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FEDERAL SUBSISTENCE BOARD

REGULATORY MEETING

VOLUME I

EGAN CONVENTION CENTER
Anchorage, Alaska
January 31, 2023

MEMBERS PRESENT:

Anthony Christianson, Chairman
Charles Brower, Public Member
Rhonda Pitka, Public Member
Sara Boario, U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service
Sarah Creachbaum, National Park Service
Steve Cohn, Bureau of Land Management
Glenn Chen, Bureau of Indian Affairs
David Schmid, U.S. Forest Service

Ken Lord, Solicitor's Office

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P R O C E E D I N G S

(Anchorage, Alaska - 1/31/2023)

(On record - 1:30 p.m.)

CHAIRMAN CHRISTIANSON: Good afternoon. My name is Anthony Christianson, I'm the Chairman of the Federal Subsistence Board and we're convening here today to go over our order of business. You can see the agenda presented here and they're available out there. Again, welcome everybody, first meeting in person in a couple of years. I know the Board here is excited and we're happy to see faces instead of Zoom boxes and so it really blessed that we're here in person and it gives us a better opportunity in engagement and we're definitely looking forward to the week. We have a lot of things on the agenda and hope to do our best to meet the demands of the public.

And with that I'm going to turn it over to Sue.

MS. DETWILER: Thank you, Mr. Chair. For the record my name is Sue Detwiler. I'm the Assistant Regional Director for the Office of Subsistence Management and our office is here to support the Board this week.

Starting out with the roll call of the Board members.

Bureau of Indian Affairs, Glenn Chen.

MR. CHEN: Present.

MS. DETWILER: Thank you. Bureau of Land Management, Steve Cohn.

MR. COHN: Present.

MS. DETWILER: Fish and Wildlife Service, Sarah Boario.

MS. BOARIO: Present.

MS. DETWILER: National Park Service, Sarah Creachbaum.

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1 MS. CREACHBAUM: I'm here Sue.

2

3 MS. DETWILER: U.S. Forest Service,
4 Dave Schmid.

5

6 MR. SCHMID: I'm here Sue.

7

8 MS. DETWILER: Public Member Rhonda
9 Pitka.

10

11 MS. PITKA: Here.

12

13 MS. DETWILER: Public Member Charlie
14 Brower by teleconference.

15

16 (No comments)

17

18 MS. DETWILER: Okay, we're waiting for
19 Charlie. While we wait for Charlie, let's see I'm
20 going to move on to some other of the key Staff here.

21

22 Department of Interior legal counsel,
23 Ken Lord.

24

25 MR. LORD: Here. Good morning everyone
26 -- or, afternoon.

27

28 MS. DETWILER: And USDA Office of
29 General Counsel, Boykin Lucas, on phone.

30

31 MR. BOYKIN: Hi, this is Boykin I'm on
32 the phone.

33

34 MS. DETWILER: All right, thank you,
35 Boykin. Moving to the liaisons to the Board, Alaska
36 Department of Fish and Game, Ben Mulligan.

37

38 MR. MULLIGAN: Present.

39

40 MS. DETWILER: Mark Burch.

41

42 MR. BURCH: I'm here, thank you.

43

44 MS. DETWILER: Thank you. Moving to
45 the Regional Advisory Council Chairs. Region 1,
46 Southeast, Cathy Needham.

47

48 MS. NEEDHAM: Here.

49

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1 MS. DETWILER: Thank you. Region 2
2 Southcentral. I understand the Chair Greg Encelewski,
3 is not able to make it but Jessica Gill, the Council
4 Coordinator is filling in, speaking for the Council.
5 Jessica, are you here?

6
7 MS. GILL: Present.

8
9 MS. DETWILER: Thank you.
10 Kodiak/Aleutians, Rebecca Skinner.

11
12 MS. SKINNER: Here.

13
14 MS. DETWILER: In person, thank you.

15
16 Bristol Bay, Nanci Morris Lyon.

17
18 MS. MORRIS LYON: Here.

19
20 MS. DETWILER: Yukon Kuskokwim Delta,
21 Myron Naneng on the phone. Is Myron.....

22
23 MS. MCDAVID: Myron just walked in the
24 room, he's about to take his seat. Thank you.

25
26 MS. DETWILER: Okay, thank you. And I
27 understand we may have Ray Oney on as well from the
28 Council, Ray Oney may be on.

29
30 Western Interior, Jack Reakoff on the
31 phone.

32
33 MR. REAKOFF: Jack Reakoff's on the
34 phone, thank you.

35
36 MS. DETWILER: Thank you, Jack.

37
38 Seward Peninsula, I understand Nissa
39 Pilcher, Council Coordinator, will be speaking for the
40 Council -- okay.

41
42 MS. PILCHER: Present.

43
44 MS. DETWILER: Thank you. Northwest
45 Arctic, Lisa Hutchison-Scarborough, Council Coordinator,
46 right now speaking on behalf of the Council.

47
48 MS. HUTCHISON-SCARBROUGH: Present.

49
50

0005

1 MS. DETWILER: Thank you.

2

3 Eastern Interior, Charlie Wright.

4

5 MR. WRIGHT: Here.

6

7 MS. DETWILER: Thank you. Region 10,
8 North Slope, Brower Franz.

9

10 MR. FRANZ: Here.

11

12 MS. DETWILER: Thank you. And,
13 finally, DOI Field Special Assistant for Alaska, Sara
14 Taylor, is Sarah here or on the phone.

15

16 (No comments)

17

18 MS. DETWILER: Okay, I don't see Sara.

19

20 Going back to Public Member Charlie
21 Brower, are you -- were you able to connect.

22

23 CHAIRMAN CHRISTIANSON: Yeah, he's on.

24

25 MS. DETWILER: Okay.

26

27 And Anthony Christianson, Chair.

28

29 CHAIRMAN CHRISTIANSON: Present.

30

31 MS. DETWILER: Mr. Chair, you have a
32 quorum, seven out of eight members.

33

34 CHAIRMAN CHRISTIANSON: Thank you. And
35 I think Charlie is on. And I think at this time before
36 I move forward I was just going to ask the operator if
37 she could give out the detailed instructions, it might
38 help Charlie get access.

39

40 Thank you.

41

42 (Pause)

43

44 CHAIRMAN CHRISTIANSON: Thank you. And
45 at this time we're going to jump off the agenda for a
46 second. As I looked around the room I seen a 100 faces
47 that are new, but also what I noticed is since we met
48 again a few people have went on to the happy hunting
49 grounds. And at this time I'd like to call on Orville
50

0006

1 to say a small prayer before we have a moment of
2 silence. And if anybody has a name to offer up, I know
3 I can offer up that I don't see Andrew Firmin, and I
4 don't see Harold Robbins here from Southeast. I don't
5 know if there's any other Board members who are active
6 but I'd like to have them recognized at this time,
7 being it's the first time that we've met in person and
8 part of our culture is to recognize those who have gone
9 ahead of us and put the effort into what it is we're
10 here to fight for. So I'd like to honor them at this
11 time with a small prayer and a moment of silence.

12

13 If there's a name in your head you know
14 or like you heard Karen talk about losing her mother
15 just recently we'll have that for this moment.

16

17 Thank you.

18

19 MR. LIND: Folks, if you'd all stand
20 and join me in prayer.

21

22 (Prayer)

23

24 MR. LIND: We offer a silent time for
25 those who have passed.

26

27 (Moment of silence)

28

29 MR. LIND: Quyana.

30

31 CHAIRMAN CHRISTIANSON: And now I feel
32 like we can get the go. We will go ahead and open up
33 the meeting and again welcome everybody. It's good to
34 see all the faces and the energy and running into
35 people in the halls and the excitement leading up to
36 the meeting. I know we have some tough agenda items
37 and we have a lot of things out there on the landscape
38 that are calling our attention and so we hope to give
39 the public the best that we can here and provide the
40 opportunity for everybody to be heard and to work in a
41 positive manner that reflect both our value system and
42 what the intent of our program is, to provide a
43 meaningful role for the public and our partners and the
44 liaisons, and that we'd also like to extend, you know,
45 in the good nature of that, that we keep everything
46 good natured. At the forefront of us is humor as
47 people and I know this ain't funny business but if we
48 let ourselves get upset all the time then we're going
49 to be operating from a different angle so me, as a
50

0007

1 Board member, would like to say let's keep everything,
2 you know, business minded, let's keep each other
3 respectable, let's keep each other on the up and up and
4 let's love each other like we should because we're all
5 in this for the same thing, for the conservation of the
6 resources, for the continuation of the access for our
7 people and to provide a meaningful role and a priority
8 use consumption for the users in Alaska. so I just
9 want to predicate the meeting with that, that we'd like
10 to just encourage everyone to have a good time.

11

12 Yeah, I'm happy to be here so like I
13 might just be a kid out of the box again because I'm
14 back in public and sitting in front of people and I
15 seen a celebrity walk in over there and I'm like, oh,
16 man, I need his autograph, hey, anyway -- hi Charlie.

17

18 (Laughter)

19

20 CHAIRMAN CHRISTIANSON: I'll turn it
21 over to Sue to review and adopt the agenda.

22

23 MS. DETWILER: Okay, thank you. And
24 for those online the agenda is also posted on our
25 website, Federal Subsistence Board website at
26 doi.gov/subsistence/board. It's also on our FaceBook
27 site under subsistencealaska, all one word.

28

29 So we're now at Item 2 in the agenda,
30 which is review and adopt the agenda. We do have three
31 time certain agenda items, which I'll quickly list
32 here.

33

34 The first one is tomorrow we have
35 dancers coming in at noon. We -- that is the (In
36 Native), and I apologize for not pronouncing correctly,
37 they'll be here tomorrow at noon.

38

39 Also tomorrow at 3:00 p.m., we'll be
40 taking up Wildlife Proposal 22-40, Wednesday, the 1st.

41

42 And then the other time certain that we
43 have is a presentation from North Pacific Fishery
44 Management Council Staff at 3:30 p.m., on Thursday,
45 February 2nd.

46

47 So with those time certain items noted
48 we'll move into Item 3 on the agenda, which is Federal
49 Subsistence Board information sharing session.

50

0008

1 Item 4 is Regional Advisory Council
2 Chairs discussing topics of concern with the Board.

3
4 Item 5 is public comment period on non-
5 agenda items.

6
7 6 is an action item, fisheries
8 delegation of authority.

9
10 Item 7 is the 2021-2023 Subpart C and D
11 proposals and closure reviews, that's the main part of
12 the agenda.

13
14 Item 8 following review of the Subpart
15 C and D proposals and closure reviews is old business.
16 We have four items under that. First, all of these are
17 action items for the Board.

18
19 First is hunter ethics, education and
20 outreach initiative update.

21
22 Second is Secretarial regulations
23 proposing the inclusion of identified submerged lands
24 in the Tongass National Forest.

25
26 The third item, C, is deferred Proposal
27 22-40, which we'll be dealing with tomorrow at 3:00.

28
29 And the fourth old business is deferred
30 Unit 4 deer proposals.

31
32 Then following those items we'll move
33 to Item 9 which is request for reconsideration, RFR22-
34 01 pertaining to reconsideration of Fisheries Proposal
35 SP21-10.

36
37 And Item 10 on the agenda is Non-Rural
38 Determination Proposal 25-01, concerning Ketchikan
39 proposal.

40
41 Item 11 is the presentation from the
42 North Pacific Fisheries Management Council. Again,
43 that's on Thursday at 3:30 p.m.

44
45 And then finally Item 12 is the action
46 item on -- to schedule upcoming Board meetings.

47
48 And then adjourn.

49
50

0009

1 MR. BROWER: Mr. Chair, this is
2 Charlie.

3
4 CHAIRMAN CHRISTIANSON: Yes, go ahead,
5 Charlie.

6
7 MR. BROWER: I am online now, I finally
8 broke the chain so I can hear everyone. Thank you.

9
10 CHAIRMAN CHRISTIANSON: Thank you,
11 Charlie.

12
13 MS. TRUMBLE: Mr. Chair.

14
15 CHAIRMAN CHRISTIANSON: Yes.

16
17 MS. TRUMBLE: This is Della Trumble. I
18 just wanted to let you know I am online in the speaker
19 room. Rebecca is filling in for me. I will be in and
20 out of the meeting listening in.

21
22 CHAIRMAN CHRISTIANSON: Thank you for
23 that Della. Appreciate you attending.

24
25 MS. TRUMBLE: Thank you.

26
27 CHAIRMAN CHRISTIANSON: So we've
28 reviewed, the floor is open to adopt the agenda.

29
30 MR. BROWER: I so move, Mr. Chair.
31 This is Charlie Brower, Public Member.

32
33 CHAIRMAN CHRISTIANSON: Motion been
34 made to accept the agenda, do I hear a second.

35
36 MS. PITKA: I'll second. Rhonda Pitka.

37
38 CHAIRMAN CHRISTIANSON: Motion's been
39 made and seconded. Any discussion, questions,
40 comments.

41
42 (No comments)

43
44 CHAIRMAN CHRISTIANSON: Call for the
45 question.

46
47 MR. SCHMID: Question.

48
49 CHAIRMAN CHRISTIANSON: All in favor
50

0010

1 signify by saying aye.

2

3 IN UNISON: Aye.

4

5 CHAIRMAN CHRISTIANSON: Opposed, same
6 sign.

7

8 (No opposing votes)

9

10 CHAIRMAN CHRISTIANSON: Motion carries
11 unanimous to adopt the agenda as presented. We'll move
12 on to the Federal Subsistence Board information sharing
13 session. And, again, this is an opportunity for the
14 Board members here to go ahead and give a report out to
15 the public present so we'll go ahead and start down at
16 the BIA end and move down to whoever has something to
17 share.

18

19

Glenn.

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MR. CHEN: Thank you, Mr. Chair.
Perhaps the only information to share with the rest of
the group here is that we are still searching for a new
Regional Director. In the meantime our BIA Acting
Regional Director is Michelle Watchman, she's our
Deputy Regional Director for Trust -- for Native
Services.

Thank you.

MR. SCHMID: Mr. Chair, this is Dave
Schmid, the Regional Forester with the Forest Service.
I guess just a couple of things maybe to share with
folks.

Certainly if you're in Southeast Alaska
you're familiar with the SASS, the Southeast Alaska
Sustainability Strategy. This was a strategy that was
announced by Secretary Vilsack a little over a year go
to do four things in Southeast Alaska. There were four
major pieces to that Legislation.

One was to restore the protections of
the Alaska Roadless -- or to repeal the Alaska Roadless
Rule and restore the protections for the 2001 Roadless
Rule. And that was accomplished and announced actually
this last week here. It was -- became public and the
rulemaking was complete with that.

0011

1 A second part of that was to reduce old
2 growth logging, larger scale old growth logging in
3 Southeast while still providing some smaller
4 opportunities for the small communities in Southeast
5 Alaska.

6
7 Third piece of that was to really move
8 forward with much more meaningful consultation with the
9 Tribes in Southeast and some of that was a fallback
10 from other efforts where we had cooperative agencies
11 that had been working closer with us and we've moved
12 forward on that.

13
14 And then the fourth piece of that was
15 an investment strategy, which is where everybody kind
16 of gravitated to initially but it was a \$25 million
17 investment and that all was implemented over the last
18 year as well. Most of -- the majority of that money,
19 more than 50 percent went directly to tribes and small
20 communities in southeast and has been moving in a very
21 successful direction. So there's a lot going on there
22 as well.

23
24 Also I would share, I think, all of the
25 Federal agencies here at the table have been involved
26 with BIL, the Bipartisan Infrastructure Law, and that
27 has really brought a lot of resources to the state of
28 Alaska, especially in our world here, I operate a lot
29 in Southcentral Alaska as well as Southeast Alaska and
30 has really been beneficial in building capacity and
31 bringing some much needed resources there as well.

32
33 I'll stop there.

34
35 But Staffing for the first time in
36 awhile within the Forest Service has fairly stabilized
37 so -- and we are actually trying to increase that. For
38 those of you in small communities and even larger
39 communities, I'll just announce, we're on a -- we're
40 calling it an ANILCA hiring blitz coming up in the next
41 month here or so, where we're reaching out, we're using
42 those authorities through ANILCA that allow us to hire
43 directly folks from communities that have that either
44 traditional, indigenous, other experiences kind of
45 unique to Alaska and help them to compete. And so
46 we're hoping to add quite a few folks, especially a lot
47 of early career and entry level folks and maybe they'll
48 reflect -- our agency will reflect the communities a
49 little bit better that we serve.

50

0012

1 So with that thank you for the time,
2 Mr. Chair.

3
4 CHAIRMAN CHRISTIANSON: Thank you,
5 Dave. Fish and Wildlife Service.

6
7 MS. BOARIO: Thank you, Mr. Chair. And
8 a special thank you to Sue and all of the Staff in
9 Office of Subsistence Management for just all the hard
10 and thoughtful work to get us here today. We're still
11 learning how to do this in person again and I just
12 really appreciate all the work that's gone into it and
13 everyone's patience with all of us.

14
15 Some updates from the Fish and Wildlife
16 Service.

17
18 We have a number of transitions that
19 will be coming here in the near future we hope. We're
20 filling for three of our Refuge Manager positions at
21 Arctic Refuge, Selawik Refuge, and the Refuges that are
22 led out of Galena, Innoko, Koyukuk and Nowitna as well
23 as our Deputy Regional Director position.

24
25 Additionally, we're hiring for an
26 indigenous knowledge liaison, the first of its kind in
27 the Fish and Wildlife Service and I think that speaks
28 to some of the earlier tribal consultation remarks we
29 heard about how we are across all of our work
30 integrating and considering indigenous and traditional,
31 ecological knowledge in all we do.

32
33 Finally, I'd just like to thank anyone
34 on the phone or anyone in the room who has been helping
35 us over the last several years. I know there are many
36 with the creation and co-production with our Alaska
37 Native Relations Policy, which is a step-down policy
38 from the Service's National Native American Policy that
39 -- and everyone who has provided thoughtful feedback
40 and comments through the public comment period as well.
41 That team is in the process of integrating final
42 comments and we're hopeful, again, that we'll soon be
43 seeing that published and finalized here very shortly.

44
45 So thank you, Mr. Chair.

46
47 CHAIRMAN CHRISTIANSON: Thank you.
48 Rhonda.

49
50

0013

1 MS. PITKA: Thank you. Hi, Rhonda
2 Pitka, I'm a Public Member from the village of Beaver.
3 I live in the village of Beaver and this last year and
4 the last three years have been a disaster for Yukon
5 River salmon fishing. So hopefully, you know, Yes. n
6 the future we'll be able to harvest a little bit of
7 fish.

8
9 In my district, especially, the chinook
10 salmon are the main species that live in that area so
11 we don't have a lot of the other resources that other
12 people, you know, in the lower part of the Yukon have.
13 It's been a really rough rough few years with the
14 Pandemic, we've had a lot of loss in our communities,
15 you know, and in such small communities it's very, very
16 difficult to replace people, you know, when they've
17 passed. Like Mr. Andrew Firmin, who sat on the Eastern
18 Interior Regional Advisory Council. He was a young man
19 from the village of Fort Yukon. And he also sat on the
20 State ACs so just recently we've gotten the State AC
21 back up and running, because he was Chairman of that
22 Board and we depended on him pretty heavily to keep
23 things running for natural resources in our area. So
24 hopefully we have some continuity from that. And I
25 actually just got myself appointed to the State AC
26 because I needed one more thing to do, not busy enough,
27 so there you go, that's what I like to do with my spare
28 time.

29
30 You know, Charlie Wright said, well, I
31 might as well work more because, you know, we're not
32 going to be fishing this summer so got to keep out of
33 trouble somehow.

34
35 (Laughter)

36
37 MS. PITKA: I really appreciate seeing
38 everybody here and hopefully we get a lot of really
39 good comments from the public and a lot of really good
40 input from our Regional Advisory Council Chairs.

41
42 I'd like to thank everybody for their
43 service to this Board, in particular. It's a lot of
44 hours reading and thinking about things that you
45 normally don't think about in your everyday life. So I
46 appreciate everybody.

47
48 Thank you.

49
50

0014

1 CHAIRMAN CHRISTIANSON: Thank you,
2 Rhonda. National Park Service.

3
4 MS. CREACHBAUM: Good afternoon
5 everyone. My name is Sarah Creachbaum. I'm the
6 Regional Director for the National Park Service. And I
7 want to echo Rhonda's comments to thank everyone who is
8 in attendance here. I know you all have day jobs out
9 there and many, many, many other things to do in your
10 life and I wanted to thank you for your service to this
11 really important topic.

12
13 I'd like to start off by introducing
14 our new Deputy Director, who's stationed here in
15 Anchorage. Maybe Dave could stand up and give a wave.
16 Dave Alberg started just a few months ago and so now we
17 have a full leadership team in the Anchorage office for
18 the National Park Service and so that's very good news.
19 It's been a long time coming.

20
21 Food security and access to subsistence
22 resources remains a top priority for the National Park
23 Service in Alaska and to that end we have been working
24 to find additional resources, both to support the
25 subsistence program, support to the RACs in their
26 capacity, support to help our tribal villages and
27 corporations consult with us in a meaningful way. And
28 also to help give them the time to offer their
29 knowledge so that we can adequately include it in our
30 decision-making in Alaska in the Park Service.

31
32 We are -- it's not lost on us the
33 tremendous amount of work that goes into every
34 consultation process, every planning document and for
35 every RAC meeting and your proposals and the work that
36 you do is largely unfunded and we're working very hard
37 to try to help to support that capacity.

38
39 I believe that the challenges to food
40 security and climate change that are going to be --
41 that we are being faced with is something that we're
42 all going to have to tackle together and so thank you
43 for your participation.

44
45 CHAIRMAN CHRISTIANSON: Thank you.
46 Bureau of Land Management.

47
48 MR. COHN: Good afternoon everyone, I'm
49 Steve Cohn, I'm the State Director for the Bureau of
50

0015

1 Land Management here in Alaska. It's a pleasure to be
2 here today. It's the first time I've been able to
3 participate in this meeting, in this forum. I'm very
4 glad to be here. Very glad to see you all. I see a
5 lot of familiar faces and looking forward to the next
6 few days as we work through some very important
7 business.

8

9 I'll just share a little bit about the
10 Bureau of Land Management and some of the projects that
11 we are working on in the state that have a very
12 significant subsistence nexus. We -- the Bureau of
13 Land Management is responsible for the management of a
14 little over 70 million acres in Alaska, just about
15 nearly a third of all the lands that the BLM manages
16 nationwide so a very significant portfolio for the
17 agency as a whole. In addition to managing public
18 lands we also are actively conveying lands to the State
19 of Alaska, Alaska Native corporations and most recently
20 through our Alaska Native Vietnam Veterans Allotment
21 Program.

22

23 In areas of particular interest, from a
24 subsistence perspective I think where we're all
25 incredibly concerned regarding the current salmon
26 crises really in the Kuskokwim and Yukon River
27 drainages. We're working on two very large planning
28 efforts within those areas and really seeking all input
29 to think about how we account for and consider
30 subsistence needs and the needs of communities in both
31 the Yukon and Kuskokwim drainages. One of those
32 efforts is a large environmental impact statement,
33 large in terms of area, dealing with the public land
34 orders, what are known as the 17(d)(1) withdrawals that
35 have been in place since the early 1970s. We're
36 providing recommendations to the Secretary of the
37 Interior on how to address those withdraws, whether to
38 retain, revoke or modify them on approximately 28
39 million acres of public lands, largely in the Western
40 Interior region and Bering Sea region, but also in
41 Bristol Bay and East Alaska.

42

43 At the same time as we're working on
44 that EIS, we're also currently working on a large land
45 use plan for the Central Yukon Resource Management
46 Plan, which is primarily the upper -- BLM-managed lands
47 in the upper part of the Yukon River drainage and
48 approximately 13 million acres of land. Through that
49 planning effort we're also providing recommendations to
50

0016

1 the Secretary on the public land orders and the
2 existing 17(d)(1) withdrawals, as well as the
3 withdrawals along the Dalton Highway Corridor which is
4 a separate withdrawal but also under consideration in
5 that plan.

6
7 As you can imagine subsistence issues
8 are sort of top of mind in both of those planning
9 efforts as well as in the Central Yukon land use plan,
10 we are considering nominations that we have received
11 from communities throughout the region for
12 consideration for areas of critical environmental
13 concern largely based on fish and wildlife subsistence
14 needs.

15
16 In addition to those large planning
17 efforts we're also currently working on several large
18 projects also with a very large subsistence nexus, the
19 Willow Master Development Plan in the National
20 Petroleum Reserve, the Ambler Access Road, and with my
21 colleague from Fish and Wildlife Service, the Coastal
22 Plain Leasing Plan environmental impact statement. So
23 a lot going on currently.

24
25 Virtually everything that we do in the
26 state, every action that we're involved in has a very
27 significant subsistence nexus.

28
29 And so it's, again, an honor for me to
30 be here. Subsistence is, I think, the most important
31 issue, certainly that I'm engaged in in my role as
32 State Director for BLM and so I'm very glad to be here
33 and to learn from you all and to help shape important
34 decisions that affect so many people in Alaska.

35
36 Thank you.

37
38 CHAIRMAN CHRISTIANSON: Thank you.
39 Thank you to all the Board members for sharing and,
40 again, we're getting complaints that we're not talking
41 close enough to the microphone. So I think they want
42 it to sound more like this and less like this. Does
43 that sound about right, public.

44
45 UNIDENTIFIED VOICE: Yes.

46
47 CHAIRMAN CHRISTIANSON: Okay. So I'm
48 just trying to serve the public and we're getting notes
49 up here. So if we could just ask ourselves to speak a
50

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1 little more louder into the microphone so the public
2 can hear and the recorder, I'd appreciate that, as well
3 as the court reporter.

4
5 I, myself, I just want to share
6 information. I'm just happy to be here again like I
7 said earlier and glad to see the room full and excited
8 that the young people in the back are here to continue
9 the work in Southeast of learning the program. I think
10 it's a big part of what we're doing, we're looking at
11 entertaining them in the morning to do a presentation
12 via Dave here, and so we want to appreciate that and
13 thank Heather and the team for bringing those young
14 folks in. Because I look just in front of them of
15 people that I work with in the field are now elevating
16 themselves into leadership roles and so there's a
17 progression here and pretty soon you end up sitting
18 here. So I'm thankful to see you here because, yeah,
19 me and Andrew go out and look at creeks and stuff
20 together and, you know, then you see yourself across in
21 an administration room, it's good to see, you know,
22 that type of connection happening where in the field
23 and in administration are finding themselves in the
24 same arena and that's how we build success in these
25 programs is marrying those two together of us here in
26 the office world and them out there in the field world
27 and the issues in between and the conservation of the
28 resource and so it's good to see all the folks here and
29 educating themselves, outreaching the public.

30
31 The people online we thank you again.

32
33 Thank you to all the Staff who got this
34 ready.

35
36 We had a work session yesterday, a
37 little update on that. You know we try to do our best
38 for the public but everybody, especially in a position
39 like this as a Federal Board and you're responsible for
40 the management of fish and wildlife across the state,
41 you could imagine not everyone's going to be happy, you
42 know, and we can't magically make resources come back.
43 I tried. I prayed about it. I did a dance. I beat a
44 drum. I called my grandma. It just don't happen. But
45 what the best thing we could do is find constructive
46 ways to work together to find solutions for the problem
47 and do it in a respectful manner and I'm going to ask
48 that we continue that, that working environment here
49 through the meeting and that we engage with everybody
50

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1 in a positive manner and that -- I'm excited that this
2 process is back in public because it gives us that
3 optics. And we did have a meeting yesterday to try to
4 come up with a few solutions to the public stuff about
5 better involvement, better -- you know, how do we make
6 sure we're being -- listening good enough and meeting
7 the demands of the public and clearly articulating
8 processes that people can follow so there isn't
9 unknowns. So we did a few things we hope will help
10 stem some of those issues and moving forward continue
11 to look to improve the system for you, the users. And
12 if there's things we can do to do that just bend our
13 ear, send us a letter, keep consulting with us and, you
14 know, action comes from people who share their concerns
15 and elevate them to this level so we 100 percent
16 respect all of you for having the encourage to do that
17 and continue to look for that engagement.

18

19 Thank you.

20

21 Sue.

22

23 MS. DETWILER: Yes, thanks.

24

25 MR. BROWER: Tony.

26

27 CHAIRMAN CHRISTIANSON: Charlie, you
28 have the floor.

29

30 MR. BROWER: Thank you, Tony. Yeah,
31 I'd like to thank everyone for being there. I wish I
32 was there but family comes first so hopefully next time
33 I'll be down there in person to attend the meetings.
34 But like everyone's stated, subsistence is in our
35 hearts so we will work closely for all people on the
36 subsistence.

37

38 Thank you.

39

40 CHAIRMAN CHRISTIANSON: Thank you,
41 Charlie.

42

43 Sue, you have the floor.

44

45 MS. DETWILER: Thank you. From OSM, I
46 just wanted to note that we will be losing Tom Kron
47 from our OSM Staff on February 10th. Tom has been with
48 the Office of Subsistence for about 22 years and so
49 he's been with us for awhile and before that he spent
50

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1 25 years, if I'm not mistaken at the Alaska Department
2 of Fish and Game. He's a Fisheries Biologist by
3 training but when he -- in his time at OSM he did just
4 about everything there was to do. He always happily
5 jumped in to help with whatever needed to be done no
6 matter what the challenge was, always has done it with
7 a positive attitude and a can-do attitude and he's just
8 a really pleasant person to work around. And he has
9 also been very generous with sharing his many years of
10 experience of living in Alaska in different parts of
11 the state and sort of helping the new folks get
12 oriented and help understand what it's all about. So I
13 just wanted to let folks know we'll be losing Tom and
14 thank him for the time that we've had with him.

15

16 (Applause)

17

18 CHAIRMAN CHRISTIANSON: He has as many
19 years experience as I am old.

20

21 (Laughter)

22

23 CHAIRMAN CHRISTIANSON: That's
24 impressive Tom. Thank you for all that service.

25

26 (Applause)

27

28 CHAIRMAN CHRISTIANSON: All right, the
29 next -- the most important work happens at Regional
30 Advisory Councils, that's where the nuts and bolts and
31 people are heard and the testimony is served to the
32 good volunteers that step forward to represent their
33 regions and their communities and so we'll call on our
34 Regional Advisory Council Chairs to share out their
35 reports, concerns and comments at this time.

36

37 Thank you.

38

39 And I'll call on my friend, Cathy
40 Needham.

41

42 MS. NEEDHAM: Thank you, Mr. Chair. My
43 name is Cathy Needham. I'm the Vice Chair of the
44 Southeast Alaska Regional Advisory Council. I just
45 wanted to make note that I had the opportunity to talk
46 to our Chairman Hernandez before coming up here and he
47 sends his regards, for those of you that know him and
48 he apologizes that he can't make this meeting but he's
49 doing well in Point Baker.

50

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1 Over the past year the Council has been
2 busy doing work. We had a fisheries regulatory cycle,
3 much of what's going to be on your agenda during these
4 meetings. We made recommendations on two fish
5 proposals, two fisheries closures and a recommendation
6 on the threshold analysis for non-rural determination
7 for the community of Ketchikan. And so those are our
8 important regulatory things that we are working on.

9
10 As you also may be aware we had
11 deferred wildlife proposals that we revisited -- well,
12 we discussed them and revisited them in the fall and
13 made some additional recommendations on those proposals
14 for some potential amendments in terms of trying to do
15 with what the Federal Board has asked of us to find
16 compromise for some potential user conflicts in our
17 region in Unit 4 deer. And I'm sure we'll talk much
18 more about that when we get to those agenda-based
19 items.

20
21 The Southeast Regional Advisory Council
22 is also very busy working on -- we do a lot of work for
23 regulatory types of proposals that are through the
24 Alaska Department of Fish and Game, for both the Board
25 of Fish and Board of Game, and we just had our Board of
26 Game meeting and the Council made 24 -- recommendations
27 on 24 proposals that were just before that cycle and
28 that meeting happened with the last two weeks. We also
29 send a representative from our Council to that meeting
30 to represent the recommendations that our Council makes
31 on those proposals and it's actually a really in-depth
32 way for us to engage with the Board of Game on issues
33 that have been really important to subsistence users in
34 our region that they bring to us to help them to find
35 good solutions for. So we keep ourselves busy with
36 that as well.

37
38 Over the past couple of years, while we
39 weren't meeting in person -- we tried to do this while
40 we were not meeting in person but the Council came up
41 with a position statement on indigenous co-management
42 for our region and actually wrote a letter that we
43 submitted to the Board regarding our -- the work that
44 we hear in our region on how Federally-recognized
45 tribes and ten government can find a better way to meet
46 indigenous management needs with respect to subsistence
47 resources as well as just natural resource management
48 in our region. So we spent a lot of time crafting a
49 position statement and we finalized about two years
50

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1 worth of work that we did that, so we finalized that
2 letter and forwarded it on to you this past year.

3
4 In addition to the position statement
5 we've also worked and continuously work on
6 transboundary mining issues. We have Canadian mines
7 that go into trans -- that have the potential to impact
8 waters that are transboundary that originate out of
9 Canada and come back into Alaska and over the years we
10 have written numerous letters, not just to the Federal
11 Subsistence Board, but we have asked for those
12 communications to be forwarded on as issues to other
13 departments within the U.S. Government outside of the
14 Department of Interior and Agriculture that are water
15 quality issues that are potentially affecting fish that
16 then potentially affect the subsistence resources. And
17 so we continue to hear from our constituents regarding
18 a lot of transboundary mining and water quality issues
19 in those water sheds and try to continue to advocate
20 for those groups and continue those concerns on.

21
22 As with -- I heard it from a number of
23 you, we have a lot of testimony from subsistence users
24 in our region regarding food security issues and it's
25 not necessarily an emerging thing. As you're very well
26 aware Kake is in our region, the Organized Village of
27 Kake is in our region, and a lot of this comes up for
28 being able to meet needs, especially when there was a
29 pandemic and continued uses for that. And so having
30 that local food security and trying to cement that
31 topic into something that we can really grasp and also
32 address the sovereignty -- tribal sovereignty that may
33 or may not go along with that, has been something that
34 we've been discussing at the Council. Most of our
35 communities are on islands in our region and access
36 between communities and to larger communities is
37 becoming higher and higher in cost as is an issue
38 throughout the state so I think that is one of the
39 driving factors for trying to really get a handle on
40 how we can better provide that food security for
41 residents in our region.

42
43 Another issue that we have taken up
44 with the -- we've been trying to address through the
45 Alaska Board of Fish for a number of regulatory cycles.
46 We have an issue in our region where we have a lot of
47 unguided, non-resident sportfishermen that harvest
48 salmon in our waters and that take of largely
49 unreported, and when we look at trying to manage
50

1 fisheries with the various different users and be able
2 to provide for a meaningful subsistence opportunity,
3 having that data we feel is something that's very
4 important. We get a lot of testimony from residents,
5 rural residents in our region about the amount of fish
6 that are harvested and shipped out of our region and
7 shipped out of state when subsistence uses might just
8 be 40 annual sockeye salmon, that might be the bag
9 limit for any particular system and then knowing that
10 some fish can have multiple bag limits each day and
11 then over the course of two weeks that racks up to more
12 take by non-resident unguided fishermen. And so we've
13 been trying to submit proposals to the Board of Fish
14 but we have not yet been successful. It is sort of an
15 issue, like our driving factor is that we really need
16 that data to do proper management because it could
17 potentially be a very large proportion of take. The
18 Department's counter-argument to that is that they do
19 estimate that fish but our users in our region really
20 feel like they're under estimating the amount of what
21 that take is and so that is why we've been trying to
22 address that management action through those proposal
23 -- the proposals that we have submitted for that.

24
25 As Member Schmid mentioned, the Alaska
26 Roadless Rule petition that came through and came
27 forward a couple of years ago on the Tongass National
28 Forest, our Council was very involved with the first
29 iteration of that and we submitted a 26 page comment
30 letter to the process of how the lifting the 2001
31 Roadless Rule protections would impact our subsistence
32 users and then that rule was overturned and then over
33 the past couple of years the U.S. Forest Service has
34 been going back through to -- well as Member Schmid
35 just mentioned, they have now repealed that, or re-
36 however he -- it's gone. The 2001 Roadless Rule
37 protections are back and that was the position that our
38 Council had taken and through the last couple of years
39 we have continued to support our original stance that
40 subsistence users in our region need that protection
41 around their communities in order to access subsistence
42 uses. So that is another thing that we have spent
43 quite a bit of time on.

44
45 As Mr. Chair, you mentioned, we, at our
46 Regional Advisory Council meetings in Southeast Alaska,
47 have the privilege of having a youth engagement program
48 that interacts with us and has been for a number of
49 years and we are lucky to be able to have young people
50

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1 from Sitka come to our meetings. they have
2 participated with us in terms of working with us in
3 work groups, they interact with us, they testify before
4 us, which is a hard thing to do I think when you're in
5 high school, but they do it and they're all very well
6 informed and engaged throughout that process and then
7 hopefully we've trained them well so that when they
8 come before you they have, you know, they can represent
9 those issues as well as they do -- continue to
10 represent those after they've been through our process.
11 Our Council has -- in our annual report, we are
12 specifically asking that this program be like
13 implemented permanently and expanded throughout the
14 state and something that has come before this program
15 in the past is that we have youth representation at the
16 Regional Advisory Council level. And so all of those
17 things will be in our annual report this year because
18 we feel the program is successful and is one of the
19 best ways to reach the younger folks and have them
20 trained up so hopefully like Chairman said, you know,
21 you're sitting back there, then you come up to the next
22 level and pretty soon you'll be there. And I think
23 this is a great example of a program that can do just
24 that. And so we are very lucky in Southeast Alaska to
25 have been able to have them on the forefront of that
26 program as it's being built. And I hope it's funded
27 permanently and actually becomes a permanent part of
28 the overall program.

29
30 And I guess, finally, I'd just like to
31 say that it's great to meet you all in person and I'm
32 excited to -- I have actually been the representative
33 one other time for the Federal Subsistence Board but we
34 met virtually so it's a little bit differently of a
35 ballgame and I look forward to learning and listening
36 and interacting with you guys over this week.

37
38 Thank you.

39
40 CHAIRMAN CHRISTIANSON: Thank you,
41 Cathy. Any questions or comments from the Board for
42 Cathy.

43
44 (No comments)

45
46 CHAIRMAN CHRISTIANSON: Yeah, I just
47 appreciate that. And I just want to echo, yeah, the
48 education outreach component, I strongly support that
49 as a Board member however we can based on the fact we
50

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1 have a hard time filling vacancies in some of our
2 regions and it might be helpful to start educating a
3 little younger and getting stirred up and involved.

4

5 Thank you.

6

7 We'll go ahead and move on to Kodiak.

8

9 MS. SKINNER: Thank you. Rebecca
10 Skinner, the Vice Chair of the Kodiak/Aleutians RAC.

11

12 So this year we finally got back to
13 having in-person meetings. We met in Cold Bay in
14 September of 2022 and I did want to commend the Izembek
15 Refuge Manager Maria Fosado for being a great host. It
16 looks like she has a really good team there so we
17 really appreciated Izembek's hospitality while we met
18 out there.

19

20 The Kodiak/Aleutians RAC does talk a
21 lot about food security and continued access to
22 subsistence resources. This is obviously why we're
23 part of this process. And I did want to comment that
24 in the Kodiak area we had a closure for coho
25 subsistence fishing in September and it was the second
26 year in a row to have a closure for sockeye subsistence
27 fishing at the Buskin River which is one of the main
28 subsistence fisheries in Kodiak.

29

30 So at our meeting in Cold Bay we made
31 recommendations on four proposals to change fishery
32 regulations for Federal public lands in Alaska, all of
33 those were within the Kodiak region. We made
34 recommendations for 14 Federal closure reviews, seven
35 for the Kodiak area, two for the Alaska Peninsula and
36 Cold Bay and five for the Aleutian region. Seven of
37 these reviews were deferred from a previous meeting,
38 which is how we got the high number of 14 closure
39 reviews.

40

41 We identified seven annual report
42 topics. First we talked about enforcement concerns for
43 Federal enforcement of regulations across the region
44 and I think particularly out on the chain. This was
45 identified as an issue, some of the concerns that they
46 have in Unalaska which you might hear more about during
47 the closure review discussion.

48

49 Second. Support for the King Cove

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1 Road.

2

3

4 Third. Discussion on the OSM policy
5 that has limited meeting sites to hub communities in
6 the region, and I think the issue here is around the
7 definition of a hub community, which seems to be
8 defined based on transportation, transportation hub,
9 not a hub as in where a lot of subsistence users live.

9

10

11 Fourth. Changing ocean conditions and
12 climate change that are having a big impact on our
13 communities and subsistence resources and subsistence
14 lifestyle.

14

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The Council nominated one Council member and an alternate to attend the joint meeting of the North American Caribou Workshop and Arctic Ungulate Conference in Anchorage scheduled in May 2023. We suggested the topics of predator control and the importance of timely complete surveys as topics for further discussion and the management workshop.

The Council discussed and voted to support three Alaska Board of Fisheries proposals that

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1 related to salmon and these are for consideration at
2 the Board of Fish February 20th to 25th meeting which
3 involves the Alaska Peninsula, Aleutian Islands and
4 Chignik regions.

5

6 We supported Proposal 98 which modifies
7 waters in the Alaska Peninsula region. These waters
8 are close to subsistence fishing for salmon and for --
9 sorry. We wanted to modify the closure which right now
10 prohibits subsistence fishing when commercial fishing
11 is not open and we're looking to remove the prohibition
12 for people who don't have a fishery -- a commercial
13 fishing permit.

14

15 Proposal 103 which reduces the bag and
16 possession limits of coho and sockeye salmon in
17 saltwater and fresh water drainages of Cold Bay.

18

19 Proposal 169 which is regarding the
20 definition and treatment of invasive species.

21

22 And then the Council also discussed the
23 need to improve Council member recruitment and
24 emphasized the need to recruit representatives from
25 smaller and more remote communities within the region.

26

27 And that's all I have, thank you.

28

29 CHAIRMAN CHRISTIANSON: Thank you. Any
30 questions from the Board.

31

32 MR. LORD: Mr. Chair.

33

34 CHAIRMAN CHRISTIANSON: Yes, Ken.

35

36 MR. LORD: Rebecca, you mentioned
37 concerns about law enforcement at Unalaska, are we
38 talking about inadequate enforcement or some other
39 issue?

40

41 MS. SKINNER: So when we get to the
42 closure reviews we might have Chris Price who's on the
43 RAC from Unalaska come up and speak, but my
44 understanding is it's primarily the lack of enforcement
45 from the both Federal and State perspective.

46

47 MR. LORD: Thank you.

48

49 CHAIRMAN CHRISTIANSON: And I'm just

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1 going to ask online if Della wanted to comment as well,
2 I know she was listening. So Della we'd also open up
3 the floor for you to speak if you'd like to.

4

5 MS. TRUMBLE: Thank you, Mr. Chair. I
6 think Rebecca has covered this very well, the report
7 very well. And then the issue, I think, on the
8 enforcement did relate also to in and around Cold Bay.
9 It seems to be an issue that's starting to come up more
10 and more.

11

12 Thank you.

13

14 CHAIRMAN CHRISTIANSON: Thank you.
15 Thank you guys for that perspective. A lot of times
16 that's what we're struggling with here as a Board is
17 regulations that are hard to enforce and we've come up
18 with that several times when we develop them, and
19 enforcing it on the ground is a trust between us and
20 the user that we represent. And, me, as a tribal
21 citizen working towards food security in our region
22 looking at partnering -- for me, co-management, it
23 means that we are going to become the enforcement,
24 that's my roundup look at it. Is how do we engage
25 ourselves at the low level to become the co-managers to
26 enforce those regulations that we are putting forth as
27 partners in conjunction with the Federal agencies that
28 set those and I think there is a pathway to that
29 myself. I think that's how we do it, we start to put
30 ourselves in a position of power with a badge and we
31 start to regulate the resource or else somebody else
32 does it with nobody there to protect it. And we see
33 that time and time again, and most of these resources
34 that we have an issue with is that they weren't
35 regulated and enforced. And so I hope us, as a
36 collection of resource managers and land managers find
37 a way to start to enforce the regulations we have and
38 work with our rural partners to find avenues to empower
39 those people to enforce the regulations that we set
40 forth. So I really hope to continue to find an avenue
41 for us to do that.

42

43 Thank you for that.

44

45 Bristol Bay.

46

47 MS. MORRIS LYON: Thank you, Mr. Chair.
48 And I would just fully support that. You can put as
49 many regulations you like on the books but unless

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1 they're enforced they're not worth the paper they're
2 written on. And I think those of us that live in rural
3 communities see that way more often than those that
4 live in more populated places and I think that you're
5 on to something there and I'd fully support it from my
6 area that's for sure.

7
8 I also want to absolutely applaud
9 Southeast and their group of youth that are here to
10 learn, to offer up what you have to offer up. I think
11 that's long overdue. I encourage you to continue. I
12 encourage those of you in Southeast to share the
13 program with the rest of us. We have been working on
14 getting more and more involvement in Bristol Bay from
15 our youth out there and we've had some success but this
16 is a step above what we've been able to do and I think
17 you're doing a fantastic job and would love to learn
18 more about the program and hope you do plan on sharing
19 it with others and thank you guys for participating as
20 well.

21
22 For us, we met in November, this year,
23 when most of our hunting and fishing seasons were over.
24 We made recommendations on one deferred proposal and
25 two fisheries closures at our meeting this fall. We
26 made recommendations on one deferred proposals and two
27 fisheries closures at our meeting this fall. We made
28 recommendations to rescind both of the fisheries
29 closures and recommended amending language to the
30 deferred wildlife proposal 22-40, which you're going to
31 be hearing about, it sounded like tomorrow. I didn't
32 know you had it on a time certain but I'm glad you did
33 because I'd like to let some of my people in the region
34 know about it and I hope they plan on participating.
35 This is a proposal that we have been working on
36 literally for years. You are aware of that. Some of
37 the newer members of this Board may not be aware of
38 that. And it's something that we've really needed in
39 this area and this region and we're very, very hopeful
40 that, you know, it's going to be found on a positive
41 note and pass this time in a manner that is going to be
42 acceptable to both our hunters and the Board. So I
43 look forward to that debate and discussion and
44 hopefully we can help everybody understand where we're
45 coming from.

46
47 Issues identified over the past year
48 for our report by my entire Board were some of the
49 things we've already heard and in addition to that,
50

1 there's concern amongst our Board for some of the
2 proposals we've brought forward from our region which
3 is heavily populated by Fish and Wildlife Service and
4 Park Service properties and we have struggled with
5 finding that the appointees to this Board don't always
6 acknowledge ANILCA rules over company policy and we
7 would like for consideration to come up that training
8 be done for anybody who is sitting on the Board and
9 participating in these proceedings be well versed in
10 ANILCA as well as what public policy might be and to
11 remember that ANILCA should take priority at these
12 hearings. It's a concern that my Board wanted me to
13 bring forward and I think, you know, rightfully so, we
14 need to uphold subsistence priority on Federal public
15 lands specifically when there's a conflict between
16 ANILCA and agency-specific regulations.

17
18 The other things that we're seeing out
19 there as probably all of you know we've had two back to
20 back record breaking sockeye return years and they've
21 been in unusual locations for us over on the Nushagak
22 side versus the east side and with this our bear
23 population has literally exploded. We had a sow with
24 five cubs on the river all year, all five cubs made it
25 through. Something we've not -- I've never seen out
26 there in my 40 years and it's highly unusual but it's
27 cause for concern because with these healthy
28 populations we're going to have more and more predators
29 and it's just something we'd like to make sure the
30 Board's aware of that the numbers of bears are going to
31 be increasing greatly with the food source going up so
32 strongly as well.

33
34 We also wanted to mention that we're
35 struggling as well to fill our empty vacant seats. We
36 would love to see some younger folks take those seats.
37 Myself included, we'd love to hand this over to the
38 next generation who have better and more thoughtful
39 ways of thinking about things sometimes than ourselves
40 and can bring fresh ideas to the table. I think it's
41 time. And it's a concern for us. So if anybody has
42 had better luck recruiting or have some methods that
43 have worked for them I wish you'd share them with us
44 because we do our best and it's especially tough to get
45 people from our smaller, more remote villages to step
46 up and take a seat and, yeah, they're the ones who can
47 add the most value to our Board. So if anybody has any
48 ideas I'm open to listen to them.

49
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1 We also struggle with game survey
2 information. We have some of our areas that have not
3 had a current survey for three plus years, four years
4 now and in order to make well informed decisions we
5 feel, you know, as a Board that we have to have up to
6 date information. It's pretty tough to tell us that we
7 should or shouldn't put our moose on a limited entry
8 program when we don't really know what we have there.
9 So it's something that we hope receives recognition as
10 an important factor that we need in order to make
11 informed decisions and we want the Board to be aware of
12 that.

13
14 On the good news, overall, we had a
15 really good year in Bristol Bay. We had a bunch of
16 really strong sockeye runs. We had some of our --
17 we've had some problems out there with our hare and
18 ptarmigan -- and with not meeting in person it seems
19 like none of this has gotten shared and it seems like a
20 while since everybody saw each other but we've had some
21 real down turns on those and those have come back very
22 quickly, even our cold harsh winters that we've had the
23 last couple of years have not taken away from them so
24 we're grateful for that. We are struggling, however,
25 with our king salmon just like everybody else. The
26 Nushagak has dropped off significantly last year when
27 it wasn't even expected to happen and we have very,
28 very high concerns for our subsistence users all up and
29 down that river which are many, many villages and many
30 people did not get the kings that they would like to
31 have seen last year off the Nushagak so we're well
32 aware of those, working through Board of Fish avenues.
33 I also sit on the king committee for that and several
34 others but we will be speaking about our king concerns
35 more than just here at this table, I can assure you.

36
37 Other than that, we pretty much just
38 want to thank the Council for filling our Coordinator
39 position finally. We realize how tough it is to fill
40 all of these positions. Everybody has struggled with
41 it. As a business, even in my own personal business I
42 have struggled with it so we appreciate your efforts
43 and everything you've done to help us make sure that
44 our meetings have been successful out in Bristol Bay.

45
46 Thank you.

47
48 CHAIRMAN CHRISTIANSON: Thank you.
49 And, Nanci, for the record can you state your name
50

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1 please.

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MS. MORRIS LYON: Absolutely. Nanci
Morris Lyon, Bristol Bay RAC Chair.

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CHAIRMAN CHRISTIANSON: Thank you. And
also I just had a couple comments about, you know, in
your report about us being a new -- and it's funny, you
know, I looked down the end of the Board here and I'm
the only one besides Glenn that was here when I got
here so yes it's new and so we did kind of hear and
look at this feedback and so we had a meeting and a
training on Monday for everybody here to go through
ANILCA, to look at each role and responsibility and to
wrestle through some of those hard stuff and had pretty
frank conversations based on the feedback we get from
you guys as the rural leaders and the public and our
other liaisons about how to try to better serve and be
that conduit for you guys to find an avenue for success
in what you're doing. So we just want to let you know
we are diligent in that and we'll continue to try to
sharpen ourselves up so we can do the best job for you
guys.

MS. MORRIS LYON: Well, thank you, it's
appreciated. Nice to know you're ahead of the ball,
that's very appreciated.

CHAIRMAN CHRISTIANSON: Myron, yes, you
have the floor Yukon.

MR. NANENG: Yes, good afternoon, thank
you, Mr. Chairman and Members of the Board. I haven't
attended a Federal Subsistence Board meeting since
about 2016 and definitely there are new faces on the
Board with the exception of Ken Lord, who we used to
argue a lot of Federal rules and regulations as he's
the solicitor for Fish and Wildlife Service.

My name is Myron P. Naneng, Sr., I'm
originally from the village of Hooper Bay. And I got
on the Regional Advisory Council last year and during
the first meeting I was selected as the Vice Chairman
of the Regional Advisory Council for the YK-Delta.

As you know we've had some ongoing
concerns regarding salmon on the Yukon and the
Kuskokwim. Whenever you talk about the Yukon and the
Kuskokwim, you got to include the coastal villages that

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1 are directly impacted by the lack of salmon that are
2 returning into the river systems. A lot of families
3 this past summer, for the last few years have not
4 harvested much salmon for their families for winter
5 food. And as a matter of fact this last summer the
6 reports came back from some of the fishermen at Hooper
7 Bay, that some of the fishermen were cited for fishing
8 by the State of Alaska apparently because I got asked
9 during the Board of Fish meeting on AYK proposals
10 earlier this month, how's that test case going and if I
11 heard anything about the test case, are they trying to
12 test our subsistence users to make them criminalized.
13 That's the question I have with the question that was
14 asked by one of the Board of Fish members.

15

16 And the other thing, too, is that the
17 king salmon have not returned in numbers like they have
18 before. The coho salmon there was hardly any this
19 fall. The last two summers there's hardly been any
20 chum salmon. And most of the coastal villages are
21 impacted by the predominant winds that blow during the
22 wintertime if the -- you know especially those salmon
23 that are bound for the Yukon, the wind blows the river
24 water along the coast and that's when some of those
25 villages on the coast have an opportunity to harvest
26 some of the salmon. And most of the time they're not
27 able to harvest any of the salmon even for food, even
28 for one, for food because of the lack of winds that are
29 blowing, if it's an east wind or a south wind, then
30 they bypass Hooper Bay, they bypass Chevak and Scammon
31 Bay and the Kuskokwim River, for the last -- maybe the
32 last 10 years or so since there's been restrictions on
33 the river, the villages have requested Federal
34 management. Why, because it seems like the villages
35 feel more comfortable in working with Federal managers
36 than they do with the state of Alaska. They don't
37 trust the State because they allow a commercial
38 fisheries to be occurring in known migratory routes of
39 the salmon that are bound for the Kuskokwim and the
40 Yukon such as Area M. They allow the intercept fishery
41 of salmon bound for the Kuskokwim and the Yukon and so
42 we're all impacted by that intercept fishery. At one
43 point they delayed the opening of the salmon fishery
44 down in Area M and that allowed for some of the salmon
45 to return to the river system. They delayed it until
46 about June 10th or so and there was a little bit of
47 number of chum salmon returning to the river systems
48 when they did that. And we're also being impacted by
49 the Bering Sea, the Bering Sea bycatch.

50

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1 All down the Coast they've seen less
2 halibut, smaller size halibut in Western Alaska than
3 they ever did before. They could probably catch like
4 maybe 10 of them but they're no longer than -- less
5 than two feet long. A majority of them are less than
6 that. And even the abundance of whitefish has
7 decreased because of the fact that some of their food
8 source, the fish eggs that the salmon when they spawn
9 in some of these river systems has impacted the food
10 source for whitefish.

11
12 There's been a decline of tomcods along
13 the Coast. For the first time in three years they're
14 finally catching a few out in Scammon Bay, which
15 Scammon Bay is where my wife happens to be from so I
16 see what people are harvesting in terms of the tomcods
17 that they've been trying to fish for for the last few
18 years. And there's also a decline in Bering Sea cisco
19 and lamprey. The blame has been put on, by some of the
20 people that it's due to commercial fisheries of those
21 stocks, species. So that needs to be taken a look at
22 because lampreys as well as Bering Sea ciscos are the
23 food source of our people. And not only are they being
24 impacted by people or commercial fisheries but we've
25 got a lot of beavers starting to close off some of the
26 streams on some of the rivers on the Coast. Has any of
27 you ever seen a beaver swimming out in the Bering Sea.
28 I've seen a few. Has any of you ever heard of a moose
29 swimming out in the Bering Sea. I've seen a few. Down
30 below the mouth of the Yukon on the south side around
31 Black River I've seen quite a number of moose swimming
32 out in the Bering Sea and even at Hooper Bay trying to
33 cross along the beach and trying to go across to the
34 other side of the bay there's been some moose swimming
35 around there. These are changes that we've never seen
36 before.

37
38 And beavers are causing a lot of
39 streams to be blocked off. I think there was a study
40 that was done either by Fish and Wildlife Service or
41 some Federal agency where there are about five
42 different beaver dams in one slough. That has never
43 happened before.

44
45 And we're getting a lot of influx of
46 sportshunters that are starting to trespass on our
47 private and village corporation lands. Some of the
48 villages have allowed for some of the commercial --
49 commercial guides to go in and sign a lease and
50

1 agreement or a land use permit to bring in
2 sportshunters to harvest a moose on some of their lands
3 but other people are sneaking in and trying to remove
4 that resource that should belong to our people in the
5 village, meaning that that land is providing at least
6 some income to our land owners when it's paid for by
7 the guides that have been authorized to bring in
8 sportshunters because the population of moose has been
9 increasing to the point where we can catch maybe two on
10 one hunting trip, a cow, a calf or a bull, that's on
11 the YK Delta on the Lower Yukon.

12
13 And one of the things that we've seen
14 the last few years on the YK Delta is there are more
15 fires, tundra fires as well as fires near some of the
16 villages. Last summer the community of St. Mary's was
17 evacuated because of the fire that got really close to
18 the village.

19
20 I think in one of the studies that was
21 done by one of the agencies said that beavers are also
22 contributing to that issue and problem.

23
24 And last fall we had Typhoon Merbok.
25 Our in our village of Hooper Bay, and inupiat speaking
26 villages they called it Typhoon (In Inupiat) means high
27 water. We've never seen as much high water at Hooper
28 Bay and all the surrounding lands like at Chevak and
29 around (In Native) with that typhoon that happened in
30 September. You know never before has the land close to
31 around the village of Hooper Bay ended up with having
32 only three islands where before, you know, you could
33 walk across but this time many people couldn't go
34 across from one point, one side of the village to the
35 other because the water was so high. And it even
36 destroyed some of the trails that the village was
37 working on for conservation purposes. So there's a lot
38 of landscape changes that we're dealing with out in the
39 YK Delta as well as subsistence patterns. Merbok --
40 Typhoon Merbok with the high water affected people's
41 ability to set blackfish traps because it brought in
42 salt water in freshwater lakes that usually provided
43 blackfish, those small blackfish that they usually
44 harvest at this time of the year. So a lot of people
45 are having to move further inland away from the
46 affected areas to harvest that blackfish for food.

47
48 So there's -- I think a map will need
49 to be made of how much impact that Typhoon Merbok and
50

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1 the floods that happened along the Coast. I know some
2 of the villages were impacted pretty much also up in
3 Norton Sound area.

4
5 This past weekend we had another storm
6 out at Hooper Bay and for three or four days there was
7 power outage. Part of it was due to the fact that last
8 fall the powerlines were impacted by the Typhoon
9 Merbok. High winds as high as 70, 70 miles per hour,
10 and this past weekend it was like about 50 miles per
11 hour winds. Cold wind chill factors and it froze a lot
12 of water pipelines, flooded some homes, flooded some
13 businesses and loss of community water for awhile. So
14 it's having a very big impact in the community of
15 Hooper Bay that has not been allowed to go subsistence
16 fishing for the last three years.

17
18 Cost of groceries have increased
19 substantially. Even to go hunting, to buy a gallon of
20 gasoline is probably about 8\$ a gallon and in some
21 villages it may be even higher. And it's causing a lot
22 of family dysfunctions because of the fact that
23 families are not working together during the summertime
24 to harvest food together for the winter. It's not just
25 out at Hooper Bay but pretty much all throughout the
26 whole Yukon and Kuskokwim areas. I told the Board of
27 Fish at AYK meeting, it's affecting the villages
28 economically and socially. A lot of concerns going on.

29
30 So I think that -- you know I remember
31 when I was growing up there was a bounty on spotted
32 seals by the State of Alaska where you got maybe 5
33 bucks for the face of a spotted seal, maybe we ought to
34 do that for beaver. I'm not necessarily suggesting it
35 but it's an idea because there's a big influx of beaver
36 on many of the streams that produce whitefish and other
37 species of fish in the Delta. So that's one of the
38 major concerns that's going on right now in our area.

39
40 Mr. Chairman, if it's okay, if Ray
41 Oney, the Chairman of the AYK RAC is online, I'd like
42 to ask him to add more.

43
44 CHAIRMAN CHRISTIANSON: Sure, yes, Ray,
45 you have the floor.

46
47 MR. ONEY: Thank you, Mr. Chairman.
48 Thank you, Myron for that report. For the record my
49 name is Raymond Oney. I'm the Chairman for the YK RAC
50

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1 from the village of Alakanuk. And, again, I want to
2 thank Myron for giving you the Federal Subsistence
3 Board update on the things that have been happening in
4 the YK area.

5

6 And I think Myron pretty much nailed
7 everything on the head, the concerns that came out from
8 the meeting that we had in the fall. That was the
9 first meeting that we had together and hopefully we'll
10 continue to see that meeting in person so I want to
11 thank everyone for participating in that meeting.

12

13 As you heard salmon crises has
14 continued to be our priority as far as issues that
15 affect both the Yukon and Kuskokwim. It's something
16 that needs to be looked at and studied and make every
17 effort to make it a priority for this Board to find
18 ways to try and rebuild the stocks that we see are
19 going down really fast. We need this Board to step up
20 to see what it's going to take to address the declines
21 of the salmon before it's too late. We don't want to
22 put this in the history books to say that we tried, you
23 know, I know there's -- there's other issues that could
24 be addressed too like moratorium, I'm sure a moratorium
25 should be looked at for both the people that are
26 commercially fishing in order to rebuild the stocks,
27 both for the Yukon and Kuskokwim. You know it's an
28 ongoing issue and until we find ways that -- we need to
29 come to the table to find ways to address that and we
30 still need to make that a priority.

31

32 Everything has a chain reaction. When
33 something goes down, like in the cycle of life, that's
34 where we're at, a portion of that cycle has been taken
35 off and now we're in the wobbly stage and that's where
36 we need your help in trying to rebuild that cycle where
37 we depend on. That's who we are as people that depend
38 on that cycle of life and this is the salmon that we're
39 talking about that needs to be rebuilt and we need
40 everyone on the table to find ways to rebuild it. And
41 we need everything on the table because we need to
42 bring the salmon back, we don't want to see it as part
43 of a species that's lost, we need your help in this.

44

45 Appreciate you listening to me and
46 thank you and thank Myron for giving the report from
47 YK, so thank you.

48

49 CHAIRMAN CHRISTIANSON: Thank you, Mr.

50

0037

1 Oney. Any questions for the Board from the YK Delta.
2 And I appreciate your guys' comments, that's a good
3 report there. The hardship, I was concerned about the
4 West Coast of Alaska after all that and the food
5 security and just the loss of food that may have
6 happened and all the sinking of the houses was a real
7 concern of mine, knowing, you know, that we process a
8 lot of food and put it away in areas that are usually
9 in cellars and basements and places that are easy to
10 access so I was just really concerned in that area.

11

12 And then also, secondly, beavers are a
13 huge issue in fisheries management in our area as well.
14 Gone unchecked we lost several sockeye systems over the
15 years of not managing them, of not putting people on
16 the ground, up the rivers, walking them, talking about
17 it and looking and pulling those structures out
18 regularly to get those fish to pass. Especially
19 sockeyes. I mean cohos could jump over it. But the
20 sockeye, they don't have that power that the coho does
21 and so beaver dams become a problem. We did a study on
22 16 systems and 10 of them had beaver problems and 8 of
23 them no longer had fish in them. So it's that kind of
24 concern when you're talking about beaver so I hope you
25 guys can find a management tool out there. I won't
26 even pick on Charlie about the beavers.

27

28 MR. WRIGHT: I have a beaver story.

29

30 CHAIRMAN CHRISTIANSON: I know you did
31 because that's what I like about your show brother.

32

33 (Laughter)

34

35 CHAIRMAN CHRISTIANSON: All right, any
36 more questions about the YK.

37

38 (No comments)

39

40 CHAIRMAN CHRISTIANSON: Okay, if
41 there's no other questions thank you, Myron, for your
42 presentation. We'll go ahead and I think Jack Reakoff
43 is online and we'll call on you now.

44

45 MR. REAKOFF: Thank you, Chairman. I
46 could not participate in the fall October meeting of
47 the Western Interior Regional Advisory Council. I was
48 unloading a semi-tractor trailer, I was nine feet off
49 the ground, I got knocked off balance and landed hard

50

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1 on frozen ground and cracked bones in my feet, ankles,
2 sprained my ankles, I crawled for two months. I now
3 can walk a little bit but I'm doing good, I should be
4 climbing these hills again by summer. So that's one of
5 the reasons I'm not at the Federal Subsistence Board
6 meeting.

7

8 Vice Chair Jenny Pelkola, she actually
9 Chaired the meeting, I was on conference call during
10 the entire meeting.

11

12 The Council made recommendations on
13 five Federal proposals and closure review proposals and
14 then three State fisheries proposals at the fall
15 meeting.

16

17 We sent correspondence to the U.S. Fish
18 and Wildlife Service concerning complexing issues with
19 Refuges and hoping to have open dialogue with the
20 Regional Director on that.

21

22 We submitted comments to the Bureau of
23 Land Management during their review of the Ambler Road
24 proposal. We have lots of concerns about that project
25 and again restated some of our previous concerns
26 regarding that 211 Mile road across -- going from the
27 Dalton Highway over to the Ambler Mining District.

28

29 We sent out correspondence to the
30 Alaska Department of Fish and Game conveying concerns
31 about management on the Kuskokwim River in the fall
32 2022 coho salmon season.

33

34 And we also selected members to go to
35 the Caribou Ungulate Conference in Anchorage in early
36 May. Member Vent will be attending for the Council. I
37 will be attending this same meeting for the Gates of
38 the Arctic Subsistence Resource Commission.

39

40 During this last year, the Council had
41 much appreciation to the Federal Subsistence Board for
42 adopting the sheep proposal, Wildlife Special Action
43 Request 22-02 in July. I wanted to express our
44 appreciation to the Bureau of Land Management, U.S.
45 Fish and Wildlife, and National Park Service law
46 enforcement. They did an excellent job in informing
47 the public about that closure. The Western Interior
48 Council will be exploring the development of a Sheep
49 Management Plan for this affected area at our next
50

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1 meeting. So we're going to be looking at that issue
2 also.

3
4 We would like to see expansion of
5 tribal co-management and consultation to species of
6 concern as well as those that are of cultural
7 subsistence importance to other Federal departments.

8
9 We encourage the Board to assist in
10 every way possible to facilitate understanding the
11 driving forces behind the current multi-species, multi-
12 drainage salmon crash so that steps can be made to
13 regain these salmon runs as you've been hearing from
14 the other Council members and I appreciate their
15 comments.

16
17 We are concerned about the Unit 19C,
18 19C is in part of the Western Interior region, the dall
19 sheep population, that population is also in dire
20 heartship. These sheep populations are driven to
21 extremely low numbers by climate change, rain on snow,
22 we're not out of the woods yet. The north edge of the
23 Brooks Range, Toolik Research Station documented two
24 large rain events on the front edge of the north slope
25 of the Brooks Range and so there's rain on snow events,
26 glazed the ground is extremely hard on dall sheep and
27 also on caribou. Caribou can migrate away from it and
28 dall sheep can't.

29
30 And so we continue to be concerned
31 about the declining Mulchatna Caribou Herd. Mulchatna
32 has not stabilized yet, it's still ticking back
33 downward. We're still concerned about that. And we
34 appreciate the measures taken by the Federal
35 Subsistence Board for an in-season caribou management
36 from the Togiak Refuge Manager. Appreciate that.

37
38 We are concerned about the Yukon salmon
39 fisheries, the salmon destinations for the Yukon, where
40 we had complete closure by all subsistence on the
41 Yukon River system and very limited salmon use on the
42 Kuskokwim yet there's commercial fisheries in the Area
43 M area that took significant numbers of Yukon and
44 Kuskokwim bound chum salmon which have achieved record
45 low numbers. So we're concerned about that issue.

46
47 We're concerned about the subsistence
48 restrictions that were taking place on the Kuskokwim
49 River and I think the State Board of Fish has addressed
50

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1 some of those issues, but those were burning issues at
2 the WIRAC meeting.

3
4 The WIRAC fails to achieve membership
5 from the lower part of our region, down in what would
6 be the Holy Cross, Grayling, Shageluk, we want
7 representation from there. We want representation from
8 down in Aniak and our next meeting is slated to be in
9 Aniak if we can work out the logistics for that. We
10 used to meet in Aniak quite often, several different
11 times during my membership on the Council since 1993
12 and we would like to meet there to listen to the public
13 about what their concerns are. We have to meet in
14 these various portions of our region, our region is
15 huge, and we have to meet in various portions of our
16 region so that we can listen to the public. That's
17 what, under .805 of ANILCA, the Councils are a platform
18 for listening to the public so we intend to meet in
19 Aniak if we can get the meeting place, and we have some
20 conflicts with some other meetings, with other
21 organizations.

22
23 We commented again on the Ambler Road
24 as I said. There is concerns about that road becoming
25 eventually open to the public. The public is led to
26 believe it's a private road but I've lived in the
27 Brooks Range before the Dalton Highway was here, this
28 road, it's even in the ANILCA law, is a closed road,
29 it's not closed. The public circumvents the closure by
30 buying -- basically staking a mining claim, they become
31 a commercial user and then general public will use the
32 road long before it's officially open. And that's what
33 happened on the Dalton Highway. When the State took m
34 management of the road they basically did a -- they
35 took out their checkpoints because it was fruitless.
36 There was so many people going through that had mine --
37 auspices of mining that were going caribou hunting on
38 the North Slope, they just gave up on it, that's what
39 will happen on Ambler. We're concerned about that
40 issue.

41
42 We're concerned about the lack of
43 representation on the North Pacific Fisheries
44 Management Council by subsistence users. There was a
45 lot of discussion about food security at our Council
46 member's topics. The salmon collapse pushes the
47 subsistence users to go to alternate resources, just
48 like the predators do. When the salmon don't return
49 the brown bears shift to hunting moose and black bears,
50

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1 that affects the subsistence users. So these salmon
2 collapses actually start pushing predation at a higher
3 and higher rate. And we see that -- we have members in
4 the Koyukuk River Advisory testify that they check bear
5 dens, they hunt bears, they go to 54 dens they found
6 one black bear and one of the bears that they actually
7 tried to get was all chewed up by brown bears. So
8 they're injuring black bears, taking out black bears,
9 taking out moose and then the trophic level, or the
10 productivity of the streams goes down and so then the
11 whitefish and other fish that rely on that nutrient
12 flow from the marine system that the salmon bring
13 affects the in-river systems so we're starting to see
14 fewer -- and, you know, there's concerns about, you
15 know, the shift of subsistence but that's not
16 reflecting so much that it's human induced, it's
17 predominately the cause of these marine systems. So we
18 have to get these -- achieve these escapements back up
19 stream so that we can build up the nutrient level to
20 feed some of these predators and make an overall intact
21 ecosystem again. With one leg of the tri-leg stool
22 kicked out, the salmon gone, the stool is collapsing on
23 the other side.

24
25 People are concerned about the high
26 cost in rural Alaska and the driving out the younger
27 people from some of the communities and then with
28 closures there's a certain amount of training that goes
29 on with fish camps and cutting fish. When there's been
30 virtually none, no, very little harvest, that's highly
31 effective, the conveyance of subsistence use practices
32 for the younger generation.

33
34 The members observed the weather
35 patterns that traditionally recognized have changed
36 caribou migration timing and where the caribou are --
37 you know, when they move -- that affects when the
38 caribou arrive. Traditionally they would migrate in
39 August, September, early October when the bulls are --
40 when the bull caribou are in excellent condition. When
41 caribou migrate late into mid-October, after the 10th
42 of October large bulls go into rut and you can't gag
43 one down. For those that don't know much about
44 caribou, you cannot gag one down, sled dogs will not
45 eat it, and so it shifts the hunters towards harvesting
46 cow caribou and so that can be an issue. The Western
47 Herd has been declining and so there's going to be a
48 restrictions on cow caribou harvest. You'll probably
49 see proposals about that.

50

0042

1 So we had a bad berry year this year,
2 it was dry and then it was too wet and so that pushes
3 black bears into poor condition going into hibernation.

4
5 Currently on the south slope of the
6 Brooks Range the snow depth is 22 inches and we have
7 not had rain here, fortunately, the north side had
8 rain, and up into Unit 26B (ph), 26C had rain up to the
9 mountain fronts but here we don't have rain on snow.
10 There are very snowshoe hares, we're in a snowshoe hare
11 low cycle. Wolf population has actually moved away to
12 the west and to the east towards the Porcupine Caribou
13 Herd. They've cannibalized individuals, wolf
14 populations will cannibalize themselves down when they
15 go into virtually lack of food sources and so the wolf
16 population is low but the ungulate population is
17 extremely low and so the dall sheep population here is
18 just still in recover. So the number of predators is
19 down but the number of sheep is way, way down. They're
20 historically low.

21
22 So that would be my report, Mr.
23 Chairman.

24
25 Thank you.

26
27 CHAIRMAN CHRISTIANSON: Thank you,
28 Jack. Appreciate the thorough report. Any questions
29 for Jack from the Board. Discussion.

30
31 MS. BOARIO: Mr. Chair.

32
33 CHAIRMAN CHRISTIANSON: Sarah.

34
35 MS. BOARIO: Thank you. I just wanted
36 to thank the WIRAC Chairman and RAC members for your
37 letter and highlighting here again today your concerns
38 about challenges that we face with capacity and how
39 that impacts our field presence, specifically your
40 concerns and questions about how we're addressing those
41 at Kanuti and Yukon Flats Refuges. I did receive your
42 letter and you will be hearing back from me very soon
43 and I completely understand the concerns around how
44 those are communicated and how we consult about some of
45 those challenges we're facing. So thank you again for
46 -- thank you for highlighting that.

47
48 MR. REAKOFF: Thank you for addressing
49 that issue. So I look forward to seeing your comments.
50

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1 CHAIRMAN CHRISTIANSON: Thank you,
2 Jack. Good to hear you.

3
4 MR. REAKOFF: Thank you.

5
6 CHAIRMAN CHRISTIANSON: We'll move on
7 to Charlie Wright. Eastern Interior.

8
9 MR. WRIGHT: Thank you. For a little
10 report I'd like to start with salmon. You've been
11 hearing a lot about it today and it's because it's dear
12 to a lot of our hearts. We're all connected through
13 salmon one way through another, pretty much everybody
14 in the room and throughout the state of Alaska and so
15 on.

16
17 As you all know that the people have
18 all been in conservation mode on the Kuskokwim and the
19 Yukon and the Yukon especially really bad. The numbers
20 are really low. All the tributaries, the people have
21 not been able to fish since 2019. The people along the
22 Yukon have been carrying the majority of this load on
23 their shoulders and happen to be in conservation mode
24 and we've even volunteered to do so.

25
26 Ichthyophonus is a disease that's
27 really affecting the salmon on the Yukon right now in a
28 great number, it's killing them. A lot of them are
29 dead before -- they're really in bad shape there when
30 they get to the Rapids and the middle of the Yukon and
31 don't make it to Eagle so the river is absorbing them
32 after they die because it's such a big river you're not
33 seeing a lot of them. We do see a few of the smaller
34 ones come up in the eddies, you see the seagulls
35 chewing on them and we go and we look and it's little
36 king salmon are all blown up.

37
38 It's really tough on all the people.
39 All the fish camps are brushed over, grassed over, you
40 can barely see them from the river no more. We're not
41 being able to see our kids the tradition. Not only is
42 it affecting the people along the Yukon River and it's
43 tributaries in the Kusko, but it's like -- like you
44 heard other people say today, it's affecting the whole
45 ecosystem. All the animals that eat the dead fish
46 after they spawn, all of them eat it, the bears, the
47 wolves, the coyotes, the foxes, the lynx, right down to
48 the blue flies being affected, so the whole ecosystem
49 is being affected. And the longer it goes on the worse
50

0044

1 the effect is. Big things are eating little things now
2 that -- it's not normal. Well, in some -- to some
3 extent, like the big bears eating the little bears is
4 more so now. You don't see black bears along the Yukon
5 River no more, far and few between because the big
6 bears that come down off the mountains to find salmon
7 in the mouth of the tributaries have nothing else to
8 eat but the little bears. So that whole ecosystem is
9 crashing when the animals chew on the decaying fish,
10 the little chunks float all the way back to the ocean
11 and start feeding the ocean and it's the ecosystem, the
12 circle of life in our region.

13

14 So we need to do something.

15

16 We need to support all the ACs and the
17 people of the Interior, support Proposal 140 that's
18 going to make change in the Area M Fisheries, the
19 intercept fisheries to help with getting more salmon
20 getting into the river to help with escapement. We're
21 not going to be able to eat until we get escapement
22 met. We can't enhance salmon on the river in no way
23 until we get escapement met. Our back's are in the
24 corner. We really need some support. That's why I put
25 in this special action request last year, to kind of
26 send a message to this Board that we need to start
27 stepping up and following ANILCA laws. We need to
28 start doing our jobs. We need to hold everybody's hand
29 to the fire. We need everybody to pitch in and try to
30 help with this, to keep the wild stocks of salmon alive
31 in our rivers. We have the last wild stock in the
32 world. And the writing is on the wall, it's been --
33 it's been centuries this has been happening all the way
34 around the globe so it's not hard to figure out how to
35 fix but we need everybody to start doing their part in
36 trying to help.

37

38 So I'm not going to go any further into
39 salmon, I'll continue on with the other part of my
40 report.

41

42 It's just as bad.

43

44 The caribou management has not been
45 working. Either the count or the management has
46 failed, the numbers in some of the herds up near the
47 border have lost 50 percent of their animals so we
48 really need to start paying attention to that, as
49 feeding a lot of people, if we can't hunt then we can't
50

0045

1 eat, if we can't fish, we can't eat. People with no
2 other means are really suffering. You know what that
3 means, they have no Costco, they have no Safeway. They
4 have no other means. Some places, some villages don't
5 have a store and if they do it cost 10\$ a gallon of gas
6 to try to go find something that's leftover to eat. So
7 it's -- it's really tough. A lot of people don't know
8 because they don't live out there. I live out on the
9 river and thank God I'm closer to the big city where I
10 can go and still get some food where it doesn't cost me
11 a whole bunch but there's a lot of people that are
12 hurting.

13

14

15 The moose count is low in density.
16 They're counting -- the moose counts are being counted
17 in a lot of areas by the harvest permits and the people
18 hunt, and they hunt hard to find a moose. Twenty years
19 ago it used to take two days to find a moose and the
20 count is still the same 20 years later but if you look
21 at the days it took to get that moose it's 20, it's not
22 two days no more, so we're hunting further off the
23 river and hunting a lot harder to find a moose. So in
24 my mind that's not proper management. You have to look
25 at the time it takes and do a better deal. We need
26 better counts and better management. We need to adjust
27 the hunting. Things are getting really hard for the
28 people.

29

30

31 We heard that the sheep numbers are
32 really low across the region and they are, there's been
33 closures. I don't hear people even talking about sheep
34 hunting anymore. Not a lot of it in my area and in the
35 Interior, but there's some closeby and some of us do go
36 once in awhile, but that's something that's kind of in
37 really bad shape right now with the way the weather has
38 been. And you could think of climate change as
39 affecting -- one of the main things affecting a lot of
40 this, the sheep is getting rain, and rain on the snow,
41 and for the caribou the same thing, deep snow and rain
42 holding them away from their food. so that's a big
43 driver. The high water is -- if there was some fish to
44 catch in the Yukon, the water's been so high and the
45 drift has been running so hard that you can't catch
46 nothing, you can't keep a net, the drift will take it
47 away so it's really hard, and now they want to put a
48 rule on us to where we have to keep our floaters, our
49 net on top of the water. If we try to put a net in
50 when the drift is running it wouldn't even be there in
15 minutes, it'll be gone and we'll lose our net, then

50

0046

1 we can't fish no more. People can't afford new nets.
2 So we're working and trying to get that changed a
3 little bit to where they can float on buoys under the
4 water so the drift -- the drift floats over them, the
5 majority of it.

6
7 Another thing that's kind of affecting
8 hunting is hunter ethics education. The EIRAC request
9 the Board's support for the program we were working on
10 prior to Covid. We think that's really important,
11 especially in the Fairbanks area. We have a lot of
12 military that go hunt the caribou, they go hunt the
13 moose and a lot of the times if they go out in a big
14 group, as soon as they get there a guy will get a
15 caribou and then everybody else wants caribou and they
16 hang that caribou up or throw it in the back of the
17 truck and keep hunting, guess what it's rotten in a few
18 days at 65 degrees. So a lot of that meat's being
19 wasted, so we would like to see the support for the
20 hunter ethics program through the EIRAC. Not only that
21 it's a big safety concern, people are shooting in all
22 directions out there and I think that safety should be
23 first and foremost.

24
25 I think that's probably about all I got
26 to report today.

27
28 Thank you, Mr. Chair.

29
30 CHAIRMAN CHRISTIANSON: Thank you,
31 Charlie. Any questions from the Board for Charlie.
32 comments.

33
34 MS. CREACHBAUM: Mr. Chair.

35
36 CHAIRMAN CHRISTIANSON: Yes, go ahead,
37 Sarah, you have the floor.

38
39 MS. CREACHBAUM: Charlie, earlier you
40 were -- made -- said that you had comments about
41 beaver, I just wanted to remind you.

42
43 MR. WRIGHT: All right, yeah, thanks
44 for reminding me. In the Delta of the Tanana River we
45 got some really nice big lakes that salmon and
46 whitefish go in to spawn so we work on those areas in
47 the wintertime to trap the beaver down to keep their
48 numbers down and the creek going in and other creeks
49 that have it. We also, we use the youth, to bring them
50

0047

1 out there to teach them to trap beaver, teach them how
2 to process that beaver house, how to read (ph) that
3 beaver house and manage it, we use the money as an
4 example. We trap a lot of them out but just leave
5 enough in there to keep the beaver house alive, manage
6 it but they get to take beaver home and by taking those
7 beavers down in the creek then in springtime when we go
8 in there hunting ducks and fishing we take the beaver
9 dams down. We know that those fish are coming out of
10 there right after the ice melts so we go in there and
11 we take the beaver dams down and we try to manage that
12 system by ourselves with tradition knowledge handed
13 down from the elders. So beaver dams are not always
14 bad so if you know of good fish habitat in your area
15 where the beavers are having an affect on those fish
16 streams it's just as easy as taking a polaski up there
17 and knocking those beaver dams down and not eradicating
18 all the beaver because in hard times beaver's going to
19 be good food for a lot of people if they're not over
20 populated.

21
22

Thank you.

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CHAIRMAN CHRISTIANSON: Thank you for that Sarah, yeah, I was waiting for that story as well. And a good method there as you watch Charlie teaching younger folks how you do it, man get them out there, get them out of their house, get them out of the community and give them that little experience and watch their eyes and their minds grow and then we get those little foot soldiers we need and that's been our method of madness down in Southeast as well, is be an uncle, it means a lot to somebody and it makes a big difference in the world.

35
36

So thank you for that Charlie.

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MR. WRIGHT: Yeah, it also -- if I may. If I may it also -- it really brings up the young man, it sticks their chest right out and they're able to provide for the community. They provide for potlatches and they provide for fur for mitts and hats. So it goes a long ways for them to get out there and learn and learn how to manage their own land and be good stewards of the land and keep it clean.

46
47

Thank you.

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CHAIRMAN CHRISTIANSON: Thank you for

0048

1 that. Mr. Brower, you have the floor, North Slope.

2

3

4 MR. FRANZ: Thank you, Mr. Chair.
5 Brower Franz for the record. Sitting in for Chair
6 Gordon Brower who is out. So I am part of the North
7 Slope Regional Advisory Council. I'd like to thank you
8 for having me. This is my first Federal Subsistence
9 Board meeting that I've ever attended and I look at
10 everybody and wonder, what have I gotten myself into.

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(Laughter)

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MR. FRANZ: But it's good. It's very
good. Since I'm new I figured I'd give a little bit
about myself. I was born and raised in Utiaquvik --
Barrow, Alaska. I am a subsistence user. I've caught
whales, moose, walrus, seals, everything in between,
caribou, fish, thousands of fish that we catch in
falltime for living. So a little bit of everything.
On top of that I've traveled by snowmachine, boat,
trucks to almost every village on the North Slope, so
six out of the eight villages I've snowmachined to just
for subsistence use and traveling, trapping, hunting,
what have you. And I've also had the privilege to
snowmachine through the Brooks Range to where we were
about 60 miles from Tanana all the way from Barrow, so
I've got a fair amount of traveling, subsistence use
and know the land pretty well. And now I'm starting to
get into the discussions with regulatory stuff with the
Federal and State management level. So it's great to
be here. Thanks for having me and I'll go on with my
report.

All right.

So last year for the fisheries cycle,
the north Slope RAC made four recommendations on
proposals at its fall meeting. Made a recommendation
of support for one fishery proposals, two
recommendations to rescind and one recommendation to
take no action on three fishery closure reviews.

Issues identified over the past year
for this Council's annual report include food security
and preservation method concerns. The Council is
concerned about the freezing and thawing of ice
throughout the season and its effects on the ability to
use traditional practices for preserving food.

1 The Council requests improved
2 management and research of sporthunting and effects on
3 caribou migration near Anaktuvuk Pass. The Council
4 suggests comparing radio collared data from Alaska
5 Department of Fish and Game and the North Slope
6 Borough's Wildlife Division and dates and locations of
7 hunters with migration patterns to see if there is
8 deflection of traditional migration routes. The
9 Council discussed Federal land and water closures
10 during the peak subsistence hunting season to mitigate
11 any affects on caribou migration.

12
13 The Council is concerned about the
14 affects -- so another one is the affects of
15 contaminants on fish, fish health and food safety in
16 anaktuvuk Pass. The Pipeline in addition to buried
17 corroded equipment are contaminating fish stocks and
18 creating concerns for lake trout and Arctic grayling
19 populations in the area. The Council is interested in
20 receiving a presentation from the Ahtna InterTribal
21 Resource Commission cooperative management agreement.
22 The Council would like to hear AITRC's experiences on
23 the process and how their management of resources has
24 changed.

25
26 So in and around the North Slope
27 region, Council members have shared some observations
28 so in Utiaquvik and the Kaktovik area, subsistence
29 hunts were, in general successful. Belugas have been
30 plentiful. Whaling was successful. We had a good
31 season for walrus and bearded seal. And we observed
32 some shorebird declines, mostly in Barrow. That was
33 one that I had noticed over the past few years is there
34 used to be thousands, maybe millions of shorebirds that
35 were around and now days we might see a handful of them
36 and they used to fly around in flocks. So, shorebirds,
37 although small I think are definitely a part of the
38 ecosystem up north.

39
40 Anaktuvuk Pass struggling to access
41 Native foods. Anaktuvuk Pass caribou harvest has been
42 minimal over the last few years. Residents are
43 concerned with the caribou decline and changing
44 migration patterns. Only 21 caribou were harvested
45 over the last year which was not enough to share with
46 the community. And, actually, the community of Nuiqsut
47 over the last years has been sharing caribou and
48 sending it to Anaktuvuk Pass due to the shortage that
49 they've had over the past five to 10 years, I would
50

0050

1 say. I think it's been in every meeting that I've been
2 a part of within the planning commission in Barrow and
3 also the Fish and Game management committees so this
4 concern is definitely being voiced everywhere and it
5 seems that it still continues.

6
7 Let's see, lynx and wolf sightings have
8 increased and bears have been coming in to town in
9 Anaktuvuk Pass.

10
11 Nuiqsut. Nuiqsut has been experiencing
12 an abundance of caribou and they have been sharing with
13 AKP, Anaktuvuk Pass. Another issue -- well, is, there
14 has been an increase in muskox coming into the village
15 of Nuiqsut and young hunters are having the opportunity
16 to harvest muskox which is a first for this generation.
17 That one there, it's kind of an issue but they have
18 been provided with a few open hunts that have started
19 over the last year but due to the numbers I would say
20 keep looking into the population of that. It seems
21 like it's fairly minimal for the effort being put in to
22 get the actual number and throughout the Slope there's
23 been more and more muskox sighted which I think would
24 warrant more than just a handful of the permits that
25 are going out. And the permits that are going out,
26 some of them are being given to areas so the people
27 receiving them are actually almost outside of the unit
28 so making that a more focused hunt, I think, would be
29 good. Nuiqsut also has fish concerns. Not as many
30 fish in the rivers and some of the fish that are caught
31 are missing some of the organs is what was stated and
32 has been -- they have been sent for testing. And also
33 they have an ongoing fish mold issue with some of the
34 whitefish and that is being looked into, I believe, by
35 the Borough and ADF&G. Some harvests of geese were
36 also sick over the last year. I believe it was
37 something to do with the bird flu. Seismic testing
38 concerns and damage to the tundra was also a concern
39 and may be impacting the berry production in the area
40 and squirrel declines.

41
42 Other than that, I don't think I have
43 any other points -- well, I guess I do want to
44 recognize a couple individuals though. You guys were
45 discussing how you can collect more Regional Advisory
46 Council members and the way I had been brought here was
47 through a couple. One of them was through Mr. Chair,
48 himself, Gordon Brower, I'd like to recognize him.
49 Over five years ago, about six years ago now he had
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1 asked me to put in my application, I filled it out but
2 I never did submit it and I felt I didn't know enough
3 and I worked for about five years with him. And a
4 little bit later -- the other person I'd like to
5 recognize is Taqulik Hepa, she's the Director of the
6 Wildlife Department in Barrow and I ended up moving
7 over to wildlife from land management so she pushed me
8 to apply as well and that one, it was about five years
9 I felt I gained enough knowledge, so it took a little
10 bit but about five years of them asking I finally
11 decided to put in my application and here I am. So,
12 that, I believe is a great method is to plant the seeds
13 and keep with it, push them to look into it and gain
14 more knowledge about things. For me, I felt like it
15 wasn't -- I wasn't ready and between then and now I
16 ended up being part of the North Slope Borough's Fish
17 and Game Management Committee and I think that's where
18 I gained the knowledge and felt that I was able to move
19 forward with going to places like this.

20

21 So I'd like to recognize those two.

22

23 Thank you.

24

25 CHAIRMAN CHRISTIANSON: Welcome. And
26 we welcome guys like you with the expertise of the land
27 and that in-office, and you just basically just touched
28 base on the two things I was talking to our kids to so
29 I'm glad you kind of gave them that insight, that in-
30 road to, it takes a little time sometimes even inside
31 ourselves we find doubt, right, but I'm glad you
32 climbed out and you did a good job presenting today.
33 Thank you for coming and we appreciate all the goodness
34 that you bring to the table here so thank you for your
35 presentation and I'm glad Barrow's always getting lots
36 of good stuff, and I miss Charlie here today. I like
37 Gordon too.

38

39 (Laughter)

40

41 CHAIRMAN CHRISTIANSON: And his area of
42 influence has been stuck in my head ever since I sat
43 here in this room.

44

45 (Laughter)

46

47 CHAIRMAN CHRISTIANSON: I use it all
48 the time so I got to say thank you Gordon, for your
49 area of influence because I use that all the time.

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0052

1 Any other questions, Board comments.

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(No comments)

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CHAIRMAN CHRISTIANSON: If not, I'm going to go ahead and entertain our State Liaison partners if they would like to share any information at this time, the floor is yours.

MR. MULLIGAN: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. You know mostly it's just good to hear first-hand information from the RACs. I was jotting down notes and then often times even though we're representing the State here, it's another department or another aspect of even the Department that's covered and, you know, just looked -- you know as far as we hear the need for more enforcement and I think, you know, our Governor has heard that, and I know the Wildlife Troopers, you know, it's not a huge number but I know they've gone up by a dozen the last couple years as far as positions and they're really -- I was just talking to the Trooper that's attached to the Board of Game and they're really committed to filling those positions. You know, I know my Commissioner is -- you know, as everybody has been not only hearing a lot from the locals, but also doing a lot as far as he can as far as what's going on with salmon, as far as his role and he's -- you know it's been a topic that already, you know, the legislative session down in Juneau has only been going for a couple of weeks and he's already had two hearings on that. I'm more than happy to share -- I can't share everything because that conversation I think takes an hour or two, so I can't share everything they talked about but I can share the link so if folks are interested in listening to the whole presentation on what, you know, our Commissioner's been talking about as far as what's being done on his end but also what the legislators are asking, I'm more than happy to share that. I know one thing that everybody touched on that I just wanted to bring up was his recognition of without salmon you're missing that link for the tradition of going to fish camp and teaching young people what to do while you're out at fish camp and just having that traditional connection and he's recognized that and they're trying to find a way within the parameters and in some ways, like the Yukon, within the treaty with Canada to figure out if there's ways to do camps where you can bring in young people and still teach that, harvest some salmon and keep that

0053

1 connection alive.

2

3 You know remind folks that the Alaska
4 Peninsula Board of Fish meeting is coming up on the
5 20th through the 25th. There's a lot of good
6 information out on the Board website and public comment
7 is still being taken ahead of time but that doesn't
8 mean that you're done. You can also, even if you can't
9 attend, you can stream that live and submit an RC as
10 well from what you're hearing, and the Board members
11 get those as they come in. So as you're sitting at the
12 table we have Board support Staff that are bringing
13 those comments in front of us as it comes in, that the
14 Board members are getting.

15

16 You know, someone mentioned fish
17 disease and, yes, the Commissioner, along with others
18 is looking into ichthyophonous especially on salmon on
19 the Yukon, I know that's a big deal.

20

21 And I think that's all I have so thank
22 you, Mr. Chairman. I just wanted to acknowledge the
23 information that the RACs brought here and I took some
24 notes and I'm going to take that back to the boss.

25

26 CHAIRMAN CHRISTIANSON: Any questions
27 from the Board. Comments.

28

29 (No comments)

30

31 CHAIRMAN CHRISTIANSON: I appreciate
32 you guys so thank you. We'll go ahead and take a
33 break, five, eight, nine, 10 -- yeah, we'll come back
34 in 10 minutes.

35

36 (Off record)

37

38 (On record)

39

40 CHAIRMAN CHRISTIANSON: We'll go ahead
41 and get started here in a minute. I see we're missing
42 a few Board members so if they're out in the hallway
43 we'll start in a minute. And, again, we'd remind
44 everybody who speaks into a microphone to please do it
45 loud and clear because the reporter and the audience
46 are having a hard time listening to us. So I know
47 we're all soft spoken because we really like each other
48 but we got to speak up.

49

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1 (Laughter)

2

3 (Pause)

4

5 CHAIRMAN CHRISTIANSON: We'll go ahead
6 and get started. We'll go ahead and call on Sue at
7 this time to do roll call of the Board for the record
8 and then we'll get back to the order of business.

9

10 MS. DETWILER: Okay, Mr. Chair, from
11 Bureau of Indian Affairs we have Glenn Chen.

12

13 MR. GLENN: Present.

14

15 MS. DETWILER: Thank you. Bureau of
16 Land Management, Steve Cohn.

17

18 MR. COHN: Present.

19

20 MS. DETWILER: Fish and Wildlife
21 Service, Jill Klein for Sara.

22

23 MS. KLEIN: Present.

24

25 MS. DETWILER: National Park Service,
26 Sarah Creachbaum.

27

28 MS. CREACHBAUM: I'm here Sue.

29

30 MS. DETWILER: Forest Service, Dave
31 Schmid.

32

33 MR. SCHMID: I'm here Sue.

34

35 MS. DETWILER: Public Member Rhonda
36 Pitka.

37

38 MS. PITKA: Here.

39

40 MS. DETWILER: Public Member Charlie
41 Brower.

42

43 (No comments)

44

45 MS. DETWILER: I'll give Mr. Brower a
46 chance to unmute his phone if he's still on. I just
47 heard him a minute ago.

48

49 (No comments)

50

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1 MS. DETWILER: Anthony Christianson,
2 Chair.

3
4 CHAIRMAN CHRISTIANSON: Here.

5
6 MS. DETWILER: Okay, it looks like we
7 are waiting to hear from Mr. Brower but otherwise you
8 have a quorum.

9
10 CHAIRMAN CHRISTIANSON: Thank you, Sue.
11 So the agenda we presented earlier has public comment
12 period on non-agenda items but this opportunity is
13 available at the beginning of the day. So if you are
14 interested in that we will began that first thing in
15 the morning at 9:00 a.m., on non-agenda items. It's
16 another opportunity -- we do tribal consultation and
17 this is an opportunity for the public to address the
18 Board on non-agenda items, but we will take that up at
19 9:00 a.m.

20
21 We will move on to fishery delegation
22 letters and special action authorities. So we'll call
23 on Scott to do the presentation thank you.

24
25 MR. AYERS: Members of the Board. My
26 name is Scott Ayers and I'm the Fisheries Division
27 Supervisor at OSM. This agenda item is about
28 delegation of Board authority to the Federal fisheries
29 managers. You can find the document that outlines our
30 request to the Board in Book 1 of your materials
31 starting on Page 1. This is an action item.

32
33 The Board has delegated authority to
34 both fish and wildlife managers to issue special
35 actions to contend with resource issues in a timely
36 manner. Special actions come in two types. Emergency
37 special actions, which are used in emergency situations
38 and can last up to 60 days but cannot be extended.
39 Temporary special actions, which are for longer term
40 issues that need attention before the next regulatory
41 cycle, require public hearing and can be in effect
42 until the end of the current regulatory cycle.

43
44 As I brought to your attention this
45 past summer, there's a distinct difference between the
46 delegation letters issued to the fish managers and the
47 wildlife managers. The wildlife delegation letters
48 allow for both emergency special actions and temporary
49 special actions to be issued while the fishery
50

0056

1 delegation letters allow only emergency special actions
2 to be issued.

3
4 This limits the actions of fisheries
5 managers to 60 days which can make in-season management
6 more challenging. For example, last season this Board
7 limited the Yukon River salmon fishery on Federal
8 public lands to Federally-qualified users from June 1st
9 to September 30th, a period of 121 days. Due to the
10 exceptionally poor run strength, the Federal fisheries
11 manager had to issue numerous emergency special actions
12 over multiple salmon runs to close harvest. This
13 could, instead, have been done with one, or two
14 temporary special actions. Another example of how
15 limiting fisheries managers actions to 60 days can
16 create challenges became evident when reviewing the
17 fisheries closures that you all will consider over the
18 next few days. Most of these closures are out of
19 compliance with Title VIII of ANILCA and, we, at OSM,
20 have recommended they be rescinded. If, rescinded, the
21 fishing regulations for those systems will generally
22 default to liberal area-wide regulations. Our position
23 is that Federal managers can issue special actions, if
24 needed, to protect populations in these areas until
25 proposals could be submitted in the next cycle to set
26 harvest limits, gear types and seasons. However, 60
27 day limits on management actions may limit the
28 managers' ability to fully protect these populations.
29 We've reviewed program documentation to determine if
30 there was a record of why this discrepancy between the
31 fish and wildlife delegation letters exist and no
32 specific reasons were identified.

33
34 I'm here today requesting that
35 temporary special actions be added to the delegation of
36 authority letters for the fisheries managers. We've
37 outlined three outlines for the Board to consider.

38
39 First. To retain the status quo.

40
41 Second. To add the authority to a
42 subset of the letters.

43
44 Third. To add this authority to all
45 letters.

46
47 OSM recommends either updating some or
48 all of the letters to include temporary special action
49 authority. While most, at the Office of Subsistence
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1 Management, prefer to add this authority to all letters
2 which would create consistency with the wildlife
3 delegation letters and proactively avoid having to
4 come before this Board again in the future with a
5 similar request, others preferred updating only those
6 letters where the need has been clearly demonstrated to
7 avoid the appearance of a blanket delegation where none
8 may be necessary.

9
10 Thank you for your time. I'm happy to
11 answer any questions you have for me on this topic.
12 And then Robbin will provide you with the
13 recommendation of the InterAgency Staff Committee.

14
15 CHAIRMAN CHRISTIANSON: Thank you,
16 Scott. Any questions for Scott from the Board on the
17 presentation.

18
19 (No comments)

20
21 CHAIRMAN CHRISTIANSON: Thank you,
22 Scott. robbin, you have the floor.

23
24 MS. LAVINE: Thank you, Mr. Chair.
25 Members of the Board. The InterAgency Staff Committee
26 supports Option 3 as presented in the Office of
27 Subsistence Management background paper updating all
28 fisheries delegation letters to include authority to
29 include authority to enact temporary special actions.
30 The ISC supports ensuring that Federal managers have
31 all the tools needed to effectively administer the
32 Federal Subsistence Board's authority on Federal public
33 lands and waters as well as ensuring consistency across
34 all delegation letters for fisheries and wildlife.
35 Action on this issue is timely in preparation for the
36 Board's deliberation on fisheries closure reviews.

37
38 Thank you, Mr. Chair.

39
40 CHAIRMAN CHRISTIANSON: Thank you,
41 Robbin. Any questions from the Board for Staff.

42
43 MS. KLEIN: Mr. Chair.

44
45 CHAIRMAN CHRISTIANSON: Go ahead, Jill.

46
47 MS. KLEIN: Thank you, Mr. Chair. And
48 thank you Scott and Robbin. I wanted to ask a question
49 related to the temporary special action authority for
50

0058

1 fisheries managers and if granted this authority there
2 would be a requirement, it's our understanding, for a
3 public hearing to be held and if you could just share a
4 little bit of information about how that would work.
5 If you have any example from the wildlife managers that
6 have used this authority and held a public hearing and
7 what the role of OSM would be in terms of supporting
8 the fisheries managers if they need to hold a public
9 hearing.

10

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Thanks.

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MR. AYERS: Thank you. Again, through the Chair, this is Scott. That's correct that there would be a requirement for a public hearing for any temporary special action, that's the case whether it goes through the managers or through the Board, that's just part of our process and in regulation. I don't have specifics on how the wildlife managers have conducted this in the past but I can tell you that it is part of what they're required to do and so public hearings have taken place.

I understand -- because we had some internal discussions on this in the past, that the Office of Subsistence Management would be able to provide assistance with those public hearings, if requested by the managers, and that we expect that there would be period of time that there would be an adjustment for having a new tool in the tool set and that there would probably be some additional conversations with managers about what this looks like and what those requirements are as we move forward.

35

MS. KLEIN: Thank you.

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37

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CHAIRMAN CHRISTIANSON: Any other questions or clarification from the Board for the presentation.

41

(No comments)

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CHAIRMAN CHRISTIANSON: Thank you. Seeing that -- you know, you hear about the fisheries today and this is at my discretion, but I'd like to open up the floor for any public testimony on this. I seen somebody back there jockeying like they wanted to speak so I'm going to allow it, and that's the good thing about this is when we're in person we can see the

1 people and how they need to be recognized. So I
2 appreciate us in public again. So we'll open up the
3 floor to this. It does change business but it also
4 puts, you know, when you hear all the emerging issues
5 we have, putting the tools that we can in our manager's
6 hands so they can respond more readily to our rural
7 residents during these hard times of fisheries. So
8 we'll open up the floor to any public testimony and,
9 please, speak loudly and state your name for the public
10 record.

11

12 Thank you.

13

14 MR. SIMON: Thank you, Mr. Chair. For
15 the record my name is Jim Simon. I'm a consultant with
16 Tanana Chiefs Conference, Ahtna InterTribal Resource
17 Commission and the Kuskokwim InterTribal Fish
18 Commission for this meeting. And these public comments
19 are at the request of the Executive Director of the
20 Kuskokwim River InterTribal Fish Commission.

21

22 The Fish Commission is highly
23 supportive of this effort and Option 3 recommended by
24 Staff to provide temporary special action authority to
25 the Federal fisheries in-season manager. This would be
26 very useful on the Kuskokwim in order to continue the
27 effective conservation measures of the conservation and
28 management partnership between the Kuskokwim River
29 InterTribal Fish Commission and the Yukon Delta
30 National Wildlife Refuge. The current limitations of
31 restricting that in-season management authority to only
32 emergency special actions is problematic when you have
33 widespread multi-species collapses occurring -- that's
34 necessitating, you know, sort of weeding together a
35 series of emergency special actions which otherwise
36 would then, and we've already been having discussions
37 and I think the Federal in-season manager has already
38 communicated with OSM about the need in order to bring
39 this to you in order to have a temporary special action
40 for this upcoming season on the Kuskokwim River given
41 the -- the likely poor returns of multiple salmon
42 species.

43

44 So the Kuskokwim River InterTribal Fish
45 Commission would encourage you to take this action,
46 would reduce a lot of the bureaucratic burden on your
47 Board by providing this authority to the Federal in-
48 season manager and that multi-year partnership has been
49 developing and is working quite well, escapement goals

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0060

1 have been met. There are, of course, a lot of issues
2 that complicate the situation but the resources being
3 prioritized there through the actions of the Federal
4 in-season manager in partnership with the InterTribal
5 fish Commission and this will help make that work more
6 seamless and less burdensome on the bureaucratic
7 process.

8

9 Thank you.

10

11 CHAIRMAN CHRISTIANSON: Thank you for
12 that support. Any questions from the Board. Comments.

13

14 (No comments)

15

16 CHAIRMAN CHRISTIANSON: Hearing or
17 seeing none, thank you for your testimony today. Any
18 other public who would like to testify at this time
19 this is your time to be recognized.

20

21 (No comments)

22

23 CHAIRMAN CHRISTIANSON: Operator, is
24 there anybody online who would like to be recognized,
25 they can speak to the letter of delegation and
26 authority.

27

28 OPERATOR: Thank you, sir. If you
29 would like to ask a question or if you do have any
30 comments you may press star one.

31

32 (Pause)

33

34 OPERATOR: Again, that is star one for
35 any questions or comments.

36

37 (Pause)

38

39 OPERATOR: At this time I am showing no
40 questions, sir.

41

42 CHAIRMAN CHRISTIANSON: Thank you.
43 And, Robbin, you did, and are going to do the ISC
44 recommendations.

45

46 MS. LAVINE: (Nods affirmatively)

47

48 CHAIRMAN CHRISTIANSON: Yes, you did,
49 thank you, I thought so. Okay, we open up the floor

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1 for Board discussion.

2

3 (No comments)

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5 CHAIRMAN CHRISTIANSON: We'd also offer
6 the State Liaisons an opportunity at this time to be
7 recognized.

8

9 MR. MULLIGAN: Thank you, Mr. Chair.
10 We have no comment at this time.

11

12 CHAIRMAN CHRISTIANSON: Thank you.
13 We'd also offer the Regional Councils at this time an
14 opportunity to speak to the proposal.

15

16 (No comments)

17

18 CHAIRMAN CHRISTIANSON: Hearing none,
19 we will open up the floor for Board action on this
20 proposed.....

21

22 MR. BROWER: Mr. Chair.

23

24 CHAIRMAN CHRISTIANSON: You have the
25 floor, Charlie.

26

27 MR. BROWER: I move to approve the fish
28 delegation letter and special action authority.

29

30 CHAIRMAN CHRISTIANSON: Motion's been
31 made.

32

33 MS. KLEIN: Second.

34

35 CHAIRMAN CHRISTIANSON: There's a
36 second on the floor. We'll open up the floor for
37 further Board discussion.

38

39 Jill.

40

41 MS. KLEIN: Thank you, Charlie and
42 thank you, Mr. Chair. Yeah, the U.S. Fish and Wildlife
43 Service is supportive of updating all the fisheries
44 delegation letters to include authority for enacting
45 temporary special actions. This would be consistent
46 with authorities delegated to wildlife managers and as
47 outlined in the OSM document, there are notable
48 examples where temporary special action authority would
49 benefit fisheries managers and also the public. And
50

0062

1 granting temporary special action authority, it doesn't
2 preclude the public submitting a temporary special
3 action to the Board but as mentioned in the public
4 testimony, it can afford fisheries managers a faster
5 and more responsive process, and, in addition, less
6 emergency special actions being issued throughout the
7 season.

8

9 Yeah, so just in summary, we think
10 it'll be beneficial for all the managers, the
11 subsistence users and resource and also especially in
12 light of the fisheries closure reviews that we have
13 coming up it might be beneficial for those scenarios as
14 well.

15

16 Thank you.

17

18 CHAIRMAN CHRISTIANSON: Thank you. Any
19 other Board like to comment.

20

21 (No comments)

22

23 CHAIRMAN CHRISTIANSON: Hearing or
24 seeing none, call for the question.

25

26 MR. SCHMID: Question, Mr. Chair.

27

28 CHAIRMAN CHRISTIANSON: Question's been
29 called. Sue, you want to do roll call on this, please.

30

31 MS. DETWILER: Yes, thank you, Mr.
32 Chair. Starting with the maker of the motion, Public
33 Member Charlie Brower.

34

35 MR. BROWER: Thank you. I support the
36 motion, recommendation from the ISI -- ISC supporting
37 Option 3.

38

39 MS. DETWILER: Okay, thank you,
40 Charlie.

41

42 Moving on to Glenn Chen, BIA.

43

44 MR. CHEN: Thank you, Sue. The BIA
45 supports Option 3 and supports the motion.

46

47 MS. DETWILER: Thank you. BLM Steve
48 Cohn.

49

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0063

1 MR. COHN: Thank you, Sue. Steve Cohn
2 from BLM, BLM supports the motion, Option 3. Thank
3 you.

4
5 MS. DETWILER: Thank you. Fish and
6 Wildlife Service Jill Klein.

7
8 MS. KLEIN: Fish and Wildlife Service
9 supports the motion and Option 3 as well. Thank you.

10
11 MS. DETWILER: Thank you. National
12 Park Service, Sarah Creachbaum.

13
14 MS. CREACHBAUM: Thanks, Sue. The
15 National Park Service supports Option 3. Thanks.

16
17 MS. DETWILER: Thank you. U.S. Forest
18 Service, Dave Schmid.

19
20 MR. SCHMID: Yes, the Forest Service
21 also supports Option 3 and especially consistent and
22 articulated by the Fish and Wildlife Service and the
23 reasoning behind it.

24
25 Thank you.

26
27 MS. DETWILER: Public Member Rhonda
28 Pitka.

29
30 MS. PITKA: Yes, I support the motion
31 and I support Option 3. Thank you.

32
33 MS. DETWILER: Thank you. And,
34 finally, Chair Anthony Christianson.

35
36 CHAIRMAN CHRISTIANSON: I support for
37 the reason stated on the record here today.

38
39 MS. DETWILER: Thank you. The vote --
40 the motion passes unanimously.

41
42 CHAIRMAN CHRISTIANSON: Thank you. And
43 I hope that helps our managers. That brings us to No.
44 7 on the agenda and that gets us into the proposals and
45 all the other things. So at this time I'm going to
46 call for a recess for the day because I don't want to
47 start on the fisheries management until the morning.
48 Right. So I want to start here at 9:00 a.m., with
49 public testimony and tomorrow we'll start with
50

0064

1 proposals and all the other good stuff. I don't want
2 to start things and stop halfway and then be
3 disengaged and then reengaged and then start another
4 process and then stop that process and start another
5 process in the morning so I think we could all enjoy
6 4:30 and have a good dinner and a nice evening and
7 we'll see you at 9:00 a.m. Meeting recessed.

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MR. BROWER: Good night.

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(Off record)

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(PROCEEDINGS TO BE CONTINUED)

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C E R T I F I C A T E

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

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

THAT the foregoing, contain a full, true and correct Transcript of the FEDERAL SUBSISTENCE BOARD MEETING taken electronically by our firm on the 30th day of January 2023;

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

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

DATED at Anchorage, Alaska, this 10th day of February 2023.

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