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SEWARD PENINSULA SUBSISTENCE
REGIONAL ADVISORY COUNCIL

PUBLIC MEETING

VOLUME III

January 22, 2026

COUNCIL MEMBERS PRESENT:

Martin Aukongak, Acting Chair
Robert Moses
Louis Green
Kelsi Ivanoff
Elmet Seetot

Regional Council Coordinator, Gisela Chapa

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1 P R O C E E D I N G S

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(Nome, Alaska - 1/22/26)

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(On record)

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MS. CHAPA: Okay, well, Gisela Chapa, for
8 the record, I'll get started with roll call. Kelsi
9 Ivanoff.

10

11

MS. IVANOFF: Here

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13

MS. CHAPA: Martin Aukongak.

14

15

ACTING CHAIRPERSON AUKONGAK: Good
16 morning.

17

18

MS. CHAPA: Robert Moses.

19

20

MR. MOSES: Morning

21

22

MS. CHAPA: And Louis Green.

23

24

MR. GREEN: Good morning, thank you.

25

26

MS. CHAPA: Mr. Kirk, Council Member Kirk
27 is not able to join us, and we are waiting for Elmer
28 Seetot, but we do have a quorum with four Council members
29 present.

30

31

ACTING CHAIRPERSON AUKONGAK: All right,
32 we're going to hand it over to Brian.

33

34

MS. CHAPA: Do we want to do a public
35 comment?

36

37

ACTING CHAIRPERSON AUKONGAK: Or we got
38 any?

39

40

MS. CHAPA: Okay, we're just going to
41 give the floor to the public. Who wants to chime in and
42 give public comment on non-agenda items? We do not have
43 public members in the room, so we'll just go online to
44 see if there's anybody online who wants to provide
45 comment on non-agenda items.

46

47

(No response)

48

49

ACTING CHAIRPERSON AUKONGAK: All right.
50 Brian.

1
2 MR. UBELAKER: Thank you, Mr. Chair. Good
3 morning, Council members. For the record, Brian Ubelaker
4 I am a Wildlife Biologist with the Office of Subsistence
5 Management. And right -- hit the right button here. This
6 morning, I will be giving you a summary of Wildlife
7 Proposal WP26-64 regarding muskoxen in Unit 22. This
8 analysis can be found on page 237 of your meeting books.
9 And once again, since we're talking about one single
10 muskox population, I'll give you all the biological
11 harvest data and everything in this presentation and
12 then skip that for the subsequent proposals. So, if
13 there's any questions, clarifications, let me know, and
14 I'll do my best to get that cleared up for everybody.
15 So, proposal WP26-64, submitted by your Council, request
16 extending the federal muskox season on the Seward
17 Peninsula from March 15th to March 31st in Units 22 and
18 23 Southwest. The proponent explains that March weather
19 and snow conditions make travel safer and more
20 predictable than earlier in the season, especially for
21 local hunters using snow machines. Extending the season
22 would improve harvest opportunity without biological
23 concern, since calving occurs later in spring. The
24 intent is to provide rural subsistence users with more
25 flexibility, better safety, and increased efficiency
26 when pursuing muskox to meet subsistence needs. Through
27 most of the history of muskox hunting in Unit 22, it has
28 been managed primarily through limited registration
29 permits and quota systems. Federal regulations have
30 consistently been aligned with state regulations to
31 maintain consistency and prevent overharvest. Most
32 regulatory action included establishing limited
33 registration permits and quota announcements, aligning
34 federal season dates with state hunts for simplicity,
35 setting the March 15th closing date to balance hunter
36 access with protection of muskox during sensitive spring
37 periods and making adjustments when necessary to clarify
38 season dates or harvest limits while ensuring
39 conservation goals were met. Muskox populations in Unit
40 22 are currently stable and healthy. Survey data
41 indicate that overall numbers are meeting or exceeding
42 management objectives, and the herds are showing good
43 distribution across their available range. Bull to cow
44 ratios remain strong, which tells us that there are ample
45 mature bulls available for harvest, while still
46 maintaining herd productivity. From a biological
47 standpoint, there are no current conservation concerns.
48 On the harvest side, reported take has remained within
49 established quotas. Most of this harvest is being
50 carried out by local, federally qualified subsistence

1 users through the registration permit system, and it is
2 consistent with management goals. Levels of
3 participation remain steady and there is no evidence
4 that harvest is negatively affecting the population.
5 Taken together, these conditions show that the muskox
6 population is healthy, harvest is well regulated and
7 sustainable, and opportunities for subsistence users are
8 being met without risk to the long-term stability of the
9 herd. This proposal would extend the federal muskox
10 season by 15 days, giving subsistence users more
11 opportunity and flexibility to avoid poor weather and
12 unsafe travel conditions. No biological concern is
13 expected, since the muskox population is already
14 carefully managed through quotas and permits. Pregnant
15 cows should not be impacted, as calving occurs later in
16 spring, while late March hunts could add some stress to
17 muskox groups. The overall low harvest pressure makes
18 this effect minimal. A drawback is added regulatory
19 complexity, since the federal and state closing dates
20 would no longer align, requiring hunters to be mindful
21 of land status. However, hunters already navigate
22 similar land status differences under other hunts.
23 Therefore, the OSM preliminary conclusion is to support
24 this proposal. Adopting it would provide increased
25 harvest opportunity and safer conditions for federally
26 qualified users without raising conservation concerns.
27 Extending into late March, maintains meat and qiviut
28 quality while improving flexibility for subsistence
29 hunters. And with that, I'll answer any questions.

30
31 ACTING CHAIRPERSON AUKONGAK: You have
32 any there, Louis?

33
34 MR. GREEN: Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

35
36 MS. CHAPA: Thank you, Mr. Chair. Gisela
37 Chapa, for the record. And we are getting started on the
38 presentation procedures for proposals. Council just
39 heard the introduction, the presentation of the
40 analysis, and there were no comments from tribes or ANCSA
41 corporations during the Board's consultation. So, we
42 will give the opportunity for agencies to provide
43 additional comments, and we'll start with ADF&G.

44
45 MS. HENSLEE: Good morning, Mr. Chair.
46 For the record, this is Sara Henslee with Fish and Game.
47 My only comments are, just if this is adopted, it will
48 result in a mismatch of season dates so federal permits
49 will end on March 31st, but state muskox permits will
50 end on the 15th of March, still. So, if this does get

1 adopted by FSB to consider, on the state side, to extend
2 this season, as well. And this is not something that has
3 been discussed by ACs, so..... I'll answer your question
4 now.

5

6

(No response)

7

8 MS. CHAPA: Thank you for that. We'll
9 move on to federal agencies. Additional comments on this
10 proposal.

11

12 MS. HUGHES: Good morning. For the
13 record, Letty Hughes, Biologist with Bering Land Bridge
14 here in Nome. Bering Land Bridge supports this proposal
15 and, as it was mentioned by Brian, and also by Sara, it
16 would be a mismatch in terms of, you know, the state and
17 federal dates. So, you know, we acknowledge that. But,
18 you know, our role, at least in Bering Land Bridge, is
19 to look as, you know, can it -- what can we do to provide
20 further opportunity, which this is what this would do,
21 considering weather conditions in the big period of
22 time, where the transition from fall to winter maybe
23 can't just get out there and hunt either, so..... And
24 we also look at from a biological concern, too, like,
25 would there be any impact. So -- and we believe that
26 there would not be. Thank you.

27

28 MS. CHAPA: Okay. Any other federal
29 agencies that would like to provide additional comments?

30

31

(No response)

32

33 Okay. We'll go to other Regional
34 Councils.

35

36 MR. UBELAKER: Mr. Chair, the Northwest
37 Arctic Regional Advisory Council heard this, and they
38 are in support of the proposal.

39

40 MS. CHAPA: And local Fish and Game
41 Advisory Committees.

42

43

(No response)

44

45 All right. There were no public comments
46 submitted on this proposal. And so now, we're at public
47 testimony. So, anybody who would like to provide
48 additional comments to the Council about this proposal.

49

50

(No response)

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And with none, we'll move over to Regional Council recommendation.

MS. IVANOFF: This is Kelsi. I moved to support WP26-64.

ACTING CHAIRPERSON AUKONGAK: All right, do we have a second?

MR. GREEN: Louis, second.

ACTING CHAIRPERSON AUKONGAK: All right.

MS. IVANOFF: Mr. Chair. This is Kelsi. Given our shifts in season and changing weather I think this provides a better window for our hunters to get out and get their muskox. With no conservation concern, I believe extending it is advisable.

ACTING CHAIRPERSON AUKONGAK: Discussion.

(No response)

Any further?

MS. IVANOFF: Question.

ACTING CHAIRPERSON AUKONGAK: All right. All in favor?

IN UNISON: Aye.

ACTING CHAIRPERSON AUKONGAK: All right. All right, motion carries. All right. Brian. Oh. You...

MS. HUGHES: Thank you, Chair. This is, for the record, Letty Hughes, Bering Land Bridge. Does this Council want to discuss putting in a proposal for the Board of Game? Like what Sara was suggesting of aligning the seasons? Or would you want to talk about that later, after?

ACTING CHAIRPERSON AUKONGAK: Kelsi, then.

MS. IVANOFF: This is Kelsi. My suggestion would be that, with it going to the state, it would, might be better coming from the AC. I know

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1 they should be -- I'm sure they'll be meeting again this
2 spring and that would be my direction to Fish and Game.

3
4 MS. CHAPA: And thank you, Mr. Chair.
5 This is Gisela Chapa, for the record. I do believe that
6 we will have an opportunity to discuss Board of Game
7 proposals at our winter meeting, as well.

8
9 ACTING CHAIRPERSON AUKONGAK: Carry on,
10 Brian.

11
12 MR. UBELAKER: Thank you, Mr. Chair. You
13 get a break from me for once. Yeah. 26-62A is Hannah's
14 proposal.

15
16 DR. VOORHEES: Good morning, Mr. Chair.
17 And -- okay. Members of the Council, this is Hannah
18 Voorhees, Anthropologist with OSM. I'm sorry, I can't
19 be there in person this time. I'll be presenting Wildlife
20 Proposal WP26-62A, which begins on page 221 of your
21 meeting materials. This proposal was submitted by this
22 Council and requests that the Board recognize the
23 customary and traditional use of muskoxen in Unit 22A
24 by residents of Saint Michael, Shaktoolik, Stebbins and
25 Unalakleet. The Board has not previously made a
26 customary and traditional use determination for muskoxen
27 in Unit 22A, so currently all rural residents would
28 qualify. In background, archaeological evidence for use
29 of muskox -- muskoxen in Arctic Alaska dates to
30 approximately 600 A.D. It's unknown exactly when they
31 were extirpated on the Seward Peninsula, but it was
32 probably prior to 1850, and use ceased long enough to
33 interrupt intergenerational transmission of hunting
34 practices. Seward Peninsula muskoxen were transplanted
35 to the area beginning in 1970. The Board made initial
36 federal customary and traditional use determinations for
37 muskoxen for all subunits, except Unit 22A in 1995. There
38 are federal muskox hunts in the rest of Unit 22 and Unit
39 23, but residents of Unit 22A communities, those I
40 mentioned before, do not have a customary and
41 traditional use determination for muskoxen in these
42 areas. However, they are eligible to apply to state
43 muskox hunts in other portions of Unit 22. A state hunt
44 for muskox in Unit 22 first opened in 2021, so not very
45 long ago. When considering a customary and traditional
46 use determination analysis, eight factors are
47 considered. You can find these on page 210 of your book,
48 but please keep in mind that these are not a checklist.
49 The Board makes customary and traditional use
50 determinations based on a holistic application of these

1 eight factors, as well as the reports and
2 recommendations of this Council. The Board makes C&T use
3 determinations for the sole purpose of recognizing the
4 pool of users who generally exhibit the eight factors,
5 and not for resource management or for restricting
6 harvest. People on the Seward Peninsula hunt
7 opportunistically, adapting to the changing availability
8 of species. For example, moose moved into the region in
9 the 1940s and were incorporated into the seasonal round.
10 Since the opening of federal muskox hunts in other
11 portions of Unit 22 in 1995, and state muskox hunts,
12 beginning in the late 1990s, eligible residents of the
13 Seward Peninsula have incorporated the species back into
14 their seasonal round. So now, we'll look, briefly, at
15 the Unit 22A, 'Community's History of Harvesting
16 Muskox'. Reported state harvest shows that between 2000
17 and 2024, Stebbins residents participated in a total of
18 four muskox hunts in Unit 20 -- Units 22E and D. During
19 the same time, Saint Michael residents participated in
20 two unsuccessful muskox hunts in Unit 22A, following the
21 opening of the state hunt in 2021. Shaktoolik reported
22 four successful muskox hunts in Units 22D, B and A.
23 Unalakleet residents hunted for muskox in all subunits
24 of Unit 22, except Unit 22E, with most of the community
25 harvest coming from Unit 22A. Additionally, Shaktoolik,
26 Unalakleet, and Stebbins have each been surveyed by
27 Division of Subsistence for their subsistence use of
28 muskoxen during a single study year. Saint Michael
29 households were surveyed for their subsistence use of
30 muskoxen once by Kawerak. These surveys took place
31 between 2005 and 2013. However, harvest or use of
32 muskoxen was not documented in any of the surveys. But
33 when considering survey data, it's important to remember
34 that they only cover a single study year and that
35 residents have only been eligible to hunt muskoxen in
36 their own subunit, Unit 22A, since 2021, under state
37 regs. They have been eligible to apply for state hunts
38 in other subunits of Unit 22 since the late 90s, but
39 these have often been administered as tier-two hunts as
40 they are today. So, you know, it wasn't clear that these
41 community members of these communities would have had
42 to apply for those hunts, and it's not a done deal that
43 they would qualify or be selected. And residents of these
44 communities have not been eligible for any federal
45 muskox hunts in Unit 22, as I mentioned before. The OSM
46 preliminary conclusion is to support this proposal. Unit
47 22A communities have already had their customary and
48 traditional uses of moose and caribou recognized in Unit
49 22. There are many previous examples of species being
50 introduced, reintroduced or moved, moving into new areas

1 and subsequently being adopted into the local
2 subsistence round. Unit 22A communities are likely to
3 continue to reincorporate muskoxen into their local
4 subsistence practice, as hunting opportunity becomes
5 available and because caribou from the Western Arctic
6 Caribou Herd have been unavailable locally. These
7 communities have a track record of harvesting muskoxen
8 under the state opportunity available to them. The
9 established -- the re-establishment of muskoxen on the
10 Seward Peninsula and the North Slope provide examples
11 where the Board has previously recognized local
12 communities customary and traditional use of this
13 species, despite historical interruptions. And the
14 modification clarifies and simplifies the regulatory
15 language. And that modification is, excuse me, to
16 support with modification, just to change the language
17 from, rather than listing the four communities, we're
18 just saying Unit 22A communities, which is a bit more
19 inclusive. And that concludes my presentation and I'm
20 happy to take any questions.

21
22 MS. IVANOFF: Hey, Hannah, this is Kelsi.
23 I had a question. Establishing the C&T would -- with our
24 next proposal, when we establish a hunt, these
25 communities would be eligible for that hunt, correct?

26
27 DR. VOORHEES: Thank you, Member Ivanoff,
28 yes, that's exactly correct.

29
30 MS. IVANOFF: Thank you.

31
32 ACTING CHAIRPERSON AUKONGAK: Anymore?

33
34 (No response)

35
36 All right.

37
38 MS. CHAPA: Thank you, Mr. Chair. Gisela
39 Chapa, for the record. And we're now at the presentation
40 procedures for proposals. And the Board did not receive
41 any comments from tribes or ANCSA corporations on this
42 proposal. So, now we will give opportunity for agencies
43 to provide additional comments. And we will start with
44 ADF&G.

45
46 (No response)

47
48 And they just shook the head. And
49 there's no comments from ADF&G. And we'll go to federal
50 agencies.

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(No response)

There are none in the room and going online, are there any federal agencies that would like to provide additional comments?

(No response)

Okay, moving on, tribal entities. This is an opportunity to provide additional comments on this proposal.

(No response)

Okay, moving on.

(Pause)

And I'm also looking at the chat, seeing that the city of Brevig Mission wants to join the meeting. And -- would you...?

(Pause)

I am looking at the chat, Lisa, I can text the number. Yes. We cannot invite people with cell phones, but I will text and we'll keep going until we get to public testimony. Thank you, Mr. Chair. Okay. So, we will move now to other Regional Council comments. And I believe that there were none. Oh, Hannah. Sorry.

DR. VOORHEES: This is Hannah Voorhees, for the record. That's correct. No other Council has heard this proposal.

MS. CHAPA: Thank you, Hannah. And summary of written public comments.

DR. VOORHEES: There were -- this is Hannah Voorhees again. There were no written public comments.

MS. CHAPA: Okay, we're now at the public testimony. This is an opportunity for the public to provide additional comments on this proposal. And I'm going to try to text the number that was shared on the chat to see if we can invite them into the meeting. So, give me, like, five minutes.

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1 (Pause)

2

3 ACTING CHAIRPERSON AUKONGAK: All right,
4 we're at the end.

5

6 MS. CHAPA: Thank you. I shared the
7 information, and now we're at the time of Regional
8 Council recommendation.

9

10 MS. IVANOFF: Thank you, Mr. Chair, this
11 is Kelsi. I move to support Wildlife Proposal 26-62A,
12 with modification to clarify the regulatory language.

13

14 ACTING CHAIRPERSON AUKONGAK: Do we have
15 a second.

16

17 MR. GREEN: This is Louis, I'll second,
18 the motion.

19

20 ACTING CHAIRPERSON AUKONGAK:
21 Discussion.

22

23 MS. IVANOFF: Mr. Chair. This is Kelsi,
24 again. Given that there's no conservation concern, I
25 believe this provides these residents -- should there
26 be a hunt established, these residents, the opportunity
27 to harvest muskox in addition to the state hunt. There
28 is multiple uses for muskox, including the qiviut. It
29 has good meat. Arts and crafts. It's, yeah. So, I support
30 this. And I had a question, Hannah, on clarifying the
31 regulatory language. With OSM's conclusion, what would
32 be....? You don't have to get into specifics, but just
33 in general, what would those clarifications be?

34

35 DR. VOORHEES: Through the Chair, this
36 is Hannah Voorhees. So, if you look on page 217 of your
37 materials, the clarification is, the only change is,
38 instead of listing the communities in the C&T
39 determination, we're just saying residents of Unit 22A,
40 since those are all the communities in Unit 22A. Just
41 to make it simpler and more inclusive. We have to
42 evaluate, based on the data we get for communities but,
43 you know, if there are people maybe living slightly
44 outside of those communities, based on this analysis,
45 they would -- they should qualify too so, that's the
46 only change.

47

48 MS. IVANOFF: Thank you.

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1 DR. VOORHEES: It just will say
2 residents of Unit 22.

3
4 MS. IVANOFF: Don't have anything else.
5 Question.

6
7 ACTING CHAIRPERSON AUKONGAK: Question
8 called. All in favor?

9
10 IN UNISON: Aye.

11
12 ACTING CHAIRPERSON AUKONGAK: Motion
13 passes. Thank you, Hannah. Are we back to you, Brian,
14 or..... All right.

15
16 MR. UBELAKER: Thank you, Mr. Chair. Once
17 again, for the record, Brian Ubelaker and I am now doing
18 the partner proposal for the C&T you just supported to
19 establish. And I will be presenting a summary of Wildlife
20 Proposal WP26-62B, regarding muskox in the Unit 22. This
21 analysis starts on page 221 of your meeting materials.
22 This proposal, which was also submitted by this Council,
23 requests establishing a federal muskox hunt in Unit 22A.
24 The hunt would mirror the current state hunt with a
25 harvest limit of one bull by tier-two drawing permit and
26 a season from August 1st through March 15th. The
27 proponent states that the Alaska Board of Game opened a
28 muskox hunt in Unit 22A because the Seward Peninsula
29 muskox herd has expanded into the area. Aligning federal
30 and state regulations would reduce confusion, prevent
31 federal rules from being more restrictive than state
32 regulations, and provide additional subsistence harvest
33 opportunity. The Council also submitted a companion
34 proposal, 26-62A, to recognize customary and traditional
35 uses of muskoxen in Unit 22A by nearby communities. And
36 since I covered all the juicy bits of info in the last
37 one, I will skip -- we'll get down to the end of this
38 analysis. There were two alternatives considered during
39 this analysis. First was to delegate authority to the
40 BLM Anchorage Field Office Manager to administer the
41 hunt. This would include setting annual harvest quotas,
42 determining the number of permits issued, allocating
43 permits between state and federal users, and closing the
44 season, if necessary. Delegating this authority would
45 provide flexibility and consistency with how other
46 muskox hunt in Unit 22 are managed. Second alternative
47 was to extend the Unit 22A season to March 31st, aligning
48 it with a proposed federal season extension in other
49 Unit 22A and Unit 23 Southwest hunts under the proposal,
50 WP26-64, which you just heard. This alternative was not

1 pursued because Unit 22A is a new hunt. Managers prefer
2 to monitor harvest patterns over several years before
3 considering season extensions, ensuring data on effort
4 and harvest are established prior to any season change.
5 So, establishing a federal muskox season in Unit 22A
6 provides additional opportunity for federally qualified
7 subsistence users who currently have no federal season
8 and must compete for limited state tier-two permits.
9 Conservation is supported through harvest quotas and the
10 use of drawing permits, limiting harvest to the
11 population sustainable level. Close coordination with
12 the state will ensure effective monitoring of combined
13 federal and state harvests. So, therefore it is OSM's
14 preliminary conclusion to support proposal WP26-62B,
15 with modification, to delegate authority to the BLM
16 Anchorage Field Office Manager to close the season, set
17 harvest quotas, issue permits and determine permit
18 allocation between state and federal hunts. This
19 proposal provides additional harvest opportunity while
20 mitigating conservation concerns through permit limits
21 and quotas. It aligns federal regulations with the state
22 hunt and ensures consistent, effective management across
23 all Unit 22 muskox hunts by delegating authority to the
24 in-season federal Manager. That is the end of that, and
25 I will answer any questions.

26
27 ACTING CHAIRPERSON AUKONGAK: Anybody?

28
29 (No response)

30
31 Start to the ne.....

32
33 MS. CHAPA: Thank you, Mr. Chair, Gisela
34 Chapa, for the record. There were no tribe or -- tribal
35 or ANCSA corporation comments on this proposal. So, now
36 we'll give an opportunity for agencies to provide
37 additional comments, and we'll start with ADF&G.

38
39 (No response)

40
41 Okay, moving on to federal agencies.
42 Additional comments.

43
44 (No response)

45
46 Okay. And tribal entities. Again, this
47 is an opportunity to provide additional comments on
48 Wildlife Proposal 26-62B, that is Unit 22A muskox.

49
50 (No comments)

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Okay, moving on. Other Regional Councils. And I -- go ahead.

MR. UBELAKER: Mr. Chair, no other Councils took this proposal up.

MS. CHAPA: Okay. And now Fish and Game Advisory Committees.

(No response)

Okay, moving on to summary over in public comments. And I believe there were none received. Okay, so now, this is an opportunity for the public to provide additional testimony.

(No response)

Moving on, we're at the Regional Council recommendation.

MS. IVANOFF: This is Kelsi. I moved to support proposal WP26-62B, with modification, to delegate authority to the BLM Anchorage Field Office Manager to close the season, determine quotas, issue permits and work with the state for muskox in 22A.

MR. GREEN: Mr. Chair, Louis will second the motion.

ACTING CHAIRPERSON AUKONGAK: Discussion.

MS. IVANOFF: Mr. Chair, this is Kelsi. Given the limited amount of permits issued under the state hunt, I believe this will give residents in the area more chance to harvest muskox, especially for those areas, or for those people who do not get their moose for the year. With no conservation concern, I believe it is advisable to open up this hunt for 22A. Question.

ACTING CHAIRPERSON AUKONGAK: All right. All in favor?

IN UNISON: Aye.

MR. GREEN: Aye, for Louis.

1 ACTING CHAIRPERSON AUKONGAK: Motion
2 passes. All right, Brian.

3
4 MR. UBELAKER: Thank you, Mr. Chair.
5 Moving on to the summary of Wildlife Proposal WP26-63,
6 also regarding muskoxen in Unit 22. And for the record,
7 Brian Ubelaker. This analysis is on page 229 of your
8 meeting materials. Wildlife Proposal WP26-63 requests
9 combining two federal muskox hunt areas in Unit 22D,
10 specifically Unit 22D Kuzitrin, and Unit 22D Remainder,
11 into a single hunt area. The associated permits being
12 FX2206 and FX2208, would also be consolidated into one
13 permit for the combined area. And I apparently have left
14 off the fact that this was submitted by the Alaska
15 Department of Fish and Game. And the proponent notes
16 that collared muskoxen moved between these two areas so,
17 there is no biological reason to maintain separate hunt
18 areas. Combining the hunt areas would align federal and
19 state regulations, simplify rules for hunters, and
20 improve compliance. The proposal is not expected to
21 impact the muskox population, as harvest is already
22 carefully managed cooperatively by state and federal
23 agencies. ADF&G also plans to propose changing the state
24 season opening date in Unit 22D Kuzitrin, to August 1st
25 in 2026, creating further consistency. Skipping over
26 biological information that I've already presented, if
27 adopted, WP26-63 would combine two muskox hunt areas in
28 Unit 22D into one area and consolidate their permits.
29 This would reduce administrative effort for BLM and the
30 National Park Service and simplify reporting. However,
31 the current separation exists because a Section 804
32 analysis restrictions limit which communities can hunt
33 in each area. So, under permit FX2206, which covers Unit
34 22D Kuzitrin, Council and Golovin residents are eligible
35 in the Unit 22D Remainder permit, FX2208, Elim residents
36 are eligible to harvest. In both permits, residents of
37 White Mountain, Nome, Teller and Brevig Mission are
38 eligible. So, combining the areas would create
39 logistical and law enforcement challenges, as a single
40 federal draw permit would need to account for these
41 eligibility restrictions. Conservation concerns are
42 minimal due to draw permits and harvest quotas, but
43 careful coordination with the state would still be
44 needed. Combining the areas may improve alignment with
45 state regulations in the future. If the Unit 22D,
46 Kuzitrin season is extended to August 1st. So,
47 considering all that, it is OSM's preliminary conclusion
48 to oppose WP26-63. The proposed permit consolidation is
49 administrative, not regulatory, and does not account for
50 existing Section 804 eligibility restrictions. A single

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1 draw permit would create inequities, logistical
2 challenges, and potential law enforcement issues, making
3 combining the hunt areas inappropriate. And that is the
4 end of the presentation, and I'll answer any questions.

5

6

ACTING CHAIRPERSON AUKONGAK: Anybody?

7

8 MR. SEETOT: Comment on that. The Port
9 Clarence or the western shores of Port Clarence, that's
10 a good summer grounds for the muskox. And to get the
11 insect relief areas and then, they use that pendant or
12 that portion to run away from the bears and the wolves
13 from past experiences with the muskox in that area. But
14 they do go up into the high hills, you know, to seek
15 shelter or just to run away from predators. But that
16 peninsula is rich in summer food for the growing calves,
17 also. But very few people from the community of Teller
18 and Brevig hunt that area, but I would assume that if
19 there's an opportunity, people would go to that area and
20 get their muskox. But that was just something that I
21 just wanted to add. And it's a good insect relief area
22 and hide out for from predators that do go after them,
23 because at the base of the southern portion was a spring
24 seal camp that was used by the residents of Brevig to
25 conduct their spring marine mammal harvest. So, we have
26 had some episodes with the muskox. Don't mess around
27 with them. It gored a couple dogs along the way so, we
28 give them a wide crack or just kind of leave them alone
29 there. Place where they do is ideal, but I think that
30 was pretty much what they kind of recognize since their
31 introduction in 1977. Good place for them to summer out.
32 Thank you.

33

34

ACTING CHAIRPERSON AUKONGAK: All right.
35 No more discussion?

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MS. CHAPA: Thank you, Mr. Chair. Gisela
Chapa, for the record, and I don't believe that the
Board received any comments from tribes or ANCSA
corporations on this proposal. And so now, we're going
to give an opportunity for agencies to provide
additional comments. And we will start with ADF&G.

(No comment)

Okay, now moving on to federal agencies.

(No response)

Tribal entities.

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(No response)

Again, this is an opportunity to provide additional comments on this proposal.

(No response)

And we'll move to Regional Councils. And I don't believe there were other Councils that considered the proposal.

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

MS. CHAPA: Okay. Local Fish and Game Advisory Committees.

(No response)

Summary of written public comments and I don't believe we received any. Looking like confirmation, we did not receive any written public comments. So now, we're at public testimony. The public can provide additional comments to the Council.

(No comment)

Okay, moving on. We're at Regional Council recommendation.

MS. IVANOFF: Thank you, Mr. Chair, this is Kelsi. I move that the Council opposes proposal WP26-63.

MS. CHAPA: Just for clarification, yeah.

MS. IVANOFF: This is Kelsi again I move to support Wildlife Proposal 26-63.

ACTING CHAIRPERSON AUKONGAK: We have a second?

MR. SEETOT: Elmer, second.

ACTING CHAIRPERSON AUKONGAK: Discussion.

MS. IVANOFF: This is Kelsi. I think combining these areas takes away opportunity for

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1 residents specific to areas within 22D. Takes away the
2 opportunity -- I know there is no -- there's - while
3 there's no conservation concern, we need to think about
4 the people getting out and harvesting their subsistence
5 and muskox for the year.

6

7 ACTING CHAIRPERSON AUKONGAK: Any
8 further?

9

10 MR. SEETOT: Question. Elmer, Brevig
11 Mission, I think that that portion that we are referring
12 to is a core corridor for the predators, especially from
13 (indiscernible) from up, around 22E, for them to move
14 around and -- in the past, they were going after the
15 local reindeer herd. Now that the local reindeer herds
16 on the southern portion has been kind of moved or
17 decimated or moved to other places because -- the
18 southern portion of Port Clarence Bay, five years ago,
19 I think the mounds that were holding the lichen were
20 pretty much eaten up by their local reindeer herd. But
21 I have observed muskox in those areas going after the
22 same food in the wintertime. So, they have to move to
23 other places. But that is rarely used by Brevig Mission.
24 I'm not really too sure about Teller. But that's
25 observation made over the past on the wildlife in and
26 around the southern portion. Thank you.

27

28 MS. IVANOFF: Question.

29

30 ACTING CHAIRPERSON AUKONGAK: All in
31 favor?

32

33 MS. IVANOFF: Nay.

34

35 MR. MOSES: Aye.

36

37 MR. GREEN: Wait a minute, what are we,
38 how are we voting on this?

39

40 ACTING CHAIRPERSON AUKONGAK: All right,
41 we're going to do a vote. Well, we'll do a vote.

42

43 MR. GREEN: It's just, get it squared up
44 so, we know what we're doing. I'm missing something here.

45

46 MS. IVANOFF: We're opposing it, Louis.

47

48 MR. GREEN: Yeah. Got it. I just re-
49 looked at it.

50

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1 MS. CHAPA: Okay. We will do a roll call
2 vote, and we'll start in the room. Elmer Seetot.

3
4 MR. SEETOT: Nay.

5
6 MS. CHAPA: Kelsi Ivanoff.

7
8 MS. IVANOFF: Nay.

9
10 MS. CHAPA: Martin Aukongak.

11
12 ACTING CHAIRPERSON AUKONGAK: Nay.

13
14 MS. CHAPA: Okay, we'll go online. Robert
15 Moses.

16
17 MR. MOSES: Nay.

18
19 MS. CHAPA: And Louis Green.

20
21 MR. GREEN: Yes, nay. Thank you.

22
23 MS. CHAPA: Thank you, Mr. Chair. Motion
24 fails.

25
26 ACTING CHAIRPERSON AUKONGAK: All right.
27 Moving back up to WP52, I believe. Right?

28
29 MS. CHAPA: 45.

30
31 ACTING CHAIRPERSON AUKONGAK: No,
32 it's.....

33
34 MS. CHAPA: Oh! That was the plan that I
35 had shared with Martin. Sorry.

36
37 ACTING CHAIRPERSON AUKONGAK: Two
38 minutes.

39
40 DR. VICKERS: Good morning. This is Brent
41 Vickers, OSM. And if you guys turn to page 39 of your
42 handbook, I want to bring back up WP2650-52 I, which was
43 a proposal from ADF&G to align brown bear harvest limits
44 and seasons, if I'm correct, in Unit 22. Throughout Unit
45 22. And your recommendation was to support the idea of
46 extending the seasons or support extending the seasons,
47 but to also increase the bear -- harvest limits to three
48 bears in each of those units. And I get it. Let's give
49 these people opportunity to harvest more bears. And it
50 makes a lot of sense. The issue is that because the

1 proposal was to align the seasons with the state seasons
2 and in particular extending seasons -- the extended
3 season length in Unit 22C, which has a one bear, state,
4 one bear harvest limit. Because that was the intent and
5 what the proposal was, we really had -- the analysis
6 doesn't go through what the conservation concerns and
7 really analyze the effects of increasing the bear
8 harvest limits in those units, especially going from one
9 bear to three. And so, the Board, the Federal Subsistence
10 Board, when taking up this, may consider that
11 recommendation to increase the harvest limit to three
12 bears, what we say, 'out of scope', like something that's
13 out of scope of the perp -- hold on a second -- proposal
14 and not something that they can really consider. And
15 then really doesn't have much to go on with your
16 recommendation. And my -- and would have to go basically
17 on their own without a recommendation on that. So, if
18 you want to reconsider that proposal and reconsider what
19 your recommendation is, so that's something, it's more
20 in, that the Board will have to really pay attention to
21 and that would give you deference in the, your
22 recommendation. Yeah, sorry.

23
24 MR. UBELAKER: No, I think Lisa's
25 probably going to.....

26
27 ACTING CHAIRPERSON AUKONGAK: Lisa?

28
29 MS. GREDIAGIN: Yeah, Mr. Chair, can you
30 guys hear me?

31
32 MS. CHAPA: Yeah.

33
34 MS. GREDIAGIN: Okay, I'm in -- have
35 headphones on, I've never used the microphone. Okay,
36 this is Lisa Grediagin, for the record. And you all
37 supported WP26-52, with modification, to increase the
38 harvest limit to three bears. And so, what OSM is looking
39 for is clarification on whether or not you intended to
40 include Unit 22C in that motion. 22C is not included in
41 the proposal as submitted. And I recall when Kelsi was
42 making the motion, she asked about 22C. And I think
43 there was just a lot going on and it wasn't clear whether
44 you all intended to include 22C or not in that harvest
45 limit increase. And so, we're just looking for the
46 Council to say yes or no on whether 22C is included in
47 your modification to increase the harvest limit to three
48 bears.

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1 ACTING CHAIRPERSON AUKONGAK: Hey, let me
2 ask Louis real quick, since you know you represent Nome.
3 What do you think, Louis?

4
5 MR. GREEN: I don't have a problem adding
6 another bear.

7
8 ACTING CHAIRPERSON AUKONGAK: Go ahead,
9 Kelsi.

10
11 MR. GREEN: Thank you.

12
13 MS. IVANOFF: Thank you, Mr. Chair. This
14 is Kelsi. I think to make our argument heard by the
15 Board, I think we should stick to the scope of what the
16 proposal says and take up increasing bag limits in the
17 Board of Game cycle. Because these are state
18 registration permit hunts.

19
20 ACTING CHAIRPERSON AUKONGAK: I agree.

21
22 MS. IVANOFF: Would I just make a new
23 motion at this point? Yeah. I think this one supersedes
24 the other one. Because we did that earlier in the
25 meeting, too.

26
27 MS. CHAPA: And, Kelsi, just for
28 clarification. So, the previous motion that was passed
29 was that you support WP26-52 with the modification to
30 increase the bag limit to three bears. And so, what
31 you're saying now is that the Council should consider
32 increasing the bag limit by submitting a Board of Game
33 proposal, and not necessarily with the, what was
34 discussed under this proposal? Does that make sense?

35
36 MS. IVANOFF: Yeah, this is just to
37 support the proposal as is.

38
39 (Pause)

40
41 This is Kelsi. I move to support WP26-
42 52.

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

46
47 MR. SEETOT: Elmer, second.

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49 ACTING CHAIRPERSON AUKONGAK:
50 Discussion.

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MS. IVANOFF: Mr. Chair.

ACTING CHAIRPERSON AUKONGAK: Go ahead.

MS. IVANOFF: Question, do we need to give further justification if we did before?

MS. CHAPA: I believe so. Cause [sic] it's a totally different.....

MS. IVANOFF: I guess..... Yeah, I can. This is Kelsi. I -- we agree to support this to align with state regulations. This is -- since it is a state registration permit, it just makes sense to align federal with state. Question.

ACTING CHAIRPERSON AUKONGAK: All in favor?

IN UNISON: Aye.

ACTING CHAIRPERSON AUKONGAK: Motion carries on.

(Pause)

All right, Hannah, you got two minutes.

DR. VOORHEES: Thank you, Mr. Chair. Are you able to see a slide that I'm projecting right now?

MR. GREEN: Louis can see it.

DR. VOORHEES: Okay, great. I can't, on my end, for some reason, but we'll proceed. All right, so this is Hannah Voorhees again. I'm an Anthropologist at OSM, and I'll be presenting Wildlife Closure Review WCR26-45, which begins on page 255 of your meeting materials. I introduced this closure review to your Council at the last meeting, but now we're asking you to make a recommendation. And this closure review, even though it's in Unit 23, is being presented to this Council because residents of Unit 22 have C&T for caribou in Unit 23. But I'll try to be pretty brief. All right. Hopefully you can see a map, or at least Louis can. Wildlife Closure Review WCR26-45 is a standard review of a federal subsistence wildlife closure to the harvest of caribou by non-federally qualified users on federal public lands within just a portion of Unit 23 Remainder.

1 This is a year-round closure. And, just to remind you,
2 it's the Federal Subsistence Board's policy that federal
3 public lands should be reopened when closures are no
4 longer necessary and that closures will be reviewed at
5 least once every four years. This closure is located
6 along the Noatak River, from the western boundary of
7 Noatak National Preserve, upstream to the confluence
8 with the Cutler River, within the northern and southern
9 boundaries of the Eli and Agashashok River drainages,
10 respectively, and within the Squirrel River drainage.
11 So, in the rest of my presentation, I'll refer to this
12 as the Unit 23 Noatak Corridor. And I want to take a
13 minute to explain that this is a different picture.....

14
15 MR. GREEN: Mr. Chair.

16
17 ACTING CHAIRPERSON AUKONGAK: Go ahead,
18 Louis.

19
20 MR. GREEN: Yeah, through the Chair.
21 Hannah, the map's not showing up on here.

22
23 DR. VOORHEES: Okay. I don't know if,
24 Gisela, if you have a possibility of showing that.

25
26 MS. CHAPA: Yes, I can. I'll share my
27 screen.

28
29 DR. VOORHEES: Thank you. So, this is a
30 different closure than the one that applies to all of
31 Unit 23. This is a smaller closure. So, that is a closure
32 to caribou hunting by non-federally qualified users from
33 August 1st to October 31st, each year, in all of Unit
34 23. And that one was implemented in 2024. So, we're not
35 reviewing that big closure right now. We're only
36 reviewing the smaller, year-round Unit 23, Noatak
37 Corridor closure shown on this map. And the closure area
38 is outlined in red. This closure was first put in place
39 in 2017 as a special action, and then in 2018, in
40 codified regulation. And it was last reviewed in 2022
41 when it was obviously maintained. At that time, the Board
42 stated that the closure was originally enacted for the
43 continuation of subsistence uses of the Western Arctic
44 Caribou Herd. And the underlying factor leading to the
45 closure: user conflict was still a concern. You've
46 already received an update on the Western Arctic Herd,
47 so, I won't give you that information here. Since
48 implementation of this closure, members of the Northwest
49 Arctic Council have testified about its positive
50 impacts, particularly for Noatak residents. And during

1 the last review of this closure in 2022, the Northwest
2 Arctic Council voted to retain it. At that time, this
3 Council also recommended retaining the status quo
4 because the closure was still necessary to continue
5 subsistence uses of the herd. The OSM preliminary
6 conclusion is to retain the status quo. The current
7 closure is still necessary to continue subsistence uses
8 of the Western Arctic Caribou Herd for federally
9 qualified subsistence users. Since the closure has been
10 enacted, user conflict within the closure area has been
11 reduced and the hunt experience and harvest success of
12 federally qualified subsistence users have improved.
13 While a different unit-wide closure to caribou hunting
14 by non-federally qualified users from August 1st to
15 October 31st was recently implemented, this does not
16 provide a reason to remove the smaller Noatak Corridor
17 closure. The Noatak Corridor closure is year-round,
18 whereas the unit-wide closure is limited to the fall,
19 but more importantly while the unit-wide closure
20 contains a stipulation that it will not be in effect if
21 the herd exceeds 200,000, the Noatak Corridor closure
22 does not have this condition attached. If the Noatak
23 Corridor closure were to be rescinded and the herd in
24 turn exceeds 200,000, federal public lands throughout
25 Unit 23 would then become open to non-federally
26 qualified users. This would likely result in more user
27 conflict and interfere with caribou harvest by federally
28 qualified users. Thank you. That's all I have. And I'm
29 happy to take any questions.

30
31 ACTING CHAIRPERSON AUKONGAK: Have
32 anything, Louis.

33
34 MR. GREEN: I was just trying to
35 understand that - what -- your last comments about
36 closures, Hannah.

37
38 DR. VOORHEES: Thank you, Member Green,
39 if you -- is there some -- I would like to answer your
40 question, but can you let me know what you would like
41 to have clarified?

42
43 MR. GREEN: It was a -- I think it was -
44 - with the -- I'm not quite sure how to frame my
45 question. I'll hold it. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

46
47 ACTING CHAIRPERSON AUKONGAK: All right.
48 Go through the nine.

49
50

1 MS. CHAPA: Thank you, Mr. Chair. Gisela
2 Chapa, for the record. And I -- we're at the presentation
3 procedures of the closure review, and just looking at
4 Orville to confirm that the Board received no tribal or
5 ANCSA Corporation comments on the closure, okay? So, now
6 is an opportunity for agencies to provide additional
7 comments. And we will start with ADF&G.

8
9 (No response)

10
11 And we'll move to federal agencies.

12
13 (No response)

14
15 Tribal entities. Again, this is an
16 opportunity to provide additional comments on this
17 closure review.

18
19 (No response)

20
21 Moving on, other Regional Council
22 comments.

23
24 DR. VOORHEES: This is Hannah Voorhees,
25 with OSM. So, the Northwest Arctic RAC voted to retain
26 the status quo because the closure directly impacts the
27 caribou, protecting the resource and preventing user
28 conflict. The North Slope Regional Advisory Council
29 voted to retain the status quo because the closure has
30 a positive effect on subsistence and prevents non-
31 federally qualified users from reducing the population
32 and interfering with subsistence. And the Western
33 Interior Regional Advisory Council did not act on this
34 proposal.

35
36 MS. CHAPA: Thank you, Hannah. Local Fish
37 and Game Advisory Committees.

38
39 (No response)

40
41 And now moving on to Subsistence
42 Resource Commissions.

43
44 (No response)

45
46 Okay, we're now at summary of written
47 public comments.

48
49 DR. VOORHEES: This is Hannah Voorhees.
50 There were no written public comments.

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MS. CHAPA: Thank you, Hannah. So, now we are at public testimony, and this is, again, an opportunity for the public to provide additional comments on this closure review.

(No response)

Thank you, Mr. Chair. We're now at the Regional Council recommendation.

MR. GREEN: This is Louis. I recommend we do approve it and continue status quo, because it's a conservation measure that could help the numbers, when they start rebuilding, become migratory to the northern part of Seward Peninsula, again. That's my comment, thank you.

MS. IVANOFF: Thank you, Mr. Chair, this is Kelsi. I moved to support WCR -- to retain the status quo in regards to WCR26-45.

ACTING CHAIRPERSON AUKONGAK: I have a second.

MR. GREEN: Second. Louis seconds.

ACTING CHAIRPERSON AUKONGAK: Discussion. Question.

MR. SEETOT: Elmer, Brevig Mission. I have been a member of Western Arctic Caribou Herd for - until recently. And the residents of Unit 23, along with maybe mostly 23, are -- we're having conflicts with out of state or non-resident hunters and then hunting from around the Noatak River. And at that time, they were very concerned that it would alter the migration pattern of the caribou coming from the northern portion of the state. And they managed to have a corridor around the Noatak River for that purpose, to limit the number of -- or not -- to limit the number of out-of-state hunters camping for caribou during their regulatory season for sport hunters. And it was widely supported by members of that Kotzebue delegation, because they had, they were very concerned that many of the hunters were getting the racks and then letting the meat spoil out in the field, instead of dropping it off and Kotzebue and giving to needy persons. So, that was one of the main reasons that Western Arctic Caribou Herd supported Kotzebue in that endeavor to keep non-residents out of

1 that corridor and I hopefully, so -- I hope so that it
2 will continue to be that because when you change the
3 migration patterns of animals, then it will hurt the
4 subsistence or other users to their, either to their
5 wintering grounds or source of spawning. So, I would
6 still support this because our caribou, that they say
7 the numbers are down, but not all caribou are in the
8 herd, they're pretty much kind of dispersed due to food
9 availability, due to predation and weather conditions,
10 which are becoming more common. Rain, which turns to ice
11 and then they can't get to the food. The elder I spoke
12 to said, many years ago mentioned that when there was a
13 wet season, like this year, and then covering the food,
14 they could -- the people around the communities heard
15 knocking, the hooves, knocking on the ice, trying to get
16 to their food. So, our extreme weather is getting more
17 and more common. And then that's one of the things I
18 think that I kind of get from my elders, is the knowledge
19 that they share over the past years instead of local
20 scientists, biologists looking at their books or their
21 technology marvels and then trying to determine why is
22 this happening. You need to also look at each community's
23 knowledge about certain animals over the years. Because
24 nowadays, everybody has technology with their iPhones.
25 They can google, they can find out where the herders,
26 they can find out the health of the animals. People want
27 to click into our meeting. Not like long time ago. Wait
28 on the phone forever and 'Oh, may I speak?' It's not
29 that way anymore. But it's something that has happened,
30 but Western science still needs to knock at the doors
31 of people, elders that hold the knowledge from the past.
32 Because history will still repeat itself over the years.
33 There are many stories about Unit 22D, lava beds where
34 the caribou were numerous, where pile of antlers where
35 headwaters of American River because they pushed a
36 caribou into the lake and then use your canoes, because
37 they couldn't outrun the caribou out in the tundra. So,
38 these are many stories that I have heard, not from locals
39 in the community, but from people from around the
40 communities. And I hope that, by voting for this, that
41 the closure will continue where the caribou originate
42 to -- on their downward migration. Thank you.

43

44 MS. IVANOFF: This is Kelsi. I -- with
45 the heavy conservation concern for caribou and the herd
46 having dropped to 120ish thousand, we recommend that we
47 retain the status quo, as it will be detrimental to
48 subsistence users in this area, as there is competition
49 from non-resident hunters.

50

1 MR. GREEN: Mr. Chair, Louis.

2

3 ACTING CHAIRPERSON AUKONGAK: Go ahead,
4 Louis.

5

6 MR. GREEN: Yeah, thank you, Mr. Chair.
7 Kind of following up on the conservation side, when this
8 quarter was put into place, before it was put into place,
9 there was not a migration through the Noatak, even close
10 to the village, if I recall. After this closure was put
11 into place, the migration of the caribou kind of got
12 close to the community. In fact, there was a
13 demonstration of one old timer there, that was able to
14 get his gear to caribou, he didn't have to go very far
15 from the community, so. Those kind of stories kind of
16 bring to mind that having that corridor in there allowed
17 the caribou to continue their historical trek through
18 that area. Thank you.

19

20 ACTING CHAIRPERSON AUKONGAK: All right.
21 Real quick I know we're for the closure here. And, you
22 know, earlier on in the meeting, a couple days ago, we
23 heard about a graphite mine. And now, you know, we have
24 the Ambler Road. I'm -- I don't even know why nobody
25 talk about this road that's going forth, I believe. And
26 I'm pretty sure we're going to have to revisit this,
27 again. But as for now, we're all for the closure and
28 keep that in mind.

29

30 MS. IVANOFF: Question.

31

32 ACTING CHAIRPERSON AUKONGAK: All in
33 favor?

34

35 IN UNISON: Aye.

36

37 ACTING CHAIRPERSON AUKONGAK: Aye.
38 Motion carries.

39

40 MS. CHAPA: Thank you, Mr. Chair. Gisela
41 Chapa, for the record. I believe that concludes the
42 Action Item 13A, which is developing recommendations on
43 wildlife proposals and closure reviews. Before we move
44 on to Annual Report, I wanted to revisit the action item
45 that the Council discussed on day one that was,
46 submitting a comment to the 'North Pacific Fishery
47 Management Council Chum Bycatch Draft EIS'. And, at the
48 day of the discussion, at the time of the discussion,
49 we had lost quorum. So, now that we have quorum, the
50 Council can revisit and take action; to submit comment

1 and I will give a very brief overview of what the Council
2 planned to support and -- let me see. So, the Council
3 recommended to support Alternative 2, with a cap of
4 100,000 chum and Alternative 5, the closure of the
5 corridor by time and space. Lastly, Council member
6 Ivanoff also wanted to make sure that the Council
7 emphasizes the importance of indigenous knowledge, that
8 science should try to incorporate into the process for
9 their future consideration. And I'm looking at Kelsi
10 seeking confirmation if that is what she recalls from
11 the conversation.

12

13 MS. IVANOFF: Yeah, that is. Mr. Chair,
14 do we -- for this, would we move to direct staff to
15 submit a letter on our behalf?

16

17 MS. CHAPA: Submit comments.

18

19 MS. IVANOFF: Submit comments? Okay. I
20 move to direct staff to submit public comments to the
21 North Pacific Fishery Management Council on behalf of
22 the Council.

23

24 ACTING CHAIRPERSON AUKONGAK: Second.

25

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

27

28 ACTING CHAIRPERSON AUKONGAK:
29 Discussion.

30

31 (No response)

32

33 MS. IVANOFF: Question.

34

35 ACTING CHAIRPERSON AUKONGAK: All in
36 favor?

37

38 IN UNISON: Aye.

39

40 ACTING CHAIRPERSON AUKONGAK: Motion
41 carries. All right. Where are we at the date of the
42 meetings or is that where we're at or.....?

43

44 MS. CHAPA: Thank you, Mr. Chair. We are
45 now at Action Item 13B, Annual Report. And I can -- I'm
46 going to start first by giving the Council a summary of
47 the Fiscal Year 2024 Annual Report Reply from the Federal
48 Subsistence Board. And you have this information in your
49 supplemental packet. So, it's not in the bound book,
50 it's in the stapled paper. And if you go to page -- give

1 me a minute. Okay, page -- they're not numbered eight,
2 nine, page nine. You have a copy of the Annual Report
3 Reply, okay. And so, if you recall, in the fall meeting
4 of 2024, the Council voted to put forward the following
5 topics in the report. The first one was youth engagement.
6 The Council had requested support from the Board to
7 engage youth in subsistence practices and engage them
8 in the Federal Subsistence Management Program. More
9 specifically, the Council sought to replicate a program
10 that's being run in the southeast part of the state by
11 the University of Alaska Southeast. And they practice a
12 policy and procedures' practicum. It's a class to help
13 youth from that region to earn dual credit while becoming
14 more familiar with the Federal Subsistence Management
15 Program and its process. The Board shared their resp --
16 the report with all the agencies, one more specifically,
17 the Park Service, BLM, BIA, and Fish and Wildlife
18 Service, so that they can consider partnering in this
19 effort but ultimately, the Board advised the Council to
20 do a little bit more legwork and find an organization
21 that can help champion the initiative in our region.
22 Ultimately, I can assist the Council with some of this
23 legwork and just need a little bit of guidance from the
24 Council to follow up on this. Do y'all have any questions
25 or comments?

26

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(No response)

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No? Okay. I'm going to move on to the
next topic that was included in the Fiscal Year 2024
Annual Report. And that was interagency workshops. The
Council had also requested the Board to support the area
to promote increased collaboration among federal
agencies, state agencies, and tribal governments and the
public so that, together, we could address long-standing
subsistence issues in the region. The Council requested
this support in the form of interagency workshops, for
an opportunity to have dialogue and bring people
together, establish goals, and potentially devise
strategies to help address conservation issues and
subsistence issues. The Board agrees that more
coordination is necessary across jurisdictions, although
this is really outside of the purview of the Board. But
they encourage the Council to continue to engage in the
issue and recommends the Council to establish a working
group to help provide a little bit more direction to
identify priorities in the region and potentially key
partners, as a way to try to move forward. Lastly, the
Board acknowledged and appreciated information provided
by the Council on additional regional concerns and that

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1 included the continued concerns over the impacts of
2 trawling and commercial fisheries on Bering Sea salmon
3 and concerns about the impacts of microplastics and
4 pollution on the Arctic marine environment. So that
5 concludes the update or the Annual Report Reply from the
6 Board to the Council. Do you have any questions?

7
8 (No response)

9
10 Okay. So, next up, this is an Action
11 Item. This is an opportunity for the Council to identify
12 issues for the Fiscal Year 2025 Annual Report. And, yeah,
13 I believe this is a discussion that Brent might -- will
14 lead.

15
16 DR. VICKERS: Good morning, again. This
17 is Brent Vickers, OSM. So, my computer is not opening,
18 and I don't have my notes, so, I'm just going to wing
19 it here which, now it's -- I'll be fine. As we just --
20 as Gisela was just discussing every year, you know, you
21 have to produce a annual report that goes to the Board.
22 This is actually written in ANILCA, and we believe that
23 the intent of the annual report is to provide information
24 on subsistence to the Board, just maybe general stuff
25 going on in the area, what's affecting users, what's
26 happening at the ground level. A lot of information might
27 not be captured through the proposal process and so,
28 this is really an opportunity to inform the Board what
29 is happening in the Seward Peninsula region as a whole.
30 This will -- information can help with their regulatory
31 decision making, in general. It can also help with land
32 management decisions by the agencies and anything else
33 that directly had -- the Board can have direct influence
34 about on topics that you might want responses on. It's
35 good to let us know. Sometimes you might just want to
36 be providing information to the Board. In some cases,
37 you may want to response on certain topics, and it would
38 be good to let us know. Sometime -- when you provide
39 information to the Board in the annual report that goes
40 outside of the Board's jurisdiction to really do
41 anything, I'm not saying nothing can happen, but it
42 becomes a little less likely that the Board can really
43 give you a response in any way that you like. And I'm
44 not saying that in a, to, like, hey, don't do this. I'm
45 just -- again, from our experience that this is -- the
46 agency can really -- the Board can really only act within
47 managing these lands and their authorities to do
48 anything outside of that, it's very, very limited. And
49 so, it's a fair warning if you want to start giving
50 suggestions that the Board do things that they really

1 might not have the authority to act on. But, again, this
2 is up to your Council on what you want to provide
3 information on in your annual report and at this point,
4 I'm just here to take items for you and answer any
5 questions. Thank you.

6
7 ACTING CHAIRPERSON AUKONGAK: You know,
8 with the big typhoon that happened south of us, and the
9 one that happened in Golovin, you know, it'd be good to
10 have a report of what's going to go forth on for those
11 people down there. You know, these people, they lost
12 everything. And when I say everything, I mean, imagine
13 losing your home. That's everything. Your guns,
14 everything that you caught before. And going forward,
15 you know, for the people that do go back to like, Kipnuk
16 and or like Golovin, you know, my hometown. You know,
17 if another typhoon hit, I would hope we have a good
18 report and I hope Fish and Game, our state, you know,
19 waive any license because these people lost everything
20 and they have no more money. I hope they get to hunt and
21 waive that for a year, at least waive that fee of getting
22 any kind of license, even with federal side. We're
23 talking, you know, a huge number that we can't even
24 repay.

25
26 DR. VICKERS: It -- thank you, Martin.
27 Mr. Chair, I really -- that -- I -- that's a big issue.
28 And I'm wondering what you think should be included in
29 the report coming from the Board or from the agencies.
30 What kind of information would you be looking for?

31
32 ACTING CHAIRPERSON AUKONGAK: I mean,
33 what are they doing to help them, like, right now? I
34 mean, this next coming fall. Have [sic] we have another
35 one? You know what? In Golovin. Yeah, we got to get
36 another moose, you know, we got to have another opening.
37 You know, thankfully, White Mountain brought one down
38 too, you know, they helped out quite a bit. And I know
39 the state waived it, the federal side waived it, you
40 know, and keep that going.

41
42 MS. IVANOFF: This is Kelsi. I agree with
43 what -- with our Chair is saying, and I think the
44 recommendation would be to continue to monitor these
45 storms that are happening more often, every, you don't,
46 you know, they call them 100 year storms and they're
47 happening so often now. Being keen to those and
48 responding accordingly. Responding, not how many months
49 later. They're in immediate need. When they lose, you
50 know, even if you didn't lose your whole home, some

1 people lost freezers. People lost power for Indian
2 Creek, people lost power for hours, where all their food
3 went bad in their freezers. So, instances like that,
4 where these disasters are declared, a quick response
5 from the Board would be appreciated.

6

7 DR. VICKERS: Thank you. I think that's
8 good information. Is there -- would you like to continue
9 this topic or something new? Oh, go ahead.

10

11 MS. CHAPA: Mr. Chair, Gisela Chapa, for
12 the record. I just wanted to point out that your
13 Supplemental packet, it was prepared for the October
14 meeting, but this was an ask by Council Member Gray,
15 back in the fall of 2024, 'to compile a summary of all
16 of the topics that the Council submitted to the Board
17 and the replies' so that the Council could just visualize
18 all of those asks and see if the Council wanted to,
19 like, revisit any of those topics. So, just wanted to
20 share that this is also material that might help you
21 develop new topics or want to follow up on previous
22 ones?

23

24 MS. IVANOFF: Thank you. Mr. Chair, this
25 is Kelsi. I think this Council should emphasize -- I
26 know everyone is already aware of the issue with our
27 caribou herd. But I think this, I think we should put
28 forward that we do want to emphasize the need to really,
29 to prioritize subsistence, giving as much opportunity
30 as we can while keeping in mind that we do need to
31 conserve. There needs to be -- I know it's -- for some
32 people, it's not easy to tell the difference between
33 males and females. I don't know if more education needs
34 to be done or what needs to happen but our -- with no
35 predator control right now, our herd needs as much human
36 help as it can. Thank you.

37

38 MS. CHAPA: And, Mr. Chair, if I may
39 follow up. Kelsi, this -- do you think this is a topic
40 that will be informational for the Board? Like, just
41 make them aware that this is a big priority and that,
42 as they're taking action on -- during the wildlife
43 regulatory cycle, or considering special actions, just
44 for them to be aware that this is a big priority and
45 they should be... yeah, aware.

46

47 MS. IVANOFF: Yeah, aware. Yeah, that's,
48 it's just emphasizing because they're already aware of
49 the issue, but really urging them to focus on this
50 issue, as I do believe it's one of the bigger issues we're

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1 facing right now.

2

3 MR. GREEN: Mr. Chair, I have one.

4

5 ACTING CHAIRPERSON AUKONGAK: Go ahead,
6 Louis.

7

8 MR. GREEN: Thank you, Mr. Chair. I think
9 that our salmon issue is a very, very important issue.
10 You know, salmon aren't just food, they're nutrition,
11 nutrients in river systems to provide nutrients to the
12 very animals we've just discussed today, through the
13 fact that, you know, when you see moose feeding in the
14 wintertime, they're usually on the riverbank, right?
15 Well, when salmon die in the river, they provide
16 nutrients to those plants and then those moose and
17 whatever else down the food chain benefits from what
18 salmon bring to the freshwater rivers and streams in the
19 lake. So, this thing with the trawlers in the Bering Sea
20 and the Gulf of Alaska is a big -- there's a lot of
21 controversy over it. I think that the message to the
22 Federal Subsistence Board is that they need to continue
23 to reach out to the, with the Interior to the Department
24 of Commerce. I think the Department of Commerce needs
25 to come to the table. And they need to be part of the
26 discussions because it's the Department of Commerce that
27 is overseeing the -- oversees NOAA, the National Marine
28 Fisheries Service, and the North Pacific Fisheries
29 Management Council. And the decisions that the Council
30 level there create -- you know, they're talking, like,
31 I'll -- hold up a second. They're -- we're talking
32 herring, there's been talk of herring. There's no
33 herring fishery in western Alaska much of anymore, other
34 than a bait fishery. They're -- they -- the North Pacific
35 Fisheries Management Council came to the point here a
36 couple of years ago, I think there was the bycatch level,
37 the quota was getting close and the Council doubled it.
38 I mean, those herring are important to western Alaska,
39 and they're a food source, subsistence taking of eggs
40 and kelp, they're a food source for salmon, and they're
41 a food source for sheefish. So, we need to keep bringing
42 this subject up and, hopefully, the Subsistence Board
43 can find some way to get through with the Secretary of
44 Interior and Agriculture to the Secretary of Commerce,
45 that it's necessary that they come to the -- they take
46 part in the discussion of what's happening. On [sic]
47 conservation of our salmon's been put on the shoulders
48 of the user and the river system and the trawler industry
49 is completely left out of it. We're discussing some caps.
50 So, I think it's important that we keep the message

1 rolling, the discussion with the Federal Subsistence
2 Board, trying to get the point across that the Department
3 of Commerce needs to be in, and the Secretary Department
4 of Commerce needs to be in the discussion process with
5 the rest of us. Thank you.

6
7 DR. VICKERS: Thank you, Council Member
8 Green. Is there another topic that would like to --
9 someone would like to bring up?

10
11 (No response)

12
13 Okay. I'll just quickly summarize. We
14 had three topics that were -- oh, sorry.

15
16 MR. NULIK: Well yeah, I just wanted to
17 share. This is Edwin Nulik, with the Native Village of
18 Savoonga. From out here, you know, we have subsistence
19 fisheries, you know, being harvested during the summer
20 and, you know, with my timeline, with my family, you
21 know, I noticed much of our traditional salmon, which
22 is what you call those Dollys, and Dolly Vardens when
23 we mostly harvest those, and those were very abundant
24 for us to -- because they are more traditional for our
25 environment. And we also have all kinds of fish but
26 those were the more abundant species that we had, that
27 we noticed that were -- we don't catch as much as we
28 used to, like, when I was younger. So, I noticed those,
29 the differences in how much we harvest for our
30 gatherings, for the winter. And I think it's important
31 to, you know, try to figure out, you know, whether we're
32 having -- what you call those -- competitions of fish
33 or something? And it's good to understand those kinds
34 of things and share that information with us, so that
35 we see the picture and understand it so that we could
36 give our input. I appreciate your time.

37
38 DR. VICKERS: Thank you, Edwin, this is
39 Brent Vickers, OSM. I highly encourage you to -- you
40 have a lot of great information on subsistence in your
41 area, out there in the island. And I highly encourage
42 you to put in an application, so you can sit here at the
43 table with the other Council members and discuss these
44 things. Does the Council want to add - take -- add
45 anything more after some more consideration or are the
46 three topics that I have listed right now are being a
47 report on the victims, the communities -- what is from?
48 -- of the typhoons? What do -- what is the Board and
49 agencies intend to do to help with these situations in
50 the future? An emphasis on prior -- on subsistence issues

1 given the caribou declines, keeping that in mind with
2 future decision making, what a huge impact it is on
3 subsistence users in the region. And also, salmon
4 concerns and needing, particularly having Secretaries
5 of Interior and Agriculture -- try to get the Secretary,
6 I guess, of Commerce in the conversation.

7
8 MR. GREEN: Mr. Chair, this is Louis.

9
10 ACTING CHAIRPERSON AUKONGAK: Go head,
11 Louis.

12
13 MR. GREEN: Thank you, Mr. Chair. I had
14 a question for you, Edwin, if you're still on.

15
16 MR. NULIK: Yes, I'm here.

17
18 MR. GREEN: Yes, thank you. Do you guys
19 -- I heard a while back that you guys had salmon out
20 there also>

21
22 MR. NULIK: Yeah, we get all kinds of -
23 - yeah, we get all kinds of salmon. But more abundantly,
24 we get Dolly Varden all throughout, you know, the fall,
25 too. And we don't see much of it during, like, late
26 fall, like, September, October like we used to harvest
27 on those Dolly Vardens. But we do see all kinds of fish,
28 you know, we see a little bit more reds so that's -- I
29 noticed that it could be competing with our Dollys, you
30 know? So, it's good to learn and understand what's going
31 on with the fish species and their population.

32
33 MR. GREEN: Yeah, well, thank you for
34 that, I think about trout is like, they need food and
35 the more salmon spawning, the more food they get. When
36 there's, during the spawning season, just for instance.
37 But like, was pointed out, I'd encourage you to submit
38 an application, so you can be at a table with us. I
39 think it's important that Saint Lawrence Island be
40 represented at the table. So, appreciate your....

41
42 (Simultaneous speech)

43
44 MR. GREEN:participation.

45
46 MR. NULIK: Thank you.

47
48 MR. GREEN: Yeah. And I'd encourage you
49 to ask others out there that are knowledgeable about
50 fish and game and sea mammals out there. Thank you, Mr.

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1 Chair.

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3

MR. NULIK: Thank you, Louis.

4

5

ACTING CHAIRPERSON AUKONGAK: Kelsi.

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MS. IVANOFF: Thank you, Mr. Chair. I just had a question. Since I had to step out, what the -- just more clarification on the third item that we're.....

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DR. VICKERS: Hey, I can answer that. Or Louis can. It's basically continuing to request that the Secretaries of Interior and Agriculture communicate with the Secretary of Commerce about the salmon, great salmon declines, and particularly about bycatch in the areas that are managed by NOAA and Department of Commerce. Again, these are -- this is something that's outside of the jurisdiction of our land management so, it's requesting that the Secretaries try to talk and say we need -- this is greatly affecting the region's subsistence users, and we need more discussion on controlling bycatch, so that the burden is not on subsistence users.

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MS. IVANOFF: Thank you.

MR. GREEN: Perfect, Brent.

MR. MOSES: This is Robert. I got a question.

ACTING CHAIRPERSON AUKONGAK: All right, Robert.

MR. MOSES: For the state to keep the RACs, all the RACs informed, the mention about the Ambler Road project came up earlier. And in the beginning the state or the Fish and Game said that they collared 25 female -- collared female caribou. They collared 25 female caribou from -- and where did they collar them? And if they're keeping track of them. In the Ambler Road project, that was the kind of the main migration route for the caribou from up north coming into our district in Bering Strait's land bridge, from that corridor. What I'm trying to say is that the state said they collared her 25 female caribou. And now, could you -- could the state or somebody keep track of the 25 collared caribou and see how many of them passed the Ambler Road, and where are all the rest, are being, are at right now? And

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1 if the state could keep an [sic] track on those 25
2 collared caribou, see how far they move past the Ambler
3 Road project for coming down to our region, and how many
4 stayed up there, and how many turned around and went
5 down our direction? Could the state keep us informed
6 about the migration routes of those 25 collared caribou
7 to have info on how much the Ambler Road project impacted
8 our region and the migration of the caribou. Thank you.
9

10 MS. HUGHES: This is Letty with Bering
11 Land Bridge, here in Nome. Through the Chair to Member
12 Robert Moses. So, a couple different projects there that
13 I'll help clarify. The 25 collared cows that you're
14 referring to, those were collared up on the northern
15 Seward Peninsula, up there, you know, around Shishmaref
16 area. So, so far, those cows have not moved off of the
17 Seward Peninsula. They're still on the northern Seward
18 Peninsula. But, to get to your question of what animals
19 are doing up on the Ambler Road and so forth. Alaska
20 Department of Fish and Game and the National Park Service
21 do have GPS collars on animals up on the Western Arctic
22 Herd. And they do, you know, keep track through the GPS
23 satellite and then, they do provide information. You may
24 not have been there yesterday, when Kyle Jolly had
25 presented on some of the collar information, at least
26 where movements and where they were the last, you know,
27 probably late fall to -- from 2024 to 2025. So, two
28 different sets. But yes, the answer to the one on the
29 caribou for the northern Seward Peninsula and caribou
30 on with the Western Arctic Herd for sure. We can keep
31 the RAC and the AC informed whether it's the state or
32 Park Service.

33
34 ACTING CHAIRPERSON AUKONGAK: Did that
35 answer your question, Robert?

36
37 MR. MOSES: Yeah, thank you.

38
39 ACTING CHAIRPERSON AUKONGAK: Right. Are
40 you ready to get the motion? I gotta go, you gotta go,
41 the whole nine?

42
43 MS. CHAPA: Yeah.

44
45 ACTING CHAIRPERSON AUKONGAK: Oh, cool.

46
47 MS. IVANOFF: This is Kelsi. I move to -
48 - go ahead, Brent.

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1 DR. VICKERS: I just want to make sure.
2 Do we want to add that last item on keeping the Council
3 informed on.....

4
5 UNIDENTIFIED: Yeah.

6
7 DR. VICKERS: Okay. And I'll -- that'll
8 be number four. Just -- thank you.

9
10 MS. IVANOFF: This is Kelsi. I move to
11 bring forward those four items discussed to the Federal
12 Subsistence Board in our annual report.

13
14 ACTING CHAIRPERSON AUKONGAK: Do we have
15 a second?

16
17 MR. GREEN: Mr. Chair, I'll second it.
18 This is Louis.

19
20 ACTING CHAIRPERSON AUKONGAK:
21 Discussion.

22
23 MS. IVANOFF: Question.

24
25 ACTING CHAIRPERSON AUKONGAK: All in
26 favor?

27
28 IN UNISON: Aye.

29
30 ACTING CHAIRPERSON AUKONGAK: Aye.
31 Motion carries. All right, Brent, keep your day job,
32 you're fired for making coffee. That's horrible.

33
34 MS. CHAPA: Okay, Mr. Chair, this is
35 Gisela Chapa. And now we are at future meeting dates.
36 So, if you look at page 329 of your meeting materials,
37 you will see the Winter 2026 Council Meeting Schedule.
38 And I believe Seward Pen. is scheduled to meet March
39 24th and 25th in Nome. So, this is an opportunity for
40 the Council to retain those dates and location or,
41 potentially, change meeting dates. Although I will note
42 that we tend to not schedule more than two Council
43 meetings in a week, so that we have the ability to attend
44 all those meetings and assist the Councils through the
45 meeting. And I will also note that the Seward Peninsula
46 Regional Advisory Council has two approved hub
47 communities or meeting locations, that is Nome and
48 Unalakleet. And this is an action item.

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1 MS. IVANOFF: This is Kelsi. I -- with
2 how little we have, how little people we have, I just
3 want to know that I will be largely unavailable the week
4 of -- that we currently have it. The 24th and the 25th
5 and would entertain moving it to March 10 and 11.

6
7 MS. CHAPA: Can I chime in, real quick?
8 I'm sorry, but these books were printed for the fall
9 meeting, so the October 1st and two, and second dates,
10 since then we've had all the other Council meetings, and
11 the Bristol Bay Regional Advisory Council moved their
12 meeting date to March 9th and 10th. So, I believe the
13 only available dates is the week of February 17th.
14 And.....

15
16 (Pause)

17
18 Give me a minute, let me just look. The
19 current calendar is online, and I'll also put it on the
20 chat for the people that are attending online. These
21 meetings have been rescheduled. Oh, got it!

22
23 DR. VICKERS: Northwest just moved it to
24 this week. I mean, it is available still.

25
26 MS. CHAPA: Give me five minutes. I'm
27 going to put the latest on the screen, so everybody can
28 see it.

29
30 MR. GREEN: Thank you. I got a glitch in
31 my digital one on my email, it's really hard to keep
32 track of what we're talking about. Sometimes it'll just
33 completely jump out of -- and have to redo it, so. It's
34 really good to have it up on the screen. Thank you.

35
36 MS. CHAPA: All right. Now, on the
37 screen, that is the absolute latest Regional Advisory
38 Council meeting calendar. So, the available dates. Oh,
39 and is that -- Brent? Does that show the dates for
40 Northwest Arctic?

41
42 DR. VICKERS: No, it doesn't, but it
43 doesn't matter because that - the -- March 30, I was
44 just saying March 30th, 31st is still open, as well. So,
45 not only the first week of mid-September, February 17th
46 through February 20th, but also the week, final week of
47 March.

48
49 MS. IVANOFF: Did you say -- did you say
50 Northwest Arctic move theirs to the 30th and 31st?

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DR. VICKERS: Yeah. And still there's
only.....

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MR. GREEN: So, is that saying March --
you guys are cutting in and out. March 24th and 25th is
open for SPRAC and Kotzebue Northwest moved to 30th and
31st? Where did I get -- miss something?

9

10

11

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13

MS. CHAPA: Yes, Louis, I think that's
what Brent is saying. But Kelsi is unavailable that week.
The week of March 23rd so, the meeting dates that are
currently scheduled for the winter meeting.

14

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17

MR. GREEN: Slim pickings. Oh, there you
go.

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MS. IVANOFF: That's what we got for
going last.

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MR. GREEN: That's what we get for being
last.

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MS. CHAPA: Well, I am the Coordinator
for North Slope, as well so, we're scheduled to meet
February 24th and 25th. And don't think I will be able
to. I mean, I think it's just, logistically speaking,
with travel, like, I'd be flying out of Utqiagvik on the
26th. That doesn't help.

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MS. IVANOFF: Is that where the meeting
is being held? Not Point Hope?

36

37

38

MR. MOSES: Do we have the SPRAC meeting
for March 31st now? Or what?

39

40

41

MS. CHAPA: Not yet. I think the Council
is still discussing potential dates.

42

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45

MR. GREEN: 30th and 31st.

MS. CHAPA: And this is, ultimately, an
action item. Sorry, Louis.

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MR. GREEN: That's okay, sorry. The 30th
and the 31st of March are taken up. Is that what you're
saying? Northwest?

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1 MS. IVANOFF: We can do it.

2

3 MS. CHAPA: No. The 30th and the 31st are
4 open, Louis.

5

6 MR. GREEN: Oh, Kelsi. Is that.....?

7

8 MS. IVANOFF: 15th to the 21st? Is -- I
9 did wrong?

10

11 MS. CHAPA: Okay.

12

13 MR. GREEN: Yeah, we don't ever interfere
14 with the Iditarod, because then there's no room in that,
15 in Nome.

16

17 MS. IVANOFF: Yeah.

18

19 MR. GREEN: So, is the 30th or the 31st
20 a possibility? I'm just trying to wrap my mind around
21 it.

22

23 MS. CHAPA: Yes. The 30th and the 31st
24 of March are a possibility.

25

26 ACTING CHAIRPERSON AUKONGAK: And 30th
27 anniversary.

28

29 MS. CHAPA: Well, let me talk about that.
30 And the -- our Chair, Martin, just asked if we could
31 meet in Anchorage, and that is something that we need
32 to request approval for. So, I mentioned earlier that
33 the SPRAC has two approved hub communities to meet and
34 that are Nome and Unalakleet. And ultimately, because
35 these are public meetings, we want to give the
36 opportunity for people in the region to participate in
37 our meetings. So, ultimately, the preference is to meet
38 within the community, to.....

39

40 MS. IVANOFF: Within the region.

41

42 MS. CHAPA: In the region, exactly. To
43 do that. So, March 30th and 31st are open for SB RAC to
44 meet. If the Council desires to meet in Anchorage, it
45 is, ultimately, we have to go through the approval
46 request, and it's not necessarily something that can be
47 answered like, right now.

48

49 ACTING CHAIRPERSON AUKONGAK: I ain't a
50 rocket scientist, but we, mainly, had the same one the

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1 past five years I've been here.

2

3 MS. IVANOFF: Nome? I think it'd be fine
4 in Nome, I can make it to Nome by 30th. I might have to
5 be that morning, but..... Oh, no! I think I can make it
6 on that night flight, on Sunday. I'll be flying from
7 Juneau.

8

9 MS. CHAPA: All right. So, this is,
10 ultimately, an action item so, if you want to move the
11 meeting dates from the 24th and 25th to March 30th and
12 31st, we just need a motion and a vote.

13

14 MS. IVANOFF: Mr. Chair. This is
15 Kelsi.....

16

17 MR. GREEN: I'll make that motion.....

18

19 MS. IVANOFF: Oh!

20

21 MR. GREEN: Oh, we'll be first and second
22 again, however you want to put it.

23

24 MS. IVANOFF: I'll second.

25

26 ACTING CHAIRPERSON AUKONGAK: All right.
27 discussion.

28

29 MR. GREEN: All right.

30

31 MS. IVANOFF: Question.

32

33 ACTING CHAIRPERSON AUKONGAK: All in
34 favor?

35

36 IN UNISON: Aye.

37

38 ACTING CHAIRPERSON AUKONGAK: Pack your
39 bags.

40

41 MS. CHAPA: Thank you, Mr. Chair. So,
42 it's been moved to March 30th and 31st, in Nome.

43

44 MR. SEETOT: Weather permitting.

45

46 MS. CHAPA: Weather permitting. Don't
47 jinx us.

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49 MR. SEETOT: That's the main, that's the
50 main.....

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MR. GREEN: Is this.....?

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MS. CHAPA: It is the main issue.

MR. GREEN: Whether or not.

MS. CHAPA: Weather permitting, says Council member Seetot.

MR. SEETOT: Yes.

MS. CHAPA: Okay.

MR. SEETOT: Weather, it's being more extreme at these -- at this point, nowadays. I think the elders were right, that things would really change in the future, and we're starting to see it.

MR. GREEN: All right.

MS. CHAPA: Okay, thank you. Now we're moving to the Fall 2026 Council Meeting. I put it on the screen so that you have the absolute latest. I believe you do have that version on your meeting book.

MS. IVANOFF: This is Kelsi. That week is AFN week, so I would suggest moving it.

MR. GREEN: I would agree.

MS. CHAPA: Okay, so just things to consider.

ACTING CHAIRPERSON AUKONGAK: I think I think we got to flex our muscle here a little bit. We're getting last all the time.

MS. IVANOFF: We can do 14th and 15th.

MS. CHAPA: October?

MS. IVANOFF: Yeah, October.

MS. CHAPA: Okay.

MS. IVANOFF: I just don't want to do September because that's moose hunting.

MS. CHAPA: Yes. Okay, so this is an action item. And to move your meeting dates, you will need a motion and a vote.

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MS. IVANOFF: Move to move our fall meeting from October 21 -- 20 and 21 to October 14 and 15. Juneau.

ACTING CHAIRPERSON AUKONGAK: Do we have a second?

MR. MOSES: Second by Robert.

ACTING CHAIRPERSON AUKONGAK: Discussion.

MS. IVANOFF: Question.

ACTING CHAIRPERSON AUKONGAK: All in favor?

IN UNISON: Aye.

MR. SEETOT: Before a government shutdown again, I think we should meet.

ACTING CHAIRPERSON AUKONGAK: All right, motion carries.

MS. CHAPA: Thank you, Mr. Chair. This is Gisela Chapa. And I believe that concludes all of our action items. I do have other important notes that I would like to share with the Council and also all the people that are joining us, and it shouldn't take me long. At two minutes. Okay, important dates. February 3rd. The -- I'm going to open it on my screen so that I can share it. I said it wasn't going to take long, I'm counting the time. Okay. So, February 3rd is the open house that is scheduled to allow people an opportunity to attend the open house for the Federal Subsistence Management Program review. So, I just wanted to share that with members of the public and the Council. I'm going to stop sharing my screen. I'll also put the information on the chat. Other dates: February 17th, the Board will hold a government-to-government consultation on the 2026-2028 wildlife proposals and closure reviews for the Seward Peninsula region. And I just want to direct people to seek more information from tribal liaison Orville Lind. The Board will also hold its wildlife regulatory meeting on April 20th and 24th, 2026, where they will consider proposed changes to federal subsistence hunting and trapping regulations. And lastly, the Board will meet August 4th and 5th for

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1 its summer work session. And I believe those are the
2 dates.

3
4 MS. IVANOFF: This is Kelsi. I had a
5 question on the FRMP, if that's the 4th and the 5th
6 still, if it's been moved to just one day.

7
8 MS. CHAPA: FRMP February 5th.

9
10 MS. IVANOFF: 5th only?

11
12 MS. CHAPA: Okay. Jared, are you online?

13
14 DR. VICKERS: I'm not sure what day, but
15 it is.

16
17 MR. STONE: Yes, hello, this is Jarred.

18
19 MS. CHAPA: Jarred. Kelsi had a question
20 about the Board's FRMP work session dates?

21
22 MR. STONE: Sure. So, the work session
23 is going to be on February 5th. And if you want, I can
24 send you some additional information. Otherwise, all of
25 that information is on the OSM website as well.

26
27 MS. IVANOFF: Okay. Thank you.

28
29 MR. STONE: Yep.

30
31 MS. IVANOFF: Oh, I do want to know all
32 of that is happening during the chum bycatch North
33 Pacific meetings.

34
35 ACTING CHAIRPERSON AUKONGAK: All right.
36 Closing comments. I think I'll go first, before
37 everybody. It's an honor to be here. Louis called me
38 last night and told me to fill out my application to run
39 again. So, we'll be on the Board, and I did that this
40 morning. Thank you, Louis, for the call. I do miss you
41 here. I do miss Tom Gray being here. I know I'm a little
42 bit quick, but, you know, I am fair. I've done this
43 before. You know, a lot of times in a boardroom we agree
44 and sometimes we disagree. And on the disagreements, you
45 know, we give our points and then, you know, we don't
46 hold a grudge against that. It's for the betterment of
47 our people who eat our food. And, like I said before in
48 a study, our Board is our steppingstone for your guy's
49 study. We listen to our people. You know, I do feel for
50 the people down in Kipnuk. It's a very tough time for

1 them right now. I do love our region of Nome, it's barren
2 straits, you know, I grew up here. And with that, you
3 know, I thank everybody on this Board. Thank you, Kelsi,
4 Elmer, Louis, Robert, and everybody in the room. And
5 anybody that called in. It was a long three days and I
6 appreciate your time. Thank you.

7
8 MR. SEETOT: Elmer Seetot, Brevig. A
9 little bit about our year in review. This was second
10 time I'd seen hooligan spawning on the northern shores
11 of Port Clarence Bay. Not more than one -- I mean, more
12 than once. And are they a critical fish species that
13 determine how the waters are, how the sea is and stuff
14 like that? I'm not really too sure. Our pink salmon, I
15 -- was scarce along with the fall chum, we did get fall
16 chum. But they were kind of low in numbers or marine
17 mammal harvest was very brief, due to ice conditions.
18 Blueberries, blackberries were kind of nonexistent
19 because, due to our weather up there we had cold, cooler
20 springs. And then where the blackberry crowberries grow,
21 they were flooded over the past year or so, so they
22 were, they had excess salt. Whitefish were caught in the
23 fall, however Dolly Varden were scarce. Kind of stock
24 up on Dolly Varden in the fall to have frozen. Second
25 time I -- or this -- I'm happy that the Bering Sea is
26 frozen for the bottom to retain their cold water
27 accordingly. There have been instances of algae, toxic
28 algae blooms probably certain parts of the Bering Sea.
29 A couple of years back, I think walrus died from that
30 toxic bloom on the northern shores of Bering Sea. And,
31 so far, we have been spared the brutality of the fall
32 storms because we're right on the northern shores of
33 Port Clarence Bay. Southerly winds southeast, southwest
34 and south were pretty much erode much of our shorelines.
35 Majority of the red salmon, I think I did good on sockeye
36 salmon. I'm on, located on the northwest shore of
37 Grantley Harbor. And majority of the salmon caught, red
38 salmon caught in Brevig Mission are usually winds from
39 the southwest to westerly. And those fishermen that are
40 on the northern shore of Port Clarence Bay catch twice
41 or triple the number that I catch. But, for me, I'm
42 happy with the catch I have because I'm the one that is
43 processing the fish there. Our Paul (indiscernible)
44 brief beluga passe on and then very rare. Our spotted
45 seal harvest done during the past, well..... And a little
46 bit about Tom Gray. I first met him, I think, when he
47 loan reindeer to the local reindeer herder, Leonard
48 Aulla in Brevig Mission, quite a few years back. And
49 then, I noticed that the animals that were, the reindeer
50 that came from white that area, you could be among the

1 herd. Not like the herd that I'd seen with the Teller
2 herd or Brevig in the past, where they're wild. So, I
3 know, I knew that Tom was pretty much with what the
4 animals around in this area, because you could be around
5 the reindeer. I'd never seen that before, too much, other
6 than in the movies like Finland or those places there.
7 He was a member of the Western Arctic Caribou Herd
8 representing the Reindeer Herders Association, and I
9 backed him up on couple issues concerning reindeer, but
10 I think he was very passionate of what he was doing with
11 this herd. And from that time on, he was talking about
12 issues that affected subsistence, that affected youth
13 engagement and other issues. But in the end, I think he
14 did quite a bit for the community of White Mountain and
15 for the Councils, Board, agencies that he represented
16 at that time. And pretty much that's my report, Mr.
17 Chair, thank you.

18
19 MS. IVANOFF: Thank you, Mr. Chair, this
20 is Kelsi. Just want to say thank you to everyone who
21 helps me along the way. Like I said, this is my second
22 meeting, so thanks for being patient with all my
23 questions and clarifications. And for the rest of the
24 Council, for being welcoming and helpful. And I'm really
25 honored to serve and represent my community of
26 Unalakleet. I really hope we can get a youth
27 representative on, convinced. So, keep your ears out for
28 youth who might be involved. And I did clarify, it's 18
29 to 25. So, I'm hoping, really hoping we can get someone
30 in who can, eventually, serve as a voting member on this
31 Council. And just want to thank everyone for their work.

32
33 ACTING CHAIRPERSON AUKONGAK: Louis.

34
35 MR. GREEN: Thank you, Mr. Chair. Martin,
36 really appreciate your taking the bull by the horns. I
37 really missed being at this meeting. It's kind of hard
38 when you're -- for me to be not at the table. In the
39 room. So, anyway, listening to Elmer talking about
40 Tommy. Tommy did quite a bit. He served for long periods
41 of time, doing public service and dealing with these
42 fish and game issues. Kind of like you say, you know,
43 missing him at the table. I appreciated his
44 participation. I've known Tommy all my life. Our
45 grandmothers were hunting partners. He and I never
46 hunted together, but we're always on the same systems,
47 in the rivers. And every once in a while, having that
48 conversation on the floating boat, down the river.
49 There's -- I was just thinking, you know, the suggestion,
50 like Edwin, out there on the island, I'm glad that he's

1 taking part in this conversation here and reaching out
2 to him to get his name in the hat, it's a pretty good
3 idea. And there are no shortage of people. And I think
4 I'd emphasize that every one of us that has a chance to
5 talk to somebody that we think should be on this Council,
6 try to encourage them to step forward. We're down to,
7 you know, there was just, like, four of us for a quorum,
8 for this meeting. And it narrows the scope down to just
9 four people making a decision for a reason. And I'd
10 rather have that full spectrum of participation from
11 Shishmaref, all the way down to Saint Michael, Stebbins
12 and in between. But we took care of the job, did what
13 we were supposed to do. And again, I appreciate - Gisela,
14 you're dynamite out there, you take care of us quite
15 well as our Coordinator, so. And the rest of the staff
16 appreciate the rest of us, also. And I just thank the
17 members of the Council that participated in this
18 meeting. Couldn't have done it without each one of us.
19 Each one of you there so, thank you very much. (In
20 Native) and all that good stuff to go. Happy New Year,
21 by the way.

22
23 ACTING CHAIRPERSON AUKONGAK: Thank you,
24 Louis. Now Robert.

25
26 (Simultaneous speech).

27
28 MR. NULIK: Where can I look into this
29 application?

30
31 MS. CHAPA: Hi Edwin, this is Gisela
32 Chapa, the Council Coordinator. I have your email, and
33 I will forward you an application for you to fill out.
34 Consider, at least.

35
36 MR. NULIK: Thank you.

37
38 ACTING CHAIRPERSON AUKONGAK: All right.
39 Robert.

40
41 MR. MOSES: Yeah, I'd like to thank
42 Martin, all the people on the Board, the RAC committee
43 and all the people listening. State of OSM and all those
44 that are online. We've got to take into great
45 consideration about the weather. The weather has a big
46 role to play in where we get our animals from. They live
47 in it, just as much as we do. They hide from it, just
48 as much as we do. They move around to go and find their
49 food, just like us, we go and look for them. The world,
50 the weather is changing, every year, it's different in

1 every region. There are spotted seal in Oogruk and (In
2 Native. The, what we call the young Oogruks, they're not
3 as abundant as before as when I was younger. You could
4 grab a white plate, and you could dump a whole pepper
5 full of, tablespoon of pepper. That would be how much
6 seals would be in the day. And then you get a quarter
7 teaspoon, and you put that much pepper in that quarter
8 teaspoon measurement, and you dump that on the white
9 plate and that's how much seals we get only, just to let
10 you know the difference. Animals move around a lot during
11 the weather. Season will change. We've had -- get lots
12 of saffron cod late this year. We've had a lot of
13 berries, blueberries, salmon berries, and cranberries,
14 this year there was abundance. A lot of people got
15 greens. There wasn't as much as trout as there used to
16 be. And then the salmon has -- there wasn't as much
17 salmon as in the years before, but people got to put
18 some away. They noticed a difference too, the commercial
19 fishermen had 24, 48 hours opening and one of them only
20 caught like five, just to show the, where the fish are
21 depleting. And, just to let you know that how much the
22 weather changed, in 1994, November 18th, 1994, I caught
23 a wolf south of Fish River, 50 miles from Golovin. And
24 now, look, it's January, and we could barely get from
25 here to there. That just shows you to let you see how
26 much the weather has changed. And without the hunters
27 and the people in the villages, without their knowledge,
28 the OSM, State of Alaska, they would just go by numbers.
29 I know numbers don't lie, you can go and change them,
30 but they don't lie. But you can go back and see where
31 you make your mistakes. But the temperature now, of these
32 years. Now the temperatures are rising. We get more and
33 more wind. This last fall and summer, I made a point
34 before, on the other meeting, at Cape Lisburn, record
35 mile per hour wind was 102 there, in one year, and the
36 elder said that, in the future, there'll be no more fish
37 in it. The winds will get windier. I believe everything
38 what the elders say. And when they speak, we should all
39 listen. Times are changing very drastically in our
40 region. There's going to be more shipping, more traffic
41 in our waters through Diomedes, Shishmaref and Wales area
42 and Kotzebue. We got to keep -- don't forget about those
43 boats coming from up north and going up north from south.
44 They might bring that green algae. That's another thing
45 to look at. And as you notice, some sunsets and some
46 days are clear in our region, some days are foggy and
47 you could notice it, you could see long ago, it used to
48 be clear all the time. So, air pollution has something
49 to do with our changing weather, also. But I like to
50 thank everybody that's online and that are listening in

1 subsistence way of life, in the villages. The way we eat
2 our good food, the way we harvest it, put it away and
3 share our knowledge of where we go and where we hunt. I
4 thank everybody on the Board and online, and thank
5 Martin, Gisela Chapa. And see you guys next time. Thank
6 you.

7
8 ACTING CHAIRPERSON AUKONGAK: All right,
9 Robert. Anybody else in the room? Don't be shy, we don't
10 bite.

11
12 MS. CHAPA: Mr. Chair, I want to share
13 some closing comments. I also want to thank all of you
14 for being here in person and online. I know that things
15 kind of get in the way and plans fall apart, but you
16 still made the time and the commitment to be here and
17 get through our agenda. That was a lot of wildlife
18 proposals, a lot of discussion. And I really want to
19 thank you for your time. I also want to share, for those
20 that are attending online, that if you have any questions
21 about the Seward Peninsula Regional Advisory Council,
22 our meetings, our agenda, any questions at all about the
23 Federal Subsistence Management Program, I am here to
24 help answer any questions. So, feel free to call me or
25 email me or text me. I am available to assist with that.
26 And I will also put my information in the chat. Feel
27 free to pass it around, as well. And I also want to echo
28 what some of our Council members have said, that our
29 Council has six filled seats, out of a total of ten. So,
30 if you have questions about what it means to serve on
31 the Council, responsibilities, etc. I'm available to
32 help. And I can also share applications. We accept
33 applications from individuals. And you're also welcome
34 to nominate other people, as well, as there, as long as
35 they're in agreement to be considered for the seat on
36 the Council. That works as well, so..... I'll share the
37 applications with you, if you know anybody that might
38 be interested, as well, that would be great. Thank you
39 very much. And thank you, Mr. Chair, for your time and
40 rolling with the proposals and the meetings and the
41 questions. We got through it. So, thank you, so much.

42
43 ACTING CHAIRPERSON AUKONGAK: All right.
44 Any more?

45
46 (No response)

47
48 Hearing none. Adjournment.

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1
2 adjourn.

MR. GREEN: This is Louis. I move to

3
4
5 Louis.

ACTING CHAIRPERSON AUKONGAK: All right,

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7

Mr. MOSES: Second by Robert.

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10 Enjoy the rest of the winter. Everybody, be safe.

ACTING CHAIRPERSON AUKONGAK: All right.

11
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(Off record)

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(END OF PROCEEDING)

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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 52 contain a full, true and correct Transcript of the SEWARD PENINSULA SUBSISTENCE REGIONAL ADVISORY COUNCIL MEETING, VOLUME III recorded on the 22nd 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