely taking away the federal hunt because there's
49 already a state hunt. Just -- yeah.

50

1 MR. UBELAKER: Sorry, through the Chair.
2 I believe we're suggesting to do away with the federal
3 permit because it hasn't been used. I don't think there's
4 any -- I don't recall anything about closing any federal
5 hunts.

6
7 MS. IVANOFF: Okay, I was just curious,
8 like, what the what the reasoning was for taking away
9 the permit. Whereas, like, in other hunts, you're
10 completely taking away the closure. Like what the --
11 what the reasoning and differences were in those.

12
13 MR. UBELAKER: I believe we're just
14 suggesting to do -- and sorry, it's not the federal
15 permit. The alternative considered would be to not
16 require the state subsistence permit under federal
17 regulations.

18
19 MS. IVANOFF: Okay.

20
21 MR. UBELAKER: And then, like I say, I
22 don't believe there's any closures for bear. Are you
23 referring, like a federal public land closure?

24
25 MS. IVANOFF: No. So, like with the moose
26 you're rescinding the closure or proposing to rescind
27 the closure?

28
29 MR. UBELAKER: Yes.

30
31 MS. IVANOFF: And then with this, instead
32 of -- instead of doing away with the federal to align
33 with the state, just, why keep the overlap when you're
34 rescinding other closures? Unless I'm not understanding
35 it right.

36
37 MR. UBELAKER: I might not be
38 understanding either. We're not.....

39
40 DR. VICKERS: This is Brent Vickers with
41 OSM. And I just think that I'm hearing what you're
42 saying. And I think there's a little bit of confusion
43 about having a permit for a hunt, rather, if the hunt
44 is open or not. Even if there's a federal -- so, a hunt
45 can be open whether you have a require a permit, federal
46 permit for that hunt or not, you can just use -- a
47 federal hunt, can be open and you could use a federal
48 permit. There could just be a green tag or a state
49 harvest ticket, state registration, there's all
50 different ways of giving, you know, providing the hunter

1 with what they need to access that hunt. But if --
2 whether the hunt is open or not is a different matter.
3 So, if we closed the hunt, that would mean that no
4 federally qualified subsistence user would be able to
5 hunt there under federal regulations. They would have
6 to be hunting under state regulations. It is very
7 confusing, even as I'm speaking, it's like, oh gosh, how
8 do I make this more clear? But we're talking about
9 different things, whether a hunt's open and then whether
10 you use a permit or not for that hunt. And in this case,
11 he's just talking about increasing -- the proposals to
12 increase the bag limit to 2 bears. So alright, what
13 you're saying is why even like do that, if it's going
14 to be aligning with the state anyways, why not just like
15 you're like kind of like why do you even have the hunt,
16 a federal hunt if it's just the same as.....

17
18 MS. IVANOFF: Yeah.

19
20 MR. VICKERS: That's up to you guys.
21 Whether you like to maintain that federal hunt there so
22 that you can -- it allows the Council essentially if
23 there's a federal hunt open and -- it allows the Council
24 to do what you're doing and make recommendations on it
25 one way or the other. If there's no hunt, you can't do
26 that. You have to go through the state process and deal
27 with just the state regulations.

28
29 MS. IVANOFF: Okay.

30
31 (Talking)

32
33 MR. GREEN: Mr. Chair, this is Louis.

34
35 ACTING CHAIRPERSON AUKONGANK: Hold on.
36 Louis.

37
38 MS. MALLORY: Hi, I'm Marianna Mallory
39 with Division of Subsistence. I just wanted to offer a
40 thought. Which is that leaving this open, since there
41 is some alignment between federal and state regulations,
42 and they're seeking to align, would at least give you
43 guys the opportunity to comment on this through the RAC.
44 And I know something that's been expressed is that it
45 feels like sometimes this process is easier to go through
46 or more effective for change sometimes than the state
47 process. And so, if that's the that's the general feeling
48 going through that process here and then seeking to align
49 it with state regulations, if this were to become
50 something that was really important for people to have

00034

1 be one way or another down the line might be a good
2 idea. And the other thing that I was hearing in the back
3 and forth about the permit and Brent can correct me if
4 I'm wrong, is the intent behind removing the permit just
5 kind of less paperwork, a little bit administrative
6 burden on users? Okay. All right. Thanks. Thank you.

7

8 ACTING CHAIRPERSON AUKONGANK: Louis, go
9 ahead.

10

11 MR. GREEN: Yes, thank you, Mr. Chair. I
12 just kind of aligning about the -- I know this is
13 probably something for a future meeting and proposals,
14 but I do agree with the upping the count of taking 3
15 bears. But one of the concerns I have is, you know, the
16 trophy hunts go on all the time. People are taking big
17 bears. The big boars, in my mind, are kind of like
18 natural predation for the cubs in the spring. So, that
19 that would be my question to Brian. Is that true? And
20 is it also true that if we're taking those big bears,
21 we're adding to the problem of overpopulation of small
22 bears? Thank you, Mr. Chair.

23

24 DR. VICKERS: Through the Chair. Member
25 Green, I do not have data to back that up. In my mind
26 that's always made sense to me. And I've heard that
27 theory discussed quite often. But I would definitely bow
28 down to the knowledge of Fish and Game if maybe somebody
29 from there would like to speak up.

30

31 ACTING CHAIRPERSON AUKONGANK: Sara.
32 Well, I do hope we up it to 3. We don't need an answer
33 today, but it'd be awesome.

34

35 MS. IVANOFF: This is Kelsi. I'm not sure
36 when the -- when our cycle is up for Board of Game, but
37 that might be an avenue for taking this up to March for
38 -- is that when proposals are due for our...? May 1st.
39 Okay. When proposals are due? Okay. Thank you.

40

41 ACTING CHAIRPERSON AUKONGANK: All
42 right. We beat that up pretty good. Now, where are we
43 at?

44

45 MS. CHAPA: Thank you, Mr. Chair.

46

47 ACTING CHAIRPERSON AUKONGANK: Oh,
48 Elmer.

49

50 MS. CHAPA: Oh, go ahead.

1

2 MR. SEETOT: Elmer Seetot, Brevig
3 Mission. Someone mentioned about increasing the harvest
4 of brown bears. I think we've talked about so long,
5 communities are inundated with numerous recommendations,
6 regulations, federal state agencies. I think we just got
7 upheld to the community like we do back home. If we need
8 help, we ask for help. And I think it -- you have to
9 approach talking about natural resources in a certain
10 way for them to be there, according to TEC or TEK. That
11 -- that's my number one issue that, you know, when they
12 want to increase because there might be a nuisance or
13 some -- just recruit more hunters, period. One example
14 is marine mammal hunt. We get certain animals, whether
15 it be through community sharing or through actual
16 harvest. That's how we get our numbers. If the weather
17 delays us, then we have to take that into consideration.
18 So, it's not a give and take on certain numbers you
19 harvest. It's just a matter of, I guess like they say,
20 going around curve for the community to use, just recruit
21 more and instead of trying to say, oh, we need 1 more
22 bear for our harvest, for people that harvest or, or use
23 the bears that way, I would support that. But I think
24 last bear harvest that I subsisted on was when our
25 parents were alive and not so much right now, where the
26 harvest of brown bear is pretty much for the fur, you
27 know, or certain things that they go through or just for
28 control of nuisance bears. But that that would be what
29 I would say go to the community where we are -- how many
30 of -- how many of them read the regulations about, oh,
31 1 or 2 bears. No, they don't -- they won't read the
32 regulations. We might advise them, but in the best
33 interests, I guess they go through what they have been
34 going through past years with the recommendations from
35 the elders and that was just one comment that I have to
36 share with you. I would like to see the bears reduced,
37 but you know that that's us -- for someone else to take
38 care of. You know, I'm just -- I just wasn't born into
39 the requirement that I had to hunt bears. You know that
40 that that's not my that's not my occupation. My
41 occupation is something else. Thank you.

42

43 ACTING CHAIRPERSON AUKONGANK: All
44 right, Sara. Looks like we're going to have a number.

45

46 MS. HENSLEE: Good morning. My name is
47 Sara Henslee. I'm the area Wildlife Biologist out of
48 Nome, nice to see you guys again. I just wanted to pull
49 up the paper Louis had asked about whether killing large
50 boars increases cub survival and I just wanted a second

1 so I could read it to you guys. But this paper was
2 published in 2003 that did look into whether hunting had
3 any impact on cub survival in a couple of Interior and
4 one Coastal population out of Katmai. And from that they
5 didn't find any evidence. I'll just read it.

6
7 No evidence that removal of adult male
8 bears by hunters reduced cubs survival or litter size.
9 So, I have not really found any evidence for that, but
10 it is something I hear a lot from hunters that large
11 boars are the ones killing the cubs but haven't seen
12 anything in the literature to corroborate that
13 necessarily. And then the other thing I'll mention
14 really quickly, we are talking about that 3-bear bag
15 limit. And I just wanted to mention that the State Board
16 of Game proposal period is about to open for our area.
17 So, the SPRAC or anyone individually is welcome to submit
18 a proposal to increase the bag limit to 3 bears. I did
19 just want to mention that we have had this 2-bear bag
20 limit for several years now, 2020 beyond, and the amount
21 of hunters that harvest 2 is very low. It's hard, like
22 you were saying, Elmer, like, you just run out of stuff
23 to do with bear hides after a while. I've seen folks
24 come up with some pretty interesting ideas, including
25 lining their honey buckets with it, which I really love.
26 But yeah, so on that. And the only other thing I wanted
27 to mention is that you do have a permit through the
28 state side to sell brown bear hides, and maybe on the
29 federal side too, now. So anyway, those 3 things and
30 I'll shut up now.

31
32 ACTING CHAIRPERSON AUKONGANK: Okay.
33 Winni the Pooh bucket.

34
35 MR. GREEN: This is Louis.

36
37 ACTING CHAIRPERSON AUKONGANK: Go ahead,
38 Louis.

39
40 MR. GREEN: Okay. That was interesting
41 to hear about the big bear and the population
42 (indiscernible) little bear. Just looking at the average
43 hunt and that's been going on for a long time, there's
44 been like about 100 bears taken out of Unit 22, for the
45 whole Unit for, I think, a few decades, I want to -- I
46 think. I do like the idea of offering that other bear.
47 But hearing the report that it's not as used as I thought
48 it would be maybe it's not necessary, but it's something
49 to look at down the road. We could put a proposal in to
50 do that. The idea of -- not trying to have any issue

1 with what Elmer said, but what I do know is when you
2 have 100 bears taken on the average, this one, it says
3 '96, I think is what it is now, you only got a select
4 few people that will actually do that. And the extra
5 bears is kind of alluding to that fact to me, is just
6 saying they're only taking so many. I don't remember --
7 I know the state you're allowed to sell hides. You should
8 be able to sell all the parts of a bear as far as I'm
9 concerned. It would -- might entice more hunters like
10 Elmer wants to see, to do the work. But beside that I
11 think we -- we're okay at this point with 2-bear limit.
12 Just because I heard that it's not being utilized as
13 often as I thought it was. So, anyway, I just wanted to
14 point out the fact that there's not any more hunters.
15 There's only a select few of us that go fishing for
16 beluga, and Tommy was the other one, I'm one of them in
17 Nome area. There's guys that hunt with the boat and
18 chase beluga. There's only so many people that will go
19 wolf hunting. And so, using that, there's only so many
20 hunters that will do bears. So, I guess the only other
21 option was to allow another permit, but if we can do
22 this with -- in the future with being able to sell. I
23 didn't get with the federal side was. And that's my
24 question. Is a federal hunt bear allowed to be sold? The
25 hide at least and I'm done. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

26
27 MR. UBELAKER: Through the Chair. Yes,
28 member Green. I'm not 100% familiar, but WP24-01 does
29 allow for the sale of federally harvested brown bear.
30 And it's not the same permit system that's used by the
31 state. It is through the federal system itself. And,
32 Brent, are you answering? Okay. Yes, so that's all the
33 detail that my pea brain can come up with right now.
34 Thank you.

35
36 DR. VICKERS: This is Brent from OSM.
37 Yes, there is a -- the federal brown bear permitting --
38 sale of hides, sorry. Is -- it was approved, and we --
39 you will -- subsistence users will be able to sell brown
40 bear highs once the permit is available. We are still
41 working with the -- basically the federal system to get
42 that permit ready. So in the meantime, selling through
43 the state permit is what one would do until the permit
44 is ready, federal permit is ready. That's all. Oh, and
45 I just wanted to add. Sorry, before I move on, remember
46 that the federal hunts, subsistence hunts, salvaging
47 meat is required. Think about eating all those brown
48 bears. That's all, thank you.

49
50

00038

1 MR. GREEN: Thank you for that, you guys.
2 And brown bear doesn't taste too bad.

3
4 ACTING CHAIRPERSON AUKONGANK: Sara,
5 then Brian.

6
7 MR. GREEN: Thank you, Mr. Chair.

8
9 MS. HENSLEE: Through the Chair again.
10 This is Sara Henslee.

11
12 MR. MOSES: Mr. Chair, this is Robert
13 Moses.

14
15 ACTING CHAIRPERSON AUKONGANK: Hold on,
16 Robert.

17
18 MS. HENSLEE: I just wanted to make one
19 more comment while we're talking about this. I know the
20 proposal on the table right now is the seasons, but
21 because the Board of Game is coming up, it just seems
22 like an opportunity for me to talk about this. But
23 seasons is one way to try and increase harvest, which
24 it seems like that's the intent of this season extension,
25 aligning the seasons. But another thing I wanted to
26 mention is we're thinking about this you could also --
27 I'm sorry, bag limit is one way to increase it. You
28 talked about the 3-bear limit, but you could also
29 consider seasons moving forward into the state Board of
30 Game season. And another thing you could consider. So,
31 our seasons end on June 30th, right now you might think
32 about maybe extending the season into July as you're
33 thinking about proposals to submit to the Board of Game.
34 It does seem like a lot of times, in my experience,
35 there are those nuisance bears that fish camps, and the
36 one in Golovin, I believe, started rearing her head with
37 those cubs in July and right into the fall. So, it just
38 seems like without fail, the moment July 1st hits,
39 there's bears that start hitting up people's cabins and
40 camps. So, Alicia and I have dealt with that every single
41 year, so just something to consider. Maybe season
42 extensions is another way to get harvest and avoid having
43 to use defensive life and property. Yep.

44
45 ACTING CHAIRPERSON AUKONGANK: Brian.

46
47 MR. UBELAKER: Real quick, just a follow
48 up on what Brent said. Yes, hide and edible meat of a
49 brown bear need to be salvaged. There are several units
50 where you do not have to salvage the hide, but you still

00039

1 have to salvage the edible meat.

2

3 ACTING CHAIRPERSON AUKONGANK: Okay,
4 Robert.

5

6 MR. MOSES: Going back to Louis and
7 Elmer's comments about the brown bear up to 3. I don't
8 know if Louis mentioned that you're able to sell
9 everything of the brown bear once you catch it. Maybe
10 this will help to -- like, Elmer say [sic] get more
11 hunters in our region. Is it possible after you catch
12 the bear that Louis said that you could -- it's legal
13 to sell everything. Every time somebody catches a bear
14 around here, they talk about the gallbladder. I know the
15 gallbladder is money for different countries or they use
16 a gallbladder from the bear. And if they could find a
17 person or a company or somebody that buys the
18 gallbladders from the bear, I'm pretty sure that would
19 get more people into going out to try and catch bears
20 to help us reduce our population in our region. That's
21 just something to bring up, to look into if that's legal.
22 Thank you.

23

24 MR. GREEN: Yes, Mr. Chair.
25 (Indiscernible)

26

27 (Simultaneous speech)

28

29 ACTING CHAIRPERSON AUKONGANK: Hold on
30 Louis, hold on. We got Kelsi then you.

31

32 MS. IVANOFF: Thank you, Mr. Chair.
33 Question on the gallbladder. Are we -- are people able
34 to sell what they salvage besides the hide from.....

35

36 ACTING CHAIRPERSON AUKONGANK: Louis?

37

38 MR. GREEN: Yeah. I just wanted to say
39 when I made that comment Robert picked up on, I was
40 saying, we should be able to do sell all parts, but I
41 think we're restricted.

42

43 MS. IVANOFF: Yeah.

44

45 ACTING CHAIRPERSON AUKONGANK: Brian.

46

47 MR. GREEN: Kelsi, that's a good
48 question. Thank you.

49

50

1 MR. UBELAKER: Thank you, Mr. Chair.
2 Yeah, Louis' correct. You cannot sell the gallbladder,
3 that's illegal. You can legally sell the hide of a brown
4 bear harvested in a 2-bear per unit area. And once that's
5 -- once the permits figured out on the federal side,
6 that'll be legal. So, that's the state side right now.
7 And then I believe you can sell handicrafts made from a
8 brown bear hide legally.

9
10 ACTING CHAIRPERSON AUKONGAK: Okay,
11 going back to Brent's comment earlier, it is up to us
12 to have modified anything what we do, because this is
13 on our land, right? You go to Hawaii, you have a shell,
14 and they get around a necklace. I mean, end of the day,
15 that was the living life in the water. You go to Captain
16 Cook, you eat bone marrow. It's part of what, you know,
17 the cow, that's legal. But if we're going to start
18 something like -- we could sell the gallbladder. Why
19 not? And it's part of the bear. I mean, it's maybe a
20 part, but it's going to help someone else who want it.
21 It's in demand. Our state is broke. Why don't we make a
22 deal?

23
24 MS. IVANOFF: This is Kelsi. One question
25 for Sara. Has this been brought up -- I've been in our
26 Southern Norton Sound Advisory, but has the issue with
27 bear either season dates or bag limit been brought up
28 yet in the Northern Norton Sound ACs meetings?

29
30 MS. HENSLEE: Yes, through the Chair. So
31 the first thing about the comment of changing the things
32 that you can sell from a brown bear. Again, I just
33 recommend submitting a proposal and see where it goes.
34 That's the beauty of Alaska's state regulations, is it
35 can be a proposal to change that. So, I would recommend
36 that if that's -- just to see where it goes. And if
37 nothing else, see what the justification is for not being
38 able to sell gallbladders. I think there was issues with
39 just wanton waste is what I want to say. But I again,
40 it would be -- all you can do is submit it to see. And
41 then as far as the seasons and bag limits through the
42 Northern Norton Sound AC, they have discussed it, but
43 most of that has been the focus is 22C. So, the current
44 recommendations I have heard from them is to increase
45 the quota of bears in 22C specifically they have not
46 discussed seasons and bag limits outside of that yet,
47 to my understanding, but they're going to meet again in
48 March to discuss Board of Game stuff. Thank you.

49
50 MS. IVANOFF: Thank you.

00041

1
2
3
4
5
6
7
8
9
10
11
12
13
14
15
16
17
18
19
20
21
22
23
24
25
26
27
28
29
30
31
32
33
34
35
36
37
38
39
40
41
42
43
44
45
46
47
48
49
50

ACTING CHAIRPERSON AUKONGANK: All right, moving on to.....

(Simultaneous speech)

MR. GREEN: Mr. Chair, I got one question.

MR. SEETOT: Real quickly.

ACTING CHAIRPERSON AUKONGANK: Go ahead. Elmer.

MR. GREEN: Yes. Oh, Louis. Sorry.

MR. SEETOT: Elmer, Brevig Mission. The comment I was going to put was that harvest of brown bear is low because of the restrictions on brown -- byproducts are being -- are implied or put upon the hunters. So, that -- that's why in my point of view, that the harvest of brown bears or bears, in fact, are low because restrictions placed on the byproducts of the animal. Thank you.

ACTING CHAIRPERSON AUKONGANK: Alright. Real quickly, Louis.

MR. GREEN: Yeah, okay. Thank you, Mr. Chair, thanks for indulging me here. Elmer made a point the thing about a sport hunt is you could just take the hide and the skull, you leave everything else on the ground. A subsistence hunt, you got to pack everything out, meat and all, everything. So, when I heard wanton waste sport hunts compared to subsistence, hunts are wanton waste. You're leaving everything, gallbladder or whatever, leaving the meat. So to me, it's hard to justify saying that a subsistence bear -- you can't sell the parts. So, I guess we need to follow that around and maybe there's a proposal out that makes sense. But the -- between the 2 different hunts, it never makes sense to me where you can't sell parts of a bear. So, thank you.

ACTING CHAIRPERSON AUKONGANK: Okay, do you have white out Brian, we want to add 1 more bear.

MR. UBELAKER: Sorry, Mr. Chair, could you repeat.

00042

1 ACTING CHAIRPERSON AUKONGANK: We're
2 wanting to add 1 more bear.

3
4 MR. UBELAKER: Then when you make the
5 motion, you can modify it. When the motion is made to
6 up that to 3 bears.

7
8 ACTING CHAIRPERSON AUKONGANK: We're
9 ready?

10
11 MS. CHAPA: Yes, Mr. Chair Gisela Chapa
12 for the record. So, now that you've gotten the
13 presentation on the on this proposal and you've had an
14 opportunity to ask questions, we can proceed through the
15 presentation procedures to -- for the Council to get
16 additional information from other entities.

17
18 ACTING CHAIRPERSON AUKONGANK: And we
19 have any more? I think we've -- yeah, we heard everybody.
20 Okay. Alright, now we got Roy.

21
22 MR. ASHENFELTER: Thank you, Mr. Chair.
23 The controversy of bear hunting and opportunity is --
24 over the years, it's been the same. And so one of the
25 things that I'll diverge a little bit, if you don't mind
26 on why it's important, I believe to heart -- to align,
27 consider aligning our federal subsistence hunt for
28 bearers to align it with state regulations. And I'll
29 give you an example. Quite a few years ago people were
30 hunted -- Alaska Natives were sighted by, I forgot who
31 for not salvaging meat on a polar bear hunt. The other
32 controversy was involved as this was walrus. They had a
33 big meeting in Kotzebue on marine -- take of marine
34 mammals. The guy from Washington, D.C., head of whomever
35 marine mammals from D.C. came to the meeting and in
36 Kotzebue. What got stopped was federales at our beaches,
37 as we pulled into shore, checking to see what we had in
38 our boats. Also checking to see whether or not we had
39 meat from the polar bear in our boat if we got one, or
40 even in the winter time. The guy from D.C. got to hear
41 all this. At the end of the day, 2 changes were made.
42 No more federales at the marine mammal hunt areas, that
43 got stopped. The other thing that got changed was that
44 a bear is a bear and polar bears are bears, and that
45 since sport hunters can just -- as just pointed out,
46 just take the hide and skull and that's it. Absolutely,
47 in my mind, that's the barrier for taking more bears in
48 our region. The assumption that everyone eats brown bear
49 is very, very incorrect. Very few people eat brown bear.
50 Very few people. I go to my village and I, you know,

1 when I was growing up, maybe 2 or 3 bears would be taken
2 in the springtime and just maybe 1 family at the most,
3 with maybe 2 at the most, we try to eat some of the
4 meat, but it's not a moose, just to be frank or caribou
5 or any other animal that's prized for its value in
6 nutrition in meat. It's almost a thing that you want to
7 do, and I don't do it, but at the end of the day, one
8 of the considerations, if you do want to try to increase
9 opportunity, change the federal regulation to match the
10 sport hunt shouldn't be controversial. It's already done
11 anyway. You wouldn't have to change the bear thing to
12 3. You would increase the opportunity, if that's the
13 goal to take bear on Seward Peninsula.

14
15 As far as selling the other parts, is
16 going to be a super uphill climb to allow selling of the
17 gallbladder, it's huge. There's a lot of information
18 about out there that makes it really controversial, i.e.
19 the significant cost, excuse me, the significant revenue
20 you would get if you were to sell a gallbladder. It's
21 huge. And its big pocket to a lot of people in our
22 region, would be a good revenue source for a lot of
23 people in our region, just for that reason it would
24 probably be very challenging to get that passed. But at
25 the end of the day, I -- what I'm trying to make is that
26 you heard me talk about the polar bear situation and how
27 that got changed. Just like that, just -- it just made
28 it match the sport hunt. And so, it's not a controversial
29 thing. It's just a matter of whether or not people who
30 understand our way of life that generally don't eat bears
31 but want to try to take them. If you want to maximize
32 the opportunity, in my opinion, consider aligning with
33 the state regulations.

34
35 ACTING CHAIRPERSON AUKONGANK: Alright,
36 let's get to our motion. Where we at with.

37
38 MS. CHAPA: Yeah, thank you, Mr. Chair.

39
40 ACTING CHAIRPERSON AUKONGANK: This is
41 not working this way. If we have something down, I
42 recommend have it written down. If not, we're going to
43 be here for 3 or 4 days every time.

44
45 MS. CHAPA: Okay, Mr. Chair, this is
46 Gisela Chapa, for the record. And we will become more
47 efficient with the process. I think at this moment we
48 still have agency comments. There could be additional
49 information that agencies may have discussed after the
50 analysis was prepared and put in your materials. So,

00044

1 it'd be pertinent to get additional information so the
2 Council can make an informed decision.

3

4 ACTING CHAIRPERSON AUKONGANK: Well, I
5 would highly recommend them for to be here too. If we
6 have people that have info and we have, we get some more
7 when they're in the room.

8

9 MS. CHAPA: Okay, so I'm going to go back
10 to giving agencies an opportunity to comment. And I
11 assure you we're going to be more efficient with our
12 time. So, giving an opportunity to ADF&G to provide
13 additional comments on WP26-52.

14

15 (No comment)

16

17 Okay. And now we can move on to federal
18 agencies. Oh, and for people online just remember that
19 you're automatically muted. And Aaron, did you have
20 additional comments?

21

22 MR. POETTER: Yeah, thanks. This is Aaron
23 Poetter with the Department of Fish and Game. I didn't
24 have any additional comments again as this would be
25 aligning with opportunity the state is already
26 providing. We don't have a conservation concern. Thank
27 you.

28

29 MS. CHAPA: Thank you for that. And now,
30 agency comments for federal agencies.

31

32 (Pause)

33

34 MS. BRAEM: Hi, this is Nikki Braem for
35 Bering Land Bridge National Preserve for the Park
36 Service. This proposal, which would increase the season
37 by a month on federal public lands and up the limit to
38 2 on federal lands as well. Bering Land Bridge does not
39 support this proposal. Subsistence users are not
40 harvesting bear in late summer or early spring for food.
41 And the hide slipping. Also, the proposal, as written
42 couches that it's providing subsistence opportunity for
43 federally qualified users when federally qualified users
44 are not using bear for food or very, very few. As you
45 might have heard. So, that's our reasoning. Thanks.

46

47 ACTING CHAIRPERSON AUKONGANK: Alright.
48 Who's next?

49

50

00045

1 MS. CHAPA: Okay. Any other federal
2 agencies?

3
4 (No comment)

5
6 Okay. Moving on to tribal entities.

7
8 (No comment)

9
10 Moving on to advisory group comments.
11 Other Regional Advisory Councils.

12
13 MR. UBELAKER: Mr. Chair, no other
14 Councils heard this.

15
16 MS. CHAPA: Fish and Game Advisory
17 Committees.

18
19 (No comment)

20
21 Summary of written public comments.
22 There were none. Opportunity for public testimony, I
23 believe. Mr. Roy Ashenfelter, if I pronounce your name
24 correctly, thank you, provided comments. Anybody else?

25
26 (No comment)

27
28 All right. Now we can move on to
29 Regional Council recommendation.

30
31 MS. IVANOFF: This is Kelsi. I moved to
32 support proposal WP26-52. With the addition of wait, for
33 which for 22A, B, D and E or C too.

34
35 MR. UBELAKER: Mr. Chair, I believe what
36 the Council was discussing was just upping the bear
37 harvest -- brown bear harvest limit for Unit 22 to 3
38 bear.

39
40 MS. IVANOFF: Okay, so for all of it,
41 because I see on Unit 22C, it says 1 bear, and then the
42 other ones are all 2.

43
44 MR. UBELAKER: I believe if you just make
45 the motion to.....

46
47 (Simultaneous speech)

48
49 MR. GREEN: This is Louis, I'll second

50

00046

1 MR. UBELAKER: If you just make the
2 motion to up the harvest limit to 3 bears, it'll
3 just.....

4
5 MS. IVANOFF: For all of the unit.
6

7 MR. UBELAKER: I mean, that's your
8 recommendation, so that's what will be applied.
9

10 MS. IVANOFF: Okay. Motion to support
11 WP26-52. With the amendment, that unit -- upping the bag
12 limit to 3 bears for Unit 22.
13

14 ACTING CHAIRPERSON AUKONGANK: We got a
15 second by Louis.
16

17 MR. GREEN: Okay. I'll second. Yes, sir.
18 Thank you.
19

20 ACTING CHAIRPERSON AUKONGANK:
21 Discussion. Question here.
22

23 MR. SEETOT: One comment I was going to
24 make was what -- excuse me. What U.S. Fish and Wildlife
25 Service, I think they got 2 arms, one is U.S. Fish and
26 Wildlife Service, regulates or manages marine mammal
27 hunting, and their enforcement is more restrictive than
28 what U.S. Fish and Wildlife does with land mammals. That
29 was -- I was saying there -- there's too conflicting
30 parts of the agency. What -- one was the marine mammal.
31 Even though you're not part of it, it's still one agency
32 that is more put more enforcement on marine mammal take
33 than does on maybe just 1 person, 2 person harvest of
34 bears, you know, that are regulated by Fish and Wildlife
35 Service. That -- that's what -- I'm not being regulated
36 but overseeing by -- the animals that are overseen by
37 regulation on federal land, that would just the 2
38 disparities that that I can that I can see being under
39 the same umbrella of Fish and Wildlife Service. It's
40 just something, you know, you -- maybe we overlook
41 because we're too busy. But that was just my comment.
42 Thank you.
43

44 ACTING CHAIRPERSON AUKONGANK: Alright.
45 Going to a vote. All in favor -- or.....
46

47 MR. UBELAKER: Sorry, Mr. Chair. We do
48 need some discussion justification for the Board -- for
49 the Council wanting to support this motion.
50

1 MS. CHAPA: And if I may, Mr. Chair, I
2 have a couple of questions. Open-ended questions for
3 Council members to discuss in the record. So our first
4 question is, does the Council believe there's a
5 conservation concern?

6

7 MS. IVANOFF: This is Kelsi. The Council
8 does not believe there's a conservation concern.

9

10 ACTING CHAIRPERSON AUKONGAK: No.

11

12 MS. CHAPA: And another question for
13 discussion. Will the recommendation be beneficial or
14 detrimental to subsistence needs and users?

15

16 ACTING CHAIRPERSON AUKONGAK: No.

17

18 MR. GREEN: No.

19

20 MS. CHAPA: So, I believe I heard Council
21 Member Green mentioned that there's no issues, but I
22 guess we want a little bit more information. So do you
23 believe that by supporting this proposal there will be
24 -- it will be beneficial to subsistence needs and users?

25

26 MS. IVANOFF: (Indiscernible)

27

28 (Simultaneous speech)

29

30 MR. GREEN: This is Council Green. Yes.

31

32 MS. IVANOFF: Yeah, the justification is
33 that it provides more subsistence opportunity for our
34 residents.

35

36 MS. CHAPA: Thank you, Mr. Chair. And so
37 just to recap, there is a motion on the floor to support
38 WP26-52 with a modification to increase the bag limit
39 from 2 to 3 bears. And there's been discussion and a
40 justification in support of that motion. And now I think
41 we can proceed with the vote.

42

43 ACTING CHAIRPERSON AUKONGANK: Yay. All
44 in favor?

45

46 IN UNISON: Aye.

47

48 ACTING CHAIRPERSON AUKONGANK: Motion
49 passes. Alright. We're going to take a 5-minute break.

50

1 (Off record)

2

3

(On record)

4

5

ACTING CHAIRPERSON AUKONGAK: All right, everybody, let's get back to order here and reconvene. All right, you guys want to keep talking to go out in the hall, please. All right. Brian, continue.

9

10

11

12

13

14

15

16

17

18

19

20

21

22

23

24

25

26

27

28

29

30

31

32

33

34

35

36

37

38

39

40

41

42

43

44

45

46

47

48

49

50

MR. UBELAKER: Okay, thank you, Mr. Chair. Moving on to 26-53. Okay for the record, my name is Brian Ubelaker, and this will be a summary of Wildlife Proposal WP26-53 regarding caribou in Unit 22. This analysis can be found on page 51 of your meeting books. This proposal, also submitted by the Alaska Department of Fish and Game, requests changing caribou seasons in portions of Units 22B West and 22D Pilgrim to a year-round may be announced season. This would combine current split seasons into a single July 1st through June 30th may be announced season. The proponent states this change is necessary because reindeer herding has been renewed in this area, and changing the year-round open season to a may be announced season would prevent accidental reindeer harvest. This change would also align federal and state regulations without affecting subsistence opportunity, as Western Arctic Caribou Herd caribou have not been documented in this area since 2015.

Previous federal and state regulatory measures have modified caribou hunting seasons in Units 22B West and 22D Pilgrim, primarily to safeguard reindeer herds. In 2006, seasons were shortened and changed to may be announced to safeguard reindeer. Under current federal regulations, these units have split seasons of October 1st through April 30th and May 1st through September 30th, while surrounding units already have year-round may be announced seasons. State regulations also manage caribou hunting in these areas as may be announced season, but the Alaska Department of Fish and Game closed them by emergency order in 2024 and 2025 because no collared caribou have been documented there since 2015. Most recent biological data show that the Western Arctic Caribou Herd has been declining, with about 121,000 animals in 2025. Historically, the herd wintered on the Seward Peninsula, but collared caribou have not been documented in Units 22B West or 22D Pilgrim since 2015. Recent collaring studies by ADF&G and the National Park Service are tracking movements of small remnant groups of caribou but their distribution remains uncertain. Reported

1 harvest in these specific hunt areas has been very low,
2 averaging only 3 animals per year from 2008 to 2023,
3 with no reported harvest since 2021.

4
5 One alternative considered was to give
6 federal in-season managers authority to define smaller
7 harvest areas. This would allow for opportunity if
8 caribou moved through the area. This was not pursued
9 because too little is known about remnant caribou
10 populations on the Seward Peninsula. Another option
11 would be to defer this proposal until the state changes
12 its codified regulations. This would keep federal rules
13 from being more restrictive and would allow for more
14 discussion with stakeholder groups.

15
16 So, if adopted, this proposal would
17 shift Units 22B West and 22D Pilgrim to a year-round may
18 be announced seasons. This would reduce the chance of
19 accidentally harvesting reindeer and align and simplify
20 federal and state regulations. Subsistence opportunity
21 would technically decrease in this area, but in practice
22 caribou haven't been present in these areas for years.
23 Other units of 22 that have a year-round season will
24 remain unchanged allowing for harvest opportunity. If
25 this proposal is not adopted, no change in federal
26 opportunity will occur but harvest in this area has not
27 occurred since 2021 and federally qualified subsistence
28 users would have to exercise caution, harvesting caribou
29 in the area to ensure no reindeer are mistakenly
30 harvested. So, OSM's preliminary recommendation is to
31 be neutral on proposal WP26-53. This proposal balances
32 conservation and subsistence priorities for federally
33 qualified users. While it slightly decreases subsistence
34 opportunity, caribou are absent from the area, so
35 effects should be minimal. The main benefit would be
36 preventing accidents, excuse me, accidental reindeer
37 harvest. And with that, I would be happy to answer any
38 questions.

39
40 MS. IVANOFF: This is Kelsi.

41
42 (Simultaneous speech)

43
44 MR. GREEN: Mr. Chair, this is Louis.

45
46 MS. IVANOFF: You can go, Louis.

47
48 MR. GREEN: Okay. Thank you, Kelsi, thank
49 you, Mr. Chair. Just a question, what reindeer herd are
50 we talking about, and area, I guess I should say area?

00050

1
2
3
4
5
6
7
8
9
10
11
12
13
14
15
16
17
18
19
20
21
22
23
24
25
26
27
28
29
30
31
32
33
34
35
36
37
38
39
40
41
42
43
44
45
46
47
48
49
50

MR. UBELAKER: Through the Chair, member Green. The area in concern are portions of Units 22B West and 22D Pilgrim and the reindeer herd in question is Tom Gray's, if you are familiar with his grazing allotment areas.

ACTING CHAIRPERSON AUKONGAK: Is there a way to table this until we get more info since.....

(Simultaneous speech)

MR. GREEN: Okay.

ACTING CHAIRPERSON AUKONGAK:what happened? I think that would be a good idea.

MR. UBELAKER: Yeah. You can recommend to take no action on this because of changes. You know, modifications are up to the call of the Council.

MS. IVANOFF: I just wanted a clarification that this would basically just align -- this would align with the state regulations, correct?

MR. UBELAKER: Through the Chair. So, state regulations have not been codified. The area that this analysis looks at has been closed by emergency order through the state side. And it's my understanding that when the next call for proposals for the Seward Pen region comes out, that they are going to do exactly what they're asking for in this proposal on the federal side.

MS. IVANOFF: Okay.

ACTING CHAIRPERSON AUKONGANK: All right. I highly recommend we table it or -- in no action today.

MS. IVANOFF: We have to go through the.....

MS. CHAPA: This is a procedural question, but I think if -- we'll still provide an opportunity to get additional information. And then once we get to the Regional Council recommendation, you can absolutely take no, yeah, no action. Exactly. So, if you -- okay, we'll get started. We got the introduction and proposal and presentation of analysis. There were no comments on -- from tribes or ANCSA Corporation during

00051

1 the Board Board's consultation. Now it's an opportunity
2 for agencies to provide additional information and
3 comments. And we'll start with ADF&G.

4

5 ACTING CHAIRPERSON AUKONGANK: Yeah,
6 hold on Roy.

7

8 MR. POETTER: Yeah. Thank you, Aaron
9 Poetter. I defer to area staff as their the local experts
10 on this one. If they've got something they'd like to
11 provide. Give them my time. Thank you.

12

13 MS. CHAPA: Okay, thank you. We'll move
14 to federal agencies.

15

16 MS. HUGHES: Hello. For the record, Letty
17 Hughes, Wildlife Biologist with Bering Land Bridge here
18 in Nome. So, for WP26-53 Bering Land Bridge does not
19 support this proposal. A few reasons for that. We would
20 Bella, Bering Land Bridge staff of -- would have liked
21 to have like, maybe consultation with the Reindeer
22 Herders Association and talking with land grazers on
23 this since there are many entities who provide who
24 provide grazing permits for reindeer herders. I think
25 we would have felt a little bit more comfortable had
26 this proposal maybe come from the Reindeer Herders
27 Association or some prior discussion. Additionally, as
28 we pointed out in this morning's presentation, that
29 there's been record or at least reports from previous
30 Seward Peninsula RAC Council members and state AC and
31 also just hunters throughout the region that they see
32 small groups of caribou. Actually, if this proposal was
33 adopted in Bering Land Bridge is opinion, it would
34 provide a significant decrease in federally qualified
35 subsistence opportunity for folks in these areas. Thank
36 you.

37

38 MS. CHAPA: Okay. Thank you for that. Any
39 other federal agencies?

40

41 (No comment)

42

43 ADF&G.

44

45 MS. HENSLEE: Okay. Through the Chair,
46 this is Sara Henslee. Sorry if I missed any questions,
47 please ask again. But this was a proposal I submitted
48 in cooperation with the Reindeer Herders Association.
49 So, I personally view it as housekeeping. We have not
50 seen caribou in the areas in question. So, we're just

00052

1 trying to align seasons and bag limits with where there
2 aren't caribou, but there are reindeer active
3 operations, so I'll take questions for sure.

4

5 ACTING CHAIRPERSON AUKONGANK: I don't
6 have a question. I just got a comment. I highly recommend
7 we table it because of what happened.

8

9 MS. IVANOFF: I have a question. I see
10 in the state regulations that they are may be announced
11 hunt's. When was the last time a hunt was announced for
12 this? Any of the areas?

13

14 MS. HENSLEE: So, through the Chair. The
15 last time we've opened a season in these areas? Gosh, I
16 can't even think of when. Yeah, Alicia starting to look.
17 I don't think we have, since I want to say, like, it's
18 been over 10 years. And that was kind of the impetus
19 behind this proposal, is like, we haven't opened it.
20 There aren't caribou there but there are reindeer. So,
21 we're just trying to, you know, kind of moderate the
22 herders needs and hunters and yeah, there aren't any
23 caribou to our knowledge. So, and yeah, deferment is
24 completely reasonable.

25

26 MS. IVANOFF: Thank you.

27

28 ACTING CHAIRPERSON AUKONGANK: All
29 right. When you get the info, could you get back to her?

30

31 MS. CHAPA: Okay. We'll move on to, I
32 believe, opportunity for tribal entities to provide
33 comments.

34

35 (No comment)

36

37 And if there are none, we'll move on to
38 other advisory group comments.

39

40 MR. UBELAKER: Mr. Chair, so Western
41 Interior Council did not consider this. Northwest Arctic
42 heard it and deferred to the home region.

43

44 MS. CHAPA: Yeah, moving on. Fish and
45 Game Advisory Committees.

46

47 (No comment)

48

49 And we'll go to summary of written
50 public comments now.

1
2
3
4
5
6
7
8
9

(No response)

And there were none. So, now it's an opportunity for the public to provide testimony.

ACTING CHAIRPERSON AUKONGANK: All right, Roy.

10
11
12
13
14
15
16
17
18
19
20
21
22
23
24
25
26
27
28
29
30
31
32
33
34
35
36
37
38
39
40
41
42
43
44
45
46
47
48
49
50

MR. ASHENFELTER: Thank you, Mr. Chair. I'm going to offer my suggestion to support. And the reason for that is because I live basically about 6 months of the year in this area. The reason I would support or table, either one is because the caribou herd, as we heard, is in decline. Anyway, you could save numbers is going to be a benefit to the herd at this point in time. The take that's being of consideration is minimal. So, you're not removing a lot of hunters from opportunity to take caribou that would -- and as questioned by Kelsi here on the EO opening, I believe was around 2008, I think the last time it was opened. That's when the caribou migrated into Seward Peninsula in all areas, including White Mountain, Nome, in this area. And the reason for the EO closure is to benefit the herders as the herd migrates. The Davis herd kind of hangs out in there, the (In Native) Herd goes up there. There was a push by the herder to put a potential herd owner to push caribou into 22D remainder or west, that work is under consideration here. But at the end of the day, the point I'm trying to offer is that we all know and herd and understand that the caribou herd is in decline. Anyway you can get to save the numbers are and get this herd turned around is going to be a benefit to all of us who rely as subsistence on this caribou herd. We have to take ourselves into consideration that we want this herd for our future and that right now it's in -- it's at a real, real critical level. Where now taking a female's further reduces the herd drastically. It reduced the herd drastically last year, and that's where it's at now. You shoot more females, you are going to reduce the herd, or we are going to reduce the herd significantly at this point. So, I support this proposal and you've already heard my reasons. Thank you.

ACTING CHAIRPERSON AUKONGANK: Now we're on onto the no action part, right?

MS. CHAPA: Yes. Now, this is an opportunity for the Council to provide their recommendation or decide to take no action.

00054

1
2
3
4
5
6
7
8
9
10
11
12
13
14
15
16
17
18
19
20
21
22
23
24
25
26
27
28
29
30
31
32
33
34
35
36
37
38
39
40
41
42
43
44
45
46
47
48
49
50

ACTING CHAIRPERSON AUKONGANK: Louis, you got anything or Robert?

MR. GREEN: I think we could.....

(Simultaneous speech)

MR. MOSES: (Indiscernible).

ACTING CHAIRPERSON AUKONGANK: What did you say, Louis?

MR. GREEN: Sorry, I took a minute to answer you. I don't really have anything to add. I just wanted to know -- I guess what was -- you wanted to table it. So, what was the reason? So I had to understand it.

ACTING CHAIRPERSON AUKONGANK: I believe we don't know what's going to go on with the reinder herd. Right?

MR. GREEN: Oh, okay. All right. So, all right, I can go one way or the other. Doesn't matter.

MS. IVANOFF: This is Kelsi. I know the Council is more inclined to take no action right now, but after hearing public testimony and from the agencies, I do believe in conserving our caribou population as much as we can. This would align this with state regulations to just be a may be announced rather than being a open season and I believe Fish and Game and subsistence management can work together to determine if a season needs to be opened or not. Whether caribou come in or not.

ACTING CHAIRPERSON AUKONGANK: All right. So, we're going to do a vote, all right. That's the only way we get through the no action or we're going to get a motion.

MS. CHAPA: Okay. Thank you, Mr. Chair. I just wanted to verify. What -- there is no motion on the table right now. Okay, so we just need a Council member to make a motion on whether to support the proposal or take no action. And then we can go through the voting process.

(Pause)

00055

1

MR. GREEN: I have a question, Mr. Chair.

2

3

4

ACTING CHAIRPERSON AUKONGANK: Go ahead,
Louis.

5

6

7

MR. GREEN: If we take -- if we just
choose not to take any action goes on state anyway,
right?

8

9

10

11

ACTING CHAIRPERSON AUKONGANK: Yeah,
that's what I recommend, no action, yeah.

12

13

14

MR. GREEN: I couldn't hear all that.
Sorry, Mr. Chair.

15

16

17

18

MR. UBELAKER: Sorry. Thank you, Mr.
Chair, Brian Ubelaker. So, you can make a motion to
defer this proposal until the next wildlife proposal
period and hopefully decisions will be made about the
herd and the status of it. You can also make a motion
to support this proposal and -- so support the proposal,
or you can support it as modified by the Council to give
delegated authority to a land management agency to
announce a hunt as OSM does not have a recommendation,
as we are neutral on this proposal.

19

20

21

22

23

24

25

26

27

28

29

30

31

32

33

34

35

36

37

38

39

40

41

42

43

44

45

46

47

48

49

50

MR. GREEN: Thank you.

ACTING CHAIRPERSON AUKONGANK: All
right, moving on here. Do we have a motion and let's --
okay. No motion, no action. Let's move on.

MS. CHAPA: Okay and this is a procedural
question. So, if the Council decides to take no action,
do you still want a vote? Okay.

ACTING CHAIRPERSON AUKONGAK: Right.

MS. CHAPA: Okay. And what Brent Vickers
said off the record I'll put it on the record, is that
for the Council to be aware that if you take no action
on this proposal, that this would leave those areas open
under federal regulations.

ACTING CHAIRPERSON AUKONGANK: Alright.
So, you got it, right?

MS. CHAPA: No, I think we need we still
need the motion.

00056

1
2
3
4
5
6
7
8
9
10
11
12
13
14
15
16
17
18
19
20
21
22
23
24
25
26
27
28
29
30
31
32
33
34
35
36
37
38
39
40
41
42
43
44
45
46
47
48
49
50

ACTING CHAIRPERSON AUKONGANK: There was -- there was no motion. All right. Do we have a motion?

MS. IVANOFF: This is Kelsi. I moved to defer Wildlife Proposal 26-53 to the next cycle.

ACTING CHAIRPERSON AUKONGANK: We have a second?

MR. SEETOT: Elmer. Second.

ACTING CHAIRPERSON AUKONGANK: All right. Discussion.

(No response)

Question.

(No response)

All in favor?

IN UNISON: Aye.

MS. IVANOFF: So, the justification behind this was that leaving this open provides the opportunity for our residents to take caribou if -- should they move into the area. It is our duty to provide those subsistence opportunities as much as we can. And the reason for deferring was because we do not know yet what holds -- what the future holds for the local reindeer herd.

ACTING CHAIRPERSON AUKONGANK: Alright, now we go to -- all in favor? Oh, no, no, we're voting right now. We're voting right now.

IN UNISON: Aye.

ACTING CHAIRPERSON AUKONGANK: All right, let's go.

MS. CHAPA: Thank you. The motion carries, and that is again, to defer this proposal to the next cycle.

ACTING CHAIRPERSON AUKONGANK: All right. So we're going to have 10 minutes to lunch on where we are able to get the next one in that time frame?

00057

1
2
3
4
5
6
7
8
9
10
11
12
13
14
15
16
17
18
19
20
21
22
23
24
25
26
27
28
29
30
31
32
33
34
35
36
37
38
39
40
41
42
43
44
45
46
47
48
49
50

MR. GREEN: Mr. Chair, I had one question for management on that deference.

ACTING CHAIRPERSON AUKONGANK: Go for it.

MR. GREEN: Okay, thank you. So, if we're deferring it to the next cycle, is there any time that we could do it out of cycle if we wanted to change it?

ACTING CHAIRPERSON AUKONGAK: Right. Yeah.

MR. GREEN: That's my question, thank you.

ACTING CHAIRPERSON AUKONGANK: It'll go to the next meeting, Louis.

MS. CHAPA: Hey, Louis, this is Gisella. I apologize, I did not hear your question. Can you repeat it?

MR. GREEN: Thank you. Mr. Chair, through the Chair, Louis. Gisela, I was just asking the question that could we potentially bring it back up on the table? Or is it, once we vote, it's the next cycle, which is, I think, 3 years?

MS. CHAPA: Yeah, I was going to say that the alternative is that you can defer this proposal and the Council can see it again at the winter meeting, which is in March. Don't know if that gives us enough time to know what's going to happen to the reindeer herd in that unit or those units.

ACTING CHAIRPERSON AUKONGANK: All right. We had a motion we're moving forward. We're -- it's going to have to go on to the next meeting. It passed already. And so it's going to have to go to the next meeting. Brian.

(Talking)

MS. CHAPA: And for clarification, I think what our Chair is saying is that the vote was to defer to the next wildlife cycle, not the next meeting. Is that correct?

1 ACTING CHAIRPERSON AUKONGANK: I believe
2 if -- unless we have more info by then and that we have
3 something written up. It could go either way. I'll be
4 honest with you. If we did have something proposed,
5 right, am I right? So, it's going to go either way.
6

7 MR. UBELAKER: Excuse me, Mr. Chair.
8 Would it -- I don't know if it would clarify things or
9 not, but if you -- if the motion was to defer until more
10 information was provided regarding the reindeer herd in
11 question, that might come before the next wildlife
12 cycle.
13

14 ACTING CHAIRPERSON AUKONGANK: There we
15 go. All right, we're on the same page, right?
16

17 MR. UBELAKER: Would that need to be.....
18

19 (Simultaneous speech)
20

21 MR. GREEN: I'm good to go, this is
22 Louis.
23

24 (Talking)
25

26 MS. CHAPA: Okay, I am getting some
27 guidance on this, so if there's any changes to what the
28 Council already voted, I believe you can have another
29 motion. And I'm going to call on Katya Wessels if you're
30 online, if you can help provide clarification.
31

32 MS. WESSELS: Yeah, thank you, Gisela.
33 Mr. Chair, members of the Council, can you hear me okay?
34

35 MS. CHAPA: Yes we can, Katya.
36

37 MR. GREEN: Clear.
38

39 MS. WESSELS: Yeah. So for the record,
40 Katya Wessels with OSM. You know, the Council had the
41 motion, you voted on it. But if the Council changed
42 their mind and would like to have a different motion to
43 take the proposal when more information is available.
44 You can, you know, just make another motion stating that
45 on the record and vote on it. And that will supersede
46 the previous motion.
47

48 MR. GREEN: Mr. Chair, Louis.
49
50

00059

1 ACTING CHAIRPERSON AUKONGANK: Go ahead,
2 Louis.

3
4 MR. GREEN: Thank you. Through the Chair.
5 Katya, would it be just cleaner if we just rescinded the
6 vote? Can we do that? I mean, I know we can change our
7 mind here at the table because it's just happening right
8 now. So, what's the cleanest way to do it? Thank you.

9
10 MS. WESSELS: I think the cleanest way
11 is you make a motion to null basically, your vote on the
12 previous motion and say that the Council will defer until
13 more -- defer the proposal until more information is
14 available. You -- because you already voted on the
15 previous motion. So, you just leave that alone but state
16 in this new motion that you know the results of the
17 previous motion and that you defer the proposal until
18 more information on the herd is available.

19
20 MR. GREEN: Thank you, Katya. Kelsi.

21
22 MS. IVANOFF: Yeah, I moved to defer
23 Wildlife Proposal 26-54 until more information is
24 available.

25
26 MR. GREEN: I'll second that motion.

27
28 ACTING CHAIRPERSON AUKONGANK: Alright.
29 Discussion.

30
31 MS. IVANOFF: Discussion. Justification
32 on this is that because we are taking into consideration
33 the reindeer herd in our decision, we would like to have
34 more information on what the future holds for that herd
35 until a decision is made on this.

36
37 ACTING CHAIRPERSON AUKONGANK: Question
38 or...?

39
40 MR. SEETOT: Comment. From my knowledge
41 in these 2 units, I know there's 1 active herder in Unit
42 22B and 1 active herder in 22D. There's 15 permits pretty
43 much throughout Seward Peninsula and then that's pretty
44 much where it stands as it is right now. Thank you.

45
46 ACTING CHAIRPERSON AUKONGANK: 22B is at
47 question I think that's why we're doing that. And our
48 question been called. All in favor.

49
50 IN UNISON: Aye.

1
2
3
4
5
6
7
8
9
10
11
12
13
14
15
16
17
18
19
20
21
22
23
24
25
26
27
28
29
30
31
32
33
34
35
36
37
38
39
40
41
42
43
44
45
46
47
48
49
50

ACTING CHAIRPERSON AUKONGANK: Alright, Motion passes. All right, let's take a lunch. I'll see you at 1.

MR. GREEN: Thank you, Mr. Chair.

(Off record)

(On record)

MS. CHAPA: Hi, everyone. Thank you for staying with us. We are now ready to resume our meeting, and I believe we are now at item 13.a for WP26-54.

MR. UBELAKER: Thank you, Mr. Chair. For the record, Brian Ubelaker. And as Gisela said I will be presenting a summary of Wildlife Proposal WP26-54 regarding moose in Unit 22. Excuse me. And you can find this analysis starting on page 67 of your meeting books. This proposal, submitted by the Alaska Department of Fish and Game, requests rescinding all three federal public land closures to non-federally qualified users for moose in Unit 22A. These closures currently apply to 22A Unalakleet, 22A north and 22A Remainder. Several of the following proposals and the one closure review all are based on information I will provide for this proposal. So, if there are any questions about what I am presenting now, please ask for clarification.

So, these closures have been in place for a long time. Federal public lands were first closed within Unit 22A to non-federally qualified users in 1995 due to conservation concerns. Through the early 2000, as moose numbers dropped, these closures were expanded and seasons were shortened. More recently, though, regulations have trended toward reopening. In 2018 as moose populations increased, the Board considered rescinding closures but opted instead to incrementally, relax the restriction by opening to all federally qualified subsistence users. Then, in 2020, the Board rescinded the September closure, which corresponds to the state sports season in Unit 22A Remainder citing healthy adjacent populations and minimal conflict. In 2022, the Board did the same for 22A north and also eased the closure in Unalakleet. Most recently, in 2024, the state extended the Unalakleet winter season through the end of February.

1 Management objectives for Unit 22A call
2 for a population of 600 to 800 moose with a postharvest
3 ratio of 30 bulls to 100 cows. ADF&G expects an annual
4 harvest of 300 to 680 moose across all of Unit 22. The
5 most recent surveys tell us that moose numbers are not
6 only healthy, but well above objectives in 22A. ADF&G
7 surveys Unit 22A Unalakleet and then extrapolates those
8 numbers for the rest of the unit. So, I will be speaking
9 mostly about the Unalakleet service area -- survey area.
10 The moose population in 22A Unalakleet has been
11 increasing since 2003, and in 2025 the estimate was
12 almost 1000 moose for the area. Bull to cow ratios have
13 been consistently high, sometimes very high, at over 100
14 bulls to 100 cows. Calf recruitment has also been strong,
15 with ratios generally at or above 30 calves per 100
16 cows. In short, the data show a stable or increasing
17 population with a surplus of bulls. Since only 22A
18 Unalakleet is surveyed, additional data from adjacent
19 units were also analyzed for this proposal. Population
20 data from Unti 18 Lowest Yukon and Andrafsky survey
21 areas were considered along with Unti 21E data. All three
22 survey areas have relatively high population density,
23 and although the extent of dispersal from these units
24 has not been studied, it is likely that migration into
25 Unit 22 is occurring as has been stated by local
26 residents.

27
28 Harvest data tells us a similar story.
29 Since 2000, about 71% of the Unit 22A harvest has been
30 taken by local residents, primarily from Unalakleet and
31 Shaktoolik. A majority of federal public lands in this
32 unit are remote and are usually accessed by aircraft,
33 meaning there is little overlap between subsistence
34 harvesters and guided non-resident hunters in 22A north
35 and Remainder. In Unalakleet almost all moose are
36 harvested by local residents. About 93% on average since
37 2000. There is no non-resident season in 22A Unalakleet.
38 In 22A north reported harvest has been extremely low,
39 averaging only two moose a year. Household surveys
40 suggest this is underreported however, an actual local
41 harvest is closer to 10 to 15 animals annually. Non-
42 resident harvest is very low. In 22A Remainder most
43 recent harvest has been by non-residents about 86% since
44 2018 after the Board rescinded the closure in 2020. Even
45 so, total harvest is still below the harvestable
46 surplus.

47
48 Rescinding the closures in Unit 22A
49 would allow non-federally qualified users to hunt moose
50 on federal public lands during the full state season.

1 Impacts to subsistence users are expected to be minimal.
2 Non-local residents harvest averages only about 5% and
3 non-residents harvest averages about 27%. But there is
4 no non-resident season in 22A Unalakleet where most
5 subsistence harvest occurs. In 22A north and 22A
6 Remainder, closures were already lifted during the non-
7 resident seasons so rescinding them fully will not
8 change harvest patterns. Since 2020, non-resident
9 harvest has increased somewhat in 22A Remainder. But
10 locals continue to take moose, and the remoteness of the
11 area helps reduce user conflicts. In 22A north, only one
12 nonresident moose has been reported in the past three
13 years. Most importantly, the moose population is healthy
14 and increasing with extremely high bull to cow ratios
15 and no conservation concerns. The conditions that
16 originally justified these closures no longer exist, and
17 the Board's closure policy requires that closures be
18 rescinded when the conditions that justified them have
19 changed. Excuse me. Therefore, it is OSM's preliminary
20 recommendation to support proposal WP26-54 so that
21 closures are consistent with federal policy and harvest
22 opportunity is available to all users. So, with that,
23 I'm happy to answer any questions.

24
25 ACTING CHAIRPERSON AUKONGAK: All right.
26 Anybody?

27
28 MS. CHAPA: Mr. Chair, can I?

29
30 ACTING CHAIRPERSON AUKONGAK: Kelsi,
31 then you.

32
33 MS. HENSLEE: Oh, sorry.

34
35 MS. IVANOFF: Yeah, this is Kelsi. Just
36 curious on -- so, it would close to taking except by
37 federally qualified, but the BLM Anchorage office is
38 delegated authority. Would they still -- so they
39 wouldn't have delegated authority to put that back in
40 place, correct?

41
42 MR. UBELAKER: Through the Chair. Not to
43 install a federal land closure.

44
45 MS. IVANOFF: Okay.

46
47 MR. UBELAKER: Federal public land
48 closure. Excuse me.

49
50

00063

1 MS. IVANOFF: I'll save my comments for
2 later. Thank you.

3
4 MR. GREEN: Mr. Chair. This is Louis. I
5 finally got on with my phone.

6
7 ACTING CHAIRPERSON AUKONGAK: Okay,
8 good. Go ahead. Okay.

9
10 MR. GREEN: I'm going to move.

11
12 ACTING CHAIRPERSON AUKONGAK: Do you have
13 anything, Louis?

14
15 (No response)

16
17 (Pause)

18
19 MS. CHAPA: Okay. And Louis, we are on
20 WP26-54, Unit 22A moose, to rescind the closure. And
21 Brian just gave us his overview of the analysis, and
22 we're about to proceed with the presentation procedures
23 for the proposals. Okay. And I am going to just say that
24 the -- during the Board consultations there were no
25 tribal or ANCSA corporation comments on this proposal.
26 So now I'm going to ask agencies to provide any
27 additional comments, starting with ADF&G.

28
29 MR. POETTER: Yeah. Aaron Poetter with
30 ADF&G. If local area staff have comments that they wish
31 to provide, I will defer my time to them. Thank you.

32
33 ACTING CHAIRPERSON AUKONGAK: We have
34 none.

35
36 MS. CHAPA: Now. We'll proceed with
37 federal agencies. Additional comments on WP26-54.

38
39 (No comment)

40
41 Okay. And tribal entities.

42
43 (No comment)

44
45 All right. We'll move on to advisory
46 group comments. Other Regional Advisory Councils.

47
48 MR. UBELAKER: Mr. Chair, no other
49 Councils took this up.

50

1 MS. CHAPA: Fish and Game Advisory
2 Committees.

3
4 (No comment)

5
6 And moving on to public testimony.

7
8 (No comment)

9
10 Okay. Thank you. And now we'll move on
11 to Regional Advisory Council recommendations.

12
13 MS. IVANOFF: This is Kelsi. The concern
14 I've heard from people in Unalakleet is that if we take
15 this away and the population is healthy enough that the
16 state deems healthy enough to open to non-residents, is
17 we would still have this protection in place to local
18 residents only. The big worry is guides and non-locals
19 coming in and hunting this and with having a federal --
20 these federal guidelines still in place should that
21 happen. And I was trying to think of the timeline of
22 like, we could bring this back in the next cycle, too.
23 But the Board of Game cycle, if that comes up as a
24 proposal from a guide or anything in the next cycle
25 within the next year till in 2027 that could open it up
26 before our next cycle for subsistence comes up. Because
27 there's that overlap that's the worry there from people
28 that I've spoken to in Unalakleet. I can't speak really
29 to 22A north or 22A Remainder, but from 22A Unalakleet,
30 that's where a lot of people that I've spoken to stand.

31
32 ACTING CHAIRPERSON AUKONGAK: Would you
33 like to take action or recommend? No action or...?

34
35 MS. CHAPA: Mr. Chair, sorry, I
36 apologize. There was one written public comment that I
37 did not share, so I'm going to just read it for your
38 information. This was a comment provided by Eric Leusch
39 I believe, is how you pronounce his last name. L-e-u-s-
40 c-h. Okay. And just going to read it verbatim. As a
41 member of the community of Unalakleet, I strongly oppose
42 this consideration. This is already a very tough place
43 to hunt, and opening the federal lands to non-locals
44 will increase pressure and user conflicts. The goal of
45 this Council should be to ensure that local residents
46 are able to feed their families. And with the recent
47 fishing closures, more and more people are focusing on
48 moves to do so. I strongly oppose these changes due to
49 conflicts -- due to the conflicts it will create.

50

1 MS. IVANOFF: And that's -- this is
2 Kelsi. That seems to be the general consensus. My --
3 when we had talked about the brown bear earlier, we had
4 said having this federal hunt allows us to have a say
5 on it, and that's where I -- I mean, taking that into
6 note I do like having this because it gives our Council
7 and the Federal Subsistence Board a way to weigh in on
8 this. Am I understanding it, right that this would
9 completely do away with any -- like this would open up
10 federal lands to any resident of Alaska within the state
11 hunt, correct?

12
13 MR. UBELAKER: Mr. Chair -- excuse me.
14 Through the Chair. Member Ivanoff. Yes, that would be
15 my understanding. 22A north under state regulations is
16 a harvest ticket. Same for Remainder. And then for 22A
17 it's a registration permit, which I do not know all the
18 ins and outs of that, but I do believe lifting these
19 closures would allow any resident to harvest in the Unit
20 22A.

21
22 MS. IVANOFF: This is Kelsi again. I --
23 and I'm sorry if this is -- since I'm new at this. I saw
24 other regulations where the -- were awarded the area of
25 the hunt and it said like the brown bear one was one
26 brown bear by state regulation. Is it an option to just
27 take away the one bull by federal registration permit
28 and just take away the registration permit versus
29 completely opening up federal public lands.

30
31 MR. UBELAKER: Through the Chair. I
32 believe that would be outside of the scope of this
33 proposal, as this proposal is specifically asking to
34 lift the federal public land closures. In that same vein
35 if you felt that a motion would be to lift the federal
36 public land closures in 22A north and 22A Remainder while
37 still leaving them on 22A Unalakleet. You can make that
38 recommendation as your motion.

39
40 ACTING CHAIRPERSON AUKONGAK: Hey,
41 Louis. You got any thought?

42
43 MS. CHAPA: Star six to unmute. Yeah.
44 There we go.

45
46 MR. GREEN: Yeah, I did star six. It's
47 just a delay in it. It's weird. Nothing at this point.
48 Go ahead. Thanks.

49
50

1 ACTING CHAIRPERSON AUKONGAK: Go ahead,
2 Brian.

3
4 MR. UBELAKER: Thank you, Mr. Chair. And
5 maybe just a little more information along with my last
6 statement that the closures in 22 North and 22A Remainder
7 are currently lifted during the state sports season. So,
8 the federal land closures there are only in effect when
9 state -- when sport hunters or non-resident hunters
10 would not be out there. So, lifting those two closures
11 should not have any effect on anything.

12
13 MR. SEETOT: Elmer, Brevig Mission. I
14 think this came up a couple years back when, when there
15 was some Unalakleet members on the RAC, and they were
16 concerned that the moose was being depleted in and around
17 that area. So, they said take at least maybe five years
18 or so, if I remember right during the discussions that
19 they wanted this area closed because low numbers of moose
20 were reported in and around that area. But with -- I
21 think with wildfire season, I know that moose do migrate
22 to certain areas and A, B, D, I think are heavily areas
23 that do have willows or trees in and around those years.
24 So those are the places I think that the moose preferred.
25 But I do see them out in the open country. But I -- this
26 closure, I was brought by a couple residents that were
27 on the RAC at that time. Thank you.

28
29 ACTING CHAIRPERSON AUKONGAK: Okay, I
30 definitely agree with the letter. I don't know, Eric,
31 but you know, for Unalakleet to do that in a five-year
32 period, they were strong all together. And then if we
33 do lift it, you know, it'd be kind of a shame on the
34 people that live there to open it more for people that
35 don't even live there. And that's what my thought.

36
37 MS. IVANOFF: Okay. Before I make a
38 motion, I want to get your guys' thoughts on if we
39 support this for 22A north and 22A Remainder only leaving
40 Unalakleet, leaving 22A Unalakleet. Just wondering if
41 that would be something that the Council might -- because
42 you said 22A north and Remainder, it won't really have
43 an effect at all because it's already lifted during their
44 season, their state seasons.

45
46 MR. UBELAKER: Correct.

47
48 MS. IVANOFF: Okay.

49
50

00067

1 ACTING CHAIRPERSON AUKONGAK: We got --
2 hey, speaking of Mike. Go for it.

3
4 MR. UBELAKER: Thank you, Mr. Chair. As
5 was just brought to my attention. 22A Remainder, there
6 is a winter hunt January 1st to January 31st that would
7 be open to state residents if the public land closure
8 in 22A Remainder was lifted.

9
10 MR. GREEN: Mr. Chair. Louis.

11
12 ACTING CHAIRPERSON AUKONGAK: Go ahead,
13 Louis.

14
15 MR. GREEN: I didn't hear all of the
16 conversation, so I'm just asking. What is the -- you
17 said the state has it open? What was their reasoning?
18 And they're asking -- and our staff is asking
19 housekeeping. That's my questions.

20
21 ACTING CHAIRPERSON AUKONGAK: Could you
22 speak on that, sir?

23
24 MS. HENSLEE: Through the Chair. This is
25 Sara Henslee with Fish and Game. Louis, are you asking
26 specifically about the 22A Remainder winter hunt for
27 residents and not? Yeah.

28
29 MR. GREEN: I'm sorry. I'm not -- Yeah.
30 I'm not -- I wanted to know if we rescinded -- Fish and
31 Game has done this already? It's open for all residents?

32
33 MS. HENSLEE: Through the Chair. So,
34 there are resident seasons throughout 22A. I think right
35 now what we're talking about specifically is in 22A
36 Remainder, that's the Golsovia drainage going into
37 Stebbins, St. Michael. There is an antlered bull season
38 from January 1st through January 31st by harvest ticket.
39 So, I believe what we're discussing right now is the
40 fact that the federal lands closure, if rescinded by
41 this proposal all residents of the state of Alaska that
42 are federally qualified users could potentially hunt in
43 Remainder. Am I understanding that? Yes. Yep.

44
45 MR. GREEN: Okay. Thank you for
46 clarifying, Sara.

47
48 MR. UBELAKER: And Louis maybe more
49 information along this question. Currently, federal
50 public land closures in 22A north and 22A Remainder are

1 open during -- or lifted during the fall state season.
2 So, the only change that would be -- was the winter
3 antlered bull hunt that Sara was just referencing, that
4 would be the only additional opportunity available to
5 non-federally qualified users. I hope that helps.

6

7 MR. GREEN: Greatly. Thank you.

8

9 MS. IVANOFF: This is Kelsi. I just want
10 a clarification on federally qualified users. Federally
11 qualified users are specific to the area that we're
12 speaking on, right? Not all federally qualified users.

13

14 MR. UBELAKER: Through the Chair, Member
15 Ivanoff. So currently C&T, customary and traditional
16 determinations have been made. So, all residents of Unit
17 22 are eligible to hunt moose in Unit 22.

18

19 MS. IVANOFF: Okay.

20

21 MR. UBELAKER: So, when it's open -- and
22 that's the -- it's only open to those when -- those are
23 the only federally qualified users that may harvest in
24 22.

25

26 MS. IVANOFF: So, Shaktoolik,
27 Unalakleet, St. Michael and Stebbins. Okay.

28

29 MR. UBELAKER: Well, no. All residents
30 of Unit 22. Nome residents can harvest Nome 22A as well.

31

32 MS. IVANOFF: Okay.

33

34 MR. UBELAKER: But nobody from 21. No
35 federally qualified user from Unti 21 or 19 can hunt.

36

37 MS. IVANOFF: Or like how Ketchikan was
38 just deemed -- yeah.

39

40 MR. UBELAKER: Yep. They're not -- they
41 wouldn't be eligible.

42

43 MS. IVANOFF: Okay. That helps. Thank
44 you.

45

46 (Pause)

47

48 This is Kelsi. Oh. Go ahead. I was going
49 to make a motion. Louis, if you want to speak before I
50 do.

1
2
3
4
5
6
7
8
9
10
11
12
13
14
15
16
17
18
19
20
21
22
23
24
25
26
27
28
29
30
31
32
33
34
35
36
37
38
39
40
41
42
43
44
45
46
47
48
49
50

MR. GREEN: Okay, so if we leave it closed. It's still all Unit 22 residents that qualify?

MS. IVANOFF: Yeah.

MR. GREEN: Okay. If we left it in those two areas, everybody would come in with a harvest ticket.

MS. IVANOFF: From Alaska, yeah. Residents of Alaska.

MR. UBELAKER: Louis. Thank you, Mr. Chair. Through the Chair. Louis, currently during the fall state seasons, the federal public land closure is lifted in 22A North and 22A Remainder. So, all state residents and non-residents can harvest in 22A north and 22A Remainder for the fall season.

MS. IVANOFF: This is Kelsi and that's because there's non-resident hunts in those areas, right?

MR. UBELAKER: Correct. There are -- the state has non-resident moose seasons in those areas where there are no non-resident moose seasons in 22A Unalakleet.

MS. IVANOFF: This is Kelsi. I moved to support Wildlife Proposal 26-54 with the modification that Unit 22A Unalakleet is excluded from this rescission.

ACTING CHAIRPERSON AUKONGAK: Do we have a second?

MR. GREEN: Is that the winter hunt only?

MS. CHAPA: Louis, can you repeat your question, please?

MR. GREEN: Oh. I'm sorry. I'm just asking if that was for the winter hunt, January?

MS. IVANOFF: No, 22A for both hunts. Keep it as is.

MR. UBELAKER: Thank you, Mr. Chair. Maybe.....

00070

1 (Simultaneous speech)

2

3 MR. GREEN: Okay.

4

5 MR. UBELAKER: Sorry, Louis. Restating
6 the motion.....

7

8 MR. GREEN: (Indiscernible)

9

10 MR. UBELAKER: Restating the motion for
11 my clarification. So, you are offering to support WP26-
12 54 with modification to lift the federal public land
13 closure in 22 north and 22A Remainder.

14

15 ACTING CHAIRPERSON AUKONGAK: All right.
16 Do we have a second?

17

18 MR. SEETOT: Elmer. Second.

19

20 ACTING CHAIRPERSON AUKONGAK:
21 Discussion.

22

23 MS. IVANOFF: Well. I think with support
24 from residents in Unalakleet, there is concern over non-
25 residents being able to hunt our population of moose.
26 With our history of putting a self-imposed moratorium,
27 I think there's justification behind their reasoning of
28 wanting to keep it a local hunt. And well as the other,
29 with 22A north and 22A Remainder well, since those are
30 already lifted during their hunts there is -- there's
31 no reason to not lift it.

32

33 ACTING CHAIRPERSON AUKONGAK: Right. So,
34 you guys at (indiscernible). All right. Questions been
35 called. All in favor?

36

37 IN UNISON: Aye.

38

39 ACTING CHAIRPERSON AUKONGAK: Motion
40 passes.

41

42 MR. UBELAKER: Moving on? Okay. Thank
43 you, Mr. Chair. For the record, Brian Ubelaker and this
44 is kind of sound like a broken record. Sorry. I am now
45 going to be presenting a summary of Wildlife Proposal
46 WP26-55 and WP26-56 regarding moose in Unit 22A. These
47 proposals, the 26-55 starts on page 99 of your meeting
48 books. Both of these proposals, WP26-55 and WP26-56 both
49 address moose hunting regulations in Unit 22A
50 specifically in the Unalakleet River drainage and

1 surrounding areas. Proposal WP26-55, submitted by the
2 Alaska Department of Fish and Game, requests that
3 federal regulations be updated to match the state. This
4 includes replacing the federal permit with the state
5 registration permit, extending the fall season to August
6 1st through September 30th, and adding the winter season
7 of December 1st through the last day of February.
8 Proposal WP26-56 submitted by the Seward Peninsula
9 Subsistence Regional Advisory Council or y'all makes the
10 exact same request, extending the fall season and
11 creating a winter season to align with state rules.
12 Currently, federal regulations require a federal
13 registration permit, FM22-01, and set the moose season
14 from August 15th through September 14th. There is no
15 codified federal winter season. However, the state
16 recently changed its regulations to allow a longer fall
17 season from August 1st through September 30th and to
18 establish a winter season from December 1st through the
19 end of February. ADF&G states the need for consistency
20 between state and federal regulations. They believe this
21 will reduce user confusion and note that the moose
22 population in the Unalakleet area is growing, so these
23 changes should not negatively impact the herd. This
24 Council requested these changes because they reduce
25 regulatory complexity, ensure federal regulations are
26 not more restrictive than state, and provide more
27 opportunity for federally qualified subsistence users
28 to meet their needs. And since this is Unit 22A
29 Unalakleet, which I just went over biologically,
30 regulatorily and harvest -- harvestability, whatever.
31 I'm not going to dig into that, but if there are any
32 questions I will try to answer what everybody needs.

33
34 And so, I will skip that and dig into
35 alternatives considered. And one alternative would be
36 to retain the federal registration permit. Since federal
37 lands in Unit 22A Unalakleet are currently closed to
38 non-federally qualified users, keeping a federal permit
39 would maintain a clear distinction between local
40 subsistence hunters and others. If the state permit is
41 used instead, both groups would hunt under the same
42 permit, which could complicate law enforcement and
43 harvest reporting. However, non-local resident hunting
44 pressure in the area is extremely low and proposal WP26-
45 54, which you just heard, is also under consideration,
46 which would rescind the federal closure entirely. If
47 that closure is lifted, the enforcement concerns would
48 go away. But if the closure remains in place, the Board
49 may want to consider retaining the federal permit.

1 So, if these proposals are adopted, the
2 fall movie season will be extended and a winter season
3 will be established, providing additional opportunity
4 for subsistence harvest in Unit 22A Unalakleet. If WP26-
5 55 is adopted, the state permit will replace the federal
6 permit, meaning subsistence users only need one permit
7 and federal managers will no longer need to administer
8 a separate system. No conservation concerns are
9 anticipated. The moose population is growing, bull to
10 cow ratios are high, and hunting pressure remains low.
11 Subsistence users can already hunt under state
12 regulations on non-federal lands, so aligning the
13 systems will not increase overall harvest pressure.
14 These proposals would also decrease regulatory
15 complexity and ensure that federal opportunity remains
16 consistent with the state. Therefore, it is OSM's
17 preliminary conclusion to support proposal WP26-55 and
18 take no action on WP26-56. The moose population in Unit
19 22A is strong and growing with no conservation concerns.
20 Extending the fall season and creating a winter season
21 will increase codified harvest opportunity for federally
22 qualified subsistence users. Replacing the federal
23 permit with a state permit will simplify regulations,
24 reduce administrative burden, and bring federal
25 regulations in line with state regulations. And with
26 that, I will answer any questions.

27
28 MS. IVANOFF: This is Kelsi. This might
29 be for -- this is either for yourself Gisela. Are we
30 going to need two motions for this? One to support one
31 and take no action on the other? No.

32
33 MR. UBELAKER: No. Through the Chair.
34 Member Ivanoff, no. If you decide to support OSM's
35 conclusion of supporting 26-55 and taking no action on
36 56, it will combine the both because they're asking for
37 the same thing. You only need to ask or take action on
38 one.

39
40 MS. IVANOFF: Okay. Thank you.

41
42 MS. CHAPA: Okay, Mr. Chair, Gisela for
43 the record. And I'll go ahead and move forward with the
44 presentation procedures for the proposals. And I want
45 to remind the Council that during the Board
46 consultations there were no tribe or ANCSA corporation
47 comments on this proposal or any proposal that the
48 Council will see for the rest of the meeting. And so now
49 it's an opportunity for agents to provide comments. So,
50 we'll start with ADF&G.

00073

1
2
3
4
5
6
7
8
9
10
11
12
13
14
15
16
17
18
19
20
21
22
23
24
25
26
27
28
29
30
31
32
33
34
35
36
37
38
39
40
41
42
43
44
45
46
47
48
49
50

MR. POETTER: Yeah. Thank you, Mr. Chair. Obviously, the alignment is what we're all kind of seeking here. We're both the Department of Fish and Game and the RAC seem to be on the same page on this one. And I'll defer any additional commentary to local staff. Thank you.

MS. CHAPA: Thank you for that. We'll move on to federal agencies.

(No comment)

I don't see anybody in the room. Online federal agencies want to provide additional comments.

(No comment)

Okay. Any tribal entities?

(No comment)

We don't have any in the room. Moving on. Other advisory group comments. Other Regional Councils?

MR. UBELAKER: No, Mr. Chair. I'm awake now. No. No other Councils heard this.

MS. CHAPA: Okay. An opportunity for local Fish and Game Advisory Committees.

(No comment)

Okay. Summary of written public comments. None. And an opportunity for public testimony.

(No comment)

We don't have anybody in the room or online. So, we'll move on to Regional Council recommendation.

MS. IVANOFF: Yeah. This is Kelsi. Everyone I've talked to agrees with this. I don't think there's been any -- or I think last year there was only one federal permit issued, so this just seems unnecessary. So, I'm going to go ahead and move to support Wildlife Proposal 26-55 and take no action on proposal 26-56.

1
2
3
4
5
6
7
8
9
10
11
12
13
14
15
16
17
18
19
20
21
22
23
24
25
26
27
28
29
30
31
32
33
34
35
36
37
38
39
40
41
42
43
44
45
46
47
48
49
50

ACTING CHAIRPERSON AUKONGAK: All right.
We goy a motion. Second?

MR. GREEN: This is louis. Ill second the
motion.

ACTING CHAIRPERSON AUKONGAK:
Discussion.

MS. IVANOFF: Mr. Chair. This is Kelsi.
Based on what we heard from OSM. I think the redundancy
-- reducing redundancy would be beneficial to all
parties. And with no conservation concern for the moose
in this area aligning the dates with the state hunt and
having it by state registration permit just makes sense.

ACTING CHAIRPERSON AUKONGAK: Question.
All right. Your vote. All in favor?

IN UNISON: Aye.

ACTING CHAIRPERSON AUKONGAK: Motion
passes. Next on there, Brian.

MR. UBELAKER: Thank you, Mr. Chair. For
the record, Brian Ubelaker. And now I'll be presenting
a summary of Wildlife Proposal WP26-57. Once again,
moose in Unit 22A. This analysis can be found starting
on page 107 of your meeting books. This proposal was
submitted by this Council, and it requests to establish
a federal registration permit for moose in Units 22A
north and 22A Remainder. Establishing a permit will
allow for greater harvest data to be collected, which
will improve management of moose. Once again, same
information as the last two analyses so I'm going to
skip over that and get to the end.

Proposal WP26-57 would require
federally qualified subsistence users to obtain a
federal registration permit to hunt moose in Unit 22A
north and 22A Remainder. This change would not reduce
harvest opportunity, but it would add administrative
burdens for both hunters and managers. The benefit is
that harvest reporting would improve, giving managers
better data to guide long-term conservation of these
moose populations. At the same time, it would increase
regulatory complexity. State regulations only require a
harvest ticket, so requiring a federal permit creates
an administrative burden for federally qualified

1 subsistence users as well as federal managers. If this
2 proposal is adopted and the federal land closure is
3 rescinded, hunters could use state harvest tickets on
4 federal lands, making the federal permit largely a moot
5 point. In that case, WP26-57 would mainly add paperwork
6 without much benefit.

7
8 If WP26-54 is not adopted and the
9 closure remains, then the federal permit would provide
10 useful harvest information. Still, federal and state
11 seasons mostly align, so the only unique period would
12 be February 1st through the 15th in Unit 22A Remainder.
13 Therefore, OSM's preliminary conclusion is to be
14 neutral. The permit could improve harvest reporting, but
15 its effectiveness depends heavily on whether the federal
16 closure is lifted or retained. And this would be one
17 more layer of administrative burden that federally
18 qualified subsistence users would have to manage. And
19 since the federal public land closure, you recommended
20 to lift in 22A Remainder and 22A north, a harvest ticket
21 will be used up there with the closure remaining --
22 well, and then with 56, adopting 56, getting rid of the
23 federal permit in 22A Unalakleet, you won't need a
24 federal permit there. So, this would be a new system to
25 be administered which might be, as I said, a moot point.
26 I'll try to answer any more questions if anybody has
27 them.

28
29 MS. IVANOFF: This is Kelsi. Just curious
30 how -- I mean, that's Shaktoolik, St. Michael and
31 Stebbins. How would these permits be administered?

32
33 MR. UBELAKER: Through the Chair, member
34 Ivanoff. As you're very aware of the 22A Unalakleet
35 members of BLM would fly out, usually twice a year in
36 the summer, and distribute them in person. That could
37 be either be the same situation. But with many more
38 villages to get to. I mean, we -- OSM, we can't dictate
39 to people, to BLM how they would distribute the permits.
40 They would probably be the ones to be the in-season
41 manager. So, my guess is it would be done through the
42 mail. Residents would call or email the BLM subsistence
43 biologist or wildlife biologist say, hey, I want to get
44 a moose permit, here's my information. They would print
45 one out and then mail it.

46
47 MS. IVANOFF: Thank you.

48
49 MS. CHAPA: Sounds good. We'll go through
50 the whole nine yards of presentation procedures. I'm

1 going to go straight to agency comments again, because
2 the Board did not receive any comments from tribes,
3 tribes and corporations. So, we'll start with ADF&G.

4

5 MR. POETTER: Yeah. Thank you again for
6 local staff have comments that they'd like to provide,
7 I'd like to hear from them. Thank you.

8

9 ACTING CHAIRPERSON AUKONGAK: All right,
10 Sara, you got two minutes.

11

12 MS. HENSLEE: Okay. Through the Chair.
13 This is Sara Henslee with Fish and Game. So, I just
14 wanted to mention with these federal permits, I think
15 the spirit of it is good to try and increase reporting
16 compliance in these communities. However, I do want to
17 emphasize how having a federal permit does increase and
18 introduce a lot of regulatory confusion to have to --
19 do I need this permit for this area? Now they need to
20 know the land status. And it just gets really confusing
21 for the hunter. So, something I again want you to
22 consider as you're thinking about this is with the Board
23 -- the State Board of Game coming up and proposal periods
24 about to open. If increased compliance is what this RAC
25 is looking for with this proposal, if they might consider
26 the state registration permit, which would also apply
27 to federal land, and that -- once you have the
28 registration permit, it's a lot easier to get permits
29 back. Alicia and I would go to the villages, all three
30 Stebbins, St. Michael, Shak. We would make sure we
31 recruit vendors that are able to issue the permits all
32 the time, rather than just visiting the village and
33 reporting -- or issuing permits then. So, and the
34 registration permits, we get phone numbers and emails
35 and it's a lot easier for us to get reports back. As you
36 guys know, our RM843 RM841, we call, we're following up
37 with folks. We're sending letters, anything we can do
38 to get those reports back. Whereas with the current
39 harvest ticket system, it's a lot more difficult because
40 reminders don't go out until July. And folks, just by
41 then they're not thinking about moose from last year.
42 And it's just a lot more difficult to get harvest tickets
43 back. And those harvest tickets are for the entire state
44 rather than this region. So yeah, I -- just something
45 to think about is we're looking at this proposal. Thank
46 you.

47

48 MS. IVANOFF: This is Kelsi. I just had
49 a question on -- so 22A north and Remainder don't have
50 registration, correct? Okay. And I remember you said

1 something yesterday about only one had been reported.
2 But the rough estimate for 22A north was like 10 to 15.
3 Okay. How -- oh, sorry. One more. How -- and then going
4 through that process to get a registration hunt, would
5 that be something on the ADF&G side or would that be
6 something that needs to go through like a proposal
7 process?

8
9 MS. HENSLEE: So, through the Chair. That
10 is not something that needs to go through -- once the
11 registration permit -- well to submit the proposal that
12 would be the RAC submitting to the Board of Game. And
13 if that were adopted and the registration permit were
14 to be established it would be a matter of Alicia and I
15 going into those communities and -- yeah, we have vendors
16 already. Some of them we have poor communication with,
17 but we can absolutely increase it. And yeah, a lot of
18 times it's just working with those vendors to make sure
19 they've got permits every year. And then, yeah, just
20 making sure there's good communication. If that answers
21 your question.

22
23 MS. IVANOFF: Yeah. So, it does need to
24 go to the -- through the proposal process?

25
26 MS. HENSLEE: Yes.

27
28 MS. IVANOFF: Okay. Good to know as a
29 Southern Norton Sound member. Thank you.

30
31 MS. CHAPA: Okay. Thank you. And I'll
32 move on to other comments by federal agencies.

33
34 (No comment)

35
36 Okay. Seeing none, other Regional
37 Advisory Council comments.

38
39 MR. UBELAKER: Mr. Chair, no other
40 Councils took this up.

41
42 MS. CHAPA: Local Fish and Game Advisory
43 Committees.

44
45 (No comment)

46
47 And -- okay. Summary of written public
48 comment. There were none. Opportunity for public
49 testimony.

00078

1 (No comment)

2

3 And moving into Regional Council
4 recommendation.

5

6 UNIDENTIFIED: Mr. Chair.

7

8 MS. IVANOFF: This is Kelsi -- oh. Is
9 someone else talking? No? This is Kelsi. I am inclined
10 to, I guess we would take no action, can we...? Yeah.

11

12 MS. CHAPA: Okay. So, I think that even
13 if the Council is opposed to a proposal, you still make
14 the motion to support just during the voting process.
15 You vote nay.....

16

17 (Simultaneous speech)

18

19 MS. IVANOFF: Okay.

20

21 MS. CHAPA:versus yay.

22

23 MS. IVANOFF: Okay.

24

25 MS. CHAPA: And that means that
26 ultimately.....

27

28 MS. IVANOFF: We don't.....

29

30 MS. CHAPA:you don't support it.
31 You oppose it.

32

33 MS. IVANOFF: Yeah. Okay. I'll go ahead
34 and make the motion to support Wildlife Proposal 26-57.

35

36 ACTING CHAIRPERSON AUKONGAK: And
37 discussion. Or a second. I'm sorry.

38

39 MR. SEETOT: Elmer. Second.

40

41 ACTING CHAIRPERSON AUKONGAK:
42 Discussion. Question.

43

44 MR. GREEN: Question.

45

46 ACTING CHAIRPERSON AUKONGAK: Go ahead,
47 Louis.

48

49 MR. GREEN: I just, I was calling for the
50 question. Sorry.

1
2
3
4
5
6
7
8
9
10
11
12
13
14
15
16
17
18
19
20
21
22
23
24
25
26
27
28
29
30
31
32
33
34
35
36
37
38
39
40
41
42
43
44
45
46
47
48
49
50

ACTING CHAIRPERSON AUKONGAK: All right,
here we go for the vote -- oh.

MS. CHAPA: Can I chime in? Mr. Chair,
if I can. So, I know that there was a lot of question
and answer right before the Council went into the motion.
But just for clarification, it will help if there's a
little bit of discussion now that the motion is on the
floor, to make sure that we do have a solid
justification. Yeah.

MS. IVANOFF: Okay. Mr. Chair, this is
Kelsi. I think with the previous action that we took on
WP26-55? 55, 54?

(Talking)

MS. IVANOFF: The closure, closure one
was 54. Okay. With the action that we took on WP26-54
it makes sense that we do not support establishing a
federal registration hunt in 26 -- or 22A north and 22A
Remainder. There's no conservation concerns in the area.
And the people in the area still have -- are meeting
their subsistence needs.

ACTING CHAIRPERSON AUKONGAK: Now we're
going to vote?

MS. CHAPA: Yes. Now, you can go into a
vote. And again, if you the motion is to support and if
you do not agree with that you just vote nay. So do we
want to do a roll call vote to clarify it. Okay. Now I'm
going to start with Elmer Seetot.

MR. GREEN: Read the motion, please.

MS. CHAPA: Do you want me to restate it?

MR. GREEN: Yes, please. Thank you.

MS. IVANOFF: This is Kelsi. I moved to
support WP26-57.

MS. CHAPA: Okay, Louis. And since you're
-- just asked clarification, I'll go with your vote.

MR. GREEN: Aye.

MS. CHAPA: Kelsi Ivanoff.

00080

1
2
3
4
5
6
7
8
9
10
11
12
13
14
15
16
17
18
19
20
21
22
23
24
25
26
27
28
29
30
31
32
33
34
35
36
37
38
39
40
41
42
43
44
45
46
47
48
49
50

MS. IVANOFF: Nay.

MS. CHAPA: And Martin Aukongak.

ACTING CHAIRPERSON AUKONGAK: I have respect for the people that live there. Nay.

MS. CHAPA: Thank you, Mr. Chair.

MR. GREEN: Mr. Chair, I would change my vote to yes. Sorry, I got it the wrong way.

ACTING CHAIRPERSON AUKONGAK: You said yes, Louis.

MR. GREEN: Yes, sir, Mr. Chair. I got it flipped over. Sorry.

MS. CHAPA: I'm sorry. Louis, I thought I heard a nay earlier. So, are you supporting, yay or nay?

MR. GREEN: Yay, I got it wrong. I had it twisted over. I'm good with yay.

MS. CHAPA: Okay, Mr. Chair. So, through a roll call vote, we had three nays and one yay. If I heard correctly, because I do have problems with hearing and with that, the motion fails.

MR. GREEN: Okay. I really got twisted up here. I thought I was voting on behalf of the people there. This is really -- it's okay, but it's -- I wanted to vote with the majority. Sorry. Sounds like I'm.....

ACTING CHAIRPERSON AUKONGAK: You -- he didn't hear it right. So, he could -- you could actually change it, right?

MR. GREEN: Yeah.

ACTING CHAIRPERSON AUKONGAK: Yeah.

MS. CHAPA: Okay. Because of technical difficulties of you not being in the room with us and. And me not really hearing what you're saying I think it's going to be valid and make sure that Louis wanted to vote nay with the majority. There we go. The outcome is still the same.

1
2 ACTING CHAIRPERSON AUKONGAK: Thank
3 you.....

4
5 (Simultaneous speech)

6
7 MR. GREEN: I had it right the first
8 time. Sorry.

9
10 ACTING CHAIRPERSON AUKONGAK: Alright.
11 The rebuttal is done. I'm moving on, Brian.

12
13 MR. UBELAKER: Thank you, Mr. Chair.
14 Okay. And just to change things up let's talk about a
15 Wildlife Closure Review for moose in Unit 22A. This is
16 Closure Review 26-09 subpart A, B, and C and this
17 analysis is found on page 113 of your meeting book. And
18 this -- so there's one analysis for these three closures.
19 So, there will be three separate actions taken on this.
20 But I will only run through the analysis summary once.

21
22 The purpose of these closure reviews is
23 to determine whether closures are still needed. Federal
24 policy directs that closures be rescinded when no longer
25 necessary, and that each closure is reviewed at least
26 once every four years. WCR26-09A applies to Unit 22A
27 north of the Egavik Creek drainage. Moose hunting is
28 closed to non-federally qualified users from September
29 21st through August 31st. WCR26-09B applies to Unit 22A
30 Unalakleet and moose hunting is closed year-round to
31 non-federally qualified users. WCR 26-09C applies to
32 Unit 22A Remainder and the closure runs from October 1st
33 through August 31st. Together, these closures reserve
34 most moose harvest opportunity in Unit 22A for federally
35 qualified subsistence users, while allowing limited
36 opportunity for non-local users during the state fall
37 season in units 22A north and Remainder.

38
39 So, skipping biological harvest data all
40 that, I'll give you a brief summary on how these closures
41 were implemented. Which happened in 1995 when the Board
42 first extended the Unit 22A fall moose season to October
43 10th, but at the state's request, restricted the October
44 portion to Unit 22A residents only, since moose were
45 scarce and vulnerable during the rut. Later that year,
46 facing signs of population decline, the Board reversed
47 that extension and also closed the December to January
48 season on federal lands to all but local residents, and
49 these closures were aimed at conserving the small moose
50 population while protecting subsistence needs. So, if

1 these closures are rescinded, it would allow non-
2 federally qualified users to hunt moose on federal
3 public lands across Unit 22A during the full state
4 season. Historically, reported harvest by non-local
5 residents has been extremely low, averaging about 5% in
6 recent years, with some years being zero. Non-resident
7 harvest has averaged 27%, but there is no nonresident
8 season in Unit 22A Unalakleet, the area most heavily
9 used by subsistence hunters. Opening federal lands in
10 22A Remainder during September in 2020 led to more non-
11 resident harvest, but little change in local harvest.
12 Similarly, opening federal lands in 22A north during
13 2022 season allowed guides and transporters to operate,
14 but non-residents reported no harvest in either 2022 or
15 2023. Overall, the remoteness of these limits -- of these
16 areas limits non-local hunting pressure. For subsistence
17 users rescinding the closures could raise concerns about
18 competition, but with very high bull to cow ratios and
19 moose populations above state objectives, conservation
20 concerns are minimal and many surplus bulls are
21 available for harvest.

22
23 Therefore, OSM's preliminary conclusion
24 on all three closures is to rescind. The moose
25 populations in Unit 22A are increasing, bull to cow
26 ratios are extremely high, and conservation concerns no
27 longer justify these closures. Non-local harvest is
28 historically low, and existing regulations already allow
29 non-residents to hunt during state seasons in parts of
30 22A. Rescinding the closures aligns with federal policy,
31 which directs the Board to lift closures once original
32 conditions change. Overall, rescinding these closures
33 will not threaten conservation and will provide
34 opportunity consistent with federal law and Board
35 policy. With that being said, I'm happy to answer any
36 questions.

37
38 MS. CHAPA: Mr. Chair, can I provide
39 some.....

40
41 (Simultaneous speech)

42
43 MR. GREEN: (Indiscernible)

44
45 MS. CHAPA:additional comment.
46 Just wanted to remind the Council that you basically
47 went through a proposal. It was WP26-54 to rescind the
48 closure in 22A moose and you've already kind of made a
49 decision with that proposal. So, I guess we can go
50 through the presentation procedures for that and -- for

1 this. If I'm making sense. We can go through the
2 presentation procedures. We'll go quickly through them.
3 And consider WCR26-09A, B and C and you can choose to
4 take no action because you've already gone through the
5 WP26-54.

6
7 MR. UBELAKER: Mr. Chair. Thank you. It
8 makes sense, but I still believe that you guys chose to
9 lift the closures in 22A north and Remainder. But keep
10 it in 22 Unalakleet. So, if we just -- I think if you
11 vote to take the action, those actions basically, I don't
12 know if you need any more excess discussion. The
13 justification you've already provided should suffice.
14 So, we can just very quickly, just so that we have clean
15 bureaucratic questions answered. Your opinions on A, B
16 and C.

17
18 MS. IVANOFF: Or I guess a comment. This
19 is Kelsi. So, can we do three separate -- this will need
20 three separate motions, right? Okay. So, 29 -- oh 26-
21 09A, 26-09C we would be supporting. We would move to
22 support 26-09B but oppose -- but vote nay on that if we
23 -- right? Yeah.

24
25 MR. UBELAKER: So, the closures for 22A
26 north and Remainder. Your motion would be to rescind
27 closures and for 22A Unalakleet would be to maintain
28 status quo.

29
30 MS. IVANOFF: Okay.

31
32 MR. UBELAKER: And I'm going to state it
33 that way because I'm uncertain which one is A, B and C
34 right at this point in the day, so I apologize.

35
36 MS. IVANOFF: Okay. Thank you.

37
38 DR. VICKERS: I'm sorry. I don't want to
39 count -- everything you guys have discussed is 100%
40 accurate right here and -- but when we went over these
41 proposals, there was a little thing that there was a
42 little confusion if it was said accurately, and I just
43 want it on the record. So, you guys -- just in case you
44 -- so you know, we're all clear on the north closure.
45 The -- is it Egavik Creek? Egavik. Thank you. Egavik
46 Creek. That closure, there is a non-resident hunt --
47 sport hunt there. I think it may have been suggested or
48 someone interpreted what was said, that there was no
49 non-resident hunt in that unit. And I just want to make
50 sure we're all clear that the -- there is a both resident

1 and non-resident hunt during September. That's all. So,
2 we're all good. Thank you. Everything else to deal with
3 this is fine.

4
5 MS. CHAPA: Alright. Nine yards of
6 presentation procedures. There were no comments from
7 tribes or ANCSA consultations. Excuse me. There were no
8 comments from tribes or ANCSA Corporation on the Board's
9 consultation on these proposals or this proposal. And
10 give an opportunity to ADF&G to provide comment.

11
12 MR. POETTER: Yeah, this is Aaron
13 Poetter, Alaska Department of Fish and Game. Yeah. We
14 support the removal of these closures. We don't believe
15 there's going to be any conservation concerns associated
16 with that. And then for specifics related to local area
17 approach, I'll refer to the local area staff. Thank you.

18
19 MS. CHAPA: Thank you for that. Moving
20 on to federal agency comments. Federal agencies.

21
22 (No comment)

23
24 ACTING CHAIRPERSON AUKONGAK: Feds are
25 quiet today.

26
27 MS. CHAPA: And move on to other Regional
28 Advisory Councils.

29
30 MR. UBELAKER: Mr. Chair, no other
31 Councils heard these.

32
33 MS. CHAPA: And local Fish and Game
34 Advisory Committees.

35
36 (No comment)

37
38 And I believe there were no submitted
39 written comments on these closures. Correct. So now an
40 opportunity for public testimony. We don't have anybody
41 in the room from the public and doesn't seem like we
42 have any public testimony online. So now we'll go to the
43 Regional Council recommendation.

44
45 MR. UBELAKER: And if you would like I
46 got my kink straightened out, and I have closure review
47 numbers to associate. If you would like me to assist
48 when you are making your motions. Okay, so first WCR26-
49 09A is the closure to moose hunting by non-federally
50 qualified users in the northern portion of Unit 22A or

00085

1 22A North.

2

3 MS. IVANOFF: This is Kelsi. I move to
4 rescind the closure for 22A north.

5

6 ACTING CHAIRPERSON AUKONGAK: We need a
7 second.

8

9 MR. SEETOT: Elmer. Second.

10

11 ACTING CHAIRPERSON AUKONGAK:
12 Discussion.

13

14 MS. IVANOFF: Discussion. Mr. Chair, this
15 is Kelsi. I think, with no conservation concern and that
16 there is -- that it's already lifted during their state
17 hunt. There is no reason to not lift it.

18

19 ACTING CHAIRPERSON AUKONGAK: Question.
20 All in favor?

21

22 IN UNISON: Aye.

23

24 ACTING CHAIRPERSON AUKONGAK: All right.

25

26 MR. MOSES: Aye.

27

28 ACTING CHAIRPERSON AUKONGAK: Motion
29 passes. Hey, Robert. Thank you.

30

31 MR. UBELAKER: Okay. WCR26-09B is the
32 closure to moose hunting to non-federally qualified
33 users in Unit 22A Unalakleet.

34

35 MS. IVANOFF: This is Kelsi. I move to
36 maintain the status quo for Unit 22A Unalakleet.

37

38 MR. SEETOT: Elmer. Second

39

40 MR. GREEN: I second for discussion
41 purposes.

42

43 ACTING CHAIRPERSON AUKONGAK: Question.
44 All in favor? Is there anything, Louis?

45

46 MR. GREEN: You guys went blank on me.
47 I'm in favor, I guess it's a majority.

48

49 (Talking)

50

00086

1 MR. UBELAKER: I think you guys are good
2 with the discussion you had on 26-54. Anybody else can
3 correct me, but I think we can apply what you -- the
4 discussion to this.

5
6 IN UNISON: Aye.

7
8 ACTING CHAIRPERSON AUKONGAK: Motion
9 passes.

10
11 MR. UBELAKER: Okay, then Finally, WCR26-
12 09C is the closure to moose hunting to non-federally
13 qualified users in the southern portion of Unit 22A or
14 22A Remainder.

15
16 MS. IVANOFF: This is Kelsi. I move to
17 rescind the closure for the southern portion of Unit 22A
18 or 22A Remainder.

19
20 MR. GREEN: Louis. I'll second.

21
22
23 ACTING CHAIRPERSON AUKONGAK:
24 Discussion.

25
26 MR. MOSES: Call for question.

27
28 ACTING CHAIRPERSON AUKONGAK: All in
29 favor?

30
31 IN UNISON: Aye.

32
33 ACTING CHAIRPERSON AUKONGAK: Aye.
34 Motion passes.

35
36 MR. UBELAKER: If you're tired of 22A
37 moose, let's switch it up with 22B moose. Okay. My
38 serious hats on. For the record, Brian Ubelaker. This
39 will be a summary of Wildlife Proposal WP26-58 regarding
40 moose in Unit 22. You can find this analysis on page 121
41 of your meeting books. This proposal, also submitted by
42 ADF&G, requests two changes for moose hunting in Unit
43 22B West. First, it would eliminate the unused federal
44 registration permit FM22-02. Second, it's asking to
45 change the winter harvest limit from one bull to one
46 antlered bull. The proponent states these changes would
47 align federal and state regulations, reduce
48 administrative burden, and improve biological protection
49 of the moose population. The state noted that the federal
50 permit has not been used in over 20 years, and that

1 winter hunts should be limited to antler bulls to protect
2 breeding animals during recovery after the rut.

3
4 Relevant regulatory history includes
5 the Board establishing a federal registration permit in
6 1995 to monitor the harvest of Unit 22B West. However,
7 the permit saw little use, as most hunters in White
8 Mountain and Golovin continued to hunt under the state
9 registration permit RM843. The last recorded use of
10 FM22-02 was in 2001. Federal public lands in Unit 22B
11 West have been closed to non-federally qualified users
12 since 2002, and the winter hunt is restricted to the
13 communities of White Mountain and Golovin residents.
14 Since then, several changes have been made to align
15 federal and state seasons and harvest limits. Currently,
16 the winter hunt is open from January 1st through the
17 31st with the harvest limit of one bull under federal
18 regulations. While the state requires harvest to be of
19 one antlered bull. Currently, nearly all harvests occur
20 under the state registration hunt RM843.

21
22 Biologically speaking, moose
23 populations in Unit 22B have historically been limited
24 by habitat conditions, predation, and periodic severe
25 winters. As a result, moose occur in relatively low
26 densities across much of Unit 22B, although some
27 localized areas support higher concentrations. Aerial
28 surveys and trend counts conducted by ADF&G suggests the
29 moose population in 22B has remained stable to slightly
30 increasing in recent years. Calf recruitment has been
31 variable but generally adequate to maintain population
32 stability. Bull to cow ratios have consistently been
33 high, often exceeding 40 to 50 bulls per 100 cows,
34 indicating that the population is not limited by harvest
35 and that surplus bulls are available. These ratios are
36 well above state management objectives and suggest that
37 hunting pressure is relatively low compared to
38 population potential.

39
40 Harvest in 22B is dominated by federally
41 qualified subsistence users from nearby communities such
42 as White Mountain, Golovin, Elim, and Nome. Reported
43 harvest by local residents has remained relatively low
44 in absolute numbers but is important for food security
45 in these communities. Moose are a preferred source of
46 red meat, and harvest opportunity is closely tied to
47 fall, whether river access and hunting conditions. Non-
48 local resident harvest in 22B has historically been
49 minimal, averaging less than 5% of the total reported
50 harvest in the past decade. Non-resident harvest is also

1 low, typically due to limited access, absence of guide
2 activity in some areas, and relatively low moose
3 densities compared to other units. In some years, no
4 non-local or non-resident harvest has been recorded at
5 all. Conservation concerns that led to prior
6 restrictions in 22B were primarily related to low
7 population densities and the risk of localized
8 overharvest. However, current biological data do not
9 indicate population declines. The relatively high bull
10 to cow ratios and stable to increasing population trend
11 suggests that the population is capable of sustaining
12 continued harvest at current levels.

13
14 Adoption of this proposal would not
15 reduce opportunity for federally qualified subsistence
16 users. Hunters would continue to participate in the
17 state registration hunt. Removing the unused federal
18 permit simply eliminates redundancy and regulatory
19 confusion. Changing the harvest limit to one antlered
20 bull will help conserve the breeding population, while
21 still allowing continued subsistence harvest. For these
22 reasons, it is OSM's preliminary conclusion to support
23 WP26-58. This proposal is expected to have no negative
24 impact on subsistence harvest, it simplifies regulations
25 and it contributes to sustainable management of moose
26 in Unit 22B West. With that, I'm happy for questions.

27
28 MS. IVANOFF: This is Kelsi, I just had
29 a question on -- Just wanted to clarify. This is doing
30 away with the permit, but you will -- it will still be
31 only to federally qualified users?

32
33 MR. UBELAKER: Through the Chair, member
34 Ivanoff. Yes. The federal public land closure -- federal
35 public lands are closed to non-federally qualified
36 harvest. So yes, the permit is there -- the proposal is
37 asking to do away with the permit. But it will still
38 remain only open -- federal public lands only open to
39 federally qualified users.

40
41 MS. IVANOFF: Thank you.

42
43 MS. CHAPA: Okay. Mr. Chair, we'll go
44 ahead and move through the presentation procedures. And
45 there were no comments from tribes or ANCSA corporations
46 from the Board consultation. And now this is an
47 opportunity for agencies to provide additional comment.
48 And we'll start with ADF&G.

49
50

1 MR. POETTER: Thank you, Mr. Chair. I'll
2 defer to local staff for their comments on actually the
3 Remainder of proposals for this meeting, as I need to
4 step out to meet another obligation. So, appreciate your
5 time. And best of good luck with the Remainder of your
6 meeting. Thank you.

7
8 MS. CHAPA: And thank you for joining us,
9 Aaron. Okay. Okay. Perfect. I'll move on to federal
10 agency comments or federal agencies.

11
12 (No comment)

13
14 Okay. Next tribal entities.

15
16 (No comment)

17
18 And move on to other Regional Advisory
19 Councils.

20
21 MR. UBELAKER: Mr. Chair, no other
22 Councils heard this.

23
24 MS. CHAPA: And summary of written public
25 comments. There were none. Public testimony.

26
27 (No comment)

28
29 Okay. And now we move on to Regional
30 Council recommendation.

31
32 MS. IVANOFF: This is Kelsi. I moved to
33 support WP26-58.

34
35 ACTING CHAIRPERSON AUKONGAK: We have a
36 second?

37
38 MR. SEETOT: Elmer. Second.

39
40 ACTING CHAIRPERSON AUKONGAK:
41 Discussion.

42
43 MS. IVANOFF: Mr. Chair, this is Kelsi.
44 I support this because it removes -- it's kind of a
45 housekeeping issue. It removes permit, but while keeping
46 the opportunity for residents in the area to harvest the
47 moose under the state registration permit.

48
49 ACTING CHAIRPERSON AUKONGAK: Elmer.

1 MR. SEETOT: Elmer, Brevig Mission. Even
2 though this gives residents of Brevig Mission
3 opportunity to harvest moose and other subunits, I think
4 they would prefer to harvest moose during the fall season
5 close to their communities. Because transportation,
6 weather, and other situations make it very hard for a
7 person to even harvest moose and then to transport it
8 across subunit. That's not pretty much our situation,
9 but I think we do it with caribou because caribou very
10 migratory. But moose has been accepted. I know that when
11 I was growing up, no moose were reported in and around
12 our areas. So, they did they did come in and that's
13 something that we kind of look forward to every fall
14 when the season open. But to my knowledge, our community
15 residents who would travel to the neighboring subunit
16 28 to get moose there because their transportation
17 routes are a little bit easier than A, B, C. And also,
18 A, B, C you know, they're remote. But if given the
19 opportunity, I know people will -- from qualified
20 communities would harvest moose, you know, for their
21 needs. Thank you.

22
23 ACTING CHAIRPERSON AUKONGAK: All right.
24 Question called. All in favor?

25
26 IN UNISON: Aye.

27
28 ACTING CHAIRPERSON AUKONGAK: Motion
29 passes. Moving along.

30
31 MR. UBELAKER: Rolling on. For the
32 record, Brian Ubelaker. And this will be a summary of
33 Wildlife Proposal WP26-59. Once again, regarding moose
34 in Unit 22B. This will be found on page 137 of your
35 meeting books. This proposal submitted by the City of
36 White Mountain, is requesting to shift the fall moose
37 season in Unit 22B West from the current September 1st
38 through the 14th to September 6th through the 20th. The
39 proponent states that hunting conditions are poor at the
40 start of September. Moose remained in higher, harder to
41 reach country. Rivers are high, vegetation is thick, and
42 hunters often waste fuel searching for moose without
43 success. They believe opening a little later would
44 improve access, visibility and efficiency, giving White
45 Mountain hunters a better chance to meet subsistence
46 needs.

47
48 Once again, all the information is the
49 same as the last proposal so I'm skipping to the good
50 stuff. But if anybody has questions, please let me know.

1 So, if this proposal is adopted, the season on federal
2 lands would shift to September 6th through the 20th,
3 which may improve hunting conditions, but it would
4 misalign federal and state seasons. Since most of 22B
5 West is state land hunters would still face a September
6 1st opening under state regulations and would have to
7 distinguish land status from September 1st through the
8 fifth. Because quotas are low and demand is high. The
9 state hunt could close before the federal hunt even
10 opens, reducing opportunity for subsistence users. So
11 therefore, its OSM's preliminary conclusion to oppose
12 proposal WP26-59. While the intent is to improve access,
13 delaying the open would actually disadvantage federally
14 qualified subsistence users, potentially causing them
15 to lose hunting days after a hunt that closes -- that
16 often closes early. This proposal would be better
17 submitted to the State Board of Game as a starting point.
18 And that's the end of that. I'm happy to answer
19 questions.

20
21 ACTING CHAIRPERSON AUKONGAK: I don't
22 have a question. I just want to comment. I do not agree
23 with that letter, you know, talking to my people. And I
24 would like to keep it the same. So, I'll -- I will not
25 be in favor of that letter.

26
27 MS. CHAPA: Okay. We'll move.....

28
29 MR. SEETOT: One comment is that when the
30 federal state agencies come together to comply with
31 agencies, how come we have to bend to the state or
32 federal agencies instead of to the people? The people
33 are the users. You are the regulators. We are the users.
34 We give you information. You should use it to your
35 knowledge or to the best of your ability to bend, not
36 bend, but to adhere to our request because everything
37 that I know on this has come from either memorandum or
38 something from the other side of the continent or other
39 side of USA. And we're still being subjugated to federal
40 and state agencies for us to (indiscernible) so that
41 they can align with the system and that's not very good
42 when we have to fight for everything that we got. 20
43 years ago, 40 years ago we had to bend to the will of
44 the state of Alaska, to the federal agencies, because
45 everything was done for us without our consultation.
46 Thank you.

47
48 ACTING CHAIRPERSON AUKONGAK: Start on
49 nine.
50

1 MS. CHAPA: Alrighty. And so, I will go
2 straight into agency comments, ADF&G.

3
4 (No comment)

5
6 No comments. Federal agencies. Yes.

7
8 MS. IVANOFF: Thank you, Mr. Chair. I do
9 have a question for ADF&G. Just if this -- I understand
10 the concerns because we, in Unalakleet are seeing, you
11 know, hunting later because of weather, but was this
12 ever brought up in the Northern Norton Sound AC meetings
13 yet?

14
15 MS. HENSLEE: Through the Chair. For the
16 record, this is Sara Henslee with Fish and Game. Yes.
17 They did discuss it. I believe it is a proposal that
18 will come down the pipe from the Native Village of White
19 Mountain for the next Board of Game cycle. They would
20 like to change all RM840 hunt areas to be September 6th
21 through the 20th for that exact reason. Just hunting,
22 it seems like it's getting later, but I guess our
23 department thoughts on that or just the season is already
24 a two day season in 22C, it's a three day season in 22D
25 in the Kuzitrin, so. Moving it later, I guess we just -
26 - I wonder if that is going to cause this 22B West area
27 to go to a two day season. Currently it's been lasting
28 14 days the last couple of years. And now we've got
29 RM843. There's only 8 bulls harvested of 16. So, I don't
30 know. Just some comments. Yeah.

31
32 MS. IVANOFF: Just a follow up question.
33 Is the thought that it might become a two day because
34 those people hunting in those other units, once they're
35 done and this opens on the sixth, they'll have
36 opportunity to hunt this one in just a couple of days.

37
38 ACTING CHAIRPERSON AUKONGAK: That's a
39 big reason why I'm going to disagree with it and talking
40 with my people. We do not want that to happen.

41
42 MS. IVANOFF: Okay.

43
44 MS. HENSLEE: Yeah. Through the Chair.
45 Yes. So, my understanding for the impetus behind the
46 proposal being submitted by White Mountain is to --
47 they're struggling to harvest moose in the early season
48 right now. So, and because a lot of the hunting is
49 happening from the river, that's just my understanding.
50 And yeah, so if their effort -- if they can harvest

1 faster, which is the intent of the proposal, as I
2 understand it. It's just -- they're going to meet the
3 quota a lot faster. So in hand with that, I guess I'll
4 add just because we're talking about it, they do also
5 want to submit a proposal to require that hunters only
6 have one RM840 permit per household, and then they would
7 also submit a proposal that you would have to choose
8 which of the four hunt areas those four areas being 22B
9 West, 22C, 22D Kuzitrin, 22D Remainder. And that was to
10 address what Martin, Mr. Chair had said to like force
11 hunters to choose only one area to kind of prevent that
12 whole moving hunting force that we usually see during
13 the RM840 season as it stands.

14
15 MR. SEETOT: Hunters from 22C have the
16 means and methods to harvest animals. They have the road
17 system to 22B, they have rows of C and D. If I'm resident
18 of subunit 22D, if I want to go say moose hunting and
19 the weather is bad, Nome has advantage to go through the
20 road system, while I don't if it's a south wind, so. I
21 would think, not think, I would propose that -- not
22 propose. Let me say. But, you know, that's how come --
23 Nome is very successful in hearing the bag limit or
24 hearing the numbers required and then getting the
25 animals because they have the transportation to all
26 these corridors that are open, so. I would say something
27 like a delayed season before, you know, they would open
28 it to Nome. But under state regs, you know, you really
29 can't get preferential treatment. But in our
30 communities, you know, we go after whatever is available
31 in our area. But then we might have to go through lines
32 to get a permit or harvest ticket. But if you're trying
33 to be restrictive of your resources on your community
34 lands, TEK say I don't think you'll see them very long
35 that's why. I don't -- can't just say, oh, we need it
36 for our communities, the whole state or the land within
37 the states, you know, they provide the resources and we
38 just need to take care of the opportunities that do come
39 along. Thank you.

40
41 MS. CHAPA: Okay. Moving on. Thank you.
42 So, I had asked for federal agencies to provide
43 additional comments, and I had seen none. And offer the
44 opportunity for tribal entities to comment.

45
46 (No comment)

47
48 And other Regional Advisory Councils. I
49 don't believe anybody else. Yeah, go ahead.

50

00094

1 MR. UBELAKER: No, no other Councils have
2 taken this up.

3
4 MS. CHAPA: And so now local Fish and
5 Game Advisory Committees can provide comments,
6 additional comments.

7
8 (No comment)

9
10 And now the public.

11
12 (No comment)

13
14 Okay. So now we're at a Regional Council
15 recommendation.

16
17 MS. IVANOFF: This is Kelsi. I moved to
18 support Wildlife proposal 26-59.

19
20 ACTING CHAIRPERSON AUKONGAK: Second? Do
21 we have a second?

22
23 MR. SEETOT: Elmer, Brevig Mission.
24 Second.

25
26 MS. IVANOFF: Mr. Chair, just for
27 discussion and clarification that we are in opposition
28 of this proposal as it would allow hunters from other
29 units to come over once the later season opens, providing
30 less opportunity for the local residents to get their
31 moose for the year.

32
33 ACTING CHAIRPERSON AUKONGAK: All right,
34 question. Go ahead.

35
36 MS. CHAPA: Okay, we're going to do a
37 roll call vote, and we'll start with Elmer Seetot.

38
39 MR. SEETOT: Restating.....

40
41 (Simultaneous speech)

42
43 MS. CHAPA: Oh, yes.

44
45 MR. SEETOT:or shifting the dates
46 then. Nay.

47
48 MS. CHAPA: Nay. Okay. Kelsi Ivanoff.

49
50 MS. IVANOFF: Nay.

1
2
3
4
5
6
7
8
9
10
11
12
13
14
15
16
17
18
19
20
21
22
23
24
25
26
27
28
29
30
31
32
33
34
35
36
37
38
39
40
41
42
43
44
45
46
47
48
49
50

MS. CHAPA: I'll go to Louis. Louis Green.

MR. GREEN: Nay. Thank you.

MS. CHAPA: Martin Aukongak.

ACTING CHAIRPERSON AUKONGAK: Nay. Robert Moses is online.

MS. CHAPA: And I'll check. Is Council member Robert Moses online?

(No response)

He had let me know that he had to go to his other job. So. Okay, so we have four nays, and so the motion fails.

ACTING CHAIRPERSON AUKONGAK: Thank you.

MR. UBELAKER: Okay. Moving right along.....

(Simultaneous speech)

UNIDENTIFIED: (Indiscernible). Excuse me, I wanted to introduce myself because I've been hearing here after I finally got on to listen to you guys. My name is Edwin. I'm delegate for Native Village of Savoonga. I'm also a marine mammal advisor for our tribe here in Savoonga. And it's nice listening to you guys. It's a learning opportunity for me to hear you guys and learn about area units in our region. And if you guys could give me information on the w -- proposal numbers afterwards and see if they passed or failed, you know, that'd be very helpful. Thank you for your time.

ACTING CHAIRPERSON AUKONGAK: Alright. Welcome.

MS. CHAPA: And thank you. Edwin, this is Gisela Chapa, and I will be sure to get your information so I can provide a copy of the meeting minutes, which will have all of the Council's action. And. Yeah, I'll touch base with you.

MR. UBELAKER: Okay. Then on to Wildlife Closure Review 26-11 and 26-12 regarding moose in Unit

1 22. For the record, Brian Ubelaker. And these analyses
2 -- one analysis, two closures, two closure reviews,
3 we'll need two actions. This analysis is found on page
4 143 of your meeting books. The Closure Review WCR26-11
5 and 12 is once again a standard review of federal
6 subsistence closures in Unit 22B West. WCR26-11 examines
7 the fall season closure of moose hunting to non-
8 federally qualified users, while WCR26-12 reviews the
9 winter season closure, which allows hunting only by
10 residents of White Mountain and Golovin. In line with
11 the Federal Subsistence Board policy, closures are
12 evaluated at least once every four years and are reopened
13 when no longer necessary. This review aims to determine
14 whether these current closures remain warranted. So, we
15 just covered biological harvest and regulatory data. But
16 I'll give you a brief overview on the beginning of these
17 closures. Federal public lands in Units 22B West were
18 closed by the Federal Subsistence Board through the
19 adoption of WP02-34 due to conservation concerns for
20 declining moose population and to ensure federally
21 qualified subsistence users had priority access. The
22 Board shortened moose seasons, limited harvest to bulls
23 only and restricted harvest to federally qualified
24 subsistence users. These measures aim to protect cows
25 and improve calf survivability. Subsequently, WP02-35 a
26 section 804 analysis further restricted harvest to
27 residents within certain units. Specifically, Unit 22B
28 West winter hunt was limited to local residents only.
29 The Board determined that restricting harvest to a
30 subset of federally qualified users would improve
31 subsistence opportunities for those most dependent on
32 moose.

33
34 Now, one alternative to consider is to
35 eliminate the federal moose permit for the winter hunt,
36 as it has not been used since 2001, with all hunters
37 using the state permit instead. While removing the
38 permit could reduce regulatory complexity and
39 administrative burden, this change is outside the scope
40 of a closure review. Although action taken on previous
41 proposals did away with that permit. Another alternative
42 was to eliminate the fall season closure. Although
43 federally qualified subsistence users currently harvest
44 about 93% of the moose in Unit 22B West, indicating
45 minimal impact on subsistence, OSM did not pursue this
46 alternative because the moose population remains below
47 management objectives. Calf to cow ratios are very low
48 and quotas are met quickly, showing demand far outside
49 -- far exceeds supply.

1 Rescinding the closures in Unit 22B West
2 would allow non-federally qualified users to harvest
3 moose on federal public land. Although the moose
4 population is stable or slightly increasing, it remains
5 below state management objectives, with very low calf
6 to cow ratios and limited growth potential. Seasons
7 often close early and quotas are met quickly, showing
8 that demand exceeds supply. Rescinding or modifying
9 closures would likely result in minimal additional
10 harvest, but federally qualified subsistence users could
11 face increased competition, particularly during the fall
12 season from non-local hunters and during the winter
13 season from other federally qualified users, including
14 residents of Nome. The winter hunt is especially
15 critical for White Mountain and Golovin, as some years
16 see all their moose harvested during this season.
17 Therefore, OSM's preliminary conclusion is to retain the
18 status quo. The moose population west of the Derby
19 Mountains remains below management objectives with low
20 recruitment, quotas are met quickly, indicating demand
21 exceeds supply. Maintaining closures ensures the
22 conservation of the moose population and protects
23 subsistence opportunities for federally qualified users,
24 including keeping the winter hunt limited to residents
25 of White Mountain and Golovin. I'm happy for questions.

26
27 ACTING CHAIRPERSON AUKONGAK: I don't
28 have a question. I do have a comment. You know, being
29 on every Board you can think of in our region, we have
30 our (indiscernible), we have Kawerak, and we have a
31 poster right out here in this very building itself. The
32 statement that everybody go by as we grow our own, and
33 you repeatedly said federally. So, if I have a tribal
34 member that grew up in Golovin and or White Mountain,
35 that is a federally recognized tribal member. I would
36 like to keep it open to anybody non-resident because
37 they are from there. Again, we give out scholarships to
38 make them go on education, but we're not going to let
39 them come back and hunt their food is very, very wrong.
40 I strongly disagree with that. I will oppose this. And
41 I would like my people that don't live there to come
42 back home and hunt. They do share it. They don't bring
43 it back out of their -- the community. A lot of it. They
44 have a mom and dad there or aunt, uncle, grandma and
45 grandpa. Thank you.

46
47 MR. UBELAKER: Mr. Chair, are you saying
48 that you're going to oppose the closure? So, you want
49 to lift the closure? Brent, their -- I'm not quite sure
50 I understand. And I appreciate your sentiment behind

1 that. I'm not sure if that's the proper way to go about
2 it. Because the section 804 the -- their might be
3 something in there. I'm not familiar with it. Maybe Brent
4 can come speak to it, but I believe -- I feel lifting
5 the closure would open it up to way too many people. And
6 just -- and, I mean, trying to just get the few that you
7 have in mind hunting, it would open the door to a lot
8 more than just that.

9
10 ACTING CHAIRPERSON AUKONGAK: I don't
11 think so. I'm pretty sure it's the same people that do
12 come up and have family there.

13
14 DR. VICKERS: Yeah. This is Brent, OSM
15 and Hannah, feel free to chime in. I'm just sitting
16 here, so I'll speak, but I just wanted clarification.
17 Because -- and I see what you're saying, and -- yeah,
18 this is one of the sort of shortcomings of the federally
19 qualified subsistence that we hear a lot throughout the
20 state is, well, I want my family members who had to move
21 to Anchorage come and hunt. And at this point, we don't
22 have that fine of a tool to be able to say households
23 can invite their family members, but we're going to limit
24 it to that. So, it's kind of a federally qualified
25 subsistence users, which in this case, the two different
26 hunts have different communities that are eligible. And
27 then once you open the door to non-federally qualified
28 subsistence users, that opens the door to anyone who can
29 get a hunt through a state sport resident non-resident.
30 I'm not exactly sure at this moment non-residents. But
31 so, I'm just saying that we understand. But I actually
32 was curious if you were speaking because we are talking
33 about two different closures to two different seasons,
34 and those seasons have different restrictions. The fall
35 September season is restricted to all non-federally
36 qualified subsistence users, which yes includes your
37 family that doesn't live in Unit 22 anymore. If I'm.....

38
39 MR. UBELAKER: Unit 22 is -- they have
40 C&T.

41
42 DR. VICKERS: Yeah. All Unit 22. Thank
43 you. And then the winter season is actually reduced to
44 just the residents of Golovin and White Mountain and
45 that's actually a two-step closure. So not only are all
46 non-federally qualified subsistence users not able to
47 hunt there, but also a lot of the other Unit 22
48 residents. And that's what we refer to as a section 804
49 user prioritization, where they had -- because there
50 were so few of the moose left, they said, okay, well,

00099

1 actually, we can't open this to all federally qualified
2 subsistence users in Unit 22. We have to just those
3 communities. So, I just wanted clarification if you were
4 speaking on both of those seasons or one in particular.
5 Okay. Thank you.

6

7 DR. VORHEES: Mr. Chair. This is Hannah
8 Voorhees.

9

10 ACTING CHAIRPERSON AUKONGAK: Go ahead.

11

12 MS. VORHEES: Thank you. Let's say that
13 since you're from that area, you know your community and
14 what it needs the best. Looking at the analysis and
15 considering how those -- the two communities are faring,
16 I did note, you know, that that winter hunt is especially
17 important that a lot of times all the moose that those
18 communities are harvesting are harvested in the winter
19 in that area, and that it may have become even more
20 important lately with declining salmon harvest and
21 reduced availability of caribou, so. Just some factors
22 to consider in that Cultural Knowledge and Traditional
23 Practices section starting on page 130. And as Brent
24 mentioned, that winter hunt being closed to everyone
25 except residents of Golovin and White Mountain often the
26 way we open those up is incrementally. So, the first
27 step could be to open to other federally qualified
28 subsistence users, but keep it closed to non-federally
29 qualified users rather than just opening it all up at
30 once, which might be a big change and might not be able
31 to track the effects you know, on such a fine level. So,
32 I just wanted to add that and thank Brent for his
33 comments as well.

34

35 ACTING CHAIRPERSON AUKONGAK: Now, keep
36 in mind, you know, I don't think there'd be a very big
37 influx of, you know, a federal ticket holder. And a lot
38 of this is corporate land. So, it's mainly corporate
39 shareholders too. So, they would have to spend a lot of
40 money going around our land, the corporate land. So, I
41 don't see it as a problem. Because we have local people
42 hunting, and if they see them on their, on their
43 corporate land, you know, you get fined, you get your
44 moose taken away.

45

46 MR. SEETOT: Elmer, question to Martin.
47 When you were talking about these non-residents, would
48 they qualify under state regs like you were saying,
49 people that that live in your community that you know
50 are providers, gatherers, hunters, fishermen that

000100

1 provide for the family as a whole but but they're kind
2 of restricted under the language of under federal
3 regulations. But they're -- they would be included in
4 state regs, though, if I understand your comment.

5

6 DR. VORHEES: Elmer Seetot. Was that a
7 question for me?

8

9 ACTING CHAIRPERSON AUKONGAK: Oh, no. All
10 right. Can we go through the nine? All right. We're
11 going to take a five-minute break.

12

13 (Off record)

14

15 (On record)

16

17 ACTING CHAIRPERSON AUKONGAK: All right,
18 Brian, you're up again.

19

20 MS. CHAPA: All right. Gisela Chapa, for
21 the record. And just to give a brief overview Brian
22 Ubelaker just presented the analysis on WCR Wildlife
23 Closure Review 26-11/12. And so now we're going to move
24 into the presentation procedures for the proposals so
25 the Council can get additional information, and
26 additional comments. Since we've already stated, excuse
27 me that the Board received no comments from tribes or
28 corporations for any of the proposals that this Council
29 is reviewing today, will move over to agency comments.
30 We'll start with ADF&G if there's any and they're shaking
31 their head. So, we'll move to federal agencies. So, this
32 is an opportunity to provide the Council with additional
33 comments on the Wildlife Closure Review.

34

35 (No comment)

36

37 I don't have anybody in the room or
38 online. So, we'll give the opportunity for tribal
39 entities to provide additional comments.

40

41 (No comment)

42

43 And moving on. Regional Advisory
44 Councils.

45

46 MR. UBELAKER: Mr. Chair, no other
47 Councils took this one up.

48

49 MS. CHAPA: And I just want to state for
50 the record that I don't believe there are any other

000101

1 Regional Advisory Council comments except for one
2 proposal. Okay. And now an opportunity for local Fish
3 and Game Advisory Committees to provide comments.

4
5 ACTING CHAIRPERSON AUKONGAK: Kelsi or
6 Elmer.

7
8 MR. SEETOT: Say again?

9
10 MS. CHAPA: So, it's an opportunity for
11 local Fish and Game Advisory Committees to provide
12 comments. So, no? Okay, summary of written public
13 comment. I don't believe we received any. And this is
14 an opportunity for the public now to provide testimony
15 on this closure review.

16
17 (No comment)

18
19 Okay. And now we're moving on to the
20 Regional Council recommendation.

21
22 MR. SEETOT: Mr. Chair, what proposal
23 were we on, 26-16?

24
25 MS. CHAPA: We are on Wildlife Closure
26 Review 26-11/12.

27
28 ACTING CHAIRPERSON AUKONGAK: Got a
29 motion?

30
31 MS. CHAPA: And I can -- oh, go ahead.

32
33 ACTING CHAIRPERSON AUKONGAK: Go ahead,
34 Brian.

35
36 MR. UBELAKER: Thank you, Mr. Chair. Just
37 to bring everybody back on the same page. Page 149 of
38 your meeting books. The OSM preliminary conclusion is
39 to retain the status quo on both of these closures.

40
41 MS. IVANOFF: This is Kelsi. I moved to
42 retain the status quo on the closures for Unit 22B West
43 of the Darby and you -- for both the fall and winter
44 hunt.

45
46 (Talking)

47
48 Oh, two motions? Oh, Okay. Well -- oh,
49 one for the fall and one for the winter. Okay. All right,
50 I move to retain the status quo for to for the for Unit

000102

1 22B West during the fall season.

2

3 MR. UBELAKER: And just for
4 clarification, that would be WCR26-11.

5

6 ACTING CHAIRPERSON AUKONGAK: We have a
7 second?

8

9 MR. SEETOT: Elmer. Second.

10

11 MS. IVANOFF: This is Kelsi. I think
12 because there is a conservation concern, we want to keep
13 this to the federally qualified users in this area.
14 Opening it up might bring more hunters in and limit the
15 amount of subsistence access for residents of the area.

16

17 ACTING CHAIRPERSON AUKONGAK: All right.
18 All in favor?

19

20 MS. IVANOFF: Aye. Oh! Question.

21

22 ACTING CHAIRPERSON AUKONGAK: Question
23 called. All in favor?

24

25 IN UNISON: Aye.

26

27 ACTING CHAIRPERSON AUKONGAK: Motion
28 passes. All right. Second one, I believe.

29

30 MR. UBELAKER: Yes, Mr. Chair. WCR26-12,
31 for the winter season in Unit 22B West. The OSM
32 recommendation is to maintain status quo.

33

34 MS. IVANOFF: This is Kelsi. I -- in
35 regards to WCR26-12. I moved to retain the status quo
36 for Unit 22B West during the winter season.

37

38 ACTING CHAIRPERSON AUKONGAK: We have a
39 second.

40

41 MR. SEETOT: Elmer. second.

42

43 ACTING CHAIRPERSON AUKONGAK:
44 Discussion.

45

46 MR. UBELAKER: Mr. Chair, I believe your
47 discussion points, unless you want to bring up something
48 separate from WCR26-11, will suffice for 12 as well.

49

50 MS. IVANOFF: Question.

1
2
3
4
5
6
7
8
9
10
11
12
13
14
15
16
17
18
19
20
21
22
23
24
25
26
27
28
29
30
31
32
33
34
35
36
37
38
39
40
41
42
43
44
45
46
47
48
49
50

ACTING CHAIRPERSON AUKONGAK: All in favor?

IN UNISON: Aye.

ACTING CHAIRPERSON AUKONGAK: Motion passes. All right. All right. We got no more. Are we done?

MR. UBELAKER: All right, Mr. Chair. We are moving on to WP26-60. Okay. It's, you know, still moose, broken record has been used before. This is moose in Unit 22, but 22D. For the record, Brian Ubelaker. And the summary of Wildlife Proposal WP26-60. The full analysis can be found on page 151 of your meeting books. This proposal is submitted by the Alaska Department of Fish and Game, and it is requesting to align federal and state moose hunting regulations in Unit 22. Specific changes asked for are: 1, to replace the existing federal moose permit requirement, which is FM22-04 for the winter hunt and Unit 22 Southwest with a state registration permit. Change number 2 is to change the harvest limit of that hunt from one bull to one antlered bull in order to protect breeding age bulls that may be recovering after the rut. Change number 3 to change the federal winter season to a may be announced with dates between December 1st and January 31st, rather than a fixed season. Last but not least, to combine the Unit 22 Southwest hunt area with the Unit 22D Kuzitrin area, thereby establishing a winter hunt in the Kuzitrin area. The proponent states this request will create consistency between state and federal regulations and will reduce user confusion. Under state regulation, the harvest limit is one antlered bull for the winter hunt. The current federal regulation allows any bull which the proponent considers biologically less warranted. Because harvests are quota based and the winter hunt doesn't often occur because the quota is filled in the fall, making this winter season may be announced, will protect the remaining bulls. Also under state regulations, permit RM849 is available only in person at certain local communities, limiting distribution so the closure on federal public lands for winter may not be warranted.

Regulations regarding moose management in Unit 22 have focused on conserving the herd while supporting subsistence hunting. In 1998, the fall harvest limit in the Kizitrin area was changed to one antlered bull to protect cows. By 2001, federal lands

1 were closed to all but federally qualified subsistence
2 users, and the Southwest Hunt Area was established.
3 Throughout the 2000, harvest was limited to bulls and
4 restricted to local residents to address the declining
5 populations. From 2015, state regulations adopted
6 antlered bull only winter hunts and non-resident quotas.
7 Special actions from 2016 to 2018 further protected
8 breeding bulls. And in 2020, federal and state rules
9 were aligned with may be announced winter hunts and
10 closures to non-federally qualified users. Today
11 closures and quotas remain in place because moose
12 populations are below management objectives. Currently,
13 the moose population in Unit 22 is below the management
14 objective. Bull to cow ratios are near the target but
15 fluctuate, and calf to cow ratios suggest stable
16 conditions in some areas and declining trends in others.
17 Predation, especially by brown bears, is a key factor
18 limiting population growth. Overall, current conditions
19 indicate a stable but low moose population with limited
20 surplus for winter hunting.

21
22 Subsistence harvest is mostly
23 concentrated in the fall, with residents of Unit 22D and
24 nearby areas taking the majority of moose. Winter
25 hunting opportunities are limited because harvest quotas
26 are typically met during the fall season. Federal
27 permits for the winter hunt have rarely been used, while
28 state registration permits manage most of the harvest.
29 Recent seasons have closed early as quotas are reached
30 quickly, highlighting the need to carefully manage
31 harvests to maintain population stability and protect
32 breeding age bulls. So, if adopted, this proposal would
33 align federal and state regulations in Unit 22D,
34 simplifying permit requirements and reducing
35 administrative burden. The federal winter hunt permit
36 would be replaced by the state registration permit,
37 which is easier to obtain and has historically been the
38 primary method for harvesting moose. Changing the winter
39 season to may be announced protects the moose population
40 by preventing overharvest if fall quotas are already
41 met, while still allowing additional opportunity if a
42 surplus exists.

43
44 Adjusting the harvest limit to one
45 antlered bull safeguards larger breeding bulls during a
46 vulnerable period and combining hunt areas creates a
47 consistent management framework while expanding
48 potential winter hunting opportunities. OSM's
49 preliminary -- OSM preliminarily supports WP26-60. The
50 proposal is largely administrative, aligning federal and

1 state regulations without negatively affecting federally
2 qualified subsistence users. The may be announced season
3 and antlered bull limit should help protect the moose
4 population while maintaining hunting opportunity.
5 Overall, adopting the proposal reduces regulatory
6 complexity, increases clarity for hunters, and supports
7 sustainable subsistence use. And that is the end of the
8 summary and I'm happy to answer any questions.
9

10 ACTING CHAIRPERSON AUKONGAK: Nows's the
11 whole nine or you got something, Kelsi? Elmer.
12

13 MR. SEETOT: Elmer Seetot, Jr. Brevig
14 Mission I -- or I'm subunit 22D. I pretty much -- what
15 you presented there was pretty much I would say against
16 the wishes of what I was going to say. 22D, Unit 22D is
17 a heavy use area on roads, for Nome and for people that
18 are traveling on roads made from Teller, maybe from Nome.
19 We're on a roadless place, we are across from Teller are
20 -- and then the dates, dates would be off in a way that
21 most of our fall storms are pretty much in the month --
22 or the early part of September. Rain, high water, south
23 winds. And then what the bull, I think it'd be one. The
24 only ones that I see that carrying their antlers are the
25 young bulls that are, I would say not in breeding cycle.
26 And the dates would not kind of correspond with people
27 that that do go up the river. But then be hampered by
28 rain or what conditions and we're requested to align
29 with the state dates and requirements that I'm kind of
30 looking at in a way that community is connected to the
31 road system would benefit. I see no problem with that.
32 But that would leave us out. The community of maybe
33 Brevig out of the loop, because 22D can be pretty much
34 mostly traveled faster through the road system from
35 here. And we do encounter extreme weathers to sometime
36 during the fall, especially last fall. So, those are the
37 conditions that are changing. And I -- and then you
38 mentioned that it was submitted by State of Alaska.
39 Alaska. I see their point, but I see that it would be -
40 - it wouldn't agree with me that that was my comment.
41 Thank you.
42

43 UNIDENTIFIED: Hi, this is Edwin with the
44 Native Village of Savoonga. I wanted to ask what area
45 do you guys serve us for as a private (indiscernible)?
46

47 ACTING CHAIRPERSON AUKONGAK: I think
48 we'll get to my public. Hold on, Edwin.
49

50 MS. CHAPA: Well, he has a question.

000106

1
2
3
4
5
6
7
8
9
10
11
12
13
14
15
16
17
18
19
20
21
22
23
24
25
26
27
28
29
30
31
32
33
34
35
36
37
38
39
40
41
42
43
44
45
46
47
48
49
50

ACTING CHAIRPERSON AUKONGAK: Oh.

MS. CHAPA: Yeah. Right?

ACTING CHAIRPERSON AUKONGAK: Well, we're going to -- we gotta [sic] go through this whole nine. Right? Okay.

MS. CHAPA: Hi, Edwin. Do you think you can hold off on your question and.....

(Simultaneous speech)

UNIDENTIFIED: Yeah. Sure.

MS. CHAPA: Okay. We're going to go through the presentation.....

UNIDENTIFIED: It's really -- I'm just doing a little bit of research on some of the information that I need to know. And it would be helpful if I, you know, get a -- like some kind of information Board about the area units.

ACTING CHAIRPERSON AUKONGAK: We'll get that to you right after the meeting.

UNIDENTIFIED: Okay, great.

MS. IVANOFF: Hey, Edwin, this is Kelsi on the -- if you go on the ADF&G website, they have maps of all the Units within 22 a whole. And then specifically 22A, B, C, D, and E that you can see.

UNIDENTIFIED: Thanks for the share.

ACTING CHAIRPERSON AUKONGAK: We'll get your info and try to get that to you quickly. Right now, Chapa will go through the whole nine.

UNIDENTIFIED: Okay.

MS. CHAPA: Alrighty and I am also going to put up the map of the Unit. But I can't multitask. So, I'm going to start off by asking ADF&G if there's additional comments while I look for this map.

ACTING CHAIRPERSON AUKONGAK: All right, Sara.

1

2 MS. HENSLEE: Thank you, Mr. Chair. For
3 the record, this is Sara Henslee. So, I guess I'll just
4 take a second to address Elmer's comment and I guess
5 clarify my proposal. My main concern with the way the
6 federal regulations currently are worded is you -- any
7 federally qualified subsistence user, so these are
8 residents of Unit 22C, and D could get this federal
9 permit this FM22-04 and hunt bull in December, the month
10 of December in this 22D (In Native) area drainage. So
11 that is just not really biologically appropriate, given
12 what you said of how there's -- the quota is met in the
13 fall time. And there are no more moose available to be
14 taken in the winter. So, the map is up there. You can
15 kind of see that little postage stamp of BLM land in 22D
16 Southwest, which is what I'm trying to align. So
17 technically, anybody in the month of December that's a
18 resident of 22C and D could go to that area and hunt a
19 bull. It doesn't have to be antlered. It could be a
20 large breeding bull like you'd mentioned that drops its
21 antlers. You could go ahead and shoot that. So not that
22 that's being done currently. It's just for me, I would
23 like to remove that in case somebody found out and would
24 like to take advantage of that current bag limit, so.

25

26 (Simultaneous speech)

27

28 UNIDENTIFIED: Thank you, Sara. I'm glad
29 that I wanted to hear because we have -- sometimes, we
30 get moose, we -- I had one sighting back about 20 years
31 ago on the island here, on St. Lawrence Island and --
32 but that was the only mammal I've seen, you know, in the
33 moose. And it was with the reindeer. It was right in the
34 middle of the herd. So, I wanted to share.

35

36 MR. SEETOT: Elmer, with Brevig Mission.
37 In regard to your comments here, I -- we -- I rarely see
38 moose fall time or even winter, in Southwest, 22D
39 Southwest. That -- those -- they have creeks, but they
40 have so little creeks or the predators will kind of
41 drive them away and rarely we do we see moose in and
42 around that area, except maybe during the fall while
43 they're foraging or looking around for mating and that's
44 the only instance that I have seen or heard of moose in
45 that area. In 22D Remainder -- Kuzitrin and D Remainder,
46 those are the places where the moose kind of reside
47 year-round. Thank you.

48

49 MS. CHAPA: Okay, Gisela Chapa for the
50 record. And we're now moving through the presentation

000108

1 procedures for proposals and we -- how do we start it?
2 Yes. Okay. So, we were on ADF&G comments. And now this
3 is an opportunity for federal agencies to provide
4 additional comments.

5
6 (No comment)

7
8 And tribal entities to also provide
9 comments.

10
11 UNIDENTIFIED: I wanted to share for 22D
12 Remainder. We'd like to, you know, continue with our
13 harvest if we, you know, sight one because we rarely,
14 you know, get any moose out here, but that was the only
15 one that might have crossed with the ice, you know, so
16 but nobody harvested it, so it's long gone.

17
18 MS. CHAPA: Thank you for that. Summary
19 of public comments, we had received none. Public
20 testimony or federal. Okay. We do have a comment from a
21 federal agency. Go ahead.

22
23 MS. BRAEM: Nikki Braem from Bering Land
24 Bridge National Preserve. We are neutral on this
25 proposal.

26
27 MS. CHAPA: All right. And now
28 opportunity for the public to provide testimony.

29
30 (No comment)

31
32 Okay. And now moving on to Regional
33 Council recommendation.

34
35 (Talking)

36
37 MR. UBELAKER: Sorry. Through the Chair.
38 Member Seetot. If you would like to use language from
39 the analysis, you can look on page 170 of your meeting
40 books under the OSM preliminary conclusion, which is to
41 support proposal WP26-60.

42
43 MR. SEETOT: Elmer, Brevig Mission.
44 Proposal WP22 -- 26-60. Requested that we support the
45 OSM conclusion or preliminary conclusion submitted by
46 State of Alaska. I'm -- and then I moved to a aligned
47 state and federal regulations for moose 22D of I'm just
48 following the words of the executive summary.

49
50

000109

1 ACTING CHAIRPERSON AUKONGAK: We have a
2 second?

3
4 MS. IVANOFF: Second.

5
6 ACTING CHAIRPERSON AUKONGAK:
7 Discussion.

8
9 MR. SEETOT: Discussion. Under
10 discussion I had some points that I would -- I agree
11 with the one antlered bull. You know, they're already
12 rutted. I mean, most of the people have already harvested
13 their moose, but I used to be one of those young people
14 that that didn't have the means of transportation or
15 mostly means of transportation, but you know, just
16 weather permitting to get a moose in the winter because
17 I had relatives, you know, that gave me meat there. The
18 dates, I'm not really -- I opposed the dates because it
19 with 22D Remainder that pretty much goes with the road
20 communities. I don't mind people getting their meat
21 under the regulations, but then it would leave us out
22 of the hoop. Maybe a couple people in the communities
23 of Brevig would be able to get that. And with the season,
24 I do agree with what the season dates, but as a whole,
25 I said I wouldn't vote for the proposal. Thank you.

26
27 MS. IVANOFF: Yeah. Question.

28
29 ACTING CHAIRPERSON AUKONGAK: All in
30 favor?

31
32 MS. IVANOFF: Aye.

33
34 MR. SEETOT: Nay.

35
36 ACTING CHAIRPERSON AUKONGAK: Nay.

37
38 MS. CHAPA: And, Louis, can you hear us?
39 It might be muted. Press star six to unmute yourself.
40 We're on the vote on WP26-60. There was a motion on the
41 floor to support the proposal. And so far, we have two
42 nays and one aye.

43
44 MR. GREEN: How is the vote again? It's
45 cutting in and out here. I lost you a minute ago, and I
46 just got back on.

47
48 MS. CHAPA: Okay. Yeah. So far, we have
49 two nays and one aye in support of WP26-60.

50

000110

1 MS. IVANOFF: Mr. Chair, can I get
2 clarification? You said you did support an antlered
3 bull, but is there -- you want to keep the federal
4 permit?
5

6 MR. SEETOT: My justification was that
7 we're out of the loop because 22 - Unit 22D is on the
8 road system and we being in the bay, Port Clarence Bay
9 or Teller being connected also by the road, we're out
10 of -- sometimes we're out of loop due to extreme weather
11 conditions because our Western Seward Peninsula I think
12 other than Saint Lawrence Island, Wales, Tin City, Lost
13 River maybe where that -- in Port Clarence where we're
14 one of the ten places that are pretty windy during the
15 spring season, some spring season, and then pretty much
16 during the fall season -- that's -- I kind of went
17 against it because of the date of the hunt and then the
18 -- I don't mind the road system, but that's the -- give
19 me a justification that I'm still out of the loop to go
20 after the animals in this. Thank you.
21

22 MS. IVANOFF: Is there -- can I ask, is
23 there a reason.
24

25 (Simultaneous speech)
26

27 MR. GREEN: Can I have the dates again?
28

29 MS. IVANOFF: Sorry.
30

31 MR. GREEN: Sorry. I guess I cut you off.
32 I'll hold.
33

34 MS. IVANOFF: Are you against aligning
35 their -- like, doing a state registration permit instead
36 rather than the federal?
37

38 MR. SEETOT: Elmer with Brevig Mission.
39 I think I stated my reasons enough in the first proposal
40 because everything has been decided by the state and
41 federal agencies instead of by the people that proposed
42 these are changes. Sometimes the changes are good for
43 some of the population, but for some it's on the negative
44 side. That's my comment. I have a mixed response to
45 proposal 26-60. Thank you.
46

47 MR. GREEN: Yeah. Mr. Chair, this is
48 Louis. I was just trying to get -- make sure I got the
49 dates right, for the hunt.
50

000111

1 ACTING CHAIRPERSON AUKONGAK: Elmer said
2 doesn't matter. Brian.

3
4 MR. UBELAKER: Thank you, Mr. Chair. Do
5 we want to reconsider this motion, Elmer? And -- excuse
6 me, member Seetot, to suggest or I would suggest that
7 you only consider having the antlered bull, but not the
8 season requirements that the proposal is asking for?

9
10 MR. SEETOT: I think for conservation
11 purposes, I guess after the -- that's what they kind of
12 go for the -- because the bulls are kind of lose your
13 antlers after the rut, October, November, while the
14 young bulls keep their antlers. But then the females are
15 antlerless. So, that's one of the requirements that
16 should be on there when antlered bull. Because we're
17 hunting, with poor eyesight, they can mistake the
18 identity or the sex of the animal. When (indiscernible)
19 was at Teller person maybe 30, shot the muskox. He
20 thought he was shooting a moose. So, you know that it's
21 -- yeah, it's been recorded. But that's one of the things
22 that that I see that when you shoot an antlerless bull,
23 you might think oh it's a female but if you look closer,
24 you know, the female is more fatter than the bull itself.
25 So, you just gotta make a determination just by visual
26 eyesight and then just common sense. But that would kind
27 of help in a way that this it being antlered bull and
28 instead of seasons because I think we're at a
29 disadvantage in 50% of the cases that -- during the fall
30 season. And that was just my justification for voting
31 in that direction. Thank you.

32
33 MR. UBELAKER: Thank you, Mr. Chair. So,
34 Elmer, if you're in favor of antlered bull only for a
35 harvest limit, but then against the season and I mean -
36 - and you would if you were -- if you would vote to not
37 support this proposal as written but you want to see the
38 antlered bull, you can make the modification to keep the
39 antlered bull restriction, but not adopt the season or
40 the permit changes or anything like that. That way the
41 bulls that have dropped their antlers will be protected.
42 Which sounds like is what you would like to see. But
43 then you will also not be at a disadvantage because of
44 the season change that you don't like.

45
46 MS. CHAPA: And, Mr. Chair, just for the
47 process right now, the motion that is on the table is
48 to support 26-60 as it is. And so, I think that if the
49 Council wants to vote differently with that
50 modification, we can vote to rescind the motion, and

000112

1 then we -- yeah, restate the motion with the modification
2 as you had suggested.

3
4 Okay. So right now -- let me know if
5 this is not clear. Right now, there is a motion on the
6 floor to support 26-60 as it is written. Okay. And we
7 started voting on it. But in your justification, you had
8 stated that you are in support of the antlered bull, but
9 not necessarily of the season dates, correct. So, if the
10 Council votes not to support, if you vote nay for it,
11 then none of it goes through. So, what I'm trying to say
12 is that if you are in support of the antler bull portion
13 of the proposal, but not the season dates, you can go
14 ahead and make that motion with the modification, you
15 know, supporting only the antler bull, but not
16 necessarily the season dates.

17
18 MR. GREEN: Mr. Chair. This is Louis.

19
20 ACTING CHAIRPERSON AUKONGAK: Go ahead,
21 Louis.

22
23 MR. GREEN: Yeah, I'm trying to see the
24 -- where the dates are, to be sure. And then what Elmer's
25 after. What dates?

26
27 ACTING CHAIRPERSON AUKONGAK: Well. Go
28 ahead, Brian.

29
30 MR. UBELAKER: Thank you, Mr. Chair.
31 Member Green. So, the proposed -- the requested dates
32 would be a may be announced season from December 1st
33 through January 31st.

34
35 MR. GREEN: Okay, that's wintertime. Of
36 course. What other dates would we be suggesting?

37
38 MR. UBELAKER: Through the Chair. I am
39 uncertain, Sara. Can you save me?

40
41 ACTING CHAIRPERSON AUKONGAK: Hey, real
42 quick here. If I'm right, we don't pass it. There's no
43 action. We come back with a different proposal, right?

44
45 MS. CHAPA: Or a different motion.

46
47 MR. GREEN: Okay, well, I'll just say
48 yay. And there's two yays and two nays. Right?

49
50 MS. CHAPA: Okay.

1
2
3
4
5
6
7
8
9
10
11
12
13
14
15
16
17
18
19
20
21
22
23
24
25
26
27
28
29
30
31
32
33
34
35
36
37
38
39
40
41
42
43
44
45
46
47
48
49
50

ACTING CHAIRPERSON AUKONGAK: We start over.

MS. IVANOFF: No, there's already two yays and one -- oh, no. Two nays and one yay.

MR. GREEN: Yeah. So, if I say yay, then there's 2 to 2 and we go back.....

MS. IVANOFF: Yeah.

(Simultaneous speech)

MR. GREEN:to the drawing Board.

MS. IVANOFF: Yeah.

ACTING CHAIRPERSON AUKONGAK: Hold on here. So, what did you vote? What did you vote, Louis?

MR. GREEN: Yay. So, there's two yays and two nays. Back to the drawing Board.

ACTING CHAIRPERSON AUKONGAK: Yeah. There we go. Go ahead, Sara.

MS. HENSLEE: Through the Chair. This is Sara Henslee again. So currently on the state side of things, we have a may be announced season January 1st through the 31st for 22D in the Southwest area. What the federal proposal -- because currently, the regulations on that federal stamp that we talked about earlier, there is -- the seasons already open, so it doesn't get opened by emergency order. It just opens every year and it's a one bull limit. So, by a federal permit. So, what I was trying to do is just align those two regulations with this proposal, if that helps clarify. So, there's this winter season that's on the books that opens every single year. So, there's nothing stopping a hunter from 22C or 22D from going hunting and taking a moose in that area in 22D Southwest. As long as they have a permit, that federal permit. Whereas what I would like to see is that season only be announced when it's warranted biologically. Like if we haven't met the fall quota. That being said, as you know, we have met the quota every single year, so I don't see it opening. RM849 is the state permit that has not opened in a very long time. That's that winter state registration permit. So, I hope that clarifies things a little bit.

1

2 MR. UBELAKER: Thank you, Mr. Chair. And
3 Louis, I think if my brain is making sense of it, the
4 current federal season for Unit 22D Southwest, December
5 1st through December 31st. And that's in codified regs.
6 That's every year. So, what Sara -- what the Fish and
7 Game -- Alaska Department of Fish and Game is asking for
8 is to change that to a may be announced season sometime
9 between January 1st and January 31st, with a date range
10 for that hunt to be determined at the time that it's
11 announced.

12

13 ACTING CHAIRPERSON AUKONGAK: All right.
14 Let's get back on track of.....

15

16 (Simultaneous speech)

17

18 MR. GREEN: So, then it's accessible but
19 -- oops.

20

21 ACTING CHAIRPERSON AUKONGAK: No. Go
22 ahead, Louis.

23

24 MR. GREEN: Okay. Thanks. That means it's
25 accessible in the wintertime between December 1st and
26 January 31st with the states after. The feds are already
27 in December 1st to the 31st, correct?

28

29 MS. CHAPA: And this is Gisela Chapa. I
30 just want to let you know what's happening in the room,
31 even though the mics are not on. Right now, Brian and
32 Sara are still going over the state and fed regs to
33 answer your question. Louis.

34

35 MR. GREEN: Okay. I'm just trying to make
36 sure we're not taking away from anybody, that's all.

37

38 ACTING CHAIRPERSON AUKONGAK: No, we're
39 going back to the drawing board here.

40

41 MR. GREEN: Okay.

42

43 MR. UBELAKER: Sorry. I was off in my own
44 little world. Louis, could you repeat your question?

45

46 MR. GREEN: Oh, I'm just asking. You
47 know, the state is announced between December 1st and
48 January 31st, which is wintertime, actually giving more
49 opportunity because basically, that's two months if the
50 state deems it biologically okay. If the total quota

000115

1 hasn't been taken, which would be only allowing one
2 antlered bull. Did I get that correct now?

3

4 MR. UBELAKER: Through the Chair. Louis,
5 are you looking at 22D Remainder -- are you looking at
6 state regulations?

7

8 MR. GREEN: No, I'm looking at this WP
9 26-60, this summary section where I'm looking at these
10 dates.

11

12 MR. UBELAKER: So.....

13

14 (Simultaneous speech)

15

16 MR. GREEN: Got to make sure.....

17

18 MR. UBELAKER:current state.....

19

20 MR. GREEN: What page should I be on?

21

22 MR. UBELAKER: On 156 shows the current
23 state regulations.

24

25 MR. GREEN: Okay.

26

27 MR. UBELAKER: Wait, am I even on the
28 right?

29

30 MR. GREEN: See, that's the problem. I
31 keep getting switched around on these pages and.....

32

33 MR. UBELAKER: Yeah. Okay, so page 156
34 towards the bottom residents, one antlered bull by
35 permit us. A season may be announced January 1st through
36 January 31st. So that's the state season that the federal
37 regulations are proposed to match, and the current
38 federal season is December 1st through the 31st.

39

40 MR. GREEN: Okay. So, then the January
41 is one -- the state's proposing a one-month season in
42 January.

43

44 MR. UBELAKER: Yup.

45

46 MR. GREEN: Which in my mind makes it
47 more accessible because of any -- just in case it's
48 seasonably warm in the fall. December is a problem. And
49 generally, just like Elmer says, the young bulls hang
50 on to their antlers longer, so there's no mistaking it

000116

1 for being a cow, correct?

2

3 MR. UBELAKER: Correct.

4

5 MR. GREEN: Okay.

6

7 ACTING CHAIRPERSON AUKONGAK: All right,

8

8 so.

9

10 MR. GREEN: Thank you.

11

12 ACTING CHAIRPERSON AUKONGAK: So, we're
13 going to -- are you going to re-word this or what's your
14 plan here?

15

16 MR. UBELAKER: Mr. Chair, do you want to
17 offer -- so the vote failed, correct? Okay. Do you want
18 to offer a modified motion to accept this?

19

20 (Talking)

21

22 MR. GREEN: I kind of want to know what
23 -- Martin, I kind of want to know what Elmer's dates
24 are.

25

26 ACTING CHAIRPERSON AUKONGAK: What's
27 your what are your dates there, Elmer.

28

29 MR. UBELAKER: Mr. Chair, do we -- Elmer,
30 do you want to break this proposal down to four parts?
31 And then we can work through it and come up with.....

32

33 MR. SEETOT: Majority of the dates are
34 pretty much during the fall or during the time that
35 everything is -- berry picking, everything is fresh.
36 Everybody says -- is on the go and, and that you write
37 in August or so. September, they're getting close to
38 rutting time, but meat is still good and but that's the
39 time that we do run into extreme weather conditions. We
40 run into extreme weather condition, these people have
41 the opportunity to travel on the road, you know, to go
42 up there and harvest moose. I don't see no problem with
43 that. Just that the dates are, you know, out of alignment
44 with what we used to do in the community. But majority
45 of the residents do live in Nome. So, one way or another,
46 you know, they're going to get their moose. Whether I
47 make the amendment or rescind the motion. But that's all
48 I can say. Thank you. Remember, I was a kindergarten
49 trying to learn trigonometry last year. So, I'm still
50 trying to figure the ins and outs of just, you know,

000117

1 just wording proper language to make sense of what we're
2 trying to do.

3

4 ACTING CHAIRPERSON AUKONGAK: Oh, go
5 ahead.

6

7 MS. IVANOFF: This is Kelsi. I just -- I
8 hear what you're saying, and I -- but I do want to make
9 the point that we just visited this with the City of
10 White Mountain one, where if we had a later opener people
11 who hunted in the surrounding units would have the
12 opportunity to go to 22D once it opened, because it's
13 in a later opener. So, aligning it with, you know, the
14 September 1st, which is what all those units are,
15 everyone's hunting in their respective areas and not
16 having the option to go to other places once they open.
17 And I think that was good reasoning behind not supporting
18 the City of White Mountain one.

19

20 MR. SEETOT: One clarification, I guess
21 on the date September 1 to 14, that's the one that is
22 pretty much was state regulations, federal regulations
23 are the one that I know for our area. Kind of started
24 in August, right after the berry start getting good.
25 Because, you know people would like to have meat in
26 quality, you know, quality. Yeah. Instead of quantity.
27 So just, you know, they're at their fattest. They're at
28 their prime. People can go in and out. They can kill two
29 birds with one stone, go berry picking up the river and
30 get a moose. And that that was pretty much what our
31 tradition over the years used to be. Now it's me family
32 thing or it's a me style generation. It's no more pretty
33 much family oriented, but people with -- young people,
34 young men, young women with the technology, with the
35 vehicles to do what they were taught to do without
36 family. Since we're getting in our ages, you know, they
37 provide for the family. But I must have been thinking
38 about something else on the September 1st through the
39 14th date, but that's what I was saying, that on that
40 road communities do have the advantage over Brevig, not
41 Teller. Thank you.

42

43 ACTING CHAIRPERSON AUKONGAK: Okay, so
44 you got all the bells and whistles to start over or
45 where are we at now?

46

47 MR. UBELAKER: Would you like to make a
48 new motion on WP26-60?

49

50

000118

1 ACTING CHAIRPERSON AUKONGAK: According
2 to Elmer, I believe we need to.

3
4 MR. SEETOT: I think I kind of state my
5 reasons, but then I was probably thinking of some other
6 system or some language in there that got me off balance
7 a little bit. I woke up at 5:00 to get here this morning
8 so that's not enough sleep.

9
10 MR. GREEN: Mr. Chair.

11
12 ACTING CHAIRPERSON AUKONGAK: Go ahead.

13
14 MR. GREEN: Louis. Yeah. So, I know that
15 22D Remainder is like, I think August. It's either August
16 10th or August 15th, and it's off the road up there (In
17 Native) and maybe the South Shore, (In Native), too. Did
18 I hunt down there? I mean, that's where I hunt. And then
19 there's the 1st of September and that's a three-day hunt
20 in 22D. So, the most opportunity is the berry picking
21 time was when 22 Remainder is open. So maybe that's what
22 Elmer was talking about. Anyway, I just wanted to lay
23 that out. Thank you.

24
25 ACTING CHAIRPERSON AUKONGAK: Okay,
26 let's get back to motion so we can get somewhere here.
27 We're getting off track.

28
29 MR. GREEN: And I think that that motion,
30 the state's got it for the 30 days in January. The feds
31 were including December, correct Brian?

32
33 MR. UBELAKER: Through the Chair. Yes.

34
35 MR. GREEN: Well, if we want to stay
36 consistent with what the feds already have and blend it
37 with the state, we could say December 1st through January
38 31st, but that's just a thought. I'll do what we're
39 majority wants.

40
41 MS. IVANOFF: This is Kelsi. I'm going
42 to make a motion to support WP26-60.

43
44 ACTING CHAIRPERSON AUKONGAK: We have a
45 second?

46
47 MR. SEETOT: Elmer. Second.

48
49 ACTING CHAIRPERSON AUKONGAK:
50 Discussion. I think we did that already.

1
2
3
4
5
6
7
8
9
10
11
12
13
14
15
16
17
18
19
20
21
22
23
24
25
26
27
28
29
30
31
32
33
34
35
36
37
38
39
40
41
42
43
44
45
46
47
48
49
50

MR. GREEN: Question.

ACTING CHAIRPERSON AUKONGAK: Questions
been called. All in favor?

IN UNISON: Aye.

ACTING CHAIRPERSON AUKONGAK: Motion
passes. Next. Brian.

(Talking)

Alright. Start over. Go ahead.

MR. UBELAKER: Thank you, Mr. Chair. Once
again, for the record, Brian Ubelaker, Wildlife
Biologist, OSM. I will now be presenting a summary of
wildlife closure reviews WCR26-13/14/15, all regarding
moose in Unit 22. This single analysis can be found on
page 175 of your meeting books. The Wildlife Closure
Reviews of all three of these closures evaluates federal
subsistence closures to moose hunting in Unit 22D,
WCR26-13, and 14. Specifically address closures in Unit
22D Kuzitrin and Unit 22D Southwest, allowing residents
of Units 22C and D to hunt. While WCR26-15 addresses the
Remainder of Unit 22D, allowing only federally qualified
subsistence users to hunt. In line with Board policy
these closures are reviewed at least every four years
to determine if reopening federal public lands is
warranted.

And once again, skipping the biological
stuff that we had already talked about this closure was
initiated in Units 22D Kuzitrin and Southwest. Closed
by the Board through WP02-34 which addressed declining
moose populations and to ensure federally qualified
subsistence users had priority access. Seasons were
shortened and harvest was limited to bulls in certain
units, and harvest was restricted to federally qualified
users only. WP02-35 further limited harvest to local
residents within some units to improve subsistence
opportunities for those most dependent on moose. By
2007, the moose population had recovered enough to open
Unit 22D Remainder, but then by 2020, declining
populations and unsustainable harvest led to WP20-40,
which closed Unit 22D Remainder again to all but
federally qualified subsistence users to protect the
long-term viability of the herd.

1 So rescinding the closures in Unit 22D
2 would allow all users to harvest moose on federal public
3 lands in all seasons. However, non-resident seasons are
4 already closed under state regulations, and resident
5 harvest is managed by registration permits and quotas,
6 so total harvest would not increase. Conservation
7 concerns remain as quotas are often met quickly, and
8 state and federal seasons sometimes close early. For
9 example, the 2024 Unit 22D Kuzitrin/Southwest hunt was
10 open only three days before the quota was reached.
11 Lifting the closures could reduce opportunities for
12 federally qualified subsistence users due to increased
13 competition, though few non-local hunters currently
14 participate. Opening Units 22D Kuzitrin and 22D
15 Southwest to all federally qualified subsistence users
16 would have similar effects. Retaining the closures keeps
17 federal public lands in Unit 22D Remainder closed to
18 non-federally qualified users and Units 22D Kuzitrin and
19 22D Southwest closed to anyone outside Units 22C and
20 22D. While most harvest is already by federally
21 qualified users and state quota systems protect the
22 population, closures ensure continued subsistence
23 priority without competition from non-federally
24 qualified users. Therefore, it is OSM's preliminary
25 conclusion to retain the status quo on all three
26 closures. Unit 22 moose population remains below
27 management objectives for population and ratios. Demand
28 exceeds supply as quotas are quickly met. Maintaining
29 closures conserves the population and ensures federally
30 qualified subsistence users have priority access,
31 minimizing competition from non-local residents. And I'm
32 happy for questions.

33
34 ACTING CHAIRPERSON AUKONGAK: None. All
35 right. Let's go through the whole nine.

36
37 MS. CHAPA: Okay. Thank you, Mr. Chair.
38 And this is Gisela Chapa for the record. And now we're
39 at the stage of the presentation procedure where we
40 welcome additional agency comments, and we'll start with
41 ADF&G.

42
43 (No comment)

44
45 Okay. Thank you. And now additional
46 comments by federal agencies.

47
48 (No comment)

49
50 No. Okay, and online.

000121

1
2
3
4
5
6
7
8
9
10
11
12
13
14
15
16
17
18
19
20
21
22
23
24
25
26
27
28
29
30
31
32
33
34
35
36
37
38
39
40
41
42
43
44
45
46
47
48
49
50

(No comment)

No. Moving on. Comments by tribal entities.

(No comment)

Okay. There were no other Regional Advisory Councils that have considered this proposal. And we had not received any written public comments on this proposal. So now it's the opportunity for public testimony.

(No comment)

And with none, we'll move on to Regional Council recommendations.

ACTING CHAIRPERSON AUKONGAK: Hold on. Kelsi. Oh, okay.

MR. UBELAKER: Mr. Chair, do you want me to walk through each of these three separately? So, we have a correct motion.

ACTING CHAIRPERSON AUKONGAK: Kelsi got -- you got it down right.

MS. IVANOFF: This is Kelsi. I move to retain status quo with regards to WCR26-13 Unit 22D Kuzitrin to moose hunting except for residents of Unit 22C and 22D.

ACTING CHAIRPERSON AUKONGAK: You have a second?

MR. GREEN: Louis seconds.

ACTING CHAIRPERSON AUKONGAK: Discussion.

MS. IVANOFF: This is Kelsi. I think with the conservation concern, keeping this to -- keeping this hunt to locals is advisable as we do want to keep -- give our residents as much subsistence opportunity as they can. Question.

ACTING CHAIRPERSON AUKONGAK: Questions been called.

000122

1
2
3
4
5
6
7
8
9
10
11
12
13
14
15
16
17
18
19
20
21
22
23
24
25
26
27
28
29
30
31
32
33
34
35
36
37
38
39
40
41
42
43
44
45
46
47
48
49
50

MR. GREEN: Thanks for the reason.

ACTING CHAIRPERSON AUKONGAK: All in favor?

IN UNISON: Aye.

ACTING CHAIRPERSON AUKONGAK: Motion passed. Second one.

MS. IVANOFF: This is Kelsi. I move to retain the status quo for Unit 22D Southwest to moose hunting except for residents by -- of Units 22C and 22D.

ACTING CHAIRPERSON AUKONGAK: You have a second?

MR. GREEN: Second.

ACTING CHAIRPERSON AUKONGAK: Discussion.

MR. GREEN: Call for the question.

MR. UBELAKER: I think the discussion for the first will suffice for all of them.

ACTING CHAIRPERSON AUKONGAK: All right. Question been called. All in favor?

IN UNISON: Aye.

ACTING CHAIRPERSON AUKONGAK: Motion passes. On to the third.

MS. IVANOFF: This is Kelsi. I move to - and with regards to WCR26-15, retain the status quo for Unit 22D Remainder to moose hunting, except by federally qualified subsistence users.

ACTING CHAIRPERSON AUKONGAK: Second?

MR. SEETOT: Second. Elmer.

ACTING CHAIRPERSON AUKONGAK: Discussion.

MS. IVANOFF: Question.

000123

1 ACTING CHAIRPERSON AUKONGAK: Elmer.
2 Discussion.

3
4 MR. SEETOT: Discussion. 22D is a heavy
5 use -- 22 -- subunit 22D Remainder is heavy use area by
6 people within the Nome communities. And also, it's a
7 heavy corridor for predators. A couple years back I did
8 mention that during the (In Native) American, Davidson
9 Landing, Igloo Creek, in just one swoop, we counted over
10 20 moose. Dead by -- killed by wolves. So that area,
11 Remainder 22D. Even though it's a real good recreational
12 area, it's widely used by nature. I mean predators, bears
13 and also people. That is my comment. And that's maybe
14 the reason that the moose are below management level.
15 And since we're so -- since Remainder 22D is so close
16 to lava beds in Bering Land Bridge, that's where most
17 of the predators use that corridor from Igloo Creek,
18 Davidson Landing to where the caribou -- or where the
19 reindeer used to be down around (In Native) and then
20 make their loop around lava beds. So that pretty much
21 one of the corridors that is being used heavily by wolves
22 when they're in search of wolves. And that might be the
23 reason that you see a moose in low numbers in some areas.
24 Other areas they're there. Thank you.

25
26 ACTING CHAIRPERSON AUKONGAK: All right.

27
28 MS. IVANOFF: Question.

29
30 ACTING CHAIRPERSON AUKONGAK: Question
31 been called. All in favor.

32
33 IN UNISON: Aye.

34
35 ACTING CHAIRPERSON AUKONGAK: Motion
36 passed. Yay. We're going to take a five-minute break and
37 Brian's all burnt out.

38
39 (Off record)

40
41 (On record)

42
43 ACTING CHAIRPERSON AUKONGAK: All right,
44 Brian, let's go. We're gonna [sic] do -- finish up the
45 moose, and then we're going to start up with the muskox
46 in the morning. So, two minutes again there, Brian.

47
48 (Pause)

49
50 Sara, give him a hug.

1

2

MR. UBELAKER: Okay, I am ready, Mr. Chair. Thank you. For the record, Brian Ubelaker and I will now be presenting a summary of Wildlife Proposal WP26-61, once again for moose in 22. This analysis can be found on page 183 of your meeting books. This proposal, submitted by this Council requests to require a federal registration permit for moose in Unit 22E. The proponent states requiring a federal registration permit will allow for greater harvest data to be collected, improving management of this moose population. Regulatory changes include federal lands in Unit 22E being closed to non-federally qualified users to address declining moose numbers in 2002. Since then, the closure has been repeatedly reviewed as populations changed. The Board has considered extending seasons, adjusting harvest limits, and at times explored rescinding the closure. Though concerns about adjacent Unit 22D weaker moose numbers have limited action and the closure remains in place as of today. State regulations have also evolved over the last 20 years, including the introduction of winter resident hunts, shortening seasons, restricting harvest to antlered bulls, and eventually shifting the non-resident hunt to a drawing system to reduce competition.

26

27

28

29

30

31

32

33

34

35

36

37

38

39

40

41

42

43

44

45

46

47

48

49

50

Biological data indicate moose numbers in Unit 22E remain relatively low compared to other parts of the region, and the herd is currently below state management objectives. The population shows signs of stability but is highly sensitive to factors like predation, severe weather, and limited winter habitat. Bull to cow ratios are adequate to support a conservative hunt, though the number of surplus bulls available is limited. Calf survival rates indicate that recruitment is occurring, but not at a level that would allow for large harvests. Overall, harvest pressure is low and reported harvest is a small fraction of the total population. Most harvest comes from local subsistence hunters, who rely on moose as an important subsistence resource. For local communities, moose remain an important subsistence resource. There is very little non-local participation due to closures and restrictions. However, accurate reporting remains a challenge, which makes it difficult for managers to fully assess harvest impacts.

48

49

50

Adopting WP26-61 would require a federal registration permit for moose hunting in Unit 22E. For subsistence hunters, this would mean an extra step,

1 obtaining a federal permit instead of a harvest ticket,
2 but it would provide much better harvest reporting.
3 Improved data would give managers the information needed
4 to track harvest more accurately and make informed
5 decisions about conservation and opportunity. No direct
6 impact to the moose population is expected immediately,
7 but in the long-term, better reporting and management
8 flexibility would benefit both the herd and subsistence
9 users. Therefore, the OSM preliminary conclusion is to
10 support the proposal with modification to delegate
11 authority to the Bering Land Bridge National Preserve
12 Superintendent to set quotas, determine permit numbers,
13 and close the season in coordination with state
14 managers. The moose population in Unit 22E is stable
15 below state objectives with limited surplus for harvest.
16 Subsistence users depend on these moose and accurate
17 data is needed to ensure suitable -- sustainable
18 management. Adopting this proposal would improve
19 reporting, provide management flexibility through in-
20 season management and continue to prioritize
21 conservation while supporting rural subsistence needs.
22 Thank you.

23

24 ACTING CHAIRPERSON AUKONGAK: All right.
25 Yep.

26

27 MS. CHAPA: Thank you, Mr. Chair. We'll
28 now proceed with the presentation procedures. And we'll
29 also state for the record, there were no tribal or ANCSA
30 corporation comments on the Board's consultation on this
31 closure review proposal. And we're going to go to ADF&G
32 comments.

33

34 ACTING CHAIRPERSON AUKONGAK: Two
35 minutes, Sara.

36

37 MS. HENSLEE: Thank you, Mr. Chair. For
38 the record, this is Sara Henslee. I'm just going to echo
39 the same comments that I've had for 22A. Just that I
40 like the spirit of a federal registration permit if you
41 would like to increase reporting compliance, but to
42 consider the fact that it would again result in a
43 mismatch of which permit you need on federal versus state
44 lands, and with the Board cycle coming up to think about
45 a state proposal instead of this. Thank you.

46

47 MS. IVANOFF: This is Kelsi. I -- so it
48 is -- just want to clarify, it is an open hunt right now
49 under state regulations? Okay. And.....

50

000126

1 ACTING CHAIRPERSON AUKONGAK: Oh, go
2 ahead.

3
4 MS. IVANOFF: And has there -- at the AC
5 level, has there been any talk of moving it to a
6 registration hunt?

7
8 MS. HENSLEE: Yeah, through the Chair.
9 This is Sara again. Yes. They plan on submitting a
10 proposal to do this. So, it'll come and the RAC is
11 welcome to comment on that. Yeah.

12
13 ACTING CHAIRPERSON AUKONGAK: All right.

14
15 MS. CHAPA: Continuing on. This is an
16 opportunity for federal agencies to provide additional
17 comments on this proposal.

18
19 ACTING CHAIRPERSON AUKONGAK: All right,
20 Letty.

21
22 MS. HUGHES: Afternoon. For the record,
23 Letty Hughes with Bering Land Bridge National Preserve.
24 So, Bering Land Bridge supports proposal 26-61 with the
25 modification. And the reasons are we echo the sentiments
26 of the state as well in terms of just better reporting,
27 we'll get just more timely as in addition. So, we work
28 with our state partners and surveys and also with the
29 harvest. So, with the federal permits, they would also
30 be receiving the harvest information as well. Ao, and
31 additionally, staff here in Nome have really good
32 relationships with folks in Wales, Shishmaref and other
33 areas. We go out to the communities. So, working to
34 establish, getting that hunt report, getting those
35 registration permits, and then the hunt report back is
36 not going to be an issue either. So yeah, we just support
37 that.

38
39 MS. CHAPA: Thank you for that. Any other
40 agencies, federal agencies online?

41
42 (No comment)

43
44 Okay. Tribal entities, again, this is
45 an opportunity for providing comments to the Council on
46 WP26-61.

47
48 (No comment)

49
50

1 And moving on. I'll just state for the
2 record that I don't -- there were no other Regional
3 Advisory Councils who've considered this proposal, and
4 there were no written public comments submitted on this
5 proposal as well. So now this is an opportunity for the
6 public to provide testimony.

7
8 (No comment)

9
10 Okay. And now we move on to Regional
11 Council recommendation.

12
13 MS. IVANOFF: I -- This is Kelsi. I --
14 because the Northern Norton Sound is planning to propose
15 it. I do see the redundancy just because Unalakleet went
16 through this where we had the state hunt overlap with
17 the federal hunt and the federal hunt became, you know,
18 no one registered for it anymore. But because there is
19 going to be, I guess, an overlap, you know, 2026 to '28
20 for this year. And Board of Game won't see these
21 proposals until next year. I do see, you know, that's a
22 year worth or so of data that the agency can use.

23
24 MS. CHAPA: And Kelsi, you gave your
25 justification. Just want to make sure I didn't miss it.
26 Did we have a motion on the floor? No motion on the
27 floor yet. Okay, okay.

28
29 MS. IVANOFF: This is Kelsi again, and I
30 move to support proposal WP26-61 with modification to
31 delegate authority to the superintendent to set harvest
32 quotas, determine the number of permits issued and the
33 method of permit allocation, and close the season.

34
35 ACTING CHAIRPERSON AUKONGAK: Do we have
36 a second?

37
38 MR. GREEN: Louis will second. Thank you.

39
40 ACTING CHAIRPERSON AUKONGAK:
41 Discussion. Elmer.

42
43 MR. SEETOT: When the hunters over in
44 Unit 22, subunit 22D are our people do go over to unit
45 -- subunit 22E to hunt. It's pretty much along the
46 coastal regions, but the moose, the caribou, the
47 reindeer, they have ample food over that way for the
48 summer range, summer forage seasons. Because what I
49 would say is that the plants and whatever, they need
50 salt or they require salt in their system. So, saline

1 or how would I say it? Saline in the plants that they
2 need to produce, you know, throughout the year. Because
3 what different minerals, you know, help them through the
4 process. But our people do go over there, maybe toward
5 the Mint River area between Wales and Shishmaref. And I
6 would say that that's the main river that they do it
7 because they are (In Native) but they don't have enough
8 brush to kind of, you know, conceal the animals or for
9 them to feed on, at least for the moose. Anyway.

10
11 ACTING CHAIRPERSON AUKONGAK: Thank you,
12 Elmer. Bananas of the North. All right.

13
14 MS. IVANOFF: Question.

15
16 ACTING CHAIRPERSON AUKONGAK: All right.
17 All in favor?

18
19 IN UNISON: Aye.

20
21 ACTING CHAIRPERSON AUKONGAK: Motion
22 passed. Last but not least there, Brian.

23
24 MR. UBELAKER: Thank you, Mr. Chair. Last
25 on the list for today is summary -- oh, sorry. Brian
26 Ubelaker for the record. And I am presenting a summary
27 of Wildlife Closure reviews -- Review WCR26-16, a single
28 one for once. This analysis is -- starts on page 199 of
29 your meeting books. And this Closure Review evaluates
30 Federal Subsistence Board closure to moose hunting in
31 Unit 22E, allowing only federally qualified subsistence
32 users. In line with Board policy, these closures are
33 reviewed at least every four years to determine if
34 reopening federal public lands is warranted. Federal
35 public lands in Unit 22E were closed by the Federal
36 Subsistence Board through actions taken on WP02-34 due
37 to conservation concerns for declining moose
38 populations, and to ensure federally qualified
39 subsistence users had harvest opportunity. With
40 modification from the Office of Subsistence Management,
41 seasons were shortened, harvests were limited to bulls
42 only in Unit 22E and all harvest was restricted to
43 federally qualified users. These measures were adopted
44 to protect cows, improve calf survival, and provide
45 subsistence priority in areas where the state had
46 already recommended restricting harvest.

47
48 One alternative considered was to
49 require a federal registration permit, which you guys
50 just acted on and supported. If the Unit 22E closure is

1 rescinded, all users could hunt moose on federal public
2 lands, which may increase overall harvest, particularly
3 from non-residents whose participation has grown since
4 2012. Unlike other subunits managed by quota, Unit 22E
5 only requires a harvest ticket, making harvest less
6 regulated and less accurately reported. Past estimates
7 show harvest exceeding sustainable levels, and declining
8 bull to cow ratios suggest limited surplus bulls remain.
9 Increased hunting pressure could create user conflict
10 and reduce subsistence opportunity. Therefore, it is
11 OSM's preliminary conclusion to retain status quo.
12 Although the Unit 22E moose population has remained
13 above minimum state objectives since 2011, the combined
14 Unit 22D-22E population has steadily declined since 2006
15 and is now well below combined management objectives.
16 The bull to cow ratio has also dropped consistently since
17 2014. Just meeting objectives in the 2022 survey, given
18 conservation concerns and the risk of unsustainable
19 harvest, Maintaining the closure ensures subsistence
20 opportunity for federally qualified users while
21 conserving the population. Thank you.

22
23 ACTING CHAIRPERSON AUKONGAK: All right.
24 Let's do the whole nine.

25
26 MS. CHAPA: If there are no questions. I
27 will proceed with the presentation procedures. And go
28 straight to ADF&G for an opportunity to provide
29 additional comments.

30
31 (No comment)

32
33 No. Okay. Federal agencies. Additional
34 comments?

35
36 (No comment)

37
38 Online?

39
40 (No comment)

41
42 None. Tribal entities. Again, this is
43 an opportunity to provide additional comments on WP20 -
44 - no. WCR26-16 Wildlife Closure Review.

45
46 (No comment)

47
48 Okay. I don't believe there were any
49 other Regional Advisory Councils that considered this
50 closure review. So now it's an opportunity for Fish and

000130

1 Game Advisory Committees to provide additional comments.

2

3 (No comment)

4

5 Moving on. There were no received public
6 comments on this closure review. So now offer the
7 opportunity for the public to provide testimony.

8

9 (No comment)

10

11 And with none, we move to Regional
12 Advisory Council recommendation.

13

14 ACTING CHAIRPERSON AUKONGAK: Kelsi.

15

16 MS. IVANOFF: This is Kelsi. I -- with
17 regards to WCR26-16, I moved to retain the status quo
18 for Unit 22E.

19

20 ACTING CHAIRPERSON AUKONGAK: Do we have
21 a second?

22

23 MR. SEETOT: Elmer. Second.

24

25 ACTING CHAIRPERSON AUKONGAK:
26 Discussion.

27

28 MR. GREEN: Question.

29

30 MS. IVANOFF: Gotta [sic] provide --
31 yeah. Discussion first. This is Kelsi.

32

33 MR. GREEN: Okay, discussion first.

34

35 MS. IVANOFF: Again, with the
36 conservation concern and while providing enough
37 opportunity for residents to harvest moose, limiting
38 this to federally qualified users in Unit 22E as
39 preferred. Question.

40

41 ACTING CHAIRPERSON AUKONGAK: All in
42 favor?

43

44 IN UNISON: Aye.

45

46 ACTING CHAIRPERSON AUKONGAK: Motion
47 passes. Thank you, Brian. And thank you every Board
48 member and everybody in the room. I'll see you in the
49 morning. Thank you.

50

1 MS. CHAPA: And this Gisela Chapa for the
2 record.

3
4 UNIDENTIFIED: Thank you, Mr. Chair.

5
6 MS. CHAPA: Yeah, just for the people
7 online. So, we've wrapped up to action item 13/14, WCR26-
8 16. And so tomorrow the Council will resume reviewing
9 wildlife proposals. And we'll start with WP26-64. And
10 then we'll also go into annual report, future meeting
11 dates. And that concludes our business. Okay. And we're
12 resuming the meeting tomorrow at 9 a.m. Thank you.

13
14 (Off record)

15
16
17
18
19
20
21
22
23
24
25
26
27
28
29
30
31
32
33
34
35
36
37
38
39
40
41
42
43
44
45
46
47
48
49
50

1
2
3
4
5
6
7
8
9
10
11
12
13
14
15
16
17
18
19
20
21
22
23
24
25
26
27
28
29
30
31
32
33
34
35
36
37
38
39
40
41
42
43
44
45
46
47
48
49
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 131 contain a full, true and correct Transcript of the SEWARD PENINSULA SUBSISTENCE REGIONAL ADVISORY COUNCIL MEETING, VOLUME II recorded on the 21st day of January;

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 11th day of February 2026.

Rafael Morel
Chief Project Manager