WESTERN INTERIOR ALASKA FEDERAL SUBSISTENCE
REGIONAL ADVISORY COUNCIL MEETING

PUBLIC MEETING

VOLUME I

Galena, Alaska
March 1, 2010
8:58 a.m.

COUNCIL MEMBERS PRESENT:

Jack Reakoff, Chairman
Ray Collins
Timothy Gervais
Donald Honea
Carl Morgan
Jenny Pelkola
Pollock Simon
Robert Walker
Eleanor Yatlin

Regional Council Coordinator, Donald Mike

Recorded and transcribed by:

Computer Matrix Court Reporters, LLC
135 Christensen Drive, Suite 2
Anchorage, AK 99501
907-243-0668
sahile@gci.net
CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: I'm going to start the meeting of the Western Interior Regional Advisory Council. I'm going to have everybody be seated. The time on my watch is 8:58. The agenda, we were supposed to start at 8:30. This is the Western Interior Regional Advisory Council of the Federal Subsistence Board. We're on the record. We'll call roll.

Donald, do you want to read the Council roll call.

MR. MIKE: Thank you, Mr. Chair. This is the roll call for the Western Interior Regional Advisory Council. Mr. Robert Walker.

MR. WALKER: Yes.

MR. MIKE: Mr. Donald Honea, Jr.

MR. HONEA: Here.

MR. MIKE: Mr. Pollock Simon, Sr.

MR. SIMON: Here.

MR. MIKE: Mr. Tim Gervais. Mr. Chair. Mr. Gervais stated that he'd be here by snowmachine, so it will be seen if he'll be here today or not.

CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Okay.

MR. MIKE: Mr. Ray Collins.

MR. COLLINS: Here.

MR. MIKE: Mr. Jack Reakoff.

MR. MIKE: Mr. James Walker. Mr. Chair. Mr. Walker, James Walker, stated that he couldn't be at this meeting. He has family medical issues to attend to.
CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Okay. That's an excused absence. Thank you.

MR. MIKE: Ms. Jenny Pelkola.

MS. PELKOLA: Here.

MR. MIKE: Mr. Carl Morgan.

MR. MORGAN: Here.

MR. MIKE: Ms. Eleanor Yatlin.

MS. YATLIN: Here.

MR. MIKE: Mr. Chair, you have eight members present. You have a quorum.

CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Thanks, Donald. I want to welcome Pollock Simon, Sr. to the Council. He's a new member, but actually an old member. He was actually on the first -- on the WIRAC back at the beginning for three years. So welcome to the Council, Pollock.

So we'll welcome our guests and Staff, but Jenny felt that we should have an invocation at the beginning of the meeting, so at this time we'll have an invocation. Did you find somebody to do that, Jenny?

MS. PELKOLA: Well, I asked Fred to introduce. He might as well do the invocation too.

CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: That would be good.

MR. F. HUNTINGTON: I guess I get to stomp. At this time I'd just like to say welcome to Galena on behalf of folks in Galena. If you guys have any questions or need something, just let somebody know and we'll probably be able to help you. At this moment I'd just like to say a short prayer to welcome everybody here today.

(Invocation)

CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Thanks, Fred.

Another preliminary item before we introduce everybody is that Salena has a lunch special here, so we can order in. If you want to have lunch here, we can have the lunch delivered to the tribal hall here so we don't
have to go wander around Galena and get spread all over
the place. On Tuesday they have -- is this a special?
And they have other things also?

REPORTER: Yeah, they have sandwiches
too.

CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: They have sandwiches
and other things. Their special today is a taco soup
or pizza.

MR. COLLINS: No, no. We talked to her
yesterday and she's going to do a soup and sandwich for
us, clam chowder and some kind of a sandwich.

CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: So the Council is
aware of this thing. If you want to make an order,
just put your name over here with Salena. Donald.

MR. MIKE: Mr. Chair. I think we'll
need all the orders by 10:00 o'clock so we can call in
the orders and that way they will be prepared to be
delivered.

CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Okay, 10:00, 10:30
on the order, so on the next break or whatever you can
put an order in. So then we'll go through the
introduction and welcome of the guests here and Staff.
So start over here with Chuck Ardizzone. Go ahead,
Chuck.

MR. ARDIZZONE: Good morning. Chuck
Ardizzone with the Office of Subsistence Management.
I'm the wildlife biologist supervisor at the office.

CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Thanks, Chuck.

MS. HUNTINGTON: Hi, I'm Joy
Huntington. I'm the niece-in-law of Fred and I married
about half the community a couple years ago.
Originally from Manley Hot Springs. My grandmother is
Judy Woods. My grandfather is the late Walter Woods
from Rampart. I'm currently running for TCC president,
so I'm here just to kind of be supportive and learn
more about you guys and what you do. When I graduated
five years ago from Dartmouth, I wrote a thesis on
tribal natural resource management and so it's very
much about exactly what you're here to do and what
you're supporting as a body. So just here to listen
and learn more about you guys and hopefully just be
able to support you and your work. Thank you.

CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Thank you, Joy.

MS. PETRIVELLI: I'm Pat Petrivelli, an anthropologist with the Bureau of Indian Affairs in their subsistence branch.

CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Thanks, Pat.

MR. BUE: Fred Bue, Fish and Wildlife Service, fisheries biologist for the Yukon River.

MR. HUNTINGTON: I'm Fred Huntington, second chief of Louden and Galena resident.

CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Mike.

MR. SPINDLER: Mike Spindler, Kanuti Refuge manager.

MR. STAMM: John Stamm, secretary of Ruby Advisory Committee.

MR. JENKINS: My name is David Jenkins. I'm an anthropologist with the Office of Subsistence Management.

MR. SLOAN: Bo Sloan, Innoko National Wildlife Refuge manager out of McGrath.

MR. HILL: Jerry Hill, wildlife biologist at the Innoko Refuge in McGrath.

MR. HARRIS: Mike Harris, fisheries biologist at Koyukuk/Nowitna National Wildlife Refuge.

MR. SCOTTON: Brad Scotton, the wildlife biologist/pilot here at Galena.

MS. BRYANT: Jenny Bryant, wildlife biologist at Koyukuk/Nowitna.

MS. BODONY: I'm Karin Bodony. I'm also at Koyukuk/Nowitna Refuge.

MR. BODONY: Tim Bodony, Galena subsistence user.

MR. McLAIN: Chris McLain. I serve as
the local magistrate here and also Jack's son-in-law.

CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Welcome to the
Western Interior Council. I'm glad to have your
participation in the meeting. We always like to have
local participation and comments during the meeting.
First off here on this agenda is election of the
officers. So I've been chairing this meeting since
basically 2007, so the first officer for election would
be Chair.

The Chair will open the floor to
nominations.

Donald.

MR. MIKE: Mr. Chair. Since you're the
presiding Chair of the Council, I think it would be
proper if I open the nominations for Chair.

CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Go ahead, Donald.

MR. MIKE: Thank you, Mr. Chair. The
nominations are open now for Chair for the Western
Interior Regional Advisory Council.

MR. HONEA: I nominate Jack Reakoff for
Chairman.

MS. PELKOLA: Second.

MR. MIKE: Any other nominations?

(No comments)

MR. COLLINS: I move that nominations
be closed and a unanimous ballot cast.

MR. WALKER: Second.

MR. MIKE: The nominations for Chair
has been closed and requested a unanimous ballot cast.
All those in favor say aye.

IN UNISON: Aye.

MR. MIKE: All those opposed same sign.

(No opposing votes)
MR. MIKE: Mr. Chair -- Mr. Reakoff, you're nominated. I return the gavel to you. Thank you.

CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Thank you. And I appreciate your confidence in my chairmanship and I'll try and continue to do a good job for the Council. The next seat is the vice-Chair and so I'll open the floor to nomination.

MR. WALKER: Nominate Ray Collins.

MR. HONEA: Second.

CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Any further nomination.

(No comments)

CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Nomination is closed. Those in unanimous consent signify by saying aye.

IN UNISON: Aye.

CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Welcome back to the vice-Chair, Ray.

The secretary seat, open the floor to nomination.

MR. HONEA: I nominate Jenny Pelkola.

MR. SIMON: Second.

CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Any further nomination.

MR. WALKER: Move nomination be closed.

CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Nomination closes. All in favor of Jenny as secretary for the Western Interior Regional Council signify by saying aye.

IN UNISON: Aye.

CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Those opposed.

(No opposing votes)
CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: So we have the
election of officers. Review and adoption of agenda.
That agenda is in our packet here, Donald?

MR. MIKE: It is in your packet
starting on Page 1, Mr. Chair. Mr. Chairman, it's in
your Council book.

CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: The agenda needs
some insertions. I've gotten a call from Randy Rogers.
They wanted to do a wood bison restoration meeting and
they wanted some designees from the Western Interior,
so that needs to be put on our agenda under Alaska
Department of Fish and Game under F. I have some
issues within the Dalton Highway Corridor, the Bureau
of Land Management guide selection process and guides
entering into dall sheep hunting, so under Bureau of
Land Management I want to insert Dalton Highway
Corridor management guide area permitting process.

The permitting process in general, the
Refuges and the Park Service and Park Preserves has a
guide selection process. The BLM does not have a guide
selection process. The Commercial Services Board has
been working on a guide selection process and that
process is failing. They're supposed to be implemented
by 2011. That is not in place, so we need to be
talking to the BLM about this guide use in the Dalton
Highway Corridor. I want that under E under Agency and
Organization reports.

Under National Park Service, G, the
Gates of the Arctic Subsistence Resource Commission has
a hunting plan recommendation entitled 10-01 and it has
to do with managing wildlife on Park Preserve lands and
the Councils review Subsistence Resource Commission
hunting plan recommendations, so I would like to insert
hunting plan recommendation 10-01 under National Park
Service G(2) in the agenda.

Under call for proposals, it's Federal
proposals, but there is a State call for game and fish
proposals at this time and I'd like to insert under 16
in the agenda B, State call for proposals, fish and
wildlife. So the Board of Fish and I think both of
them are due in April, the call for State proposals, so
we need to -- if the Council has any State game or fish
proposals, those should be submitted by the Council
under State call. So that will be -- when we're
promulgating proposals, it will work back to back with
the Federal proposal call.

So those were the insertions that I have offhand. Any Council member additions to the agenda?

MR. HONEA: Move to adopt amended changes.

MR. COLLINS: Second.

CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Moved and seconded to adopt with those changes. Any further discussion on the agenda?

(No comments)

CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Those in favor of adopting the agenda signify by saying aye.

IN UNISON: Aye.

CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: So in the packet is our minutes from our last McGrath meeting in October. Are they here, Donald?

MR. MIKE: Mr. Chair. They're in your handout folder and it's a gray-colored document.

CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: This titled February 23rd?

MR. MIKE: That's correct. There's two summaries of the minutes, February 23rd, 2010. That's the minutes with the joint meeting with the Eastern Interior Regional Advisory Council.

CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Okay. I see that.

MR. MIKE: And then Page 5 or two or three pages later is the minutes of the October 5-6, 2010 McGrath meeting.

CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: These minutes, the Western Interior's minutes are supposed to go to the Chairman for approval and I did not receive these minutes until yesterday morning when I was leaving home. I want the record to reflect that, that the minutes were not produced on time, so we need to have these -- the business of the Western Interior Council
is to execute the wishes of Congress to assure that
wildlife resources within the Western Interior are
protected for subsistence uses. Also that we're
supposed to advocate for the subsistence users.

This is serious business, this Council
work. These Councils have advocated to the Department
of Interior that we are to have a deference in wildlife
and fish management, so the Secretary of Interior has
pushed for -- the Federal Subsistence Board is looking
to these Councils for recommendations and those
recommendations have huge weight at the Federal
Subsistence Board.

So the administration of this Council
needs to be tightened up. I can't get minutes the day
before I leave for a meeting and review them properly.
I just received those minutes and looking at the
minutes for October I had some insertions under the
Chair's report.

I would like to clean up the language.
It would be -- I flew down here on the airplane and
looked at these minutes. So under the Chair's Report,
you're looking at Page 2. Chair Reakoff reported he
attended two Federal Subsistence Board public meetings
as Chair of the WIRAC. Well, I want the minutes to
reflect what those meetings were.

The first, the Federal Subsistence
Board meeting, was the fisheries deferred proposals on
net mesh size restrictions in the Yukon River drainage
and that was the 7.5 and the 35 mesh and I attended
that meeting last year in April to the Federal
Subsistence Board and advocated for this Council's
positions, which that's not to be lightly skimmed over.
There's a lot of issues going on at the Federal
Subsistence Board.

The other thing that needs to be
reflected here, the other Federal Subsistence Board,
was the wildlife meeting proposals and that was in mid
May of 2010. So that should be inserted into the
minutes.

And instead of Chair Reakoff stated the
Federal Subsistence Board deferred Wildlife Proposal
10-69, the C&T use determination, that would be for
basically Unit 19A-1 and go hunt in lower Unit 21.
There was lots of comments that there needed to be more
discussion with the local communities and instead of a
working group they're called a subcommittee, was to be
formed by the Western Interior Council on that 21E C&T
for 19A, so that clarifies it's not working group. It
should be changed to subcommittee.

And then another insertion is down on -- Mr. Walker moved to transmit a letter to the Federal
Subsistence Board and the Solicitor to attend the State
Board of Game meeting to convey the State of Alaska's
bi-lining it's procedural act. An insertion is a
letter from the WIRAC was prepared to be sent to the
Board of Game on the bear trapping issue that we
discussed. The minutes need to reflect that that
letter was prepared and submitted to the Board of Game
on bear trapping, which the bear trapping issue was
pushed back. They pushed it to the March of 2012
meeting and that was because some of the advocating of
this Council. Very important issue, this bear trapping
issue, for this region. Those would be my insertions
there.

Under our annual report topics Issue 13
is Tier II -- well, to clarify, it's a permit hunt
criteria of Section .804 restrictions are needed to
limit subsistence. That needs to be inserted into that
issue. When we get to the annual report, we need to --
there are several issues that need to be in this annual
report.

The annual report is mandated by .805
of ANILCA for the Councils to produce an annual report.
So the annual report is a very important aspect of the
Council's work. The minutes need to reflect that Tier
II is not -- the entire issue is that we need a Tier II
permit system. Right now the permitting system is a
drawing permit if there's a limitation -- if there
needs to be a limitation among subsistence users, the
Federal government, the Federal subsistence program is
using a drawing permit.

Well, I've got a problem with that.
The problem is that school teachers can move to a
village never having hunted a moose in their entire
life and put in for a drawing permit and draw a Federal
subsistence permit. The Tier II permit that the State
of Alaska developed when they were managing was using
eight criteria and the eight criteria are drawn up from
.804 of ANILCA; proximity to the resource, dependance
on the resource and certain criterias that allocate to
people who really have used and need the meat from these resources. A drawing permit I feel is a failed thing.

One of our annual report topics is going away from the drawing permit and moving towards an .804-based and ANILCA-based permitting system. That's why this is an important language that I want inserted into these minutes.

So that would be my insertions into these minutes of last year's meeting, October 5 and 6, 2010 in McGrath. Any additions to the October meeting from the Council.

MR. COLLINS: Mr. Chairman. In reading through these, I noticed that there was a working group to be set up to deal with the issues of customary trade issue on the Yukon. To my knowledge that was never formed.

CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Ray, I was going to bring that up under the Chair's report. The reality is that that was not formed, but the Council wrote a letter of recommendation to the Federal Subsistence Board. When the Federal Subsistence Board reviewed the customary trade issues, they've mandated a subcommittee to be formed by all three RACs on the Yukon River and we're going to come together and hash out this customary trade issue.

MR. COLLINS: So it is going to happen.

CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: It is going to happen. That was going to be under my Chair's report, but might as well enlighten you now. Any other comments on the minutes from our McGrath meeting.

MR. HONEA: Mr. Chair. I have no question on it, but I move to adopt.

CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Okay. Move to adopt as amended? Don, clarification. As I amended? You moved to adopt the minutes and I clarified some issues. I was inserting various things. Do you move to adopt with my insertions?

MR. HONEA: Yeah, move to adopt with clarifications.
CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Okay. Thank you.

MS. PELKOLA: Second.

CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Seconded by Jenny.

Any further discussion on the minutes of October 5 and 6 in McGrath?

(No comments)

MR. WALKER: Question.

CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: The question is called on the minutes, 5 and 6 for McGrath meeting. Those in favor of the minutes signify by saying aye.

IN UNISON: Aye.

CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Opposed same sign.

(No opposing votes)

CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Then we have what was failed to be in our packet in McGrath, was the minutes of our joint meeting with Eastern and Western Interior Regional Advisory Councils. It's the first page. So we need to go back. We had a joint meeting with Eastern/Western Interior on Proposals 12 and 13. That was the net mesh size restrictions. Those minutes look good to the best of my recollection. Any further comments on the minutes of February 23rd, 2010 meeting in Fairbanks?

(No comments)

CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: It's just a formality. We have to adopt the minutes and those were not in our meeting packet in McGrath last fall in October when we were down there.

MR. COLLINS: Move to adopt.

MR. WALKER: Second.

CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Moved and seconded to adopt the minutes of February 23rd, 2010 joint Western and Eastern Interior Council meetings in Fairbanks. Further discussion on those minutes.

(No comments)
CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Hearing none. Those in favor of adoption of the minutes as presented of February 23rd, 2010 Eastern Interior and Western Interior Regional Council meeting in Fairbanks signify by saying aye.

IN UNISON: Aye.

CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Opposed same sign.

(No opposing votes)

CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: So those minutes are adopted. Tim Gervais just arrived by snow-go. Welcome to the meeting, Tim, and we'll let you take your winter gear off.

MR. GERVAIS: Sorry, I had a clutch problem.

CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Well, better late than never. Glad to have you here, Tim. We've reviewed the minutes and we've approved the minutes of our joint meeting in Fairbanks last February with Eastern and then we've reviewed our minutes of our October meeting and those are approved. We had elections. I was re-elected as Chair.

MR. GERVAIS: Congratulations.

CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Ray is vice-Chair and Jenny is the secretary. That's basically where we're at on the agenda.

I was going to go through the Chair's report and I sort of touched on the issue of the subcommittee for the customary trade. The customary trade issue, as you've been reading in the news, when we had our meeting in October there were proposals about customary trade and precluding customary trade for chinook salmon on the Yukon River. With that, it became even more -- the Federal Subsistence Board in their November meeting was apprised that there was enforcement actions taking place on the Yukon River and it's becoming a bigger deal.

When I attended the Federal Subsistence Board meeting in January on fisheries proposals, there were those proposals to preclude customary trade. Many proposals to preclude use of salmon for dog feed and
various proposals. Elimination of fishwheels and a lot
of those were proposed by Mountain Village Working
Group. Mountain Village at that meeting withdrew their
proposals, which basically withdrew many of the
contentious proposals off the table. That was a
positive move in their direction, moving towards
wanting to work together on the Yukon and not bringing
animosity.

This customary trade issue was boiling
with the Federal Subsistence Board and the Federal
Subsistence Board requested that the Councils appoint a
subcommittee. The Councils and the Federal Subsistence
Board is being -- wanting tribal council involvement.
So one of the issues as Chair of this Council I feel
that before this subcommittee on this customary trade
is actually formed we need to send out a request -- I
had a questionnaire that I formulated to the tribal
councils, but I was told that there's legalities. Do
you have those legalities there, Donald? Go ahead.

MR. MIKE: Mr. Chairman. The
questionnaire on customary trade that you submitted to
our office, there's Federal procedures as far as
collecting information from the public. We have to go
through the Office of Management and Budget in
Washington, DC to get those questionnaires approved.
If the Federal Staff would be able to assist on that
particular question, you're welcome to come forward and
give further explanation. There's regulations as far
as collecting information from the public, sending out
questionnaires. That has to be approved from the OMB
office in Washington, DC. This doesn't stop the
Council bringing it up for discussion.

Thank you, Mr. Chair.

CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Thanks for the
clarification on that, Donald. I appreciate that. The
reality is we have conflicts. We have the Federal
Subsistence Board wanting a subcommittee to be formed.
We have a mandate from the Department of Interior to
involve the tribes and questions and now we have the
regulations that preclude the expeditious use of these
tribal councils. So I'm getting very frustrated with
that and I feel that the Federal Subsistence Board
better cut through some red tape because the Secretary
of Interior wants tribal council involvement.

For this subcommittee to work with
customary trade I have produced a document that Donald
has that we can review that asks the pertinent
questions about customary trade. It clarifies the
issue. A lot of people are confused about customary
trade. A lot of people think that customary trade is
trading a bag of sugar for some salmon strips. No.
Customary trade is sale. That's getting cash money
for.

So we have to clarify to the
communities what customary trade is. We have to ask
them what the parameters -- if their community sells
fish, they have people that sell fish, if their
community buys fish and what is an appropriate level.
So what the problem with customary trade is large
volumes of salmon being sold. That's the rub. It's a
very important issue.

This Council needs to designate
participants and we did designate some participants,
but Mickey Stickman was not reappointed to the Western
Interior Council, so we need to redesignate some
Council members to attend that subcommittee.

So that's what happened at the Federal
Subsistence Board meeting. The proposal to protect the
first pulse of salmon, which was Proposal FP11-02, the
proposal failed. The proposal I submitted basically
for the Council was using the resolution that all three
Regional Councils submitted in requesting a resolution
of protection for the first pulse. When the proposal
was moved through the Councils, the proposal failed in
the Eastern Interior and it also failed in the YK-Delta
and we modified the proposal to close or predominantly
close, protection on the first pulse, the proposal
failed.

I tried to talk the Federal Subsistence
Board into having the in-season manager, Fred Bue,
here, giving him direction on protection of the first
pulse or at least getting the stocks back on track.
The Federal Subsistence Board did not discussion that.
They sort of evaded that question.

So I do feel that this Council needs to
submit a letter of recommendation to the Federal
Subsistence Board, to the Yukon Panel and YRDFA on
Yukon River stocks and so I've written a document of
suggested language of that protection. I've been
writing documents for a week. I'm checking wolf traps
I'm in deep snow to my chest and trying to write documents too, so I'm a little bit tired right now. I've come to this meeting to physically rest and talk for awhile.

I also received comments on a moose hunt in Huslia from an individual from Huslia and so I've written a document requesting a statement from the tribal council of Huslia on how the moose hunt is going. So I'll produce that document for the Council's review. When we get into our business here, I'm going to be asking Eleanor some questions about that.

At this point, that would be my -- oh, I also had a phone conversation from Greg Roczicka. I think he's vice-Chair of the YK Delta and he's got a predator management request and he sent that to our Council also for our review and is advocating for predator management. He told me he wanted it inserted into the MOU, but I read the document and I can't find where it's discussing the MOU at all in the document, so I'm a little bit confused about his MOU thing. It's not clear in the document that he transmitted to this Council that it's actually clear that it's going to go into the MOU. It's sort of a long statement and the MOU is not going to be that long.

I have language that I'm going to present to the Western Interior Council on the MOU about maintaining health of populations and using scientific information in the MOU and it's a one paragraph thing. You'll see that when I give it to you. I want the Council to be aware that I had a phone conversation with Greg on that issue, so we can discuss that and endorse his concept, but I don't see how it's incorporated. They don't give a clear recommendation of how to put it into the MOU. Maybe they're relying on the Federal Board to do that somehow.

That would be my Chair's report at this time. Any questions from the Council. Don.

MR. HONEA: Thank you, Mr. Chair. I have no question other than the fact that when we -- you know, the working groups, I see that the Federal Subsistence Board has approved of a working group between the three RACs anyway, and I was just wondering what is the next step on there because it seems that everything moves so slow. So where exactly are we in that process?
CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Thanks for that question, Don. Geoff Haskett, the Regional Director of the U.S. Fish and Wildlife, wanted to expedite the subcommittee on that working group on the Yukon River because he would have liked to have seen this customary trade language worked out with the RACs before the season started and so OSM is completely swamped. They've had Staff quitting right and left, so OSM seemed to be wanting to put the brakes on this whole thing, but I feel that this is a very important issue, this customary trade subcommittee. I feel that when we met that we could put a fire -- that this Council could start to build a fire under that subcommittee to be formed this spring before the season.

MR. WALKER: It's not going to work.

CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: It's not going to work. Go ahead, Robert.

MR. WALKER: Mr. Chairman. Members of the Board, Staff. I don't think we're going to have enough time here to put it in this year I think because of the language. Mickey Stickman is not on here anymore. We'll have to appoint somebody else to this. I'd like to have Polly Wheeler -- we need an anthropologist, somebody here to work with us. Also looking at other strenuous deals here. We need somebody like Carl Morgan that's a former representative if we have to go to the State to do the State law. There's a lot more issues than I thought that would be here. Because if we're going to do it at one time to combine with the State and Federal enforcement, we have to sit down with both and sit down and talk with them. Plus we have to talk with the tribes yet. We have to see what they want. It's not what we want. We're here for them. Am I correct here?

CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: That's exactly the kind of comments I would like to hear. This is part of the discussion on that issue. You know, that was the wishes of one of the Federal Board members. You're bringing out some very pertinent points, regulatory changes and so forth. I don't know that the working group can advocate -- the Federal Board can advocate to the State, but I don't know if that actually can happen, whether the legislature would approve. That may take years and may never even happen.

MR. WALKER: Actually what I meant was,
we'll find somebody like Carl with expertise saying
that we don't have to go this route, we don't have to
go to the legislation, but we could do this and do this
and do this.

CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: But we do need to
move this. The Federal Subsistence Board wants this
Council to move some ideas forward. I have some ideas
and we can work on -- I have a document, a
questionnaire. You can insert various things. Maybe
the working group -- not the working group, the
subcommittee -- and there's an issue with you calling
it a working group. There's a legal issue that the
solicitor brought up. It's a subcommittee of the
Federal Subsistence Board and so we need to review and
work on that issue. That's why this meeting needs two
days is because that's kind of an important issue.

I talked to David Jenkins here, our
anthropologist. We need an anthropologist in charge.
In discussion with him, he's reviewed various aspects
of this customary trade issue and I would like to have
David Jenkins as our anthropologist in charge. Polly
is so distracted. I don't have high confidence in her
being able to put a lot of effort into this issue.
That's my position. We're not going to go into that
right now. I just wanted the Council to be aware that
we are under a mandate for a subcommittee and we have
to come up with ideas at this meeting about that
subcommittee. Whether that happens before the season,
you're right, Robert, that may not happen.

Any further discussion on the Chair's
report.

(No comments)

CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Then Council members
reports. We'll start with Jenny down here. She's been
here all morning drinking coffee, so she's up to speed.
Go ahead, Jenny.

MS. PELKOLA: Gee, I just had a blank
here, Mr. Chair. What is the report we're supposed to
give now?

CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Just your -- you
know how we go down the table and bring up concerns and
your feelings about maybe what the Federal Subsistence
Board did or did not do. You know, just whatever you
feel.

MS. PELKOLA: Oh, yeah, I remember now. I agree with Robert when he was talking about that customary group. I think it needs to be pushed because it's getting bigger and bigger and bigger and there's more publicity in the papers and it's just getting out of hand. I remember when we first talked about it, it was just for a few people that do make not really a living, but use it for helping them, they're just getting so carried away with these laws and restrictions that it just -- you know, it's pretty sad because it's been going on for years in our community and on the Yukon. There's not that many jobs for these subsistence users and that's one way that they make their living to help them.

Also I think the moose hunting in this area went very well. I think a lot of people got their moose. And if they didn't, people were sharing with each other. The fishing was regulated pretty well, but a lot of people got their fish.

I think that's all I have right now, Mr. Chair.

CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Thanks, Jenny. Good comments. Tim.

MR. GERVAIS: Thank you, Mr. Chair. As far as things that's happened these past few months, the Marine Stewardship Council did go ahead and approve the certification of the Bering Sea pollock fishery as sustainable. In the press release that I read on it, they sounded like they're really impressed with how well the fishery is managed and the low rate of bycatch. So I was disappointed that they didn't really address our concerns, WIRAC or YR DFA's concerns on that, but it's kind of out of our control. It's an organization based out of London and they make their money from their clients and so they have a lot of incentive to tell a good story about how well particularly fisheries are run and their bycatch are managed. So that was unfortunate, but that is what happened.

Perhaps at this meeting we could have a discussion on whether to look to get involved with the Marine Stewardship certification for the Russian pollock fishery, which is in the process right now.
This past -- I believe it was in October there was a high bycatch rate of approximately 55,000 kings south of Sand Point and I didn't see any information on where the genetics of those fish were. Probably scattered throughout Alaska. So that was another deficit to the deep water king population.

A third item on the pollock fleet, their allowable biologic catch and also their total allowable catch, which is set by -- I think it's recommended by National Marine Fisheries Service and then approved by North Pacific Council to increase that quota for this year 2011 by -- I have the numbers out in my snow-go, but it's either 52 or 56 percent. So a very substantial increase in the amount of fishing pressure and tow time that's going to be occurring in the Bering Sea this year. And then based on some of the recruitment numbers that the research vessels that do these surveys, they potentially could increase it again up in the near future, like in 2013 or something of that sort.

That's all I had regarding that information right now. I think I'll close there at this point.

CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Any Council questions for Tim on those issues? My question is do you recall they reduced the harvest for pollock significantly and now they've jumped back to a huge increase?

MR. GERVAS: Yeah, it's my understanding that's correct. I don't know exactly when it started, but for like the last -- the previous three years they had kept decreasing the TAC or total allowable catch and were concerned about not enough mature pollock being available in the population and then for some reason their survey that was performed, the last survey that was performed, showed that there was more fish available so they increased those numbers. I could get more information by searching some stuff.

CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: That was my recollection that they were worried about the biomass and then the size and the numbers were declining and then just snap back in the other direction. The incidental bycatch of chinook salmon was very high at 126,000 and then they started doing reductions and
total allowable catch and that reduced the bycatch and
I was in favor of protection of the pollock and then
the periphery is protecting the chinook, the salmon,
but then going in this direction, we're going to go
back to huge bycatch and we already have a depleted
chinook fishery as it is. So it's going to make it a
lot harder to rebuild these chinook stocks.

Go ahead, Tim.

MR. GERVAIS: I had one more comment.
I was talking to some of the people from Tanana and
Ruby about people who have been fishing all their
lives, even just this past weekend I talked with
Lorraine Honea and she remembers the fishery in 1927.
Ask them what they felt what the quality of the king
run was compared to historical, their historical
experience. Everybody thought it was about less than
half. I asked the question do you think it's around
half and most people as far as chinook were concerned
said it was less than half. So I've been trying to
figure what we could do to take steps.

This mesh size reduction is an unknown.
There are some unknown things that are going to happen
with it as far as drop outs and targeting smaller size
fish and stuff like that. It seems like as far as the
State is concerned they feel like having that mesh size
restriction in place is going to give them enough of an
action plan that I don't feel like they're going to try
to manage their closures very aggressively to protect
that run.

It was disappointing reading the
comments submitted for the Federal Board about that we
didn't get good support from the YK Delta or from
Eastern Interior even though we had gone through that
information in our joint meeting and I thought we had
everybody on board with that. So I hope there's a way
we can figure out to take some conservation matters
that involve the river users that are going to help
build up our population back to more appropriate
levels.

CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Thanks, Tim. That's
important information. We need more comments from
elders and fishers that are realizing the size and
quality of the fish. That's an important issue. Those
nice fish are nice for human consumption, but they're
also the best breeders on the spawning ground, so
that's a big issue.

Do you have a comment there, Carl?

MR. MORGAN: No comment, just

housekeeping. In order for our lunch to be delivered
we've got to put in the order before 10:00.

CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Okay. We can go for
-- are you done there, Tim? We'll stop at this point
and we'll continue with Council comments so that people
can get a coffee cup and get your order in too. So
about a 10-minute break.

(Off record)

(On record)

CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: I'm going to bring
the meeting back to order. In the agenda, we're on
Council members reports, so we're at Ray Collins. Go
ahead, Ray.

MR. COLLINS: Yes, Jack. The only
comments I have to make is on that customary trade
issue. I served on the original working group that was
drawing up regulations for that and we met for several
times for a year, year and a half. The conclusion of
that group was that we could not come up with solutions
that would fit statewide. The reason I comment is
that's probably why they're calling this a
subcommittee. The recommendation was that we leave it
to the Regional Advisory Councils to work out
regulations for their area because there is so much
variance.

Just to further comment on that, if you
think even in our area -- when I came back in the '60s,
Nicolai, for example, every family was going to fish
camp, putting up fish for their dogs and so on. In
relation to that, they got the king salmon they needed
and made their strips. That's not the case any longer.
Many of those families are now having to work or
something and fewer are going to fish camp, so they
rely on the ones who go to fish camp to put up their
strips and then pay them for it and it would vary from
community to community up and down the river between
the mouth and the other. So a lot of those that are in
commercial trade where there's money involved it's
still going to subsistence users.
So it's going to be a challenge to fit something. They probably will not come up with a solution that's going to fit forever. They'll probably have to review it because of the changing circumstances just to make sure that subsistence users get the traditional food that they were using. So that's my comments on that. I think that's why they formed it as a subcommittee because it's only part of the group working on an issue for a local area. Thank you.

CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Thanks, Ray, for the clarification. Ray did work on that working group. The Federal Subsistence Board is aware that there are regional differences. Bristol Bay commented on what is appropriate amounts. So in each region the Federal Subsistence Board wants to be sensitive to each region's use of fisheries, but then we have a long Yukon River with three different regions and so we need to work out what appropriate levels customary trade actually is and what comprises a significant commercial enterprise. That's the underlying question.

At this time I want to recognize that we have several people have arrived, additional Staff and other people and I welcome you to the Western Interior meeting. There's a sign-in sheet in the back of the room there. Be sure to sign that sheet. So we're working through our agenda. We're on Council member comments.

Go ahead, Don.

MR. HONEA: Thank you, Mr. Chair. Good morning everyone. We had a pretty good moose hunt. It's on the record that we do have a winter hunt, but fortunately we've never had to use those measures. The chum run was pretty poor. I was actually out there during the king run and that was pretty poor for us, but we utilized the chum run, so that's really important. When we think of the pollock fishery, we think of the chinook salmon, the kings that they're taking and we actually never consider the chum run. So that there in itself from looking at the one submitted by Norton Sound or whatever, that directly affects us too and we can see it in the poor runs and stuff.

So I'd just like to also welcome Pollock aboard and I'd like to somehow thank Mickey for his years of service. You know, he's always been pretty knowledgeable and outspoken on fishing issues.
I'd also like to thank my cousin Jenny for the fish that we're having here this morning, the smoked fish and stuff. It's really good.

I'd also like before we leave here clarification on Proposal 223 submitted by the Board of Game and want to know the pros and cons of that. Thank you.

CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Thanks, Don. When we get to the State and Federal proposals, we're going to get to those State proposals. I inserted it in the State call for proposals, but we also can discuss the 222 and 223 trophy value nullification that the Board of Game and why we have to oppose those proposals. I intend to have that as part of our meeting. Thanks for wondering about that. Those are very important issues. There's reasons why we have to oppose those two State proposals, which will be heard in March.

I do appreciate your chum reliance. As the king salmon runs decline, we need to really start protecting chum salmon and there's some real issues with -- Area M is again catching a lot of chum salmon as bycatch. The North Pacific Fisheries Management Council is going to increase fishing time, so we're going to have a lot of chum caught there. So we're going to be talking about those issues. Thank you.

Go ahead, Robert.

MR. WALKER: Thank you, Mr. Chair. Welcome Staff and Board members. First of all I'd like to thank Mickey Stickman for being here for 13 years. I think we should recognize that, Mr. Chairman, and also welcome Mr. Pollock Simon here to the Board. I understand he was one of the original Board members back in the early days when it started. I've known Pollock a long time. He's a good hand. So the boys at Alaska Fire Service says he's a real good hand, so whenever they say something you have to follow it.

Getting back to customary trade, I know it's not going to take just one meeting. It's going to take more than one because when I asked for all Staff and AC Boards and tribal councils to sit on this, to work on this -- Jack, I'd like to see this -- it's going to take more than one meeting. I know it's not going to be ready by the time the fishing season starts in June. I asked for Polly, but you said David Jenkins
could also sit in there. Polly is kind of busy. I can understand that.

I could go on and on and on, but I'm not going to do that. This will be done here sometime I would say by October? Correct me, but we can go from there.

I had another issue here, but I'm not going to bring it up. I can talk about it in the meeting.

Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: I appreciate your comments on the customary trade subcommittee. As a fisher, I appreciate your perspective on how long it might actually take to produce a quality document and I appreciate your comments on that. I may have been overly optimistic, as was Geoff Haskett, Regional Director for U.S. Fish and Wildlife. So you may be right, October. At our next meeting we may be finalizing some customary trade issue things.

MR. WALKER: One of the other things I looked at, Jack, was how much the local people recorded. In our records, I looked at our minutes in the past, the average rural person makes $6,000. So when you start looking at the dollar sign, the gasoline prices, and it's going to be raising again this year, I'm very optimistic about it being done by November.

CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Thank you, Robert. The subcommittee will work through those various aspects of regional differences and cost of living and what's appropriate. I want to reiterate the tribal council involvement in this process is very important and so we need to at this meeting transmit to OSM and the Federal Subsistence Board the need for tribal council involvement and working with -- well, I'll bring Polly up to the table here on the legalities. I have written a questionnaire and how the OSM can rewrite the letter. We need to be able to transmit questions to the tribal councils. Whether the Federal Subsistence Board has to make a request of changing -- DOI is requiring things, so DOI and maybe the Secretary of Interior has got to cut some red tape. This is going to really hinder the work of this Council on this customary trade issue if we can't involve the tribal councils.
Go ahead, Polly.

DR. WHEELER: Mr. Chair, thank you.
Polly Wheeler with the Office of Subsistence Management. I have a couple things, but just as a reminder the subcommittee is involving the YK Council, the Western Interior Council and the Eastern Interior Council. I think before you get ahead of yourself to sending out the tribal questionnaire you need to remember that there's going to be representatives of each of the three Councils that are going to be participating in this subcommittee. So you probably want to get together as a group and then figure out how you want to proceed.

Now in terms of the Federal government, the Office of Management and Budget has a rule that if you ask more than 10 people a series of questions you have to get approval from this body, the OMB. There's probably ways that we could get around it, but I don't know until the subcommittee gets together as a group and you move forward and figure out how you want to move forward. I'll tell you right now the Secretary of the Interior has no authority over OMB. It's a different department. But that's sort of government speak. I would encourage the group to get together and figure out an approach and then we'll figure out a way to make that approach work. So let's just give the group time to get together as a group and then figure out the approach they want to take and then we'll figure out how to help you get there.

Mr. Chair.

CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Okay. This customary trade issue is boiling in the forefront of our Council discussion this morning, so I wanted a clarification on that. So when we get to the Yukon River fisheries we'll develop a position on this customary trade and try and -- my perception is that we could push for a subcommittee meeting in April, all three Councils, send a position from this Council to that subcommittee, try to get the three Councils to agree on a questionnaire and try to get that questionnaire out to the communities by September so that they can be transmitting their feelings for the next Council meetings. That might give us the six months. If we can build a fire under that to expedite it six months or shorter. So that should be the direction of this Council on the customary trade.
And you're right, the three Councils have to work together. The questionnaire that I produced I would like to see that sent to all three Councils so that they can be mulling it over in their minds, but I'm not sure if that happened.

Thanks, Polly, on the clarification on that.

Any further comments, Robert?

MR. WALKER: No.

CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Pollock, do you have comments about your concerns or anything from your area in your perspective? Go ahead.

MR. SIMON: Yes, thank you, Jack. My name is Pollock Simon, Sr. I live in Allakaket. I'm glad to be down here in Galena. I have a lot of friends down here. My son is PJ. He's lived down here with you guys for a while. Crazy kid. Thank you for putting up with him when he lived here.

(Laughter)

MR. SIMON: I appreciate that. A few years ago there was only 13 moose taken in Allakaket for about 30 or 40 families, so you can guess that meat was spread out pretty thin. With also that salmon crash, more subsistence fishermen on the Koyukuk River and we depend on the salmon if there's not enough meat. One year I caught 30 king salmon and I thought that was lots. In the '70s we stayed in fish camp and catch king salmon that's close to four feet long. Not today, you don't see those anymore. They're more like three feet. The fish are getting smaller. If all the fish that's being caught on the high seas would return to the Yukon River, there would be plenty fish for everyone. We wouldn't be discussing fish that much.

I got on that YRDFA this year too and went to Mountain Village meeting recently and there was a lot of discussion about the fish and customary trade. People have been selling fish for years and that's a touchy issue. Every committee I sit on we have to sit down and talk about it for a lengthy discussion. But that's all right. We can talk about it the next time. You will still continue to sell strips and put some away for yourself. I don't think we'll come to an
agreement on anything.

In closing, I'd say that working together, unity, is the key to surviving. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Thanks, Pollock. I appreciate your comments on your perspective of the size of the chinook salmon and customary trade, having attended the YRDFA meeting down in Mountain Village. It is a very touchy issue. It's going to take a long time, actually quite a bit of work to work through that.

Carl.

MR. MORGAN: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. My comments -- and I'll try not to be lengthy. I'd just like to reiterate what I've already said before in all my other comments and my reporting when I gave these comments was just continued close monitoring of the salmon, the continued close monitoring of the caribou herd in Mulchatna, close monitoring of our moose. I think that should never be given up.

One of my biggest worries or concerns is this customary trade. I'm glad it's a hot issue and it's something that's very contagious. I'd just like to say that it's something that is not one size would fit all. One size will not correct everything. We've got too many different diverse people. We're a big state and we've got different needs. We have different traditional uses. I think that should be very considered and one of the considerations that we should be taking into heart and to feel the traditional uses in each region.

The other concern I'm glad about is that the Federal U.S. Board is included or the Secretary has agreed that we have two public members to represent Alaska subsistence users. And when it says public, like what you said earlier, your concern is that -- you know, because of our shortage of teachers, our shortage of health workers in our clinics and stuff, we always have a shortage, a lot of them come right out of college, right out of universities in the Lower 48 who have no idea how subsistence is being used. They come in here. They're a rural public subsistence user. You look at that and they could qualify to be our representatives in the Federal Board.
They could. Public. Title VIII say if you live in rural Alaska, you're a rural subsistence user.

That's why I'd like to have some emphasis on -- because the regulation, the way it is, it speaks nothing to whom the new representative will be or how the process will progress. Like any other Board I look at or even committees, I always see -- I'm not prejudiced. I've got to emphasize that real hard. This is not a prejudice issue. I'd like to see aboriginal Alaskans on those two. I look at the Alaska Board of Game. How many we got? One. Federal Subsistence Board. One.

To be equal in ethnicity I think we should have -- one of the criteria should be aboriginal Alaskan. I think one of the big issues, one of the big criteria should be because we're underrepresented. We're going to be even more afraid when the State legislature gets reappointed. We're going to be still underrepresented. So that's my concern because the decision of who gets on these is going to be appointed by the Secretary of Interior and we need to be really, really concerned about that.

That's how I feel right now. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: I really appreciate those comments, Carl. I too feel that Alaska Natives should sit in those seats on the Federal Subsistence Board. That's an agenda item under 18 here, these mandates for those two Board members. The Federal Subsistence Board is going to take comments from this Council on those. So we can insert those into our comments when we discuss that issue.

I have other feelings on the criteria of those two Board members, the eight criteria. I feel they should have direct dependence on the resource and those kinds of things. Those should be part of their qualifications. Not I'm an Alaska Native from Anchorage, never seen a moose in my life except it ran across the road by my house or ate my bush or something, no. They have direct dependents and things like that.

So I really appreciate your comments on the Federal Board makeup. It's an important change to the Federal Subsistence Board though and we are going
to review that.

Eleanor, do you have comments and concerns. Go ahead.

MS. YATLIN: Thank you, Mr. Chair. We do have a winter moose hunt this year, March 1 through 5, starting today. Last year that went pretty good. It's a Federal subsistence moose hunt. Last fall I believe most of the families in Huslia did okay on moose hunt.

On fishing, we were the only ones that stayed in fish camp. This is noted to me because we live in fish camp a lot of the years of our lives and we're dependant on our subsistence food, but this year -- you know, we stayed in fish camp all last summer to cut fish and we helped a lot of people in the village. The dry fish that we cut we finished it end of January. Usually by March, end of March we finish our -- that's how much we get for the winter. You know, even giving it to the elders or giving it to the New Years potlatch.

The other comment I wanted to make and usually I try to call either Allakaket or Hughes and talk to people in Huslia, but I'm sorry to say I didn't do it this time, but I talked to one person in Allakaket and it's something that my cousin Polly said about the moose. You know it's been declining for a number of years. We lived in Bettles for almost 11 years and I saw the crash there with all that moose and I testified to that many times to our advisory committee.

The same issues are still a concern there because this one person I talk with she stated -- well, I'll read from my notes and she said I hope we don't have another rough year without moose meat. This is the second straight year that we don't. We're just really tired of (In Native). That's, you know, store-bought food. It's really so hard to live like this where we have to be dependant on the store. She said that the Old Man River where they go moose hunting it's just a trickle of water coming out right now. They can't go back Old Man River anymore to go moose hunting.

The other thing is, when they have their -- last year I know they had one month open for
moose hunt and it was a Federal subsistence hunt. It was so deep snow, this one person said that they went out -- and they have to go really far and with the price of gas the way it is, you know, they didn't get any because they have to go too far up the Kanuti with the elements and snow.

She talked about that and the price of gas and she compared the price of gas to the price per pound of meat that they have to buy. When you really look at it, it's just about the same for, you know, like -- I don't know what their price of gas in Allakaket is right now, but I know it's pretty much. When you do per pound of meat, would you rather try to get that gas and have no luck going out to Kanuti or buy that per pound. They're tired of that. They have so hard time. I can't imagine.

The reason why I brought up our moose hunt down -- you know, we are fortunate. We are. But I also know how it is to live up in Bettles. And she talked about elders, like Kitty and David. They've been going hunting for 70 years and they didn't have no luck last fall. So if she is having a hard time past two years trying to feed her grandchildren and her children, then you can imagine what it's doing to the elders. I think that's a great concern.

Another thing she brought up was those outfitters in Bettles. You know, to go to Allakaket through the airlines you have to land in Bettles sometime or Anaktuvuk Pass. She said she was sitting at the airport in Bettles and there was these hunters and she saw the front quarters -- this one hunter had just the two front quarters and she really wanted to know where the rest of the meat was because they're hungry for it. She saw the horns. So it's still happening what was happening in the '90s. They're still making money off, you know -- and I wanted to bring that -- and I know it's an issue because I saw it. I think it's a great concern that we try to do something for the people, for Allakaket and their hard times because we're talking going on five years probably of their low moose hunt.

Oh, the other thing is that customary trade. My feelings on that is we could discuss it from here to forever because it's been on everyone's agenda no matter what entity, whether it's a Federal or State subsistence. I went to an ANILCA training and my
feelings -- because of Title VIII and their description, it's so vague that customary trade and subsistence, both the words. It's so vague in, you know, the way they put it in Title VIII. It just like non-existent.

I think my feeling is all the people that work for the State or the Federal should take the training because it's a three day intensive training and then maybe they'll have a different idea of what we're talking about.

Thank you, Mr. Chair.

CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Thank you, Eleanor. One thing that is different this year for -- oh, you've got a comment there, Pollock?

MR. SIMON: No, go ahead.

CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: One thing that is different up in Unit 26 or, correction, 24B around Allakaket is the Board of Game just increased the season from December 15 to April 15 one bull, which gives a four month season and then there's an additional Federal areas on some BLM lands under Federal permit have the same season. So that is a change up there.

The State of Alaska, Glenn Stout, brought that proposal forward and passed the Board of Game. It's not the best, what people would really like, to be able to hunt cows in winter, but it's as good as we're ever going to get right now, so we have to be very happy with what we can get for at least a winter hunt. Not five days, not 10 days and specifically Federal land. This gives enough -- it allows hunting anywhere below the Henshaw, so it helps some.

I just flew down from -- we flew to Bettles, we flew to Allakaket and that pilot flew low. It just snowed four feet and all these moose were coming -- there was trails coming down from the mountains. They were all coming down to the river. So I think it's going to be a good year to harvest moose all the way through the middle of April because all the moose are coming down by the river. I saw one right on the river right above Allakaket laying on the river.
I think there is going to be more winter hunting opportunity than there has been in the last five years. That would be my comment on the winter hunting for that area.

Did you have a comment, Pollock.

MR. SIMON: Thank you, Jack.

Remembering we had a winter moose hunt around Allakaket some years back and now the moose crashed. We used to have a cow season, which was good and everybody prefer. And fall time you never get a moose you can get a cow during the winter. But now there's not that much moose, so there's no cow season. A couple years ago on the Federal land there was an opportunity to get a bull moose in winter, but that's kind of difficult. Allakaket got pretty cold. Last month was 70 below for two days and during that five day season for bulls only it was 40 below. It's not like going on the river and there's a moose standing right there. In winter it's different. You have to put on snowshoes and walk around.

There's also other difficulties like immediately behind Allakaket it's all different land; Federal land, private land, corporation land, checkerboard land. The catch is you have to shoot the moose on the Federal square. So I tried to shoot moose one time. Of course, I didn't get a moose in the fall season. I followed this little bull moose, but then I know it crossed over to State land, so that's the end of my hunt. That gas at $7 a gallon, it's hard to go a long ways to get moose. Caribou is up 60 miles. Traveling that far is difficult. But, yeah, there's moose, you know, but the thing is bulls only. All the old people say most of the time bull moose has no fat and it's tough meat and they'd rather have fish or go to the store and buy burgers.

Thank you, Jack.

CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Thanks, Pollock.

Yeah, bull is not the preferred moose, but that is as good as we're going to get for a moose hunt. Like Ron told me, they used to get bulls at spring camp. They used to kill a bull in spring camp and they're starting -- at least the muscle is coming back a little bit and they make good dry meat. That's all we're going to get. That's all we have right now is a winter bull hunt. Until these moose come back we're not going to
have cow hunting, so that's as good as we're going to
get right now. We can't do any more than that. There's
no way we can try to get an additional cow season or
anything.

But there is a four-month season. We
have to be happy for some kind of winter hunting
opportunity where you can pick the weather, the
conditions. So you can go all the way to the middle of
April. That's all we can really do right now. This
Council has worked hard to try -- and I appreciate the
State coming forward with a reasonable hunt, something
we can work with.

At this time is there any additional
comments from the Council?
(No comments)

CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: So, no. So we're
through the Council comments. It's a good point in our
agenda to let Council members vent their concerns and
so forth and I always appreciate this part of our
agenda to bring everything forward that's on people's
minds at that time.

I see administrative business. You've
got some comments, Donald?

MR. MIKE: Thank you, Mr. Chair. I
provided a handout folder for the Council members.
I'll just go over that briefly. In it we have the
minutes from the February 23, 2010 and last fall's
minutes. The comments on the -- it's got the heading
Western Interior RAC-02, it's comments regarding Gates
of the Arctic SRC hunting plan recommendation 10-01,
comments from the Western Interior. And then Western
Interior RAC-03, it's a letter to Mr. Reakoff from the
Bureau of Land Management regarding hunting guide
operations and BLM permits. That's for your
information.

CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Donald, these
comments were my personal comments to the BLM in the
guide area selection process and that was the basis of
developing a letter from this Council, so I wrote a
letter yesterday and it got lost when I put it into
your thumb drive there. So there's a more concise
comment for the Council. I have some other letters
that Donald has to print out in addition to that, but
this letter to the BLM is my own personal comments and it's the basis of an issue for guide selection for the Dalton Highway Corridor.

Go ahead, Donald.

MR. MIKE: Thank you, Mr. Chair, for the clarification. And then Western Interior RAC-04, it's a State Board of Game Proposals No. 222 and 223, which is on the agenda for later on in the meeting, under Item No. 16. That's for Council information in preparation for that discussion.

CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: I see the State's draft feasibility for intensive management and then I see the Seward Peninsula Advisory Council recommendation for Bering Sea bycatch and I see a resolution from the YK Delta on Bering Sea pollock fishery. So we will use these documents at the appropriate time in the agenda. So then there will be some additional letters or recommendations that I have for the Council that need to be printed out on other agenda items. Then I see Gene Sandone's PowerPoint, which he's going to present here, so that's in this packet.

Other comments there, Donald?

MR. MIKE: No, that's it then. Just finally, as you summarized, the resolutions from Seward Peninsula and YK Regional Advisory Council, and a briefing on changing the composition of the Federal Subsistence Board as Mr. Morgan briefly discussed this morning. Finally, there's a March 1 and 2, 2011 Western Interior Advisory Council. Federal review requires the RAC to comment on the current Federal/State MOU. Mr. Chair, that concludes the summary of what's in the packet.

Mr. Chair, I just want to remind you to give an opportunity for the public to testify. Thank you.

CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Right. That's next on our agenda. Item here 10. So there's more documents that will come into this packet here. At this time we'll take public testimony on any agenda item that you see that the Western Interior Council is going to be working on. I also encourage public testimony throughout the meeting. At various points in the meeting I also encourage public testimony. The
Councils are to meet and to act as a platform for public comments, so I appreciate public comments greatly and we're actually mandated by ANILCA.

You had a comment, Eleanor.

MS. YATLIN: I wanted to introduce someone for the public testimony whenever.....

CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: We're at public testimony.

MS. YATLIN: So this is the time to do it?

CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: If you would like to do that, go right ahead.

MS. YATLIN: I'd like to have Darrell Vent come up for the Huslia Tribal Council. He wanted to do public testimony.

CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: This is the appropriate time. Thank you. Go right ahead, Darrell. Turn the mic on there. Good to see you again.

MR. VENT: Yeah, it's been a few years since I've been here. I think the last time I ever went to a meeting was we had a big issue down there in McGrath concerning moose population and what kind of wolf control management we could use, which we have introduced to Juneau for trying to get aerial wolf hunt. It was a touchy issue. We did get it passed, but it took many years for them to kind of utilize the fact that they could hunt from the air because it's such a hard area down there. Now we've got issues here concerning Bettles and Allakaket area where the moose population is limited.

The thing I see is that -- you know, Carl Morgan mentioned that and I heard it over there from Robert Walker about Federal land is public land and the regulations that could go wrong with these. We're subsistence users here and everything is kind of vague. It's not really addressed toward the subsistence users from the villages. Our issues are not really heard. We don't have a lot of input from the management boards because like it was stated earlier there's not a lot of rural users in there. We can't go back to our aboriginal rights and work from
there. So if we could get, you know, a lot more
involvement from our villages that would address these
issues, maybe we wouldn't have low counts on our moose
and stuff.

Our area in Huslia is fine right now, but what's to say five to ten years down the road that
you start having issues like this that Bettles and McGrath area are having right now. With all the
management that should be done on it, I think that these issues are important to us. So if we learn to
work with the State and look at the harvest and if we have input to the State on how the harvest should be
done, I think they should address our concerns. The natural resource part of it should be regulated
because, like I say, the Federal government on this advisory board here is public use. So, you know, there's a lot of things that we probably have to work
on to get regulations done on.

It's a touchy issue, but, you know, if there's going to be management in Alaska, I think it has to deal with the rural people. So that was my point on how we should address these issue.

Under that, I think where Pollock and them are hunting moose at, it's a pretty poor thing to be hunting a bull in the winter. It's a tough thing to do. I remember when they used to tell stories about how they used to go moose hunting a long time ago. It would take them three or four days walking just to catch a moose. Now up in your area they're opening caribou hunt, is that correct?

CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Up to the north of us the State of Alaska Board of Game passed a proposal to allow five cow caribou on July 1, basically hunting cows all fall when they've got baby calves. There was a lot of cow caribou killed. That's what happened down in Southwest Alaska. They started hunting cows in fall time, lots of non-resident hunters. The caribou herd crashed. So we're real concerned about the caribou population up north. We petitioned the Board of Game. That failed. So we're at a point where we're just monitoring the situation. There's a huge infrastructure being built. Air taxis are applying for permits. You can go on the internet and Google caribou hunting on the North Slope. You'll see all kinds of people trying to attract hunters to the North Slope. In the next two or three years it's going to go south
is what's going to happen.

At one point I want to clarify to you is this a Federal Regional Council. We deal with Federal lands and we have a Federal priority for rural users, so rural users have a priority on the Federal lands. The issue is that the Native corporation lands are managed by the State of Alaska. That's the issue around Huslia.

MR. VENT: Okay.

CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: But the corp. lands actually have to have State regulations, so we can only make Federal regulations that apply to the Refuge lands. I wanted to clarify that to you. Go ahead.

MR. VENT: One of the issues that we have in our area is the regulations on transporters. I realize that you guys don't have much regulations and that has to do with the State. I think that's going to be an important issue later on because we're really dealing with that problem right now. There's a lot of things that's not restricted. Not a lot of regulations on there and we need more regulations on it because it's starting to become a problem. I think that's one of the important issues from our area that needs to be looked at real close.

Once we start getting down to it, we've got to start working for our moose. Like Pollock and them, they had to come down to our area, some people, to go hunting. That's a long ways to travel and costs a lot of money for the gas. It's something that probably will continue on for a while until their area is through with their intensive management. I don't know when that's ever going to happen. It's some issues that we have to look at and look for in the future. We're going to be able to try to help them, but we need to watch what's being taken out of our area.

It's depleting our natural resource. Not our natural resource, our moose. We're the ones that have to live on this moose. If we have to go to the store to buy food, that's not what we want. We want to be able to have that meat for our diet and abundance.

Hopefully we can look into these issues
on how to regulate a little bit more on transporting
and guided hunting. All our issues are dealing with
subsistence but a lot of our problems, I think, has to
deal with other things, so we have to include
everything.

Thank you.

CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: I appreciate your
comments. The State of Alaska regulates through the
Commercial Services Board regulates transporters, so
Huslia Tribal Council can send a letter to the
Commercial Services Board to state that you would like
regulations to control the numbers of transporters or
requests to them. The Federal Subsistence Board
doesn't regulate that at all. The number of guides is
regulated on the Refuge lands by the Refuge system and
there's a selection process for that. Then the numbers
of moose is regulated in the Koyukuk Moose Hunting
Plan. There's only so many moose, so the subsistence
use is accommodated by harvest under the subsistence
tag. The drawing is the allocation to the
non-residents and other users that want to keep the
antler. Residents of the area can actually apply for
the drawing permit and if you draw a permit you can
keep the antler. I always encourage local people to
apply for the permits because then you can actually
keep the antler and sell them.

Glenn Stout over here calculates the
number of bulls that are available and calculates how
many drawing permits. The permitting system that we
have on the Koyukuk Controlled Use Area I consider it
exemplary of wildlife management. It can't get any
better than that unless we have wolf control. But the
reality is we can't have wolf control. It's very hard
to get wolf control on Refuge lands and especially when
you've got this kind of a moose population. It's going
to be a real hard sell. So I just flat out like to
tell people the realities of what can happen and what's
not going to happen.

Since you're here at the table I would
like to ask you -- I had a call or comment from a
person in Huslia that felt that the winter hunt, the
Federal winter hunt for 10 moose with no more than five
to be cows that's what's currently happening today, so
there's Federal permits that were issued. Brad Scotton
can probably tell us how many permits have been issued.
I'd like to know how many have been issued.
I would like to know -- his perception was that killing cow moose was a bad thing to be doing around Huslia and that should be stopped. I would like to know -- I have a letter that I would like to submit to the Huslia Tribal Council requesting their perception of how they feel the winter hunt, is it a good thing, and do you feel that shooting cow moose -- since you're here representing Huslia, do you feel that shooting -- taking five cows, only five in a very dense moose population, primarily to be used for elders, do you feel that that's a bad thing or a positive thing?

MR. VENT: The way I look at it, through the years we always hunted cow moose in the winter, the spring hunt, and the fall time was the bull hunt. The meat is the right texture to eat and it's, you know, the nutrition value is a lot better with the cows in the spring than the bulls because the bull is way too skinny. There's a lot of sinew. But if you're feeding it to elders, it's kind of hard for them to chew on sinew and things like that, so it would be a lot better if they had what we originally had from the beginning was cow hunt in winter and spring compared to trying to take a bull which is too hard to chew on and the nutrition value is not really adequate.

I think that's a good thing because our elders did that from years back, so it would be good to have more cow hunt. What we have is a good sustained yield, a good harvest. Our area got enough moose to support it. I'd say that going for more than the five cows. I don't know what you considered the other ones, probably five bulls, but I figure it would be good to have all of them cows instead of bulls.

CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Well, the biological parameters are -- I can't leverage for more than five right now with the moose population. The cow population is basically stable or slightly declining. Until we see more moose going into the population, five cows is about all I can really leverage the Refuge into giving. So I wanted to know your perception of the hunt. I got one perception. I want to know from the people in Huslia whether they think that this winter hunt is jeopardizing the moose. This person thinks that it is. I want to know from the Huslia community to this Council whether they feel that that hunt is jeopardizing the moose. Hopefully at some point in this meeting I will review this letter of Huslia requesting that information and I want the tribal
council to review that and then send it back to us. That's what I would like to do.

Go ahead, Darrell.

MR. VENT: There's one thing I'd like to address when we start hunting. Well, you know, in order to keep our moose pretty much stable you have to have a breeding bull which produces strong calves to survive. Our survival rate in calves is one that I think is going to be really affecting us because you get the big bears and you get the wolves. They have a high kill ratio when you don't have a strong calf. The breeding bull is the one with the big horns. We don't use the big horns. We go out and hunt the two, three, four year old bull, which is good. It has good meat for us. If that issue is going to be addressed, I think that, you know, it should be addressed like I said, who the State has to regulate. It should be looked at in a different way. Instead of trying to place blame we should learn to work together and address the problem from where it starts.

CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: I've reviewed the moose biology for the Huslia and the bull/cow ratio is -- Glenn Stout is precise on maintaining the 30 bulls per 100 cows. He's doing an excellent job. So we've got several big bulls in the population. We have the breeding bulls and it's as good as game management is going to get. I consider it the best moose management plan in the Interior of Alaska right now. It can't get any better than that. We have proposals to eliminate the antler destruction. That will bring all kinds of hunters, our bull/cow ratio will go in the toilet and things will go south.

Any comments from the Council to Darrell. Go ahead, Tim.

MR. GERVais: Thank you, Mr. Chair. Before I asked a question of Darrell I wanted to ask you or perhaps the Refuge Staff could comment on what controls the amount of transporters on Federal lands in the area around Huslia?

CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: That's for the Koyukuk/Nowitna. Brad, are you here?

MR. SCOTTON: Yeah.
CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Come to the mic, please.

MR. SCOTTON: Mr. Chairman, Timothy. Brad Scotton from the Refuge. Normally Kenton Moos, our Refuge Manager, would be handling these questions, but he's having to fill in for somebody in Anchorage in the regional office so it falls to me. The regulation of transporters is handled via a permit process. On the Refuge system it's simply an application to the Refuge for a commercial use permit to transport hunters onto the Refuge. Guiding is a separate issue, a different set of regulations, and there's only I think currently two guides in all of Koyukuk Refuge that are allowed to operate and there are two on the Nowitna Refuge.

Transporting, you apply and there's some regulations they have to follow and conditions of their permits. Currently I think there's two or maybe three permitted transporters onto the Refuge by air and there might be one or two more that are allowed to do it using boats on the Refuge. Again, the hunting is all under permits, either drawing permits or registration permits, so the only people that are allowed to fly in with the commercial transporters are the ones that have already won the lottery permit that allowed them to go onto the Refuge and that's highly regulated so that the number of hunters that can come is pretty regulated on the Refuge by that way, so there aren't very many transporter permits out there.

Did that answer your question?

MR. GERVAIS: Yeah, thank you. Darrell, thank you for traveling here to discuss the views of the Huslia Tribe. If it was up to you or up to the tribe, what are you seeing as the biggest threat up there from commercial services? Is it the number of guides or the volume of the guides or is it the number of transporters or what? If it was up to you to make the regs, what would you or the Huslia Tribe like to see happen?

MR. VENT: I think some of the issues that we're having right now is with transporters. You know, the guides, we got them limited back to areas where they're not able to hunt on the Doyon lands, so it kind of gave them areas that makes it a hot spot for them to hunt moose. It's probably around the Dalki...
area with the guides and up above the Dalki area. So
transporters are able to go back onto the lakes onto
Federal lands, which we consider public lands, and
float down through the system into the State controlled
areas, which are the rivers and the tributaries off the
rivers or the high water mark. I guess that's how it's
stated.

Some of the things that we find out is
that it takes them probably four or five days to come
out of those areas with those moose. The restrictions
on that is not limited, so we want a little more
regulations on how much time it takes them to come out
of there so the meat wouldn't be spoiled because we can
smell the meat when it comes out of there. It ain't
very -- you notice that smell after years like in the
Galena area there used to be a lot of bad-smelling meat
because it wasn't taken care of.

I guess our issue is that the meat --
you know, we've always had that problem from years
back. Trying to issue some of these little things, you
know. I'm just getting back into the tribal council,
so I'm trying to address these regulations and see if
we can do something about it because it was mentioned
in our meeting up there in Huslia. Just trying to get
our information in there. We want to work with them
because they're doing good management. I could see
that. We want to keep it a good management, so we had
to address our issues and the one thing was the
transporters.

Thank you.

CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Thanks, Darrell.

Tim.

MR. GERV AIS: Darrell, do you think
there needs to be more enforcement so that there's less
wanton waste? Is that something the Huslia Tribe would
support?

MR. VENT: Yes, if we wanted to put in
a resolution, that would be one of our issues, is to
try to get a little more control on them, how to work
with us in order to provide something that will look
good for both State and tribal.

CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Thank you.
MR. GERVAIS: And then just a quick last part. So how about -- I didn't quite hear you comment directly to the amount of guided hunters or the amount of transported hunters in there. Do you feel it's an appropriate level or you'd like to see that reduced?

MR. VENT: It depends on the areas they're hunting because some areas we have more abundance of moose and some areas we have less. Moose aren't stable all over the whole area, so we have high hunt areas, low hunt areas. Some places get hunted out too much one year and then it has to grow back. The Dalki area is different than Dalbi area. We always address everything in one big area. When you hunt somewhere, you hunt one area too much, it reflects on the other area.

If you look at the counts, sometime you might have a lot of counts in one area and nothing in the other area and then you put it together and that's not the way management works. If we want transporting, we'd really try to address the areas that we put them in. It would reflect, you know, on how we manage our areas. It's kind of a hard subject, but we've all got to learn to work together. Hopefully management becomes more capable as the years go along.

CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Thank you. Thanks for those questions, Tim. Eleanor.

MS. YATLIN: Just one quick comment on that transporters, Mr. Chairman. This past year for two weeks they were allowed to be in the Three Day Slough, so that's new. I think it was Umphenours, the outfit that came up there. They were up there for two weeks. I testified on that at our last meeting the complaints we got from local people about them leaving their barrels and camp stoves and stuff behind. I just wanted to add that they did have more people, more transporters here this past fall.

CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: I remember you talking about that. Any other questions of Darrell. Go ahead, Don.

MR. HONEA: Thank you, Mr. Chair. I just want to thank Darrell for his comments on there. We like to ideally see some place where that's taken care of. I was up the Novi I think it was last week
there and there was some hunters that came out of the Dalbi. I don't know if the Dalbi is below the cabin or wherever the check station is, but they had already pulled up camp there. They wanted to actually check out, so they did it at Novi. They didn't have to. But the thing is, I mean I have concerns too. When he talks about -- when we hear of the hunters giving away meat here in Galena, I don't know what kind of shape that meat is in. Like you say it could be hanging there a week and it might not be edible. By the time we get up to Ruby all we see is racks. Just enforcement of that, I guess. We don't much know what enforcement-- what they check for here in Galena or when they check out of the -- but I'd have to comment and, you know, I just have to -- you know, we just have to keep up with what's happening to the meat. That's my only comment.

Thank you.

CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Thanks, Don. Jenny.

MR. PELKOLA: Darrell, I'm glad you came. I think we need more councils to send their reps from the villages. This is hard work and we try to represent our people, but sometimes we don't get feedback from anybody.

What I would like to say is in the fall time I'm at Bishop Mountain and we watch all these big, huge boats go by. Sometimes they're just little boats and they have about three or four racks on there. I wonder where they put all the meat. I wish the State and people would listen to us because we see what's going on and they're way out in their offices or wherever they are. They don't really see it and we're complaining, we're telling them, but yet they don't hear us. I think it's about time now they hear us because a lot of that meat I don't know where it goes. I don't even think they check them here in Galena. A lot of the meat they try to give away some of it is spoiled and you can't fool old Native people about trying to give them meat. They know what it smells like. It's pretty sad and I think we need more -- you need to track the meat and track it from day one to where it ends up. I'm sure by the time they probably get to Fairbanks or wherever they're going they probably just have the horns on there. That's a lot of waste and that's sad.
Thank you.

CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Thanks, Jenny. Any other questions for Darrell.

MR. WALKER: I got one.

CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Go ahead, Robert.

MR. WALKER: Darrell, you mentioned something about Federal lands here. Maybe you could ask a question of Jack, what is Federal public lands. On one hand they say that we're here for subsistence for you and on the other hand they say they're public lands. Maybe you can get a clarification for that.

MR. VENT: Yeah, that's right. Thank you, Robert. I did mention that earlier that I wanted to know the definition of why it's called Federal public lands, whether it's representing the subsistence users, as this Board is supposed to represent the subsistence. Could you make a clarification on that?

CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: It comes from ANILCA, Alaska National Interest Lands Conservation Act and there's a Title VIII in ANILCA that gives basically how management is to occur on Federal public lands. So the rural subsistence users have the highest priority use. If there's a problem with the game population, all other uses on the Federal lands are to go behind the rural subsistence use first. But Title VIII of ANILCA .815, it's not an exclusive use. .815 of ANILCA allows sport use also. If there's game population to support it, sport use can also occur and is actually part of the Title VIII. It's not exclusive use, it's a priority use. If there's a problem with the game population, it prioritizes to the rural people on the Federal land. The Native corporation lands are managed by the State of Alaska. There is no rural priority use. It's all Alaskan residents are a priority user. The corporations then are compelled to post their lands and stop people from hunting on their lands below the mean high water mark.

The Federal priority is for the Federal lands and those would be the Refuge and BLM lands in this area and those have a priority use. So the winter hunt that we have for Huslia right now applies only to the Federal lands, not to the corp lands. That's the clarification.
We can't stop sport hunting. It's allowed in ANILCA. If the population can support it, sport hunting can occur and the Federal Board can't stop it. We have to kind of work together on the sport hunting issues, you know, the meat care and so forth. The Koyukuk River Advisory Committee has worked to have meat on the bone regulations on the corridors. There's regulations trying to go away from -- I think at the check stations don't you hand out pamphlets, Glenn, on meat care? There's been educational processes.

Action item, Donald. I feel that this Council should write a letter to the Koyukuk/Nowitna Refuge to go to Huslia and discuss the transporter regulations with the tribal council and talk about the transporter issues that people have there so the Refuge itself issue these permits. So this letter from this Council shall go the Koyukuk/Nowitna Refuge requesting them to go to Huslia Tribal Council, discuss the transporter issues, the guiding issues so people understand what the parameters are, and try and work towards mitigating some of these issues with local people and so people can work together on this transporter issue.

The Council will entertain a motion to transmit that letter to the Koyukuk/Nowitna Refuge.

MR. GERVAIS: Mr. Chair.

CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Are you making the motion?

MR. GERVAIS: I wanted to add one thing onto that.

CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Go ahead. You'd make the motion and amend.

MR. GERVAIS: I would make the motion to draft that letter and I would like to amend it to include some discussion. As we're dealing with the Federal agencies, it will be increasingly common to hear that there's not enough money available to do enforcement and whatnot and it seems like there's enough of an issue of this wanton waste going on that I would think the fines from enforcement action should be able to cover the increased costs of this enforcement.

CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Right.
Discussion on the letter to the Koyukuk/Nowitna Refuge on developing a dialogue with the Huslia Tribal Council on the transporter issue, the guiding, the sport use issues and then reporting back to this Council. The Refuge will report back to this Council on that meeting. Any further discussions on that letter.

MR. WALKER: Mr. Chairman. A carbon copy to the Huslia Tribe to.

CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Yes, a carbon copy to the tribal council.

MR. WALKER: Call for the question.

CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: The question is called on that letter transmittal to the Koyukuk/Nowitna Refuge on transporter and sport use issues meeting with Huslia Tribal Council. All in favor of the letter signify by saying aye.

IN UNISON: Aye.

CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Those opposed same sign.

(No opposing votes)

CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: That should be forthcoming, Darrell. Thanks for your comments. I really appreciate you coming all the way down here to Galena, so thank you very much.

MR. VENT: Thank you, Chair.

CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Donald, you got a comment.

MR. MIKE: Thank you, Mr. Chair. The Council welcomes all public comments and testimony to the Council. I just want to remind the public if they wish to testify it would be helpful if you fill out a green sheet or just let myself know or the Chair know that you wish to testify in front of the Council and we'll make that happen.

Thank you, Mr. Chair.
CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Do we have further public comments. Yes, come up. She was first there. State your name for the record, please.

MS. J. HUNTINGTON: Joy Huntington, thank you. I just wanted to thank you for coming to Galena. It made it easier for people to come in from different areas around here, so it's good to be here and thank you to the community of Galena for hosting this. I wanted to first make a quick recognition of someone very important for all of this to be going on today and that's the late Morris Udall. ANILCA was his baby law and I was a part of one of the organizations that was founded in his honor and so it's really proud for me to see this going on and to see Section VIII really being taken seriously and used and taken advantage of by the communities, which is really good.

Just a few comments here. I had some suggestions. When we're talking about how to get tribes input, I do see that there's some regulations from OMB that may slow that process down. I guess my suggestion would be if the tribes initiated that survey versus -- since you're a Federally mandated body there is obviously some regulations there. One thing that I was kind of concerned about was if the questionnaire doesn't go out until September and you want it back in October, as we all know that's the time when people are going out moose hunting and their concern is preparing for winter. One suggestion that I would have is that most communities that I know have village youth workers every summer and most of the time they're cutting grass and they're looking for more kind of.....

(Phone ringing)

MS. J. HUNTINGTON: Is that my time to go sit down now? You're done.

(Laughter)

MS. J. HUNTINGTON: My recommendation would be that those youth workers possibly if they have the questionnaire they could go around and do it themselves and it would be community driven. The elders in the community may feel uncomfortable giving certain information to -- you know, we kind of get the us against them mentality sometimes, but if the young
people are going around, I think that would help make
the process go a little smoother. And they would have
something meaningful to do that would really give them
good training and community involvement. As good as
cutting grass is, I think this would be a more
meaningful thing for them to take part in and then
you'd get the information a lot sooner than the fall
months, which I think everyone is a little distracted
at that time.

The second comment I wanted to make was
on the customary trade and I'm sure this point has been
spoken across the state already, but definitely one
thing that I would like to reiterate and enforce is
that the cost, the expense of going out and fishing,
and I'm sure you all are aware of this is very high and
it differs. A comment that I believe Carl made was
that in each of the communities it's different,
especially how much it cost to go out there. I think
in Ruby the last I heard the per kilowatt hour is like
a dollar. What is the expense of gas in each
community.

Personally I know that my husband Keith
likes to go out and get a moose for his mother here in
Galena. In the past few years we've looked at how much
that costs and we were not able to with the gas, the
expenses that it costs to get everything together and
to go out. So I understand there's an issue between
identifying what is customary trade, what that dollar
amount is.

But I would like to see it left a
little open to interpretation because as the cost of
gas goes up that's going to impact people and if we set
it at a certain -- you know, not that we're selling
moose meat, but I think it's an important note to make
that the cost of going out and getting that fish is
going to keep rising.

CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: One comment. My
position on the customary trade issue is there's
proposals to set dollar amounts. My position with the
Federal Subsistence Board is inflation will eat that
dollar amount. So my position is that we should be
moving towards a percentage of your harvest or a pound
limit. So I'm on the same sheet of music with you,
Joy. Go ahead on your comment.

MS. J. HUNTINGTON: That's great to
hear. I see that one point I think we should raise is that probably in our communities probably 95 to 99 percent -- I'm kind of an optimistic, but I'd like to say 99 percent of our people out there in the rural areas are not abusing customary trade, so maybe this one percent and that's really the issue, is the abuse of that and not necessarily the fact that people do sell it. It's sad that the few misbehaving students in the classroom get the attention and they set the precedent for everybody else, but if we keep track of that and I think, as you've stated, Jack, just now, you want to keep it open enough, but then also manage the abuse. So I would like to see both of those taken into account when you are working at the solution there. I do see it as a major challenge, but I think everyone's comments today have shown that you're going to take it very seriously and make some good decisions.

The last comment I'd like to make is when you get to the agenda item 18(i), which is expanding the Federal Subsistence Board seats. Just as kind of a general comment, I think there's no such thing as over representation of our rural areas. So if they want to expand it by 20, I'd say go ahead, feel free. We've all had a steep hill in the rural areas for underrepresentation and that comment was made earlier as well. So I'd like to see this RAC and across the state everyone really stand behind that and any way other people can offer input. The people here in the community, I'm sure. The more people that say, yes, we want that expanded. You know, when it comes to these policies it's kind of a numbers game. We've had 70 people write in and say that this is something that they want in the communities, so I definitely wanted to support that.

I really enjoy listening to you and something that Pollock said about unity is the key to our survival. I really enjoy that and I see that happening right now. Thank you for your hard work. I may make comments when there's opportunities at another point.

CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Thank you, Joy. Does any Council members have questions of Joy on her presentation. Don.

MR. HONEA: I don't have a question, but I'd like to thank her for the views she presented. I'd have to totally agree with what she said about
customary trade. Maybe 10, 15, 20 years ago that
system itself was greatly abused. To this day,
especially within the Middle Yukon or where I'm at,
like I commented in meetings before, there's just a few
people who may do that. It's not a customary thing
these days to do that. A $750 limit or whatever,
that's fine with me. I don't care what it is, but it's
just that -- you know, as you say, you may take
advantage of that thing. So it's across the board.

When we met at our Ruby Advisory
Committee, I said that -- and I'll say it here, that
it's just not customary to do that any more. Like I
said, maybe it was abused in the past, but we're just
using that chum run if we have to and, you know,
tighten your belt.

I appreciate your comment.

Thank you.

CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Thanks, Don. Any
other questions for Joy. Go ahead, Ray.

MR. COLLINS: I was going to thank her
for her comments too because she did trigger something
on the customary trade and you commented on it further,
that the cost of production is going up. It's probably
doubled just on gas alone. So you can't use a dollar
amount or you're going to have a reduction in the
amount you'd actually be able to take and put into
customary trade. So that's important to pass forward
to this task force or subcommittee.

CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Thanks, Ray. I
appreciate that comment. When the Department of
Interior was reviewing the Federal program, as Chair I
attended Pat Pourchot's meeting down in Anchorage. One
of the issues that I brought up and recommended to the
Department of Interior was that the Federal Board
makeup should entail three rural seats. They only took
two. I felt that the Board currently is six members
and in addition they were requiring two more. It still
makes an even Board. I felt three seats would give the
Chair as one rural member and then three additional.
It would be more of a split Board. They only took the
two seats, so it's better than nothing, but that's what
the Department of Interior requires. So we will try to
push for as much rural criteria, subsistence criteria
for those seats as we can or that's my intention. So
thank you for your comment on that.

MS. J. HUNTINGTON: Thank you. I have one follow-up question. When it comes to the youth workers or the tribes initiating that, I'd like to kind of see what that is to see how the tribes may want to take that initiative on their own. Is there going to be any representation of this Board at the TCC convention this spring aside from the Council members that are part of it? I didn't see a report or anything happening, but that might be a good opportunity to solicit some of that support.

CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: This Council could write a letter to TCC requesting them to make comments on the Federal Subsistence Board's mandate of a subcommittee made up of the three RACs and then the tribal council input into that and maybe TCC could help facilitate that as a non-government entity. That may be another avenue of using TCC to facilitate this tribal council involvement. The Department of Interior wants to see that. The Federal Subsistence Board wants to see that. I would like to see that. So that's a good question. At this time, would the Council be willing to submit a letter of request to the Tanana Chiefs. What do they call it, the annual meeting in mid March?

MS. J. HUNTINGTON: Convention, yeah.

CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Convention. Requesting they review the Federal Subsistence Board's mandate for a subcommittee formation on customary trade and have input into tribal council involvement in the process. I would like to include the Tanana Chiefs in the whole mix here.

Did you have one additional comment on that letter?

MS. J. HUNTINGTON: Just to kind of help support that letter. I guess that would really allow the tribes to say this is how we best feel we can give input. Instead of having that given to them, I think if they were a part of the process they could make that decision and that would probably make it a lot stronger.

CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: I would also like to attach -- I have suggestions on that questionnaire. I
would like to attach those questions after the Council approves those questions to be also transmitted sort of a proposal to TCC. Does the Council feel that a letter to TCC would be warranted and do I have a motion to that effect?

MR. HONEA: We have a motion to that. I so move toward the letter, but I think that to be able to get it in in a timely manner I think TCC -- if we're going to put it in the form of a proposal, that has to be submitted by the 1st of March, the 6th of March, something. I mean there's a dead.....

MS. J. HUNTINGTON: For the resolution?

MR. HONEA: Right, in the form of a resolution. So just bear that in mind. If we could check on that, then I so move.

MS. PELKOLA: Second.

CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Seconded by Jenny.

In the form of a resolution? They have to be in the form of a resolution?

MS. J. HUNTINGTON: Maybe the resolution could be open ended, like this is just a resolution to start working with the RACs to -- I mean just so that it's not like exactly specific and this is exactly what it's going to be, so that allows TCC to start that conversation. And it does have to come from one of the specific tribal councils if it's a resolution. If it was just a letter, that would be a slightly different process. The resolutions are definitely prioritized. So if Huslia or Galena or Louden wanted to submit a resolution very broad saying we ask TCC to follow up with the RAC in this process, that would be enough to get staff motivated.

CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: I don't know that that works for this Regional Council reaching that far out.

MS. J. HUNTINGTON: Okay.

CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: This Council needs to make it stand on its own because we're an arm of the Federal Subsistence Board. So I would like this Council to transmit the letter and a list of what we would like see the participation of the tribal councils
and Tanana Chiefs in this customary trade issue. That's the basis of the letter. So I feel that would be appropriate. Reaching out to a tribal council to try and get them to come up with -- that might not even meet the framework, so I would prefer not to actually go there. I do think that a Regional Council request like that would actually be highly sought by TCC on this issue because it is a high-profile issue.

Further discussion. Eleanor.

MS. YATLIN: So clarification on Don's motion would be a letter?

CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Yes.

MS. YATLIN: So one quick comment is we're trying to get village participation and we're trying to get tribal councils involved, so I think this letter would be a way of reaching out to more people because there's a lot of people at that TCC convention. The letter would be like a public announcement saying that we are a part of the Federal Subsistence Board and we are advisory and they have the right to come to us to make any comments like the tribal council member did this morning.

So that's what I wanted to say.

Thank you.

CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Thanks, Eleanor. I would like to also include in the letter that TCC is invited to the subcommittee meeting as part of that letter and request for their involvement in the tribal council. They're like the giant tribal council for the region.

Further comment, Don.

MR. HONEA: Yeah, Mr. Chair. So I'm kind of confused now. If we can't as a body as the Western Interior submit to TCC, then how would you propose to do it? I mean if you say Louden or Ruby or whoever cannot -- I'm kind of confused. Did you say that we will as a body submit that?

CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: The intent of this letter is to submit the request of information. The Federal Subsistence Board wants our Council to have a
subcommittee and meet on the questions of what -- the
overall question is what signifies a significant
commercial enterprise. That's the basis of the
question. The peripheries of that is do people
actually have customary trade in their community, do
they sell fish, and you have to define this in this
letter. Do they sell fish, do they buy fish, some
people buy fish in this region, and what is an
appropriate amount. That's the questions. So the
letter that we will send to TCC is stating those are
the questions that we have to answer at the
subcommittee meeting and we have a mandate by the
Federal Subsistence Board to answer those questions and
let TCC discuss this at their annual meeting or
whatever it's called. That's the basis of the letter,
Don. Does that clarify that?

MR. HONEA: Yeah, I guess so. Actually
we're just doing it as the Western Interior, we're
going to submit the letter to TCC and it doesn't
necessarily have to come before the convention because
of the time we're under. I'm still confused if we're
going to do it in the form of a resolution or just a
letter of intent.

CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Carl.

MR. MORGAN: Yes. I think your comment
about we must be very careful in this that we are not
lobbying TCC to start this. That's not our -- I don't
think we can do that. We can't go out and -- it's just
like going to DC or someplace and lobbying. We're
asking them for their opinion, what do you think about
-- so we cannot come right out and ask them and lobby
to support.

CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: We're not lobbying
them. We're not under the Hatch Act with TCC, are we,
Polly?

DR. WHEELER: No, I think in this
instance you're asking for input. You're not asking
for a particular product or a thing, but you are asking
for input. I think that's appropriate. You're not
even advocating a particular point of view. You're
just asking for input to this issue that the Federal
Board has said it needs information on. So I think
you're safe, but I think putting a resolution it may
appear that you're advocating something. So writing a
letter with the attachments is open and whether it goes
before the convention or it goes to the leadership, 
whatever, the request has been made.

CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Thank you. Any 
further discussion on that letter to TCC?

MS. J. HUNTINGTON: I think you're 
exactly right. It doesn't have to happen before a 
convention, but just to help speed up the process so 
that you're not scrambling to get tribal input in 
September, getting that letter to them, so they can 
start, you know, considering if they would like to 
participate. It's definitely not a mandate, but an 
invitation and I think that should be taken very well 
that you're reaching out to the unified voice of the 42 
tribes.

CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Right. So is that 
clear, Donald, on the intent of that letter? It's an 
outreach to TCC stating -- the overreaching effect is 
the Federal Board needs this information, this Council 
is charged with a subcommittee and do they want to 
participate in this process. You're exactly right, 
September is not a good time for the tribal councils 
to.....

MS. J. HUNTINGTON: You might get one 
person's comment maybe.

CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Right. So we need 
to -- I'm getting more squared away. This is going to 
take quite a bit longer as time goes on. So is it 
clear, the letter's intent to TCC? I will provide my 
basic questions to the Council. They're lost in my 
paperwork here, so I will find them and give those to 
the Councils maybe after lunch. We're coming up on 
lunch.

Any further discussion on this letter 
to TCC.

(No comments)

CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Those in favor of 
the letter of request to participate in the customary 
trade issue outreach to the Western Interior Regional 
Council, the letter shall be cc'd to the Eastern and YK 
Delta also.

Do you have another question there?
MR. GERVAIS: Do we need to send it to AVCP also since they're on the river and Gwich'in Council. I'm sorry, I don't know the correct name.

MS. J. HUNTINGTON: Council of Athabaskan Tribal Governments.

MR. GERVAIS: Yeah.

CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: We could do that. We could have further outreach out of our region. That's a good idea, cc'd to them also.

MS. J. HUNTINGTON: TCC also represents the 10 villages of the Council of Athabaskan Tribal Governments so they would still be included, but I see AVCP.

CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: AVCP. Any further discussion.

(No comments)

CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Those in favor of the letter and the cc'd list signify by saying aye.

IN UNISON: Aye.

CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Those opposed same sign.

(No opposing votes)

CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Hearing none. Thank you very much, Joy. I appreciate your comments and interaction with the Council.

MS. J. HUNTINGTON: Thank you.

CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: We have one more. Come up here to the mic, Fred.

MR. F. HUNTINGTON: Now that I'm up here you guys are going to be skipping lunch, I think. Thank you, Board, for coming to Galena. I represent a lot of entities. My efforts with the family of subsistence harvest continues year around. I'm Louden Tribal Second Chief. I'm also on the Middle Yukon River Advisory Board. I'm also a member of YRDFA. I hold other seats that's too numerous to name.
A lot of my history comes from confirmed with elders, as you know. My stepfather, Sidney Huntington, he's 95 years old. My stepmother Angela is 84 years old and my Aunt Hilda is 85 years old. So I do confirm with a bunch of them when we do harvest our fish and game. A lot of that goes to the family, extended family and whatnot.

As I see it, customary trade comes off from ANILCA subsistence user. There's a lot of -- oh, I lost the word, but there's a lot of discretion between subsistence user and the State relation, Federal lands and State lands. When ANILCA was passed, as Eleanor mentioned, that she took a course in Title VIII, which is the Federal subsistence law.

In 1970, '71, I testified when Thomas Berger was involved and taking statements from the beginning of where ANILCA came out of. That's where we got ANILCA and which our rural Federal subsistence users have priority over State regulations. Customary trade, you might ask the question is it determined by State law or is it by Federal law. If it's under Federal law, it becomes under subsistence rural user, which has preference over commercial entities, especially on the river with the salmon crash.

Now I urge you to take very careful in making your decisions on some of the resolutions you are making because when there's a shortage of resources on the river our Federal users will have priority rights over any state which is commercial fishing. Only place there's commercial fishing is down at the mouth and that little bit in Kaltag.

So when you take a stand on customary trade you might as well know that Yukon River commercial king salmon would be jeopardized because the only way you're going to change Federal subsistence law is by opening ANILCA. You cannot go to Congress and ask Congress to open ANILCA to change the Federal subsistence law.

Other than that the abuses are going to continue. There's a few people that make a livelihood of subsistence fishing where they're going out and selling and I can tell you who the buyers are are our own Native people, our own Native corporations, buying it up by the thousands and there's nothing under ANILCA says that's wrong. I don't know if you have a
different definition of that, but under ANILCA there's no limit to the amount of fish -- and it's not only fish now.

If you go to Fairbanks in the fall time, there's going to be people asking me about bringing their dry meat to town to sell and I feel that's wrong. Bringing your moose meat into town to sell it for a dollar. At the price of gasoline, those things make it available. Right now we're paying $6.50 a gallon of gasoline at the pump and $11 for a gallon of milk. There's families out here that have been living out here with kids, you know. Of course, if I had 20 pounds extra of salmon, I would trade it in for cash to buy the milk and the gas. Now that's reasonable.

But when you're getting your yearly income off the river on two weeks run of fish, that's where abuse is coming from. If you've got anything to say or do about that, that's what to look at rather than saying you're going to cut customary trade. Customary trade is -- and I mentioned it during the Middle Yukon or the YR DFA board we had a couple weeks ago down in Mountain Village that any time you're pointing the finger at subsistence user you're jeopardizing others, especially commercial fishing at the mouth, which they make their livelihood on that.

I'm trying to make this short and sweet. Now that I said what I came to say, the other resolution I think you have is your antler destruction resolution came from the Board of Game. They want to do away with antler destruction. In the Koyukuk controlled use area antler destruction came about to save some of the moose. We were going up the Koyukuk River, too big a population going up the Koyukuk River and we saw the moose declining.

Some of the things we did, and I'd like to thank Glenn Stout for the management he did, he's been doing. But the destruction of antlers discouraged the trophy hunters. Another thing that discouraged the trophy hunters was the permitting system. There's an early permit system and a late permit system, which is applied up the Koyukuk River controlled use area. The early hunt for the permit, you can get your moose. It's 50 inch or larger within the first 10 days of the season. After that you've got so many hours to leave the controlled use area. Your hunt is over for that
permit. The late permit goes on later, last 10 days.

So when the resolution -- if antler discussion comes out, I'd like the antler destruction continued and I urge this Board to see that the resolution is supported for destruction of the antlers. When the Board of Game wrote that resolution, they're implying that Koyukuk River controlled use area could sustain more hunters. Over the last five years since it's been applied, we've been going up the Koyukuk River every fall and getting a little bit larger, a little bit larger moose. This last two years we got, you know, one 58-inch and another time we got one in the 64 range. Prior to that we were getting 30-inch or some even smaller. It's a good process too that we have for the game management.

With that, it's getting to lunchtime and I'm sure I said everything I had to say.

CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Thanks, Fred. Does the Council have any questions on Fred's statements. Don.

MR. HONEA: Yeah, I'd just like to thank Fred for those comments. It makes it a little more clear exactly the intent of that proposal. Anything we can do to keep the numbers down. I think the drawing permit, whatever is in effect on the Koyukuk is working. Tell me it's cut down a lot of numbers. Because maybe 10, 15 years ago or something there was trophy size racks coming out of that area and to this day I mean because of a lot of the breeding bulls that have been taken and stuff, you know, this past fall I've seen a lot of mid-size to small racks coming out. So maybe that's a deterrent too. You know, anything to bring the number of hunters coming down. So thank you for that.

CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Thanks, Fred. Tim.

MR. GERVAIS: Thank you for your comments, Fred. A comment I have to you on this process for the customary trade, it's my understanding that the only legal customary trade that can occur is for raw unprocessed fish and if you feel it's important to have strips or dry fish as to be allowed in customary trade, those comments should come forward as this working group is going over this issue.
CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Fred.

MR. F. HUNTINGTON: Your definition is.....

MR. GERVAIS: It's not my definition.

MR. F. HUNTINGTON: Whatever definition we do have, it's still a subsistence rule, subsistence user process. I always say there's a State law and Federal law. Federal waters and State waters, Fish and Wildlife and State Fish and Game, all come to you with different views of regulations. We're out there fishing and some guy come up to the boat and started asking us questions and names and numbers and those kind of things, but he doesn't really have the right because under ANILCA when you're a Federal subsistence user we're not in the wrong pulling fish out of the river. When you go in the wrong as a subsistence user is you bring your harvest to Safeway or Fred Meyers or something of that for resale and that's what I determine is wrong.

I say selling $25,000 worth of strips in one season is wrong, but under ANILCA there's no limit. When the State passed the last regulation on the net change, if that went to court with a Native person and that Native person was using eight-inch mesh net in the Federal waters and the State took it to court, it would be thrown out because it would have been Federal waters. Now if the Federal regulators came and took him to court on Federal law, there would be a question whether that subsistence user was in the right or wrong.

I feel that law was only passed for State waters. Nobody made a determination of who could fish or who couldn't fish with that net or not. Go ahead.

CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: One clarification for you, Fred. The Federal Subsistence Board took up the 7.5 inch regulation and it's now in Federal statute also, both and State and Federal regulations read that no more than 7.5-inch net can be used in the Yukon River drainage, so there is no difference now. The Board of Fish adopted 7.5 in January. The Federal Subsistence Board adopted in April the same regulation, so it's uniform throughout the whole river.
The clarification for you is ANILCA has an undefined amount for customary trade. That's what the subcommittee is working on. That's what the subcommittee's job is to do from all three Councils and requesting. Galena will be one of the -- I'm intending that this community will get the request what is an appropriate amount. You know, you could keep saying you feel that 25,000 is an inappropriate amount. We want to know that and it's good to hear your input. We want to know from the whole community what is an appropriate amount. How we work that out legally to make that question available to the tribal councils.

When all three council work out what Eastern Interior's definition is, our definition is and the YK Delta's definition, those are all going to come to the Federal Subsistence Board and the Federal Subsistence Board is going to determine what an appropriate level of customary trade is. I feel dollar amounts cannot be used because there's inflation. In 10 years $700 might be worth nothing. It might take $700 to buy a five-gallon can of gas. So we can't set dollar amounts.

That's the question. We're not trying to change ANILCA. Customary trade is in ANILCA and it's recognized that people did sell some fish. What the Federal Board wants to see, what's the definition of too much sale. That's the overlying question. So we're not trying to change the law. We're trying to define what customary amounts, what is traditionally sold.

Did that clarify that issue for you, Fred?

MR. F. HUNTINGTON: Well, what I was saying is if I was to go to court under the cause of overselling my catch and it went to the Federal system of the law, actually the Federals would win the case or I would win the case or would it go all the way up to the Supreme Court and that's the direction it's heading because subsistence is part of customary trade under ANILCA.

Any regulation you make under subsistence will determine who gets to go to court and who is going to win the case.
CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Right.

MR. F. HUNTINGTON: And that's what I'm saying.

CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Right now the Federal regulation says that you can have customary trade of raw, unprocessed fish that does not constitute a significant commercial enterprise. The question is that the Federal Board wants answered what is a significant commercial enterprise. What is customary and what's too much. We're kind of to the point where they can't prosecute effectively people with this gray area. It's a target we don't know what we're shooting at. That's what the subcommittee is going to be working on, defining what is a significant commercial enterprise.

Go ahead.

MR. F. HUNTINGTON: When you say commercial, that's determined under State law.

CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: That would be moving into what is commercial. What we're trying to define is what is subsistence and what gets into commercial. Where is the threshold? Where does selling like a boat load of strips moves into commercial. That's what the subcommittee is going to be working on. That's the question, Fred, the Subsistence Board is asking of us.

One more comment.

MR. F. HUNTINGTON: One thing, you know, when I'm sitting there, I'm not making these things up on my own or anything. I don't wish it to be as it is. However, we're still looking at the idea of the Federal user, subsistence user, which have rural preference over State law. If the State does not comply with the Federal law, eventually the State could lose it's hold on management and that's what we want to avoid. We don't want the Federal managers to take over what State -- the co-management. Co-management system seems to be working for us. However, we're fine tuning some stuff in regards to what's happening. We need to be aware the Federal management could take over State management of fish and game in Alaska should they not comply with what we're doing there.

So I just needed to come up and make
those comments. We could talk on it all day and worry
about it. That's what's going to happen if it's going
to go somewhere.

CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Right. I appreciate
your comments, Fred. I think the Council is getting
hungry. Any further questions of Fred.

(No comments)

CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Appreciate it.

MR. F. HUNTINGTON: Thank you.

CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Any other public
comments. I didn't know of any. Donald.

MR. MIKE: Thank you, Mr. Chair. I
would just remind the Chair that we may have some
people online wishing to testify and I can double check
on that, Mr. Chair.

CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Is there somebody on
there?

MR. MIKE: Do we have anybody on the
telephone that wishes to testify to the Council?

CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: I don't hear
anybody.

MR. MIKE: There's no one, Mr. Chair.

CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Okay. At this time
we've covered the public comments, so a break for
lunch. How long? About an hour for lunch? Eleanor,
you had a comment? Is the lunch here?

REPORTER: It's not, no.

CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Oh, it's not here.

When does it get here?

REPORTER: When it gets here.

(Laughter)

REPORTER: She said around noon.

CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: For some reason I
was smelling food. I just assumed it was here. Sorry.
We have some salmon bycatch on groundfish fisheries
issues that we're moving into. Do we have a fairly
short presentation, Donald, of one of these?

MR. MIKE: Yeah, Mr. Chair. We do have
a short OSM briefing on Bering Sea/Aleutian Islands on
Page 18.

CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Okay.

MR. MIKE: And we didn't have any
Federal Staff identified to provide that briefing, but
that briefing is on Page 18 for the Council's
reference.

Thank you, Mr. Chair.

CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: So there is no Staff
to review this with? Go ahead, Polly.

DR. WHEELER: Mr. Chair. There is a
briefing in the book, but that briefing was intended to
supplement what the North Pacific Fisheries Management
Council Staff were going to say. It was my
understanding they were going to be on the plane this
morning, but they weren't, so I don't know where they
are. Donald, have you heard from them?

MR. MIKE: No, I haven't heard, but
they said they would be on the morning flight and I
haven't seen them yet.

DR. WHEELER: Well, they weren't. I
have a couple points I can make about the North Pacific
Fishery Management Council, Mr. Chair, if you'd like,
but it looks like lunch is here, so you probably want
to do that.

MR. WALKER: Yeah, we want to do that.

(Laughter)

CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Yeah, let's eat
lunch now that it's arrived. I appreciate your
information that you'll bring to the Council. So we'll
break for lunch for about one hour, so 1:20.

(Off record)
(On record)

CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Western Interior Council is coming back to order. Darrell, we're going to start the meeting, so I want to get everybody's attention here. So we're back on Agenda Item 11 and the Bering Sea/Aleutian Islands OSM briefing can occur, but the North Pacific Fisheries Management Council Staff that was supposed to be here this morning is going to come tomorrow I've learned, so we're going to move them back in the agenda because we do want to hear their presentation. Then OSM has a Gulf of Alaska briefing and then we're going to move into Yukon River salmon pre-season outlook. I would like Gene Sandone -- he has a time constraint, so we'd like Gene Sandone to present agenda item 12 at that time. So if you can hold on for those two OSM presentations on Bering Sea/Aleutian Islands OSM briefing. I guess you're doing that, Polly.

DR. WHEELER: Yes, Mr. Chair. I can actually be pretty brief on that. I'm not going to get into the specifics of the information that the North Pacific Fisheries Management Council is going to get into. So you can actually see the written briefings in your book on Page 18 and the Gulf of Alaska is on Page 26.

I will tell you right up front the briefings are pretty technical in nature. My recommendation is that you, as a Council, read them on your own time and be prepared with questions tomorrow when the North Pacific Council is here. Our key piece of information for you to consider is that the North Pacific Fisheries Management Council is going to be meeting in Nome in June to deal with chum bycatch. We, being OSM, are prepared to pay for a Council member from each of the affected Councils to attend that meeting. Clearly you don't have enough information in front of you to make a specific recommendation from this Council to the Council up in Nome at the June meeting.

My recommendation is that at this meeting you select a person to represent this Council and because you're not going to be able to give anything real specific, you can talk generally what your recommendation may be, you may want to express that chum salmon is important to the inshore subsistence users, management plans for inshore
subsistence fisheries are conservation based and chum
salmon conservation needs to be assured whatever
bycatch option they choose. So that you have sort of
these general principals that this Council has in mind
and that whoever you select can go to the meeting and
speak to those general principals.

CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Okay. Thank you,
Polly. Does the Council have any questions. Robert
and Carl just came in during Polly's briefing. She's
pointing out the Page 18 Bering Sea pollock fishery
chum salmon bycatch update, which the North Pacific
Fisheries Management Council was supposed to be here
this morning but they're not until tomorrow, so I
suggest, as Polly does, reading Page 18 and 26 so that
you kind of know what the overview is, so that when the
North Pacific Fisheries Management presentation is here
tomorrow we can ask pertinent questions during their
presentation. Is that clear, Robert and Carl?

(Member Morgan and Walker nod
affirmatively)

CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Any other comments
from the Council at this time. Tim.

MR. GERVAIS: Thank you, Mr. Chair.
Polly, is there any information here that talks about
the distribution of -- I see one chart that shows the
numbers of non-chinook salmon bycatch on Page 23, but
is there any breakdown of what river systems like on a
percentage basis the bycatch is?

DR. WHEELER: Mr. Chair. Member
Gervais. We're way out of my league here with regard
to what this information actually means. My
understanding is based on genetic samples they have
general idea where the fish come from, but it's not
tied necessarily to specific tributaries or anything
like that. I've already exhausted my knowledge on
this, so I would encourage you to speak to the Council
Staff tomorrow when they come in or if any fisheries
biologists are sitting behind me that want to volunteer
that information they're welcome to.

MR. GERVAIS: Okay, thank you. Do you
know what dates in June that meeting in Nome is?

DR. WHEELER: I don't even know that
either. I'm not very helpful, am I? It's June 2011 in
Nome. That's what I do know. The council may know the meeting. They're going to have to know the meeting shortly. I don't know the date offhand, but I can get on my technology and find out if we know the dates yet and get back to you on that.

MR. PAPPAS: 6 through 14th.

DR. WHEELER: See, I didn't even have to get on my technology.

MS. PETRIVELLI: Page 25.

DR. WHEELER: Oh, there you go. Read what's in front of you, I guess.

CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: This Council will be in Nome and we'll designate a representative after we hear the North Pacific Management Council presentation tomorrow whenever they may arrive. I appreciate the overview on that Polly. Until the North Pacific Management Council arrives I feel I would like the Council to read 18 to 26 tonight or whenever you get the chance to sort of get an idea of what's going to happen and thing about some questions.

We're moving down the agenda to 12, fisheries issues. The Yukon River salmon preseason outlook. We're going to put that on hold. Gene Sandone has presented to the YK Delta Council a PowerPoint presentation. Come to the table, Gene. I'm going to put Gene up here. He's under a time constraint. So he'll give us an overview of some issues with his organization and then we'll move into the preseason outlook after that.

Go ahead, Gene.

MR. SANDONE: Thank you, Mr. Chair. I really appreciate you allowing me to make this presentation today. I have to get back. My daughter is having my first grandchild, so my wife is going down. That's why I need to be back tonight.

My presentation here, I presented it at YRDFA and also presented it at Yukon Delta telephonically. It's Yukon Area Chinook Salmon Subsistence and Personal Use Harvest Patterns. You can throw trends in there. This is all data taken from
ADF&G publications or preliminary data and there's also a few personal communications when I needed clarification on numbers. So this is not any of my data. It's kind of summarized for you. I will note where data are preliminary in the presentation.

I think this was useful for the RACs to see for a number of reasons. First off I think you can probably use it in your customary trade discussions as a base. It's basically what has happened over the years with chinook salmon harvests. I think that as maybe subsistence grows or as the runs decline we're at a point now where there is just enough fish for subsistence uses or maybe not even enough because of the run sizes that have decreased over time.

In my estimation, we've lost maybe a third to a half of the production of the Yukon River chinook salmon. That translates basically into harvest. So we lost our commercial fisheries. We used to take 100,000 per year in the commercial fishery chinook salmon. They're gone basically. Last year we had an incidental harvest in the chum salmon fishery of 10,000 fish. Besides that, all the incidental harvests in District 4 with all the fishwheels, they're gone. So we're seeing a lot of fish moving upriver that didn't move upriver before. A lot of the smaller fish are moving upriver now. The chum fisheries are gone in the lower river and also the chum fisheries in District 4.

My name is Gene Sandone and a little bit of background. I've worked for the Department on the Yukon River since 1988. I was Yukon River research biologist, then the regional research biologist, and then finally the regional supervisor for AYK, so I have a long history with Yukon issues.

Just to get you familiar with the Yukon River, the Alaska portion, about two-thirds of it is in Alaska, about a third in Canada. You've got District 1 here, going about from the mouth through St. Mary's. District 2, St. Mary's up to and including Pilot Station, Marshall. Then District 3 we have Russian Mission, Holy Cross. District 4 is a very long district. It goes from Old Paradise, was just below Anvik, all the way up to Illinois Creek here. It also includes the Koyukuk River drainage. District 3 also includes the Innoko River drainage. District 5 goes from Illinois Creek all the way up to the Canadian
border, so that's a very long district also. District 6 is basically the Tanana River drainage.

Now if we look at chinook salmon harvest over time, and I want to point out to you that the data from 1975 through 1987 are not strictly comparable with data after 1987 because there was a change in methodology of assessing the runs. But these can be used for trends. We believe that this trend probably occurred; that the harvests were fairly low and an increase through the late 1980s and remained fairly constant as far as the averages go overall.

The red is the upper river harvest and the blue is the lower river harvest with these horizontal lines representing five year averages. So you can see that the upper river took about, most recent average about 30,000 fish, with the lower river taking about 20,000 fish.

This is the same graph except we're using proportions over here from 0 to 80 percent and you can see that most recently the upper river is taking about 60 percent of the harvest with the lower river taking about 40 percent.

I'm going to spend a little bit of time on this graph, but on graphs of this nature in the presentation I'm not going to spend that much time because I think the subsequent graphs are more informative. This is a graph that shows the chinook salmon harvest on the Y axis and years on the X axis by district. The Lower Yukon area Districts 1, 2 and 3, and then the Upper River District 4, 5 and 6, and they're color-coded.

You can see that District 5 is currently taking the most fish, about 17,000. District 4 about second, 13,000. District 2 over here about nine. District 1 at about six. District 3 at about a five and then down here the decreasing trend in District 6 about 1,500 chinook salmon subsistence harvest.

This graph, you take these five-year averages and this is why I think it's more informative than the next graph. If you look here, you'll see that these are the five-year averages reflected in the previous graph. I think you can see trends a little better here. You can see that District 5 was taking an
average of close to 19,000 fish in the 1989-93 period, 
declined through the disaster years 1998 through 2003, 
and then increased in the most recent years. Again, 
the pattern of District 5 ranks 1, 4 ranks 2, District 
2, District 1, District 3 and then District 6.

This is proportion. I'm not going to 
spend a lot of time with this one. This is the five-
year average proportion for each district and the ranks 
basically follow the harvest pattern.

This graph I'm going to spend a little 
time here. This is chinook salmon harvest by 
community. We have all the communities here on the X 
axis. There's the coastal district here. We have 
numbers on the Y axis. Coastal district. District 1 
is in the blue diamonds. District 2 is red diamonds. 
District 3 is the black diamonds with Shageluk on the 
Innoko River as a triangle. The triangles represent 
communities that are off the mainstem or off the Tanana 
River. We have District 4 in light blue here. The 
Koyukuk River drainage communities down here. District 
5 in the red diamonds with the two Venetie and 
Chalkyitsik on the Chandalar and Black rivers and then 
also the Tanana River drainage.

You can see that it ranges from about 
4,000 fish in the Tanana to very very low numbers in 
the Koyukuk with fairly low numbers in mainstem Birch 
Creek and Central in District 5. This is the 2004 to 
2008 mean and I want to point out that the 2006 and 
2007 data are preliminary and they're subject to 
change.

Now we looked at a number of fishing 
households. It's interesting that basically they've 
been staying the same. It hasn't had much change 
overall, but what's changed is that the lower and upper 
river communities now are basically even. There's 
about the same number of fishing households in the 
upper area as in the lower area and that's the 2004 to 
2008 average.

This is number of fishing households by 
districts. I said I wasn't going to spend a lot of 
time with these, but these kind of show the variations 
and you can see that District 6 has shown a remarkable 
drop here and you'll be able to see this more prevalent 
on this five-year average graph. Again it's the same 
information, just using the five-year averages. It
shows some increasing trends in these districts up here, District 2, 4, 1 and 5 with a decrease -- well, District 5 is basically stable, with a decrease during the disaster years, but the precipitous decline in District 6 through the 1994-98, through 1999-2003 period, and then stable. District 3 increasing slightly.

This is fishing households by community. I've divided it into quartiles. This is the top 11 communities on this graph. Ranks 1 through 6, ranks 7 through 11. I'll go through the rest of the quartiles here momentarily. You can see that in ranks 1 through 6 most of them are either stable or increasing here. Alakanuk is fairly stable. Hooper Bay has increased dramatically through '99-2003 and then has basically leveled off. Here's that big decrease in District 6 where you can see Fairbanks. These are personal use permits that dropped off dramatically for people fishing in the Tanana River. So that's where that big drop off comes. Again, these are the top 11 communities as far as fishing households.

Then we go to the next quartile, the next 11. I've kept the axes the same, 0 to 140 for comparative reasons. More stable here, possibly even decreasing. Then the third quartile, and you can probably see your village that you're from on these and note how they compare to the rest of the drainage. Finally the fourth quartile. Most notably Minto here has decreased quite a bit along with Rampart. So these communities have decreased pretty much in numbers of fishing households.

If we look at fishing households by communities, we see that this is a coastal district. There's kind of a decreasing trend here possibly through District 4 and then a leveling out in District 5 and District 6. This median at about 20 fishing households per community is indicating that 50 percent of the communities are above that. They have more than 20 fishing households per community and 50 percent are below that line.

So that kind of gives you a point of reference, the numbers or the villages that are above the line and then below the line. You can see that it ranks from about nearly 120 in Hooper Bay and then we have -- I think that's Marshall at about 100 and then
drops off in the Koyukuk communities here and then the
Ramparts and Birch Creek are fairly low too.

This is chinook salmon harvested per
fishing household. Again, I'm not going to spend a lot
of time on this graph. It shows the variation by year
and then they also have the five-year averages in the
bars, and you go to the next graph and it has just the
five-year averages, so it's a little easier to see
trends in chinook salmon harvested per fishing
household. Again, the 2006-2007 data fishing household
data are preliminary. They don't have those, ADF&G,
published yet. You can see there's a decreasing and a
stable trend in District 5. District 3 is decreasing.
District 4 is basically stable and then there's slight
decreasing in District 2, District 1 and District 6 is
fairly stable.

This is like the other graph, but this
is chinook salmon harvested per fishing household and
I've ranked the communities. These are the top 11
communities and the number one community for numbers of
fish is Rampart and they're kind of converging here.
Tanana is second, Stevens Village third, Circle
fourth, Fort Yukon is in there and also Anvik. Anvik
has shown quite an increase here from around 25 up to
nearly 75 or 80.

This is the second quartile or the next
11 villages, ranks 12 to 21. There's been a decline in
Russian Mission and also the District 5 villages that
are too few to select as one village. They're kind of
lumped by ADF&G.

And the third quartile. And the fourth
quartile.

This is a graph similar to what you've
seen before and this is mean number of chinook salmon
harvested per fishing household by community and
there's a somewhat trend up through Districts 3 here of
increasing where -- again, this is the median value.
It's 33 salmon per fishing household. Fifty percent of
the communities are above that line, 50 percent are
below that line They range from about over 105 in
Rampart down to maybe one in Bettles with low numbers
in District 6 villages and Chalkyitsik.

This is a number of people per fishing
household by community. The median is about 3.3 people
per fishing household. The P's inside these red and
green blocks indicate that these were taken from
permits issued. I don't have the information from
permits that were fished and returned, but these are
from permits issued and over 50 percent of the permits
issued in the permit area have been returned, so I
think it's a pretty good surrogate for the numbers of
fishing households per permit. So it ranges from about
six in Scammon Bay down to about less than one in
Bettles.

Talking about the permits. I wanted to
bring this slide in to show you where the communities
are that are required permits, so it's the entire
Tanana River drainage. Up in 5C it's Rampart and then
around Circle and Eagle. So people that live in these
villages need permits, either subsistence permits or in
the case of the Fairbanks non-subsistence use personal
use permits.

You figure one more step further you
have chinook salmon harvested per person by community.
Overall we've got about 8.1 chinook salmon harvested
per person. That, again, is 50 percent of the
communities harvest more than that per person, 50
percent harvest less than that per person. The coastal
districts are very low. The Koyukuk River is very low
and the Tanana in some villages are very low.
Increasing in District 1, District 2, District 3,
District 4. Finally we have about 35 fish per person
in the village of Tanana, closely followed by Rampart.

Now I want to talk a little bit about
the origin of chinook salmon in the subsistence and
personal use harvest. Now we have three stock
groupings in the Yukon. There's the Lower River stock,
and I'll just go to this next slide. The lower river
stock includes all the tributaries. Fish originating
from these tributaries in the Lower River up through
the Gisasa River and the Koyukuk and then up around the
Tozitna River, which is up here. So all that's
classified as the Lower Yukon stock group.

The middle stock group, which is also
Alaskan, is the Upper Koyukuk River, the Tanana River
and also the Chandalar River and the Sheenjek River,
which is not shown in this graph but is a tributary to
the Porcupine River. So you have two stocking grouping
in Alaska, the lower and the middle.
Then you have the stock grouping in Canada, which is all the fish that originate from Canadian tributaries. We're going to see what they contribute to the Alaskan subsistence and personal use harvest. You can see that the upper grouping or the Canadian grouping averages maybe about 60 percent overall. That's six out of every 10 fish that are harvested in Alaska for subsistence personal use are Canadian origin.

The Middle River right now is about 32 percent, the most recent average. It has been lower. Recently the Lower Yukon stock grouping has dropped dramatically. It started to rise there, a trend, and then dropped off here. I'm not really sure why that happened. It seems like there's a switch that's going on. It could be possibly windows. People are fishing harder earlier and taking more of these stocks that come in earlier than Lower River or possibly it could be a stock productivity problem, that they're not producing as many fish as they have in the past.

This is the Lower River stock and the contribution of the Lower River stock to each district. Districts 6 and 5 do not have an opportunity to harvest Lower River stocks because those fish branch off the tributaries before they hit those districts. So you have Districts 1, 2, 3 and 4 are harvesting Lower River stock and all the districts right now in the 2004 to 2007 average harvest less than 2,000 fish a piece.

The Middle River stock we're going to talk about now. It averages maybe about 17,000 fish. This is the contribution of the Middle River stock to the harvests and we can see -- first off, District 5, there's a contribution to the District 5 harvest that has just recently been discovered. In 2002 ADF&G did a radiotelemetry study that indicated there was substantial populations of spawning chinook salmon in the Chandalar and Sheenjek and that was news to ADF&G. We assumed that every fish in District 5 was Canadian origin until we found out that.

We did genetic stock -- I'm sorry. ADF&G did genetic stock identification and found out that about on the average about 3,000 fish harvested in District 5 are coming from Chandalar and Sheenjek, so that's why they are now represented on the Middle River stock. They probably harvested fish from the Middle River stock in these years, but we don't -- ADF&G
District 4 has recently increased their harvest of Middle River stock from about 2,000 in 2003 to about 6,000 now. The rest of them have been fairly stable with District 6 declining. Again, Middle River stock, Tanana River, Upper Koyukuk, Chandalar, Sheenjek. Then we look at the Upper River stock, which has contributed about 30,000 fish most recently, 2004 to 2007 average. So basically the bulk of the fish, about 55, 60 percent of the Alaskan harvest is Upper River stock.

District 5 harvests the most. They don't have the opportunity to harvest Lower River stocks. They have limited opportunity to harvest Middle River stocks, so the only fish they harvest basically is Canadian origin. I just want to point out here that this number -- these numbers are not really comparable because this number is -- these numbers include Middle River stock through here and I don't know how many they do, but they do include some. This number doesn't. If you want to make it comparable, you would add 3,000 to this number, making it about 17,000, so that dot would be up here or decrease all these. So I guess what I'm saying is this shows that it's stable when it really isn't. It's increasing here these last 10 years.

As we've seen with the Middle River stock, District 4 is harvesting more of that stock. The rest of them are fairly stable with maybe a slight increase here, overall increase in District 2.

That was just looking at proportions of the Upper River stock. We can see that District 5 is taking anywhere from greater than 60 percent to most recently about 45 percent. Again these numbers are not strictly comparable because these don't have the Middle River stocks subtracted from them. This is a real number. This is about 45 percent. So 45 percent of all the Canadian fish harvested in the Alaska subsistence and personal use fishery are harvested by District 5 fishermen.

District 4 is now above 20 percent. We have District 2 at about 15 percent and Districts 3 and 1 are less than 10 percent. District 6, again because of their location, doesn't have an opportunity to harvest Canadian origin stock.
Summary. The average -- this is looking at 2004 to 2008 average Yukon area chinook salmon harvest. The average harvest has been around 50,000 fish. Average district harvest ranged from about 16,000 in District 5 to about 1.5 thousand in District 6. The average harvest by community ranges less than one chinook salmon in Bettles to nearly 4,000 in Tanana with the median value being 818. Again, 50 percent of the community is above that number and 50 percent below.

Average number of fishing households by district. In District 2, there's 316 ranging down to District 3, 103. Again, the Lower and Upper Rivers are basically the same. The average number of fishing households by community range from about 118 in Hooper Bay and then 101 in Mountain Village on the mainstem to less than one in Bettles. These are averages. The median value is about 20 fishing households per community.

Average chinook salmon district harvest per fishing household range from about 63 in District 5 to about 15 in District 6. Average district harvest per fishing household by community ranged less than one in Bettles to about 105 in Rampart. The median value is 33.

The number of people per fishing household by community range from about six in Hooper Bay and about five in Kotlik on the mainstem to less than one in Bettles and the median value is about 3.3 people per fishing household.

Harvests per person by community ranged from less than one in various six communities to 32 in Tanana with a median value being about 8.1. The Canadian stock contributes an average of over 30,000 salmon or over 58 percent to the total Alaskan harvest. The average harvest proportion of Canadian stock by district ranges from about 45 in District 5 to zero in District 6 because they're not available, but in Districts 3 and 1 they're about 9 percent.

I want to note again that District 5 does not have an opportunity to harvest Lower River stocks and a very limited opportunity to harvest Middle River stocks. That concludes my presentation.

CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Thanks, Gene. Those
are pretty enlightening numbers. I enjoyed your presentation. Does the Council have questions and comments. Tim.

MR. GERVAIS: Thank you, Mr. Chair.
Thanks for your presentation, Gene. Can you talk to on your first chart why the 1970 numbers are so low? Maybe if you know the data into the '60s. Is that due to the joint venture or is it because there's no drift gillnet fishing in the Lower River?

MR. SANDONE: Mr. Gervais, Mr. Chair.
Again, I want to point out that there was a change in methodology in 1988 to estimate the harvest and that could be part of it, but I do believe that there was an increasing trend up through the mid '80s. What I've been told, like I can speak to maybe a little bit of the Lower River, is that they didn't have electricity and their main fish that they used to harvest were chum salmon because they dried very easily. When they brought electricity on, people had freezers, so they could actually take some more chinook salmon. I don't know if that's true or not, but that's what I've been told and I don't know any other reasons why. Maybe someone else would have a better idea than I do.

MR. GERVAIS: Thank you.

CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Robert.

MR. WALKER: Thank you, Mr. Chair.
Gene, all this is done with the subsistence calendar, am I correct here?

MR. SANDONE: Mr. Chair. Mr. Walker.
No, sir. Fish & Game does a survey every year. They go out to the villages and they interview different type users, heavy users, medium users and light users, and they come up with an estimate. I'm sure that people in the audience, Steve Hayes, could speak to that more intelligently. The calendar, I believe, are only used in certain circumstances, maybe for timing and to give people a better idea of what they caught throughout the year. So it's the post season survey that is the instrument that they use.

CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Further questions.

Don.

MR. HONEA: Thank you, Mr. Chair.
Gene, I just had a question. I mean a few years ago, maybe it was two years ago when there was really high water and stuff like that, there was people from, I believe, Venetie and Chalkyitsik or something getting enormous amount of king salmon up in their area, the likes of which I haven't seen for some years. So you're saying actually more of the fish are being -- you know, there was a bunch of numbers you gave us, but is there more fish spawning in some of these rivers that are not Canadian bound then?

MR. SANDONE: What I said is that when we did the radiotelemetry project in 2002 to 2004, prior to that time we thought that all the fish harvested in District 5 were Canadian in origin. I believe that there was some small harvests from Venetie and Chalkyitsik that we attributed to Middle River stocks, but they were the only harvest and we didn't believe that there was a substantial spawning population until the radiotelemetry indicated that, hey, there's a lot of fish going up the Chandalar and the Sheenjek.

Before 2004 we used scale pattern analysis to determine stock of origin. We looked at the different circular on the scales. They're like rings of the tree. We could differentiate between the Canadian, the Tanana and the Lower River stocks just by that technique. But then we moved into genetic stock identification where fish in the certain areas look similar genetically and when we start looking at the run in District 5 we realized that maybe about 8 or 10 percent of those fish that were caught were actually going to spawn in the Chandalar and Sheenjek Rivers.

MR. HONEA: So is that kind of an accurate figure then, about 60 percent of the fish, chinook, 60 percent are Canadian bound?

MR. SANDONE: There's different timings of stocks through the river. The Canadian usually contribute more to the early run fish. The first pulse, the second pulse, and their percentages decrease as the run goes through. The Tanana is similar and they are kind of an early run fish also, but maybe not as early as the Canadian. They're kind of mixed. But at the tail end the Lower River fish come in and they predominate in the last few pulses.

So the subsistence fishery I believe is
front-end loaded. People want to get out and get their fish, so they usually, I believe, harvest more of the Canadian than in the total run and probably more of the Middle River run that's in the total run. So the 60 percent that are Canadian stock that contributed to the Alaska harvest is probably a little bit higher than the run.

Mr. Chairman.

CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Thank you.


MR. COLLINS: Based on where you are at now in your understanding, that protecting of that early stock then is the thing that would contribute to most to escapement in Canada, is that right, based on that being loaded and also that being the heaviest fished?

MR. SANDONE: That is probably true, but I think -- I don't want to speak for Fish & Game here, but it's a balancing act because you don't want to take the entire harvest of that first pulse and throw it on the Alaskan stocks. You want to try to make your escapement goals throughout the drainage and that's, I believe with the runs that we're seeing now, very difficult to do with the subsistence harvest.

CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Any more questions or comments.

(No comments)

CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: My questions are the number of fish that each household uses was portrayed, but one point I would like to make is with the use of large mesh gear in the Lower River, the size of the fish -- you were just counting fish, but the size of the fish was much larger and that was testified in the Federal Subsistence Board meetings that people could catch very large fish and didn't seem to realize there was a problem of smaller fish up the drainage.

So one of the aspects that should be thought of is that the size of the fish of each household's take it may appear that there's reduced numbers of fish, but the amount of poundage of harvest is actually fairly large. As you move up river, the fish have been sorted by gear size and actually it
takes more fish to achieve the same amount of effect
and I would like your comment on that.

Go ahead.

MR. SANDONE: Mr. Chair. I think that
you're partially right, but I think that large mesh
gear has been used throughout the Yukon River and I
know that people who use fishwheels, at least from Stan
Zuray's testimony, do not use fishwheels exclusively.
They may be putting in the net to catch the larger fish
for cutting. He just presented information for that
for the net replacement study, in supporting that
fishwheel people do get nets also.

I think it just depends on the gear
you're using. I mean if you're using fishwheels, I
think you're going to catch small fish, but there's not
a lot of fishwheels out there anymore. I think a lot
of people are using large mesh gear to harvest chinook
salmon. But I think you're partially right that it is
a poundage issue and somehow it could be incorporated
into this.

CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Thank you. Another
comment. I see that what your presentation portrays is
the Rampart area is actually 5C and there's many
households from Fairbanks and various permits. That's a
permitted area and there's many users coming from
Fairbanks to fish. I know them fishing up there in
that 5C and I see that it's one of the highest harvest
per capita and the harvest rates. I wanted to point
out to the Council that that's not Rampart village
doing that, that's actually a significant urban usage
area on the Yukon River. That's a significant point. I
like the presentation, but I wanted to clarify that to
the Council that that's not just Rampart people doing
that.

Your comment.

MR. SANDONE: Yes, Mr. Chair. You're
absolutely correct. It appears -- and I'm not 100
percent sure of this, but I believe that where you
report -- like some people may fish in Rampart and then
their harvest information is reported in Fairbanks,
people who fished in District 5 and it's up there.
Also there could be people who fish in Rampart's area
that report from Tanana. I believe that the reports
now indicate what subdistricts the fish were caught at,
but I'm just reporting where they were reported by
village. But you are right.

CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Well, a cautionary
time you know, people that live in Fairbanks
could be reporting District 6 if they're fishing in 5C,
so there's a significant impact to the Yukon River
upriver stocks by a fairly large urban contingent. I
just wanted to point that out to the Council that it's
a significant harvest area. I know people that have
fish camps up there, various fairly high-profile people
in Fairbanks that actually fish up there a significant
amount of time and take a lot of fish. Less than 20.
It would be fairly high significant numbers. So I feel
that 5C could be highlighted as an area of concern if
we're talking about Canadian stock. I wanted the
Council to be aware of that point.

The question is what is -- you know,
the Chandalar drainage contribution, I know it's
contributing to the harvest. Do you have sort of an
average run size for the Chandalar? I've never seen a
number on what those Chandalar runs are. Is it several
thousands? It must be 20,000, 30,000 fish, chinook
going in there.

MR. SANDONE: I know they can't
differentiate Chandalar from Sheenjek and I'm not
really sure if they could differentiate Chandalar,
Sheenjek from Upper Koyukuk or Tanana. I know we don't
have a weir on there, nor a sonar. I think the only
thing we have is aerial surveys and I can't speak to
that.

Mr. Chair.

CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Okay. Thank you. I
would be somewhat concerned about the Chandalar stocks
if they're contributing 3,000 harvest and we don't know
what the stock composition is. I would be thinking
about that stock also.

Mr. Sandone.

MR. SANDONE: Mr. Chair. That's
Chandalar and Sheenjek contributing 3,000.

CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Sheenjek's a
tributary of -- Sheenjek goes into which?
MR. SANDONE: Porcupine.

CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Oh, is that a Porcupine drainage? My geographic knowledge failed me. Thank you. Any further comments from the Council on the presentation. Did you have a statement for the Council that's supplementary information?

MR. SANDONE: Maybe I could take my science hat off now and just be public testimony. Regarding customary trade, I've said it before, and I'm not speaking to anything here. I'm just speaking as a person, public.

I've said it in the past that I'm not concerned that much about customary trade even defined as it will be in the future. What I'm concerned about is the abuses of customary trade. We're getting to the point now where the chinook salmon runs cannot satisfy all the subsistence uses and I was at the Federal Subsistence Board meeting when I saw the door crack as far as priorities for subsistence uses. ANILCA lists a number of subsistence uses, human consumption, customary trade, transportation.

Now both the State and the Federal Subsistence Board have prohibited the feeding of chinook salmon to dogs and that was the first priority that the Subsistence Board did with chinook salmon. At the Federal Subsistence Board, the Solicitor indicated that there was the potential for further prioritizing subsistence uses. I suggested to YRDF that they consider a resolution indicating that priority for chinook salmon should be human consumption.

I believe, I didn't stay for the whole meeting in YRDF, but what I heard is that YRDF took that resolution or that idea and made it their own and said that there should be -- customary trade should be restricted to rural to rural and that includes a lot of Alaska. So my suggestion would be to consider in your customary trade discussions, especially when the runs are this low so that they're not going to satisfy all uses, is to restrict your customary trade when runs are low to the Yukon management area rural to rural.

It doesn't make a lot of sense to me that when runs are so low you have a Federal special action restricting subsistence to Federally qualified rural people if they're going to take a large portion.
of their catch and sell it in Fairbanks or Anchorage.
I mean it kind of defeats the purpose in my mind.

So that would be my recommendation, Mr. Chair.
Thank you for allowing me to voice that.

CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: This is public
comment and I consider you part of the public now, not
an ADF&G on your hat anymore, so I considered it as
public comment. Personally, I do think that the
customary and traditional use determinations for Yukon
River chinook salmon are for Yukon River communities
and that you could actually lean in that direction,
rural to rural within the customary and traditional.
You get into what -- Fairbanks is in the Yukon River
drainage, but Fairbanks is in a non-subsistence area
and would not actually be eligible under Federal
regulations to participate.

When this Council discussed customary
trade several years ago, I personally, as a Council
member, said that if there was a problem of Yukon River
fish it should be rural to rural inside the Yukon. I
actually said that. It's in the transcript somewhere
back there in the archives. I feel that it may come to
the point -- you know, that should be a part of the
discussion of the customary trade. It should be one of
the things on the table at the subcommittee meeting, so
I appreciate that comment personally.

Further comments or questions for Gene
Sandone's presentation. Don.

MR. HONEA: Yeah, I'd just kind of like
to mention, I guess, in the McGrath meeting that when
we say that we use, taken for dogs, we're not talking
about chinook salmon at all. It's personally chum.

CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Okay. Tim.

MR. GERVAIS: Gene, could you comment
what you think would be the important component or
components of an effective rebuilding program for the
Yukon chinook run?

MR. SANDONE: I'll put my science hat
back on. I think that getting the right numbers and
right type of fish on the grounds is paramount. I
think if we make it in Canada under the management
regime we have now, we'll make it everywhere in the
rest of the drainage. But I believe that the
escapement should reflect the long-term brood year
return.

In other words, if the brood year
return says they have 60 percent six year olds in it,
then that's what should be on the ground, 60 percent of
six year olds. It shouldn't be a predominance of
younger-aged fish.

CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Go ahead, Jenny.

MS. PELKOLA: Gene, I just want to
clarify something, I guess. When I was growing up,
chinook salmon, to me wasn't king salmon. I mean king
salmon wasn't chinook salmon. To me, chinook was the
last fish that came up the river and it looked
something like trout and there's still some elders that
do call it -- they don't call chinook -- I still have a
hard time. King salmon is chinook, right?

CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Yes.

MS. PELKOLA: Okay. They don't call it
chinook, they call it king salmon. I guess what I'm
trying to say is I know a lot of the elders still call
it king salmon and we still call chinook salmon
salmon and I don't know what kind of fish that is, the
English name for that one. In my mind, I'm trying to
keep up with your report, but I keep seeing this other
kind of fish when you say it. So I guess we have to
educate the elders and myself included to get the new
term. That's just a comment.

MR. SANDONE: Mr. Chair. I think I
need to tailor my presentations to say king salmon
rather than chinook. I think you're right. I think
next time I give my presentation it will be king
salmon.

Thank you.

CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: My comment, it may
be that coho, which is silver salmon, are the late run
and they can be blush like a king salmon.

MS. PELKOLA: I know what coho is.

CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: It's not that.
MS. PELKOLA: It's not that.

CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: So the late run is a small king then is what you're talking about.

MS. PELKOLA: Yeah. It has red meat.

CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Okay. We have to have it all on the record. Enough discussion on that. Thanks for the presentation, Gene. I appreciate that.

One more little thing that was kind of rattling around. You present information by community. What is the confidence level on participation of the communities in the data collection. Some communities may be better at divulging information than others and I was wondering is subsistence division sorted that out? Do they have fudge factors calculated in? In your research, did you see that?

MR. SANDONE: Mr. Chair. Commercial Fisheries Division does all the subsistence surveys. It's based upon a sampling design that Subsistence Division did do, but to answer your question specifically there are confidence intervals on many of the estimates that ADF&G makes and it's in the annual report. So if you go to your community, I know they have a stratified design where they sample -- they surveyed more of the heavy users and medium users and down to the light users. They try to get all the heavy users surveyed, but there are confidence intervals around that estimate.

CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Thank you. I again appreciate your presentation. It does have some very pertinent information. For this Council, as we move forward in trying to rebuild these stocks and various proposals that may be necessary for conservation of Yukon River king salmon.

Thank you.

Becca, you have something to say there?

MS. ROBBINS-GISCLAIR: Yeah, thank you, Mr. Chair. I just have a quick correction that I wanted to make sure was reflected on the record. Gene, Becca Robbins-Gisclair with the Yukon River Drainage Fisheries Association. I just wanted to clarify that the YRDFA board did not pass any resolution addressing
customary trade. I think Gene just said that we had
looked at that. The board did talk about it, but no
resolution was based.

CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Okay. Appreciate
that clarification. I got a request from the public,
from Tim Bodony, that has a prior commitment today, so
he wanted to make a comment to the Western Interior
Council. Go ahead, Tim.

MR. BODONY: Thank you very much for
fitting me in the agenda. My name is Tim Bodony, B-O-
D-O-N-Y. I'm an eight-year resident of Galena and I've
been a subsistence user for seven of those years since
I was Federally qualified. I wanted to speak while I
had the opportunity here about Yukon River salmon
management.

I think I have the dubious distinction
of being the only one, Mr. Chair, who filed a comment
to the Federal Subsistence Board in support of your
proposal that ended up being rejected regarding
protection of the first pulse of king salmon. I want
to thank you for putting that through and hope you
stick with it personally, and all the other boards
continue to consider that management option of
protecting that first pulse of king salmon going into
the river.

That said, I'd like to comment on
what's coming up next in the agenda and that's State
and Federal managers talking about the rebuilding
initiative for king salmon. I'm encouraged as a
subsistence user by some of the things I read here in
this summary document, this two-page document 2011
Yukon River chinook salmon rebuilding initiative. I'm
very encouraged by some of the language in here that we
are now talking about conservation in a real serious
way.

In general, if I could sum up my
comments today to you, it would be that I don't feel
like we can fish our way out of the problem we're in.
Adjusting net sizes, changing window lengths, adjusting
the legal limits of nets and boats and everything I
think is going to get to a sort of Darwinian moment
where only the strong survive in the village. Those
with the most wherewithal and force to go out there in
an eight-hour subsistence opening and dominate a
driftnet spot and try to intimidate others off of it.
1 I think it would only create more animosity within
2 villages and between villages as we continue to tinker
3 and tinker with opportunities.
4
5 I see more hope for rebuilding the king
6 stock and doing something like a full closure on the
7 first pulse, which is a pretty drastic management
8 action. Certainly not popular in many places, but I
9 think it was effective in 2009 to accomplish the goal
10 of getting higher escapement.
11
12 I believe that's all I wanted to
13 present to you. Again, thank you for allowing me to
14 squeeze into the agenda here.
15
16 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: I appreciate those
17 comments. Does Council have questions for Tim's
18 position.
19
20 (No comments)
21
22 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: I personally can see
23 how short windows could be highly competitive, so I
24 will take that into consideration as we move through
25 this dilemma that the king salmon run is in.
26
27 Thank you.
28
29 MR. BODONY: Thank you.
30
31 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: I have some others,
32 Brad Scotton and John Stam wanted to make comments. I
33 was wondering if you two are going to be present after
34 these fisheries issues and can you make your comments
35 afterward, Brad?
36
37 MR. SCOTTON: Yes.
38
39 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: And John.
40
41 MR. STAM: Yes.
42
43 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Okay. So we'll move
44 into Yukon River salmon preseason outlook. That would
45 be Alaska Department of Fish and Game and U.S. Fish and
46 Wildlife. State your name for the record, please.
47
48 MR. MASCHMANN: Mr. Chairman and RAC
49 members. My name is Gerald Maschmann and I work for
50 the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service out of Fairbanks. I
assist Fred Bue, who is the Federal Manager with Yukon River salmon management. If you'll turn to Page 31 in your book, you'll find the joint ADF&G/Fish & Wildlife Service paper titled 2011 Yukon River chinook salmon rebuilding initiative.

The one in your book we've found an error, so I've handed out a new one. The error is in the second graph. You'll notice at the top of that second graph it says lower IMEG. That should read 42,500 and the one in your book says 45,000.

This paper will be part of a packet of materials that YRDFA will be sending out advertising this spring's salmon preparedness meeting similar to what we've had the past two years. The purpose of the meeting is to bring people together from all over the drainage to exchange information and communicate their concerns and suggestions with fisheries managers.

The meeting is funded by the U.S./Canada money and is scheduled for April 13th in Anchorage. Jason Hale with YRDFA will have more specifics for you on the meeting. At this time we are still working among both agencies and with Canada on the 2011 outlook, so we do not have a formal outlook in hand yet. However, this paper generalizes our expectations for the coming season. Since it's fairly short, I'd like to just read through it now.

Yukon River chinook salmon are important to all users in the Yukon Area. Unfortunately, they have experienced a drop in production. Current run sizes are about half of historic levels, making it difficult to meet escapement goals and provide for subsistence uses on the river. Harvests have been greatly reduced since 2000. Despite good parent year escapements in 2007, 2008, and 2010, runs were below expectations and escapement goals into Canada were not met.

Preliminary analyses suggest the 2011 Yukon River chinook salmon run will again be below average to poor. Due to poor production in recent years, it is likely the 2011 chinook run may not be sufficient to fully support subsistence needs. Over half of the Yukon River chinook salmon that are harvested in Alaska are Canadian-origin. Therefore, it is very important to keep Canadian as well as Alaska stocks healthy.
Conservation of fisheries resources by all users is extremely important for ensuring future salmon runs. It is now prudent to enter the 2011 season with the expectation that conservation measures will be required in an effort to meet escapement goals and share the available subsistence harvest.

It is necessary for all users to help in meeting escapement goals. In recent years, Canadian fishermen have voluntarily reduced their subsistence harvest, sometimes by more than 50 percent, in order to allow fish to reach the spawning grounds. During these low runs, it is necessary for all users to look at the amount they harvest and determine how they can help ensure adequate Chinook salmon escapement.

Given the users concerns over the future of Yukon River chinook salmon runs, it is necessary to develop a management plan focused on rebuilding the stocks. The initial objectives of the plan would be to achieve escapement goals in the Alaska portion of the drainage and meet escapement and harvest sharing commitments to Canada. Furthermore, this plan must provide for subsistence use of chinook salmon in the Alaska portion of the drainage and management of overlapping summer chum salmon fisheries.

Yukon River fisheries managers need your assistance developing options and management strategies for 2011 that will assist in getting fish to the spawning grounds should the chinook salmon run be similar to the poor runs of 2007, 2008, and 2010. Because of the trend of low productivity, it is anticipated that a conservative rebuilding plan will be in place for the next few years.

During the winter and spring, State and Federal fisheries managers will attend several meetings to inform fishermen and user groups of the 2011 outlook, and to receive input on management options for the 2011 fishing season. Yukon River fisheries managers are soliciting practical ideas for reducing chinook salmon harvests from resource users on the river. All people who depend on Yukon River salmon have a role in protecting these special fish for future generations.

Thank you.
CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Thanks, Gerald.

That's the completion of your presentation. Does the Council have questions on Gerald's presentation.

(No comments)


MR. HAYES: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. For the record, my name is Steve Hayes with the Alaska Department of Fish and Game. I'm the summer season manager for chinook and summer chum. Just to briefly add to what Gerald had just gave you, at this time we don't have our confirmed outlook although we do have preliminary information. We're looking at a run size probably similar to what we saw last year for chinook.

We'll be going to the Yukon River Panel meeting at the end of this month to determine what escapement goals we'll have for the border into Canada and also to present a more formal outlook to the panel. After that we will then have our outlook that we will get out to the public so that they know what's going on.

At this time I would expect that we should all be looking at something similar to last year for both chinook and summer chum. As you heard in the flyer that we put out, at this time we are looking at conservation measures. What those are going to look like I can't tell you at this time. I mean we have some ideas of tools that we've used in the past in 2009. Whether it's reducing windows or pulling periods off the first or second pulse.

I know we all talk about the first pulse, but I think we need to be more open that it could be more spread out because we do have a large portion of Canadian fish still running in that second pulse as well. It could be done differently within districts. In 2009, it was pretty much consistent all the way up the river how we did it. Well, we learn more as we go that each district fishes differently somewhat. There may be better ways to actually get fish through each district differently. So we're going to address that too as well in that in-person meeting that Jason Hale will talk about I think later here.

I wish I had more to offer you, but as I said at this time we're still working on the outlook.
The idea of the meeting is to get input from the users that we can hopefully put into the management plan for the summer.

CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Thanks, Steve. Does Council have comments on the State's preseason outlook. Go ahead, Tim.

MR. GERVAIS: Thank you, Mr. Chair. Thank you, Steve and Gerald, for your presentations. To either of you, when we had that first pulse go through in 2009 -- what the basis of this question is going to be is about like tracking that pulse. People didn't fish on that pulse, but just on the basis of chance or luck or coincidence, when those fish got up into Rampart rapids area they were on an opener with that and actually had to pull their gear before their period was closed because they couldn't handle the volume of fish and stuff.

I wanted to get your comments on how feasible it is to do accurate tracking in a subdistrict mode and if it's financially feasible or have you given any consideration to how to -- if you decide you want to let a pulse through how you can track it so it doesn't get stepped on by some village or some district.

CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Thanks, Tim. Go ahead, Steve.

MR. HAYES: Mr. Chairman. Tim. First of all I guess I would say managing this fishery or any fishery you're not always going to be perfect. We put that schedule in place in 2009 pretty much preseason and we were actually pretty lucky that we did as well as we did on the timing of the closures. It worked out pretty well in the end. There's going to be times where one subdistrict or district may hit the tail end or the front of the pulse.

That's why earlier I said that we're going to be trying to look at ways that we can treat districts differently and when they may be closed. Maybe it's not on the first pulse, maybe it's on the second pulse. Like in subdistrict 5D, for example, they're only fishing on Canadian fish. We have a little bit more latitude that we may be able to pull them off of either the first or second pulse.
At the same time, when we go into the plan preseason, we're going to have in-season information in the Lower River that we'll have a good idea on the timing of the fish at that time and adjust as we go. In 2009, it was pretty much set preseason what we were doing.

But these are the things that we're going to work on in this meeting and get input on and how to address it. Is it going to be perfect in the end, no, but the goal is to meet our escapement goals and do what we can.

The other thing is to shift the harvest. It's like Mr. Sandone had said earlier, you know, at this point we feel that we have enough fish to meet our escapement and provide for subsistence on this run. It's delicate when you're trying to shift harvest from maybe the first pulse to the second pulse and things like that that we're trying to figure out how to do.

I would anticipate looking at something similar to what we did in '09. I don't think, based upon the preliminary outlook that we're seeing, that it's going to be as restrictive as it was in 2009.

CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Thank you. Ray.

MR. COLLINS: Do you have the means and the technology to accurately track a pulse let's say by tagging those fish and following a certain number of them upriver? Do you have gear that could check when they go by there? Is any of that being done? How are you tracking the pulses?

MR. HAYES: Well, currently we're tracking the pulses in the Lower River. The first project that we have is the Lower River test fishery. Once those fish have hit that project we then know at what speed they're traveling. We have a spreadsheet that we track in-season. Based on the miles between that project and the next community or project we're able to tell when those fish will be hitting that area. It actually works pretty well. I mean it's not perfect all the time. It could be half a day off at times, but overall it does pretty well.

You could do like radiotelemetry, which is actually a very expensive project to do to track the
fish all the way up the river if you wanted to.
Unfortunately there's no funding to do something like
that. I think currently what we're using to track the
fish in-season works pretty well. Of course, we're
always verifying that in-season with fishermen along
the river. And the YRDFA teleconferences, we'll hear
as fishermen tell us if they've seen the fish or not,
we're able to track it to what our sheet is showing us.
We can correct it as we go.

CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Robert.

MR. WALKER: Thank you, Mr. Chair. Steve, with doing away with the 8.5-inch mesh this
coming summer and projected to use 7.5-inch mesh, has
it been determined that -- will there be a big
difference in the escapement here? Have you guys
talked about it? What is going to be the plan here? I
don't want to see you do away with the windows. I want
to keep those in place. That's the last thing I want
to get rid of too.

MR. HAYES: At this time there's no
talk about doing away with the windows. Obviously that
would be a Board of Fish proposal that they would have
to take up. In changing to the 7.5-inch mesh obviously
it's going to be the first season this year that we're
going to be using that, so we have no data at this
point that we can use to say what is it doing, so we're
going to have to start collecting that data, which is
on the spawning grounds.

The spawning grounds into Canada we're
going to have to collect. Unfortunately right now
there's not a lot of projects in Canada that they're
collecting this stuff, but they are starting to. So
over time, and it's going to take quite a few years to
collect that information to see if we're getting the
results we want to get from that mesh size.

MR. WALKER: That would be interesting
because I tried to fish one summer with 7.5-inch mesh
and just about killed myself spending all the dollars
on there and hardly get anything. I've already got
firsthand information on that.

CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Don.

MR. HONEA: Thank you, Mr. Chair.

Steve or.....
MR. WALKER: Gerald.

MR. HONEA: Gerald. I had a question. Is there like -- I know at Pilot Station I believe you guys have a tracking there and you have another one below there. Is that what protocol is? I mean if you're not getting enough fish passing the lower one, you -- because, you know, there's also fishing going on. Maybe the Lower Yukon has already gotten whatever they want, but we have to bypass that first pulse or whatever. Is that going to be the norm again? I mean if you're predicting a run that's as bad as it was last year or something, is that the general procedure then we can expect?

MR. HAYES: One thing we are looking at working on -- well, we're working on it now and whether or not we're able to actually incorporate it into our management this season is looking at triggers at Pilot Station. Most of us know that the Pilot River sonar is really the project that we get the actual index numbers from that tell us how many fish have gone by. The Lower River test fishery, it gives us some abundance information, but mostly just timing information.

We're looking at the potential of using the triggers so that some level of passage at Pilot -- let's just say 140,000, pull it out of the air, if that was the number we want it to be at and let's say we had pulled a subsistence period in District 1 and 2, but we were projecting we were going to hit 140 or above, we may not have to continue on with the restrictions. We can let up on those. Or vice versa. If we're below a certain number, we may have to take more severe reductions. So we are looking at how to incorporate that into the management. Whether or not it's in place this summer I don't know yet.

MR. HONEA: My question do you have one near the mouth or isn't the one at Pilot Station further up where you've already passed and you had an open season, you know, until you hit those numbers? I mean wouldn't that be -- is that a correct question? Do you have one near the mouth that you go by or do you use the Pilot Station one exclusively?

MR. HAYES: That's correct. Pilot Station is the only sonar project we have in the Lower River. Of course, at the border we have Eagle. There is fishing that goes on prior to Pilot Station. Those
fish we do account for. In other words, we get our number from Pilot, but then we have to assume that there's so many fish that are caught from subsistence below, and then we can add those in to kind of get what we think the run size will be.

Typically we're not making any type of management decisions or historically until about the first quarter point of the run that we've seen. Because we're in these really poor runs now we're having to go in preseason with these plans in place, which now we're looking at halfway through the run or third quarter point of the run before we actually shift in our management. That also brings up our summer chum management is largely affected by that because we're letting three-quarters of the king run go by before we can even think about doing anything with chums, so we're letting surpluses of chums go by as well.

MR. HONEA: Thank you.

CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Further questions from the Council. Tim.

MR. GERVAIS: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Steve and Gerald, I'd just like to communicate from the community of Ruby that we would encourage you to manage conservatively. We're prepared to stand down to let the escapement to get past. It's not just a nutrition issue any more. People are being affected emotionally and spiritually by the lack of kings in the river. It feels like the king fishery has kind of been foreclosed on. It's probably the most significant subsistence issue for our community. If you guys want to be really tight with your closures, that's okay with us, just do whatever it takes to get fish on the spawning grounds.

CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Thank you, Tim.

Additional comments, questions. Jenny.

MS. PELKOLA: It's just a comment. I know the year in 2009 when you let the first pulse go, I just want to make sure that it's really clarified because a lot of us were confused. We didn't know what the pulse was because I guess they were coming in slowly. Just so it's clarified. Thank you.

CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Other questions, comments from the Council.
(No comments)

CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: My comments. Tim testified at the beginning of the meeting when he first arrived that the Bering Sea North Pacific Fisheries Management Council has increased the pollock harvest quota by up to 58 percent.

MR. GERVAIS: 56.

CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: 56 percent. Is the Department contemplating the huge increase in bycatch that will ensue with that amount of biomass, numbers of trawls and the amount of bycatch that's going to ensue in that? Is that a calculation at this point?

MR. HAYES: Mr. Chairman. Not at this point for this season. It wouldn't affect us for what we're looking at right now. Obviously it would in the future and the next few years we'll have to look at it for those runs coming up, but not for this year.

CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Another question I have, is the Department contemplating precluding sale of chinook salmon in the directed chum fishery and requiring retention for subsistence for this season as a precautionary against intentional harvest of chinook salmon in the directed chum fishery?

MR. HAYES: That will be one of the items we'll be discussing at the April 13th meeting. Obviously we have regulations in place that can help us deal with the incidental harvest of chinook during the chum periods. But we do want to get input from the parties that are affected by that before we move forward in our planning of it.

CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: It's my opinion that the incentive to harvest chinook with chum gear is very high if they're over five bucks a pound. I feel that those fish should be retained as subsistence use and that windows and opportunity for upriver stocks should be reduced in the Lower River to allow -- the directed chum fishery would actually be targeting more of the Lower River chinook stocks. I would feel that the Department and YRDFA should work towards targeting subsistence harvest of Lower River chinook stocks for personal consumption and avoiding directed commercial harvest of chinook salmon.
If I was getting paid $5.50 a pound, I would go after king salmon. I would hang my net in and I'd use heavier twine and I would catch king salmon in the directed chum fishery and you can do it. I used to commercial fish. You can tangle a king salmon and hung in gear with larger twine size. So that could be an issue and I feel that in this time that it's imperative that we move away from a commercial incentive to harvest chinook salmon. If people were understanding that we're just there to catch chums and you're going to take home these fish, don't catch so many kings in the first part of the run, I think that would move towards conservation of the chinook.

I'm also concerned about tracking the chinook run as it moves upriver. We have Pilot Station sonar, we have the downriver indexes to show run timing, but then this run blurs as you move through the rate of passage changes. You get into the Ramparts, those fish slow down because it's faster water. I feel the Department should use a community assessment. Select one fisher maybe randomly going through a list of fishers to go out and take indexes to track the pulse as it's moving up. So when the pulse arrives we know where it's at. So use the communities as a test fishery index as it moves up and allow them to use drift gear if it moves into -- or setnet gear for the best setnet sites. Some way of tracking this pulse. So we don't have a window opening right in the middle of a protected -- when everybody else is gone on conservation. We don't end up with what happened up in 5C.

Comment on that.

MR. HAYES: Mr. Chairman. We do communicate with the people in the communities to track the fish. We have people that we've worked with over years. The one thing I have to caution you on is that because of the time it takes us to actually put out a news release to get the word out to the people that there will be potentially a closure in effect, that's why I'm saying it's not always going to be perfect. Typically we like to put them out two days in advance to give people notice. When we try to do it sooner, people haven't heard about it. They're out at fish camp. So we do try to give advance notice. Things can change between that 48 hours on the fish. Like you just said, they can speed up, slow down. That's why I'm saying it's not always going to be perfect.
I said earlier if you do happen to miss that pulse that you want to protest, we have the option to look at the second pulse or we have the option that if a community totally missed fish that we wanted them to fish on -- in District 4 in 2009, we actually added more hours and they were able to pick up some fish there. So those are things that we will have to fine-tune in-season unfortunately. I just want to caution you it will never be perfect. I think overall, as we saw in 2009, we did do a fairly good job of getting the majority of that pulse upriver.

CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: What I'm saying is that there's a need for assessment projects along the way. I mean if we're going on full protection, we don't have enough fish, we have to know where those fish are in the river and we have to have some kind of -- other than Pilot Station to Eagle. We have to have some kind of an additional assessment projects along the way. That's what I feel.

One way of doing that would be to pull the first period window for chinook harvest. If it's thought necessary, I feel that that's equitable. As the comment from Tim Bodony here, you don't enter into some combat fishery for a six-hour period or something. Personally, I feel that that would be the most equitable way, is to pull the first period. That's just my opinion.

There's other things that may be necessary in the future. If this run keeps going further south, you know, setnet only. There could be some other options. There's other options that may be necessary, things that we don't want to go to, but may be necessary in the future.

Another thing that you can put on your list for your meeting is 5C, as presented, is a huge harvest. I used to fish down in Bristol Bay and I'd get my subsistence permit and down there you have 10 kings period, that's all you get, and you get 300 reds. I feel there should be a contemplation of limitation in 5C on harvest amounts for king salmon. So that's something that should be contemplated for 5C. That's something that Gene's presentation was graphic. There's a huge spike in 5C on the amounts of fish that each fisher was catching. I feel those are basically primarily upriver stocks.
We should be concerned about that huge harvest in 5C and I feel a harvest limit per permit, that each permit should have 10 fish or a reasonable amount of fish, not 180 fish or some crazy amount of fish. So I feel that to protect the upriver stocks that a permit stipulation. You have discretionary authority. My question is do you have discretionary authority from the Board of Fish to limit the amount of fish on the 5C permit?

MR. HAYES: I'll have to look into that, but I think that would have to be something that would have to go back to the Board of Fishery to start limiting that.

CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: I'd like that issue to be brought up at the in-season meeting in April. That is graphic and a huge impact, in equitable impact to the upriver stocks, so I feel that a permit -- I get a 5C permit. I have yet to fish it because I don't have a boat, but I've got a 5C permit. If it was 10 fish, okay, that's the way it goes. We have to get a handle on that issue there in 5C. That's what I see.

Those would be my comments. Does Council have any further comments on the preseason. Tim.

MR. GERVAIS: Thank you, Mr. Chair. Steve or Gerald. I wanted to know, and I hope you've discussed it, how weak does the Yukon king run need to be before the Federal government steps up to what's going on in the Bering Sea?

I just don't see where it's fair that those guys are going to be out there dragging for probably 10 months this year and we're looking at taking all these preseason measures. I feel that both the State and the Federal government should provide some protection for these user groups on the river. We don't have the lobbying money to be effective in the North Pacific Management Council process. I'd like to see Cord Campbell and I don't who the -- the Federal Subsistence Board asked for some conservation measures that are more significant than what came out of the chinook bycatch process in 2009.

We, as in-river fishers, commercial fishers, subsistence fishers, we've taken a lot of steps and we're not getting the rebound in the
populations. Have you guys discussed a number or a level that it needs to get to where it's like, okay, we can't get the stock rebuilt just on in-river measures. We need some help by what's going on outside the three-mile zone.

MR. HAYES: Mr. Chairman. I guess one thing to point out is I don't know if you guys have seen the handout that YRDFA put out on the bycatch here, which I think does a fairly good job of explaining the cap that was put on the bycatch for kings. I guess the reason I'm bringing it up is I just want to bring to your attention that the bycatch is not our only issue.

In the bigger picture, if you take a look at what this run used to be historically, 250-300,000 kings, and what we're getting back now, like last year we got 130-some thousand kings back, it's not the bycatch. The bycatch is a part of the bigger picture. As we all know, we also have these marine environment issues that we don't even know what they are. It's not just a Yukon issue, it's a statewide problem with kings.

So I'm not belittling bycatch, and I think they have taken steps on the bycatch issue with the cap that will go into effect this year, January 1st, but there's still things out there that we're not sure on what's happening within that ocean environment. We've met escapements. These poor returns are coming off good escapement years. We don't know what's happening with the fish.

The unfortunate thing right now is all we can do -- for me as a manager, I can manage what comes back and meet the escapement goals and subsistence needs. Hopefully in time there will be some answers on the marine environment issues that may be causing this. We'll continue to look at the bycatch stuff. I know that people focus heavily on the bycatch, but it is a small part of the big picture.

CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Go ahead, Robert.

MR. WALKER: Steve, when we start the season up with 7.5-inch mesh, it's going to be from Y1 all the way up to Y6 with 7.5-inch mesh, 150 feet long by 35 mesh deep?
MR. HAYES: Correct. From Districts 1 all the way up the river it will be 7.5-inch mesh, but the current depth size in regulation remains in effect for the areas. The lower district it's 6 inch or larger, 45 meshes deep, 6 inch or smaller at 50 meshes deep. In the upriver, it's 60 meshes deep.

I don't know what the buyers in the lower river or what TCC what they purchased depth-wise, I don't know that. I can tell you that you can still go with the depth that's in regulation.

CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Thank you. Any further comments from the Council.

(No comments)

CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: I appreciate that.....

MR. WALKER: I've got a question.

CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Go ahead there, Robert.

MR. WALKER: Steve, we're going to be still using the 1-800 for the Tuesday fisheries meeting, phone calls, whatever, call-ins?

MR. HALE: (Nods affirmatively)

CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: We have an affirmative from YRDFA that the 800 call-in number on Tuesday is still in effect. Any other questions.

(No comments)

CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Thank you.

Appreciate that. Jason.

MR. HALE: I don't know if this will be a good time, but since we were just talking about this preseason planning, instead of waiting for me to.....

CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: It's an excellent time. State your name and organization.

MR. HALE: Super. Thank you, Mr. Chair and everybody. For the record, Jason Hale, Yukon River Drainage Fisheries Association. It's real good seeing
everybody again. Thanks for giving me a minute.

You guys are familiar with this process. This is going to be the third year we've done it, the preseason planning process. It's changed a little every year. We're changing it again this year. We're always trying to make it a little more complete, a little better hopefully. First off, Gerald mentioned it a moment ago, but it's funded by the Yukon River Panel and the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, so we're sure appreciative of them for supporting the project.

The main purpose of this thing, what we're really trying to do, is give the opportunity for fishermen and for tribes to give their input into how the run should be managed. It's their fishery and let's let them come up with the good ideas that they can support. So discussing specific management actions and possibly trigger points for managing the 2011 chinook run and keeping in mind that funding isn't guaranteed year after year, so trying to get as much information as possible while we actually have the money to bring folks together, so that in years where we might not have that opportunity we can say, well, we've already kind of got a sense of what people are thinking.

I was really encouraged to hear all the really well thought out ideas from you guys already today and other people have been throwing stuff out over the course of the winter, so I think we've got a lot to hash out because there are a lot of good ideas out there.

Also, secondarily at this meeting, whenever we bring this many fishermen and tribal reps together to talk about fish we figure it's a good idea to have some informational sessions to get people current on the current science and give them a chance to comment and talk about it. So that will be sort of another part of this process.

Let me just walk you through what the structure is this year. We started it actually in Mountain Village a couple weeks ago talking about it at the YRDFA annual meeting. It was just sort of the first kick-off point where the same information Gerald presented a moment ago was presented to the YRDFA board and they started talking about this coming season. The State and the Feds were there talking about it as well.
and getting some input. Then, of course, we're going
to all the RAC meetings for the Yukon and announcing
the meeting, getting ideas. That's part of what we've
been doing today.

Gerald referenced another thing, a
mailer, that was sent out on Friday to every tribal
council in the Alaska portion of the Yukon River
drainage, so that's 47 tribal councils. The mailer
consisted of -- I'm really excited about this. This is
really long overdue. So an introductory letter about
this process and about the coming season and how it's
not looking super, then that flyer that you guys all
read along with Gerald a minute ago. Then a list of
questions to consider. The idea is -- the meeting is
April 13th, the big river-wide meeting is April 13th,
and if we can get the information in front of the
tribes now, we know that they're all going to have a
meeting in March. We talked to every tribe months ago
to find out when their meetings were to be sure it
would fit. We said, heck, if we hit some of these main
points in front of them, maybe they can talk about them
and then send representatives to this meeting in April
and they'll be able to speak maybe more informed from
their tribal perspectives.

I wanted to take a second just to let
you know what questions we are encouraging them to
consider beyond just the information presented by Fish
and Game and Fish and Wildlife. Those questions were:
Does your tribe support cutting back subsistence
harvests to get enough king salmon to the spawning
grounds in years of poor salmon returns. So do you
think we should cut back when the runs are poor.

Number 2, does your tribe support
pulling or cancelling subsistence fishing periods on
the first pulse or second pulse of king salmon as a way
to get enough king salmon to the spawning grounds.

Number 3, how does your tribe feel
about using voluntary harvest reductions to get enough
king salmon to the spawning grounds.

Lastly, number 4, does your tribe
support the use of different king salmon management
tools or approaches different parts of the river.
Steve kind of references that a minute ago. Fishing is
different, conditions are different in parts of the
river. In the past, when there have been big cuts and
management actions, it's been all the same throughout. What about mixing it up in recognition of the different conditions. What do people think about that? Do they think it's fair or do they not. It might give us some different roads to go down for some of that precision management that Tim was talking about earlier. So that's in there.

Also, I've been invited to a lot of weddings this year. For some reason I keep getting these darn wedding invitations in the mail. I said, well, heck, we're having a meeting, we should send out like wedding invitations, so we did. So every tribe is going to get this lovely little envelope and this little thing that says, hey, we're having this wonderful meeting and you should come on out and we'll pay your way and stuff. We didn't ask them to bring a date. And a little RSVP card and stuff, are you going, who are you going to send and please respond by this particular date and, you know, do it up right. You know, we didn't ask them if they want to eat chicken or fish, but maybe next year fish will be obviously what we hope for. And we'll be calling all the tribes next week to make sure they're good to go and if they've already had their meetings, did you talk about it, how did it go, who are you going to send. If they haven't had their meeting yet, don't forget about that mailer, you got it, right. Do you need me to fax it to you again. Then start setting up their travel.

We'll also be talking about it at the Yukon River Panel meeting, talking about all these issues. Just basically trying to talk to every major group on the river that gets together and talks about fish. And get more input so that when the big meeting hits, which will be April 13th in Anchorage at the Clarion Suites downtown, we can already have some of our homework done so we can hopefully start a little ahead of the game.

The invitees will be every tribal council in the Alaska portion of the Yukon River drainage and we can fund the travel for one representative of each of those tribes to come into Anchorage to the meeting. We would like to ask a representative from each of the three RACs. We'd very much like for you guys to consider coming and then figure out who you might like to send to represent your RAC. The Yukon River Panel members from the Alaska portion of the drainage. The processors who are still
operating on the river certainly have a stake in
management and should get a voice. The inter-tribal
groups and you guys, of course, talked about TCC
earlier and there's CATG and AVCP. We've been talking
to them for quite a while about this.

YRDFA will send, I'm sure, an upriver
and a downriver representative. We're coordinating the
process, but it's really the fishermen's process up and
down the river. It's not a YRDFA process, it's a
riverwide process for everybody regardless of whether
they're a member of YRDFA or not. And then, of course,
heavy agency involvement throughout. The State and
Federal manager have been heavily involved since the
initial planning of this. Of course, they need to be
since they're going to be the ones managing. And then
all the other agencies who are involved in any capacity
we'll be asking to join this whether it's to answer
questions or pitch in or learn from the fishermen.
We're hoping for a pretty packed house.

We polled people last year at the
meeting, do we need to keep doing it, what do you
think, we see value in it, what do you guys think, and
it was unanimous, keep doing it. Keep doing it pretty
darn similar, keep bringing people together before the
season. We want to see it. This is important. So
that's why we're doing it again.

The last thing on the riverwide
meeting. As I mentioned, we're going to try to have
some informational sessions. You guys are talking
about all the big issues going on on the river. If
there are any topics you'd like to see covered that you
think people would like to see more current information
on, please let me know. We'd like to hold three
informational sessions during the day. People can
choose which ones they want to go to.

Last year we did things on customary
trade, the sonar at Pilot and use of traditional
ecological knowledge and management, so those were our
three last year. We can repeat or we can do something
totally different. But what are you wondering about
and what do you think other people are wondering about.
Please let us know because I want to have those
sessions geared towards what the need is. So I'd just
love to hear from you.

Then lastly another really overdue and
super cool thing that we've managed to get funding for is regional meetings. So after all this is said and done and the plan is set, in May we're looking at doing three regional meetings in May just before the fish come in. We're looking at doing something in St. Mary's, something in the Middle River and we're talking about Nulato, maybe Galena, and then something in the Upper River, hopefully Ft. Yukon, where we would bring in a few people from the surrounding villages, fly them in, maybe two or three people per village, as well as involved fishermen in those areas. Bring them in and present the plan. The managers will be joining and present the plan. Just let people talk about it. Let them ask questions and kind of be ready and we'll have learned from the April meeting what people are interested in, be ready to answer those issues, but on a more grassroots, on the ground basis.

So we don't have dates set for those yet. We'll have more information forthcoming by April. But that will kind of be the end of the process and afterwards we'll probably do a mailer with the plan and take out ads in the papers to be sure everybody sees the plan before the fish hits the river. Of course, starting the first week of June, the first Tuesday in June, we'll start out with those in-season teleconferences. I think that might be June 7th. The number is not going to change from past years, but if you need any information on it just let me know and I'll send it to you.

That's pretty much all I've got and thank you.

CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Thank you. Robert, go ahead.

MR. WALKER: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Jason, when you talk about Yukon River Panel, how many people does it consist of and what are their terms and who are they?

MR. HALE: That's a good question. In terms of number of people, there are four on the Alaska side who are actual panel members and then there are advisors and alternates and stuff like that. In terms of the rest of it, I think we might have a panel member here in the room and I might defer the question to Fred Bue if he's.....
CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Go ahead, Fred.

MR. BUE: Yeah, Mr. Chairman. I think Jason pretty much handled that. There's four panel members. Each one of those has an alternate and then there's at least four advisors, which also go to the meetings and provide support to those panel members. Canada has a similar balanced part to their side. We also have what we call the JTC, Joint Technical Committee, which is biological, technical staff that provides staff analysis, input to the panel, supports their questions and information that the panel can make decisions. Joint Technical just kind of stops right at the biological information. The Panel goes beyond that and talks about the political and policy and that sort of information.

As far as terms, I believe they are all three-year terms. I think myself, I have only been on there one year and I had taken Russ Holder's position and so I have to reapply to that because I was just finishing out his term. I'm appointed by the State Department, I believe.

MR. WALKER: Who are the other three?

MR. BUE: Ragnar Alstrom, Andy Bassich from Eagle and Stanley Ned is the Middle River person.

CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Does that answer all your questions, Robert?

MR. WALKER: Yes, it does. Thanks.

CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Tim, go ahead.

MR. GERVAIS: So, Fred, what's the mood or reaction from the Canadian members on the panel? Are they really disappointed that we haven't made escapement in three of the last four years or they're just like I know you guys are trying, whatever shows up shows up? I mean isn't there treaty obligations that need to be met here?

CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Fred.

MR. BUE: Yes, Mr. Chairman. Again, this is Fred Bue with the Fish and Wildlife Service for the record. Yes, Canada is very concerned. Their management is a little bit different on their side.
Their aboriginal fishing is a little bit different than our subsistence.

Part of their fishery -- they fit into a management plan and they managed to close some of their fisheries and then the aboriginals take it as -- it fits into the structure of the plan, but when they take restrictions, they consider it a voluntary restriction. So they have significantly reduced their harvest voluntarily in Canada.

This past season, you know, I guess it's probably me that a lot of it falls onto, is that they felt we did not restrict our subsistence harvest nearly enough. As I said, this fall RAC meeting we kind of went through this whole thing again. Where we were trying to fish around the three high water events throughout the season. They were pretty significant. Some people lost gear, some weren't able to fish, and that was part of our consideration why we specifically didn't pull some periods. We thought we were saving fish because of the high water. Rather than force people to go out and fish when there's a lot of debris in the water, take chances of potentially risking their gear, we gave them the flexibility if they don't fish when the debris is there they may get an opportunity at another time. So that's why we didn't specifically pull a period, but we also asked people to voluntarily reduce their harvest.

I guess that would be one of the questions of this Council and this coming preparedness meeting, is how did you feel about a voluntary reduction. I think we got mixed results. I think in Canada it worked fairly well. People there see it as they're more in control of what's going on. In Alaska, my impression is that we're concerned that maybe those other guys aren't -- you know, we're doing okay, but those other guys maybe should be making more of an effort to reduce their harvest.

So in that light I think my impression is that a lot of people in Alaska would just as soon if we told them when they could or couldn't fish, but I guess that would be a question to this Council.

CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Thank you. Would the Council like to answer that question. Do you have a comment, Don. I feel the Council should answer that question. Should it be voluntary or regulatory
MR. HONEA: Yeah, just a comment. When we met with TCC, they had kind of a big meeting a couple years back, and we met with the aboriginal people from Canada on this issue. They weren't just concerned, they were pretty angry about it. I would have to agree with them for some of the things we're doing on this side. Maybe we have some infractions with the lower Yukon and all the groups, but I think we're committed to -- you know, we're obligated to let a certain amount go by, so whatever we can do in that sense. It's pretty compassionate when people come out and they're giving up some of their things, they're giving up some of their fishing. They're the last ones up there, so we're obligated to do that. When Tim asked what's the feelings there, it's not just well, you know, we're trying or something like that, it's pretty upset because, you know, it's a food source for them too.

Thank you.

CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Thanks, Don. Appreciate those comments. Any other comments from the Council on the YRDFA process and the Yukon Panel process.

(No comments)

CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: I would like to go down the Council here and I think a position needs to be taken on whether voluntary restrictions or regulatory restrictions should be implemented.

Jenny.

MS. PELKOLA: Could we start on that end?

(Laughter)

CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Okay. I'll alternate. Go ahead, Eleanor.

MS. YATLIN: I wasn't asleep. I think it should be voluntary. If Canadians could do it, we could do it. I was at the same meeting that you talked about a couple years ago. They were really passionate about how they were going to do the voluntary not
taking the fish. They did it after they said it at that meeting, so it can be done. I believe it should be voluntary.

CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Thanks, Eleanor.

Carl.

MR. MORGAN: You know, one time the Kuskokwim had a similar problem and the upriver did voluntarily restrict their fishing. It was not an easy decision to make, but once you make the decision you can't enforce it. You know, it's voluntary and it's up to the individual. I think if it becomes regulatory, then you're mandating that they do stop fishing. But I would tend to go with voluntary and if that don't work, probably go to regulatory.

CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Thanks, Carl.

Pollock.

MR. SIMON: In the '80s, there was a closure completely on salmon. We didn't stock our caches for our own personal use and for our dogs. It was a hardship all winter. The State came across and got some fish from somewhere, from Valdez, to feed our dogs and our people. I guess they could do it, but they would have to close the commercial fishery to the Lower Yukon. I mean close the fishing across the board. You know, voluntarily stop fishing.

CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Thanks, Pollock.

Robert.

MR. WALKER: Mr. Chairman, thank you. Volunteer, I don't know, but I think mandatory would be a lot more direct to our part of the area. I would have to talk to our tribe to see what they say. I'm going to say mandatory.

CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Okay. Go ahead, Don.

MR. HONEA: What's the question?

(Laughter)

CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: The question is do you feel is voluntary restrictions appropriate for a reduction of harvest of king salmon at this time or should it be a regulatory
reduction?

MR. HONEA: I think I would have to go with the mandatory and if it leads to the regulatory, then so be it. I think we did an excellent thing in the proposal that we came out with as Western Interior. The numbers were too large, so we modified that at our meeting over there. I'm not speaking for the tribe or the advisory committee or anything, but just personally I would do anything to protect. If we had to forego the first pulse, so be it.

CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Okay. My position is that YRDFA would have to have complete consensus to have a voluntary reduction. As Pollock said, there has to be a reduction of the commercial in bycatch in the directed chum fishery also. You can't have your cake and eat it too. If that consensus could not be made, I feel that there needs to be regulatory restrictions for reducing chinook harvest on the Yukon River. I feel the Canadians are making huge concessions. They're buying fish from the coast and they're doing all kinds of stuff to try and get these fish back. We have to start doing our part on this side. If I was fishing, I would voluntarily reduce my fishing. We have the huge regional differences, so I don't know that we can come to that consensus, so I lean towards regulatory restrictions myself.

Ray.

MR. COLLINS: I think ultimately the voluntary would be good if we could build up trust and I like the efforts where we're trying to do that by joint meetings and things. I think before you personally want to volunteer something you want to know the others are buying into it too. So I think it's important that information get out and there be some kind of consensus among the users that they're going to go that way. So it's worth trying to promote that, but if it's not working, then obviously we'll have to have regulation.

CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Thank you, Ray.

Tim.

MR. GERVAIS: Mr. Chairman. That would be great if voluntary was successful. It would be nice to live in a world like that, but I feel that it's so important to get the spawning escapement, from our
household and our community, I would feel that regulatory restrictions would be the most effective. If you go the voluntary restrictions, then that just benefits the pirates. You're going to have a river that has a high concentration of salmon in it and then the bad eggs are going to be out there just slaying them. Everybody should bear the burden of conservation and the way to ensure that is to have it be a regulatory restriction.

CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Thanks, Tim. I appreciate that comment because when I fished down in Bristol Bay we had strikes for a better price and there were people that fished during the strikes and they loaded up big time. So it benefits the bandits in this case to the highest degree, especially if we don't get this customary trade thing under control. We could have people really making a lot more money and exacerbating this issue if we don't have regulatory restrictions. So I will agree with you on that, Tim.

Go ahead, Jenny.

MS. PELKOLA: I agree.

(Laughter)

MS. PELKOLA: The reason why I wanted to be last is because I didn't quite understand the question. It seems like we're already being mandated to volunteer part of our catch. I think being mandated or regulated, I can live with that.

CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Thank you. Fred.

MR. BUE: Mr. Chairman, thank you. Jason just whispered to me. Part of how Canada does that is their biologist tells them about how much fish they need. They give them a target and then they go back to their community and try to work in their community about how each individual community can get to that target for their area. Again, Canada is a much smaller area, it's fewer people. It's a lot easier to work in those groups. It's more like a lot of them area community fish camps. In Alaska, a lot of us are pretty unique individuals. We're pretty spread out. Even just communication in-season is difficult when some of these decisions come down. So it comes back to each individual and that's a tough decision.
I think in 2009 some of you may remember, I believe it was Koyukuk actually made a letter or a resolution and said they were going to voluntarily reduce their harvest in half and they were held up as leading the charge on that. I don't know how successful they were, but I assume they did save fish. They got community buy-in. It comes back to the buy-in of the people. It's a public resource. It's up to the public to share the responsibility. We work for the public, so conservation. We can come up with management guidelines or ways to conserve fish, but we need the support of the fishing community also.

Mr. Chairman.

Mr. Chairman: Thanks, Fred. You had a comment, Jason.

MR. HALE: Just kind of a tack on to that. Following up on this voluntary thing. In 2009 there was a pretty big push. Hey, the run is looking terrible. We need to figure out some ways to get more fish up. I talked to a lot of fishermen throughout the year. Just about every village several people would say, you know, I said I got 100 percent of what I needed, but I decided I needed 70 percent of what I normally take or 50 percent. There were a lot of voluntary restrictions. No one is ever going to know about it.

So while voluntary probably isn't the answer for Alaska, it helps and I think that these kind of informational exchanges and talking about, hey, this is important to us. I think in the end, you know, I'm not going to take my normal 20 fish. I'm going to take 15, you know.

And on the Canadian side, just for a matter of interest, they do talk to First Nations, DFO, their Fish and Game says I think you need to cut back by X percent, cut back by 25 percent, and then each First Nation sorts out how they want to do that. Your tribe or First Nation might say we're going to have these two guys fish for the whole community and stop at this number. Yours might say you can only fish on the weekend. Yours might say 10 fish per household. All of those were things the Canadians did, but the First Nation said this is how we're going to do it. So voluntary sounds like you just say, hey, everybody try and take less and everybody just does and it's sort of
like this happy land.

(Laughter)

MR. HALE: But really they did have kind of more strict things that each First Nation put into place, but they chose to agree with DFO and come up with their own system to comply with it. Just so you don't think it's all fairies and rainbows.

CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Thank you. Tim.

MR. GERVAIS: I just wanted to relay an experience in 2009 when we were trying to protect that pulse. I believe it was Marshall decided to voluntarily fish on a closure and for the people in our community and I'm sure several other places on the river they were like -- there was a lot of fence-sitters where they really don't want to stand down, but you talk to them, you say it's important, they can do it. But when you have this breach in the pact of trust for the river and everybody just gets pissed off at those people that breached and then they just get pissed off in the whole process. They're already at a high level of anxiety anyway because they know they're not going to get the fish they really want. It's a really painful thing to endure. It's a lot of work for me personally to try to keep people's head in the game that we're all doing this for our future, our grandkids and people 200 years from now can have really nice salmon to eat. It's just not a perfect enough world for that to happen in my opinion.

CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Thank you. I think that's expended that issue. We could go to a break. We're still going to be working on Yukon River fisheries. We have a customary trade issue, so we've got some issues on the Yukon River fishery to clean up before we move down in this agenda. So we're going to have a 15 minute break.

(Off record)

(On record)

CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: We're coming back to order again. Jenny has some quick announcements pertaining to Galena here. Go ahead, Jenny.

MS. PELKOLA: May I have your
attention. Tonight at the Galena Bible Church there's
a concert going on by the Broken Walls and they said
they're going to be selling pizza about 6:00 to 7:00
and it starts at 7:00. Also, Shirley asked me to take
lunch for tomorrow, your names, and it's chicken
cocoan curvy over rice and it's $10 and she said
she'll bring whatever other stuff she has. I think
there's something else going on, but I can't remember.

UNIDENTIFIED VOICE: Science Fair.

MS. PELKOLA: Science Fair, yes, at the
school. It starts at.....

UNIDENTIFIED VOICE: 6:00.

MS. PELKOLA:.....6:00. And she's not
from Galena.

(Laughter)

MS. PELKOLA: So it starts at 6:00.
That's just what I wanted to say. The sheet will be
over here.

CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Okay. The sign-up
sheet for lunch tomorrow is over there by Salena. Some
people that have signed up to comment -- if you're John
Stamm, are you still wanting to comment on Yukon River
fishery issues?

MR. STAMM: Sometime.

CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Right now is the
appropriate time because we're in the Yukon River
fishery stuff. If you want to come up and comment to
the Council. We had Brad Scotton and Ken Chase wanted
to say something also. Go ahead.

MR. STAMM: My name is John Stamm.
I've been a subsistence fisherman on the river system
for 38 years. Fishwheel permit holder for 36 years
although I haven't fished commercially since 1997. I
still fish subsistence.

Just a few comments on customary and
traditional use. I was stunned to learn that it's
actually illegal to sell anything but unprocessed
salmon. I was always under the assumption that what I
was selling was perfectly legal strips and dry fish and
so forth. I found out at our last meeting that actually I'm a criminal because I was selling processed fish. Which leads me to the question of if everybody else on the Yukon River is selling strips and dry fish and processed fish, what is the issue? It sounds like the issue is an enforcement problem. If it's already illegal and everybody is doing it, it sounds like basically it's an enforcement problem until they change the regulations, which I hope they do.

As far as whether voluntary reductions will work to protect the king run, like I say, as long as king salmon is worth $30 a pound and the strips, I don't think it's going to work.

Another topic unrelated to fisheries directly, but indirectly I suppose, is the western Alaska access corridor. We had a meeting out here this winter concerning a road from Fairbanks to Nome. I get the general feeling that the State is pushing the road and they're making it sound really rosy, everybody is going to get cheap freight, the trip to town is going to be real cheap. From what the polls show, the majority of the people are for the road and listening to the comments at the meeting here in Galena and also most of the local people were for this road.

What I'm concerned about is these people aren't really thinking about what a road through the western Alaska through the Yukon River corridor, which is the most popular road, would do to subsistence activities. We see what's happening at the bridge with easy access from Fairbanks to the Yukon River at the bridge. People are already concerned now with people coming down with their river boats, coming out here to hunt and amount of fly-in people coming in with planes. Maybe we should start talking on this level about what would happen if the State got serious and put a road out here as far as competition for subsistence resources.

The State is already planning for a road out here. They've got a committee going. They're studying it and they're pushing it. They're not neutral on this. It might be a good time to start talking about it.

That's all my comments.

Thank you very much.
CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Thanks, John. Does the Council have questions or comments on John's testimony. Go ahead, Tim.

MR. GERVAIS: Thank you, Mr. Chair. Thanks for your comments, John. One thing I wanted to state about a correction from what I said earlier today is with the customary trade, the fish, I said earlier that it was for raw unprocessed fish and apparently that's what the State uses as a definition for subsistence, but I guess -- and anybody can correct this if they want, if I'm saying something wrong or misstating it. I guess in Title VIII of ANILCA it says any fish, fish parts or eggs. So what I said and I believe Jack made a mention to it too about the raw unprocessed was inaccurate.

CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: I was corrected at the lunch break. David, would you like to come to the mic and tell the Council precisely what the Federal regulation actually says, so I will stand corrected also. Go ahead, David.

MR. JENKINS: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. David Jenkins, Office of Subsistence Management. As you know under ANILCA customary trade is defined as a subsistence use and in subsequent regulations customary trade is allowed for subsistence users and they're allowed to exchange for cash fish, parts and eggs. There's nothing in those regulations about whole fish. It's fish, parts and eggs are allowed to be exchanged for cash under customary trade.

CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: That's the regulation and I appreciate that clarification.

MR. STAMM: That was my assumption, that it was legal all this time to sell processed fish. It was also my understanding -- I remember when they were first making the regulations, maybe 15 or 20 years ago, it was $5,000 per household. So I assumed that was the general figure that the Federal government was still using up to the present time. Maybe you could clarify me on that.

CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: No, there was proposed language of various amounts of dollar amounts and that was never adopted. The only thing that the Federal Subsistence Board passed was that it could not compromise a significant commercial enterprise and
that's where we get into defining customary trade and what level is appropriate for customary trade. That's going to be the question for the subcommittee. That's going to be the question for all three Councils on the Yukon River as of January. The Federal Board wants the Councils to determine what is an appropriate amount, at least regionally, on the Yukon River and let them sort it out. We're at that point where we're going to define what is an appropriate amount. There is no dollar figure in this Yukon River system. There is in Bristol Bay, $450, but there isn't here. And I think for kelp or something down in Southeast.

Any other questions for John? Thanks for the clarification, David.

MR. COLLINS: Just a further comment on that. There was a task force that was put together to deal with what was customary trade and we had a statewide group put together to see. The consensus was you could not set something that was statewide. It was left up to each region to define. This is the first time that the Yukon River has dealt with that now. That's why they're asking the three groups on the Yukon River to define what's appropriate for their area, but there is no dollar amount. It just varies from area to area what's customary.

CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: We'll be moving into this customary trade issue further on, so we're not going to spend a lot of time. This PowerPoint needs to be presented because Gene needs to head out on a plane. Any further questions for John?

MR. STAMM: In closing, the only statement I'd like to say is that I don't think a percentage will work. A percentage of your catch could go to customary trade because then the person would just fish harder maybe. I think it has to be actual numbers of fish or numbers of dollars.

CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: It can't be numbers of dollars because then inflation eats it up.

MR. STAMM: Okay, numbers of fish then.

CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Thank you. I appreciate that comment. Okay. Now we're going to the State presentation because they're borrowing Gene Sandone's computer here. Go ahead, Jeff.
MR. ESTENSEN: Good afternoon, Mr. Chair. Members of the Council. For the record, my name is Jeff Estensen. I am the fall manager, fall season for the Yukon with ADF&G out of Fairbanks. What I'd like to do here for the next couple minutes is just give you a quick overview of what our preseason outlook is for fall chum and coho salmon and then briefly discuss some preliminary management strategy based on these outlooks.

You also should have some handouts that I passed out to everybody. We're going to kind of go out of order of what you have in your handout, so I didn't know I was going to have the luxury of having the ability to do a PowerPoint here. This slide right here is actually Page No. 2. Essentially what we're looking at for the 2011 season is a run size and this is for fall chum of about 737,000 fish. This is below average for an odd year historically, which is right about a million fish. Looking at our 80 percent confidence interval around this point estimate, it's from 605,000 to 807,000.

If this estimate were to hold water as we go into the season, if we did actually see this level of run, that would be adequate for escapement for meeting subsistence priority and also our U.S./Canada obligation and then also provide a commercial harvest, which could be anywhere between 50 and 300,000 fish, depending on run size.

This table is kind of hard to see on the screen here. You might want to follow along in your packet there. This is Page 1 of your packet, so we're actually going back. This is how we derived our outlook for fall chum. As you know, fall chum come back as six year olds, which is going to be 2005 brood year, as five year olds, which is the 2006 brood year, and then four year olds, which is the 2007 brood year, and then finally three year olds, which would be from the 2008 brood year.

The second column on this table here is what the escapement was in each of those parent years. The next column there is the estimated production. This is the recruit per spawner for each of those brood years. The estimated production from each one and then the contribution based on age and then the current return.
Things to look at here is that for the 2011 run that the major contributors are going to be the five year olds, which are from the 2006 brood year, 25 percent. Then also for the four year olds, which were from the 2007 brood year, which is about 72 percent. In those years, you can see that the recruit per spawner ratios are below zero or below one. I should say, which means that they're not replacing themselves. There is a slight improvement, if you want to call it that, from 2006 to 2007. You will note though that the escapement in 2007 was about 900,000 fish. In this last column here is what we can expect to get for a return of what we're looking at for each of those brood years. Again, our estimate is about 737,000 fish.

This should be slide 3 in the packet there. What this is showing is basically this is the -- the shaded or the filled in bars here are what we observed for the run and the lighter ones are what our projection was for that particular year. What we kind of see since 1998 through the disaster years here we saw very low returns here or I should say runs, then high runs during the mid 2000's and what we've been seeing since 2006 is a decline in the runs to where we're at right now in this kind of trough right now after following this kind of peak through the mid 2000's.

A couple things to keep in mind when we're looking at this projection we have for run size is that the last three years, '08, '09 and '10, what our observed run size, which is the dark bars here, were about 30 percent less than what our projection was. So if that trend continues for 2011, then as opposed to 737,000 you might expect to see 500,000. At that level of abundance, it would still be adequate for escapement, subsistence priority and treaty obligation, but that would be -- a commercial fishery would be kind of a question mark whether one would be prosecuted.

Something I want to point out to you is that in 2010 we saw about 16 percent three year olds for the fall chum, which is above the average historical average of about 3 percent. So just keep in mind though that sibling relationships between three and four year olds is not strong with fall chum on the Yukon. There has been years where it's been very strong such as '01 and there's also been years where
it's been pretty bad. Overall, when you look at the picture, this is the correlation about .48, which is not good. So take that for what it's worth.

CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: I'll stop you at that point. Ray has a burning question. Go ahead, Ray.

MR. COLLINS: How do you explain 2005 when your actual observed return was three times what you estimated? I mean that shows you you can't always rely on prediction. What's going on there?

MR. ESTENSEN: I don't know exactly what happened with this year, why it was so off, but you're absolutely right. You can't always rely on your projections. You can see, looking over the years, that there's been cases where our projection has been under and there's been cases where our projection has been over. What happened here I can't tell you. I could find out for you and pass it on to you or maybe someone who -- but I guess the thing to look at right now is just what's happened in the last few years. We've been 3 percent under, so whether that holds true this year we'll wait to see.

The other thing I'd like to point out also is that we're kind of in this trough right now and whether we start seeing like what we saw back in the 2000's disaster years, an upswing in run size, which would kind of follow suit with what we've seen for the cycles. If similar to other areas in western Alaska remains to be seen.

CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Thank you.

Continue.

MR. ESTENSEN: Okay. Also I just want to point out too is that this is our outlook for right now. As most of you are aware, as we start getting our numbers from the summer chum that there is a relationship between the summer chum and the fall chum. This is a regression that we've done over the years. For the most part, historically, it's matched up pretty good. Last year we were a little bit under that. What's going to happen though, as we start getting information from the summer chum performance, how the run is looking there, we will be refining our projection based on this relationship. So what we're saying right now may not necessarily be the case. I
think last year we were looking at -- it changed just a little bit last year from what our projection was based on this and then what we got from the relationship.

Then just moving on to coho real quick. This is abundance based on Pilot Station taking into account their adjustment for run timing in Mountain Village. This is for coho salmon. Number of fish from '95 through 2010. This includes the harvest, which is the stippled and then run reconstruction here or just the run. Then this is the average over the years here. Our parent year for our coho this year is going to come out to 2007 parent year, which was above average in terms of run.

Then also the only place in the delta Clearwater. This is of the Tanana drainage. Again, 2007 was within the upper part of the range there, which is 52 to 17,000 and we hit just the upper end of the range during that year. So I guess in a nutshell, assuming that we have average survivorship to this year and based on parent year escapement we're looking at an average return of coho salmon. If that was the case, then we should have -- there would be abundance to allow a coho directed fishery taking into account fall chum.

That's all I had.

CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Okay. I'll let Gene take his computer.

MR. SANDONE: Thank you.

CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Gene has to go catch an airplane. You can slide over and take the mic. Does the Council have questions for Jeff on his presentation? Go ahead, Tim.

MR. GERVAIS: Mr. Chair, thank you. Thank you for your presentation, Jeff. I have a few questions. How do you define the difference between a summer and a fall chum? Is it a date or a pulse?

MR. ESTENSEN: Well, genetics is the first thing in my understanding, but also in terms of the actual fish itself it would be genetics, but in terms of when management occurs it's by date by regulation in the Lower River in Y1.
MR. GERVAIS: Okay. Then you used the term sibling relationship. That means if so many three year olds come back one year that you'll see some kind of relationship to the four year olds the next year?

MR. ESTENSEN: Yeah. In other areas -- when I worked in the Kusko, that was part of our outlook. If we had a strong showing of three year olds, that might mean that you could see a strong showing of four year olds the next year. It's been pointed out to me with fall chum on the Yukon that that relationship is poor, .48, as I mentioned in my presentation.

MR. GERVAIS: Thank you. And have you had an opportunity to look at this North Pacific Fisheries Management Council chum bycatch information.

MR. ESTENSEN: I have seen it, yes. I was able to see it at the YR DFA presentation in Mountain Village. I suppose the next part of your question is have I taken that into consideration with this outlook. We have not.

MR. GERVAIS: That's good information. What I meant to ask is do you feel it's detrimental to the Yukon chum run?

MR. ESTENSEN: What I've looked at in the last -- I've seen that the bycatch has gone down considerably looking at the information that I've seen. At this point in time, and I think Steve answered it pretty well earlier is that, and I'll say the same thing, is that it's certainly a factor. Is it the root cause of the low runs that we've seen, I don't think it is. Is it something that needs to be taken into consideration? Yes, it does. I also believe that the Council is taking steps to look at potentially putting some restrictions or some incentives into place and I think that's a good idea.

MR. GERVAIS: Okay. Well, I wish you success in managing this fishery. I see extremely large demand for chum coming up starting about a year and a half ago and continuing into the future, so there's going to be a lot of pressure from commercial fishery interest and stuff to want to catch and harvest and process these fish, so I hope we can keep the stock in good shape. I also had a question. When the North Pacific Council goes ahead and approved a hard cap and
they put in place their systems of trading salmon between sectors or vessels and whatnot, to me that's representing an allocation of fish. I don't really understand how they can get an allocation of fish outside the three-mile line. I don't know the State statute, but I thought there was -- all the salmon in Alaska were supposed to be harvested in terminal fishery, so how does the State or Department of Law reconcile allowing North Pacific Management Council to give a salmon allocation on -- it's not the high seas, but in the exclusive economic zone?

MR. ESTENSEN: I'm not entirely sure -- through the Chair. I'm not entirely sure I can answer that question right now. I'm still learning about the process. I'm not sure if I can answer that question right now.

MR. GERVAIS: All right, thank you.

CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Thanks, Tim. Any other questions or comments from the Council on Jeff's presentation.

(No comments)

CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: My question is I heard that Area M harvested around 700,000 chum salmon as basically a bycatch in a non-terminal fishery. We can't do a heck of a lot about the North Pacific Fisheries Management Council, but are you in coordination with your co-managers for Area M on some way of reducing that fairly massive amounts of bycatch of chum in the interception sockeye fishery? And the drive to harvest chum that would be in Area M as a bycatch.

Go ahead.

MR. ESTENSEN: Mr. Chair. We get emails from the area managers down in that area and we're certainly looking at the numbers right there. As far as any active management, you know, there is none. Coordinating with them or trying to get them to take measures for us or something like that, no, there's not.

CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: They used to be under harvest caps and quotas and stuff like that. If this becomes more and more of an issue, I feel that
there should be a revisiting of that bycatch interception in Area M, so I would encourage the State managers to work more in concert with peers in the Department on this bycatch issue. I haven't seen those kind of numbers out of Area M in years. And then we go into flat runs on the Yukon, which is a significant component as the Yukon River fish, chum salmon.

You had a comment there, Fred.

MR. BUE: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Fred Bue, Fish and Wildlife Service. You're talking about Area M fishery. Part of what we are doing though is -- Jeff was giving his presentation referencing fall chum. Part of the Area M fishery is there's a June fishery and a post-June fishery. The June fishery we think of more as a summer chum fish. Timing-wise in order for those fish to go through in the June fishery, they're likely to be summer chum. Post-June perhaps could be fall chum because the timing and the distance traveled, just to keep that in mind.

There is a report out there. Some of you have heard about, were anticipating it coming out. It's a WASSIP report, Western Alaska Salmon something or other. Essentially what they did was, it's a genetic sampling they did for four years in a row along the western portion of Alaska, coastal waters in the commercial fisheries and what they're trying to figure out is the origins of those stocks that are picked up in those areas. I was out in Sand Point a couple years ago and watched them collecting their sample off Shumagin and Unimak fish as they came in. They were taking those samples -- they took them in north peninsula, Bristol Bay, all the way up and I'm not even sure. They may have even taken in Kotzebue. Even the mouth of the Yukon we were looking at those fish. So we're trying to get a handle on where fish are picked up and those coastal fisheries are actually bound for. It could be some of our fish that we're picking up in the coastal district maybe bound for Norton Sound or Kotzebue. We don't know that for sure.

So this report I believe -- maybe someone knows. It's supposed to come out this fall, I believe, but I'm not certain. But that should clear up quite a bit of that. We have a lot of ideas, a lot of supposition, but this report is going to be pretty significant and put a lot of those pieces of place.
CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: I appreciate those clarifications, Fred. Did you have a timing on that report?

MR. GERVAIS: What's the name of it?

MR. BUE: It's WASSIP. Maybe someone knows exactly what it stands for.

MS. ROBBINS-GISCLAIR: Western Alaska Salmon Stock Identification Program.

CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Thank you. Do you want to repeat that on the record there, Fred.

MR. BUE: Challenge me. Western Alaska Salmon Stock Identification Program.

CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Thanks for the clarification on the record, Becca. Does the Council have any further comments on the fall season report.

Don.

MR. HONEA: Thank you, Mr. Chair. This looks pretty promising, the 2011 chum salmon report, the projection, so would that have any bearing on closing down the king season? We could say, well, hey, you've got a good summer chum coming up here, let's go ahead and close that. I mean I don't know if that's a question for.....

CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Go ahead, Jeff.

MR. ESTENSEN: Through the Chair. I don't want to speak for Steve. I can't say what Steve would think about that or not, so I'll leave it at that. I don't know if Fred has any ideas on the Federal side of things.

CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Go ahead, Fred.

MR. BUE: Mr. Chairman. That is a concern. Although I don't manage the commercial fishery, I do take quite a bit of stock in how the subsistence fishery is and the overlap of chinook, king salmon, overlaps the summer chum salmon. That is a big deal and the strength of the summer chum run is factored in. Often the bigger the summer chum run is, the more overlap there is with kings. So typically if
there's a big chum run and a small king run, it gets
touchy at the end and a lot of those fisheries are --
it gets close to how many kings you may take even
though you're trying to catch chums.

Also there's the rollover into the fall
season. As many of you know, there's not a distinct
line between a fall chum and a summer chum. You
fishermen know when you catch them and often you catch
them both at the same time and it's difficult to say
exactly what day which fish is going to be in your net.

MR. HONEA: I thank you guys for that
report because I'm personally relying more on the chum
than on the kings, so we have to use what we can.

Thank you.

CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Other comments.

Fred.

MR. BUE: Maybe I should let it go, but
Mr. Gervais spoke to the chum bycatch and the pollock
fishery. I think it was on Page 23 in your report. I
think you see a big spike in the chum bycatch. I think
that also corresponded with a big spike in our in-river
fish. As managers, it's a little bit different with
chum salmon. Typically we think when we see an
abundance of chum salmon in the bycatch, that's usually
a good sign that we're going to get a lot of chum in
the river. When the chum run is down, I don't know
what that means.

CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Thanks for pointing
that out, Fred. Any further questions.

Go ahead, Tim.

MR. GERVais: Thanks, Mr. Chair. You
probably know better than I. So they're having a low
bycatch on kings right now, so that's second? That
would be indicated this king run could be weak?

CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Go ahead, Fred.

MR. BUE: No, I'm not saying that at
all. I think for kings we don't know what it means
very well. It appears that the chum and kings are
using different areas in the ocean and encountered
different places. In fact, they're encountered -- the
kings are primarily in the winter bycatch fishery whereas chum are more in the summer fishery. So even locations they're encountered at different times. I think the report tomorrow will show that.

CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Jeff.

MR. ESTENSEN: I'd just like to add too, and this was talked about at the last JTC meeting, is also I think with these restriction with chinook, with these incentives and restrictions and whatnot, it used to be I was told that -- it was brought up that you used to be able to rely on that for chinook, but now with the incentives it's not so much easy to do so anymore because you don't know if the reduced catch is because of the abundance or because they're simply just not -- there's not much in the bycatch anymore, so you can't use that information anymore for that.

MR. GERVAIS: Thank you.

CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Thank you. My final comment would be that as we move away voluntarily, regulatorily towards reducing our king salmon harvest, there's going to be a higher reliance on subsistence use of chum and being a smaller fish to make the same poundage. It's going to actually entail additional fish. It's something to really keep in mind on directed chum fisheries and stock analysis. So looking at these graphs, this doesn't really look so good. Non-chums going into these real super trough and correlating directly to this reduced inshore, in-system Yukon. It would indicate to me that this season is going to be real flat compared to the project. The fall chum could be a real problem and run timing and various factors. I would just caution you both as managers to be very cautious about making sure that we get the additional fish on grounds for subsistence use this year if we're going to shift towards chum in a regulatorily or voluntarily away from chinook. That would be my comments and I appreciate your presentation and clarification.

Fred, go ahead.

MR. BUE: I hate to bring -- I think in recent years we haven't seen as many chum in the subsistence harvest as we have had historically. Historically we've had some very strong runs when we used to have dog teams and such. In fact, our harvests
have been well below the ANS guidelines that are in
regulation and so our management plans are looking at
the ANS as kind of factored into there, so I think
there is some buffer built into there. I think the
management plans that we have for summer and fall chum
have built in some of that already.

Mr. Chairman.

CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Appreciate that
aspect. That's enlightening also. Thank you.

MR. GERV AIS: What is ANS?

CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Amounts necessary
for subsistence.

Okay, we're still on Yukon River
fisheries. I should have apologize to Gene. He was
under time constraints and I took one comment and put
him in a bind and I'll email him and apologize. He
seemed to be stressed out leaving here. I would like
to have as much public comment as I can. Brad Scotton
was going to comment on Yukon fisheries from his
personal perspective since he is a Federal U.S. Fish
and Wildlife game biologist. I want the Council to be
clear that he's just a resident of Galena.

Go ahead, Brad.

MR. SCOTTON: Thank you, Mr.
Chairman. Brad Scotton testifying on behalf of myself
and my family. It is after 4:30, so even though I'm a
bureaucrat I'm now off the clock and I can legitimately
do this.

There's several of the comments I
wanted to make have already been covered and I think,
generally speaking, the testimony and the concern about
conservation of king salmon has been heightened again
and everyone is concerned. I feel from a personal
perspective we're going down the right path.

I was gratified somewhat to hear the
nation of Canada being mentioned more and more.
Educationally, people are beginning to really catch on
that they are the host for the majority of the breeding
stock that provides our subsistence catch in Alaska.
Sixty percent of the fish we catch as subsistence users
come from Canada and we have an international treaty
obligation to get escapement into Canada. That number
currently, I believe, is around 45,000 fish. What
exactly that's based on I don't know. I do know that
we've failed to meet that objective for several years.
I think three out of the last four is what I hear most
commonly.

One consideration I'd like to bring up
that I never really hear talked about a whole lot is
what type of fish those 45,000 are is important. I
think Gene Sandone touched on this. He said if you
want to conserve the species, if you want to do well
for the king salmon, and historically six year olds
were a large component in the harvest of these fish, we
need to be letting six year old fish get into Canada to
spawn. It's not acceptable to be harvesting them in
such a way in Alaska that we're taking out all the big
ones and only the three, four and five year olds are
making it. So we need to consider that in our
management options.

I would like to say that I considered
2009 a success. I think there was a great educational
campaign out there by YRDSA and various committees and
the State and the Feds that were saying, look, we have
a conservation concern, we need to do our best, we need
to do voluntary restrictions and we're going to protect
the first pulse. Guess what? It worked. We put
65,000 or so fish over the border into Canada. That
should be held up as a positive for Alaskans and a
positive for Canada that we did the right thing.

I don't think anybody starved to death,
but there were hardships for people certainly. My
family chose to forego fishing entirely that year for
king salmon. A lot of other families, and Timothy
Gervais testified to that, made voluntary restrictions
and we all tried to abide by the first pulse
restrictions.

I would like to say that for this
coming season as State managers and others should
consider that those first two pulses are the key pulses
to meet our escapement objectives for that big bunch of
fish and that's where the restrictions are going to
have to be and we need to start getting that
information out there and talking about it and prepare
people for a season of extreme sort of conservation
measures. And then if it turns out that more fish turn
up than planned and we can allow more fishing, then
everybody is happy. But if it really is an abysmal
year, people need to be psychologically prepared to not
fish as much this year. So that's just my thoughts on
that.

The sale of king bycatch in the
directed chum fishery on the Lower River was brought up
by Jack and that's the first time I've heard it
mentioned in a while. This, I think, frustrates a lot
of people. I know it frustrated me personally. When
people upriver on one hand, and Fred mentioned this,
were being asked to voluntarily reduce our personal
harvest late in the season when we realized we were not
going to meet escapement objectives and at the same
time there were Lower River commercial openings for
chums, which I have no problem with, it's called a
directed chum fishery and you're allowed to fish with
6-inch mesh nets which catch a lot of kings, and they
cought 10,000 kings.

Okay, a lot of those weren't going to
Canada, but some of them were and some of them would
have come upriver to be caught by subsistence
fishermen. Those 10,000 kings were allowed to be sold
commercially. That, to me, does not indicate a
directed chum fishery because the value of those kings
that were caught was probably greater than the 250,000
chums that were caught in terms of dollars.

So when the value of the bycatch is
greater than the value of the targeted catch, I don't
call that a directed chum fishery and I think maybe
there's some things we could do. I think there's
smaller mesh nets that the commercial fishermen own in
the Lower River. If it's a chum fishery, use 4.5 or 5-
inch mesh nets or whatever is available for chums,
don't allow the sale of bycatch of kings, let people
put those kings in their subsistence larders and the
rest of them that aren't being caught can come upriver
and feed the Alaskan stocks, which probably need help
as well. We don't even know because I don't think we
do a whole lot of escapement surveys in Alaska.

So those are sort of my key points and
I appreciate the Board's work and I appreciate YRDFA's
work and all the people that are on this and the
teleconferences that occur. I think the people of
Alaska, from what I hear in the teleconferences, are
more than willing to do their fair share for
conservation. The first thing we need to do is look
out for the king salmon and then take care of the
subsistence users and then take care of the commercial
fishermen.

CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: My comment on the
gear size is I used to fish in Bristol Bay with 5-
3/8ths gear, 5-1/4 inch gear for sockeye and you start
getting into too small a mesh you end up with a huge
drop out rate and it actually kills the fish and I have
a diagram that will show you how that all works. But
the reality is if you go to too small a gear, you
actually kill the larger chums and the kings. You
actually drop them. The perception is, and I argue
this over and over, there's been no statistical study
done to demonstrate when you use too small a net what
the mortalities are. So our annual report and our
fisheries funding is moving towards developing a study
to show drop out rates with too small a net. You can
move away from your intention by -- the perception is,
and it's widely promulgated, that you use smaller mesh
gear and you'll save fish. No, you actually kill fish.
You actually kill fish and you lose them. So you can
move away.

I feel strongly that the directed chum
fishery should not allow the sale of chinook salmon.
That's the direction this needs to go. If they have a
directed chum fishery, it is a chum fishery. It's not
a king salmon fishery and bycatch should not be sold.
If bycatch is harvested and cannot be used, it should
be processed and returned back to up the drainage to
the intended sources.

So I told the North Pacific Fisheries
Management Council that those bycatch fish in McGrath
in 2007 they should actually be processed, not ground
into powder and dumped overboard. They should be
processed and returned to the rivers of origin. They
didn't do that. I felt that that would be a
disincentive. I feel that the sale of chinook salmon
on the Yukon River should be disincentivized. I made
up a term. Sara does that all the time. So I agree
with you on that aspect. I don't agree on reducing to
4.5-inch mesh and I will transmit a document that I
designed for the Department of Fish and Game that shows
that small mesh gear actually can have a huge
mortality, an unknown mortality. I just wanted to put
that on the record.

Does any other Council members have
comments on Brad's personal comments.

(No comments)

CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: I do appreciate your conservation ethic and the conservation of the -- we're both on the same sheet of music on conserving the Yukon River chinook salmon and I appreciate you coming up as a person that lives in Galena and your perspective. I really appreciate that.

Go ahead, Don.

MR. HONEA: Thank you, Mr. Chair. I thank you, Brad, for coming up and speaking to that effect because a lot of times it seems like we put forth as the Western Interior -- you know, maybe we don't have the blessings, maybe we don't have of our own village and we're kind of -- you know, so it kind of reinforces to hear a local say that, hey, we will give up that first pulse if we have to.

Like Fred mentioned a while back ago, Koyukuk took the initiative at the beginning, a couple years back, to introduce that and they were the ones that said, hey, we would give this up. So we, as village councils, whatever, at TCC, we said, hey, you know, so everybody thought about it and, you know, it was just grassroots kind of stuff. So I appreciate anybody that comes up and says, hey, you know, if we have to do this, we would. It's not like we, as the Western Interior, we -- sometimes I guess maybe somebody in my village don't even know that we took this step, so we have to kind of explain why. So I appreciate those comments.

Thank you.

CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: One additional comment I had was that it was reported that about 25 percent of the chinook salmon that were taken in the directed chum fishery were of upriver stocks and that varied. There was various interpretations around that figure. There were a significant portion of those fish were upriver stocks.

Brad.

MR. SCOTTON: I'll make one additional comment. I did sort of appreciate you polling the
Council on their considerations of whether they thought voluntary or mandatory restrictions would be necessary. By saying that I think there's a lot of people willing to volunteer. I'm not saying that I advocate that as the only solution. I actually think that mandatory restrictions are necessary to fulfill our treaty obligations and help protect the species. Again, from a biological perspective I think it's got to be focused on the first two pulses and do what we need to do to make sure that those salmon are coming back.

I really dislike the term world class, it gets used a lot, but if you look on a worldwide scale of healthy, natural, wild stock salmon runs, Alaska has, you know, more than their fair share in the world. When you start talking about large scale king salmon runs in the world, the Yukon River, if not the biggest, one of the biggest. You look at the whole west coast of the United States and what they're dealing with with trying to rebuild stocks from a handful of fish, and let's hope we're never in that boat. We still have a healthy population. It just needs a little bit of help right now to get back on track and avoid some of the major problems that we could see if something really collapsed. We are dealing with a lot of unknowns and ocean conditions and changing climate and those types of things that might be out there. So as kind of end users, it is up to us to some extent to make sure we're doing our part to conserve the species.

CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Thank you.

MS. PELKOLA: Jack, I have something

CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Go ahead, Jenny.

MS. PELKOLA: Brad, I want to thank you for your comments. That year when we were asked to cut back on our fishing and to let the fish go by, 10,000 kings were caught downriver for commercial and Canada was lacking 10,000 kings to meet the quota, so I just want to say that I agree that we shouldn't be selling kings when it's a chum season.

CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Thanks, Jenny.

Thanks, Brad. So Ken Chase had his hand up earlier for comments on Yukon River fishery. You got something to say, Ken?
MR. CHASE: If it fits your agenda.

CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: We're working on Yukon River fisheries. I had other commenters signed up before you. That's why I had to take them first.

MR. CHASE: No, there's no problem. Mr. Chairman. Members of the Committee. Ken Chase, chair of the Grayling/Anvik/Shageluk/Holy Cross Advisory Committee. I have a number of things I'd like to talk about, but I can't because I'm up here on behalf of the committee and we only have a meeting a year and we haven't had ours until next month. In the past we've talked about some of the things that's been discussed here and one of the things I'm real glad to hear is Don's comments and talks and interest in the fall chum and the summer chum.

Growing up in Anvik back in the '50s we didn't use king salmon. We used chum salmon, fall chum and summer chum. There was very few people that caught kings in the fishwheels. The reason was historically they used fish traps and then when they outlawed fish traps they didn't have the nets to fish the kings with, so they just used fishwheels and the chum salmon was the main source of fish for everybody. It was for trade, for dogs, for human consumption, the whole works.

Our committee has talked about this and I know for a fact they will wholly support total closure or total control to the Fish and Game to rebuild the king salmon stock. It's plain to see that there's been abuse and the reporting -- if it was voluntary, it would not work. I would like to see it work and people be honest, but it will never happen because we could see in the past and you can see the fish calendars and you can see the reports from people come around. You look at the graphs that are being put up by Fish and Game and I can tell that they're not being honest with what's being taken. So I really feel that there should be some curtailment of the first salmon so they can get up the river to spawn.

The other area that I would like to address is -- you talked earlier about a letter to TCC supporting -- I'm getting off track here. Anyway, to help with the.....

CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: In regards to
customary trade.

MR. CHASE: Yeah, customary trade.

Again, I've talked with some of the members and we feel very strongly about -- we, as a committee, years ago opted to tell TCC that we wanted to manage our own affairs. We said we wanted to be more dependant ourselves, teaching our people, our kids to make the decisions instead of going to a political group to do that. I feel that they will be also supportive. Be very careful of how this body deals with TCC and getting its input into helping on that area.

It's not personal, but I've seen it. I've been Mayor for 30 years. I've been chief for 30 years and I've been on the TCC board a number of times and I know how those committees and how those heads of departments work. I just feel strongly and I know some of the committee members would -- lets develop our own resources, our human resource, our children and help them to understand that it's their right and their need to do this themself rather than being dictated by somebody else.

Thank you.

CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Does Council members have comments on Ken's testimony.

MR. HONEA: Yeah, I do.

CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Go ahead, Don.

MR. HONEA: Yeah, Ken, I appreciate that, you know, because for me, for like during the king season it's pretty hectic. There's a lot of conflicts between our own people in the village, fishing sites and stuff. I'm kind of pretty happy about this projected outlook here because we go up to the camp and we do the -- you know, it's usually pretty late. It runs into September. So we're hunting and it's a little colder, it takes a little longer to dry the fish and it's not as rich or anything. It's still edible, it's still good, kind of prized at that time. I think just kind of gives us more of a thing to look forward to if we had to not use that season. So I like those comments and because we're out there, we're hunting at the same time and we're taking care of it.

So thank you.
CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Other Council member comments.

(No comments)

CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Ken, I wanted to pry a little deeper into your cautionary on TCC. Is it your perception that they would leverage for customary trade to urban areas or what would be your concern with TCC and AVCP?

MR. CHASE: Well, they're political. I mean they're sort of advocates for the Native community. From our perspective, from the Advisory Councils, we represent all users regardless of what they are out in the rural areas. If they're non-Native or not, you know, we try to encourage them to get involved in our committee and our decisions. In the past, I've seen Tanana Chiefs to where they discourage that. I mean they want to go strictly with the group and I don't want to go any further than that.

CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Okay. I appreciate your comments and concerns. The Department of Interior's mandate is for tribal council involvement and that was the request and sort of the mandate from the Federal program is for tribal council involvement. That would be the primary outreach from the RACs is to the tribal councils. TCC's comments are just inclusionary in the process and AVCPs comments would be inclusionary. Personally, I would look to the tribal councils on the Yukon River system, and there's 40-something villages, 43 or whatever.

MR. HALE: 47.

CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: 47 villages on the Yukon River. I would look at those comments as the primary level, the local comments, because this body is charged under .805 of ANILCA to be a platform for local people to express their concerns. That would be my comment to you on the TCC and the AVCP involvement.

Do you have a comment, Ken.

MR. CHASE: Mr. Chairman. I understand. Maybe I didn't clarify myself really. I'm going back to the fact that one of the things that TCC, Doyon and even the villages, self-determination, they want to encourage the people to do things for themself and I
I don't think -- it's going in the wrong direction. I think TCC could take maybe upper hand and sort of help the villages to get their people not only the tribal council. There's so much emphasis put on that. A lot of the villages don't have really strong tribal councils. There's just a few number of people that take control and then the other people don't get involved and say oh they can do it. So as a result you don't get strong people into the process. I think if you get people off the street -- if TCC worked that course, you'd get more people involved, stronger people and people are not so politically inclined and it could be like a standing committee or just a committee that's dissolves after a certain thing is done for that specific reason. See what I'm saying?

CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Right. I do see what you're saying. Joy was talking about including youth and working with -- and polling the community also, so I felt that was a great idea. So TCC could facilitate that. We don't have the wherewithal to do that from the Council or OSM. So I sort of lean towards that aspect.

Any more comments from the Council.

(No comments)

CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Appreciate your comments and concerns, Ken.

So we're at 5:00 o'clock. This customary trade issue is still part of the Yukon River fisheries and we do need to deal with that, but we're kind of to the end of the day here. We can take up that in the morning. This is a wildlife meeting. We need to deal with some wildlife issues also.

We've accomplished a lot today, so I feel it's time to break. I would like to complete the agenda by the completion of tomorrow, so we need to be prompt at 8:30 to achieve this agenda. Tim.

MR. GERVAILS: How long do you think that North Pacific Council presentation is going to take?

CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: I have no idea how long that is. The North Pacific Management Council presentation was presented at the YK Delta and
approximately how long did that take?

MS. ROBBINS-GISCLAIR: I think the presentation is probably about an hour and then depending how many questions you have.

CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Oh, wow. So there's an hour there.

MR. GERVAIS: I'll probably have a few questions for that.

CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: I'm sure you do. Well, we'll deal with that when they get here. We do have many other issues. We have mandates that the Federal Subsistence Board wants answered on the MOU and various aspects. Those are real action items. That is not an option, so we need to complete that also.

Polly.

DR. WHEELER: Mr. Chair. Just a suggestion on a couple of those items. The first item -- one of the items is expanding the Federal Subsistence Board to include two new members. There's a briefing document back on the table that didn't make it into your books and that covers the gist of what the proposed rule would do, which is to add two members that represent the interest of rural Alaska subsistence users to the Federal Subsistence Board and also the proposed rule changes the quorum.

So I suggest you read the briefing paper tonight. One way to kind of move things along tomorrow. See what the proposed rule does and what it doesn't do and you can move through that fairly quickly.

The other item that I suggest and you've already done it is read through the MOU, which is also in your book, and then you can come tomorrow with questions. I know at the YK Council they spend a considerable amount of time going through the MOU line by line, which I'd be happy to do with you, but it might save time if you read it tonight and come up with questions, comments, whatever. I would urge you to make the questions and comments as specific as possible because that's a lot more helpful.

CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Thanks for those
comments, Polly. On the MOU there's a real glaring
need for change in the MOU and I'm encouraged by the
request to change the MOU. I have prepared comments
and the Council can review my position on the MOU and I
do encourage the Council to read the MOU and the
briefing paper on the Federal Board make-up. We can
comment on the criteria of the Federal Board selection,
the two members. That's closed at this time?

Go ahead, Polly.

DR. WHEELER: Do you want to get into
this now or wait until tomorrow?

CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: I just want to know
where we're at, how much preparation I'm willing to put
into that.

DR. WHEELER: This was actually brought
up a while ago with Pat Pourchot and I will make it
short and we can cover it again tomorrow. The
questions have been raised to him all along what
process are you going to use to get these two people on
there, are they going to be Native, are they going to
be tribal. He's like, whoa. In regulation, we're not
going to put the process by which these people are
selected. If we go to our implementing regulations for
like the composition of the Federal Board, all it says
is by regulation on the Federal Board is the regional
heads of the BIA, BLM, Park Service, Fish and Wildlife
Service and a citizen chair. That's all it says and it
says what the quorum is.

Pat Pourchot and the Secretary are
quite clear that they don't want to tie anybody's hands
by putting into regulation what a selection process
would be. As it turns out, the selection process for
the chair of the Federal Subsistence Board is sort of
an application process and they get vetted all the way
up through the White House. I imagine that would be
the same sort of thing for these two additional seats.
But Pat has been quite clear, as has the Secretary,
that they do not intend to put into regulation a
process or an ethnicity or tribal or anything like
that. That really is up to the purview of the
Secretary.

Now keep in mind that changing the
composition of the Federal Board is a subpart B change
in our regulations and that is program structure. That
lies with the Secretary. So the Secretary could do
this change if he wanted to anyway, but he's sort of
putting it out there for people. So I think it's
highly unlikely that the Secretary would put into
regulation what the selection process would be.

You can put that into your comments,
but it's been quite clear that they're not really
probably going to go down that path.

Mr. Chair.

CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Thanks, Polly.
Okay. I just wanted to know what point and status we
were. Pollock, you have a comment.

MR. SIMON: It's past 5:00, Mr. Chair,
10 after 5:00. You have to keep it between 8:30 and
5:00, you know.

CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Right.

MR. SIMON: You're the Chair. You have
to keep the comments and questions brief and we finish
the agenda. Thank you.

CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Thanks for point of
order, Pollock. Everybody is getting hungry. We need
to know what we need to study for this next evening.

MS. PELKOLA: I have a correction on
the Science Fair. It's 6:30 instead of 6:00. Also we
have only two people signed up for lunch, so if you
want lunch tomorrow, you better sign up. Shirley is
back there.

DR. WHEELER: One more thing just to
add to your homework list, everybody. Robert says
grumpily. The closure reviews are in your book also.
There's a briefing document and the closure policy and
then there's one wildlife closure that you'll be taking
up tomorrow. So if you want to just kind of get your
prep work done on that, that would be good too.

MR. WALKER: Do we leave our books
here, Mr. Chair?

DR. WHEELER: You cannot leave your
books here. You need to take them home and read them.
(Laughter)

CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: The meeting is recessed until tomorrow morning at 8:30.

(Off record)

(PROCEEDINGS TO BE CONTINUED)
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