WESTERN INTERIOR FEDERAL SUBSISTENCE
REGIONAL ADVISORY COUNCIL MEETING

PUBLIC MEETING

VOLUME I

Community Hall
Galena, Alaska
October 10, 2018
9:00 a.m.

COUNCIL MEMBERS PRESENT:

Jack Reakoff, Chairman
Raymond Collins
Timothy Gervais
Don Honea
Tommy Kriska
Jenny Pelkola
Dennis Thomas

Regional Council Coordinator, Karen Deatherage

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CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Start the Western Interior Regional Advisory Council meeting. We're at Galena, Larson Charlie Community Hall. It's October 10, 2018, and it's just before 9:00 o'clock. So we're going to -- we've got a supplementary agenda that we're going to adopt -- or look through to adopt.

The first thing on the agenda is invocation. Would you like to say a prayer, Jenny?

MS. PELKOLA: Oh, sure.

CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Turn on your mic there.

MS. PELKOLA: Heavenly Father, we thank you for this day. We ask that you go before us and help us to make decisions that we do have to make for our area. Father God, we thank you that everyone was able to make it, and we pray for those that also couldn't make it due to weather or illness or whatever, Lord. And we just ask you again to bless our meeting. In Jesus' name we pray, amen.

IN UNISON: Amen.

CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: So we'll call -- I guess we're calling this meeting to order now. It is 9:00 o'clock. We'll have roll call and establish a quorum. Do you want to call the roll, Karen. Or Jenny. Jenny's our secretary. Go ahead, Jenny.


(No response)

MS. PELKOLA: Donald V. Honea, Junior.

MR. HONEA: Here.

MS. PELKOLA: Pollock Simon, Senior.

(No response)
MS. PELKOLA: Raymond L. Collins.
(No response)
MS. PELKOLA: Jack L. Reakoff.
CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Here.
MS. PELKOLA: Tommy Kriska.
MR KRISKA: Here.
MS. PELKOLA: Timothy P. Gervais.
MR. GERVAIS: Here.
MS. PELKOLA: Dennis R. Thomas, Senior.
MR. THOMAS: Here.
MS. PELKOLA: Jenny K. Pelkola. Here.
CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: And I want to find out, are you on the phone, Ray Collins. I just want to check. Pollock called and said that he had other -- some family issues. I forget what exactly his reason was. And Shirley Clark, she got -- her plane didn't pick her up, so she's absent because of that.
So we do have quorum.

Welcome and introductions to the guests. We'll go through the room and have people identify themselves. Maybe turn that mic on there at the table so we can pick those up.

MR. KRON: Tom Kron with OSM.

MR. LIND: (In Native language) Hello and good morning. My name is Orville Lind. I'm the Native liaison for OSM out of Anchorage.

MR. DECOSSAS: Good morning. Gary DeCossas. I'm a fisheries biologist and statistician for the Office of Subsistence Management.

MR. MOSES: Hi. I'm Aaron Moses. I'm the fisheries biologist at Yukon Delta National Wildlife Refuge.

MS. PETRIVELLI: Good morning. I'm Pat Petrivelli, the BIA subsistence anthropologist out of Anchorage.

CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: I want to get everybody introduced.

MS. STUBY: Hello. I'm Lisa Stuby, I'm the new sportfish area management biologist from Fairbanks.

CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Nikki.

MS. REAKOFF: Hi. I'm Nikki Reakoff. I'm Jack's wife. I'm serving today.

CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Bob, do you want to introduce yourself. We're going through people in the room.

MR. REBARCHIT: I guess I will.

(Laughter)

MR. REBARCHIT: My name's Bob Rebarchit. I'm the deputy refuge manager for the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service.

CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Thank you.

UNIDENTIFIED VOICE: Which refuge?

MR. REBARCHIT: Pardon?

UNIDENTIFIED VOICE: Which Refuge?

MR. REBARCHIT: For the Koyukuk, Nowitna, and Innoko Refuge.

CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Okay. And then we have -- who do we have on the phone? Could you introduce yourself if you're on the phone. I hear a lot of phone.....

MS. MORAN: Yeah, this is Tina Moran.
I'm the acting manager at Kanuti Refuge.

CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Okay. Tina.

MR. COLLINS: Yeah, I just joined you now. This is Ray Collins.

CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Okay. Good to hear you on the phone, Ray.

MR. COLLINS: Yeah.

MR. PAPPAS: Good morning, Mr. Chair.

George Pappas, OSM.

CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: George.

MR. SHARP: Dan Sharp.....

MS. DAMBERG: Good morning.....

MR. SHARP: .....BLM.

CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Go ahead, Dan.

MR. SHARP: Yeah, good morning. This is Dan with BLM. I'm in Anchorage.

Go ahead, next.

CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Okay. Dan Sharp.

MS. DAMBERG: Good morning. This is Carol Damberg, U.S. Fish and Wildlife, and I'm in Anchorage.

CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Okay. And your position?

MS. DAMBERG: I am the regional subsistence coordinator, and ISC team member for U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service.

MS. JULIANUS: And this is Erin Julianus with the BLM Central Yukon field office in Fairbanks.

CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Okay, Erin.

MS. CARROLL: Good morning. This is
Holly Carroll, summer season Yukon manager. I'm based in Anchorage.

CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Okay. Thanks, Holly.

MS. GLEASON: Christy Gleason, Alaska Department of Fish and Game in Fairbanks. I'm the Yukon area assistant manager for fall season.

CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Okay, Christy.

MR. HAVENER: Good morning, everyone. Jeremy Havener, Refuge subsistence coordinator for Koyukuk, Nowitna, Innoko. And sorry I couldn't be there. Got baby duties in Fairbanks here.

CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Congratulations, Jeremy.

MR. HAVENER: Thank you.

CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Anyone else.

MR. RUNFOLA: Yeah, this is Dave Runfola, Fish and Game Subsistence Division, calling in from Fairbanks. I'm the Kuskokwim area lead researcher for the Subsistence Division.

CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Okay. Thank you.

MR. RUNFOLA: Thank you.

MR. BIRCH: Good morning. This is Mark Birch with the Department of Fish and Game in Palmer.

CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Mark. And you're a subsistence liaison, right?

MR. BIRCH: That's correct. I serve in that role.


MS. OKADA: Hi, good morning. This is Marcy Okada, subsistence coordinator for Gates of the Arctic National Park and Preserve, based out of
Mr. Ream: Good morning. This is Joshua Ream, anthropologist with OSM in Anchorage.

Chairman Reakoff: Good morning, Joshua.

Mr. Ream: Good morning.

Chairman Reakoff: Anybody else on the phone.

(No comments)

Chairman Reakoff: Okay. Thank you for calling in. And review and adopt the agenda, and we're going to look at this -- oh, we got one more in the back of the room here. Go ahead. Turn your mic on there. Push the little.....

Ms. Sam: Susie Sam tribal administration for Louden Tribal Council.

Chairman Reakoff: Okay. Susie Sam for Louden. And I don't see anybody else in the room. So, okay.

And so we're going to -- we have this draft agenda that has highlights. These were additions to the agenda after the book was printed. So did you want to go over these additions, Karen.

Ms. Deatherage: Yeah. Thank you, Mr. Chair. I'm Karen Deatherage, the Subsistence Council coordinator, and a new Council coordinator for the Western Interior Alaska Council. I'm really excited to be here, and great to meet all of you.

Chairman Reakoff: Excuse me, Karen, I failed to introduce you. I just assumed everybody -- brain fart, sorry about that. Go ahead. And then we have our court recorder.

Ms. Deatherage: Nathan.

Chairman Reakoff: Nathan. So go
ahead, Karen.

MS. DEATHERAGE: Thank you, Mr. Chair.

As indicated, there were several requested additions and changes, which I will read off, that were requested after the printing of the meeting books. So I've provided each of the Council members a copy that shows in red those additions and where they'd like to be inserted to make it a little easier for you.

The first one is to add the NPS sporthunting and trapping regulations. This is old business. As some of you are aware, the regulations for sporthunting of predators on National Park lands and preserves was re-introduced, re-opened. It is currently going through a comment period. There's a copy of the environmental assessment in your packet, and Jack requested that that be placed on the agenda. We'd like to move the National Park Service report this morning to today, because Marcy Okada has to be at the Eastern Interior meeting tomorrow.

We'd like to move FP17-05, which is a deferred fisheries proposal from 2017 to the Kuskokwim River fisheries proposals, because it is in line with the proposals that we're going to be reviewing for this cycle.

We'd like to add the Yukon River reports to new business.

The National Pacific Marine Fisheries Council presentation was canceled. They just finished their big meeting in Anchorage. They're still pulling information together, and they thought it will be best to present that at the winter cycle meeting. That said, I did provide you with copies of the by-catch materials and a letter regarding the new regulations on by-catch, or what's happening with by-catch, and the quotas for by-catch in your packets.

We want to add the Yukon River burbot radiotelemetry/TEK and northern caribou herds under ADP&G reports. We have individuals both on the phone and present who will be giving those presentations.

And then the Fairbanks district office will be presenting the Ambler Road, the Central Yukon field office resource management plan, and Anaktuvuk
Pass Road under their report, and the Anchorage
district will cover the Donlin Mine issue and give you
updates on that.

That is it for the requested changes
that we had prior to this meeting. If there are any
changes that the Council members would like to add,
this would be the time to add them before the Council
approves the agenda.

Thank you.

CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Are those additions
to the agenda acceptable to the Council.

(Council nods affirmatively)

CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: I see affirmative.
Any additional agenda items or arrangement of the
agenda.

(No comments)

MS. PELKOLA: I'll move to adopt with
the corrections or additions.

CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Move to adopt with
the corrections. Jenny.

MR. THOMAS: I'll second.

CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Seconded by Dennis.
Those in favor of adoption of the agenda as amended
signify by saying aye.

IN UNISON: Aye.

CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Opposed, same sign.

(No opposing votes)

MR. COLLINS: Aye.

CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Okay. Thanks, Ray.
Review and approve previous meeting minutes. And that
would be on Page -- oh, let's see.

MS. DEATHERAGE: 5.
CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Page 5, right.

MR. HONEA: So that would be where?

CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Page 5.

MR. HONEA: Page 5?

CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Of the meeting book.

MR. HONEA: Motion to adopt for discussion.

CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: We've got a motion to adopt the minutes.

MS. PELKOLA: Second.

CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Seconded by Jenny for discussion.

On Page 11 under my second paragraph discussion, what I was stating. It says he elaborated there has been a lot of high winds and rain events which can be detrimental. I did not say -- high winds are beneficial to Dall sheep, but rain events are detrimental. I wanted to correct that. High winds are beneficial to sheep, gets the snow off the mountain so they can feed.

Any other corrections or additions from Council members.

MS. DAMBERG: To the Chair. This is Carol out in Anchorage. There's some folks that appear to not have their phones on mute, so if they could mute, that would be great.

CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Yes. And that's star-6. I did hear people whispering a while back, and some paper shuffling. If you could push star-6 unless you need to talk, that would be appreciated.

MS. PELKOLA: Call for the question.

CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: The question's being called on the minutes of our winter meeting. Those in favor of adoption of the minutes as corrected for February 20 and 21 in.....
MR. GERVAIS: Mr. Chair.

CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Oh, Tom.

MR. GERVAIS: I have one correction here before we.....

CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Okay. Tommy.

MR. GERVAIS: Where it says Mr. Kriska responded to the lower number of brown bears, it should be black bears.

CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Oh, black bears.

MR. GERVAIS: Black bears, yes.

CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Okay.

MR. GERVAIS: That correction there.

CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Yes. Yes. Thanks, Tom. Any others.

(No comments)

CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: The question is called. Those in favor of adoption of the minutes from February 20/21 in Anchorage, 2018, signify by saying aye.

IN UNISON: Aye.

CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Those opposed.

(No opposing votes)

CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Thanks, Ray.

Minutes are adopted. And so we're down to Council member reports. On the minutes there was supposed to be an FRMP working group formulated this summer, and Tommy, Tim, Don, Shirley, and Jenny were on that. I didn't get a status report, so when you give your Council member reports, I would like to know about what happened with that one. And so Ray's on the phone, we'll start with Ray. As Council member, you want to give your Council member report, Ray.

MR. COLLINS: Yes. The critical thing
on the Kuskokwim, of course, is the early closure.

(Conversation on the phone)


MR. COLLINS: Yeah, that has led to a remarkable turnaround in the escapement in the upper river. I may have mentioned it before, but it jumped from just a little over 2,000 in the Salmon River to over 6,000 returning and spawning. And those are starting to come back now. It's been closed for -- I think we're into the fourth year. So it's critical that we continue that early closure to keep building that, because there's a tremendous potential for increasing the salmon. And those are some of the biggest salmon, of course, and they were targeted early in the season when they used to use the eight-inch gear. So we need to watch that closely to see what happens with that.

And that's all I had I think that I can think of right now. The Denali SRC did not meet because of the death of Lester Erhart, one of the Council members. And I think -- I haven't heard the latest, whether we're going to meet later this fall or wait until the spring meeting.

And that's all I have right now.

Thank you.

CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Did you have a Kuskokwim River FRMP discussions this summer, Ray?

MR. COLLINS: No, I don't think I did.

CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Okay. Pippa.

MR. COLLINS: Oh, the State discussions you mean?

CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Pippa's going to clarify this.

MS. KENNER: Hi, Ray. This is Pippa Kenner. And we had a teleconference with you and James Charles and John Andrew who are on the YK Delta
Council, discussing the priority information needs. I know you attend a lot of meetings, so I thought I'd just pique your memory.

One of the things we talked a lot about.....

MR. COLLINS: Thank you. Yes. It's hard to keep them all straight.

CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Go ahead. Might as well brief us on what happened with that, real quick on that.

MS. KENNER: Okay. This is on your agenda, too, after we get through the fish proposals, but we had a really good conversation though. And one of the things that Ray and a couple other elders brought up is the need to document the history of the fish people on the Kuskokwim and their use of salmon through time. That was one of the things we talked about.

CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Okay. Appreciate that. So, Ray, do you have any.....

MR. COLLINS: Yeah. Mr. Chairman.

CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Go ahead.

MR. COLLINS: I remember that.

CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Okay. Good.

MR. COLLINS: We're losing all of our elders, and the younger generation has entered into the fishery after the commercial fishing came in when they started drifting in the middle of the river. And as some of those elders pointed out, they didn't use to do that. So the ones heading for the headwaters just tracked up the middle of the river with limited fishing until they got closer to the headwaters where people were catching them in nets. And we got them in nets in McGrath and from here on up, because of snags doesn't allow any drifting up here. So it was always setnets and fishwheels until they got to the traditional wheel that -- or fishing at Salmon River where they traditionally put in a fence there, and had their own weir and took their salmon that way. But that was
stopped in the 60s just after I came, because declining
salmon once commercial opening down river started
cutting into those stocks.

CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: When did the
commercial fishery start, Ray?

MR. COLLINS: I don't have the exact
date at my fingertips here, but it was sometime just
prior to -- in the early 60s, or perhaps shortly before
that.

CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Okay. All right.
Appreciate your report, Ray.

MR. COLLINS: But that really changed
the whole fishery in the river, because it allowed the
purchase of bigger motors and boats and nets and so on,
and allowed drifting in the main river which
historically did not happen. And I would like to see
-- what I pushed for was some documentation of that
from some of the elders who remember, like James
Charles and others who remember what it was like
before, because we don't have that history as far as I
know written up anywhere.

CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: That would be very
important. Appreciate that. Thanks so much.

And we'll go down here to Tom Kriska.
Give your report, Tom.

MR. KRISKA: Just on this summer's.....

CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Turn your mic on.

MR. KRISKA: Just on this summer's
fishing, it was great fishing here along the Yukon with
the opening of the drifting up to Ruby. There was a
lot of people out there. Good to see those people. I
did travel from Fairbanks all the way down the river
during the opening, and it was great to a lot of the
fishermen from Ruby, Galena, but all over in
interesting places that were never fished before. And
it opened up a lot of the fishing for downriver, and it
seemed like it turned out a lot better for everyone.

And another thing here, that like Ray
said, a lot of our elders are passing, and it's going
to -- it's hard to voice anything out there from the past.

And another thing here is I traveled around during the -- right after like the fishing, and there was a lot of low water in a lot of the areas in our spawning grounds, and the beavers were really impacting. A lot of dams there. They were blocking a lot of the streams. And I went up a few of those streams with a jet unit, and a lot of our salmon were below the beaver dams, so it was something maybe to look at.

So that's all I have.

Thank you.

CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Okay. Appreciate that.

MR. HONEA: Thank you, Mr. Chair. I think our fishing was pretty good this summer, and I think it was -- for the most part, it was pretty good in this whole region, regionwide.

And our hunting was pretty good. A lot of moose were taken along Ruby to Poorman Road, and so there wasn't hardly much local hunters from Ruby having to go up to the Nowitna Wildlife Refuge.

But I do want to thank the people that were at the Refuge for going out of their way. And I thank Kenton and them for putting some people in there that we had a good time visiting and corresponding and stopping in with them.

But I thank Tommy for the report on the fishing. I would like to -- you know, I've always liked to come to Galena, because we have such good support. Maybe it's a little early and it's the first day, but we've always had good local input, and that's what I like to see. Some of the places that we have been, we don't get much input, and I don't know what their problems are. So that being said, I think that when somebody comes up to the mic, a local person, and expresses a problem or a need or a concern for this area, instead of FYI, writing it down whoever's taking notes, I think we should follow up on those like in the past. And I'm not saying that we don't, but I just
consider it seriously, the problems, and some of the
tings that happened in the past where somebody brought
up a concern and they were -- maybe said, well, we will
take care of that locally and stuff. I would like the
Board to take those seriously.

I've always like coming to Galena here,
because it's really good in getting local concerns as I
said in the setting here. Some of the problems we've
had in different villages, like in the sound system and
stuff, and so I appreciate all the B and B's, and I
think that they really took good care of us. They gave
us breakfast, and I can't thank any more. And Boston
won yesterday. Sorry, Yank fans.

(Laughter)

MR. HONEA: So, hey, I'm looking
forward to that. And just unfortunately because
Eastern, you know, can't help it, but Eastern Interior
is meeting at the same time, and that takes away a lot
of the personnel, whether it's, you know, ADF&G and
stuff that could be here. It's much more -- and I
missed the last meeting, so I know what it is to be on
-- like what Ray is doing. It's much to be here in
person and to have ADF&G answer some of the questions.
So, you know, it was just -- I don't know how it turned
out that we have the same meetings, but we don't have
their expertise. And I'm looking forward to this.

Thank you.

CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Thanks, Don.

MS. DEATHERAGE: Mr. Chairman.

CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Yes, Karen.

MS. DEATHERAGE: Thank you. Through
the Chair. Mr. Honea, I wanted to let you know that we
will be making a concerted effort not to have these
meetings during the same week at least, because we also
heard from a lot of agency personnel that it was really
difficult for them to be able to attend both. So
thanks for bringing that up.

CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: We'll take that into
more diligent consideration when we select meeting
dates. And both Eastern and Western should be aware to
do that. And so I'm sure that they're discussing that also over there, because both regions have really close boundaries and similar issues, Staff gets spread too thin.

Jenny.

MS. PELKOLA: Thank you, Mr. Chair.

I would just like to report a little on fishing. I've heard comments from around the community that it was so good to fish in front of our village instead of going downriver on Koyukuk and Nulato to fish. A lot of people were happy with the fish that they did get. Of course, there were some that could have used a little bit more, but we just have to get what we have.

We did have high water at certain times, and that prevented fishing for us at our fish camp down here at Bishop Rock. And another thing, we had to relocate our whole camp due to erosion. So it took us about maybe up to two weeks to move our whole camp from closer to the river further back.

MR. COLLINS: Jack, I can't hear Jenny. Is she close to a mic?

CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Okay. We'll move the mic a little closer. Thanks, Ray, appreciate that. I'm not hearing what's on the phone. Yeah, that would be great.

MS. PELKOLA: Okay. Ray, I just said we had good fishing on....

CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Can you hear her okay now?

MS. PELKOLA: Ray.

MR. COLLINS: Yes, thank you.

MS. PELKOLA: Okay We had good fishing in our area, and also I reported that we had to move our whole fish camp back due to the erosion in our fish camp. Another thing that I stated, that there were high water and it prevented us from fishing I know in our area just for a little bit, but not too much.
The moose season was okay. We didn't get our moose, but, thank God, we have people that look out for us and gave us some meat. It was really, really rainy, and there were a lot of -- some people that didn't get their moose. And I don't know if they got any from other people, but we should look maybe at a short winter hunt for those people that didn't get any moose, excuse me, just to help them with their food supply during the winter.

And I think that's all I would have right now for that.

CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: My question, Jenny, is regarding the king return. How did those fish look this year? Were they healthy looking fish? Did you see any of that Ichthyophonus stuff in them or how -- they were big or small or how did that look?

MS. PELKOLA: The fish to me looked very good compared to some other fishing seasons that we had. To me they were a little bit small, ut they'll come back a little bigger hopefully.

CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Okay. Appreciate that.

Dennis.

MR. THOMAS: Out at Crooked Creek, I was not there all the time this summer due to the health issues with my wife. I'd be there for a while, then I had to go to town for Helen. But anyway the fishing was good. The sizes again, like everybody talked about, were not the giant ones or the bigger ones, the 50, 60-pounders. Maybe 30, 40-pounders. And we got a lot of reds, which is good. They're some of the best I think So over all I have to say our fishing was good. It was sustainable, and everybody got what they needed.

And as far as the hunting goes, it was the same. You know, it's not like it was in the past where you just go out overnight and get a moose and come home, but most of the people got it. We got our moose. You know, now, we get it through that thing with the Feds where a certain age you can take a proxy for your hunter. I forget what the heck it all is. But I give it to my son, and boom, boom, there we go.
The first night out, he got our moose for us. So it's pretty good. The village is pretty happy that things are going. And like I said before, just keep doing what you're doing, because something's working.

And we talk about this caribou stuff coming. We'll see what happens down there with that Mulchatna herd if it comes up our say. It still hasn't hit us yet, but we have to get the animals up there quite a bit again before they migrate our way. But overall we're working. People are listening, and maybe we'll get somewhere here and eventually get it to where it's spread out. It's all over the place, you know, not just -- anyway set up in one area. So everybody's going to get their chance to get what they need. Now, why anybody would need five caribou, I don't know. Maybe they eat a lot of caribou. But, goodness, make it two for a while until everybody upriver or wherever now could get their two also. So spread the wealth I guess is the word I'm saying, and just keep working on it. And I know we are.

And other than that -- anyway, this is my first time to Galena, and I'm impressed with some of the things around here. The bed and breakfast we're staying at is really nice. And everybody is just helpful as the dickens, so I wouldn't mind coming here again.

Now, as far as splitting these meetings up, I guess a lot depends on where they have the meeting. Is it Galena or is it Anchorage? You know, if they've got a meeting in Anchorage, it's a lot easier for the people to go there than it is to come out here. So anyway they could split it up. You know, we're here also.

Thank you much.

CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Well, we like to have a meeting in -- at least one rural community per year so we can get rural input. That's ANILCA law. This Council is a public platform for people to express views on fish and wildlife management, and that's why we're here. We wanted to know how the -- wanted to be here to hear how this new drift -- you know, Louden made that proposal to the Board of Fish about driftnetting here in 5 -- correction, 4B and 4C. Ben from down in Koyukuk Village many years ago was on this
Council. He was the driving force to have a Federal
drift permit on the Federal waters, and this Council
fought hard to get a Federal drift permit for the
Federal waters. And the State of Alaska says, oh, no,
Galena's going to kill 15,000 king salmon; it's going
to be the end of the world. It's like, no, no, we
fought that hard -- fought hard. I fought really hard
before the Federal Board to get that permit and show
that the people who were harvesting fish aren't going
to take more than they need. So now the State has
finally come around to where they're allowing it on the
State waters, also, in 4B and 4C. It spreads the
fishing out to where they're not all concentrated down
in front of Koyukuk Village. Everybody's way happier.
Why didn't we get to this 20 years ago when we were
fighting this driftnet thing.

So now we're -- I'm really happy. I
wanted to how that went here, and I'm real happy to
hear that it went fairly well, just as I expected. And
so I submitted a proposal to.....

MR. THOMAS: May I make a comment here?

CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Go ahead, Dennis.

MR. THOMAS: You talk about taking too
many fish. I don't think that would happen, because
people aren't going to do any more than they need.
When you know you've got your needs down, you're not
going to go out there and do it. Who in hell wants to
work that hard, you know. This isn't a hobby, this
isn't a bit joke to do. You know, I mean, it's work.
I realize you stop everything to fish. When the fish
come in, things stop. Just like we're running our
store there. We were down there early in the morning
to get our fishing down before the store opened. But
it was done before the store opened. The fish was cut
up, salt, spread, and hung up. Then we opened the
store. You know, things are a priority around here.
But again I don't see doing it -- yeah, it would be how
much wood do you chop? You chop enough for four, five
years, you do it one year at a time, you know.

Anyway, enough.

Thank you.

CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Jenny. Yes, Jenny.
MS. PELKOLA: Yes, I would like to also add that on that Proposal 230, I just want to thank everyone that supported us. It was all up and down the river. And also I'd like to recognize our tribal administrator from Louden, Susi Sam, who worked very hard to get this through. Everyone works together, and it just shows what can be done when people work together. So again I just want to thank this Council who really supported us to get this through.

And like Dennis is saying, there wasn't an overkill in fishing. We just needed what we wanted, because the king salmon has more oil, and my husband and I, we eat king salmon every morning, he does more so than I do, because of that grease in it, and it helps his cholesterol I guess that's what they -- and you can buy those in the store, those pills, but why not get it right off our river here and have it fresh every morning.

Thank you.

CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Thank you, Jenny.

MR. KRISKA: Jack.

CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Tom.

MR. KRISKA: Just comments on some of the fishing through the State. The fishing all the way from Ruby down the river when I had the opportunity, I was coming back from the boat racing, and I stopped by a lot of the fishermen from -- there was some people above Ruby that were really happy that this was going on. I stopped about Dainty Island, and over here behind Louden, and all these people were -- you know, they were really happy that they were fishing in their own grounds, because they didn't have to go very far, go back to their camps and deal with their fish, instead of running all the way to Koyukuk and back and the extra 100 miles they're traveling.

And down in Nulato and Kaltag, I drove all the way down 50 miles below Kaltag within two days from Fairbanks, and just observing all of that. Everyone was happier about this fishing. And like you said, they wished it would have happened many years ago.
And going to the -- there was a few times they had a hard time in Nulato, Kaltag, and Koyukuk because of the weather. I think it was some of things maybe Jenny was saying, that the water was high, and then when there's high water, the wind, it tends to kick up, and a lot of the people missed their fishing, because of that, and they wanted emergency open, but that's kind of a hard thing to do I guess. And I guess it doesn't have to be if everybody watching understand the time and the date of the weather. The river from the Kaltag area to Koyukuk is straight direct with the south wind. And then once it comes to Galena, it turns up -- or toward the east about, I don't know, 70, 80 degrees, and so up this way you can fish, but down there, you can't. The waves get five, six feet and no one goes out there.

And another thing due to that, a lot of the people in Nulato, Kaltag, they only fish for one or two days, and they're done. Just one or two days, and it's really something to think about, because they're done and we've got to save room in our freezers for the silvers, and they catch whitefish, and, you know, all of this other fish that they don't eat just king salmon or silvers. They've got whitefish, a whole bunch of the different species there.

So I'm really happy for that.

And one more other thing, going back to the moose hunting, this year I guess due to the global warming, a lot of people was out there, I felt bad for a lot them that ran out there from the Koyukuk area and Nulato area. The moose, they didn't move until the 18th to the 20th. I mean, I do commercial, or drop off hunters, and I had to haul a couple clients back that didn't get a moose because of the fact that they weren't moving, and if anybody was really observing the hunts, and a lot of the big hunters that came from Fairbanks, they all went back with no horns at all, because the moose weren't moving. You know, they have a set date from the 5th to the 15th, then they have to leave, because that's only the 10 days that their hunt is open, the way their permits are handed out. And I'd say 70 or 80 percent of them went back with no big moose at all.

So just a comment.
Thank you.

CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: That's an excellent comment, Tommy. I appreciate that.

You were done, Dennis?

MR. THOMAS: Well, the only other comment I would make is I feel for you people with your king salmon from the Yukon. They are greasy and they're oily, but everybody seems to really prefer this. Now, I'm on the Kuskokwim. My father-in-law I remember before he died, he just loved to get that king salmon from the Yukon. He would take a bite out of it, it just dribbled. Jesus. I don't know how anybody could eat this stuff, you know.

(Laughter)

MR. THOMAS: But this is what you're used to, this is what you want. So anything we could do to help you get that, I'm all for it.

Thank you.

(Laughter)

CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: We love that stuff, Dennis.

MR. THOMAS: I know. I know.

MR. COLLINS: A question, Jack.

CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Go ahead, Ray.

MR. COLLINS: Yeah. Is there any meat distribution program on the Yukon? I know here in McGrath the hunters from the Innoko Refuge have to bring their meat out of the field, so they bring it into McGrath and they often have a list of people. A lot of them are trophy hunters, and they don't want to pay for having the meat cut up or shipped out or whatever. So people sign up for it. In fact the local meat cutter here was charging them 75 a quarter when they brought the meat in, because that's what it would cost to ship it to down if they chose to take it that far. And then they were cutting and wrapping it with that money and distributing to elders here. So that's
the way I got a lot of my meat this fall is through that distribution program. And then a local hunter shared a quarter with us, too. But is there any program over there that would allow people to leave their name at a checkpoint or Galena or somewhere that they're willing to sign for meat.

CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: A good question, Ray. Do you have -- Tom.

MR. KRISKA: Ray, back, I don't know, about 10, 15 years ago the Fish and Game tried that at the check station in Koyukuk. And what happened then, there was a lot of meat from the trophy hunters dropped off at the check station, and they were calling people to come get it, and by the time that -- I mean, you know, they did go there to pick it up, but a lot of those people, they're just really there for the trophy and there was thousands of pounds of meat went to waste, so they quit doing it right at the -- they didn't want to take it like that any more.

CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Okay.

So Mr. Gervais.

MR. GERVAIS: Thank you, Mr. Chair. I'd like to say good morning to all the Council members, and all the Staff and public attending our meeting. I'd like to also give a welcome to Karen to WI RAC. So far I appreciate your work's been good on the communication and logistics and stuff, so it looks like it's going to be a good and useful fit for our Council to have you as our administrator.

Some quick housekeeping items here. On July 5th Scott Pruitt resigned as Secretary of the Interior, so that may change the way that the Department of Interior is run. I've been busy most of the summer and this fall, so I don't even know who the new Secretary of Interior is, but we'll probably find out from somebody.

OSM could I think fill us in.

CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Zinke is the Secretary of Interior. I'm not sure it was Scott Pruitt.....
MR. GERVAIS: No, I'm sorry. I'm sorry, I'm......

MS. PELKOLA: (Indiscernible -- microphone not on)

MR. GERVAIS: I'm saying the wrong thing. Correct the record here.

CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Right. No problem.

MS. PELKOLA: It's hard to keep up with.

CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: It's hard to keep up with the news on who's quitting and who's not.

(Laughter)

CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: So I.....

MS. PELKOLA: It's a given.

CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Yeah. So.....

MR. GERVAIS: I know one of those guys that wrote me a letter thanking me for service on the WI RAC, and they all kind of blend in after a while.

CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Right. No sweat.

MR. GERVAIS: Alrighty. But even in Scott Pruitt as resigning as Secretary or Director of the EPA, that has ramifications to what happens in rural Alaska also with the permitting for the mines and industrial projects.

And then regarding this drift gillnet fishing, I would like people to realize -- I don't know about here in Galena or Koyukuk, but in Ruby the general term for drift gillnet fishing is seining, and so if you hear any comments during YR DFA teleconference or public comment coming out of Ruby regarding seining it may not be technically seining, but drift gillnetting, so that's something to keep in mind.

There's a young lady in Kodiak, she's a fishery historian. She does -- she writes articles on a monthly basis for Pacific Fishing magazine. Her name
is Anjuli Grantham, and she had an article earlier this
year about a British guy that was based at the Russian
trading post at Nulato in the late 1850s, and they were
going ready to do a trip up to Fort Yukon to try to
develop better trading with the indigenous people, and
it's before photography was that good, so he was a
commercial artist and his job was to draw pictures of
what he saw and document it.

And she had some quotes from him. I
wish I would have not left it at home, but he's talking
about local Natives. He specifically states the Middle
Yukon River, they were drifting in birchbark canoes and
catching salmon with nets. He didn't explain too much
of what the nets were, but he said it was pretty -- he
enjoyed watching the activity. There were like fishing
groups of canoes would fish, and then when somebody
would catch a fish, there would be a big commotion, and
excitement and yell, and he was happy to see how happy
the people were to catch fish. And he remarked they
were catching large salmon and small salmon, and he
said the large salmon were pretty amazing, because they
didn't require any oil or shortening in the fry pan to
cook them.

Anyways, there's a lot to that story
regarding subsistence and cultural history, but for
right now, one comment I would like to make on it is
it's historical record of what was going on here. And
as, Jack, you were saying, 20 years ago people were
fighting drift fishing on the -- in this area of the
Yukon, but here we have a written story of when it was
occurring in the 1850s.

Unfortunately, because of the world
population getting bigger, there's going to be
continual pressure for -- more people are going to be
moving into Alaska. There's going to be more people
that want to fish here. Like right now the Federal
subsistence priority is not that big of an issue,
because the population of the State is 700,000 or
something like that, but probably in all our lifetimes
it will be over a million and some of us will live to
see two million people living in Alaska. So there's
going to be -- all the time there's going to be
continuing pressure, more people wanting access to
resources, that right now it's not that much, I call it
species pressure, because there's not that many people,
and the population of all these communities is such
that pretty much everybody can go fish and hunt or
east whatever they need to feed their family and
their friends and family groups.

But what we have with ANILCA and the
Federal subsistence priority is pretty special. It's
like not common in the United States for one group to
have more rights to kind of a public resource than
others, and the State of Alaska doesn't allow it either
under the constitution, so we need to be careful on the
way we act, the way we set these rules, and the way we
deliberate, and communicate about what's going on,
because right now it's kind of a lax time because of
the low population in rural Alaska, but it's not always
going to be that way, and we just need to be stewards
and good communicators about what's going on, and
figure out what's the best thing for our society and
our State and our country.

On October 25th will be the 100th
anniversary of the sinking of a steamship called the
Princess Sophia. It was back before airplane travel,
and people used to take steamships up the Yukon River
to Whitehorse, and then the train down to Skagway and
take the boat down to Seattle. And they would go down
there for medical treatment or to serve in World War I
or, if they're rich miners, they would just go to what
every home they had Outside, but, anyways, out of those
350 people that died 100 years ago in that shipwreck
between Skagway and Juneau, probably like 30 or 40 of
them were from Ruby, Poorman, Flat, Iditarod, so for
sure the genes of those people are scattered around in
our villages and whatnot, and our communities.

And it was kind of -- as I was reading
a book on this, I was starting to think like the
dynamics of like what happened where Ruby didn't really
exist as a city in 1900, and then they found gold in
1908, 1910, 1911, it's booming, 10,000 people. And
then at this time, 1918, you know, the population had
gone down some, because the stampede was over and
things were thinning out some, but there's still a lot
of people around, but whether it's Ambler Road or Yukon
River Highway, Donlin Mine, the gas line to Donlin
Mine, it all like causes habitat destruction and
increases access into what now is like, other than the
rivers and snowmobile trails, snowgo trails, it's
roadless areas.
So like when you look at some of the comments from people that are proposing Donlin Mine, they're saying, well, it's just this one little area, and it's economic development, well, if you have a project like that occurring every 30 years, pretty soon there's not that much wilderness left, not that much habitat left. I think what makes a lot of Alaska special is that it's just undeveloped and people are able to have some degree of subsistence economy where you can feed your family off the rivers and the land, which isn't very common any more hardly anywhere in the world.

So right now the subsistence users, we have a pretty special right and responsibility, and I hope that we and whoever we interact with, our children and our neighbors, that we can remember how fortunate we are to have what we have, and can do a good job of passing a good, clean, and intact environment along to future generations, and we can deliberate good laws and regulations that ensure that it's a fair and equitable system for subsistence users and the sport and commercial user also.

Anyways, I'll move on, because we've got lots of stuff to carry -- or to cover. So this summer on Alaska Public Radio I heard some stories of in the Bering Sea a seabird die-off. These birds were showing up dead on the beaches, St. Lawrence Island, Shishmaref, Seward Peninsula. The significance of that, we've seen this seabird die-off in 2015, 2016 in the Gulf of Alaska, and we've had some really major species decline with cod and now this year was probably the most significant salmon declines in some of the fisheries on the Gulf of Alaska that we've seen since I don't know when, for 50 or 100 years. Like Chignik, where I have started commercial fishing since 2014, that normally harvest over a million king salmon -- or a million sockeye salmon out of that fishery with 80 or 90 boats, and this summer we harvested approximately 168 sockeye total. It was just -- I mean, everybody's heard of bad runs around here, but nobody's around here have seen runs that are just nothing like that.

So there's some real significant things going on in the ocean that we don't understand all the ramifications of it. A lot of the fisheries management for like the Federal fisheries in the Bering Sea, according to the Magnuson-Stevens Act, they always say
best available science, but best available science for
the marine environment is still very inconclusive, very
unsure. So I hope as participants in that process, we
realize that just because you have a statement of best
available science as to how you manage, it doesn't mean
that you have to manage a species, the total allowable
catches as -- you don't have to redline them, and you
shouldn't redline them. And I mean redline them by
harvesting right up to the maximum scientific
calculation, because there's so much that's unknown.
It's a dynamic system. The monitoring on it, you only
see a small fraction of one percent of what's really
going on there. So there's so much unknown compared to
what we know, that we have to be conservative in our
management.

So hopefully -- the scary thing about
the Bering Sea seabird die-off, kind of indicator
species with the murres, because they're deep-diving
birds. It can dive a couple hundred feet deep looking
for forage fish, because that's where -- it's my
understanding, that's where the kind salmon that go
into the Kuskokwim and the Yukon spend their winters.
Or not their winters, excuse me, the ocean part of
their life cycle. So it the birds that are expert
fishermen are starving off there, what's that going to
mean for our king salmon in two, three, or four years.
So let's keep an eye on that.

The National Weather Service reports
that due to the sea ice in the -- I don't know why they
call it the Chukchi Sea, it's -- I call it the Chukchi
Sea. It's a Siberian Russian word from the people that
live there, Chukchi Luti (ph). The area is called
Chukotka. I don't know why Alaskans always call it
Chukchi. That 'uk' isn't even part of the -- it's not
even a sound in the Russian or Chukchi language. So
I'll refer to it as Chukchi Sea.

The sea ice there I recall far back and
so this October's projected to be warmer than any on
record, which is going to have huge environmental
impact on the western Interior. To the bears, I don't
know if they're going to keep foraging or if they're
going to stay out and try to find something to eat when
they don't have a lot of snow to den up. What it will
mean for like the migration and harvest. Like further
down rivet they try to catch them when the ice in thin
and do that. But maybe the lamprey will migrate past
those communities before the ice forms on the river. So we'll have to just be good observers and like this other Council member's saying, we need to, you know, document all these animal and plant events that are occurring so that we can recall, we can go back in 5, 10, or 100 years from now and say, hey, this is what was happening at a certain such and such time.

Another item is there's an interesting international research project going on that's a collaboration of scientists from a lot of different countries in the North Pacific. Korea, Japan, Russia, United States. Scientists are doing some offshore netting of salmon to try to determine what location in various parts of the North Pacific have what kind of salmon stocks at what time of the winter. So I hope they are successful with their research project, and probably in two or three years we'll get some -- hopefully get some information about where the different salmon are -- the different salmon stocks are living and that can help us with our management.

Last month I was on Hot Springs Creek, which is 25 miles upriver from Ruby going towards Tanana. And there was caribou tracks going up into the canyon. I've never seen one of these caribou on the Yukon or Nowitna Refuge. I see their tracks almost every year. They seem like they come down and they cross the river and they hang out on the Nowitna refuge for about a month, and then they cross back up and go back into the high country in the -- it's what we call high country. It's not so high, but it's, you know, whatever, 1500, 2,000 feet high for -- in the Melozi drainage, so I hope at some point in my life I'll be able to see these caribou. Like that herd apparently doesn't grow in size at all, so I don't know if I'll ever be able to hunt them, but we don't have -- since I've been in the area for about 22 years, I've never harvested a caribou for subsistence, and I would like to. I know old timers, Lorraine and Johnny Honea, used to harvest quite a bit of caribou in the 50s and 60s over by -- between Selukna (ph), which is off of the Nowitna, and Lake Minchumina, so hopefully we can see some caribou more back in the Ruby area of the Yukon drainage.

I harvested a black bear about three weeks ago when I was moose hunting. It's a three-year-old boar, and he was just harvesting high bush
cranberry on the north bank of the slough on the
Nowitna Refuge. And the berries crop was not that
good, not that abundant, and what berries there were, a
lot of them were pale and not very sweet I guess. Or I
don't guess. Potentially that's from not a lot of
sunlight during whatever important time of their growth
cycle, but that bear was the skinniest bear I've ever
butchered up, and I hope it was just because he was
young and inexperienced at foraging and hunting. But
another -- my neighbor had told me he had seen very few
bears this summer, too. He lives 15 miles upriver from
Ruby. So I hope it's just an isolated situation where
we're not seeing much bears. I know we're always --
talk frequently about wanting to keep the bear
population down to help the younger moose out, but on
it's own a bear's a really valuable resource. It's
totally integral to the ecology of the area the way
they spread seeds around, the way they keep trails
open. And they're just -- they have a lot of high-
quality meat and fat. Their gall is really strong
medicine. So I hope that we're not entering into some
kind of issue where the bears are sick or not able to
keep their population level up.

The final thing is it still sounds as
though we're getting some poor quality meat coming out
of commercial hunting operations in the Melozitna
River. That meat's ending up in the Ruby dump and it's
creating public safety concern, because we had a
grizzly bear that was coming in every couple days to
pick up the meat, and it's not legal under State law to
shoot a grizzly within a half mile of a dump, so it
makes a tough situation where you know you have a
grizzly bear in your dump, you're allowed to hunt it.
And it's unethical and illegal to bring rotten meat out
of the field on a commercial operation.

CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: What kind of
commercial operation is that? A guiding operation? A
transporter?

MR. GERVAIS: Guiding.

CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: The State regulation
requires that the meat be removed from the field in an
edible condition and be stored for two weeks -- able to
be stored for two weeks after removal from the field.
Did anybody call the Alaska State Troopers about this
violation?
MR. GERVAIS: No.

CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: They should call the Alaska State Troopers to report that kind of egregious violation, because then that's -- it's not legal to do that. It has to be -- there's statutory requirements under State salvage requirements, and so they would be -- they could be cited, they could be reprimanded by the Commercial Services Board for doing those kinds of things. So I would suggest that Ruby make a formal complaint that this operation is disposing of meat illegally in their dump, attracting bears to the dump. You know, these troopers are spread out so thin, they need any additional help you can give them. So I would suggest that.

I do appreciate your pointing out this murre die-off. The ramifications of what that would mean in what's known as the trophic level or the food chain in the ocean for the Chinook salmon. Those are truly indicator species of what we can look at on the horizon, and I appreciate your bringing that forward to this Council. We're not out of the woods yet on this whole king salmon decline on the Yukon River and Kuskokwim River. We've still got these marine problems that are a driver of why these fish don't keep coming back.

And so when we look at the by-catch, Chinook by-catch in the Bering Sea trawl fishery, when you're thinking about what these trophic levels declining in conjunction with increasing by-catch, that's not a real good thing. That's a real bad thing.

I appreciate all your comments. That caribou herd that you're referring to I think is the Wolf Mountain Herd, which is like 150 caribou. And those little herds -- there's Wolf Mountain.....

And somebody's on the phone again not star-6'd, and we hear all kinds of papers rattling around and so forth. If you can mute your phone, I'd appreciate that.

The Wolf Mountain Herd, the Ray Mountain Herd, the Hodzana Caribou Herd. Those little -- that's that whole range of hills that goes all the way over to Venetie. Those little herds are typically old. They live long periods of time. They have low
reproductive rates. They have some kind of bear predation or predation problem on their calving grounds, because they're not at really high levels, so they can't seem to overwhelm the predators or get above what I call their predator threshold. Large herds like the Western Arctic, Central Arctic, Porcupine Caribou Herds, they compress into real tight groupings and they have all their calves in a real short period of time, but there's so many caribou there the predators can't eat all those calves at one time, so they can sustain themselves over their predator threshold. These little herds haven't been able to get big enough to actually do that. Ray Mountain is the largest herd and it's usually between 1,000 to 2,000 caribou, so there's fairly limited hunting on those, whereas the Wolf Mountain Herd is closed right now.

Any comments on Tim's presentation.

(No comments)

CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Appreciate all your comments, Tim.

Don.

MR. HONEA: Yeah, just a comment. He remarked on the caribou. I've in the past maybe 5, 10 years ago or something saw some caribou right above Big Eddy, exactly the area he's talking about, and, boy, it was sure tempting to go and take a caribou. And it was running back and forth really fast. They were really speedy. That this thing was collared and so I thought, hey, I don't know if it's coming out of Galena, whether a project to collar them. And I thought, hey, if I take that, then they're going to be tracking me, so....

(Laughter)

MR. HONEA: Like a GPS thing or something. So I didn't bother with it. But it's interesting. Every once in a while they do come out of the hills there, and if you report you had seen one, hey, I'd like to get it.

Just a comment.

Thank you.
MR. THOMAS: Yeah, another comment here that there's people from our village there that were fishing out of Chignik or Chignik Bay or something down there. And they stopped all the fishing. They just stopped it, because he was going to send us some halibut or what not, but they stopped the halibut fishing, they stopped the salmon fishing. I mean, they completely cut them off. So I don't know whether this is good or bad or whatever, you know, but it shows that the numbers are pretty weak even in that area.

Thank you.

CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Appreciate that. And we have Susie, the tribal administrator. Did you want to -- at this point, the Council has gone through their comments, but we have public and tribal comments on non-agenda items. Did you want to speak to us, Susie. Go ahead, Susie.

MS. SAM: Good morning, Mr. Chair. Thank you for allowing me to speak. I just wanted to talk more about what Jenny said on behalf of Louden Tribal Council.

Louden instituted it's first ever wolf bounty program last year. This was due to the fact that we wanted the moose population to grow. We didn't get very much, but we got about 10 wolves. We'll probably continue this again next year.

We are also looking at a fox bounty program, because, if you'll notice around town, the foxes out there all over town and they are getting really tame, you know. You'll be driving by the store and you'll see a fox in the parking lot. So we're going to be looking at that this year, too.

We would really thank you all for the support on Proposal 230. I think it was because of support like from WI RAC and from the other Advisory Councils and the State government and other tribes up and down the river that we were able to do this. This was the first year that we got go fish outside of -- around Galena. And one of our Council members said this was the biggest accomplishment that we've had in this area in 30 years, so that was big news for people here to be able to fish. And Ruby, too.
Someone asked the question about the moose distribution program. We have like an informal program. We have an elder center here. The elder center has nine full-time residence, but we also have an elder lunch program. So anybody over the age of 55 can go over for a free lunch. And so they get a lot of donations from -- for subsistence foods: moose, fish, berries, and whatever. So we feed a lot of elders through that program. And it's also supported by Louden Tribal Council under our elder nutrition program.

The other place that does accept meat from guided hunters is the Gila (ph) school. They have been receiving meat from people for I think about 19 years, and they have people volunteer to cut and package meat back there, too.

Louden Tribal Council really took a stand to protect our subsistence foods. We believe that without subsistence foods, our villages will continue to decline. You know, we won't be able to survive if we have -- right now we pay $10 for a half a gallon of milk, you know, $7.95 for a gallon of gas. It would be hard for village people to stay in the village if we don't have subsistence foods of moose and fish. So Louden Tribal Council has really took the stand over the last couple of years. We've took the stand to oppose Ambler Road, we've took the stand to oppose the big mining, because traditional foods are more than sustenance. Yes, it does feed us, but it also defines who we are. We are Native people. We've been here, we use for -- these foods and natural resources for much more than food. We use them in cultural events, you know, in our potlatches.

And we also had this year wasted meat. And we didn't call the state troopers, because I didn't see it personally, but if I go to the place and see it where the meat was dumped and, you know, I will make that call. But, yep, Louden has really taken the stand to protect subsistence resources in this area.

And the other thing that we're really working on is the BLM -- trying to get government-to-government consultation with BLM. It's been a bit of a struggle, but I think we're making progress, not as fast as we'd like to see though.
Thank you.

CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: I always tell people I have my camera in my pocket. Everybody's got phones, but I don't have cell service, so I carry a camera. If I see violations, I take pictures all the time. I take pictures, I send those to the Alaska State Troopers. They love to get my pictures, because I take pictures of what those violations look like at the time, because those are time date stamped. If I see the person, I actually walk right up to the person. I put the camera in their face, I take a picture of them, their truck, what they're doing, all this kind of stuff. And the troopers love to get that. So sitting and complaining in the village and saying, we don't like this stuff, we don't like what's happening, just go up to the person that's dumping this meat, take a picture of them and send those, email those to the troopers. They love to get those or any other enforcement.

We had problems with things.

I haven't given my report yet.

MR. THOMAS: A comment. A comment again. It seems like we're having a lot of trouble giving away the meat that these hunters take sometimes. I mean that they don't take with them. Well, we did -- one year we had these drop-off hunters come out there and they got seven moose, none of want -- each one wanted a piece of the moose was all, so that left a lot of meat there. So I told everybody in the village, if you want meat, you come down and help me process it, because I'm not just going to cut it up for -- I couldn't use this kind of moose, you know. So people got together and I had them help me do it. I was a meat cutter by trade, so I could zip through this stuff pretty good. And that's before we had reciprocating saws. They were doing this with the old hand saw and all that. And we got those done in an afternoon, and we made an awful lot of it boneless and stuff, but again the people that wanted it, they come and they helped. You know, if grandma and grandpa couldn't move around, okay, then they'd send a grandkid down to help. But somebody had to contribute some of their own time to make this worth doing it. And it worked. Now, I don't know whether it would work everywhere or not, but it would work in stages. Okay. You'd get some and you'd it, you'd get some and you'd do it. This was a
one-shot deal. But again it worked. They have to buy it into it. They have to have something into it to make it work.

Thank you.

CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: I appreciate your report, Susie.

MR. COLLINS: Jack, this is Ray.

CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Tom, did you have a comment.

MR. COLLINS: The voices are fading again, so make sure that the mic is close to them.

CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Okay. I appreciate that, Ray. You know, we can't hear what you're hearing.

So, Tom, go ahead.

MR. KRISKA: I Just want to make a comment on the wanton waste, the meat. That's happening not only in these places. I hear it's going around in a lot of interior of Alaska. So there was a lot of meat that comes through the check stations that people won't even eat. And I really -- you know, going to a check station, here's the manager there, supposed to, you know, count the pieces of meat, make sure everything is there per moose. And I think that the villagers and the AC's and everybody that are on those, or even the Louden Council, Koyukuk, all these villages need to get together and maybe pressure the State a little more for the quality of meat that's coming through the check station. Because I've seen it myself over the years that it's not edible, because a lot of those people stay out there 8 or 10 days, maybe shoot their moose right off the start, and coming through those check stations, it's not -- I mean, you know, the rules and regulations are not being followed there. So maybe we've got to get in to put a little pressure on like I said the State and those guys to make sure that's not happening any more.

So thank you.

This is comment.
CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Thank you.

MR. GERVAIS: Mr. Chair.

CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Tim.

MR. GERVAIS: Thank you, Mr. Chair.

Thank you for your comments, Susie. I appreciate to hear that Louden is focused on the habitat protection, realizing that that's really the key to a successful future.

I wanted to know if there was any current communication with Louden Tribe regarding road or highway construction down the Yukon River corridor and what's Louden's stance on that type of construction project.

MS. SAM: Louden Tribal Council has not taken the stance, because that hasn't been on our radar. We've been quietly talking, you know, if the State was in a better fiscal situation, you know, they might be trying to expand the road down from Tanana, but I think we would probably be opposed to that, too. We have -- really rely on the barge service, you know, for our freight in the summer. But the Louden Tribal Council has always not only thought about what their needs are, they are thinking about their children and their grandchildren, and so they would be probably opposing the road coming through, just like they oppose Ambler Road for the same reasons. We've heard from Pollock Simon, you know, who's been on your board, you know, and his concerns about what the road would be doing to Allakaket. And he thinks in future generations as well. He's always said that.

So that's the stance that the Louden Tribal Council has taken.

CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Tim.

MR. GERVAIS: One comment that fits in with the road construction is, I forgot to bring it up during my report, was if they do put Ambler Road in or Yukon River Highway potentially these areas that are connected to these roads would lose their rural status. I mean, that's totally something that could happen. So I know people are pro-road, because they think it might end up in being cheaper gasoline or easier access to
wide screen TVs or easier access to drugs or groceries or whatever people want to get off the road, but you have to be careful for what you wish for, because there's a lot of negative things that could come with a road. And once they're gone, it's gone. It's not coming back to any kind of wilderness or roadless thing.

CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Right. I live near Coldfoot and we pay 5.50 a gallon for gasoline. Those truckers want a lot of money to haul that fuel up there. Is your moose, do you think that all of your resources -- and your resources are where you get served. When they built the road, they closed it to hunting. We had thought -- when they opened it to hunting, there are thousands of hunters that come. We have to have drawing permits on the Dalton Highway to hold it down. If it's State land you're under a draw permit with everybody in Anchorage and Fairbanks. You have no idea what the roads mean. It doesn't mean that it's going to a lot cheaper. It means it might be a tiny bit cheaper, but is it worth it to give away all of your resources for a little bit cheaper fuel? Probably not, because just walked over to that store right over here and I looked at -- I go in the store and I pick up packages of meat. I'm not going to buy it. I just want to see what people would have to pay if they bought a piece of meat here. 28.60 something a pound for New York steak. Rib meat sliced up, the sparerib meat, $20 and something. I saw hamburger, 8.50. That stuff is freezer burned. That's what your moose is worth. Are you willing to trade your moose for super expensive meat prices, because you're not going to get the moose. You're going to have to compete with all these other hunters. And, no, it's not worth it at all. And so ADEA and these people, these organizations will try and tell people, oh, you're going to pay a lot cheaper prices. It's like, oh, no, you're going to have thousands and thousands of hunters. You just open the floodgates.

So the Ambler Road is not going to be closed. They can't tell -- they can tell me that until they're blue in the face. They closed the Dalton Highway when they built it, and it was supposed to be closed. It's actually in ANILCA law that the road was supposed to remain closed. Oh, no, they opened it up. By 1982 when the Board of Game opened the Dalton Highway corridor for archery hunting, all the hunters
in Fairbanks immediately figured out that they could stake mining claims, because it’s an industrial road. You’re immediately an industrial user, so you take a paper, stake your claim. It costs 30 bucks right now. You state a claim up there on the Ambler Road, and you’re eligible to go hunting. No, they don’t stop the hunters. The hunters will figure out a way to get there, and they did. They were there long before they officially opened the road.

Don’t get me started on this.

(Laughter)

CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: I know all about the road, because I had the road built.....

MR. GERVAlS: Slow down, Jack. Slow down.

(Laughter)

CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: I heard the road coming, my dad said it was the beginning of the end, and, yeah. Why do I sit on these councils? It’s to control the hunting pressure. To control. To try and keep it within sustained yield. That’s the only reason I’m on these councils and stuff. It’s the primary reason.

So I haven’t given my report.

Ken Chase wanted to give us comment on something that’s non-agenda. But I would like to give my report first, because we didn’t actually cover my report.

I did attend the Federal Subsistence Board meeting in April, and worked with the Board on deliberation of various proposals, and several of those were from the Western Interior Council. And I was fairly annoyed with the Interior Department and not adopting -- not publishing the adopted proposals by the Federal Subsistence Board that they adopted and were in regulation. Those regulations were not published during the hunting season, and I was annoyed with the Interior Department for not. These are not -- Alaska is not like the continental United States. We have subsistence priority on Federal public lands. Two-
thirds of Alaska is Federal public lands. This Secretary of Interior wants to work with the State as much as possible, and this Council does work with the State as much as possible, but we do have to maintain a subsistence priority. And the Federal Subsistence Board deliberated proposals with involvement with the State of Alaska at the table. Deep involvement of the State of Alaska. Yet those regulations were not published. And I was unhappy that those -- just yesterday I got an email, you can now log onto it, and they'll be sending those out later this month. Well, most of the seasons are over now. And so that was a little frustrating. This Council, the Federal Subsistence Board process, all of the Councils work together to promulgate and make these proposals. And then for the Secretary of Interior to sit on them all summer, from April all the way until yesterday, it should not be.

And so the Federal Subsistence Board in our annual report should reflect that the Councils feel that the Secretary of Interior does not understand the ANILCA priority for rural residents. It's a statutory requirement by Congress on these Federal lands, and so the Federal Subsistence Board -- we have to work through the Federal Subsistence Board, and I feel that that should be an annual report topic to enlighten this Secretary of Interior that these are not in conflict with State regulations. These have -- there are subsistence priorities that need to be implemented through the Federal Subsistence Board process, and there's regulations setting out the Councils and the Federal Subsistence Board that were signed by previous Secretary of Interiors. That needs to be brought to the forefront. And, of course, those regional directors are not going to feel like doing that, but the Councils should drive that, that these regulations need to be published on time. If they're adopted with the arms of the Secretary of Agriculture and the Secretary of Interior, then those regulations have to be implemented before the current regulatory year implementation.

MR. GERVAIS: Jack, a question.

CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Yes, go ahead, Tim.

MR. GERVAIS: So you said that you want to enlighten the Secretary of Interior. What if
they're intentionally left off from being published so that they wouldn't go into effect?

CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Well, it should be on the record at least. Yeah. The Secretary of Interior, but I'm sure he's not stupid and knew what he was doing. But they do have to be reminded of the statutory requirements, and the Federal Subsistence Board is of the position to do that. And I feel that that should be an annual report topic, and we're going to be getting to that.

So jot that down, Karen.

And so I wanted to give a report.

Yes, we see the same things. I told Nikki, I says, we'll hear about the moose not moving until like late in the year. I said that. I don't know why it is. Throughout the entire region moose will do exactly the same thing. And that's why they don't do certain things. We did not see moose responding to calls. They didn't want to move until at least the 16th to 18th of September at the very first, and not even moving very much until the 20th. And so we have -- my impression is that when cows have green grass and green willow leaves to eat, they don't send out a pheromone or something to attract bulls. That's my impression. After it gets really cold and all the leaves fall off the willows, then those bulls go zipping right over to those cows.

That's exactly what -- and the Department of Fish and Game says they all breed on the same time. You guys are all crazy. The moose just move -- they breed on the same time. Yeah, but they don't move, are not exposed to hunters on time. For days and days of looking for moose, and they weren't moving around. And if the bulls are just sitting back in the woods, you can't find them. It compresses the hunting -- the subsistence hunters get into a really short time frame. Climate change is causing hunters to work extra hard.

Then we've got fly problems. We used to kill moose in early September. Then it got to be the 10th of September. Now it's like last year, the 16th of September, I had flies trying to get all over the meat. It gets worse and worse with this delayed
cold weather.

Also, you know, trying to keep meat is getting a little bit harder.

So we had the same problems. We had these moose moving around late. And if you didn't catch a moose on time -- we had one kid, he went all fall, he didn't get a moose. He was in the wrong place at the wrong time or whatever. And so we have that problem.

I'm actually still really concerned about king salmon on the Yukon River and the Kuskokwim River because of these marine problems in the Bering Sea and in the North Pacific. You know, some of those salmon runs are crashing and, you know, they're returning really poorly to Kodiak and Chignik. Those are just indicators of a food chain problem in the ocean. We're not out of the woods on that.

We have tons of snowshoe hares in the Brooks Range. We're on the high hare population peak. Snowshoe hares in the Brooks Range are not on a 7 to 10-year cycle. They're on a 18 to 19-year modulation. So we're on that peak. There was lots of wolf pups born this spring. And those wolves have lots of puppies. And we're seeing wolf pups all over the place. We've seen most of them -- we've seen five wolf pups eating almost exclusively snowshoe hares. And so wolves will be eating snowshoe hares until the snow gets about 15 inches deep. Then they're going to switch to their primary winter prey, which is going to be big game animals. And so we can anticipate high predation this year, because we've seen exactly well, I've seen this exactly happen on the other hare population peaks, which was in 2000/2001. Instead of seeing typically like 18 or 20 wolves on my trap line, I saw 65 wolves that time. That's how many wolves were there. We have huge increases of wolves right now in the Brooks Range.

Those wolves will also (indiscernible). They'll move out from that when those hares population starts to crash, there's not enough caribou, there's not enough moose. We've got .1, .2 moose per square mile up there. You can expect to see more wolves coming down the Koyukuk River also, down into this area.
We do see black bears, but they're not exceptionally thick in the Brooks Range, because the brown bears eat those. Sidney Huntington came to our meeting the last time we were in Galena. And Sidney Huntington was wheeled in by his daughter, and I said, come to the mic. And Sidney talked to this Council, and for the Council members that weren't here, Sidney said, brown bears are increasing in population. They're going to eat all the black bears, then they're going to eat all the moose, and they're going to control your lives. I'm quoting Sidney Huntington. That's what he said. And he was trying to encourage people to take more brown bears. That's what he was saying to this Council. He was a very respected elder, a very wise person. He knew exactly what was going to happen. That's why we don't see black bears.

Bears can have these large round worms. Did you cut that bear open, Tim? Did you check to see if it had been highly parasitized. See, if you get a bear that's really skinny, you want to cut it open. They've got these.....

MR. COLLINS: Mr. Chairman, did you stop talking?

CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: No, I'm still talking.

(Laughter)

CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Did you hear me?

MR. COLLINS: I can now, but I couldn't a few minutes ago. I heard nothing.

CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: I'm still talking. I've got to get closer to the mic. I'm not sure what happened there. But we're talking about worms and bears. Black bears and grizzlies got large round worms. You've probably seen those. They're about the size of a pencil, like that.....

MS. DAMBERG: Hi, this is -- Chair, this is Carol Damberg. You are fading. I'm wondering if it's a battery in the microphone or something.

CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: My red light is lit up. I'm not sure what's going on here. Our court
reporter is twisting some connections and so forth. Am I still.....

MS. DAMBERG: We can no longer hear you on the phone.

(Pause)

(Off record)

(On record)

CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: So we're going to come back to order. Jenny went to go get something, and that was more than 10 minutes ago. She'll be back.

And so I was going to continue with my comments. I was talking about -- are you on the phone there, Ray? Did people come back on the phone.

MR. COLLINS: Yes, I'm back on.

CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Okay. We had an intercom glitch here. The phone line was working. We could hear you talking. You couldn't hear us. So hopefully people have come back onto the phone. That was some link up problem.

So I was in my comments. I was talking about the wolf population is really high right now in the upper Koyukuk primarily due to deeper show last winter which allowed the wolves to hunt better, making them fatter, which produced lots of puppies. And now we're on the high hare cycle, and we have millions of snowshoe hares. But when the snow starts to get over basically 15 inches deep, then the wolves will switch to large game. And so there will be e-migration out of that into the upper Koyukuk drainages will have -- they should show up more wolves down this way and we will have high predation factors.

The Dall sheep population, looking at that, it's still really low, but has a lot of pretty good lamb production, and a really high yearling survivalship this last winter, because I did an inventory. I counted 103 sheep, and we had a real good yearly survivorship. I sit there with a 30 power spotting scope and do a composition of what they're
actually looking like. There's not that many older sheep in the population. We don't see many older rams or I don't see many older ewes. But the population is low and returning to a young component that should be more productive. And if we have some easier winters, we should have -- last winter was not that bad for sheep, because it was real windy on top of the mountains and it blew all the snow off and so they did okay. I expect to see -- I see really large lambs. It was really rainy, and sheep and caribou eat flowers.

I read a report this summer where biologists seem to think that caribou produce calves by sucking protein out of a cow, and that's not by the eating lichen, that they actually are eating sugar. And they seem to think they can gestate calves on lichen. That's absolutely wrong. They got it all wrong. They didn't do any kind of food -- they were doing pellet counts, pellet inventories of what the caribou are actually eating, but they only went through the middle of April. Caribou started eating cotton grass flowers in late April, and switch entirely to cotton grass. They don't eat lichens in the springtime. Nelchina Caribou Herd. Oh, my gosh, there's no lichen on the caribou calving ground, so we're going to shoot the Nelchina Herd down, because they're eating themselves out of house and home. Now, they don't eat lichen in the summertime. They primarily eat flowers, flowering grasses. Cottongrass shoot up five to 20 blossoms with a huge pollen head, and pollen's protein. That's their protein source. So the Nelchina Herd unfortunately was annihilated last year, because managers don't understand caribou. They don't understand that they don't eat lichens on the calving ground. They don't even have to have lichens. Look at the Teshekpuk Herd. There's one percent on the ground on the Teshekpuk calving ground, and the Teshekpuk Herd lives there all year and they do really well.

So this year there was the cooler spring allows the tundra to melt slower, so that gives the caribou more time and the sheep had more time to eat flowers. It was rainy and insects can't pollinate the flowers. So the sheep lambs are really large, and I'm expecting to see some really heavy calf weights on caribou.

So these caribou herds in the arctic
are starting to recover. And this was a perfect thing for the caribou to have. The biologists don't seem to understand that, and I guess I need to talk more about why they need to understand what caribou eat. In the springtime, soon as the tundra melts off, everybody have seen a tussock chewed up. All those little dark blossoms pop up, and those things open up into a pollen head as big as my thumbnail. That's the driving force of caribou calf production. So apparently managers don't understand that.

In Nelchina there was -- the lichen had diminished on the core calving ground, so they decided that they needed to reduce that caribou herd. No, they don't need to reduce the caribou herd. Larger herds migrate. They have untapped lichen resources for winter feed all over the interior of Alaska that the Nelchina and Forty-mile herd used to use decades ago before they got vastly reduced in number.

So they shot 14,000 caribou in the Nelchina herd, and when they did the survey this summer, they found out there was only 35,000. What happened to the rest of those caribou? That was wound loss. When you turn the public loose with the idea that there's -- these caribou are rats and we need to shoot them to reduce their population, they shoot into the middle of herds, there's wound loss. Massive wound loss. And apparently something like 16,000 additional caribou were killed, because those caribou were not there in the population currently. So they closed the winter hunts for -- the Nelchina hunts are all closed down. That's the kind of mismanagement that I've seen over and over and over again on caribou.

Central Arctic Herd, 2010, the herd rises to 68,000. Fairbanks Advisory Committee wants five caribou limit with cow caribou harvest in summer. And the Board of Game opened cow caribou harvest on July 1. The cows that had three-week old neonate calves, and they let hunters kill those cow caribou. That's an atrocity. I don't like to see this kind of mismanagement of caribou. Caribou is the most misunderstood species in all of Alaska, and managers continuously make giant mistakes.

Mulchatna Caribou Herd, southwest Alaska. 200,000 caribou in 1997. The herd was shot down to 14 bulls per 100 cows with one large bull per
100 cows. The herd goes into reproductive failure and crashes to 28,000 because there's no bulls. Daddy caribou weren't present, so there were no babies. And late-born calves and high predation factors, because little, tiny calves don't hold up against predation.

I've seen caribou mismanagement my entire life, and I just am really annoyed to see the Nelchina just endured that whole big giant mistake again, because managers do not understand that caribou eat flowers from springtime until the middle of summer. And flowers have pollen. I think we need to have real managers reevaluate what caribou actually eat and go back out to the field and start doing some real inventories of what caribou eat, because I am not going to keep tolerating decimation of caribou herds.

I, as a Council member, feel compelled to protect resources for future subsistence uses. Larger herds migrate in winter to eat lichens which turns into sugar, and they run around and it makes them light on their feet. They float in the snow better, and they do real good on lichen. But in the springtime they don't have to have lichen.

And so I'm concerned that the managers apparently, and I read biological reports, and I read these things. I read current data, a report that said, they did a pellet fecal inventory and caribou are capital breeders. They suck proteins out of their system. That's how they produce calves. It's like, no, that's all backwards. That's all wrong. Absolutely wrong. And we need to fix that. And so I don't know how this Council's going to fix that drive, but I'm going to be talking about this issue at every meeting this winter. When I read current biological reports that makes me belief that biologists seem to think that caribou don't need any kind -- they have lichens is the driving force of production. It's like, no, that's wrong. That's absolutely wrong, and Nelchina's a glaring example of what happens when the managers get the misinformation that drives the idea that caribou are rats and they need to be killed back, because they ate all their lichen on the calving ground. No, that's all wrong. That's wrong. Nelchina Herd is going to take about a decade to recover from that big faux pas.

And they did that 10 years ago. I
don’t know if you remember, 10 years ago the Nelchina Herd started growing, and it’s, oh, my gosh, they’re eating themselves out of house and home again. It’s like, no, they’re not. Flowers, grass flowers pop up every year and they’re very productive.

And so I am real concerned about caribou all over the State of Alaska and especially within this region. Teshekpuk, Central Arctic, Western Arctic, and Porcupine Caribou were coming into the Western Interior Region this last winter. The first time I’ve ever known of Porcupine Caribou coming into the Koyukuk River drainage since the 50s and 60s. That herd is starting to utilize the upper part of our region. So we need as a Council to be aware that managers don’t understand caribou, that they need to understand them better, that they need to know what caribou eat throughout the entire year, not just wintertime, and that this idea that lichen is the driving force of caribou calf production is a totally erroneous misperception. That’s like some old wive’s tale that they’ve told themselves over and over. It’s like, you know, I live with caribou, I shoot caribou in the springtime. They don’t even eat lichens. They’re eating flowers, grass flowers. That’s what they’re eating, and lots of it. They’re down so tight that Nikki can’t even get her hand in there to cut the windpipe. The stomach is green with caribou -- with the cottongrass flowers. And they’re just pigging out on that. We kill bull caribou, but they get real light-colored meat and they’re real excellent eating when they’re eating that tussock grass.

And that’s a problem that I wanted the Council to be aware of, why I’m concerned about that, that managers apparently to me don’t understand caribou. They make big mistakes over and over again. When I heard the deputy director of wildlife conservation two years ago on the Federal Subsistence Board, Lem Butler, say that we don’t really need large bull caribou in the population, they’re there for esthetics. It’s like, no, actually I talked to reindeer herders in Scandinavia that tell me they don’t even breed a reindeer -- reindeers the same animal as a caribou -- they don’t even breed a bull reindeer until he’s eight years old. Got big bulls. I says, you don’t breed four-year-olds? Nope, we breed large pulls to our cows, because they have better on-time breeding and they have better, larger calf weights, and we want
good, healthy calves.

Apparently managers need to go to real biologists in Scandinavia that seem to know something about rangifer (ph), and develop some kind of understanding of caribou management, because my experience with caribou management in Alaska is it's pathetic. The kind of mistakes that the Board of -- the Alaska Department of Fish and Game and managers that sign onto these misperceptions of caribou are decimating caribou herds right and left, and some of those happen in our region.

Western Interior Region had he Mulchatna Herd killed off by 2007. Dennis doesn't have caribou down there. Why is that? Because the herd is so small, it doesn't migrate any more. When it was 200,000, they had 5,000 caribou at McGrath, because caribou of the Mulchatna Herd used to swim across the Kuskokwim River right there at Ruby. They had to stop all the steamboats. And it's well known that Wolf Mountain Herd, or that Copperine (ph) Mountains, that was the Mulchatna Herd migrating for hundreds of miles along the ridges coming across the Yukon River to the north.

Same thing was that Forty-Mile when it was 500,000. The Forty-Mile Herd was 500,000. They had to stop the boats. They couldn't run in the river. Oh my gosh, the Forty-Mile Herd went north of the Yukon River a few years. Oh, no, they're getting too big. We need to kill them. It's like, no, they want to go back to their historic range. There's trails etched in the ground. You see all those trails on the tops of the hills down there by Ruby. These guys are from Ruby. They know that those trails are there. Anybody in their right mind knows. I told the Department of Fish and Game they need to go out and do these trail inventories.

I'm concerned about caribou still. I keep talking about caribou. Why do I talk about caribou? Because I just watched Nelchina get killed off again this time. That's pathetic, to kill a herd that was happily at 70,000, starting to migrate north of the Alaska Range and kill it back to 35,000. It's going to take 10 years to recover that herd now. It's gotten below its predator thresholds and so forth.
So we need to be aware of this stuff. I want this Council to be well aware of my concern about Mulchatna, these other Arctic herds that are in this region. I'll get off my high horse on that one.

(Laughter)

MR. GERVAIS: Relax, Jack. Relax.

CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: And so I do feel we're going to have to be aware that we have healthy calf caribou and we have healthy Dall sheep this summer, because the cold summer doesn't allow the pollinating insects to fly. Those cows and ewes ate lots of high protein food, and so we should have a good situation coming up. When the herd starts to grow back, we're going to have to be very aware to hold back the managers from killing off these caribou herds. That's what we have to be aware of. And so Tim likes to talk about the future of the fishery resources; I talk about the fishery of these caribou resources and other resources. The terrestrial.

MR. HONEA: Mr. Chair.

CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Don.

MR. HONEA: Mr. Chair. I would -- I don't want to interrupt you or anything, but I see your passion about this and about the caribou and the populations and bringing back hopefully some of the herds that once were. And I would like to somehow incorporate that into our annual report as a motion maybe when we get to it.

Thank you.

CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: I appreciate that. I do feel that that should be in the annual report, that the managers have to re-evaluate what's referred to as trophic intake of a species, what the food of the species are, that they do not eat lichens, we'll flat state what caribou eat throughout their life cycle. And so I feel that managers have to be aware that they have some huge misperceptions about caribou, about what the breeding structures are, what the caribou eat throughout their life cycle. This Federal Subsistence Board should be aware that the State managers don't seem to understand caribou and have demonstrated in the
Nelchina debacle this last year how they do not understand the caribou and can make giant mistakes on how they -- harvest rates and wound loss rates. In our annual report of last year we had discussion about wound loss rate. Well, here's a glaring example of Nelchina. A glaring example of how wound loss rates can highly effect how caribou are harvested.

So I appreciate that......

MR. RINALDI: Yes. My name's Tod Rinaldi. I'm the regional management coordinator for the Division of Wildlife. I oversee the Mulchatna and the Nelchina Herds.

And while I also appreciate the passion that was just expressed here, most of that information was inaccurate and misrepresents not only the State Department of Fish and Game, but also what's happening in both those herds. I heard a number of -- that were completely inaccurate such as we harvested 14,000 caribou out of the Nelchina last year, which is not the case. We harvested 5,000. The Nelchina Herd has been managed for 50 years and it's been able to provide a considerable number of -- a considerable level of harvest during that time without a crash. Our managers through 30, 40 years information have determined that we do not like to keep the population over 50,000 animals, so sustaining it at 70,000 is actually a hardship on the landscape, and it's probably over-use of the landscape. So the Board of Game has developed population thresholds of 35 to 40,000 based on 30 to 40 years of information. So to say that the Nelchina's decimated, to say that we've hammered and killed the population, or that we're doing things and that we don't understand what we're doing, even though we've been doing this for 40 plus years, I think is disingenuous and inaccurate.

CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Well, my position is that the herd was 70,000 animals and now is 35,000. That's a catastrophic decline in population. And whether 5,000 were harvested, the objective was to get 14,000. That herd is half of what it was on the previous survey. The herd migrated north of the Alaska Range. It wants to go into more habitats. Larger herds will migrate. Caribou on the core calving grounds eat cottongrass flowers. That's what they eat.
And so I disagree with Mulchatna management when they shot it down to 14 bulls per 100 cows with one large bull per 100 cows, that herd had reproductive failure, and I'll argue that over and over again. There is no way that when less than half of the management objective for bulls, that that was -- I could put a star on your forehead for Mulchatna.

So I will distinctly disagree with you on these caribou management problems that have happened. And there was not misinformation. I'm using your statistical data. And so I'm not going to argue that.....

MR. RINALDI: Well, I don't know (indiscernible -- simultaneous speech).....

CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: .....I'm not going to argue that on the.....

MR. RINALDI: .....recent your information is, and I'm not going to.....

MS. DEATHERAGE: Excuse me. I'm sorry.

MR. RINALDI: .....start debate or an argument.....

CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Point of order.

MS. DEATHERAGE: This is a point of order. This.....

MR. RINALDI: I'm just......

MS. DEATHERAGE: .....is Karen Deatherage. This is the Chair's report. I think that if there's going to be some information shared from the Department of Fish and Game or even the Federal biologists, which we believe is incredibly important, that would be best done under the agency reports. And so that's when I would invite you to do that. I'd like to be able to just ask at this time that the Chair will be able to make his report without comment.

Thank you very much.

CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Thanks. Karen. I do appreciate your comments, but I do have my opinions,
and my opinions are from my own field experience, and
from my understanding of situations and performance.

So I want this Council to be aware that
I do not agree with everything that the managers
propose or purport.

I do feel that this Council's actions
on the fisheries issue here for 4B and 4C were shown to
be highly beneficial to the subsistence users of our
region that live in Galena, Ruby, and also Koyukuk,
Nulato, and Kaltag, the fishing pressure got spread out
to where there was a highly beneficial to all of the
subsistence users on this portion of the Yukon River,
and I highly appreciate the Louden Tribal Council
putting that proposal forward and that adoption by the
Board of Fish.

So at that point I'll complete my
report. I do hear that Susie had a couple more
statements that she wanted to make under tribal
comments on non-agenda items. Susie.

MS. SAM: Thank you. I was instructed
by my husband that if I had anything to say, to say
this, and I failed at my first attempt. But he noticed
this year for the fishing that when we were processing
the fish, the king salmon eggs and chum salmon eggs
were a lot smaller this year than any other year.

And then Louden is hosting the potluck
tonight, but I was just going to make a comment. Thank
you to people like Jenny to bring subsistence foods,
but because a lot of people will probably bring no fish
or meat, because that's too valuable for us to share.

And our last tribal meeting -- the
other thing that I wanted to share was at our last
tribal council meeting the tribal council passed the
resolution for Stand for Salmon. And for the same
reasons that I had talked about earlier. I just wanted
to bring that to the attention.

Thank you.

CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Thank you, Susie.

Karen.
MS. CARROLL: Mr. Chair, this is Holly Carroll with Fish and Game.

CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Oh, are you going to answer one of her questions. Go ahead, Holly.

MS. CARROLL: Actually I found the comment by -- was it Susie? I found that fascinating about the fish egg size. And I don't want to derail your process now, but I would love to ask her a few questions about the fish egg size if I could.

CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Oh, go right ahead.

MS. CARROLL: Is your name Susie?

MS. SAM: Yes.

MS. CARROLL: And you are fishing in District 4 there near Galena or -- I missed that part.

MS. SAM: Yes.

MS. CARROLL: I was curious if you're comfortable explaining what type of fishing method you used, and also if you noticed any difference in the size of your catch this year, because one thing that we know about fish egg size is that typically fish have smaller eggs when they are going further to spawn or when they are less mature or when they're smaller or younger. So I was just curious if you were using a different kind of fish method -- fishing method or gear, and whether or not you noticed that you had smaller fish or possibly younger catches this year.

MS. SAM: Yes, we used -- we drift around Galena this year, and the fish were smaller this year also, but the eggs were notably smaller on both salmon species.

CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Did you use to drift down by Koyukuk with the same size gear?

MS. CARROLL: I can't hear any response from the meeting, can anyone else.

CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Can you hear me, Holly?
UNIDENTIFIED VOICE: No, we lost them.

CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Can you hear me, Holly?

MS. CARROLL: Oh, Mr. Chair. I can hear you, yes.

CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Okay. I'm asking Susie did she use the same gear type down on Koyukuk in other years. Susie.

MS. SAM: Yes. And it's my husband that do the fishing, but, yes, he does.

CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: So it's a drift gillnet, same size gear used previously, was used just upriver, but this year showing smaller fish. So I don't know that that would have a bearing, Holly.

MS. CARROLL: Okay. Thanks for that clarification. We really appreciate hearing details like that from fishermen, so I want to thank you again for bringing that up.

CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Thank you. I do appreciate that. That's very important information for managers to understand.

MR. KRISKA: Mr. Chair.

CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Tom.

MR. KRISKA: I think there's a different -- it could have been different methods used, because of the fact that they start out with -- you could use seven-and-a-half right off the start, and then you go down to six, and they switch it back and forth a lot, so it's kind of for me hard to say. So I don't know. It's just that there was smaller eggs even if we used the seven-and-a-half. It was not only here in Galena, but all the way down the river.

CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: All right. Appreciate hearing that.

MS. DEATHERAGE: Mr. Chair.

CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Karen.
MR. COLLINS: Mr. Chair. This is Ray.

CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Okay. Go ahead, Ray.

MR. COLLINS: Yeah, I wanted to make one comment before we lose it. We were talking about the salvage and the distribution of meat. And I'm wondering what information is given to those sporthunters that are going up there. And if they're going through a Federal checkpoint, maybe we need a requirement that they have enough game bags to take care of at least the moose that they're expecting to get, because that keeps the flies off and it helps.

The other thing is that they be required to hang the meat and have a tarp or something over it, because if they're laying on the ground and if they're in plastic bags of mishandled, it's lost. So maybe there should be some requirements put in place about how prepared they are, and maybe some information given to the hunters about the salvage of meat so that it comes in in better shape.

Thank you.

CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Thank you, Ray.

Eastern Interior Regional Council has been driving a hunter education on meat care and so forth. And so I would like Karen to come up with what Eastern Interior's developed so far, and whether that should be also implemented in Western Interior, especially for Koyukuk and the Nowitna check stations.

And then Karen had a comment. Go ahead, Karen.

MS. DEATHERAGE: Thank you, Mr. Chair.

And regarding the Eastern Interior, the program that they are developing is a pilot program where the hope is that what they come up with will be used in other regions and help other regions to deal with some hunter conflicts.

I wanted to ask Susie -- first, I want to thank you and the tribe for hosting the potluck tonight. What time will that be held and will it be held in this building here.
Thank you.

MS. SAM: Yes. It's 5:30 here at the hall.

MS. DEATHERAGE: Thank you very much.

CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Okay. Appreciate that. Appreciate your comments and appreciate your providing the meal tonight.

Don. Don has a question.

MR. HONEA: Well, not so much a question. I thank you for your presentation, Susie, for coming here for Louden, and specifically I wanted to know, you know, and I guess I kind of heard in favor of what the fishing was like. I mean, was it really good? And it sounds like it, but I just wanted to mention that the tribe's position on ballot 1. And we just recently within the last week, Ruby tribal did pass and -- you know, whether it makes a difference in the November thing or not, we did pass it in support of it.

And also I like your wolf bounty and any village within the Western Interior can consider that. We do have a bounty on them. And I think that's one way that -- you know, for the State to come in and do what they did in McGrath, it's not going to happen. So I appreciate that bounty that they do. That's just one of the means that we can help ourselves.

Thank you though.

CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Thanks, Don. Appreciate those comments.

Any other comments on -- and then Ken Chase wanted to talk to us on a non-agenda item and briefly on -- this is a past proposal 2017, Ken. And so you want to come before the mic there and give us a real brief comment on -- this would be Wildlife Proposal 18-33 through 36 for 2017. Go ahead and make that comment.

MR. CHASE: Thank you, Mr. Chair. How much time are you going to give me?
CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Oh, just give us a real brief. This is a -- this proposal was acted on by the Federal Subsistence Board, so.....

MR. CHASE: Well, there's a couple other things I'd like to bring up.

CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Oh, go ahead and just give us your comments.

MR. CHASE: Okay. Thank you. And thank you to the committee. My name is Ken Chase.

I guess I have to say I'm here because -- I came up on a meeting or kind of a get together with some fishermen from the Yukon. A young fisherman. It was hosted by YRDFA. And I was asked to participate as an elder and also as I work with the Fish and Wildlife here out of Galena on Nowitna, Koyukuk, and Innoko.

And that's one of my goals working is trying to get younger people more involved in all aspects of fishing and hunting and resource for the subsistence people in the Interior.

And also I see member Shirley Clark from Galena is not here -- from Grayling. Is she on call? Is she on the.....

CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: She's not called in this morning. And the plane didn't pick her up when she was supposed to be picked up there.

MR. CHASE: Okay. And then I kind of want to comment on some of the fisheries things that you were talking about in the discussion here.

And I also chair the four-village the advisory committee for the State, so I'm kind of back and forth on a number of things.

But my interest on the fisheries is hearing the comment on the fish from the gal from Galena here. We had the same thing happen this year in the Grayling/Anvik area where our fish -- the second pulse I noticed was -- had a lot of small male fish, and then the female fish that were caught during that second pulse was also small. The eggs were small. And
that seemed to me -- so I kind of wanted to see what Shirley had to say in her report from Grayling.

And the other reason I'm here, too, is to talk about a couple other things. One is the Bering Sea/Western Interior classification of lands. That's probably going to affect some of the subsistence stuff that's going to be going, but that's going to be happening here shortly. And I've been working on that.

And going to the main reason or -- I came here by accident really, and so I thought I should answer or bring up this problem we had with our proposal, 18-33 and 36 that was proposed last year by our committee. And for the record I would like to say that our committee, our advisory committee for the State, has worked very hard with the four villages down there, and every time we had any kind of questions with wildlife and stuff, we'd go to -- we hold committee meetings in all our villages. And for at least five years prior to this proposal, we've had people coming to us about trying to align the State and the Federal government seasons, to stop some of the illegal hunting, some of the people that were being charged with hunting, and we could see that it was happening.

And in our proposal it states that we took away 13 days of subsistence fishing from the users, which is true in a sense, but it's not true that we took all those days away, because with the spring hunt in February and March, which is handled by Innoko Wildlife Refuge, we had one month that the manager has the option to keep open during that winter season -- or spring season. So actually the people have more chance to get moose in the year towards springs than they do if we just leave that one in the falltime.

And also the State did a -- came up with a five-year harvest on that hunt in August and September. And the front end of the August -- the first part of the August season, there was -- I think five years, there was only like nine moose taken. I don't have all the numbers with me, but four of them were taken illegally, because they were on land that they didn't know it was open for -- or closed. And then in our area there's like 60 percent of the land, you know, is Federal government, and we have village lands of the four villages. So in that early season, they have to go -- people that are going to hunt that first part have to go a long ways off of the village to
hunt up the Innoko River or up the Bonasila River, so the records show that that August 20th, or whatever it was at the time, was not producing any opportunity for people. They were not using it. And that's why we changed up to give it to bring it with the State alignment hunt.

And I was kind of upset that spring when I was in Kotzebue for an RIT meeting, and I got a call from the office and said that our proposal was kind of blind sided by Tanana Chiefs. And somebody there that I didn't even know who it was, but they didn't give me the courtesy to call, to come -- try to get down there and explain what was -- what happened to this. And we got someone come in there to kill a proposal that we worked on for five years, and that the people really wanted, and we thought was in the best interest of the people.

And my thing to the committee here is that I don't like to see that. I don't think that was a very smart thing to sidetrack or to cut the people on the bottom of the working chain, which is the villages and the advisory committees for the work we put into it, and then we're just -- we had no chance to defend it. We had no chance to do anything with it. So that's my caution to this committee is that, hey, look at some of these proposals and where they come from, and they come from the people that are using that resource. They're the first one on the list, and those are the ones we have to listen to.

I think that's the end of my complaint.

CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Okay. Yeah, I was at the Federal Subsistence Board meeting. The Tanana Chiefs task force, I forget what their full title was, had many commenters come up to the mic in opposition to this Proposal 18-33 and 36 alignment. On of their main complaints was that the tribes were unaware of those proposals. And so that's -- this Council -- at that point I felt that if the tribal council members were saying they hadn't been told about this proposal. This Council had requested, and when we deliberate proposals, we ask, are there any tribal comments and we had none. So there was a glitch in what some people -- some people's information flow about those proposals. That's why the proposals failed as because there was -- people were saying they weren't informed of these
proposals. And that was the main reason that started
to turn south. This Council had originally supported
the proposals for alignment, but when we had like a
huge number of people commenting before the Federal
Subsistence Board that they were opposing the proposal,
that weakened that.

So we need to go -- I would encourage
resubmission of the proposals under the next wildlife
round, and I want to assure that each community
affected by those proposals, past number 18-33 and 36,
that those regional council -- those tribal councils
are fully informed about those proposals, and that they
have their -- their comments are then brought before
this Council and the Federal Subsistence Boards.
That's why that proposals failed. And so this is a
public process, and because the AC was in favor of the
proposal and submitting the proposals and the
representatives from each one of those communities on
the AC, it didn't represent what the tribal councils' positions were. That's where the twist occurred.

So I would suggest that those proposals
be resubmitted, but we have to have those tribal
comments. And so when we deliberated those proposals
in last round, we were getting no comments. And I said
that over and over. And Orville says that at the
Federal Subsistence Board, we get no comments from
those tribes. We need to have tribal comments on
proposals that affect the tribes, the game management
units that they're in. Like Louden. Louden should be
-- it's my position, my position, that the Refuge has
subsistence coordinators, and those subsistence coordinators should go to each one of those
communities.

Like if a proposal affects Ruby and
Galena and Koyukuk, that they should go to those tribal
council meetings and say, these are Federal proposals
that are going to affect you community, and this is
what the proposal does. What do you feel about it?
And they should be able to comment in that way.

Did you have a comment, Karen.

MS. DEATHERAGE: Yeah. Thank you, Mr.
Chair. And I know it's difficult for the tribes.
They're so busy. But we do have four opportunities. I
just want to make sure that they understand there are
four opportunities for tribes to comment on proposals.

The first one, of course, is when we open the comment period up to everyone in general. When we go out with the proposal book and we say, we invite anybody to make comments at that time.

The second opportunity is when Orville, our Native liaison sets up tribal consultations. And I for one think that's one of the best opportunities for tribes to really weigh in. And so I would encourage all tribes to take advantage of those opportunities.

And if there's something we can do to change how we make outreach or make it more convenient for you, we are all ears. We're going to be talking about that a little later in this meeting.

The third opportunity that the tribes have are indeed at the actual Council meetings. So every day we give tribes opportunities to speak not only to proposals but to any issues that are facing their communities.

And the fourth one, which some people may not be aware of, are the actual Federal Subsistence Board meetings. As Jack said, the Tanana Chiefs group spoke at those meetings. They testified on those proposals. You can do this by phone. You can do it in writing. Or you can do it present at the meeting.

And if there's again anything we can do from the Office of Subsistence Management to help make sure that you have those opportunities, and to work with you, to make sure you're getting your points across, we would be more than happy to help you.

Thank you.

CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Thanks, Karen.

Do you have a comment, Don.

MR. HONEA: Just a comment. Thank you, Ken, for that. I really don't even know what that specific proposal is or why, you know, TCC hunting and fishing task force took a stand on that, but is it somewhere in here or can we look that up and.....
CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Well, it was in our last meetings, we were under wildlife. It was to align the State and Federal seasons for moose in Unit 21E. And so when it came before the Federal Subsistence Board, the Tanana Chiefs hunting and fishing task force had many people come to the mic and comment against that proposal. That's the reason the proposals went south.

So I do feel that this Council is under statutory obligation to provide a public platform for communities and public members to have a meaningful role in subsistence management. So I feel that there's probably many reasons to support the proposals, but those tribal councils have to be made aware of what those positive benefits are. So apparently they weren't, because.....

Whoever called just called in, your phone is just really making a ton of noise, a lot of static. Can you hang up and redial in. Oh, that must have been it.

So I would suggest that the proposals be resubmitted and that we need to get -- this Council needs to have the tribal comments from those GASH communities to make this float before the Federal Subsistence Board.

Ken.

MR. CHASE: Mr. Chairman. I'd like to comment to that. And I'm very well aware of how this process goes. I don't think due process was done -- was handled in that way. And to remind you, Mr. Chairman, that I am also a tribal member. And I know for a fact that these -- I have a letter here that we sent around to all the tribes at that time.

And the people that got -- that opposed this were three new people, three new chiefs. They knew nothing about this. They didn't want to know about it. One of them was your ex-board member, Robert Walker. And they didn't come to any of our meetings. And we invited them to come to our meetings, and they don't. And it's not a breakdown of my committee or me. It's there; it's that they're not coming. Every village -- has all their members are tribal members. And they're very well aware of this proposal.
And I could read this one letter, this one thing I sent out prior to that thing. And the Tanana Chiefs said that they had -- there was no comment from them at one point of our process. And I know we can resubmit it and everything, but I don't want to see this happen again with our committee.

CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Well, what I would like, if the proposal was resubmitted -- proposals was resubmitted, that I would like when it comes time for the deliberation of the proposal, I want those tribes to be on the phone. And if they don't comment on the phone, that we will call them and contact them. And if they don't want to be on the phone and make a comment, then they have nothing to say before the Federal Subsistence Board. But when we have tribal members saying that they were uninformed of that, whether it was after the process had been started, they were new council chiefs, or whatever it was, we need to have everybody at least the opportunity to comment. And so apparently they hadn't had enough opportunity to comment even though you had sent this letter, but those members hadn't seen it or however it occurred. But that's why the proposal failed.

If you feel the proposal still has -- is warranted, then I would encourage you to resubmit the proposals. OSM has already done all the background work on it, and that we need to engage these affected tribes during the Council, Western Interior Regional Council's deliberation process, and OSM will -- I'm going to make sure that OSM makes sure that they're on the phone, that they're called and they're bugged and you are going to have to be on the phone for this proposal. And so they can take their position at that time. But it's a public process, and when those tribes came before the Federal Subsistence Board, tribal members specific to that game management unit, that's when that proposal went south. And so we need to address that on the next round.

MR. CHASE: Okay. I thank you and Mr. Honea for your information that the proposal is 18-36 and 18-33 in this book and you can review it there if you would.

Thank you.

CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Thank you. So
thanks for bringing that up, Ken.

So it is a little bit before 12:00 o'clock. And we have Marcy Okada. She wanted to talk to us. Are you on the phone still, Marcy?

MS. OKADA: Yes, Mr. Chair. I'm still on the phone.

CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: We have about 10 minutes or so before 12, and so we'll give you your time to speak right now, because you have EI RAC meeting also. So we'll let you speak now before we break for lunch. Go ahead.

MS. OKADA: Okay. My name is Mary Okada. I'm the subsistence coordinator for Gates of the Arctic National Park and Preserve. And I'm just going to give an update. And I think all of you might have that update in front of you, so I'll just go ahead.

Gates of the Arctic National Park's Subsistence Resource Commission met in Allakaket on April 17th and 18th of this year. There was much discussion on the Ambler Mining District road with the National Park Service providing updates, the Allakaket and Alatna tribal members providing testimony, and the SRC members sharing information about their comment letter that went to both the National Park Service and the Bureau of Land Management.

The National Park Service presented information on proposed wildlife regulations for hunting and trapping in national preserves that are currently in the process of being amended.

The SRC took action to send a welcome letter to the Department of Interior Secretary Ryan Zinke to introduce themselves and to share their concerns about the Ambler Mining District road.

Additionally Park Service Staff provided updates on both natural and cultural resources. And the next scheduled meeting is for November 13th and 14th in Fairbanks.

The next update is about a caribou study that was conducted by the Park Service from 2010
to 2013. It was a caribou diet analysis study of early
fall and late winter diet of barren-ground caribou, the
Western Arctic Herd, Teshekpuk Herd, and the Central
Arctic Herd. Results from this study showed that
lichens made up about 71 percent of late winter diets
of caribou in Northwest Alaska, whereas moss made up 11
percent, and shrubs made up 9 percent as the next most
common forage items. Diets of males, non-pregnant
females, and pregnant females were not significantly
different. Pregnancy was not associated with the
abundance of any forage type during winter. Caribou
that migrated south have lower levels of nutritional
stress, higher levels of lichen in the diet, and lower
levels of moss and shrubs compared to caribou that did
not migrate south. Future investigations into the
potential connection between lichen abundance and the
winter diet and survivorship, as well as linking the
late summer diets of individuals to the reproductive
success are very much needed.

CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: And I will stop you
there......

MS. OKADA: Our Service is.....

CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: And I will stop you
there, Marcy, and state that I read that report and
disagree with that report, that there was a complete
ignoring of the spring diet of high protein foods, and
so I'll be discussing that at the Gates of the Arctic
Subsistence Resource Commission, but I have to get
these managers' heads turned around the corner.
They're stuck on this lichen in the diet and this
capital breeding thing. So this is -- I read that
report. I will be talking about that at the future
Gates of the Arctic Subsistence Resource Commission
meeting.

Continue.

MS. OKADA: Okay. The National Park
Service was able to survey nearly all of the 160 sample
units, and this is a bear survey, which covers about
18,213 square kilometers in Gates of the Arctic
National Park and Preserve. The sample units are
representative of the park habitat. Survey data is
used to estimate bear density, the number of bears per
area. Preliminary estimate for brown bear density in
the survey area, which included Gates of the Arctic
National Park and Preserve and surrounding lands in Unit 26A and B, 25A, 24A and B is approximately 565 bears with 50 of those bears being cubs. An in-depth analysis will be shared with the RAC at your next meeting.

Dall's sheep surveys were conducted July.....

MR. GERVAIS: Question, Mr. Chair.

MS. OKADA: .....2nd to 8th -- go ahead.

CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Stand by there. Tim's got a question on the bears. Go ahead, Tim.

MR. GERVAIS: Marcy, this is Tim Gervais. What age do you consider bears to no longer be cubs?

MS. OKADA: And I -- Mr. Gervais, I can't answer that question, but I could get back with you in regards to your question. But at the moment I can't answer that question.

CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Typically in most bear surveys that I've read brown bear cubs that are with the sow are considered cubs. And that's usually normally departing the sow at three years of age, but they can stay as long as five years. I've read that. So they -- but generally three years. And this is Gates of the Arctic, so it would be northern population, stay with the sow for three years.

Go ahead, Marcy.

MS. OKADA: Okay. Dall's sheep surveys were conducted July 2nd to 8th in the Itkillik and Anaktuvuk areas by a pilot and one observer. All transects were completed in the Itkillik and about 80 percent of the transects were completed in the Anaktuvuk area. Overall numbers appear to be stable in both areas with no major increase or decrease, but lamb recruitment appears to be low in the Itkillik area. The data will be analyzed and results will be available at your next meeting. The Park Service will continue annual surveys in the northeastern portion of Gates of the Arctic to monitor changes in sheep population.
The National Park Service and the Alaska Department of Fish and Game conducted a salmon stream survey in Gates of the Arctic National Park and Preserve and Kobuk Valley National Park from July 23rd to August 13th. This effort identified undocumented salmon streams and spawning habitat in the Upper Koyukuk and Kobuk Rivers.

In regards to the ranger division, with response to requests from Anaktuvuk Pass residents, Gates of the Arctic was able to staff the ranger station throughout the summer by revolving staff in and out during times the local ranger was away from the station.

Ranger Adam Mehlhorn, a previous employee of Gates of the Arctic, returned to a supervisor position this past mid-winter. He was hired to coordinate search and rescue, law enforcement, and medical response. Ranger Mehlhorn will be based out of Fairbanks for part of the year.

Remaining barrels on Park Service lands at Chandler Lake near Anaktuvuk Pass were removed this summer by rangers. This completes the coordinated barrel removal project started in 2016.

Guide Richard Guthrie, who’s permitted to guide in Itkillik Preserve, which is Unit 26A and B, did not have any clients for sheep or bear hunting this past season.

Several search and rescue events occurred in the park and preserve this past summer, mostly from inexperienced boaters who were challenged by high water conditions. And some of the injuries were treated by park staff who are trained in medical response.

Park Service recently hired Joe Dalle-Molle as a supervisory park ranger, who’s based out of Kotzebue, to coordinate search and rescues, law enforcement, and medical responses in the western Arctic National Park lands.

And long-time ranger/pilot Dan Stevenson, who’s based out of Kotzebue will be -- well,
I guess I should say has retires last month at the end of September.

And I just quickly want to share an Ambler road update. The Park Service is currently working on an environmental and economic analysis, and we're also waiting to hear whether the Alaska Industrial Development Annex Port Authority will be moving forward with the Ambler Road project.

Any questions.

CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Any questions for Park Service -- Gates of the Arctic Park Service presentation.

MR. THOMAS: I guess the only comment I have is they talk about this Ambler Road project. They talk about a great big -- a very large area to work the mine. Now, everybody's concerned about all the kind of good stuff on it. But why not start small to make sure that it's a viable situation. I mean, you don't have to go there and make a 10-mile cut to find some proof. Make one of them every one mile just to see what could happen in there. That way you're not going to rip the whole country apart if it isn't necessary. I don't know, I just -- yeah.

Thank you. Enough.

CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Well, the proven reserves, you know, they've drilled that stuff. But the problem, one of the main problems when we reviewed this at the -- I'm on the Gates of the Arctic Subsistence Resource Commission. The company who wants the road built is not even going to mine. That company wants to sell it's property. So basically they want a value enhancement so that they can sell their property. They're not proposing mining. There's no mining plan. And so the whole project is a debacle. So they've drilled it. They know they have reserves. They're trying to sell it. That's what their objective is, and they want the State of Alaska to build them the road to enhance their sale price. That's what they're doing.

So any other questions for Marcy.

(No comments)
CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Hearing none, thank you so much, Marcy.

MS. OKADA: Thank you.

CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: And we've come down to -- Karen, what do you think for -- we should keep going until the lunch arrives -- or the lunch is arriving here. Go ahead.

MS. DEATHERAGE: Thank you, Mr. Chair. The lunch is here.

Okay.

MS. DEATHERAGE: Yes, it's in the back. And so if you'd like to break now, I think it would be a good time. The only thing I'd ask you if for people, if they could pay their $15 per lunch, if you did purchase it, I'll go ahead and collect that so we can make sure they get payment. Thank you.

CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Sure. Okay. Thanks so much. We'll break for -- it's five after 1. We'll reconvene at 1:05 for those on the phone.

Thank you so much.

MR. COLLINS: Thank you.

(Off record)

(On record)

CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: .....and continue the Western Interior Regional Advisory Council meeting. We had our Council comments this morning, introduction of guests. We took some non-agenda items from Louden and Susie Sam and Ken Chase. So now we're further down on our agenda. We took Marcy Okada, because she has to deal with Eastern Interior also. They're meeting simultaneously. So we're down to old business, No. 9 on our amended agenda, National Park Services sport hunting and trapping on national preserves in Alaska, environmental assessment.

Karen, did you want to.....
MS. DEATHERAGE: Thank you, Mr. Chair.
I guess I could ask who is on the phone, if Clarence
Summers is on the phone or if Marcy would like to
present any information on the regulatory proposal from
the National Park Service.

MS. OKADA: Hi. This is Marcy, and I
had coordinated with the regional office in Anchorage
to provide that informational update. I'm not sure if
they're on the line. It sounds like.....

CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Do we have --
there's a lot of people coming on line, and we're
looking for anybody from National Park Service.
Marcy's not prepared. We need National Park Service,
Clarence Summers, regional office to discuss this sport
hunting and trapping on National Preserves in Alaska's
environmental assessment. And if not, we'll move that
further back.

Karen.

MS. DEATHERAGE: Thank you, Mr. Chair.
I think Mr. Summers was going to discuss that with
Marcy, if she was comfortable. If not, he was willing
to go ahead and have it heard under the National Park
Service report under agency reports later on during the
meeting.

CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Okay. That would be
fine. Do we have anybody on the phone that would like
to address that from Park Service. If not, we're going
to move on.

MS. OKADA: Mr. Chair. This is Marcy.
I can go ahead and share information about this
proposed rule and EA.

CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Okay. If you would,
go right ahead.

MS. OKADA: So just to give a
background overview, on May 22nd, 2018 the Park Service
published a proposed rule that would modify wildlife
harvest regulations that were adopted for national
preserves in 2015. 2015 Federal prohibitions that
would be reversed include taking black bears, including
cubs and sows with cubs with artificial light at den
sites; taking black and brown bears over bait; and
taking wolves and coyotes, including pups, during the
denning season. The proposed rule would more closely
align sport hunting and trapping regulations for
national preserves with State harvest regulations. The
proposed rule does not affect hunting in national
parks.

On September 6th, 2018 an environmental
assessment, also known as an EA, was released. The EA
is a mandatory NEPA compliance document. An EA is a
concise document that serves to briefly provide
sufficient evidence and analysis for determining
whether to prepare an environmental impact statement or
a finding of no significant impact. The EA relies in
part on data from Alaska Department of Fish and Game to
determine whether the proposed regulation could
significantly impact wildlife populations relying on
habitat in national preserves.

The proposed rule and the EA are open
for comment until November 5th, 2018. The public
comment period has been extended two times already.
Once at the request of the State of Alaska, and again
at the request of other local parties, including the
Eastern Interior Regional Advisory Council.

There are two ways to comment on the
proposed rule. You can upload comments at
regulations.gov, or you can mail or hand-deliver your
comments to the Regional Director of which an address
is listed, and he's located down in Anchorage. All
submissions received must include the words National
Park Service or NPS and must include a docket number.
And comments received will be posted without change to
regulations.gov including any personal information
provided.

And the other way is to -- well, the
other way is to comment on the EA, which is the Pepsi
portal, and you can also mail or hand deliver your
comments to the same address, the Regional Director's
office.

I will stop there, but if folks have
any other questions, or any questions, feel free to go
ahead and ask.

CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Does Council members
have questions regarding this. It was basically a
directive by the Secretary of Interior to review the regulations that were published in the Federal Register regarding eliminating specific predator harvest seasons and methods of harvest. And now the Park Service is going back through the whole process over again to possibly realign with State regulations. Any comments from the Council members on that.

(No comments)

CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Any Council members feel that the Council should make comment on this EA to the Park Service.

(No comments)

CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Seeing none, we....

MR. CHAKUCHIN: Mr. Chair. This is Jobe Chakuchin with the National Park Service. I just logged in.

CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Okay. Go ahead, Jobe. Marcy gave us an overview of the EA. The Council is evaluating the EA, whether this Council would make a recommendation.

This Council relies fairly heavily on the Subsistence Resource Commissions to deal with these types of issues. And the commissions typically report back to the Council. And so this Council would rely is -- would be the Gates of the Arctic Subsistence Resource Commission. Preserve areas would be in question. This Council and the North Slope Regional Advisory Council would be the affected regions that the Subsistence Resource Commission would communicate back with their findings or comments.

So is it sufficient for the Council to rely on the Subsistence Resource Commission, Gates of the Arctic Subsistence Resource Commission to deal with this Park Service EA. Do I have affirmative.

MR. COLLINS: Jack, this is Ray.

CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Go ahead, Ray.

MR. COLLINS: Yeah. Unfortunately the Denali SRC was not able to meet this fall, and so we
don't have direct comments on that proposal. But

generally we have agreed with realignment with the

State wherever possible. But that's all I could say

now without the council actually taking action.

CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Thank you, Ray.

Don, go ahead.

MR. THOMAS: Yeah. Mr. Chair. I'm

really kind of confused. Is this the one where we're
talking about the taking of wolf pups and stuff, the
denning things? It seems like we've been tossing this
around for a couple years, and I'm just wondering if
this is an action item.

CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Well, when does the

comment period end again, Joe or Marcy.

MS. OKADA: The comment period ends on

November 5th.

CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: So the comment

period's coming up fairly soon. The Gates of the

Arctic Subsistence Resource Commission will meet after

that, but it's typically the commission would -- they

would receive the comments from the commission,
correct, Marcy?

MS. OKADA: I think the SRC would have
to have a teleconference prior to the deadline for

comments in order for potential comments to be

incorporated.

CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Well, the SRC should

have a conference call then if that's the case.

Typically agencies have allowed Regional Councils or

SRCs beyond the normal comment period to accommodate

their meetings, but one way or another, the SRC should

comment on this EA.

This was an issue at the 10-region

Council region meeting a few years back, or three years

ago or whenever that was. The Councils were really

wound into the whole U.S. Fish and Wildlife process

which did the same thing. And so this Council -- or

basically it was a comment by the Koyukuk River

Advisory Committee that the harvest seasons and bag

limits for predators should be aligned, because those
are still within sustained yield. But that was under
the U.S. Fish and Wildlife regulatory change, which is
basically very similar to what the Park Service has got
here.

So I'm sure that the U.S. Fish and
Wildlife is going to have another process that we will
most likely address this spring it seems at some point.
I'm not sure where the U.S. Fish and Wildlife is in
this whole process, but they're going to do the same
thing, because the Secretary of Interior has told them
to do that.

Go ahead, Karen.

MS. DEATHERAGE: Thank you, Mr. Chair.
My understanding is the Fish and Wildlife Service's
ruling was overturned.....

CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Oh, they're

overturned.

MS. DEATHERAGE:.....because of the
time frame. It allowed -- there was enough time
between the ruling, when it went in place and when it
was to codified, for it to be overturned. And so that
did not go into regulation. So it will not come up for
review.

Thank you.

CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: I stand corrected.
I appreciate that. I failed to recall that. And so
that's -- yes, I do remember that now.

MR. THOMAS: Mr. Chair.

CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Go ahead, Dennis.

MR. THOMAS: Is this the kind of thing
we should be sticking our nose in or not?

CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: This gets the Arctic
Subsistence -- this area is in a portion of our region,
that's why we would be discussing that. But I feel
that it's best served by allowing the Subsistence
Resource Commission to address that, because it's
really a tiny little sliver within the region, so I
don't think that it's such a big fish to fry to make a
big comment on it. But I wanted the Council to be aware of this issue of where the -- or how the Secretary of Interior and the Congress took exception to this specific over-ruling of State regulations.

Karen.

MS. DEATHERAGE: Thank you, Mr. Chair. I just wanted to remind the Council that this affects State regulations only, not subsistence. So when we talk alignment, I'm not sure if that is the correct word. What it would do was allow for these practices to happen by sporthunters on National Park preserves and any other areas where sporthunting is permitted. It does not affect subsistence hunting and subsistence regulations.

Thank you.

CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Yes. But it was.....

MR. CHAKUCHIN: Mr. Chairman. I may add to that.

CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Go ahead, Jobe.

MR. CHAKUCHIN: Jobe Chakuchin. That only applies to the preserve areas as well, and not park lands or most of the Alaska National Parks. It aligns the sport regulations with the State regulations.

CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Right. So we.....

MR. CHAKUCHIN: And on the point of asking for more time for the SRC to address this issue, I would let Marcy bring that up to Clarence and myself to make sure that you can provide comments.....

CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: It's my opinion.

MR. CHAKUCHIN: .....after the closing.

CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Yes. It's my opinion that this Council should allow the Subsistence Resource Commission to deal with this. This Council could endorse an extension for the Gates of the Arctic Subsistence Resource Commission, and we could write a
letter to that effect. Would that help with the.....

MR. CHAKUCHIN: Certainly. Yes. Yes.

CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: So the Chair will entertain a motion to draft a quick letter to extend the EA comment period so that the Gates of the Arctic Subsistence Resource Commission can make proper comments on this EA.

MR. HONEA: I'll second that if that's a motion.

MR. GERVAIS: So moved.

MR. CHAKUCHIN: And that would make the most sense to do.

CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: So we've got a motion by Tim, seconded by Don. Those in favor of transmitting that letter for an extension to allow the Gates of the Arctic Subsistence Resource Commission to properly address this EA and finding -- signify by saying aye.

IN UNISON: Aye.

CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Those opposed same sign.

(No opposing votes)

CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: And we will transmit that to the Park Service Regional Office. Thanks so much Marcy and Jobe.

MR. GERVAIS: Question, Jack.

CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Go ahead, Tim.

MR. GERVAIS: Would somebody, Marcy or another person with the Park Service clarify. There's no sporthunting or sport trapping inside the national park; it's only the preserves. Is that the current regulation.

MS. OKADA: That's correct. National Park lands are reserved for resident zone communities such as Wiseman; and national preserves are open to
both sporthunting and subsistence.

CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Okay. That covers that issue.

MS. OKADA: And, Mr. Chair, I have.....

CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Go ahead.

MS. OKADA: .....just a little bit more information to add in regard to the number of comments that were received so far for the proposed rule, and then what the next steps are.

CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Okay. Go ahead.

MS. OKADA: So total comments on the proposed rule as of September 17th, so far 175,000 comments have been received. 28,000 of them have been unique. This is an unusually large amount of public response. No comment numbers yet on the EA. Initial analysis suggests the vast majority of comments oppose the change.

In regards to next steps, and this is kind of dated, there was a consultation teleconference set up with the tribes and ANCSA corporations, and it occurred on October 2nd. After the close of the comment period on November 5th, the Park Service will analyze public comments and consider modifications based on feedback. The Park Service will respond to substantive comments on the EA and proposed rule with reasonable basis. And following the public comment analysis, the Park Service will consider the appropriate next steps for NEPA and work towards publishing a final rule.

CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Okay. Appreciate that information, Marcy.

Any other.

(No comments)

CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Okay. Thanks so much, Marcy.

MS. OKADA: Thank you.
MR. HUNTINGTON: Mr. Chairman.

CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Oh, go ahead, Gilbert. Come to the mic if you're going to -- you have to speak into the record.

MR. HUNTINGTON: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. My name is Gilbert Huntington. I live here in Galena. I'm also a big game guide and commercial fisherman.

I have a question for you, Mr. Chairman, and I believe her name is Marcia?

CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Marcy Okada.

MR. HUNTINGTON: Marcy. Yes. What she mentioned, a great number of comments on this item here. And what impact would those comments have versus what some of us here that are more likely impacted, directly impacted from the harvest of these resources, be they considered sport or subsistence?

Now, you might look at me as a big game hunter -- big game guide as I bring sporthunters out, but I assure you, Mr. Chairman and others, that the harvest of these resources by my clients are used for subsistence purposes. For instance, myself personally, most of the bear meat and for sure moose meat that are harvested by my clients are used for subsistence purposes. But the vast majority of the meat is given to people that are in need. We have a running list.

And so I'm very, very concerned that these however many comments there were will be just overwhelmed what little voice we may have. And I'd like some assurance that we won't be basically voted out on certain issues. Maybe this might not be the case in this instance, but it's one of my concerned over the course of all these fish and game issues.

CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: So for clear for the record, you're in favor of aligning State -- eliminating the National Park Service restrictions on State regulations applying to the park preserves?

MR. HUNTINGTON: Yes.

CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Yes. So you
registered that comment, Marcy?

MS. OKADA: Yes.

CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: And that's Gilbert Huntington.

MS. OKADA: Okay.

CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: He's orally presenting that. So I appreciate that. This is a forum for comment on any issue, and Gilbert's stating that the bear meat and so forth is used by subsistence users within this region.

MR. HUNTINGTON: Absolutely, yes.

CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Okay. So any other comments, Gilbert?

MR. HUNTINGTON: Not on this issue here.

CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Okay. Appreciate your being here.

MR. GERVAIS: Jack.

CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: All right. Tim.

MR. COLLINS: Jack, this is Ray again.

CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Oh, go ahead, Ray. Stand by, Tim.

MR. COLLINS: Yeah. I think we've had a little discussion on the Denali SRC before, and there's one part of the regulation that may kind of cause conflict. That is the taking of bear over bait, because those areas are visited by Outside visitors and so on, and it makes it more visible, and they would question, you know, what is this about the park and so on, as opposed to simply trapping in the winter or some of the other parts of the regulation. So I don't know if they'll look at individual -- and I'll wait until we have a chance to meet to make a position on that. But it could be causing more conflict with the shooting over bait, because it's more visible to the general public who might visit the park. That's my comment at
this point. But it's individual, not the SRC.

CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Okay. Thank you, Ray.

And so I would again ask you to register that comment, Marcy.

MS. OKADA: Okay.

CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: And, Tim, go ahead.

MR. GERVais: Thank you, Mr. Chair.

Tim Gervais.

Marcy, when Gilbert was talking about the situation of having a lot of comments against the proposed rule, could you address the Council and our public audience about the Park Service evaluates the significance of those comments? Does it come directly down to the number of comments for and against? And you also used a term unique comments. Could you address how the Park Service evaluates the quality or type of comment.

CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Go ahead, Marcy.

MS. OKADA: So unique comments are considered, you know, not just your standard comment letters that just I guess -- I can't remember what the word is, but it's just your standard comment letter that just say they oppose or they are for this proposed rule without any backup information; whereas substantive comments could include identifying a factual error in the document and offering corrected information, or identifying relevant environmental issues that have not been considered in the document and explaining why it should be given further analysis, or possibly identifying inaccuracies or omissions within the document, impact analysis, or offering technical information. And it would be those types of comments that would be considered substantive. And they're not your typical comments, therefore they're considered unique. It's more of -- they're more of comments that are providing background information.

CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Okay. Does that explain it, Tim.
MR. GERV AIS: Well, okay. And the second part of that question is, as Mr. Huntington indicated, there's concern there's a vast number of comments against a rule. So as the Park Service evaluates whether they're going to move forward supporting the rule or not, how significant is it that there may be a certain percentage -- or a certain number of comments against a rule, like who's -- is there a grading system on which way the Park Service is going to go, or it's just kind of abstract on what the supervisor of the park wants to do.

CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Marcy.

MS. OKADA: Well, I'm not sure that I'm the most appropriate person to answer that question, being that I don't have a background on how comment analyses work. All I know right now is that I think a majority of the comments that we've received, public comments that we've received came from private organizations and organizations outside of the State.

CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: It's not a voting process though as far as I know.

MS. OKADA: But it's not a voting process. It's not a tally system of, you know, how many people are for the proposed rule or against the proposed rule. But I don't know the specifics on how the analysis is conducted.

CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Okay. And I think that's -- Gilbert's got one more comment. Go ahead, Gilbert.

MR. HUNTINGTON: Mr. Chair. Thank you. Excuse me.

I would urge the Council here and you specifically to address this issue and I think it's a critical issue for us here that depend on the resource. Maybe not in this instance, but identify a course where we know where this is going, where we don't depend on the whims of whoever's appointed or the director or whoever it is decides these issues, what the direction of these -- of what could be critical in some cases. We can't be wondering where are they coming from. Where the direction is coming from. We need to know in advance so we can properly address it, we don't get
blindsided by something that, you know -- I don't know your process, but I think it's a critical issue that needs to be addressed.

Thank you.

CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Okay. Thanks, Gilbert. Tommy.

MR. KRISKA: I was kind of confused about this, and really kind of scary for me to hear all these big numbers, 179,000, 28,000, and then last year when we were at another meeting, this kind of -- what the heck, there was a big sign-up sheet, there was 109 -- or 79,000 signatures for bear denning. And it seems like they attack us in different ways with this kind of stuff, and it really scares me. And I'm kind of concerned about it, and I really think in some way we should address these issues.

Thank you.

CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: So what the Council could do is make a comment as a voted comment by the Council that would support State regulations on the park preserve lands that's addressed in the EA. And would you like to make that motion.

MR. KRISKA: I would like to make that motion.

MR. GERVAIS: I'll second that.

CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Okay. We have a second by Tim. The Council's been discussing this for about a half an hour right now, and so I think it's clear in the Council's mind what this process is doing.

Any further discussion on this EA.

(No comments)

MR. HONEA: Question.

CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: And so Gilbert feels that -- I'm in discussion. Gilbert feels that this Council, it behooves this Council to make a recommendation. So there's a motion on the floor. And
so this Council's decided that it is going to make a position, and the Gates of the Arctic Subsistence Resource Commission can also make theirs.

So the question's called. Those in favor of transmitting a recommendation to maintain State regulations on Gates of the Arctic Park Preserve lands as addressed in the EA signify by saying aye.

IN UNISON: Aye.

CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Opposed same sign.

(No opposing votes)

CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: And so those comments will be transmitted to the National Park Service process, Regional Office I suppose.

Karen.

MS. DEATHERAGE: Thank you, Mr. Chair. The only recommendation I might make, if you would like to provide some justifications which I know would extend this conversation, it is often helpful, just as it is with regulations, to offer your justifications of why you would support that action.

Thank you.

CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: I will address that justification. As discussed by this Council extensively in past meetings regarding the harvest of predator species, wolves and bears within this region are way far below sustained yield, and so they've expanded seasons and bag limits, and harvest methods of the State of Alaska are not detrimental to those predator resources. And we felt that under the -- and we extensively commented on the U.S. Fish and Wildlife process, that that was not detrimental to those resources when you look at reality. And reality is the bear and wolf resources are under-harvested within the region, and so we didn't feel that the State regulations were detrimental to the -- on park land or refuge lands. So that would be the primary justification, that those State regulations are not -- would not exceed sustainability or harvestable surplus for subsistence users.
Tim, you have a further justification.

Go ahead.

MR. GERVAIS: I feel like the Council should support the fact, as a secondary reason, that we support the Park Service trying to keep their hunting regulations and trapping regulations in alignment with the State of Alaska. There's many times on this Council where we try to simplify the regulation burden of the users and managers by having Federal, State and Park Service regulations match each other as much as possible.

CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Okay. And that would be another reason of justification. All right.

Any further comment or justification on that.

(No comments)

CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Hearing none, we're moving on in the agenda here.

MR. THOMAS: Mr. Chairman.

CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Go ahead, Dennis.

MR. THOMAS: The only thing I've got about the Park Service, and I've heard people say that they would not do business with them, period. So I don't know if that reflects what we've got going on here or not.

CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Well, I've got a park within six miles of my house, and I've dealt extensively with the Park Service. And over the years we've developed a very good working relationship with the Gates of the Arctic Subsistence -- or, correction, their subsistence Staff and their superintendent and Staff. And so they are a land managing agency, and we do deal with them on a congenial basis.

So having said that, we're going to move on in this agenda. And we're on new business, No. 10, Yukon area salmon season summary, joint and Federal managers. And Gerald Maschmann usually sits at the table for us.
And there's also State fishery Staff on the phone call. Can I get an affirmative on that off the phone.

MS. CARROLL: Correct. Yukon management Staff are standing by for questions.

CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Say again your name.

MS. DEATHERAGE: Holly.


MS. CARROLL: I'm Holly Carroll. I'm the summer season manager for the Fish and Game, State of Alaska.

CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Yes, Holly. And then YRDFA also wanted to be after the Intertribal Fish Commission. I'm getting a little note here. So there would be other. That would be -- YRDFA would be with the Kuskokwim, right? Yukon also?

MS. DEATHERAGE: Yukon River.

UNIDENTIFIED VOICE: Well, what about the Kuskokwim then? I saw that here somewhere.


MR. MASCHMANN: Thank you. I'm Gerald Maschmann with the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service. I'm the assistant in-season manager on the Yukon River. Most of you know I work for Fred Bue, and he went to Tanana this time, and I'm here in Galena with you guys.

I'm handing out a lot of paper, and I always kind of cringe to hand out this much paper, but one report is the summer season summary from the Alaska Department of Fish and Game. That was put together by Holly Carroll's team. That gives a very detailed overview of what went on this summer, if you're interested in specific details about the summer season.

The other handout is a summary that Fred and I put together that basically summarizes the summer season and the fall season up to this date,
which is almost over for us, but there's still a little bit of monitoring going on for the fall season. I'm not going to read that. I've got some highlights and footnotes that I'm going to go through, and then ask you guys for questions.

And I just want to reiterate what Holly said about, you know, there's been some reports here about smaller fish with smaller eggs. And I just want to let you know we really value those reports. It does inform our management. And I was hoping during lunch to maybe talk with some of you specifically to see what you guys saw, but, you know, everyone took off for lunch. So hopefully sometime during this meeting, I'd like to corner you and ask you specifically how fishing went this year.

Anyway, on with the summary. I'll start with the summer season and then move to the fall season.

As most of, you know, we've had Chinooks -- Yukon Chinook salmon have been -- the production has been pretty low. In 2014, '15, and '16 we managed pretty conservatively, but in those years the run came back better than expected, and we ended up exceeding some of our goals. And in 2017 we also entered the season cautiously; however, you know, at the mid-point of the run, and in 2017, the run started coming in really well, and we actually came in better than we actually expected.

Summer chum, they've been doing good since '02. You know, there's been a lot of work with fishermen, both subsistence and commercial fishermen, to figure out how to harvest those abundant summer chum while protecting the weaker Chinook stock.

In 2018, the Chinook salmon forecast was between 173,000 and 251,000 Chinook. And we knew at the -- that at the low end of this range that that was going to require, you know, conservation measures to meet our escapement goals. And when we say conservation measures, we typically mean subsistence salmon restrictions. And we knew that a run size at the upper end, we could probably provide for a full subsistence harvest opportunity on Chinook salmon.

And we were somewhat optimistic going
into the season. You know, recent studies on ocean survival indicated that there were more young Chinook salmon out in the Bering Sea than in recent years, and there seemed to be a little bit of an upward trend from that low that we had in, you know, 2012 and 2013. And taking into account these new management tools, and then combine them with a great deal of the fishermen's suggestions that we've gotten in the past and at the pre-season meetings, you know, we came up with a strategy for a conservative approach to the season.

And then we entered the season, you know, cautiously with the idea that we would provide a little more Chinook harvest opportunity than we did in 2016 and '17, but still enter the season fairly cautiously. And we started in the Lower Yukon, you know, rather than going directly to six-inch gillnet gear just after ice out, we allowed some Chinook salmon gear to harvest the front, what we call the front tricklers of Chinook, and then just monitor the catches at the Lower Yukon test fish, and monitor subsistence fishermen's catches to see when those Chinook salmon start to pick up.

Then we put the Lower Yukon on, you know, half their normal window schedule of two 18-hour periods per week with seven-and-a-half-inch gear or smaller. When the Chinook salmon catches finally did begin to increase in the Lower Yukon test fishery, subsistence fishing was restricted using a combination of, you know, partial periods, closures, and periods restricted to six-inch or smaller mesh gillnet gear. And some level of these restrictions continued through upriver districts as the Chinook salmon run continued. And closures were used to protect groups of Chinook salmon through sections of the river, and restrictions to six-inch or smaller mesh gillnet gear provided some opportunity to target chum salmon while also expecting that there would be some harvest of a few Chinook salmon incidentally in this gear.

You know, unfortunately as the season progressed assessment continued to indicate that the 2018 Chinook salmon run was coming in, you know, below our expectations, you know, warranting continued restrictions to protect the Chinook salmon run. We didn't really relax subsistence salmon fishing until about 85 to 90 percent of the Chinook salmon run had passed.
Commercial chum fishing in Districts 1
and 2 began early with dipnet gear and beach seine
gear, which lasted through most of the season. Towards
the very end of the season, we did allow some
commercial fishing using six-inch or smaller mesh
gillnets. Again that was after, you know, 85 or 90
percent of the Chinook run had passed. And any
incidentally caught Chinook taken in that gear had to
be taken home for subsistence, so no Chinook salmon
were sold in the commercial fishery this year.

You know, in general the Upper Yukon
saw fewer restrictions, but there were a lot of
restrictions, because by the time Chinook salmon
arrived in these districts, we were a little more
confident that assessment was showing a bit of a
surplus of Chinook salmon available for subsistence
harvest. So we maybe didn't quite have as many
restrictions as the lower Yukon. Subdistricts 5A, B,
and C were restricted to half their normal schedule of
two 24-hour periods per week with six-inch gear for
about half the season. And Subdistrict 5D was
restricted to half their normal schedule, which is
normally seven days a week, down to three and a half
days a week with six-inch gear for most of the season.
And that was used to protect -- you know, most of the
Chinook going through 5D is Canadian-origin, and so
that was to protect those Canadian-origin Chinook.

District 6 was not managed nearly as
intensively as the rest of the Yukon. Genetic sampling
indicated maybe that the Tanana component of the run
would be adequate for escapement, but subsistence and
personal use fishing in Subdistrict 6 was placed on
half their normal window schedule with six-inch gear
for two and a half weeks, and then placed back on their
normal window schedule with seven-and-a-half-inch gear.

The Department still has subsistence
surveyors out in communities, so we won't really know
what -- we won't have any subsistence harvest estimates
until perhaps this spring, but fishermen reports
indicated that most fishermen who fished were able to
harvest some Chinook salmon. Although fishermen may
not have meet their Chinook salmon needs for the
season, it did sound like fishermen were able to get
some. And again we would love to hear this Council's
feedback on their harvest towards the end of my
summary.
In general goals were met for Chinook salmon on the east fork Andreafsky and the Chena and Salcha Rivers. The Gisasa River and Henshaw Creek weirs did not operate in 2018. The border passage objective was met, but was not exceeded. And just incidentally the goal has been exceeded the last four years, so we think we came in near the top of our border passage goals for Chinook salmon.

Summer chum goals, the drainage-wide escapement was met or actually exceeded. It does appear that maybe Lower Yukon summer chum stocks are maybe not doing as well as Upper Yukon summer chum stocks. Summer chum goals were not quite met on the east fork Andreafsky River. They came in just a bit short. And the Anvik sonar, which has not been performing well as other portions of the drainage in recent years, also came in a bit short of their goal. But again the drainage-side summer chum goal was exceeded. So summer chum in general are doing well, but the lower stocks seem to be -- productivity seems to be maybe not as good.

For the fall season, the fall chum outlook was for above average run; however, based on the lower than expected performance of the summer chum run, the fall chum run was projected -- there's a summer chum to fall chum relationship, so once the summer chum run is nearly over, we kind of have a good idea of how the fall chum. Numbers-wise, summer chum did good, but compared to the average they were a little below average. And so the fall chum projection was downgraded to 700 to 900,000 fish. But even a run of this size, there were no concerns for subsistence fish, and, you know, commercial would be managed with consideration for, you know, subsistence fishermen upriver who might want to use fall chum to kind of round out their subsistence goals if they didn't meet their Chinook salmon goals.

In the Lower Yukon, subsistence was relaxed to their standard seven days per week schedule with seven-and-a-half inch or smaller mesh gillnet gear at the start of the fall season, although it was closed around commercial openings. In the Middle Yukon subsistence was relaxed to five days per week, and then a little bit later to seven days per week with seven-and-a-half-inch or small mesh gillnets. And upriver in Subdistrict 5D went back to their standard seven days
per week schedule at the beginning of the fall season. Fishermen did report that good fall chum subsistence harvest with high quality fish.

The Fishing Branch weir on the Upper Porcupine has not been producing very well in recent years. At this time it looks like the Fishing Branch weir may not meet it's escapement goal. And in order to -- so the only dark spot in the fall chum report is that we had to close subsistence fishing on the Porcupine River to protect that apparently weak Porcupine River fall chum stock.

CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: How was the Sheenjak component?

MR. MASCHMANN: The Department has not been monitoring the Sheenjak in some years, so we're not sure. Chandalar downriver from Fort Yukon did well. We counted just below the upper end of the escapement goal, but the fall chum run was like five to seven days late this year. Probably the latest on record, and there were still a lot of fall chum going past the sonar. And even at the Eagle sonar ended on October 6th, there was still a lot of fall chum going by the sonar. So if you take into account the fish going -- what we think, the lateness of the run, we probably exceeded the Chandalar upper goal, and there will be some post-season analysis, but the Eagle sonar is probably even more than what we were reporting so far. But I'll let the Department if they want to go into more detail on that later.

There was good commercial harvest on fall chum as well as coho. Again fall season, fall chum assessment's still ongoing. Almost a million fall chum, 927,000 fall chum salmon passed the Pilot Station sonar, which was above the median. As I said, the run -- the mid-point of the run is seven days late, which is probably the latest fall chum on record.

137,000 coho salmon passed the Pilot Station sonar, which was below the average, but again it was a late run also.

Chandalar passed 161,000 fall chum, which is above the escapement goal range of 74 to 152. The sonar passage at Eagle ended at 158,000, which was above the upper end of the interim management
escapement goal of 70,000 to 144 K, but we probably
came in below the total allowable catch, which is
negotiated, and which essentially our harvest sharing
with Canada. It probably came in a little short on
that.

Fall chum are still -- are just
starting to arrive on their spawning grounds in the Big
Delta area on the Tanana River, and so they'll be doing
counts on those stocks probably in October and even
into early November as well as assessing the coho on
the Delta Clearwater.

So that's my report for the season. I
don't know if you have any questions or, you know, we'd
definitely like to hear how Tim and Don and Tommy and
Jenny did fishing this year, and kind of what the
quality of fish they saw, the size, you know, if they
noticed small eggs, or how folks did driftfishing in 4B
and C. We'd definitely like to hear how that's going.

CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Don, go ahead.

MR. HONEA: Thank you, Mr. Chair.

Gerald, I don't really know if this
question I'm going to ask is posed to you or not,
because you're with the Federal. And, you know, I
guess I've always confused even to this day. You guys
pretty much mirror what the State says, right? Okay.
So maybe some of it is Federal waters, but you guys
pretty much following the State mandates and such in
opening and stuff like that. And I have -- you know,
the only problem that we have in the Ruby area, 5B or
5C, or whatever it is, is that -- and maybe this is a
Holly question, because, you know, they set the windows
and the times and stuff as to reduce down to the 24-
hour period. That makes it rely hard for setnetters
like myself. I'm not out there driftnetting. I'm not
good at that maybe, you know. And there's some
setnetters like myself; that's the biggest gripe in
that area, and maybe something we can work toward or
something. But, you know, I don't know if I should
pose that to you or not. But it's really a hardship
having to put in a king net, whether it's six-and-a-
half to seven, whatever, and to have to pull that out,
you know, for one day at a time. And I'm just -- are
we looking forward to the same thing or am I being
premature in asking that question. I mean, you know,
maybe it's a Holly question.

Thank you though.

MS. CARROLL: Mr. Chair. This is Holly Carroll with Fish and Game. I'm happy to answer the gentleman's question.

CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Go ahead, Holly.

MS. CARROLL: Yeah, thanks for that. I really appreciate those comments, and I really like to hear this feedback, because sometimes, you know, we can kind of adjust our strategy if we think fishermen are just really not able to meet their needs.

One of the things that kind of frustrating is that this season the run size, as Gerald kind of explained, was not very good. It was coming in at the very low end of our projections. And so our strategy was to try to restrict fishermen such that they would only be able to harvest about half of what they need. So in that sense, that's kind of why we cut the time in half.

And we can do it two ways, you know. If you have two 48-hour periods, we could give you just one 48-hour period per week, or we can give you two 24-hour periods per week. And there might be a reason that we would choose one or the other. And one reason that in this particular season that we chose to give, when we could, two 24-hour periods a week -- so basically one-half period twice a week. The reason we did that was so that the harvest would be spread across particular pulses of fish. And it also gave people two times a week that they could fish instead of just one time in case they missed that other window.

So while we understand and I totally agree that whenever possible if we can have you on that full schedule of 48 hours, that's ideal. Sometimes we're reducing that because we want the harvest to be lower, if that makes sense.

CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Did that answer your question, Don.

MR. HONEA: Yeah, it does. I mean, I was just wondering if that same scenario is going to
happen. Is that what we're looking forward to? And I
guess maybe throughout the winter and meeting with you
guys or YRDFA or something, we'll find out. I was
just, you know, fishing around here just to -- you
know, speaking for the tribe and for the village,
that's kind of our gripe, but I can understand the
reasoning why, the reason for doing it.

But thank you for the answer anyway.

MS. CARROLL: Thank you. And just to
follow up, I guess I would say it is premature since we
don't have a forecast for next year's run size to sort
of talk about what our strategy would be next year.
But, you know, I think if there's an opportunity at the
preseason meeting to kind of share some feedback that
you just didn't feel that this worked in your area, or
that, okay, if you have to limit our harvest in our
area, a better way might be this. We're all ears on
that, and we do like to hear those suggestions, and we
can adjust our approach. So definitely bring those
concerns forward, and we may be able to find different
opportunities for our area. Yeah.

And I guess I did also want to point
out that, it's kind of off topic, but there is a State
proposal that would allow drift fishing in all
districts. I don't know if drift fishing would be
different, but, you know, these are the kind of things
that would also affect your local opportunities. And
so just bringing it to your attention that that's a
State proposal that people in your communities might
want to pay attention or comment on.

CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Thank you. Other
questions for Gerald or Holly. Tim.

MR. GERVAIS: Thank you, Mr. Chair.
I'd like to thank Gerald and Holly and all the managers
and YRDFA for doing the difficult job of trying to
manage fish on this long of a river.

In general the comments from around
Ruby were that they were -- they wished they could have
had longer openings, but they were able to get a
reasonable amount of king harvest based on the two 24-
hour periods. I think the two periods a week is a good
and efficient system for the harvesters. It allows
them more time for processing and putting the fish away
in a high quality manner by having the two periods instead of a big load of fish to process after one opening. And then it may fit into some people's schedule, too, that they would only be available to fish one of the two periods, so more flexibility's good.

I had thought about maybe having four 12-hour periods a week, but that might be cumbersome with all the start and stop time, might be hard to manage and hard to figure out. So I definitely think people in our area are appreciating the two 24-hour openings instead of the 48-hour opening.

I'm getting positive comments about the ability to do the drift gillnet fishery. It's saving a lot of fuel. It's lessening the amount of stress in the community where there's -- for fixed gear such as drift gillnet or fishwheel site. These locations, some are premier locations, some are secondary, and some are crappy locations, and it's kind of a historical thing on whose father or whose grandfather fished where. And having this drift gillnetting as a legal harvest technique is taking a lot of pressure off of that situation, which is good.

And then as I was indicating during my opening comments, that it's matching a -- drift fishing's been a style of fishing that's been around since pre-contact. So it's matching in a way. I mean, of course modern gear is a lot more effective and efficient than homemade gear, but it's good to have the people harvesting what they eat.

I also forgot to say in my opening comment that for the Gulf of Alaska, the chum fisheries were stronger than any of the other species, so for whatever reason with their food or life cycle, the chum salmon were not as affected by the low return numbers as compared to sockeye or pink or silver or king salmon for the Gulf of Alaska species. I don't know what that means, but maybe at some later point in time we'll be able to figure that out.

Anyways I had a question for Gerald or Holly. I'm not -- I was looking at Gerald's, but I lost my glasses a couple weeks ago, so I can't read very well, but what was the trans-boundary escapement number? I know you said it was met, but I don't see it
in the text on the actual number it was. And the other
comment was -- well, what -- just go ahead and tell me
what the boundary escapement number was, please.

MS. CARROLL: Mr. Chair. This is Holly
Carroll. I can answer Tim's question.

CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Go ahead, Holly.

MS. CARROLL: Okay. I'm pulling up
that data for you. When we calculate the escapement
into Canada, we actually have to account for the
Canadian harvest, and we don't have those numbers yet.
So we don't have the true spawning escapement value
right now, but I can tell you what the border passage
number was. I'm going to pull that up real quick.

MR. GERVAIS: Okay. And then another
question I had, I believe with the out of cycle
proposals that got passed by Board of Fish last winter,
managers had the option of allowing the sale of king
salmon caught in a chum fishery situation, like the
dipnetting. Apparently you didn't allow that option.
You required all the kind salmon to be retained for
subsistence. What was the decision point on that,
Gerald.

MR. MASCHMANN: Yeah. You know, we
heard loud and clear last season and this spring with
fishermen meetings that Yukon River fishermen aren't
quite ready yet to allow for the sale of king salmon in
the commercial fishery. And frankly there's just --
you know, particularly this year there just wasn't a
surplus of king salmon. I mean we were restricting
subsistence fishermen, so, you know, allowing the sale
of king salmon just -- there wasn't any fish available
to allow for that.

MR. GERVAIS: Okay. I appreciate that
management strategy, and I'm glad to hear you guys were
considering some comments. I mean, we lost a proposal
process with the Board of Fish, but it's -- I don't
know, if starting or appreciative to hear that you guys
had consideration that there is a lot of concern about
the sale out of commercial fishery while we get this
going. Overall I feel like we need to make -- this
Council needs to progress into -- we need to make a
more aggressive stance.
I'm looking at these charts in the back of Gerald's report on commercial fishing -- or commercial Chinook harvest and subsistence Chinook harvest, and, of course, this is Subsistence Board, but having a viable commercial fishery in the middle Yukon helps support people with subsistence or partial subsistence lifestyle. And on Page 7 of Gerald's report, the top chart, you see since 2000 we've had really poor to non-existent commercial harvest in the U.S., so that's 18 years that this has been going on, and I feel that when we meet with North Pacific Management Council in our winter meeting, we need to stress the point that this is in violation of the national standards which the Magnuson-Stevens Act specifies where they're affecting subsistence and commercial fishing opportunity in our communities.

So I feel that, yes, like the pollock fleet is doing a lot to try to minimize their by-catch, but the reality is no matter what they're doing, it's still -- after 18 years of fishing restrictions in-river and gear changes, that we're still not getting our fishery, our in-river fisheries back to a normal state, and there needs to be more drastic action taken in the marine environment to protect the salmon so that our subsistence and limited commercial fishing economies aren't as drastically affected by fisheries that have just occurred since -- that Bering Sea trawl fishery started in '91, so that's only been around for like 27 years.

And I feel like that's definitely part of the problem, and I feel like this Council needs to address it in a more significant manner. The tribes, they have other means available to address the problem. With a long history of not being able to meet their subsistence salmon needs, tribes in Washington sued the State of Washington for more control of their fishery and shellfish resource, and the judge looked it over in the Bolt decision and they did. What they ended up doing is they ended up giving half of the allocation of all the fish and shellfish in Washington, all the salmon and shellfish in Washington, half of it went directly to the tribes. It's just done deal, right down the line.

So that would be an interesting situation in Alaska, but the point I'm trying to make is that there is legal precedence that gives the tribes
rights to be able to harvest salmon at their historic levels. And the historic levels haven't been met since it looks like 1997. So it's a big issue and big topic that has taken up a lot of this Council's time, but I feel like the status quo of always going into zero commercial Chinook harvest and restricted subsistence harvest needs to end. There needs to be more effort taken from the marine fisheries that occur in the Bering Sea to help us get our Chinook run rebuilt.

CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Thank you, Tim.

MS. PELKOLA: I have a comment.

CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Jenny.

MS. PELKOLA: Well, I'd just like to say in the beginning when we had our comments, I stated that everyone -- well, not everyone, but most of the people in Galena were satisfied with our fishing, that we were able to fish right by our village. I know there are not very many elders left in our villages, so there are a lot of young families that are going out fishing, and they're all working together, which is really neat to see, that the little ones are learning from their -- I want to say younger parents, but middle aged parents or whatever.

The elders now, in Galena we have an elders home here, and most of our elders are up there. We have a few in town who are unable to fish for themselves, so other people fish for them. I'm still able to fish for myself, and with the periods we had last summer, to me was pretty good. I was able to rest whereas before it seems like we had to hurry up and get our fish in. We didn't have time to enjoy life. And I think fishing and our cultural is you work for what you get, but you also need to enjoy your life, so I felt relaxed this summer in my fishing season. Even though we had to move our whole fish camp back off the river, it was still -- it was sad, it was really hard to leave my Yukon -- I call it my own private waters, to be able to see that every morning and enjoy it, and I moved further back in the woods, but where I moved, it's like a campground. So it really soothed me to be able to still see the Yukon and still do my fishing.

So I think that Holly and whoever, Gerald, whoever manages the fishing, I think for me it
was pretty -- well, I haven't heard any comments,

negative comments so far from the area.

Thank you.

CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Appreciate those

comments, Jenny.

MR. THOMAS: Mr. Chairman.

CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Go ahead, Dennis.

MR. THOMAS: I've got a question for
the Board or for anybody. What's the Stand for Alaska,
Stand for Fish stuff about? Yes or no or whatever.
What's this all about? Has it got anything to do with
what we're talking about here?

CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: No, it has nothing
to do with this.

MR. THOMAS: Nothing.

CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: We're off topic. So
we're going to -- but that's a referendum vote. And so
you'll have to read that when you get your voter
manual.

But we're talking about in-season
management. And any further questions. Tommy.

MR. KRISKA: I just have one to Holly
or -- anyway, I was just thinking about the way you
guys regulate your 24-hour, 48-hour, and every year you
go through a survey per household in starting of
fishing and the end of fishing. I know it's going on
right down downriver. They're there in the homes
picking up the surveys, asking all kinds of questions
about their season. And I was just wondering if maybe
they could the question in there about how they like
their openings, 24 or 48, so that way they can survey
that when they get back to the offices and kind of
dwell over it during the winter, and it might make it a
little easier, take a little weight off of them. I
don't know. Anyway just my question there.

CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Good comment, Tommy.

You got that Holly?
MS. CARROLL: Yeah, Mr. Chair. I wanted to thank you for that comment. We actually do ask fishermen if they have any comments, positive or negative about the management or any suggestions. And so sometimes we do hear about particular things people didn't like, but that's a very good specific suggestion that we could ask.

And I did want to follow up and just get an answer for Tim about the border count there at the Eagle sonar. This year we counted just about 58,000 king salmon. And I just want to clarify that while that's a pretty good measure of whether we met the goals, it's a little complicated, because the goal is for a spawning escapement of 42,500 to 55,000 met that goal. But additionally Alaska has agreed with the Canadian government to provide a harvest share of extra salmon that -- a Canadian can harvest of king salmon. And so we do have to put additional fish there as well, and we kind of manage for that. So we think we also provided that harvest share. They get to have 20 to 26 percent of the surplus. So just trying to follow up there for Tim.

CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Can you restate that for me. The harvest share is 20 to 26 percent, but there's only 58,000 and the escapement goal is 42,000 to 55,000. That doesn't leave very many.....

MS. CARROLL: Right. Okay. I guess I'll back up. It's quite a complicated process. I wasn't trying to confuse anyone further.

We calculate a total allowable catch, which is the total available surplus that would be available for both countries after meeting goals. That number this year is a range, and like I said, it's an estimate, but it would be a range of 23,000 to 35,000 king salmon. Those are the additional above escapement needs. Then the countries need to share those. America gets about 74 percent of those, Canada gets 20 to 26 percent. So what we endeavor to do is put enough fish for the spawning goal, that 42,500 to 55,000, but then we also give extra for Canada to harvest.

But I'll also add that Canada has been choosing not to harvest their king salmon fully. Many First Nations have voted for a full moratorium. And so we have had higher spawning escapements because they're
choosing not to take their fair share of the extra fish that we're putting above for their harvest. So hopefully that makes it more clear.

CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: That is more clear.

Thank you.

MR. HONEA: Jack.

CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Go ahead, Don.

MR. HONEA: Thank you, Mr. Chair.

Holly, this is Don Honea. Just a while back in reference to Tim's question, you said you were going to come up with a border passage number. Is that the number?

MS. CAROL: So the Eagle sonar counted just about 58,000 fish. That's the number at the Eagle sonar. But we do have a community, an Alaskan community above the sonar, between the sonar and the Canadian border. So when we want to get a true border passage estimate, we have to subtract the harvest that will be taken by Eagle residents. And on average it's about 500 king salmon. So you can imagine once we have the harvest estimates that we may see that border passage estimate drop from about 58,000 to about 57,500.

CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Okay. Other questions. Tim.

MR. COLLINS: Mr. Chairman. This is Ray.

CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Okay. Go ahead, Ray.

MR. COLLINS: Yeah, it's just a comment. My son worked for a fish buyer down at the mouth a number of years ago, and at that time they were able to sell the incidental catch. And he noted during the summer that some fishermen came in with a lot more kings than others. So there may be some way to target. And I would keep that in mind if they're going to introduce any commercial fishing upriver, or sale of incidental catch, because if the same thing applied up
there, some would be able to target -- start targeting kings more just because they're work more. So I don't know how the -- it would be conducted up there, but that's something that should be kept in mind when the discussion takes place about introducing any sale of incidental catch.

Thank you.

CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Thanks for that comment, Ray.

Tim.

MR. GERVAIS: Thank you, Mr. Chair.

This is a question for Gerald or Holly. Last month we were -- we had a teleconference. We were -- let me get my correct page of my notes here. With the Fisheries Resource Monitoring Working Group. And we had Andy Bassich from Eagle. It's slipping my mind right now. Arthur Firmin from Fort Yukon, myself, a fellow from I think Marshall, and another fellow from -- do you remember, Karen? Was it Mountain Village? Anyways, two Yukon Delta or Lower Yukon fishermen. And some of the comments that came up of concern on research projects was Andy is always interested in quality of escapement, meaning ASL and too many jacks getting counted as escapement, jack kings. Is it physically possible, scientifically possible to get any kind of index or analysis on success of spawning or that type of figure, like kind of comprising multiple things like the amount of fish with a certain amount of fecundity, and then they can share that like they didn't get froze out by like a low snow year, or washed out from a bad rain event or something like that? Is it -- I don't know enough about the spawning grounds in Canada, if they're concentrated enough, or all spread out. But that seemed to be something that Andy, Arthur and myself were concerned about was what -- if there's any way to get an index or research project that could evaluate and keep track of on a yearly basis the quality escapement and the success of the spawning and smolt development.

CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Do you want to answer that, Gerald.

MR. MASCHMANN: I don't know if I can answer it, and if Holly has anything to add, but I'm
just -- the, you know, quality of escapement has been
on everyone's mind for quite a few years now, and it's
just a hugely complicated topic and question to
address. And, you know, what do we mean by quality?
Is that size? Is that females? Is it fecundity?
Those are all questions I think that, you know, as a
drainage, as fishermen, and managers all need to get
together and answer.

But I will say that lately one of the
things we've been addressing is there's been some
concern that at some projects technicians are maybe
mis-identifying males and females. If you're doing a
test fishery with nets and you're killing the fish, you
can cut them open and verify your visual interpretation
of the sex of the fish. But at a weir where you're
looking at live fish, there's some questions about
whether, you know, the technicians are really able to
identify the males and females. So we've been working
on some studies to address that issue. And if you were
listening to the YRDFA teleconferences this summer, the
Department up at the Eagle sonar did a project where
they sacrificed some of the fish to make sure that the
technicians who were identifying the sex of the fish at
the Eagle sonar were -- they're basically verifying
their visual identification.

And so not really answering your
question, Tim, but we're working towards improving our
data so that we're more sure about the quality of the
data. You know, are we truly counting the number of
females at these escapement projects, is where we're
headed right now. But, you know, throwing in fecundity
and success of the eggs, and then the success of the
fry and how they move downriver, those are all hugely
complicated questions that some folks have been, you
know, starting to enter, but I think we're a long ways
away from it.

But, you know, improving that ASL data
is -- we're working on that, and I think we're seeing
some movement in, you know, helping to verify that
data.

And again what quality of escapement,
you know, that's a huge topic. It's a big question.
And I think it's just going to take some time to figure
out what people want to measure when they talk about
quality of escapement and what that means.
I know it doesn't answer your question.

Holly, I don't know if you have anything you'd like to add to that.

MS. CARROLL: Yes, I guess I would follow up. Thanks for that, Gerald.

You know, I think that it's a good question, and I think what you asked about, Tim, what you're asking about is multiple life stages of the salmon. And so, for instance, that one study that Gerald referenced, we did have to sacrifice about 250 salmon. Those females though, there was a university group that took those eggs and they are going to study the fecundity by looking at the size and number of eggs in those fish. And so that's one question that is a separate process to look at. It's like, okay, for a certain size of fish, how big and how many are the eggs.

But to get at how would the juveniles that resulted from those fish, how do they survive, now you're talking about monitoring all the streams that those fish that pass Eagle sonar are going to go spawn in, which could be, you know, 10, 20 streams in Canada. So, you know, a lot of research is being done through the restoration enhancement funds through the Yukon River Panel where any proponent can do a study like that where they're looking at fry emergence, or they're looking at, you know, survival in rivers. But those are vast undertakings, and each tributary or each stock might have one study.

And the other thing with these kinds of studies, and it's kind of the reason we're not doing that much of it is you often do have to sacrifice the fish to study them in the ways that we would need to to measure fecundity. And you know with the numbers we're seeing at the border, you know, there was a lot of people that felt it inappropriate to kill 250 salmon, even though they were donated for subsistence use.

So we're trying to toe the line between, you know, keeping our research moving forward, but also recognizing that there's just barely enough fish to go around right now, and there's not a lot of excess for scientific mortalities.

So, you know, that is kind of -- it is
a concern, and, you know, I'll just echo what Gerald said, in that we're trying to study each piece of these, but at the end of the day, we are going to be limited by run sizes for a while.

As far as the younger fish escaping into Canada, you know this has been an ongoing question, and one of the problems there is that the way that we run our test fishery for the sonar is a drift gillnet fishery. And many of you who are fishermen will know that when you're drift fishing, you tend to be just a little bit more offshore in the deeper, faster water, and you're just not going to get the same number of small fish that people who locally have got a setnet in a slack water or eddy, they're going to get far more little fish, and they may feel that, you know, these little fish are under-represented in our escapements -- or over-represented if you will.

But, you know, the studies that have recently been done by U.S. Fish and Wildlife and the AYK as a side research say that, you know, the number of four-year-olds we're seeing is not an inordinate number of four-year-olds. We're still seeing large fish getting to all the major escapement grounds, so it doesn't meet to be as big of a concern as you would think, you know. It's not affecting the runs right now and the returns right now. So, you know, at this point we're managing for numbers of fish, and we've been exceeding the goal the last four years, and that's kind of the -- we're just hoping we're doing the best we can.

CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Thank you. My question is, could you do auxiliary fin clips by your technicians when you're going your sweep analysis for the Eagle River sonar so that you don't have to have mortalities. You just clip them, the tech makes a ruling on what salmon is. Then you look at its genetics and see what it really was. You can't do that?

MR MASCHMANN: The genetics lab.....

MS. CARROLL: That can't be.....

MR. MASCHMANN: Sorry, Holly.

CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Go ahead, Holly.
MS. CARROLL: Yeah. I was just going to say, we don't have the technology right now. There's not really a genetics sex marker for the Yukon stocks. And the way that the genetics works anyway is you can almost never identify a single fish. You have to have large collections of samples to be able to figure out even what stock the fish come from. So we're a ways out. Our genetics lab is working on trying to find a marker for sex genetically, but currently we don't have one.

And the good news is we found that our -- just from one year of study, our ability to sex ID is 100 percent accurate at the border. So we don't need to cause mortality in the salmon. And this was the first year we have had mortalities. Typically we are able to do all of our ASL and genetic sampling and release the fish safely alive. And we're going to continue doing that at the Eagle sonar project. That was a one-year study. We got a lot of good data from those fish we had to sacrifice, including fecundity data which you couldn't do without killing the fish. So, yeah, no, we don't need to kill fish at the Eagle sonar, just to be clear.

CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Okay. Appreciate that. Other questions, comments on the presentation.

Gilbert, you've got a question.

MR. HUNTINGTON: Yes, Mr. Chair.

Thank you, Tim, for bringing this issue up. I have maybe more of a comment. But I pounded the table on this issue about 30 years ago, and I received pretty much the same answer from my friend Tom that was just presented by Holly and Gerald here. And that irritates me to no end. I mean, you can't keep saying the same thing for 30 years, you know. Let's come up with an answer, because as I'll say our primary voice from the village here, you are representatives, have an impact on management like I don't have. And in order to do that, to properly evaluate this resource, to manage it, you need information. And without a qualitative assessment, how can you say that, yeah, we've got enough fish on the spawning ground.

Yet I have what you consider anecdotal information that we have 10 jacks following one big
Chinook on the spawning grounds. Now, tell me that's the right number of spawners. Give me a break I mean, you know. Yeah, we've got 11 fish there, but there's only 2 spawner, you know. So without a qualitative assessment on this escapement, you'll never be able to do a good job.

And I'm sick and tired of the same answer, no offense to you, sir. But this has been 30 years now. I was on the Yukon Panel for 10 years, you know, with the primary responsibility to manage Yukon salmon. And I founded the table then for this. And still we're getting the same answer.

I think you as a Council, and urge all other management bodies, to just press this issue to where you can really do your job like it needs to be done to safeguard the resource. We can't just kind of guess that, yeah, this is the number we need. Oh, yeah, maybe we've got so many jack. Oh, maybe, maybe, maybe. It pisses me off. But you can't do your job, because you don't know.

It's number -- for your information, as part of the Yukon Panel, we started out I think it was 75,000. That was the number, you know. 75,000 kings. Am I correct, Tom? That was the top, yeah. And we reduced it from there. And yet we're still -- we've got to remember, we're selectively harvesting these stocks all these years. That's what gillnetting is, you know. And so we have to find a way to get a qualitative assessment.

Thank you.

CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Appreciate those comments.

Tim.

MR. GERVASIS: I had one other question for both Holly and Gerald. Do you currently, or is there any plan in the future to quantify the catch and release mortality from the different management strategies, like I was thinking about it this summer, sum -- and if they're doing and release, fishwheel fishing to target summer chum and letting the kings go, that the kings sustain a lot of trauma and injury and stress from being caught in a fishwheel. It's got to
either kill them, all of them, or a large portion of them, especially if they're not released correctly. As a commercial seiner, I looked at it a lot this summer, and all you could try to release a king without injuring it, you know, like in a deep water setting, not even like on a beach where shallow water and silt, and the fish are too strong and too healthy, and to traumatized by being caught in a net, you just can't let a king get out of your gear without causing some injury, because they're so scared and they're just going to splash and thrash and bump into the boat or into the gear or something bad's going to happen to the fish. But do you have number that is included in the total run size for mortality?

I know from talking to set gillnet fishermen in Ruby, not this year, but from last year, I had one guy said that he had lost seven fish throughout the season -- seven kings throughout the season that had fallen out of his smaller gear. And another fellow said he lost five fish. And, you know, a lot depends on the site and the current, and if they have like a dipnet of something that they can retrieve these fish falling out, but there's definitely mortality occurring.

I appreciate everybody trying to develop harvest methods to allow the kings to go on, but there's going to be mortality involved with any of them, and I think we should start quantifying how much it is and add that to the run size so we know if you use this catch and release fishwheel, you're going to lose so much percent fish. If you use catch and release seining, you're going to lose this much fish. And I just wondered, as the managers, have you been quantifying that? Are you interested in quantifying that.

MS. CARROLL: Mr. Chair. This is Holly Carroll with Fish and Game. I can answer Tim's question.

CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Go ahead, Holly.

MS. CARROLL: Yeah, Tim, I think you raise some really valid points. There has been research on some of these methods like beach seining. There was university level research in other states that talked about the potential stress and mortality
effects. And we don't have a value that we're calculating in. No, there's no mortality rate that we're adding on top of this. And it's just that we don't have a single quantifiable amount for each of those, and we haven't run studies for each method. But you're absolutely right, there is a chance for that in the stress and handling effects.

We don't know how much is happening, but we can all operate a beach seine and see how tired that king is when we release it. I myself have been drift gillnetting ad watched kings fall out. And you've got to be very careful to basket them if you want to retrieve them. Now, they may live and kick and get all the way upriver, or they may not.

And if we were to study that -- just to point this out, if we were to study that, it would involve high level tagging, and then following the fish and trying to figure out whether they died or not, trying to figure out whether any death or stress effects were from the tagging or from the gillnet or beach seine. And one of the reasons those studies aren't conducted frequently is that that kind of tagging project costs millions of dollars, and it does cause mortality of fish.

And I just want to explain something to you guys, not as a form of excuse, but I just want to make it clear that you're bringing up incredible amounts of research that are being done by universities and by the research arms of Fish and Game. And these are all really great research ideas. They're probably great things for proponents to be submitting to OSM for projects and studies, but as a manager, my full-time job is managing the run and forecasting it as it comes in and then managing the harvest. So, you know, as much as I would love to be doing, you know, 10 different studies and tagging hundreds and hundreds of salmon to figure out if they die, you know, there's whole universities that are kind of run around that kind of research and have the time to do that. And, you know, it's not an excuse, but it's like I can only do one job at a time. And so when -- you know, we're not avoiding this research, it's just hard to find the funding and the entire teams of staff to do it, and sometimes the mortalities are not worth the research when we have these low run sizes. So again not an excuse. These are really great ideas that you have,
but a lot of times what we have to do is just turn to research papers, see what the effects might be, and then see whether we can support these kinds of gears.

And I will draw your attention once again, there's a couple Board of Fish proposals that kind of deal with handling stress. One of them is about using live boxes on fishwheels, and whether that is causing undue stress to fish. So that might be a Board of Fish proposal to look out for. The other one is, you know, when people want to restrict all nets to six-inch gillnets, you know, one of the comments that I make is that all of us drift gillnetters have seen that dropout is happening, and we're hearing that from fishermen. So we don't really want to require the use of smaller gear for kings than is necessary for conservation. So we're just constantly walking that tightrope of trying to protect the kings, but allow people that opportunity to go out and get their summer chums. So, yeah, I appreciate your perspectives there, Tim.

CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Thank you, Holly. I've exactly been saying for years, thumping the table as Gilbert says, that the dropout with six-inch gear, there's an unknown mortality factor there. The gills are pinched shut, the fish dies, they drop out of the gear dead. They don't even swim up the river. And so we have this mortality factor with six-inch gear. Even if they drop out alive, they still have -- there's a question whether that fish is going to make it.

When you were referring to those dropouts, Tim, were those dead fish your friends were talking about?

MR. GERVAIS: I don't know. They were just fish as they were pulling through the gear, moving their boat along the gear, the fish fell out of the net. That's where it got over the rail of the boat and they lost it.

CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Right. Yeah.

MR. GERVAIS: And that was for the season. So one fellow during a season lost seven fish, one fellow lost five fish. And that was 2017, which was more fishing than....
CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Was that with six-inch gear?

MR. GERVAIS: Yes.

CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Yeah. So six-inch gear with kings, everybody knows we did this selectivity study and Denny Evason, and seven-and-a-half-inch gear kills kings. Or catches them and holds onto them. But six-inch gear has this phenomenal dropout rate, and it doesn't do -- what I've said for years, it doesn't do what managers think it's doing. They think that the fish bounce off the net. It's like, no, there's a bunch of them get killed, because their gill plates get pinched shut and they can't breath. Then they pop out of the gear when they come over the rail.

So, yes, I'm glad to hear that you have witnessed that, Holly, and I would advise you to be very cautious with the use of six-inch gear for Chinook conservation. To saturate gear with summer chum, yeah, that's probably a good idea, but long periods with six-inch gear are strictly -- Virgil Umphenour wants six-inch gear for all Chinook harvest. That's backwards. That's absolutely -- he's a wheel fisherman. He doesn't know anything about gillnets. And so I'm highly opposed to six-inch gear use exclusively on the Yukon.

Tommy.

MR. KRISKA: Yeah.

MS. CARROLL: Mr. Chair.

CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Go ahead.

MS. CARROLL: If I may follow up, I really appreciate your perspective there. And, you know, there's a lot of misconceptions out there that because we went to seven-and-a-half-inch gear, and you cited that mesh size study, it proved that that would be a safer, less selective gear than those eight-and-a-half and the larger gear, but once we went down to that, it has caused a misconception for most people that somehow we will improve quality of escapement if our nets become smaller. And that is not the case. There is extensive data on test fisheries with
different mesh sizes. We have thousands upon thousands of data points, and the six-inch gear are not ideal for catching kings, and we don't know the dropout rate. And the seven-and-a-half-inch gear catches kings across what's present in the run. So if the run is dominated by five-year-olds, your seven-and-a-half-inch catches mostly five-year-olds. And we've got years of data supporting that as well.

And so I do appreciate, you know, hearing this perspective, because I do find that I'm trying to help people with that misconception that even if there is a quality of escapement concern and people want to see older, larger females on the spawning grounds, that six-inch is not necessarily the answer to that. So thank you very much for sharing that.

CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Thank you. Tommy.

MR. KRISKA: Yeah. I just kind of have a comment on some of this six-inch fishing gear. For all I'm hearing is that there's a lot of deaths in the bigger fish that's falling out of the six-inch gear. It happened to me, happened to a lot of people in the villages, and they get really upset about it. And they said, who the hell is in charge of all of this, and if -- why we fish with seven-and-a-half-inch yesterday, and fishing with six-and-a-half today and fishing with seven-and-a-half tomorrow. We don't have money to be buying these nets just because they want us to be fishing like this.

And another thing to really think about is that the fishermen in our village and the way we grew up, we only take what we need. So maybe getting bigger fish, we will take 20 of your 60 fish from your six-inch, you know. Twenty fish versus 60 fish. We're only going to take what we need. So it's something to think about.

I don't know, I get tired of this kind of stuff, to see a lot of the older people out there that barely have enough money to buy gas, and then you guys want them to buy another net for 7 or 800 bucks during the winter. They can't do it. It's impossible, unless you're giving them fish nets to do this. So somebody got to make up their mind what's going on here.
And another thing, going back to to kind of getting a little irritated, too, in a lot of this update on all this stuff, and going back to even what Gilbert said 30 years ago. We went to meetings 30 years ago, Yukon Drainage Fisheries Association. All of this came up and it's still up, and still don't see nothing, data, no -- any goodness coming out of it still at this point.

Thank you.

CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Thanks, Tommy. So I think we've -- Gerald, one more comment. Go ahead.

MR. MASCHMANN: I was just curious from the Council that, you know, we had some, you know, 24-hour openings with king gear, and then we alternated with some 24-hour openings with six-inch. I was just curious how folks in your villages responded to those six-inch openings. Did they -- you know, like some people don't have the gear, so in a way they couldn't go fishing. Other people maybe they don't want to use the six-inch gear, or did they, well, it's open and it's six-inch, so I'm going to take advantage of it if I have -- so I'm curious how people in your villages took advantage of that six-inch opportunity or begrudgingly took advantage of it, or how did they respond.

CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Jenny, go ahead.

MS. PELKOLA: I think that like Tommy said, you were going from six to seven-and-a-half one day, the next day you were, you know -- it was changing all the time. I know when they said six-inch, I would just cringe. I didn't like that six-inch. And there was another fishermen above our camp that cringed also, that didn't like that six-inch. So I would also say that seven-and-a-half is just about right. We went down from eight to seven-and-a-half, and that was a battle in itself, but I'm satisfied with seven-and-a-half, and I think most of the people in Galena that fished around here, I'm not too sure, but I'm sure they, you know, fished with seven-and-a-half.

Thank you.

CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Tim.
MR. GERVAIS: Jack, I'd like to bring Ray into the conversation, because I've had discussions with him before. On the Kuskokwim they've been using six-inch only for a long time, and he's had some positive aspects to the small gear size. Will you talk to that, Ray.

MR. COLLINS: Yeah. Well, it depends on what they're targeting. If they're targeting, you know, sheefish and others, but during the king openings, I think I would prefer moving up so you caught across the spectrum. I haven't heard any mention of seven. Did they do studies on seven, too, or only on seven-and-a-half.

MS. CARROLL: Yeah, Ray. Mr. Chair. Sorry. This is Holly at Fish and Game. I can follow up with Ray.

CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Go ahead, Holly.

MS. CARROLL: The mesh size study looked at a suite of gears, and it did include seven-inch. And seven-inch is just a little too small to be the ideal size to target across all age classes present in our current king runs. So it would have a similar.....

MR. COLLINS: Yeah, you know, I'm using.....

MS. CARROLL: .....to six-inch as far as, you know, over-selecting for some types of fish. And seven-and-a-half was the preferred king gear if fishermen are using it to target king salmon.

MR. COLLINS: Yeah. Well, the openings now have been more liberal up at the headwaters, because they're at the end of the run. And so the ones that are most efficient I think would be the best to use so you didn't have the potential of dropouts, because as mentioned, people only take what they need. They'll stop fishing once they've got what they need. So for the headwaters I think at least the seven-and-a-half would work. Down below that it depends on what they're -- whether they start it when the chums come in or silvers or we have sockeye, too, down here. And if you're targeting those basically, I guess they are usually held off until the majority of the kings have

passed down there, and the working group has approved
the openings down there, and I think moving to six-inch
might be appropriate then. But if you're having an
opening that's targeting kings, it should probably be
the seven-and-a-half. That's my comment.

CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Thank you, Ray.

Yeah, my position is fish kings with
king gear; don't fish kings with six-inch gears.
There's too much loss, it's just -- that's what happens
with it. They're dead loss. And so we don't have an
indicia for that. Some live, but they're still injured
by that. If we're going to kill fish, let's kill king
salmon with seven-and-a-half-inch gear.

I think we've covered this issue
extensively. I appreciate all of your comments, Holly,
Gerald.

MR. GERVAIS: Jack, one more, please.

CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Tim has a dying -- a
burning question to ask. Go ahead, Tim.

MR. GERVAIS: Yeah. Holly and Gerald,
so what have you seen in Districts 1 and 2 when you
have these directed chum openings during the middle of
the king run with six-inch gear. What's being caught,
what's dropping out. What's the -- what's going on
down there?

MS. CARROLL: This is Holly with Fish
and Game.

Tim, so I do want to clarify that
because our summer chum runs and our king runs overlap,
it's not as simple as when either or, let them use
seven-and-a-half or let them use six-inch, you see. I
have to provide opportunity for summer chum salmon and
so I have to provide six-inch opportunity. And those
summer chum are passing in large numbers all the way up
through the lower part of District 5. And so while
dropout is a small concern, and as I've said, I've
experienced some of that myself when using six-inch,
when you have huge numbers of summer chum present, you
don't have the dropout problem, because king salmon
avoid the net entirely when it's filling up with chum.
So if you're lucky, you catch a king or two, and then
you're getting lots of chum. And so in the lower part of the river, Districts 1 and 2, most fishermen are using that opportunity to get their chums, because actually it is the referred subsistence salmon. Most households in Districts 1 and 2 harvest more summer chum than king salmon anyway. And so they're just getting their chums, and if they get a few kings in that six-inch, it's great.

Where we start to have the problem is where we get up into District 3 and 4, and that's why we alternated between six-inch and seven-and-a-half-inch. We did one period a week with six-inch and one period with seven-and-a-half. And the reason is people were telling us that if we gave them a six-inch opportunity, they were going to get a bunch of unwanted chums, so they didn't go at all. So basically they were reducing themselves to a single opportunity per week. And that's what made us do the seven-and-a-half once a week. It meant that now once a week they could go for kings. So it is a very different situation in the middle and upper parts of the river compared to the lower river.

In the lower river, when they're using six-inch, they're barely getting any kings. And I do think the dropout rates are likely lower. Again, I haven't measured this at all except for what happens anecdotally. And the majority of gillnet fishermen in the lower river are drifting. And when you drift you can tell you've got fish on there. You can see those kings, you can basket them, and you can bring them in the boat. So likely the amount of loss is far different than someone who's got a set net that's just capturing fish, gilling them and then they're checking it after 24 or 48 hours. So that is a little different as well, that you can release kings or you can either retain kings pretty quickly when you're drift gillnetting, because most drifts are quite short, maybe 5, 8, 10 minutes. Maybe the longest drift would be 20 or 30 minutes, but that's going to be pretty rare.


MS. PELKOLA: Holly, this is Jenny. It seems like I was just observing something here as you were speaking and our conversation here. The lower fishermen you say fish mostly with six-inch. And it seems like that would be -- is that for commercial
fishing? And also upriver in 4B and C, we don't have
any commercial fishing, so our preference of fishing
would be with seven-and-a-half inches.

But also maybe the diet. I don't know,
I'm just throwing something out there. Our diet might
be a little different than the lower fishermen's diet.
I don't know.

MS. CARROLL: Yeah, Jenny, that's
correct. We're taking all those things into account,
too, but first to answer your question, when we're
talking about commercial fishermen, the chum salmon
commercial fishery is limited to six-inch. They may
only use six-inch gear. And in most seasons they're
not getting to use those gillnets until the way end of
the king run. Instead they're having to use selective
gear so that they can release all the kings alive,

In the lower river they also want king
opportunity with seven-and-a-half-inch gear, because
the chums will go through that mesh and they will get
to truly harvest their king salmon. So I don't want to
misrepresent what fishermen want down there. They
would also like king opportunity with seven-and-a-half-
inch gear, and when we can provide it, we do. I'm just
explaining the difference on how the fishing goes in
those area that fish with six-inch.

So, yeah, we understand that you would
prefer to use seven-and-a-half-inch, but as I was
trying to explain earlier we knew that we needed the
harvest to be half what people needed, so we reduced
your time in half and then we also canceled king
periods, So we got down to one period a week. And then
we thought, well, we'll provide six-inch opportunity
for those that want to harvest chums. And people in
District 4 and the upper part of 3 said that they don't
want that opportunity at all. They would rather have
seven-and-a-half. So we at least gave one seven-and-a-
half short opening per week.

And so, yeah, in theory if we have
enough king salmon surplus for the entire subsistence
harvest, we would not do any restrictions. And I think
that's the point that people keep missing, like while
we know that everyone will only take what they need,
there's 2,000 households in 43 villages on the Yukon,
and we do the math on what people need, and what they
need sometimes would be more than there is available. And so we're sort of having to force the fishing to be less than ideal for people so that we can let everybody have a bit of harvest and try to manage that total harvest when the runs are just too small to support everybody meeting their needs, if that makes sense.

CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Yes. Thank you.

Gerald, one more comment.

MR. MASCHMANN: I'm always sometimes hesitate to ask, because it's a hard question, but, you know, if we're providing six-inch opportunity, would you rather have that six-inch opening or no opening, because sometimes that's where we're at in the decisionmaking process. We've figured out that we can allow this one 24-hour period a week for kings, for example, this season, and we can allow an additional 24-hour period with the six-inch gear. Would you just rather not have the six-inch opening, because that would be the alternative.

CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Tom.

MR. KRISKA: Well, I have a thing, too. Since you're going to wind up opening it up for 24 hours with a six-inch and killing fish that -- I mean, they fall back into the river and possibly you're not going to get many kings anyway, so why don't you just open it up for 12 hours with a seven-and-a-half-inch?

MR. MASCHMANN: And just to go back, what Holly said is as we're assessing the run, we've made that assessment that we can provide that one 24-hour period for kings that week, but there is not enough surplus available to provide more. And so we're left with that decision to either not open it or, well, we could let them have a six-inch and they could get some, knowing there's going to be some dropout, knowing that some people aren't going to be happy, knowing that some people don't have the gear, but some people do have the gear, and some people do want at least the opportunity to fish, even if it's six-inch. So the question I'm asking is, you know, in your district, would you at least want that six-inch knowing the drop off, or would you just say -- and some people have said that, you know, a six-inch opening is like a closure to us, because we don't have the gear, and we don't want those mushy chums anyway that get in the gear. So
that's what I'm asking now from your input is, you
know, inform me, the manager, what would your area like
to see.

MR. KRISKA: I would have to......

MR. MASCHMANN: Is six-inch no good or
would you at least like the opportunity to have......

MR. KRISKA: I would have to say open
it with six inches, because I have people to answer to,
too, once I get home. And, you know, it's like a big
game to you guys, but it's not to us.

CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Don.

MR. HONEA: Mr Chair. Thank you, Mr.
Chair.

If we're going to down the aisle, I
would say, yes. I mean you'd just as soon go ahead and
open it for the six-inch. Yeah, I'd say yes.

(Conversation on teleconference)

CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Jenny.

MS. PELKOLA: Four to six-inch, to
open.....

CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Either a four to
six-inch opening. One kind opening or a four to six-
inch opening, or no four to six-inch opening.

MS. PELKOLA: Oh, I guess I would have
to go for it. It just seems like we're put on the
spot, but even though I'm against it, I guess I'm for
it for the people that will fish with it.

CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Okay. Tim.

MR. GERVAIS: I would recommend or like
to see that you kept the six-inch opening available,
even though it's not idea. The people that want the
fish are going to figure out a way to get the gear, and
they're going to fish it. So I would recommend that
you keep the second opening with the six-inch
available. If you're in that situation where you want
to have any more seven-and-a-half-inch opening other
than the 24-hour period, then allow the six-inch gear.
We all understand it's a compromise. It's going to
cause dropout. And it's going to adversely affect
people that don't have the gear. So it creates more
regulatory burden, but I feel like because it opens up
some harvest opportunity, we should keep that option
available.

CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Okay. Thank you.
That kind of addressed that.

MR. MASCHMANN: Yeah, I just want to be
clear. If we can provide more Chinook opportunity, we
will. I'm just trying to get to -- nobody likes six-
inch fishing for kings with six-inch. I mean, we know
that. We know there's a dropout. We know it's a
burden. We know it's a hard decision to make. If we
can provide more king opportunity, we will. And
hopefully next year, you know, we'll be able to do
that. But we do like to know your input. On the YRDFA
teleconference is a good place to offer that input.
That if the choice had to be made, would you want that
six-inch or would you just rather stay at home? You
know, that's the decision we're making, that difficult
decision to make.

CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Yes. I understand
the burden of the managers also, so appreciate that
though.

Okay. We've covered this summer season
-- or the salmon season report.

Go ahead, Karen.

MS. DEATHERAGE: Thank you, Jack. This
is Karen Deatherage.

Could I do a quick housekeeping. I'd
like to get a roll call of who's on the phone, because
I'm not sure we did that, especially after lunch.

And then the second thing is to ask
people who have come into the room if they could please
sign into the sign-in sheet that's on the front table
there, that would be very helpful.

Thank you very much.
CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Okay. Who do we have on the phone. Can we get a roll call there.

MR. ESTENSEN: Yeah. Mr. Chair. This is Jeff Estensen, Alaska Department of Fish and Game, fall season manager, here in Fairbanks.

CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Okay, Jeff.

MR. COLLINS: This is Ray Collins in McGrath.

And, Holly, I have a request of you. When they do handouts there, could you collect a set of those for me and mail them to me after the meeting. Thank you.

CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Okay, Ray. Anybody else on the phone.

MS. JULIANUS: And this is Erin Julianus, BLM Central Yukon Field Office.

MR. CHAKUCHIN: And this is Jobe Chakuchin, National Park Service Regional Office in Anchorage.

MS. PATTON: Good afternoon. This is Eva Patton, Council coordinator for YK Delta and North Slope Subsistence Regional Advisory Councils.

CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Okay, Eva.


CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Okay, Jeremy.

MS. MORAN: This is Tina Moran, acting manager at Kanuti Refuge in Fairbanks.

CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Tina.

MR. SHARP: Dan Sharp with BLM in Anchorage.

CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Dan.

MR. JENKINS: Oh, go ahead.
MR. RUNFOLA: Dave Runfola, Alaska Department of Fish and Game, Subsistence Division in Fairbanks.

MR. JENKINS: Owen Jenkins, Yukon River Drainage Fisheries Association.

MS. DAMBERG: Carol Damberg.....

MS. DAGGETT: Carmen Daggettt.....

MS. DAMBERG: .....U.S.....

MS. DAGGET: .....Alaska Department of Fish and Game in Barrow.

CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: We had two speakers at the same time. Go ahead.

MS. DEATHERAGE: I got them both.

Okay.

MS. DAMBERG: This is Carol Damberg, U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, regional subsistence coordinator, Anchorage, Alaska.

MR. PAPPAS: George Pappas, OSM, Los Anchorage.

CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: George.

MS. STICKMAN: Danielle Stickman, Yukon River Drainage Fisheries Association, Anchorage.

MR. REAM: This is Joshua Ream, OSM in Anchorage.

CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Joshua.

MS. LAVINE: Robbin LaVine with the Office of Subsistence Management here in Anchorage.

CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Robbin. Is that everybody. Okay.

MS. OKADA: Marcy Okada, National Park Service.
CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Okay, Marcy.

And so that's everybody. Okay.

MS. DEATHERAGE: Thank you, Mr. Chair.

CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Did you get Dave Runfola at Subsistence Division.

MS. DEATHERAGE: Dave who?

CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Dave Runfola at Subsistence Division.

So, okay, we're going to move on to -- we covered the fall season. Yes. And so Yukon River InterTribal Fish Commission is up on our agenda here next. And YR DFA was going to participate in that?

UNIDENTIFIED VOICE: (Indiscernible -- away from microphones)

CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Oh, on the summer season. I missed that part. I thought you were with the InterTribal Fish Commission issue. If you want to speak to the summer season, go right ahead.

UNIDENTIFIED VOICE: Okay.

MS. MONCRIEFF: Thank you. This is not a long presentation, but I have it as a PowerPoint. So I'm Catherine Moncrieff. I'm with the Yukon River Drainage Fisheries Association, and I'm here reporting on behalf of myself, Wayne Jenkins and Danielle Stickman who it sounds like they're both on the phone if we have any questions that they can answer.

And you should have two handouts from me. One is a two-page flyer, and it's very similar to the PowerPoint presentation, so you can follow along at your seat. I think Karen told me that she had passed this out to you. And the second is a flyer I brought today that will be the last project I tell you about. It looks like this one. It looks like this these two.

MR. HONEA: Yukon River Drainage Fisheries Association?

MS. MONCRIEFF: Yes, that's correct.
MR. COLLINS: This is Ray. I can hardly hear the last speaker.

MS. MONCRIEFF: Can you hear me now? Am I the one you couldn't hear?

MR. COLLINS: Yes.

MS. MONCRIEFF: This is Catherine Moncrieff.

CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Can you hear her, Ray?

MR. COLLINS: Yes, I can hear her now.

MS. MONCRIEFF: Sorry. I think I was not leaning into the microphone well enough.

CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Okay. Go right ahead.

(Conversations not near mics)

MR. COLLINS: Well, I'm not hearing anything now.

MS. MONCRIEFF: Yeah, we're just setting up the PowerPoint briefly.

(Pause)

MS. MONCRIEFF: Okay. It looks like the PowerPoint is set up. And I want to thank you for this opportunity to tell you about the projects we've been working on this past summer and this past year.

It's okay if I do this?

Okay. So the first project I wanted to tell you about is our pre-season meeting. This takes place in the spring, and it brings fishermen from all along the Yukon River to either Anchorage or Fairbanks to meet with the managers and prepare for the upcoming fishing season. This project is funded by the Yukon River Panel. And for next year we do have a proposal submitted for the meeting coming up that would take place in the spring of 2019, and we'll learn in December whether this receives funding or not.
So the main things we've learned from this meeting is it's a very important meeting for getting information out to fishermen and for fishermen to have a voice with managers about the upcoming fishing season. It's highly valued both by fishermen and by managers. And the managers tell us they're especially dependent on this meeting to be able to reach fishermen and get feedback and discuss with them things they're considering for the upcoming season.

The May 2018 meeting was well attended with over 100 fishers and fishery managers in attendance. And the post-meeting evaluation indicated that people were very -- had very high levels of support for the project.

The next project I want to talk about is the in-season teleconferences which was mentioned a couple of times in the last discussion. This project takes place during the summer. Every Tuesday during the fishing season, the fishermen call in to the teleconference and talk with managers about what's going on in their communities. This project is funded by the Fisheries Resource Monitoring Program, and currently we have funding through March of 2020, which means that it is up for renewal, and to continue this program, we'll be reapplying this round when the call comes out.

What we've learned from this project is that this project is also highly valued by fishers and managers due to the complexity of the management of the river and the opportunity for real time conversations during the season. Also that this project is necessary in periods of low runs and conservation. And it's necessary for supporting meeting subsistence harvest needs.

Next I want to talk about a project, this project that's funded by the Yukon River Panel. This is building and maintaining public support for salmon resource management. This helps us fund our annual board meetings and outreach and communication to the river. Through this we've learned that the YRDFA Board is the collective voice from the river communities for informing and sharing information with fishery managers. And it's developed strong relationships along the river and a better understanding of the fishery issues. Through this
funding, we also were able to reprint our newsletter
this past year.

And then we have our in-season harvest
interviews. This project is also funded by the
Fisheries Resource Monitoring Program, and it's been
funded through March of 2020, which also means it's up
for renewal. If we want to continue this program,
we'll need to reapply with the new call coming out.

So this project is an important
communication tool that qualitatively informs managers
how fishers are doing in key locations along the river.
We hire one surveyor in 10 communities stretching the
length of the river in the Alaska portion, and they
talk to fishermen weekly during the king salmon season,
and provide that information to the managers before the
teleconferences and then our surveyors also give a
report on the teleconferences for the whole river to
hear.

What we've learned this year is we had
-- in 2018 we had 466 interviews that were conducted
with fishers in 10 communities for the six weeks that
the Chinook salmon were swimming through their
villages.

Okay. And this is a brand new project
that has just begun. It's also funded by the Fisheries
Resource Monitoring Program. This project is called
traditional knowledge of anadromous fish in the Yukon
Flats with a focus on the Draanjik Basin. The purpose
of this project is to provide information critical to
the management of anadromous fish and the habitat that
supports them. We'll be accomplishing this through
cTraditional ecological knowledge interviews with
fishers knowledgeable about white fish and salmon
fishing areas in the Draanjik Basin. We'll be talking
to fishermen in Chalkyitsik, Fort Yukon, Venetie, and
Fairbanks. And then this is a partnership with Tanana
Chiefs Conference as well as the communities. So after
the interviews we'll be following up with the mapping
that we've done will be verified by helicopter and
riverboat field work. And then finally we'll make
nominations to the anadromous waters catalog if we find
areas that are not yet documented. So we've just begun
this project. I went to Fort Yukon earlier this year,
and we're hoping to get out to Chalkyitsik next week.
And Nicole is in the audience, too, I think. Yeah.
The two of us will be traveling to Chalkyitsik hopefully next week as well as Fort Yukon.

Okay.

This project is the educational exchange. It's funded through the Yukon River Panel, and the purpose of this project is to -- it's way for people who live and use the Yukon River in both the U.S. and Canada to increase their understanding of their neighbor's experiences and challenges related to supporting and maintaining sustainable salmon runs to the spawning grounds in Canada. So this project, the funding just ended for it for this last summer season, and we do have a proposal submitted and we'll find out in April whether it will be funded for next year.

And the way this project works is we alternate. This year we took Canadians down to the Lower Yukon and showed them around, and showed them what life and fishing is like down there. And next year if it's funded, we'll take Alaskans to the headwaters up in Canada and show them what life is like up there and fishing. And it really builds an understanding of the different life ways on the Yukon.

Okay.

This project, education and outreach, the purpose of it is to -- it's really to work with young adult fishermen and continue education and outreach programs. It's funded by the National Fish and Wildlife Foundation. And this funding also just ended, but we just finished -- what we've learned is that not all adult fishers use social media to find fisheries information, and that young adult fishers have knowledge to share, but oftentimes feel like their voices aren't being heard.

With this project we were able to hold three young adult fisher workshops. We just finished the third one, and that took place here in Galena last weekend when we brought 12 young adult fishers, it was an age group of 18 to 40. We just had them here in Galena for the weekend, and we had a wonderful time talking with them about fisheries management, and we got to take them out on the river, and we got to attend your local jamboree that you held here. It was very rewarding and inspiring to work with these young
Let's see.

And then this is the last project I want to tell you about. This is community outreach for BLM planning. This is funded by Pew Charitable Trusts. And the purpose of this project is to do outreach to tribes and communities in the Bering Sea, Western Interior, and Central Yukon BLM planning regions to support engagement in the ongoing resource management planning process. The funding we have for this just ended, but what we've learned is that Kuskokwim and Yukon River communities wish to protect their traditional use areas, and have access to land and water on BLM lands as a key component of the new resource management plans.

So 14 communities have submitted ACEC nominations requests to BLM, but many of the requests have not yet been accepted by the BLM review. The community engagement continues, moving into the government-to-government consultations and the cooperating agency status with BLM.

This flyer that you guys have, this is on that project. And the main take-home points are that -- is that this planning process has been accelerated. It's on the fast tracks. And if tribes have an interest in engaging in the BLM process, Wayne is available to assist with that, and you can contact him.

And that is the end of the projects I wanted to tell you about.

I wanted to say thank you and if there's any questions.

CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Thank you. Any questions.

MR. HONEA: I liked your show. I have a question.

CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Oh, go ahead, Don.

MR. HONEA: Thank you, Mr. Chair.
Catherine, I guess -- I had a question on the ACES process. You know, I realized that -- I mean, I don't know why they haven't, you know, accepted them yet or will they accept them, but your last presentation, your last project there, how is that going to work? I mean, that's -- I mean, Ruby has already submitted something, and whether they accept or not. I mean, it's kind of a moot point, and I brought this up before. You know, we submit something, and, you know, what -- it doesn't make sense for them to reject it upon what? I mean, what are they basing it on? They gave us something like, hey, list your priorities whether it is for traditional use, berries, water, what's important to you. So it's kind of a moot point.

But what exactly -- is this program going to enhance that or is it going to help us to get those? I mean, what exactly is that program right there.

Thank you.

MS. MONCRIEFF: Well, I wonder first if Wayne's on the phone still.

MR. JENKINS: Yes, Catherine, I'm here.

MS. MONCRIEFF: Okay. Well, I was just going to say that I know that Wayne's been working quite a bit on this, and has provided quite a -- I mean, he's done a lot of work on it, but maybe, Wayne, you want to address Don's question directly.

MR. JENKINS: Yes, I'd be glad to.

Through the Chair. Don.

CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Go ahead, yeah.

MR. JENKINS: Thank you, Chairman.

BLM is not making this easy. One would hope in these kind of NEPA public processes that they come to the public, they ask the public for their inputs. They hear and analyze and come to conclusions that hopefully support the public's interest. ACEC's chosen as a way to give BLM the kind of details they would need for defending a position for protecting subsistence even though they're already directed to do
so. And it was a way to engage, a way the tribes had not engaged with BLM previously in the hopes of creating a long-term working relationship. Not just to finish the plan, but to create a working relationship where BLM and the interests of the communities, you know, could be addressed ongoing.

The rejections ACEC's are based on a pretty subjective analysis that has two different pretty loosely defined criteria. Relevance and importance. And the pattern that we've seen in rejection of the nominations that have come from so many tribes has been in the area of importance. BLM has shared -- they understand the importance to the local communities for harvests on land and water for cultural, nutritional food, resources, the whole gamut. But the way they perceive importance is two ways. One is local and regional. And they were not perceiving the nominations, the areas as regional. They were looking at them from a local perspective, and so they felt that it didn't rise to the level of importance criteria as they look at it. So as you can see, it gets into levels of complexity and subjective definitions.

What we're doing now is we're trying to support the nominations in a wider context, because we've gone back and had discussions, and in fact tribal use and subsistence harvest of the lands is indeed regional in perspective, because the foods aren't just used in the village. They're shared, they're traded, they're bartered throughout their region, and these regions overlap. It's a very complex matrix of food harvest, processing, and sharing that just goes across millions of acres of land. Now, whether BLM will accept this new idea or this new approach, it pretty much reflects the reality within the new political situation that we find ourselves, we do not know. There are no guarantees. All we can do is support and work with tribes and BLM. We're trying to bring the facts forward and then see in the not too distant future now, I think by November we'll start to see draft environmental impact statements where BLM will be requesting comments. And so that will be another opportunity to look at what they've done with the information they have and whether it actually addresses the needs of the communities. So we'll be working with tribes on that.
We're also working with more tribes to request cooperative agency status. BLM seems to be slow in getting back to the tribes that are requesting that. And, of course, there are capacity challenges at the local level also.

So, Don, I don't know that that makes it any simpler for you. I think it probably makes it more complicated, but does that help you.

MR. HONEA: Yeah. Wayne, it sure did. I guess what I was looking, it's really frustrating to submit these things and then just sit there and wait, and then to find out that BLM has more ideas on more plans and stuff that we have to fill out. I was just wondering if you knew of a time line or a deadline or whatever that we would hear back on these ACEC's. But I appreciate your answers.

Thank you.

MR. JENKINS: Don, thank you. Through the Chair.

There is a new time line. Before it was rather open-ended, and the process seemed to stretch out. I know I started working on this back in 2014. It is a lot of work, especially at the local level. And it is frustrating. We are trying to approach it in as efficient and painless way as possible, but we have to work within the framework that's set by BLM in the planning process. Much of that is changing and shifting. It's coming down from the top folks in Interior. So, of course, and they get their instructions from even higher up. The new time line is I think we'll see an EIS by November. A 90-day comment period. There's also a period in there that analysis in D.C. has to be done. And I believe the estimate for both the Central Yukon and Bering Sea, Western Interior is to come out with a decision, a final decision in April of 2019, and a limit of 300 pages on the main document, which seems fairly challenging for the BLM folks themselves to actually pull that off. But, you know, the fast track approach just means, you know, we have a lot of work to do.

MS. PELKOLA: Wayne. Through the Chair. This is Jenny Pelkola. I'd just like to know, where all the tribes that submitted an application,
MR. JENKINS: They were not, Jenny, through the Chair. But once again this is kind of a reflection of the -- oh, I don't know what to call it really. The differences in the Western view of things and how Federal approaches are structured and the reality on the ground of the people that live there. For instance, Koyukuk's nominations included the watershed of the Honhosa, Gisasa, and Kateel. The Kateel and Gisasa had U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service studies that supported the fisheries. You know, that they were spawning grounds for certain species. And so it gave BLM data that they needed in order to be able to support maintaining those in the nomination as ACEC's. Honhosa has had no studies, and so it was rejected. The input and the need for protection in that area requested by Koyukuk was not accepted based on the testimony from the tribe. BLM seems to need or desire western science and studies to support their selections, and the importance criteria that this was local use only was also used to reject it.

CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Okay. Any other questions.

(No comments)

CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: All right.

MS. MONCRIEFF: Thank you.

CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Thank you. Appreciate your presentation. Thank you.

MR. JENKINS: Thank you.

CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Karen, what do you think about a break, Karen.

MS. DEATHERAGE: That's fine.

CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Okay. I show the clock at 3:40. We'll reconvene in about 15 minutes at 3:55.

(Off record)

(On record)
CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: We're going to come back on the record a little bit break. And you're still on the phone there, Ray?

MR. COLLINS: Yes.

CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Okay. Good. We've got to remember we have the potluck at 5:30. And so we're going to move down on the agenda to the Yukon River InterTribal Fish Commission.

MR. HONEA: Where are we at.

CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: We're on No. 10.b. So we've got Pippa and Gary and they're going to be giving us the Yukon River InterTribal Fish Commission.

MS. KENNER: Oh, sorry, we jumped the gun.

CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Oh, you jumped the gun?

MS. KENNER: We jumped the gun. We have this new agenda.

CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Did you see the one with the red marks in it?

MS. KENNER: (Indiscernible -- away from mic)

CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: So who was going to do the -- what happened to Karen? There she is. The InterTribal Fish Commission presentation. Stephanie Quinn-Davidson.

MS. DEATHERAGE: And I haven't heard from Stephanie.

CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Oh, she may not be here. So if she's not, and no one is here to do that presentation, then we will go to Pippa, since you're already set up there and stuff, and Gary. So Stephanie Quinn-Davidson will -- could you message her or text her or something?

MS. DEATHERAGE: I'll email her.
CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Email her and see if she is about. She's not answering, she's not talking on the phone, so, okay, go ahead, Pippa. Gary.

MR. DECOSSAS: Good evening, Council. So my name is Gary Decossas, and I am a fisheries biologist and statistician for the Office of Subsistence Management.

MS. KENNER: And I'm Pippa Kenner, an anthropologist for the Office of Subsistence Management. And I'll be working with Gary today.

MR. DECOSSAS: Yes. So we'll start off with the Yukon proposals first. We'll start off with Fishery Proposal 19-01, and that can be found on Page 59 of your books. I'll give you a second to flip to that page.

CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Go ahead.

MR. DECOSSAS: So this one should be familiar to at least one person on this Council.

CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Yes.

MR. DECOSSAS: Proposal FP19-01 was submitted by Jack Reakoff of Wiseman and it requests an expansion of the area and fishing time for the Federal Subsistence drift gillnet fishery in Subdistricts 4B and 4C of the Yukon northern Federal subsistence fishery management area. The proponent also requests repealing the maximum mesh depth restriction of 35 meshes deep for drift gillnets used in the Subdistricts 4B and 4C in the fishery.

The proponent states that adoption of this proposal would align Federal subsistence fisheries methods, means, seasons, and area regulations with recent State regulatory changes for the drift gillnet fisheries in Subdistricts 4B and 4C of the Yukon River drainage. And would mirror the State absence of a drift gillnet mesh depth limit.

The proponent indicates adoption of this proposal will reduce the amount of travel time and associated expenses for subsistence users who choose to use drift gillnets to harvest salmon.
The proponent indicates that removing
the drift gillnet mesh depth maximum, combined with
more liberal fishing season dates for fall chum salmon
would reflect recent changes made by the State and will
increase compliance with regulations as well as reduce
enforcement concerns.

In March 2018 the Alaska Board of
Fisheries adopted modified Proposal 230 allowing the
use of drift gillnets of 150 feet in length in
Districts 4B and 4C. Prior to this, only set gillnets
and fishwheels were authorized.

So I’m going to move on to the effects
of the proposal. If the proposal were adopted,
additional harvest opportunities would be provided to
Federally-qualified subsistence users by removing the
depth restrictions on drift gillnets in Subdistricts 4B
and 4C of the Yukon River. Also if the proposal was
adopted, a Federal subsistence drift gillnet fall chum
salmon fishing season within Subdistricts 4B and 4C of
the Yukon River beginning August 2nd would be provided.

Currently on the State-managed drift
gillnet subsistence fishery for all chum salmon is
authorized under State regulation, but not in Federal
subsistence regulation. If this proposal was adopted,
Federally-qualified users could drift gillnet fish
under Federal regulations, which would be independent
to State regulations during the referenced time frame.

Aligning the Federal subsistence drift
gillnet allowance with State regulations will likely
result in less confusion by fishers and less
administrative actions by the Federal in-season
manager. Adoption of this proposal will align State
and Federal subsistence fishing regulations, which will
reduce enforcement concerns and user confusion. The
Federal in-season manager under the management
authority delegated by the Board will continue to have
authority to make in-season adjustments in fishing time
and fishing gear types in response to the Chinook
salmon run strength.

For OSM's preliminary conclusion, it
was to support Proposal FP19-01. The justification in
the preliminary conclusion is as follows.

This proposal was submitted to mirror
recently adopted fishery liberalizations by the State. Currently the Federal drift gillnet fishery in Subdistricts 4B and 4C of the Yukon River is more restrictive than the State-managed fisheries. Adoption of this proposal will allow Federally-qualified users to fish deeper waters with drift gillnets in the identified area without mesh depth restrictions. Allowing the use of deeper nets may increase user efficiency by reducing the amount of time used to harvest the same number of fish in a deeper net and less time than it would do so in a shallower net. Adoption of this proposal will also create a fall chum salmon drift gillnet Federal subsistence fishery beginning August 2nd, allowing users to target fall chum salmon if harvestable surplus is determined by the in-season Federal fisheries managers with the management authority granted by the Federal Subsistence Board.

Adoption of this proposal is not expected to increase subsistence harvest as the fisheries in the affected subdistricts, as participation in salmon harvest in this area has been consistently low. Although an increase in harvest is not expected, adoption of this proposal may affect management of other Federally-qualified users harvesting salmon outside of Subdistricts 4B and 4C.

And since the Yukon-Kuskokwim Delta Regional Advisory Council met at the end of September, their Council voted to support FP19-01.

And that's it. Mr. Chair.

CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Support as presented?

MR. DECOSSAS: Correct.

CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Okay. Thank you. Any questions on the proposal presentation, Council members.

(No comments)

CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Seeing none, do we have any reports on Board consultations with the tribes, Orville.
MR. LIND: It will be very short. Mr. Chair. Thank you for the opportunity to report.

There was consultation done on June 7th, and Fisheries Proposal 19-01 was given a brief overview to the audience, and there was no comments or requests or any action on 19-01.

Thank you.

CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: And that was with tribes and ANCSA corps?

MR. LIND: Yes sir.

CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Okay. Thank you.

Appreciate that.

And so we've got ADF&G comments. Do we have ADF&G on the phone.

MS. CARROLL: Mr. Chair. This is Holly Carroll, the summer season manager for the Yukon.

CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Go ahead, Holly.

MS. CARROLL: I just wanted to verify that you're still talking about FP19-01.

CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Yes, we are.

MS. CARROLL: Yeah, we're in support of that proposal. We see that as basically a housekeeping proposal.

CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Thank you.

Appreciate your comment.

And then we have Federal comments.

Gerald.


Fred Bue, the Federal manager, he supports this proposal. It would align Federal subsistence fishing regulations with the State regulations, which would avoid confusion in this area with differing State and Federal regulations in waters.
that are close by.

One thought we had was, you know, to eliminate unnecessary Federal regulations, you know, rather than duplicate State regs, why not just eliminate it since, you know, by default we adopt State regulations. So one option would be to repeal or rescind or just do away with it. Then you don't have to deal with duplicate regulations. But that was our opinion that we I think vocalized with OSM.

CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Yes, but with the contentiousness and this Federal regulation being in place, there had to be a proposal to eliminate. So this is the more palatable way to do that.

Thank you.

And so we have tribal consul -- local tribes. Do we have -- Susie, do you want to make a comment on this Federal proposal which aligns with the current State regulations? No? You've said plenty in support of current regulations.

Advisory group, other Regional Councils. We have that the Yukon-Delta Regional Advisory Council had adopted this Proposal 19-01.

Fish and Game Advisory Committees. Have they met? Middle Yukon. And subsistence resource commiss -- Gates of the Arctic has not met in this proposal.

Summary of written comments; have we gotten any written comments, Karen?

MS. DEATHERAGE: Thank you, Mr. Chair. This is Karen Deatherage from OSM, and there were no written comments received for Federal Proposal 18-01 -- 19-01, excuse me.

Thanks.

CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: 19, yes. Any public comments from people from Galena that may.....

(No comments)

CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: No, I don't see any.
Regional Council recommendation. Need a motion to adopt.

MS. PATTON: Good afternoon. Mr. Chair.

CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Oh, go ahead.

MS. PATTON: This is Eva Patton, the Council coordinator for the YK Delta Subsistence Regional Advisory Council.

And the Council did met September 26th through the 28th, and took action on this proposal. The Council supported FP19-01. And they had discussed that they had heard positive feedback from fishers and communities on the river that this would assist those areas in 4B, 4C to be able to drift in front of their own river. And Council members that live in the region also saw this as alleviating a crowding, increase competition in the lower river when people had to travel down there in order to drift fish. So the Council did support this proposal with no conservation on noted by both the State and Federal managers, but would allow people in that region to subsistence fish in their own area by drift fishing there.

Thank you.

CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: I appreciate your additional information, and appreciate YK Delta's support of the proposal also.

And so the -- we need a motion to support the proposal.

MS. PELKOLA: So move.

CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Moved by Jenny.

MR. HONEA: Second.

CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Seconded by Don.

Discussion on the proposal.

MS. PELKOLA: Question.

CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: We have to have
justification if you support the proposal.

My justification for support would be
to align State and Federal regulations and provide
elimination of that 35 mesh. We do 35 mesh just to get
the driftnet fishery for B and C on the Federal waters.
So that was -- that needs to be eliminated. And then
the addition of the chum salmon fishery after August 2
is a real positive aspect of this proposal.

Tim.

MR. GERVAIS: Further justification is
in agreement with YK Delta that it alleviates crowding
for that State water area for the Ruby residents, and
is more economical for Federally-qualified users that
live upriver from Ruby, and supports our trend of
trying to align the State and Federal regs. And it
matches what I was talking about during my opening
proposal that there has been driftnet fishing in the
Middle Yukon for at least since the 1850s, so probably
well before that even, so in some regards it's a
customary style of fishing.

CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Appreciate those
additional justifications. When we go before the
Federal Subsistence Board, those are actually read into
the record for the Federal Subsistence Board by the
Council Chair or the representative from the Council.
So those justifications are actually fairly important
to have why the Council voted in specific manners.

So any other additional comments.

(No comments)

CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Question was called
by Jenny. Those in favor of the proposal as written
and with those justifications, signify by saying aye.

IN UNISON: Aye.

CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Opposed same sign.

(No opposing votes)

CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Are you there, Ray.

(No comment)
CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: If you've muted your phone, Ray, I can't hear you.

MR. COLLINS: Yes.

CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Okay. We got a yes from Ray. So we've got a unanimous on that. So appreciate that, Ray.

Pippa.

MR. DECOSSAS: Okay. So we'll move on to Fisheries Proposal 19-02, and this can be found on Page 83 in your RAC books. All right.

So Proposal FP19-02 was submitted by Alissa Rogers of Bethel, and requests the Federal Subsistence Board decrease the time the subsistence fishery is closed prior to the start of the State commercial fishing season in Yukon Districts 1, 2, 3, and 4A, excluding the Koyukuk and Innoko Rivers, from 24 hours to six hours. The proponent submitted a similar proposal to the Alaska Board of Fisheries to take up at its Arctic, Yukon, Kuskokwim fin fish meeting on January 15th through 19th of 2019.

The proponent states these closers do not prevent people from selling to the commercial fishery Chinook salmon taken in the subsistence fishery, because only a few Yukon subsistence fishermen do this. The proponent states there are always going to be a few bad actors, that they are known and have been fined before, but that the existing regulation has not stopped them. The proponent states that this regulation is burdensome on subsistence fishermen without any benefit.

Effects of the proposal. If this proposal were adopted, Federally-qualified users -- oops -- would be allowed to continue subsistence fishing for salmon up to six hours instead of up to 24 hours.

CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: We're hearing an echo on the phone. Somebody that's got their -- push star-6 to mute, because we're getting an echo from what we're saying back and forth. Okay. Go ahead, Gary.

MR. DECOSSAS: Okay. Yeah, that threw
me for a second. I thought maybe it was my phone. So
I'll start over. If this proposal were adopted,
Federally.....

CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: We're still hearing
that echo. If somebody's on the phone, push star-6.
So I still hear that echo. Hello. I still hear the
echo. Go ahead and try and talk again, Gary. I don't
hear the echo now. Somebody got it. Thank you.
Appreciate it. Go ahead.

MR. DECOSSAS: All right. Third time's
the charm. If this proposal were adopted, Federally-
qualified subsistence users would be allowed to
continue subsistence fishing for salmon up to six hours
instead of up to 24 hours before the start of the State
commercial fishing season in Yukon Districts 1, 2, 3,
and Subdistrict 4A, excluding Koyukuk and Innoko
Rivers.

State and Federal regulations would no
longer be the same, complicating enforcement of these
regulations and creating confusions about where and
when it is legal to fish. If the proposal was not
adopted, the subsistence fishery would remain closed
for 24 hours prior to the start of the State commercial
fishing season, and subsistence management regulations
would remain the same.

OSM's preliminary conclusion is to
support Proposal FP19-02. The justification is as
follows.

Adoption of this proposal would result
in additional opportunity for Federally-qualified
subsistence users in Districts 1 through 4A on the
Yukon River. If adopted with FP19-03 as modified,
Federally-qualified subsistence users would have a
uniform period of closure surrounding the commercial
fishery throughout the fishing season, reducing
confusion in Federal regulations. The six hours
between subsistence fishing and commercial fishing
would still allow enough time for users to adjust for
each as needed.

And for additional information, since
the Yukon-Kuskokwim Delta RAC met at the end of
September, they voted to oppose Fishery Proposal 19-02.
And then Eva later on can provide the justification
that the Council provided for that oppose proposal.

CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Okay.

MS. KENNER: And this is Pippa. I'd like to add a little bit of information. So I want to point out that this is the closure prior to the start of the State commercial fishing season. So this isn't the opening and closure that occurs before and after commercial openings. This is before the start of the first opening.

Thank you.

CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Okay. Any Council member questions on the proposal presentation.

(No comments)

CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Seeing none, did we have any tribal consultation input, Orville.

MR. LIND: Mr. Chair. Orville Lind, Native liaison, OSM.

During the consultation, Frank Harris of OSM presented a brief overview of 19-02, which received no comments.

Thank you, Mr. Chair.

CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Okay. Appreciate that. ADF&G comments. Holly.

MS. CARROLL: Yeah. Mr. Chair. Thank you.

Just briefly, the State opposes this proposal as written, and I will clarify that the proposal was submitted exactly the same to the State Board of Fisheries. The State doesn't have finalized comments, but I'll give you my general thinking as the manager.

We oppose it, because there may be times when shortening that original closure around the start of the commercial season is too short of a time. While the proponent has stated that she knows who the bad actors are, I wish I was as lucky as a manager. We
don't always know whether illegal sales of subsistence-caught fish are going on. Usually we don't find out about it until a processor notifies us that it's happening. We do have that occur even in the chum salmon commercial fishery. So it does remain a concern. And while most fishermen are honest and absolutely doing their best to conserve the runs for the future, these kinds of closures are in place across the State.

What I would suggest is that the Department would likely support some language changes in the State version that would allow us, when it's warranted, to reduce that 24-hour closure, because we do have that flexibility around other openings. And we often reduce those closure times. So having the ability to reduce it when we want to provide subsistence opportunity would be great. But as written, we do oppose the proposal.

CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Okay. Thank you for your position.

Federal position. Gerald

MR. MASCHMANN: Gerald with U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service.

We also oppose for the same reasons that Holly just discussed.

Thank you.

CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Okay. And tribal comments. Anyone in the room want to make a tribal comment.

(No comments)

CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: I don't see anybody. Advisory -- other Regional Advisory Councils. Eva, are you on the phone.

MS. PATTON: Yes. Good afternoon, Mr. Chair and Council.

The YK Delta Subsistence Regional Advisory Council voted to oppose FP19-02. And while they expressed that they would like to see an
opportunity for subsistence fishers to be out on the
river earlier, longer around commercial fisheries for
more time to harvest for subsistence, I'm hearing. You
know, pretty detailed discussion with the State in-
season manager and also the Federal in-season manager,
they felt that the current buffers around the
commercial fishery had been working pretty well, and it
provided a little bit of buffer for those, too, that
both subsistence and commercial fish. They did want to
ensure that people were not treated as criminal, that
most of the communities and most of the people were
working very diligently to conserve Chinook salmon.
But again they did oppose this proposal, noting that
the current management seemed to be working fairly well
based on feedback from the Yukon members.

Thank you.

CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Thank you, Eva. And
is there any advisory committees met on this? No.
Resource Commission did not meet on this.

Summary of written comments. Did we
have any.

MS. DEATHERAGE: Thank you. Mr. Chair.
This is Karen Deatherage with OSM.
There were no written comments received
for FP19-02.

CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Okay. Public
testimony. Anybody.

(No comments)

CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Don't see anybody in
the room wanting to.

Regional Council recommendation. We
need a motion to adopt to vote the proposal up or down.

MR. GERVAIS: So moved.

CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Moved by Tim.

MR. THOMAS: Second.

CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Seconded by Dennis.
So Council discussion on the proposal.
Any Council members care to comment on the proposal.

Go ahead, Tim.

MR. GERVAIS: Yeah. I've never fished down in those districts, so I can't speak specifically to the areas, but I've never seen a buffer time period that short anywhere in the State. And it seems not only it could lead to subsistence-caught fish being entered into the commercial market, but may give certain fishers advantage in knowing where the fish are moving prior to the commercial opening. That would not be equitable for all participants. So I feel like the current regulation seems fine, and based on the discussion from the YK Delta Council that they seem to be in agreement with it. They're certainly the local experts in the matter. And I'm in agreement with their conclusion.

CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Yes. Thanks, Tim.

Appreciate those comments.

I do think that, you know, the subsistence -- or recent fishing activity would indicate where the majority of the fish -- the longer you fish, the more knowledge you have of what the fish are actually doing.

My personal opinion is that moving it -- you know, they have these bad actors selling fish. Well, it would encourage a lot more people to have more of an incentive to have really bright fish ready to sell. And I've seen -- this is a chronic problem. It doesn't matter where you're at. I've seen boats with their tires dragging in Bristol Bay. They were sitting out on the opening, that had their net in the water for five minutes running directly to the tender. They knew that if they had a couple fish on the boat, they could go deliver. So that is always a problem when you have a commercial fishing that goes right up to a subsistence fishery. That would actually encourage or be an incentive for people to -- maybe more people to break the law, so I would be concerned about that.

So I intend to oppose the proposal.

Other discussion.
(No comments)

CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Do we have a question then.

MS. PELKOLA: Question.

CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Question's called by Jenny. Those in favor of Proposal FP19-02 signify by saying aye.

(No affirmative votes)

CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Opposed same sign.

IN UNISON: Aye.

CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: And your vote, Ray.

MR. COLLINS: Aye.

CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Okay. Aye. Okay. Unanimous opposition to the proposal with the justifications given in the discussion.

Next proposal, Gary.

MR. DECOSSAS: All right. Mr. Chair.

Members of the Council.

We'll move on to Fishery Proposal 19-03 and 19-04. This can be found starting on Page 105 of your RAC books.

All right. Proposal FP19-03 was submitted by Alissa Rogers of Bethel, and requests the Federal Subsistence Board decrease the time the subsistence fishery is closed immediately before the State commercial fishing period in Yukon Districts 1, 2, and 3 prior to July 15th from 18 hours to 6 hours, and immediately after from 12 hours to 6 hours. And after July 15th from 12 hours before to 6 hours before, and immediately after from 12 hours to 6 hours.

So as you can see here, she's changing all of the scattered times from, let's see, 18, 12 to 6 hours. Everything's consistently six hours in her proposal.
Proposal FP 04 was also submitted by Alissa Rogers of Bethel, and requests the Board eliminate the closures to subsistence fishing immediately before, during and after commercial fishing periods in Yukon Districts 1, 2, and 3. The proponent has submitted a similar proposal to the Alaska Board of Fisheries to take up at its AYK fin fish meeting on January 15th through 19th of 2019.

The proponent states these closures do not prevent people from selling their harvest from the Federal subsistence fishery as commercially caught fish. The proponent states that the existing regulation is burdensome on Federal subsistence fishermen without any benefit.

Effects of the proposal. If Proposal FP19-03 were adopted, there would be a decrease in duration of the closure to the subsistence fishing before and after State commercial opening periods from 24 hours to 6 hours. If Proposal FP19-04 were adopted, it would eliminate the closures to subsistence fishing immediately before, during, and immediately following State commercial fishing periods.

Although these proposals may increase opportunities for subsistence harvest for Federally-qualified users, there are some potential drawbacks that could occur. State and Federal regulations would no longer be the same, complicating enforcement. Also commercial and subsistence fishers fishing at the same time increases enforcement complexity and may increase user conflict. Commercial fishers will be competing with subsistence fishers for prime fishing locations. Additionally this proposal may make it easier to illegally sell subsistence-caught fish in the commercial fishery.

One potential effect that could come from adopting either of these proposals is an increase in commercial fishing time. If the Yukon area managers allow two 18-hour subsistence fishing opportunities per week, then there's potential for commercial fishing to occur during or up to six hours prior, and again six hours after the subsistence fishing opportunity. This may affect the quality of fishing during the subsistence fishing period.

If both proposals were not adopted,
then the subsistence fishery will remain closed before the commercial fishing opening for 18 hours prior to July 15th and 12 hours after July 15th. Also, the subsistence fishery would remain closed for 12 hours after a commercial fishing period during that entire time period.

OSM's preliminary conclusion is to oppose Proposal FP19-04 and support Proposal FP19-03 with modification to include District 4A. The justification for the preliminary conclusion is as follows.

Adoption of this proposal as modified may result in additional opportunity for Federally-qualified subsistence users in Districts 1, 2, 3, and 4A on the Yukon River while avoiding issues that may come with having concurrent subsistence and commercial fishing periods. This proposal as modified will also remove some of the confusion associated with restrictions prior to the commercial fisheries by standardized the amount of time subsistence fishing is closed prior to and after the commercial openings.

Since the YK Delta RAC did meet for this, they voted to oppose both of these proposals.

Thank you, Mr. Chair.

CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Okay. Thank you.

Any questions on these proposal presentation.

(No comment)


MR. LIND: Mr. Chair. Council members. Again during the consultation on June 7th presented by Frank Harris of Office of Subsistence Management, on 19-03 and 19-04, there were no comments made.

Thank you, Mr. Chair.

CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Okay. Appreciate that.

So agency comments. Holly.
MS. CARROLL: Thank you, Mr. Chair.

Holly Carroll, Fish and Game.

And again we don't have finalized Department comments, but these proposals were identically submitted to the Board of Fish. And so, you know, my comments are as a manager.

We oppose this proposal as written. I won't repeat all the enforcement reasons that were mentioned for the previous one, but they all apply. And also some of the comments that your own Board members have just made also apply, that when you have a very short window between openings, it kind of can encourage, you know, an opportunity that we don't want to exist at all for subsistence-caught fish to get into the commercial market.

But the other reason we oppose it is that we already have the emergency authority to reduce all of those closures, and we also have the authority to allow concurrent subsistence and commercial fishing. So, for instance, in District 4A, commercial and subsistence is already concurrent. There are no closures for subsistence. For District 3 there's no commercial fishing, so they are not affected by closures. And for Districts 1 and 2, we used to allow concurrent commercial and subsistence fishing with no closures, and the fishermen themselves at the pre-season planning meeting in 2014 and '15 said that they would prefer that the fishing not be concurrent, that they would like them to be separate. That some of the fishermen that commercial fish, or most of them, are also the main household subsistence fishermen, and so they need time to rest in between. Otherwise they're having to choose between fisheries.

And so I also wanted to point out that when we do need to have those full-length closures in place, sometimes that will be for biological reasons. It will be to allow groups of fish to pass safely through a district or a subdistrict without anyone fishing on them. And so we like to retain that ability to allow groups to pass through safely.

And the other thing is that actually in practice, because we've been executing mostly a selective commercial fishery the last four year, we've actually been reducing these closures to often as short
as two hours around the openings. And the reason for that is we're already restricting subsistence fishing, and so we don't like to close them any more than necessary. And a lot of times when fishermen are using selective gear, they're just going out for chum salmon anyway. So we are drastically reducing those closures pretty frequently when we can. So just maintaining that flexibility is really important for effective management.

So we oppose the proposal as written.

CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: I appreciate those additional comments, Holly, on how you're prosecuting this fishery.

And the Federal position. Gerald.

MR. MASCHMANN: Gerald. Fish and Wildlife.

We also oppose for the same reasons that Holly Carroll just stated.

CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Okay. Thank you.

I see tribal comments. Don't see anyone in the room that would be commenting from a tribal position locally.

Other Regional Advisory Councils. Eva.

MS. PATTON: Yes. Mr. Chair and Council. The YK Delta Subsistence Regional Advisory Council voted to oppose both 19-03 and 19-04. Their justification was similar to the previous proposal, for 02. They did really appreciate hearing how that fishery was managed and the flexibility that currently exists around the timing of those closures. And also concurred that, you know, at times it would be important to have a break between commercial and subsistence fishing so, you know, stocks wouldn't be over-harvested, and there would be a break for salmon to move upstream.

So again the Council did oppose both those proposals, 19-03 and 19-04.

Thank you.
CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Thank you, Eva.
And advisory committee comments. None.
Subsistence Resource Commissions.
None.

Summary of written comments.

MS. DEATHERAGE: Thank you, Mr. Chair.
This is Karen Deatherage with OSM.
No comments, written comments were received for FP19-03 and 19-04.
Thank you.

CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Okay. Thank you.

Public testimony.

(No comments)

CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: I don't see anybody in the room that's submitted a blue card or wanting to comment.

Regional Council recommendation. We need a motion to get the proposal 19-03 and 19-04 on the floor.

MR. HONEA: So move.

CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Moved by Don.

MR. GERVAIS: Seconded.

CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Seconded by Tim.

Council discussion on 19-03 and 19-04.
Similar justification with the addition that the State clarified that they -- how they're prosecuting the fishery, and need to have the ability for flexibility. And that's an important issue, to give more window of passage for stocks. So we don't want to straightjacket the managers into specific time frames. And so the State has management authority to adjust the length of the -- to shorten or to maximize the windows before and after subsistence and commercial fisheries separation.
So that's a justification addition, and my intent to oppose these proposals.

Any other comments.

MR. HONEA: Question.

CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Tim has a comment.

MR. GERVVAIS: And your justification, Jack, included the justification for the prior proposal?

CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Yes, on the just -- and in conjunction with the prior justification. Thanks for that clarification.

Other comments.

(No comments)

CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Question's called by Don. Those in favor of Proposal FP19-03 and 04 signify by saying aye.

(No affirmative votes)

CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Opposed, same sign.

IN UNISON: Aye.

MR. COLLINS: Aye.

CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Thank you, Ray.

And, yeah, we've got time for another one here. So we're going to address FP19-05. Gary.


Now we'll move onto 19-05. And this is found on Page 131 of your RAC books.

All right. Proposal FP19-05 was submitted by Alissa Rogers of Bethel, and requests the Federal Subsistence Board remove the requirement of fin clipping subsistence-caught Chinook salmon in the lower river, Yukon River Districts 1, 2 and 3. The proponent submitted a similar proposal to the Alaska Board of Fisheries to take up at it's AYK fin fish meeting in
The proponent states that fin clipping does not prevent people from selling subsistence-caught Chinook salmon into the commercial fishery, because only a few Yukon subsistence fishermen do this. This proponent states that the existing regulation is burdensome on subsistence fishermen without any benefit.

On the effects of the proposal, if the proposal were adopted, there would be a reduction of requirements on Federally-qualified subsistence users on Federal public lands in Districts 1 through 3. Effects on the salmon stocks are likely negligible.

Although this proposal would reduce the requirements for subsistence harvest for Federally-qualified users, there are some potential drawbacks that may occur. State and Federal regulations would no longer be the same. Additionally this proposal.....

(Conversation on teleconference)

CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Somebody's talking on the phone. You need to mute your phone. We're getting a presentation here. Star-6.

Continue.

MR. DECOSSAS: All right. So the State and Federal regulations would no longer be the same. Additionally, this proposal may make it easier for subsistence-caught fish to end up being illegally sold in the commercial fishery.

If the proposal was not adopted, the subsistence fishery in Districts 1 through 3 would continue to clip fins on subsistence-caught Chinook salmon under State regulations. Federal and State subsistence management regulations would remain the same.

OSM's preliminary conclusion was to support Proposal FP19-05 with modification to allow Federally-qualified subsistence users to harvest Chinook salmon without clipping the tails when the commercial sale of Chinook salmon is not allowed. The justification for that preliminary conclusion is as
Fin clipping is not a traditional practice, and in some regions of Alaska marking requirements have been described as burdensome and disrespectful to cultural ways of life. Given the recently limited opportunity for the commercial sale of Chinook salmon, there is no need to burden subsistence users with marking requirements meant to prevent illegal sale of Chinook salmon. The modification to require fin clipping once the commercial sale of Yukon River Chinook salmon is announced, removes an unnecessary burden on subsistence users, but leaves in place a requirement to clip fins as a deterrent to illegal sales of subsistence-caught fish.

Requiring fin clipping once the commercial sale of Yukon River Chinook salmon is announced, it's necessary for law enforcement to effectively track and differentiate salmon harvested under Federal subsistence fisheries and State commercial fisheries. Given the proximity of these two fisheries in both space and time, the opportunity for illegal sale of Chinook salmon maybe elevated in times that sale of the species is allowed. Curbing such illegal sales is essential to prevent over-harvest as a means for rural residents to earn cash from an illegal activity. While fish marking requirements are warranted during these specific and recently limited times, they're not warranted at all times.

And the YK Delta RAC did meet to provide a......

MS. KENNER: Recommendation.

MR. DECOSSAS: .....recommendation, thank you. It's a late day. But I'm going to leave that to Eva, because this one was kind of complicated at the YK Delta RAC. So you can hear more about their recommendation from her.

CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Yes, we will. Any questions on the proposal, on the presentation.

(No comments)

MR. LIND: Thank you, Mr. Chair.

Council members. Orville Lind, Native liaison for OSM.

During the consultation with tribal and ANCSA folks June 7th, the only comment was from Chief Gary agreeing with that it's not a common cultural practice, and stated that the government should pay attention to the tribes more, because subsistence rights should be above and beyond all uses.

Thank you, Mr. Chair.

CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Thank you, Orville.

Agency comments, Alaska Department of Fish and Game. Holly.

MS. CARROLL: Yeah, Mr. Chair. Thank you.

I actually -- same caveats as before. We haven't finalized our State comments, but this is also submitted for the State Board of Fish.

And after hearing the OSM recommendation, we oppose the removal of the fin clipping requirement, so we oppose the proposal as written. But we would support some substitute language that would allow in times when there are no commercial sales that it not be required. And so therefore if we had maybe emergency order authority to require it when there are times when there are commercial sales, that would be good.

The Department needs to be able to retain the flexibility to require that marking. It does have an effect. It's certainly helpful for enforcement. It can have the effect of stopping fish going into the commercial market.

And, you know, while we may not have a king commercial sale any time soon, you know, just in 2017 we had a run size of over 200,000 and we did consider commercial sale. Run sizes of 200,000 would warrant some sale of king salmons in incidentally caught chum fisheries. And so removing it completely is not supported by the Department. Giving us the authority to require that fin clipping when there is a sale of commercially -- or commercial sale of incidentally caught salmon is going to be very
important. So we do oppose it as written.

Thank you.

CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Okay. I really
appreciate your detailed comment.

Gerald.

MR. MASCHMANN: Gerald, U.S. Fish and
Wildlife Service.

Again we also don't support it a
written, but would support a modification that when
there is no sales of Chinook then having no clipping,
that would be fine with us, too.

Thank you.

CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Okay. Appreciate
that.

Any tribal comments. Do you have a
comment on that, Jenny?

MS. PELKOLA: None at this time.

CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: None. Advisory
groups. Other Regional Councils. Eva. It was complex.

MS. PATTON: Yes. Mr. Chair and
Council. Yes. Mr. Chair and Council. The YK Delta
Subsistence Regional Advisory Council ultimately
supported FP19-05 with the OSM modification.

As Gary noted, there was a little bit
of confusion at first in terms of the vote, because it
was asking to remove the fin clipping regulation. So
there was a little bit of confusion on the first vote
between removing the proposal and removing fins, but
ultimately the Council did revisit this proposal and
vote to support it with the OSM modification. And the
Council felt pretty strongly that this is an
unnecessary regulation that has been burdensome on
subsistence fishers and contrary to traditional
beliefs. If you catch a fish, you should use the whole
animal. And so removing fins and throwing those away
was offensive to some.
And they also felt that there had not been a commercial Chinook fishery in many years, and that this regulation had persisted on the books when it wasn't necessary at this time.

They did vote to support the OSM modification, feeling that it had an opportunity to pass both on the State and Federal side if there was the opportunity to have it on the books in the event that there would be a commercial fishery in the future.

But again they felt that, you know, traditional was to not remove those fins if not necessary, and a burden for subsistence fishers. And again reiterated that the majority of people are -- you know, have been conservation minded and continue to be so.

Thank you, Mr. Chair.

CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: My question about YK Delta's deliberation, did they deliberate what Holly said to add a modification that if there was no commercial fishery they would be able to leave the in intact.

MS. PATTON: Mr. Chair and Council. Correct. So the YK Delta RAC's final motion was to support with the OSM's modification which describes that process, that procedure where the fin clipping would not be required unless there was a Chinook commercial fishery prosecuted, and then it could be reinstated at that time. And I don't have that modification right in front of me here, but I can look that up in a book.

CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Gary's sitting in front of us here. I'm not seeing that in my book, the OSM modification.

MS. KENNER: We've got it.

CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Okay. Go ahead.

MR. DECOSSAS: Through the Chair. If you go to Page 144 in your RAC books, you'll see the modification. The only.....

MS. KENNER: Just don't say it.
MR. DECOSSAS: Yeah -- thing that would need to.....

CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: All right.

MR. DECOSSAS: .....say to ignore is that last sentence where it said provide the updated language only one time in the regulations to avoid redundancy. That just -- pretend you didn't read that. And that's what the YK Delta RAC.....

MS. KENNER: You're going to read it?

MR. DECOSSAS: So, yeah, the part that you would -- yeah, so support Proposal FP19-05 with modification to allow Federally-qualified subsistence users to harvest Chinook salmon without clipping the tails during times that commercial sale of Chinook salmon is not allowed, period.

CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Okay. What I was looking at was Page 144 that does not reflect that. Correction, 148, that does not reflect that language. And so that's where my confusion. So I want the Council to be aware of 144 and 145, the modified language which I do support. The modified language which Holly alluded to also.

So right now we're on any public testimony.

(No comments)

CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: No. Summary of written comments. Karen, did we have any written comments on this one.

MS. DEATHERAGE: Thank you, Mr. Chair. This is Karen Deatherage with OSM.

And there were no written comments received for FP19-05. Thank you.

CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Okay. So we need a motion to get Proposal 19-05 as modified by OSM on the table. And the Chair will entertain a motion for an adoption. 19-05 with modification. Did you make the motion, Don.
MR. HONEA: I second. I.....

MS. PELKOLA: I'll so move.

CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Jenny motions. Don seconds. The Proposal 19-05 as modified by OSM which the modification highlighted language is in Districts 1, 2, 3 from June 1 to July 15, if the State of Alaska as announced that Chinook salmon can be sold in the commercial fisheries-comma-then, highlight ends, you may not possess Chinook salmon.

So I support that modification.

Discussion by the Council on this proposal.

MR. COLLINS: Mr. Chairman. I have a question. Do we need to vote down the one and support the second, 04 and then support 05?

CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: No, we've made a motion to adopt Proposal FP19-05 with the OSM modification. So that's what's on the table right now.

MR. COLLINS: Okay.

CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: So we don't have to vote the first one down.

Any other discussion. Tim.

MR. GERVAIS: The modified proposal doesn't seem to present a conservation concern or any kind of concern of illegal sale of Chinook. So I would recommend that the Council approve it as modified.

CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Thank you, Tim.

Reduces a burden on the subsistence users when unnecessary, when there's no commercial fishery.

Karen.

MS. DEATHERAGE: Thank you, Mr. Chair.

Would you like to duplicate the language used by the YK Delta Advisory Committee for your justification for this proposal. I can read it to you, what I captured, and you can accept that as your justification with the addition that you made.
The YK Delta Council supported this proposal with OSM modification to eliminate fin clipping when commercial fishing not happening. This is unnecessary and burdensome on fishers. There's not been a commercial Chinook fishery in many years and this regulation has been on the books. Mr. Reakoff added the modification that if there was no commercial fishery, they would leave the fin intact, and to remove that last sentence. And then Tim added that there was no conservation concern or illegal sale of Chinook.

CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Sounds good to me. Tim.

MR. GEVERAIS: Yeah, so long as everything we've done leaves the regulation in place, that there is going to be fin clipping during periods when commercial sale of Chinook is allowed.

CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Yeah, that's in the -- on the top of Page 145, you can read that. If the State of Alaska announces that Chinook salmon can be sold in the commercial fishery, then you may not possess Chinook salmon taken for subsistence unless both lobes, tips of the tail have been removed before the person conceals the salmon from plain view or transfers the salmon from the fishing site.

So it's contingent on if the State of Alaska announces that announces that Chinook salmon can be sold.

So clarified for the Council. Do we have a question.

MS. PELKOLA: Question.

CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Question's called by Jenny. Those in favor of Proposal FP19-05 with modification and justification of the Western Interior Regional Advisory Council and YK Delta's justification signify by saying aye.

IN UNISON: Aye.

CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Opposed as modified signify by saying aye.

(No opposing votes)
CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Any YK Delta.

MR. COLLINS: Aye.

CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: And we got one from Ray. We have opposed same sign.

(No opposing votes)

CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Unanimous with that modification. OSM modification.

What time do we got to be out of here for the.....

MS. DEATHERAGE: Actually 5:30 is when they're going to start the potlock.

CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: So we've got 15 minutes to do something. Can we.....

MS. DEATHERAGE: Mr. Chair. If there's enough time for another proposal based on what they believe, that's fine. I just think there should be a little time for you guys to clean up just a little bit and make sure that your area's just organized enough so that it's protected.

Thank you.

CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: So it's probably time to quit for the evening.

MR. KRISKA: We're going to have to set up for the food and stuff. I think these tables might have to go back over there.

(Off record conversation re tables)

CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Okay. So we'll recess for the evening since we have a meal coming in at 5:30 and we have to reconfigure the room. So appreciate everybody being on the call today. And we'll reconvene at -- what time is that again. 8:30 tomorrow morning.

MS. DEATHERAGE: 9:00 o'clock

CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: 9:00 o'clock.
UNIDENTIFIED VOICE: That would be noon, Mr. Chair.

CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: 9:00 o'clock.

MR. PAPPAS: Mr. Chair. George Pappas, OSM.

CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Say again.

MR. PAPPAS: George Pappas, OSM. I just want to inform you that I'm recording all your comments so I can transfer them to.....

(Off record)

(PROCEEDINGS TO BE CONTINUED)
CERTIFICATE

UNITED STATES OF AMERICA
STATE OF ALASKA

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

THAT the foregoing pages numbered 02 through contain a full, true and correct Transcript of the WESTERN INTERIOR REGIONAL ADVISORY COUNCIL MEETING, VOLUME I taken electronically on the 10th day of October 2018;

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

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

DATED at Anchorage, Alaska, this 27th day of October 2018.

Salena A. Hile
Notary Public, State of Alaska
My Commission Expires: 09/16/22