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FEDERAL SUBSISTENCE BOARD

REGULATORY MEETING

VOLUME II

LAKEFRONT ANCHORAGE HOTEL
Anchorage, Alaska
April 3, 2024

MEMBERS PRESENT:

- Rhonda Pitka, Madame Chair
- Charles Brower, Public Member
- Sara Boario, U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service
- Sarah Creachbaum, National Park Service
- Steve Cohn, Bureau of Land Management
- Jolene John, Bureau of Indian Affairs
- Chad VanOrmer, U.S. Forest Service

Ken Lord, Solicitor's Office

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P R O C E E D I N G S

(Anchorage, Alaska - 4/3/2024)

(On record)

MADAME CHAIR PITKA: Good morning.
Please take your seats. Good morning. At this time
I'd like to call the meeting to order and ask for a
roll call.

MS. HOWARD: Good morning. Thank you,
Chair Pitka. So for Federal Subsistence Board roll
call.

Public member, Charlie Brower.

MR. BROWER: Here.

MS. HOWARD: Bureau of Indian Affairs,
Jolene John.

MS. JOHN: BIA present.

MS. HOWARD: Bureau of Land Management,
Chris McKee.

MR. MCKEE: Here. I'm expecting Steve
Cohn to be showing up shortly.

MS. HOWARD: Thank you.

Fish and Wildlife Service, Sara Boario.

MS. BOARIO: Present.

MS. HOWARD: National Park Service, Eva
Patton.

MS. PATTON: Good morning. Here. And
Sarah Creachbaum, our Director, will be showing up as
well.

Thank you.

MS. HOWARD: USDA Forest Service, Chad
VanOrmer.

MR. VANORMER: Forest Service is here.

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1 MS. HOWARD: And then public member and
2 Chair, Rhonda Pitka.

3
4 MADAME CHAIR PITKA: I'm here.

5
6 MS. HOWARD: Madame Chair, you have a
7 quorum.

8
9 MADAME CHAIR PITKA: Thank you very
10 much. So today we'd like to begin with public comment
11 on non-agenda items. So we have two requests in front
12 of us.

13
14 Sarah James from Arctic Village.

15
16 (No comments)

17
18 MADAME CHAIR PITKA: Sarah James from
19 Arctic Village.

20
21 (Pause)

22
23 MS. JAMES: Sorry.

24
25 MADAME CHAIR PITKA: Oh, you're fine.

26
27 MS. JAMES: Yeah.

28
29 MADAME CHAIR PITKA: Just start with
30 you're ready.

31
32 MS. JAMES: Okay. Oh, my name is Sarah
33 James. To respect of people of this land and people
34 that don't know me, my name's Sarah James and I'm from
35 Arctic Village. English is my second language.
36 Sometime I have hard time explaining things in my
37 language and trying to translate it into Gwich'in and
38 that's kind of difficult or try the other versa -- vice
39 versa. And many times I get laugh at and don't know
40 what to make of it and that kind of stuff, but it don't
41 bother me, I'm proud to have my language as a first
42 language. And I grew up on the land. At one time we
43 be gone out in the land for so long there's a plant
44 that sounds like paper when the wind blows on it, when
45 it's dry. When I hear that out there I -- you know,
46 that's the only thing closest to civilization.
47 Civilization, paper. Well, anyway and for many years
48 we don't have any trash that we leave behind because we
49 don't have trash. So that's the way I grew up. And my
50

0073

1 mom they -- she keep us clean and everything we do out
2 there is clean, everything we do is preserve,
3 everything we do out there is to survive and honor it.
4 And I call that way of life. And that's what I talk
5 about.

6
7 What I can remember since I can
8 remember and a way of life and I've been doing this for
9 many years. I spoke to this Eastern and Western
10 Subsistence Board many times and this -- both of them
11 at the -- many times on Arctic National Wildlife Refuge
12 and Red Sheep Creek. And because we want to protect
13 the caribou, want to protect the Red Sheep Creek.

14
15 I'm from Arctic Village, my mother,
16 Martha James, is a caribou people. My father is from
17 Birch Creek. His name is Eliajah James, he's a
18 Fortyeight Mile Herd people and salmon people in the
19 Yukon Flat. So I live that both life as I was growing
20 up. So I know about Yukon, I know about into the
21 mountains. So that's the way I grew up, on the land.

22
23 I am a spokesperson appointed 2018 to
24 my tribe, Native Village of Venetie tribal government,
25 I am a member for many years. When we -- back to the
26 time when we were fighting for our subsistence,
27 fighting for our sovereignty, fighting for tribal
28 government because that's how we grew up, that's how I
29 learned to grow up and every village is something,
30 nothing different. And that's how I grew up. And I
31 respect those, our law and our way of life to survive.
32 I partake in many way of my life since I can remember.
33 And I'm not an activist, it's a way of life to survive.
34 That's what I cover which is the right thing to do.

35
36 Today I want to talk about Red Sheep
37 Creek protection. I spoke on it from the beginning
38 because we live off the -- to us the sheep are very
39 important part of our diet, it's a respected food.
40 Many times I say that. When we were living in skin hut
41 we bring it in from the back door, back door is not
42 being used for anything unless there's an emergency to
43 get out. And that's how they bring it in from the back
44 door because it take a long time to be a -- to have a
45 -- the horn to grow so and it's good meat. And it's
46 sacred.

47
48 Another one we do with is we call out
49 at Old John Lake, it's a big lake east of Arctic
50

0074

1 Village. We got lake trout there sometime as big as,
2 you know, very big, very small. And it's very good
3 eating fish, you know, trout. They remind me of
4 salmon. And when we get that we don't overharvest it
5 because again it takes 40 years to be an adult. So
6 this way we don't overharvest anything that's, you
7 know, endangered in population.

8

9 Many times I spoke to the tribe because
10 now I hear more and more because -- because my tribe
11 fought very hard for sovereignty. Native Village of
12 Venetie tribal government for Arctic Village and
13 Venetie. And at that time I was much younger and I put
14 my life on the line to do that many times. And many
15 times we were told that we don't have that right, but
16 now at this meeting, I've been here two days now
17 listening, there's a lot of tribal issue that's
18 bringing up, I'm really happy about because at the
19 beginning of the issue of Red Sheep Creek it was hard
20 to try to get our story across and now they seem to be
21 more of tribe -- government to government with this
22 Board. And I'm just happy about it because that's the
23 only way we can control our resource.

24

25 Now I'm 80 years old and I don't know,
26 so many elders from home we hard -- we hardly have any
27 elders. There's Gideon, my brother, he can't hear that
28 well, can't use his hand, can't get used to -- I call
29 him tribal operation, but he's older than me and
30 Trumble is still well and there's few of us. And more
31 and more people younger than me are dying and so I know
32 I'm at the age where, you know, god might call me to
33 rest. So I want to cover just about whatever I want to
34 cover now. And I know that a lot that know they were
35 going to die they can't stop talking because they want
36 to share. My auntie did that before, I see a lot of
37 people that are freezing to death because they want to
38 and give their knowledge to generation before they go.
39 And I feel like that now. So bear with me if I was
40 taking too long, but I'll make it as short as I can.

41

42 And one of the things that I'm really
43 concerned about is the allotment because many of our
44 people are selling their allotment. That's the only
45 Indian country we got. And I know that one place in
46 Yukon Flat some elder allotment are being used to get
47 into oil and gas development because they can do that.
48 So I'm really concerned because this Board, you know,
49 is very important to me. You guys have got a huge job.

50

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1 I can't -- you know, there's so much that you guys
2 cover, eastern and western and then this meeting
3 together.

4
5 And I help organize Yukon River
6 InterTribal Watershed. I always talk about this there
7 that they want to clean it up so they can drink it
8 again. And so I said, you know, Yukon River is very
9 wide, you see Mississippi or Rio Grande, it's just
10 checkerboard all around it, there's hardly any natural
11 land around it. but Yukon is still healthy. And now
12 that we don't have fish, my father is a salmon fish
13 people and I remember we -- I remember we -- they had a
14 fish camp, it's like a little village, but one
15 fishwheel and maybe four family. Because so much big
16 fish they just -- whoever gets the fish out of port he
17 takes it and takes it and takes it and it's just like a
18 little village, a little tribal village. Now we don't
19 even see that anymore. It's overgrown now because it's
20 been a while that they fish. Now when I went with the
21 reporter to report fishwheel in Yukon they took me to
22 the fishwheel that was on sandbar. They still get to
23 fish, but they can't put it where they used to because
24 everything is overgrown and barren.

25
26 And in those days I remember my grandma
27 and grandpa, there's about four brothers my grandma got
28 -- I mean, grandpa and grandma, they got four boys and
29 two girls. And those four get their fish for their
30 family, one of them is my father, and everybody get
31 good size fish. Fish -- they not only do that, they go
32 hunting and bring in that meat, duck hunting, fishing,
33 other fish and they bring that in, preparing for the
34 winter. And when school start -- before school start I
35 remember that we start hearing boats in the village and
36 we know whose boat it is, we know whose -- which one is
37 my grandpa and grandma's boat. I get all excited
38 because I -- they'll have lots of food come in,
39 berries, eggs, a lot of -- a lot of pelts, you know,
40 beaver, caribou, moose, everything is just piled in the
41 -- in that boat. And even rhubarb, that's what I was
42 looking for. And they do that for the winter because
43 kids have to go to school. So they come in from
44 camping all summer. And I don't see that anymore. Us
45 kids we used to know which plane is flying in because
46 we're always out there and which boat is who. Even --
47 even today kids are like that, but they don't go out
48 there to bring in these winter food to survive for the
49 winter and get all excited about that. So it's gone
50

0076

1 and some kids can't even go fishing, can't go -- even
2 go out camping because everything is regulated. What
3 I'm getting at is the -- which is rightfully us -- ours
4 to begin with.

5
6 Red Sheep Creek is very important to
7 Indian nation a long time ago before the -- before
8 contact because the red ink we're talking about, people
9 from all over the world come and get their ink -- their
10 red ink. And 10 years ago due to the climate change
11 and raining up north right behind the Big Mountain we
12 call it, it extend to, what you call that, Cane Creek,
13 that Big Mountain we call it up north. And there's
14 just some behind there through that creek from Red
15 Sheep Creek to that mountain. And then there's another
16 creek there which is Crane Creek. And then the next
17 one is Red Sheep Creek. My sister got an allotment
18 right there and another allotment at the mouth of the
19 Red Sheep Creek. Again it's Indian country and that
20 will -- I know the -- I know my sister allotment we're
21 not going to allow sport hunting there. We haven't,
22 we've been keeping the sport hunting out of there.

23
24 And at that time it rain and rain and
25 then a chunk came off from that mountain, the Big
26 Mountain -- right behind the Big Mountain, went into
27 the river. The river was red for three days just from
28 that small chunk of red that -- red ink that went into
29 the river. And that red ink is -- we call it Red Sheep
30 Creek -- we call it Red Sheep -- Red Sheep because it
31 got a little red streak in the back. There's no sheep
32 in the world that have red streak in the back. So it
33 need to be protected.

34
35 And the other population and coming
36 down a lot of -- I know the -- between the White
37 Mountain, between Fort Yukon and Birch Creek and
38 Fairbanks that White Mountain was -- used to be full of
39 sheep. Sheep hunting season I see tents in every
40 valley for -- hunting for sheep. Now I don't even see
41 one -- I don't even get to see one sheep. And on the
42 other side of Rocky Mountain, Brooks Range, there is
43 sheep, but it's declining. And since we're talking
44 about one type of sheep and the (indiscernible) that
45 needs to be protected. And it's also sacred to us
46 because one time two sheep came all the way down to
47 Arctic Village when people were hungry for meat and
48 they shot it. They even make a rug out of it for
49 church to kneel on it. And it saved our caribou from
50

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1 -- our people from starvation. So it's really sacred
2 to us.

3
4 And now I could have spoke the other
5 morning, but I didn't quite get answer I needed, but I
6 got it now that when Eastern Board was in Arctic
7 Village some of them stayed at my cabin. And it was a
8 good meeting up there. It was kind of cold, but we
9 manage. And at that time the sheep was beside -- they
10 decide that they were wildlife closure for it. So and
11 same time Arctic Slope RAC stated that they're no
12 longer use the Red Sheep Creek, that they going to pull
13 out. And at that time my Council reject that. I just
14 want to know -- I'm just kind of alarmed, this is kind
15 of alarming to me because I remember when we -- when
16 the leaders of Alaska worked very hard on customary and
17 traditional use and they got it as a -- as a Native of
18 Alaska. And we can't -- and Arctic -- Arctic -- Red
19 Sheep is on Arctic Refuge. And -- and so that's my
20 concern because I am a spokesperson for Arctic Refuge
21 and the caribou.

22
23 And -- and then another thing that kind
24 of alarm me is that -- that they said they no longer
25 hunt there and -- or use that area. But at the
26 beginning -- I was the beginning part of it to protect
27 the Red Sheep Creek. At that time they came in with
28 us, Chalkyitsik, Fort Yukon, Venetie and Kaktovik. And
29 there's a history of them using it before, they do get
30 to Red Sheep Creek. And now they said they're not
31 using it. So that's kind of alarming because again
32 because the Board -- for this Board I'm beginning to
33 hear ANILCA too because ANILCA -- I was told ANILCA is
34 great protection law for our way of life. And tribal
35 consultation, there's a lot of -- we -- we have
36 consultation on protecting the Red Sheep Creek, we have
37 consult -- tribal consult -- consulting Council for Red
38 Sheep Creek and Arctic Refuge. So we can use our
39 tribal power to speak to government and to protect our
40 way of life. Those are very important to me.

41
42 And many times -- many times when I was
43 testifying a lot of times I was talking against
44 something that I don't know because it wasn't a tribal
45 power or tribal, it's that I fought for the
46 sovereignty. So now it's getting to be so powerful to
47 have people come to this table in April to have a
48 leader like this that can help.

49
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1 And another thing I'm -- Andrew Firmin,
2 he's my friend and his mother is my friend and he was
3 good on this Board. And we -- he pass and it's been a
4 while now. Our region is not appointing his seat.
5 That's a concern to me, the more of us the better we
6 can work. I heard there's about two or three apply,
7 but I don't know who they are. And I just want to
8 bring that back up again.

9
10 Another of my concern is that yesterday
11 some southeastern they were talking about lots of
12 money. And I think there is money out there for us to
13 protect our way of life. And I know for Arctic
14 National Wildlife we got -- supposed to have
15 information center first even before they talk
16 development. And so is Yukon Flat. It is like that
17 and Refuge down in Washington, DC Refuge and of course
18 I was there and a couple case in North and South Dakota
19 Refuge because as a tribal government surrounding that
20 rich -- I mean, Refuge, we are the co-management to the
21 -- we are the co-manager to the Refuge. That's how I
22 read it under the Refuge -- where the Refuge is. And
23 our State representative, Lisa Murkowski, all those
24 people, sometimes there is money available that you can
25 -- you -- as a tribe you can claim and put the
26 (indiscernible) in these two places. And with the
27 founding and everything, we know what is out there and
28 there's also they had to go through orientation before
29 even go out there. We need I think this group have a
30 power to do that. Us we ask for it a couple times as a
31 tribe, but at first they were going to put in Kaktovik,
32 but Kaktovik is not the nearest one to Porcupine River
33 because it's a -- there's corporation land in between.
34 And they try to put it in Timber Lake and there's no
35 Native community there. The only one that have one is
36 Arctic Village because the border is right across the
37 river. But it's so hard to get money for it because
38 again we got political position on Arctic Refuge, they
39 don't give us that kind of honor. So I just thought
40 I'd bring that up.

41
42 And climate change. We got again
43 Congress spoke up yesterday but the forest, Tongass
44 Forest, the area in southeastern, that forest is very
45 important to climate change and a stick and it's what
46 you call it, nondevelopment. Those trees are very
47 important to climate change. And another thing that we
48 have is boreal, boreal forests. They're all over and
49 that's very important to climate change. We need to
50

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1 protect those boreal is kind of very amazing what it
2 does to our air and other things that boreal do. So we
3 need to talk more about that on climate change because
4 climate change is real.

5
6 Yeah, and then I don't understand. I
7 just came back from Vegas and then Los Angeles and then
8 sometimes I go across the country and I don't get to
9 see children like how we used to be out in the land.
10 Now that's even limited because of no salmon. And when
11 we were living on -- fishing with my father there was a
12 lot of things to do, we got turtle, those little turtle
13 -- oh, not turtle, frogs which is different from Arctic
14 Village, the forest, garden snake, all these were good
15 discovery and different area compared to Arctic
16 Village. Kids are not doing that, kids don't -- they
17 don't get to see our land and touch it and that kind of
18 stuff. So I don't know if everything like spring
19 carnival has gone away from what it was the purpose.
20 It was the purpose of surviving another cold winter to
21 celebrate that. Now it's just -- it's just like it's a
22 gamble game. So we need to get away from stuff like
23 that in order to get back on the land with our
24 children.

25
26 I seen -- Mrs. Sapeli said and even in
27 my time I see Rio Grande River mean big river. I've
28 been to Albuquerque a lot and I see that water. When
29 it rains it fills it up, but then it's dry most of the
30 time. Used to be, you know, Rio Grande. In L.A.,
31 there is a river through L.A., but it only fill up
32 during snow -- raining and that's another what I call
33 cement river, that fill up now and then. I guess
34 that's how they get their water to L.A.

35
36 MADAME CHAIR PITKA: Sorry, I don't
37 mean to interrupt, but can we -- can we start wrapping
38 it up now?

39
40 MS. JAMES: Yeah.

41
42 MADAME CHAIR PITKA: We can -- okay,
43 thank you, Sarah.

44
45 MS. JAMES: Yes, I'm about to -- about
46 then. So I'm just throwing out things that concern
47 this big Board because I think this Board is very
48 important to the world because we still have river, we
49 still have everything. And I think your job is very
50

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1 important and as a leader I think we're getting there
2 together to make it -- make it come back maybe. So I
3 just like it when they came up to Arctic Village and I
4 share my whitefish because that's what I had, I don't
5 have salmon, we don't have salmon up there, but more
6 and more it spawns up that way.

7

8 Another thing that we -- everybody in
9 my way of life out -- being out there, if we found what
10 they call fish spawn. Fish spawn is very sacred where
11 they spawn. And it's very sacred and hidden. And I
12 was taught -- I know where they are in my country and
13 we're not supposed to share that information. We need
14 to protect that, we need to relocate that and protect
15 it. Maybe that might get the fish back. So I just
16 want to mention that.

17

18 Yeah, I'm just about finish. I want to
19 finish with -- oh, yeah, circumpolar region. We have
20 -- we gain two representatives for circumpolar region.
21 One of them the polar region with Arctic Council is
22 Eddie Alexander. There's four of them which is good,
23 but we also have Athabaskan seat there too. I don't
24 know of a Chickaloon guy, that Gary still got it at one
25 time. Guy from Beaver and all circle, I mean, Steven
26 Village had it before. So I just want to know that we
27 covered that area to protect our way of life. And that
28 we're not -- we're over here and to protect our way of
29 life. And that's very important to work with too.

30

31 Thank you. And then earlier I was
32 talking about coming from Vegas to Los Angeles over
33 here. I -- I hardly see any recycle anywhere, throw
34 away, waste, that kind of stuff. I think we need to
35 get really serious about those things too.

36

37 That's about all I can say.

38

39 Thank you for giving me all this time.
40 And I'll be here throughout here to help or listen and
41 learn some more.

42

43 Thank you.

44

45 MADAME CHAIR PITKA: Thank you, Sarah.
46 I really appreciate the time that you took today. It
47 kind of grounds us and reminds us of why we're all
48 here.

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1 Thank you so much for your time.

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So now we have Mark Richards from
Resident Hunters of Alaska.

MR. RICHARDS: Good morning, Madame
Chair, members of the Board, RAC members, Department
and Agency Staff and everybody in the room. Thank you
very much for the opportunity to comment this morning.
For the record my name is Mark Richards. I'm the
Executive Director of Resident Hunters of Alaska.
We're a hunting conservation organization that is
striving to prioritize resident hunting opportunities.

I wanted to speak to you this morning
about what we have in common. Our organization,
Resident Hunters of Alaska, wants to ensure that all
Alaskans, no matter where they live, have the same
hunting opportunities that we have today. Our focus is
on sustainable wildlife management policies with a
clear emphasis on prioritizing resident hunting
opportunities. We formed in 2016 to educate the public
and the Legislators about the influence of the
commercial hunting industry on our wildlife management
decisions and advocate for changes. We are the only
western state in the country that does not limit
nonresident, out of state hunters across the Board from
any species of animals that so many of us depend upon
to feed our families.

For us this is primarily a Board of
Game issue as that Board determines all wildlife
management and allocation decisions over most of the
State. Those decision too often then negatively impact
resident hunters in rural areas as well. The seven
member Board of Game is currently made up of a majority
of big game guides which is an unprecedented imbalance
in favor of commercial hunting interest. I recently
gave a presentation in the Legislature to the Senate
Resources Committee on Board of Game issues and the
influence of the commercial hunting industry and new
legislation and guardrails that are needed to ensure we
manage our wildlife to benefit Alaskans. We can't
continue to manage our wildlife or our fisheries for
that matter based on who brings in the most money. I
encourage you all to view and read the presentation,
it's posted on our website on our Board of Game page.
Even though we may disagree at times I hope those on
this Board and the RAC members and those listening will

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1 support our advocacy for changes to the Board of Game
2 process and stronger statutory guardrails to protect
3 our resident hunting opportunities and hunting
4 traditions of all Alaskans.

5

6 In closing we are looking at the big
7 picture and -- and we really need to focus on what kind
8 of State we are leaving our children and grandchildren.
9 We need a clear resident hunting priority in statute,
10 it's what our State constitution demands, but we're not
11 following it. And why we are not following it is
12 because of the influence of the commercial hunting
13 industry on our wildlife management and allocation
14 decisions.

15

16 So that's all I have for you. Again we
17 have to stop managing based on who brings in the most
18 money and I hope you'll -- you'll help us in Juneau get
19 some of these changes necessary that will benefit all
20 Alaskans.

21

22 Thank you, Madame Chair.

23

24 MADAME CHAIR PITKA: Thank you for your
25 time. I appreciate the comment.

26

27 Does anybody on the Board have any
28 questions. And I forgot to ask if anybody had any
29 questions of Sarah, but she said she'll be here all
30 week.

31

32 (No comments)

33

34 MADAME CHAIR PITKA: Okay. Thank you.
35 At this time we have Earl Atchak from Chevak on the
36 phone.

37

38 MS. LAVINE: Hello everyone on the
39 phone. One of the ways that you can make sure that
40 your voice is heard is to unmute yourself. So it --
41 you can do that by pressing star, six.

42

43 So, Earl, if you are line, press star,
44 six.....

45

46 MR. ATCHAK: Yeah, can you hear me now?

47

48 MS. LAVINE: Yeah, we gotcha.

49

50

1 MR. ATCHAK: Okay. Okay. I'll start
2 again. This is Earl Atchak, I'm from Chevak, Alaska.
3 I'm a lifelong resident of Chevak. I'm both a
4 subsistence hunter and a fisherman. We depend on a lot
5 of fish in our area and also like salmon and also like
6 moose and wildlife, birds and we live like that all our
7 lives. And I'm going to be commenting on the fisheries
8 in the Yukon River and also in our area and also the
9 ocean and a little bit of traditional knowledge that I
10 want to share about our area, especially about Chevak
11 since I'm from there. I'll be also speaking about, you
12 know, Hooper Bay area too and also Scammon Bay.

13
14 We -- you know, the Board of Fish that
15 regulates our area for whether the Yukon River should
16 be closed or not are -- especially for the Chevak area.
17 Back in 1980 or '81 or '82 they had a test fisheries
18 that had maybe like maybe 100 or 200 species of salmon
19 or salmon, a certain kind of salmon that we call (in
20 Native). They -- they didn't do no kings, but they did
21 salmon at that time in July when -- during the late run
22 and early August when the -- you know, the -- when the
23 kings have passed. And one or two of those tagged fish
24 ended up in the Yukon from all these maybe a couple
25 hundred fish or so that they tested both in Hooper Bay
26 and Old Chevak. And because of that they're using that
27 data to include Chevak and Hooper Bay area to close it
28 when -- when the -- when they close the Yukon River.

29
30 So last year a lot of elders in Chevak
31 and Hooper Bay, we had a meeting in Chevak and we
32 talked about that the Board of Fish is using outdated
33 -- outdated data with absolutely no new data that they
34 -- and they're including in our area to close down
35 fisheries. The people that are making that decision
36 have no idea whether if that salmon that goes into the
37 Hooper Bay area goes up to the Norton Sound area or
38 because they get that exact same fish and they have no
39 idea that they -- whether if they go to the -- to the
40 Yukon because the data that they're depending on to
41 make these decisions are so out of date. And I think
42 we need a new -- we need new data, we need new testing
43 because, you know, according to traditional knowledge
44 and my -- you know, my observations the past 40
45 something years I've been fishing in our area, a
46 certain fish that go into our Hazen Bay area go upriver
47 and they start spawning in lakes. And if you see on
48 the maps you'll see that there are so many big,
49 gigantic lakes above Hazen Bay area that the fish go
50

0084

1 to. But when I bring my family over the years to go
2 fishing in -- or salmonberry picking and berry picking
3 in August when we -- when we try and target cisco, we
4 get so much salmon, colored salmon, that we call (in
5 Native) in Yup'ik. And we see so much of them in those
6 big lakes. And the traditional knowledge from those
7 old people, older -- way older than me that have passed
8 away have told me stories that they used to see so many
9 salmon in our area. So the salmon, we always say that
10 they're a different species and they're trying to
11 regulate our area as the fish that go up to the Yukon
12 River, but they don't, they come to our area.

13

14 And, you know, a lot of people too in
15 our area broke the law when they closed the Yukon River
16 and they broke law and fished anyway. And they'd get
17 -- they'd get so much what they -- what the Board of
18 Fish need to understand is that each family in -- in
19 your -- each family in our area fish just like 60, 70
20 fish and they quite. The don't try to get thousands
21 and thousands of fish. Like for my family we get 200
22 fish and then we're done. And that's for the whole
23 winter and it'll last us for a while. And each -- not
24 every family in Hooper Bay, not every family in Scammon
25 Bay or Chevak goes subsistence fishing because whether
26 it be resources that they don't have or the equipment
27 they don't have, a lot of these fishermen too,
28 subsistence fishermen share with other families. So
29 please keep in mind when you guys do the Yukon River
30 that Chevak, Hooper, Scammon area is a separate area
31 that they should consider and especially that data that
32 don't exist.

33

34 I just want to thank you for listening
35 to my comment and hope you guys have a wonderful week
36 meeting and thank you for doing what you guys are
37 doing.

38

39 Thank you. Bye.

40

41 MADAME CHAIR PITKA: Thank you very
42 much for your comment. Does anybody have any questions
43 of Earl.

44

45 (No comments)

46

47 MADAME CHAIR PITKA: No. Okay. We
48 don't have any more forms at this time, but does
49 anybody else want to comment right now.

50

0085

1 Gayla, did you have your -- okay.

2

3 MR. DAU: This is Jim Dau from

4 Kotzebue.

5

6 MADAME CHAIR PITKA: Okay. Well, I
7 don't have your form, I mean, Gayla.

8

9 Did you want to comment, Gayla?

10

11 REPORTER: Somebody's on the line too.

12

13 MADAME CHAIR PITKA: Was there someone
14 online?

15

16 REPORTER: Yes, Jim Dau is online.

17

18 MR. DAU: Yes. Jim Dau from Kotzebue.

19

20 MADAME CHAIR PITKA: Oh, okay. Go
21 ahead, Jim.

22

23 Thank you.

24

25 MR. DAU: Thank you. I'll keep this
26 brief. Thank you for the opportunity to comment on
27 lifting D1 land protections in Alaska. My name is Jim
28 Dau, I'm a retired Wildlife Biologist for the Alaska
29 Department of Fish and Game. I was the Department's
30 lead Biologist for the Western Arctic Caribou Herd
31 during 1988 through 2016. I've lived in Kotzebue since
32 1988. I oppose lifting the D1 protections that were
33 established by the Alaska Native Claims Settlement Act.
34 I gave a presentation on caribou management in Alaska
35 during the All Council meeting that OSM held in
36 Anchorage. In those presentations I described why this
37 is a particularly bad time for caribou and for
38 subsistence users and all hunters to facilitate
39 industrial development in Alaska. I'll give you a very
40 short version of my presentation now.

41

42 At the OSM Heather Johnson and Tim
43 Pullman described the wide spread and sometime drastic
44 decline of caribou herds in Alaska and Canada over the
45 past 20 to 25 years. In fact roughly 75 percent of all
46 caribou herds in the circumpolar north are declining.
47 We've lost roughly two-thirds of the Western Arctic
48 Herd just since 2003. And both the Mulchatna Herd and
49 the Nelchina Herd are currently approaching collapse.

50

1 Subsistence users have relied on each of these herds
2 for a millennia for food and caribou are an important
3 component of their cultural identities. From my years
4 of working with caribou I suspect that global warming
5 is ultimately responsible for these declines. The
6 specific mechanisms and higher temperatures that are
7 causing these declines such as changes in vegetation,
8 prevalence of diseases and parasites, snow and icing
9 conditions, duration of insect harassment and many
10 other factors probably vary for the individual herds.
11 For example I think winter icing events probably
12 initiated the Western Arctic Herd decline while changes
13 in vegetation and disease have been linked as possible
14 drivers of the Mulchatna Herd decline. Ultimately
15 though I suspect that rising temperatures are
16 responsible for the changes that are affecting these
17 caribou herds and other cold adaptive species like dall
18 sheep. Given a synchronizing and geographic extent of
19 these caribou declines I think it defies reason to
20 think that local harvest and predation levels are
21 driving them.

22
23 Literally thousands of climatologists
24 worldwide are predicting that global temperatures are
25 going to continue to increase for at least several
26 decades. We are seeing the truth in their predictions
27 in the wildfires that have struck the western U.S.,
28 Russia and Canada in recent years, the hurricanes that
29 have pummeled coastal areas, local drought and flooding
30 events and the loss of sea ice at both poles to name
31 just a few. We may be on the cusp of the time when
32 State and Federal regulatory systems to manage harvests
33 will become secondary to political decisions regarding
34 how we address climate change and how we balance
35 resource development with conservation of fish and
36 wildlife with conserving caribou and other species.
37 Without addressing climate change and conserving intact
38 fish and wildlife habitat regulation of harvest levels
39 will eventually only influence the rate in which
40 caribou, sheep and king salmon populations decline.

41
42 The Administration, Senators Sullivan
43 and Murkowski and many State legislators support
44 removing the D1 protections saying they are obsolete
45 and unfairly hinder resource development in Alaska. I
46 disagree. Lifting the D1 protections to facilitate
47 industrial resource development will impact fish and
48 wildlife population -- populations that subsistence
49 hunters rely on. Proponents of development repeatedly
50

0087

1 state with responsible development we can have mineral
2 and energy independence, jobs and a healthy economy
3 without impacting fish, wildlife or subsistence users.
4 From my experience with Western Arctic Caribou near the
5 Red Dog Mine and Road though is not universally true.
6 Some impacts of industrial development on wildlife and
7 on subsistence users are inevitable even with
8 responsible operators and mitigation. I cannot recall
9 a time when it was more important to conserve fish and
10 wildlife and their habitats than right now.

11

12 Thank you.

13

14 MADAME CHAIR PITKA: Thank you very
15 much for your comment. Does anybody on the Board have
16 questions of the commenter.

17

18 (No comments)

19

20 MADAME CHAIR PITKA: Okay. Thank you.
21 So at this time we'd like to call.....

22

23 MR. DAU: Thank you.

24

25 MADAME CHAIR PITKA:Gayla Hoseth.

26

27 MS. HOSETH: Good morning, Madame Chair
28 and member of the -- members of the Council. I'm happy
29 to be here today. For the record my name is Gayla
30 Hoseth. I wear many hats. I'm the First Chief of
31 Curyung Tribal Council located in Dillingham, Alaska.
32 We represent 3,075 tribal members and I'm also the
33 Director of Natural Resources for Bristol Bay Native
34 Association also located in Dillingham and we represent
35 31 tribes in the region.

36

37 Today I'm going to be talking about
38 some non-agenda items, but first of all I just wanted
39 to thank you -- say thank you to the Board for moving
40 WP24-18 from the consensus agenda to the non-consensus
41 agenda for people in the room that wanted to comment on
42 that. And also thank you for moving HJR22 as an agenda
43 item later on this week.

44

45 I guess I could start out by
46 relationships and how important relationships are. And
47 as we work through and navigate through this system
48 with the Federal Subsistence Board I see again people
49 that I know sitting on the other side of the table and
50

0088

1 I have established relationships with some of you
2 through workshops, through working in other positions
3 and other Boards and stuff that we also serve on. And
4 I just think that it's really key that we really build
5 those relationships that we have with the people who
6 are making decisions for the people who we represent
7 sitting here today. And to keep it to always know that
8 in your positions there it's a rotating position, you
9 guys come and go. Us as tribal leaders and people of
10 Alaska, Alaska Natives, we will always be here. And so
11 my job right here is I'm here for this moment in time
12 just like you're here for this moment in time. What
13 can we do together and make positive change for the
14 people who we represent.

15
16 And I just really wanted to emphasize
17 that because when we go -- when we talk about building
18 relationships and working with the Federal agencies and
19 the State agencies in our area it's really important to
20 build those relationships for communication,
21 collaboration and partnership. If people are out there
22 and I -- you know, I'm sorry it always has to be U.S.
23 Fish and Wildlife it seems to me on this table and I do
24 respect you, sir, it's no personal attacks on anything,
25 it's agencies. And it's all the bureaucracies that we
26 have to go through to get things done and then that
27 just makes it really frustrating. And part of my day
28 job is to educate people on how to understand this
29 process and to navigate through it.

30
31 So with those relationships that we
32 must build in order for us to actually trust, there's a
33 quote, I don't know who did it, but we can only move at
34 the speed of trust. And doesn't look like we're moving
35 very far. So we have to build that trust. And we have
36 Federal trust responsibility that all of you guys have
37 too for the -- for Natives, for tribal people across
38 the nation. I serve on many boards and it seems like I
39 have to keep educating the people who should know these
40 things of wanting to -- it's education, it's like we're
41 the teachers of reminding people of their own rules a
42 lot of times because the rules that impact the rules
43 actually impact us.

44
45 So, you know, we shared yesterday
46 during tribal consultation and I -- I'm going to be
47 repeating myself just so it gets on this record because
48 I know that the tribal consultation records aren't a
49 part of this public process so forgive me if you're
50

0089

1 hearing it again. Along with the relationships that
2 need to be built, we really need to build those
3 relationships with law enforcement. You hear -- you
4 heard testimonies and you will hear testimonies
5 throughout the day as we go through these proposals
6 that will be presented before you of -- you know,
7 people are doing subsistence and gathering food to feed
8 their families, that's why we're here. So when we have
9 law enforcement going out there in their uniforms, you
10 know, really -- you know, we use the word hassling,
11 chasing, herding, you know. It feels like the people
12 on the land are feeling that way. And the -- you know,
13 they have -- we have very high cost of -- high cost of
14 living where we live across -- of course, you know, all
15 over across the rest of the State of Alaska we have a
16 high cost of living and so when people are going out
17 there I guess I'm just wanting to say we need to build
18 those relationships.

19

20 When people -- I'll use Fish and
21 Wildlife Service because that's the dominating Federal
22 agency in our -- in the Bristol Bay region. If there's
23 any projects that are being done, any partnership that
24 needs to be done, please work with the tribes, the
25 nonprofit organizations, but mainly the tribes, mainly
26 Togiak and Twin Hills and Manokotak, those are the ones
27 closest to the Federal -- the Refuge area. And then
28 also in the -- on the -- on the other peninsula on the
29 east side we have the National Park Service that is
30 over there and that does seem to be a little bit more
31 friendlier process, I do have to say that with the SRCs
32 and what we have with working the National Park
33 Service. That's just kind of like a balance of who
34 we're -- who we're working with. But I just also want
35 to say that as working for a tribal nonprofit
36 organization, working with the tribal nonprofit
37 organization is not working with the tribes. We are
38 the go between to help agencies work with the tribes
39 and connect so I just look at it as kind of like a
40 gatekeeper or a peacemaker, a peacemaker a lot of
41 times, to making sure that the tribal people understand
42 what regulation, all of this stuff is being -- you
43 know, how do we -- how do we translate that and make
44 people understand. So I make sure the agencies are
45 aware of what the tribal people say and then also
46 making sure that the tribe -- the tribes' voices are
47 being understood at -- on the -- with the decision
48 makers. It's a hard job, we have a lot -- look at you
49 guys' -- how many books we have here. I don't think
50

0090

1 anybody has read all of that. Of course we read the
2 ones in our region, but when you guys are making
3 decision I don't think you guys read all of those
4 pages.

5

6 MADAME CHAIR PITKA: Lies.

7

8 MS. HOSETH: So.....

9

10 MADAME CHAIR PITKA: I absolutely
11 disagree, ma'am.

12

13 (Laughter)

14

15 MS. HOSETH: Well, Rhonda's the ace,
16 the -- Rhonda's the star student so, you know, the star
17 leader. We serve on another Board together so we get
18 to have fun together. And I just think that we should
19 make this a fun process so thank you for that.

20

21 So I guess I just wanted to, you know,
22 talk about the relationships and how important that is
23 because it really, really -- I can't emphasize that
24 enough.

25

26 When we're going to the proposal
27 process, I mentioned this before, I keep bringing to
28 DC, and I'm here today to continue to talk about it. I
29 know that everybody knows what ANILCA is that is
30 serving on the Federal Subsistence Board and on the
31 RACs and understanding that and it's a -- it's a
32 complicated process. But what's really important as we
33 talked about the rotating Chairs here, is that if
34 there's any proposals that are being presented that you
35 guys are going to be making a decision on and that's
36 allowable in any other game management unit area and
37 somebody's putting in the same proposal like we did,
38 please go back and look at how your agency voted to
39 allow that in that area and see if that is allowable in
40 any of these proposals that are being addressed or to
41 be discussed today. Because it's really -- why -- if
42 it's Federal land why would it be any different in our
43 area or in a different area.

44

45 So part of the -- as I -- as we all go
46 through this process I really don't under -- I don't
47 see how it would be so hard because a lot of times
48 we've gone through it for four years it took us to get
49 positioning wolf and wolverine and caribou with the use

50

0091

1 of a snowmachine here and we had to keep pushing it and
2 driving it to make sure that ANILCA was being followed.
3 So if we had a Solicitor's review on some of the
4 proposals as a line item like we have all the RACs
5 weigh in and the State of Alaska and OSM and a
6 Solicitor's review that basically says does this follow
7 ANILCA, yes or no. Save a lot of time, save a lot of
8 money, save a lot of time for us to keep coming and
9 bringing these issues back when we as users know that
10 ANILCA wasn't followed when a decision was made and
11 we're going to bring it back. We're going to keep
12 bringing it back and keep bringing it back until we
13 actually get it, but that's one regulation at a time.
14 So it's just a slow -- I guess moving at the speed of
15 trust is kind of what we -- what I stated earlier.

16

17 I don't have much more, Madame Chair,
18 but let me just look at my notes here really quick.

19

20 Oh, on part -- on terms of like
21 communicating, collaborating and partnering, I seen on
22 your agenda item that the delegation of authority for
23 the caribou -- for the Togiak Wildlife Refuge that's
24 going to be discussed here today and then it's
25 reference with the Nushagak Peninsula Caribou
26 Committee. I'm a part of it, Frank Woods is a part of
27 it. We're active in that group, it's of the seven
28 communities that surround that Nushagak Peninsula
29 Caribou Herd and I don't know if there's a chance that
30 we could discuss it there when it comes on the agenda,
31 but I guess I will just emphasize on co-management.

32

33 A lot of time we're looked at with this
34 committee that it's co-management, it's not co-
35 management. The State is there, the tribes are there
36 and U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service is there. How can
37 we get it to an actual co-management of the resource.
38 So that's something that I want to work on, I could
39 work that on with my day job, I could work that on the
40 tribal level, but how could we do that until we
41 actually have that recognized as a true co-management
42 in our region for the Nushagak Peninsula Caribou Herd.
43 That way all of the authority doesn't lie on the Refuge
44 Manager. That's where the problem lies and that's
45 where the trust issues lie. And if we have a good one
46 in it's good, if we have a bad one in it's bad.

47

48 I don't know if anybody's going to
49 emphasize on the tribal -- the tribal card for fishing

50

0092

1 and hunting. I think that that's really good. I know
2 that's kind of in the works in our area, that we want
3 to work on that.

4

5 But I just want to leave you guys with
6 kind of like something to think about. As we talked
7 about bartering and customary trade I'm going to just
8 read it into the record just to remind everybody.

9 Barter means to exchange of fish -- means the exchange
10 of fish or wildlife or their parts taken for
11 subsistence uses for other fish, wildlife or their
12 parts or for other food or non-edible items other than
13 money, if the exchange is of limited and noncommercial
14 nature. And then our customary trade means the
15 exchange of cash for fish and wildlife resources
16 regulated herein, not otherwise prohibited by Federal
17 law or regulation to support personal and family needs
18 and does not include trade which constitutes
19 significant commercial enterprise.

20

21 So when we were at the all RAC meetings
22 I had the opportunity to sit down with a lot of elders
23 during that time and it was actually the Yukon-
24 Kuskokwim Delta Chair, we actually shared dinner
25 together and had a conversation and we were talking
26 about bartering. You know, we have unlimited resources
27 from our area even though we have things that are not
28 of population, for instance salmon. And what really
29 needs to happen and it really could start here at the
30 Federal Subsistence Board that we have a venue that is
31 available for us to actually bring in food, to actually
32 have a barter and trade during this meeting, during
33 this space, that we have a space to do that. I could
34 bring fish from Bristol Bay, we also have berries, we
35 have herring eggs. And, you know, this is a discussion
36 that we've been talking about. But it really should
37 happen here, we're talking about possibly doing
38 something during AFN, but this is where it should
39 start, the Federal regs. So if we could work on
40 something and have conversation with all of the
41 different RACs and how do we -- how do we bring that
42 and let's start bringing that because in that way we
43 could share and we could do customary and trade.

44

45 And that's all I have to leave you with
46 just to think about.

47

48 Thank you, Madame Chair.

49

50

0093

1 MADAME CHAIR PITKA: Thank you very
2 much. I really appreciate that.

3
4 Does anybody have any questions for
5 Gayla.

6
7 (No comments)

8
9 MADAME CHAIR PITKA: Literally nothing
10 is stopping you from bringing salmon in right now.

11
12 Nothing.

13
14 (Laughter)

15
16 MADAME CHAIR PITKA: Okay. So right
17 now we have Frank Woods.

18
19 MR. WOODS: Good morning, Madame Chair,
20 members of the Committee here. It's a privilege to
21 speak before you. I just got the second volume this
22 morning and it's not -- it's by chance. I'm here to
23 speak on behalf of the Curyung Tribe and regurgitate
24 what we did for the record yesterday.

25
26 I am a prime subsistence user, I've
27 hunted and fished and depended on what the resources of
28 our land has provided for me and my family ever since I
29 was born. These two volumes are actually items of what
30 -- a snapshot of what Alaska is faced with today. And
31 each one of you RAC members, I applaud you for sitting
32 on the Council and being the talking heads of our
33 people. My grandmother sat before me, that's my
34 grandmother. She told me that was the way she was
35 raised and that was the right way.

36
37 The changes that have happened within
38 the State of Alaska since Statehood. In 1959 -- I
39 applaud you for your history lesson. In 1960 the State
40 turned over management to the State of Alaska. State
41 of Alaska's our friend. Like the speaker before me
42 said you all got to work together. And how do we do
43 that. We have to -- I'll say it again, about five days
44 ago I got the message to read these two big volumes and
45 come to this meeting and be prepared. I called my land
46 manager of our village -- our village corporation said
47 hey, there's a meeting, a tribal consultation meeting
48 on Monday, you got to attend, he called in, he said
49 where do I fit in. Those village corporation lands
50

0094

1 were chosen for prime subsistence use. We don't honor
2 that today.

3
4 My grandmother loved cowboy and Indian
5 movies and guess whose side she was on, supported
6 cowboys. And this is the cowboys right here. I loved
7 sitting there listening to my grandmother just like we
8 -- you know, we used to spend hours and days and weeks
9 sorting out the problems of our people. We don't do
10 that and do that justly today. Not only for our elders
11 that sat here, but here in this meeting. I had five
12 days to prepare and read these volumes. I have no -- I
13 stepped out of this arena in 2014 to go into Forestry
14 because it was less conflicting, we -- I wouldn't have
15 to keep doing this. The lady -- the elder that sat
16 here said she dedicated her life to this process, to
17 protect it for her children and grandchildren.

18
19 In the State of Alaska, we are getting
20 tired as Native people to defend ourselves. I'll say
21 this. Two weeks ago I was out hunting, I told you I
22 got moose on the last day of moose season, March 15th,
23 I think I dropped my tag on March 14th. And I recorded
24 it and punched my tag and did the civil duty of being a
25 responsible hunter. Where I'm going with this is a
26 week later I'm up in Denali Park driving on groomed
27 highway trails doing multiple hours and I love
28 snowmachining. I was fortunate enough that a buddy
29 would bring me out there. It's a new world, it's a
30 whole different new world when you're sitting on a
31 groomed trail. So I went from subsisting in the middle
32 of nowhere to cruising on groomed trails in a urban
33 setting for snowmobile recreating. A business owner
34 pulled me aside, oh, you're Native, huh. I say yeah.
35 See I'm a half-breed, the good thing is I'm a half-
36 breed. She goes I heard you guys get free tickets
37 wherever you go. I said well, educate me. The
38 essential program of the Federal government subsidizes
39 freight service and mail in rural Alaska and it's
40 needed. I sat there and listened (indiscernible)
41 educate me. She had applied for all the different
42 permits and getting essential air into her community up
43 in Skwentna and that's great, right. So I said well,
44 number 1, I don't -- I never remember getting a free
45 ticket anywhere. The perception is we get handouts.
46 When I went and got my moose nobody handed me that
47 moose. I had to butcher it, haul it, hang it, process
48 it, it's work. So when that lady asked me if I -- you
49 know, if I got a free ticket and that was her -- that
50

0095

1 was her exact statement so I asked her to educate me.

2

3

4 I sat there and listened. I said, you
5 know, I got to thank you. Number 1 we celebrated
6 Indigenous Day on Columbus. We subsidize that for
7 March 1st for our spring festival. I said, you know,
8 ever since Columbus hit Plymouth Rock and I'll steal
9 this from Sydney Huntington when I was first -- about
10 30 years ago sitting up in Fairbanks at a Board of Game
11 meeting. Ever since Columbus hit Plymouth Rock we as
12 Native people are indebted to the white man to educate
13 them. She educated me on her perspective and I'll take
14 off my glasses because that's what she was looking at.
15 She was clearly looking right at me with perceived
16 different opinions. She perceived that I was -- I got
17 a free ticket and that I was given things that I wasn't
18 -- I didn't deserve.

18

19

20 What I speak to you today about is
21 basically what we're going to be faced with in the next
22 generation is I could look at -- I could look back at
23 my -- I'm only 58 years old. My grandmother was born
24 and raised traditionally. She seen the first sailing
25 ship and the school set up in Kulukak where we're going
26 to talk about in Proposal 18. My parents were sent off
27 to boarding school. They got educated in the white
28 system and the western way of learning. I'm a third
29 generation of that. I look back at Statehood and
30 things have changed so dramatically that you can't even
31 imagine. I sat there this morning trying to log on and
32 do an eight hour class today online and then I've got
33 North Pacific Fisheries Management Council and then you
34 got, you know, the tribal politics and the whole agenda
35 so we're sitting here in a room today full of people
36 that want to make it better. We have a highly
37 educated, highly motivated, group of young people. The
38 lady before me is one of those people. We've got to
39 honor the most important -- every meeting I go to I
40 look at the youngest person in the room, that's the
41 most important person because we have to educate and
42 pass on what we're doing today.

42

43

44 In closing I just want to -- I'd like
45 to commend the Resident Hunters of Alaska because
46 they're faced with the same issues that we have. That
47 gentleman right there, we're competing against the
48 commercial industry resource in rural Alaska. The
49 commercial industry has taken over everything. It
50 proceeds resident opportunity. In 2011 Ms. LaVine was

50

0096

1 our scientist in a moose and caribou enhancement
2 project, the guide industry had more precedence than
3 us. So I asked consensus in the Board of the Game for
4 a guide industry consensus meeting every morning.
5 There was one guide that wrote 152 proposals to the
6 Board of Game. Can you imagine reviewing 152 proposals
7 in our area at the committee level and then bring it
8 out to the Board of Game and have them review them.
9 The first day he pulled 86 of them or something like
10 that because the only reason he was asking for it was
11 he wanted his own area to guide in. At that time it
12 was only 10 to 12,000 for a combo hunt, 18,000 for
13 extended and out of 10 people I could write a business
14 plan out of that man's proposals. So when a guide
15 before me asks, I'll tell you what, he said there's a
16 spiritual experience to track, hunt, kill, taxidermy
17 and hang it on his wall. That was his testimony. It's
18 not a spiritual experience for me to sit there and make
19 a business plan out of those 10 hunters I could -- I
20 could profit off of getting that consensus area. He's
21 in operation today, he's still asking for more.

22
23 The western way and the white way of
24 doing things is go until somebody tells you to stop or
25 go until it's all gone. We in the State of Alaska are
26 faced with a fisheries disaster that should be
27 unprecedented. Every agency ought to be, every State,
28 Federal, they're having North Pacific Management
29 Council, hundreds of thousands of people on the
30 Kuskokwim and Yukon that can't feed their families off
31 the fish. I never imagined running out of kings, I
32 never imagined getting a shortfall of caribou. I'm
33 watching it right before my eyes. But the layers of
34 bureaucracy, I ask each one of you heads of State or
35 your department, Park Service, BLM, Forestry, U.S. Fish
36 and Wildlife Service, all you volunteers here, all you
37 Staff members, and it's real important number 1 that we
38 protect our rights. And I hope and pray to god we
39 never stop this process. It's unique in Alaska. Like
40 the gentleman that came from the Resident Hunters of
41 Alaska, it's unique that I get to come up here and help
42 you make a decision. What's even more important is
43 that it's unique on how we're structured. There's
44 three different arms of government if you stop and
45 think about it, State, Federal and a representative --
46 there's tribal representation right now. That's an
47 honor. I don't take that lightly. I don't pass it on
48 to everybody and everything, but I do take it because
49 I'm back here 10 years after leaving this place because
50

0097

1 there are certain things that need to be addressed.
2 And one of them is we've got to secure -- somehow
3 secure the Native preference. There's nothing against
4 non-racial statement, it's a non-biased statement from
5 me. My best friends, some of them are white. But I
6 have to protect and help feed our people because
7 they're -- we're -- they're starving us to death.
8 They're.....

9

10 And I'll stop because we got a whole
11 agenda before us and I just wanted to pass on that yes,
12 I concur with you that number 1, we as the State of
13 Alaska and it's not -- it's not the State themselves,
14 but it's how we regulate. I believe we're in -- we
15 live in America where if the law doesn't work any
16 individual can stand up and help change that law to
17 make it work.

18

19 So with that thank you for your time.

20

21 MADAME CHAIR PITKA: Thank you so much
22 for your comment. I really appreciate it.

23

24 So right now we have questions.

25

26 (No comments)

27

28 MADAME CHAIR PITKA: No. Okay. Thank
29 you so much, Frank.

30

31 Zach Decker is on the phone.

32

33 MR. DECKER: Hi, can you hear me here?

34

35 MADAME CHAIR PITKA: Yes, thank you.

36

37 MR. DECKER: All right. Thank you. My
38 name is Zach Decker out of Juneau. I'm a commercial
39 operator on the National Forest. Our company is
40 Glacier Guides. We've one of the longest tenured guide
41 outfitters on the -- on the Tongass. We're celebrating
42 our 50th year this year. And I want to take the time
43 to speak on the -- some of the southeast proposals. I
44 think this is the -- hopefully this is the right time
45 for that.

46

47 MADAME CHAIR PITKA: Oh, sorry. We're
48 on.....

49

50

0098

1 MR. DECKER: And.....

2

3 MADAME CHAIR PITKA:non-agenda
4 items right now. If you wanted to.....

5

6 MR. DECKER: Okay.

7

8 MADAME CHAIR PITKA:provide
9 public testimony on an agenda item then we'll take that
10 up during the time.

11

12 MR. DECKER: Perfect. All right. I'll
13 wait until then then.

14

15 MADAME CHAIR PITKA: Thank you so much,
16 Zach. And.....

17

18 MR. DECKER: Thank you.

19

20 MADAME CHAIR PITKA:I appreciate
21 you calling in today.

22

23 Richard Slats on the phone.

24

25 (No comments)

26

27 MADAME CHAIR PITKA: Is Richard Slats
28 still online? Thank you.

29

30 MR. SLATS: Yes, this is Richard Slats
31 I just got these numbers and I just wanted to listen
32 in, you know, and also to support the Yukon-Kuskokwim
33 Subsistence Regional Advisory Council group. And I
34 wasn't given any prior notice about these hearings or
35 this call in, but I -- you know, so I didn't want to
36 say anything without express permission from the Yukon-
37 Kuskokwim Subsistence Advisory Council.

38

39 Thank you.

40

41 MADAME CHAIR PITKA: Thank you,
42 Richard. Okay. So it looks like that's all we've got
43 right now. So at this time I'd like to call a 15
44 minute break. So that puts us at 10:45.

45

46 (Off record)

47

48 (On record)

49

50

0099

1 MADAME CHAIR PITKA: Hi, it's 10:45
2 a.m. We'd like to call back to order. Please take
3 your seats. And at this time Richard Slats is on the
4 phone.

5
6 (No comments)

7
8 MADAME CHAIR PITKA: Hi, is Richard
9 Slats online still? I believe he wanted to give
10 testimony.

11
12 (No comments)

13
14 MADAME CHAIR PITKA: Okay. If not then
15 we will go to Bertha Pavian-Lockuk from Togiak. I'm
16 sorry I said that wrong. I really butchered that. My
17 apologies.

18
19 MS. LOCKUK: Quyana. Thank you for
20 having me here. And my name is Bertha Pavian Lockuk
21 and I am born and raised in Togiak. And I would like
22 to thank BBNA for bringing me here to be present for
23 the first time for this meeting. And for all you to be
24 here and thank you for listening and giving us a chance
25 to speak.

26
27 I'm not sure where to start, but I --
28 as I am listening to all the speakers that have spoken
29 before all I can think of is my parents, my
30 grandparents and my hometown. But having to -- been
31 born in Togiak, we were raised with parents that were
32 not bilingual. Yup'ik is my first language, English is
33 my second. I learned it from our school that we were
34 -- where our parents had encouraged us to attend, we
35 learned how to speak English from there. We were
36 reading books that contained farm -- farm animals that
37 -- the animals that we weren't aware of, cows and pigs
38 and we don't see any of those in our State, in our
39 villages. But we have two -- with all the experience
40 that I have been through to date all I can think of is
41 hats off to all the elders that have passed on before
42 and our parents for teaching us what we know today.
43 They were not bilingual, they're only -- they only knew
44 Yup'ik language and yet they dealt with all of this,
45 the meetings that they have gone to. And lately in
46 school -- later on in school and as a young adult and a
47 parent raising up five children of my own and now I
48 have four grandchildren.

49
50

0100

1 But subsistence is our priority today.
2 That I hear. I'm -- hat's off to all the elders that
3 have spoken up for our way of life. And thank you for
4 allowing that. And I hope it will continue for
5 generations to come.

6
7 As I was listening I thought of my
8 upbringing. I was in high school and we were supposed
9 to have a report, an essay report done. I didn't know
10 how to do such a thing, but there was also a cultural
11 activity that we used to do and there were varieties of
12 activities in our school that occurred at the time.
13 There was Native dancing, there was skin sewing, basket
14 weaving, ivory carving and one of more subsistence.
15 And subsistence, there was hardly anyone in that
16 subsistence, you know, that class that school had given
17 us an opportunity to choose with. So I chose
18 subsistence where there was less individuals. By
19 choosing that I came to learn and my grandpa's words
20 stuck to me. He said -- he said to me when he was
21 alive -- he was alive, but I lost him -- we lost him a
22 month after I graduated from high school. But his
23 words were that stuck to me were somehow I'm not sure
24 if it was pitying to me or the younger generation, but
25 he said like this. I'm hard to translate into English.
26 Sorry. (In Native). I'm not sure how that would be
27 translated. You younger gen -- you my grandchild, I'm
28 so sorry for you and your generation. You guys are
29 getting accustomed to filling out papers just to go out
30 and gather moose, caribou, salmon, anything that you go
31 out to gather food to take care of your family, you
32 first have to pay for license, fill out document to get
33 legalized. In my generation we never did that, we did
34 not have any documents to fill out, we just gathered
35 what we had to gather.

36
37 Every season you -- we were taught four
38 seasons in school. Every season brings forth it's own
39 subsistence food in our area, in our land. This is the
40 -- this is the land that we grew up in, what my
41 parents, what our grandparents grew up in. There was
42 no one telling them what not to hunt, how much to take.
43 They knew exactly how much they needed to take care of
44 the family that they now have family of depending on
45 the size of your family it can be one or two cow -- two
46 moose or four caribou or something. One moose does not
47 -- it goes a long way, but with the size of the family
48 and depending on who you are hunting with our custom is
49 to share the person that we are hunting with. For
50

0101

1 example if you and I were out hunting, if we catch a
2 moose I would have to split you completely in half even
3 though I had a large family just to be fair. And
4 that's how my family is, that's how I was raised. Any
5 game that we bring home whoever you are hunting with we
6 have to share and split that because they have a family
7 to feed also.

8
9 With that being said there's more that
10 I can go on with, but to date what saddens me is to see
11 our hunters getting criminalized for hunting on a
12 closed season, off season or closed waters or whatever.
13 That really bug -- bothers me because that shouldn't --
14 that shouldn't be, that's not how we should be treated.
15 We use our guns to hunt for our food, not to be
16 criminals and kill any other person. They're to hunt
17 for animals that we consume to take care of our
18 families and keep them healthy.

19
20 And then one thing that -- I'm losing
21 my thoughts, sorry. Togiak for instance, I want to
22 point out the islands that we are surrounded with. We
23 are a coastal village and from the past history I have
24 said this before, using the Walrus Island that's an
25 example. I was -- I have learned now as an adult there
26 were individuals that were criminalized for getting a
27 walrus. They didn't know it became a sanctuary at the
28 time and they're -- they were handcuffed. I never
29 heard a lot of that, but I also have heard where a
30 hunter is -- the gun is taken from them along with the
31 meat or whatever they have hunted is taken away from
32 them. I don't think that is right. Communication is a
33 must have, translation, making sure that everyone
34 understands in our village. I am coming from a village
35 that is -- it's the largest village in our region, and
36 yet we are abundance in wildlife. Every season that
37 brings -- I mean, every season we always hunt for this
38 and that and we know when not to hunt big game due to
39 birthing. They know -- the elders know -- knew when to
40 hunt. And I want -- I want to use an example. Let me
41 go back to using our herring fish as an example and our
42 salmon.

43
44 Our elders, we have been subsisting all
45 our lives. My parents were subsisting, we were raised
46 subsisting, my grandparents were subsisting. Now I
47 know what I wanted to say. Our salmon, our wildlife,
48 we're abundant in, they were in abundance, our herring
49 fish were abundant in our region. Why are we lacking
50

0102

1 today, what have we done. And all I have seen is the
2 subsistence users being -- we have to report our much
3 salmon we're taking, how much our fishermen are
4 bringing up salmon for us to split. Those are
5 reported. And that kind of bothers me. Lately I --
6 the recent thought that came to me was this subsistence
7 has been going on from generations, from abundance to
8 date. And having all the supplies that we hunt and
9 gather for are -- were in abundance then and that
10 hunting you -- just until recently. What's causing
11 this to deplete, what is causing our king salmon to not
12 be around in our rivers and our bays anymore, what is
13 causing our seals to disappear, deplete and get those
14 sickly fleshies -- furless spots now, what is causing
15 that. Herring fish, our coast used to be totally white
16 with spawned out herring fish, coast to coast, bay
17 wide. Today I only see little spots of area with
18 spawning of herring fish.

19

20 Seiners. When we -- when our elders
21 heard of seiners they were totally not agree and
22 unhappy to hear that. I don't know who allowed our bay
23 to open up for seiners and that's when I heard our
24 elders they -- they were opposing it, but they were not
25 listened to. But the seiners went ahead and fished our
26 bay for years. Now we have nothing, we have to go far
27 to get our help on herring fish. We have to -- we have
28 small herring fish that we have to get smaller nets to
29 get small. They're get -- our salmon and fishes are
30 getting smaller and they're getting less.

31

32 You all know who is -- you have studied
33 all of -- you have studied animals, their migration
34 patterns, birds and animals and I'm sure sea life too.
35 You have an idea of what the migration patterns are on
36 all those species that we gather. And who's at fault
37 right now. I know it's not our subsistence lifestyle.
38 They were in abundance for a generation. Whose greed
39 has all this for us to be lacking the salmon that we
40 consume in abundance before. Those are not -- I mean,
41 this isn't right, this is -- we need to do something
42 better. Conservation. I have heard there's a lot of
43 things that we can discuss, but that's the point I
44 wanted to point out at this time and there's more.

45

46 I have been working with our school to
47 teaching my own language to the younger generation, but
48 what bothers me is I have been speaking and trying to
49 speak out for if we are to teach our younger generation

50

0103

1 our language and our way of life accurately we need to
2 be able to hunt and subsist the grounds that our elders
3 have shown us where to gather food, certain foods and
4 plants that we have to gather in certain areas. Those
5 our younger generations need to know. All these maps
6 and regulations I'm not -- I'm just learning about
7 those. I have grew up knowing and hearing them, but I
8 think there is so much that we need to teach our
9 younger generation in order to continue.

10

11 I'm for subsistence. After this Covid
12 hit I was so thankful that we have subsistence
13 lifestyle, the planes were not coming into our village,
14 no store -- the stores were getting empty. We had --
15 we have no restaurants, we only have a store and a post
16 office and community members and we have neighboring
17 villages. The stores were getting empty at the time,
18 but I was so grateful that we knew and had lived our
19 subsistence lifestyle then, today and it will always
20 be.

21

22 And farming, You guys all know what a
23 farm does, what they are consisting of. My way to
24 explain and compare that in this level would be our
25 land and our area, the rivers, the creeks, the ponds,
26 the land, solid or marshy, every inch of it has my food
27 on it. We gather food from the -- we get fish from the
28 ponds, certain kind of fish from creeks, from the
29 rivers. The land may be marshy, a hillside, it may be
30 flat for you, but there's food for us on the ground
31 that we can gather. So every year, doesn't matter what
32 part of the year as long as we can go out safely.
33 There's always subsistence going on year round, it
34 doesn't stop.

35

36 So thank you. Those are my words and
37 thank you. There's more.....

38

39 MADAME CHAIR PITKA: Thank you so much
40 for your comments today and I appreciate it.

41

42 Does anybody have any questions.

43

44 (No comments)

45

46 MADAME CHAIR PITKA: Okay. Thank you
47 very much.

48

49 At this time is Richard Slats on the

50

0104

1 phone.

2

3 (No comments)

4

5 MADAME CHAIR PITKA: If not we will
6 move on.

7

8 MR. SLATS: This is Richard.

9

10 MADAME CHAIR PITKA: Okay. Go ahead,
11 Richard.

12

13 MR. SLATS: Okay. Hi. I apologize, I
14 just got noticed. I wanted to thank our Coordinator,
15 Brooke McDavid for calling me on -- to be on and for
16 Alissa for being there, you know. I'm Richard Slats,
17 I'm from -- with the Chevak Native Village. I'm also a
18 RAC member for the Yukon-Kuskokwim Delta. Normally I
19 would introduce myself properly in my language, but I
20 didn't -- I was noticed about that and that more times
21 than not when we are having to speak especially on very
22 important subjects that's, you know, like our lives
23 which is subsistence. And so that would have taken it
24 -- taken up my five minutes. And so I appreciate the
25 Board of Fish [sic] for approving our cultural and
26 traditional use of the three villages, Hooper, Scanlon
27 and Chevak that we submitted and we appreciate it.

28

29 Mostly I'll be speaking on subsistence
30 or things that are going on in our community. I'll
31 probably give you a small picture of on our, you know,
32 living out here in the coast in our region. Because
33 these things that have been on us especially since
34 2019, that thing that came on us which was global and
35 right at that time it became -- food security became
36 our number 1 issue, you know. Well, for us. It was
37 important for us to try to make it, you know, like
38 continue to survive and to live. And then mostly to
39 follow our lifestyles and living off the land.

40

41 So even though the Covid-19 when it
42 first came on, things were moving on. And so during
43 all that time when we were trying to keep Covid out of
44 our communities these things were moving on and then we
45 were, you know, doing what we can to keep that Covid
46 out of our community. At one time our community had
47 the biggest number of Covid and so we did our lockdowns
48 and everything that everybody else was doing. But
49 we're still here today.

50

0105

1 We've been -- we're out here and then
2 we're experiencing unforeseen climate changes, these
3 changing conditions. Our small community emergency
4 response plan did not have anything about climate
5 change. So one of the points that I wanted to make is
6 that because of the permanent ice that was out there in
7 the coast is now ice flows. And then storm surges are
8 now common.

9

10 And our -- my community is right in the
11 middle of the migratory birds fly zone. So when the
12 storm surges occur all these lakes and -- lakes and
13 water in our area, we're on a low, you know, like
14 marshy lands where the migratory birds stop to rest and
15 -- and drink, you know, clean water. But that has been
16 getting -- that poses this country for the birds that
17 have to, you know, migrate thousands of miles for their
18 survival.

19

20 And so one of the points that I wanted
21 to make is about that because of the salmon crisis on
22 the Yukon, you know, we respect how the people on the
23 Yukon have always showed respect for those people from
24 the out -- you know, upper Yukon. And so, you know,
25 consideration for them that they will get fish too. So
26 traditionally I've seen that and that is shown by the
27 people of the Yukon. And so this show of consideration
28 goes all the way up to the -- goes all the way up to
29 Canada. And so, you know, this is something that is
30 been -- that we all grew up with.

31

32 And then, you know, when we're not --
33 when the fish crisis is occurring and that we are --
34 you know, normally we will just quit fishing or limit
35 our fishing so that the fish might return. But in the
36 past having been into meetings and reports from the
37 Yukon and Kuskokwim fisheries, those people during
38 those times have reported that the escapement numbers
39 were just about what they would have been. But in the
40 last four years there have not been any returns. So
41 something else is going on out there, it isn't just the
42 people on the coast or people on the Kuskokwim or the
43 Yukon that are not as fault about crash. Something --
44 you know, the studies need to be looked at and probably
45 reconsidered and reinstated.

46

47 So when we are looking at -- you know,
48 especially the -- how we have to resort to other
49 subsistence resources especially like the Mulchatna

50

0106

1 Caribou Herd. The Mulchatna Caribou Herd is going
2 through a bit of a time themselves. Their numbers have
3 went down and the people on the Kuskokwim, whenever
4 they -- families that don't get -- are not lucky during
5 the moose hunting will resort to the caribou. And
6 that's what it's -- and so but there have been
7 brucellosis and some of those other things that where
8 they -- we are laying off on them and not hunting the
9 Mulchatna Caribou. But it's also that the agencies are
10 using predator control and aerial wolf hunting is one
11 of those. And I have a problem with that because I
12 believe that there are other ways to address the
13 predatory control.

14
15 Again I wanted to thank the Board of
16 Fish [sic] for allowing us to use Federal or customary
17 and traditional use for our Federal -- Federal
18 customary and traditional use determinations for our
19 area. But it's also that we -- when we're -- when we
20 were filling that out and request for determination, it
21 was just like we're -- we never existed. We shouldn't
22 have had to do that because subsistence is all we've
23 been about our whole lives. For someone like me and
24 I'm -- don't want to admit that I'm an elder yet, but
25 it's also that -- all of these things are going on in
26 my lifetime. And when there is local and traditional
27 knowledge of the subsistence and the area that we are
28 experiencing out here in rural Alaska, it also should
29 be that local and traditional intelligence should be
30 considered before, you know, science and all of those
31 other factors that they consider before making their
32 decisions about our -- the management of the
33 subsistence resources in our area.

34
35 And again like I was saying is that
36 climate change conditions are what we are living
37 through. And so is our subsistence resources. They
38 have to be out there 24/7. And then when they have to
39 fly thousands of miles down to -- for their survival
40 all of these other things come -- factors come into
41 play. So I just wanted to point out the things that
42 are going on out here and also I just wanted to also
43 mention that open pit mines are an issue and there will
44 be a 14 and a half inch pipeline coming in from --
45 being proposed for -- from the Cook Inlet area, Cook
46 Inlet all the way to where Donlin Gold will be. And
47 it's also that there's been talk about caribou when any
48 -- even roads, when they are in their migratory route
49 they will not -- that disrupts their migratory
50

0107

1 migration. So it's -- these things that I just wanted
2 to point out.

3

4 And then I just wanted to thank
5 everybody for their or thank the Board for your time
6 and consider our customary and traditional use first
7 and foremost and subsistence is our way of life and
8 keep that in mind.

9

10 Thank you.

11

12 MADAME CHAIR PITKA: Thank you so much for
13 your comments, Richard.

14

15 Does anybody have any questions from the
16 Board.

17

18 (No comments)

19

20 MADAME CHAIR PITKA: Okay. At this time
21 do we have -- Louis has a question.

22

23 MR. GREEN: No question, ma'am. Thank
24 you, Madame Chair. Just the following comment. I've
25 been listening to people testify today in cultural and
26 traditional methods of living and they're always
27 talking about the food. And basically that's what it
28 is. Food security is in -- it's a disaster we're
29 having right now. And to me that comes out loudly.
30 I've -- other folks that I've talked with before have
31 said the same thing. Food security. Our cultures and
32 our traditions are based on gathering and hunting and
33 fishing and I hear it from these folks. I just wanted
34 to reiterate what they had to say.

35

36 Thank you, Madame Chair.

37

38 MADAME CHAIR PITKA: Thank you for
39 that. I feel like that's a recurring theme and I
40 really appreciate you pointing that out.

41

42 Thomas Tilden.

43

44 MR. TILDEN: Thank you, Madame Chair
45 and members here. I'm representing myself, Thomas
46 Tilden, as a subsistence hunter/fisherman. And I just
47 wanted to share a couple ideas that I've been thinking
48 over. I've been a subsistence fisherman for -- all my
49 life and I can remember prior when the State first
50

0108

1 became a State and when we used to still hunt and
2 gather our foods. We used to have to hide from the
3 Fish and Game planes, they would circle us and -- when
4 we were picking eggs. And we used to stand on the
5 beach and set our net and I was the listener, I had to
6 stay -- stand way up on the bank and listen for and
7 look for a plane while the people would set a net and
8 then they would come in at high tide and everybody
9 would run that fish up into the grass and hide it and
10 then we'd split it under our canopy. But those were --
11 those were tough days, it was really hard to
12 subsistence hunt and fish back in those days.

13

14 But times have changed and I really
15 appreciate that we have a Federal Subsistence Board now
16 that we can talk to and that can relate to our way of
17 life and how we want to continue our way of life. We
18 are a majority in our lands, but when it -- but we are
19 a minority when it comes to making decisions on what
20 you can hunt and fish. And that -- that needs to be
21 reversed. That -- we have to try something else so
22 that we're heard. Because we are the people that
23 notice the changes in the fish and game prior to
24 anybody else. It seems as though only when the species
25 collapse then it's an emergency, let's do something.
26 But we notice things right off the bat because we live
27 there and we know our fish and game.

28

29 Alaska's growing at a tremendous rate.
30 Not -- I should take that back a little bit because I
31 think after Covid I think it kind of slowed down quite
32 a bit. But tourism continues to grow. Tourism
33 continues to bring in lots of people and it's going to
34 continue to do that, I mean, we're an attractive State,
35 I mean. I think these -- some of the Lower 48 people
36 think we're a foreign country. And they -- when they
37 come up here they're amazed at, you know, how great
38 this country really is. And of course that means
39 there's increased efforts in regards to hunting of fish
40 and game. And I've seen it in my area, some of the
41 hunting groups that bring in a lot of tourism, their
42 meat spoils and you see the dumpsters plumb full of
43 moose and caribou, just overflowing because the meat
44 soured. And it's really funny that the head don't sour
45 because they take that head out. But they throw all
46 that other meat away. And so we need to come up with
47 ideas on how -- maybe you can't take that head out if
48 your meat sours. I bet you we'll have a lot of good
49 meat then. Or make sure that a local person goes out
50

0109

1 with them and takes care of the meat so it don't sour,
2 they could give it away to the (in Native). But we
3 have to be creative in what we do and how we do it.

4

5 And the -- you know, in the '60s when
6 the State first formed, if you wanted to hunt walrus
7 out on Walrus Island which is a conservation area right
8 now, but at that time it was open, you had to go to the
9 Village of Clark's Point to get a license in April 17
10 or some date like that. And I like that idea. I like
11 the idea that if you want to hunt in Unit 17 you're
12 going to have to get your license in Unit 17 on
13 February 17 and 18. And let's see how many people are
14 serious about hunting and able to get their license in
15 that unit. I think that that would be a great creative
16 way of making sure that the locals have priority
17 because the locals are going to be living in that area
18 and be able to get their hunting license then. And so
19 that was done, that was done and tried in the '60s.
20 And I think that's something that we need to look at.

21

22 And you could go with commercial
23 fishing too. If you want to fish in Egegik Bay you get
24 your license from Egegik. If you want to fish in
25 Nushagak Bay you get it from Clark's Point. And on and
26 on. But we have to -- we have to come up with new
27 ideas in regards to how we're going to make sure that
28 we have conservation and that we're able to hunt and
29 fish the resources that we have.

30

31 Our village corporation back in
32 Dillingham, Choggiung Limited, in order to make sure
33 that their shareholders have sufficient moose they have
34 a program where they go up there and cut the brush
35 down, not kill the brush, but knock the brush down so
36 that the moose are able to eat the tops of those --
37 that brush because there's still edible food up there.
38 And the survival rate of the moose has increased in
39 that area. That is an innovative idea. The whole
40 State of Alaska needs to do that. In addition to
41 enhancing one species, we should be looking at what are
42 other ways that we could enhance the survival of
43 caribou and other species that we live off of. We need
44 to be able to find out how can we make sure that they
45 have a better survival rate. And those ideas like that
46 that need to be employed and looked at researched. And
47 you could do the same with fish as well. And I think
48 that by doing this I think there'll be moose and
49 caribou and some of the other sports species for all of
50

0110

1 us.

2

3

4 But we need to -- we really need to
5 start trying different things. And I think what this
6 Federal Subsistence Board is something new and it's
7 going to -- it could take you to come up with new ideas
8 and addressing different issues and how we can all in
9 the future be able to hunt, fish and live our
10 subsistence way of life.

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11

12 But thank you very much.

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MADAME CHAIR PITKA: Thank you very
much for that. Does anybody have any questions to
Thomas.

(No comments)

MADAME CHAIR PITKA: No. Okay. So at
this time we have student testimony. So I'd like to
round out this morning of public comment with the
student testimony.

Thank you.

MS. BAUSCHER: Thank you so much,
Madame Chair and members of the Federal Subsistence
Board. My name is Heather Bauscher. I'm a Fisheries
Community Engagement Specialist in a shared role
between Sitka Conservation Society and SalmonState.
But I'm also an Adjunct Professor for the University of
Alaska Southeast and teach a class that is a policies
and procedures practicum course in navigating the
Federal Subsistence Board process. So today I am here
with two remarkable young women that chose to add this
work to their course load. This is a four week class
through the University, it's also dual enrollment, and
it's all based in experiential learning to learn how to
navigate this process and these systems. And it's all
about skill building. So we have a couple different
assignments. So of you have been aware of this before.
They're going to have to collect a number of people's
contact information so please feel free to talk to
them. That's network assignment. But then another one
is learning to give testimony. So this is opportunity
for them to learn to talk in a mic and I'm going to
step back and turn it over to them for their
introduction.

0111

1 MS. GRIGGS: Hi. Thank you guys for
2 taking time out you guys' day to listen to us talk
3 about what we believe in. My name is Elizabeth Griggs
4 and I come from Anchorage, Alaska. Although I grew up
5 in a city I can never imagine life without subsistence
6 living. When I was younger me and my (in Native) and
7 my uncle and my aunt, we would go to Kwethluk where my
8 uncle would live and we would live with him for a
9 little bit during the summer and we would go to fish
10 camp where we would fish and just make -- and berrypick
11 and just so many memories. But with the salmon going
12 down we haven't been able to do so, we haven't been
13 back in a while so we haven't been able to practice
14 some of the cultural experiences that we've been taught
15 to go through growing up. And losing that is kind of
16 like losing part of the culture that you want to hold
17 onto. There they would also teach us how to speak our
18 language, but now I could hardly even introduce myself.

19
20

21 Fishing used to be a renewable resource
22 where we would always have it when we needed it, but
23 with the numbers declining it's losing its renewable
24 style, it's less abundant now making it harder to feed
25 let alone our family, let alone the whole community.
26 Growing up in the city we would have family ship stuff
27 up to us from what they hunted and what they fished,
28 but now they have to choose between that or starving.

29
30

31 I go to Mount Edgecumbe High School
32 which is a boarding school and when you're away from
33 home you feel homesick, anxious or even just sad. So
34 having that food that you've known and grown up with is
35 the perfect little pick me up that you need. But now
36 we're having that less and less because we don't want
37 our families back home to starve.

38
39

40 I wanted to take this class because I
41 believe it is important to advocate for what we need.
42 What you guys are doing here is very important and it
43 not only affects your generation, but it highly impacts
44 our generation and the generations to come. Not only
45 does it help us eat and survive off the land, but it
46 also helps keep our cultures alive.

47
48

49 Thank you.

50

MADAME CHAIR PITKA: Thank you very
much and we definitely feel the impacts of the salmon

0112

1 crashes and I appreciate that.

2

3

4 MS. JONES: Thank you for letting us
5 speak and take time out of your day. I'm Naomi Jones
6 and I'm a third year junior at Mount Edgecumbe High
7 School. I live in the southcentral region in the
8 Native Village of Tyonek. Tyonek is a 25 to 30 minute
9 flight from here. And it's a small village located on
10 the west side of the Cook Inlet. In my village we
11 don't have a grocery store available to us. To get
12 groceries we have to ask a family member to shop for us
13 here in Anchorage and send them down on the plane.
14 Depending on the season and the weather we have to wait
15 until the weather lets up to get our groceries. In
16 Tyonek the most common subsistence activities we
17 participate in are the salmon fishing we do throughout
18 the summer and the moose hunting in the fall and the
19 berrypicking when they're ready.

19

20

21 Doing these activities help us be
22 prepared to not receive our groceries depending on the
23 weather. Having these traditional foods in the freezer
24 or fridge helps us enjoy these foods during the season
25 where we are not able to fish, hunt or gather for them.
26 Our subsistence foods enable my people to live
27 healthier lives. Some subsistence foods that I enjoy
28 with my family are kippered and smoked king salmon in
29 the summer as a nice snack or as a side in dinner.
30 Another food we love to enjoy right after we harvest a
31 moose is the heart fried in the kidney fat and served
32 with rice. King salmon and moose are my family's
33 favorite subsistence animals that we harvest for
34 ourselves.

34

35

36 When we have time to pick berries we
37 love to have my grandmother make a dish we call (in
38 Native). (In Native) is when you cook your berries
39 with a little bit of flour and sugar until it thickens.
40 We love to share these traditional foods with our other
41 family members around the State and even with our
42 family that is located down in the States. I can't
43 even begin to think of the most important as every food
44 and every resource for my community and region is the
45 most important. We truly need everything we
46 subsistence hunt, fish and gather to help sustain us
47 during the times where we need it most. Everything
48 that people in my community put away in their freezers,
49 our snacks, meals, desserts and everything they could
50 possibly eat off their subsistence harvest. Not only

50

0113

1 do we eat all that we harvest, but we also use the
2 things we cannot eat. My family believes in a minimal
3 waste policy with things we can't make anything out of
4 we find a way to use them.

5
6 I'm concerned about the safety of
7 consumption of my subsistence foods. For example in
8 recent years I witnessed on several occasions abnormal
9 blood and mange on our harvested moose. Moose are the
10 main game animals that we harvest and it's important to
11 make sure that their population is healthy for years to
12 come. I'm also concerned about the salmon population.
13 My family and I have been concerned about the king
14 salmon, but this past summer we got concerned for the
15 coho. Before I left to MHS in August we heard that
16 only about 20 coho went up the nearby rivers and this
17 is at the end of August. And seeing the population
18 drop from the previous years is devastating. Salmon
19 have been part of my family's lifestyle for
20 generations.

21
22 As you can tell subsistence harvesting
23 plays a large part of my family's lifestyle. I hope
24 that being here inspires others to promote the
25 importance of their subsistence lifestyles as well.

26
27 Thank you again for having us.

28
29 MADAME CHAIR PITKA: Thank you so much
30 for your.....

31
32 (Applause)

33
34 MS. BAUSCHER: I just want to say thank
35 you for this opportunity and I acknowledge the bravery
36 and the strength that these girls just showed right now
37 in giving this testimony. And thank you for your
38 support of that and thank you to the Forest Service and
39 other partners like the university for providing these
40 opportunities.

41
42 MADAME CHAIR PITKA: Thank you. This
43 is.....

44
45 (Applause)

46
47 MADAME CHAIR PITKA: This is one of the
48 favorite parts of the meeting for me is when the youth
49 have a voice especially with your program because you
50

0114

1 usually bring the younger students in. We've had older
2 students come in from other programs, but this is
3 always a really important program.

4

5 Thank you so much for your work on this
6 and thank you both so much for your testimony. I
7 appreciate it.

8

9 Do any of the Board members have
10 questions or comments.

11

12 MS. JOHN: Madame Chair, this is Jolene
13 John, Bureau of Indian Affairs. I just want to keep
14 encouraging you young ladies to continue what your
15 doing because through your youth engagement and
16 involvement that's the only way that we're going to be
17 able to replace the leaders that move on.

18

19 Quyana (in Native).

20

21 MS. BOARIO: Madame Chair, Sara Boario,
22 Fish and Wildlife Service. And I just want to add to
23 Jolene's remarks. And thank you both for reminding us
24 what's at stake in meetings like this and in forums
25 like this. It's real people and real lives tied to the
26 land and your families and it is so important that
27 you're here and advocating as you say for what you need
28 and what matters.

29

30 Thank you.

31

32 MR. VANORMER: Yeah, Madame Chair, this
33 is Chad VanOrmer with the Forest Service. And I just
34 wanted to express my appreciation to the two young
35 speakers who provided such important testimony here
36 today and their courage for coming in and sharing their
37 stories, their real life stories around how the
38 challenges we're facing are really impacting them and
39 their generation as well as how they are thinking and
40 looking at the future ahead of them and the challenges.

41

42

43 So much appreciation for the two of you
44 and, Heather, thank you too for running this program.

45

46 MR. BROWER: Madame Chair.

47

48 MADAME CHAIR PITKA: Uh-huh.

49

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0115

1 MR. BROWER: I want to thank you young
2 ladies for coming out with such courage. I know it
3 takes strength to come out and express your concerns.
4 You're the new generation, new subsistence hunters in
5 the future that will have the effects of what's
6 happening now. So keep up the good work and don't be
7 shy. Keep on going.

8
9 Thank you.

10
11 MS. CREACHBAUM: Madame Chair, Sarah
12 Creachbaum, National Park Service. I want to add on to
13 the remarks of my colleagues. And thank you for being
14 here today and thank you for making my heart so happy.
15 We need bad ass girls.

16
17 (Laughter)

18
19 MS. CREACHBAUM: And I appreciate your
20 courage and your willingness to work with your
21 community and work for your community. And you make
22 the world a better place.

23
24 Thank you.

25
26 MR. COHN: Madame Chair, Steve Cohn,
27 Bureau of Land Management. I'll echo all my colleagues
28 sentiments and want to thank you for coming today and
29 testifying. And I think it's such a critical -- it's
30 critical to remind all of us about the integral link
31 between culture and fish and wildlife and the
32 management of fish and wildlife is more than just
33 science and biology, it's about people and culture.
34 And that is a great reminder to us about the really
35 critical nature of this work.

36
37 Thank you.

38
39 MADAME CHAIR PITKA: Thank you so much.
40 I appreciate your testimony.

41
42 So at this time we have a time
43 sensitive, urgent matter at 1:00 p.m. The dance group
44 will be here at 1:00 p.m. promptly. So if we don't
45 have -- I don't want to jump into the delegation of
46 authority letters for like three minutes so if I don't
47 see any objection I'd like to call lunch right now, but
48 then promptly at 1:00 p.m. the dance group will start.

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0116

1 MS. HOWARD: (Indiscernible - away from
2 microphone).

3

4 MADAME CHAIR PITKA: Okay. So 12:50.

5

6 MS. HOWARD: 50.

7

8 MADAME CHAIR PITKA: Government time
9 remember. Thank you all.

10

11 (Off record)

12

13 (On record)

14

15 (Dance group performs)

16

17 MADAME CHAIR PITKA: Okay. Thank you
18 to the dance group. That was amazing. It's always
19 really good when we can invite a dance group in.

20

21 At this time since we're going to be
22 reconvening after lunch I'd like a roll call again.

23

24 Thank you, Anee.

25

26 MS. HOWARD: Good morning. Thank you,
27 Madame Chair.

28

29 So let's start with Bureau of Indian
30 Affairs, Jolene John.

31

32 MS. JOHN: BIA present.

33

34 MS. HOWARD: Bureau of Land Management,
35 Steve Cohn.

36

37 MR. COHN: Good afternoon. This is
38 Steve Cohn.

39

40 MS. HOWARD: Fish and Wildlife Service,
41 Sara Boario.

42

43 MS. BOARIO: Present.

44

45 MS. HOWARD: National Park Service,
46 Sarah Creachbaum.

47

48 MS. CREACHBAUM: Good afternoon. NPS
49 is here.

50

0117

1 MS. HOWARD: USDA Forest Service, Chad
2 VanOrmer.

3
4 MR. VANORMER: Forest Service is here
5 and ready to go after that. That was great.

6
7 (Laughter)

8
9 MS. HOWARD: Thank you. Yeah.

10
11 MR. VANORMER: Yeah.

12
13 MS. HOWARD: Got the blood flowing.

14
15 Public member, Charlie Brower.

16
17 MADAME CHAIR PITKA: He had an
18 appointment so he's excused for a little longer.

19
20 MS. HOWARD: All right. Thank you,
21 Madame Chair.

22
23 And then public member and Chair,
24 Rhonda Pitka.

25
26 MADAME CHAIR PITKA: Here.

27
28 MS. HOWARD: Madame Chair, you have a
29 quorum.

30
31 MADAME CHAIR PITKA: Thank you very
32 much. So it looks like we have a couple housekeeping
33 items. Did you want to cover those.

34
35 MS. HOWARD: So we just wanted to put
36 out a quick reminder for Board members and Council
37 Chairs, please out in this hallway is where we have the
38 student art contest pictures and art work. Make sure
39 you vote, please vote. And that's one reminder.

40
41 The other reminder is we did receive an
42 invitation and the team will be printing out or Robbin
43 will be printing out a flyer and it is from the Native
44 People's Action Group where they have invited attendees
45 and Board members and Council Chairs from the Federal
46 Subsistence Board meeting this week to join them for
47 dinner. And I believe it is tomorrow night, Robbin?

48
49 MS. LAVINE: April 4th, 6:00 p.m. to
50

0118

1 9:00 p.m. at 49th State Brewing.

2

3 MS. HOWARD: And I do believe they are
4 going to also have a shuttle. So we will get those
5 flyers printed out and passed around, but wanted to
6 make everyone aware of the invitation.

7

8 MADAME CHAIR PITKA: Chairman Green.

9

10 MR. GREEN: Thank you the invitation
11 included North Pacific Fisheries Management Council?

12

13 (No comments)

14

15 MR. GREEN: Okay. Thanks.

16

17 MS. HOWARD: Yep, they're going to --
18 they're going to get people together from both meetings
19 since they're coinciding at the same time this week.
20 So we'll get more information out to the group.

21

22 Madame Chair, that was all of the
23 housekeeping that I had for after lunch.

24

25 MADAME CHAIR PITKA: Thank you so much.
26 Okay. So it looks like we are at delegation of
27 authority, number 6 on the agenda. So we have
28 delegation of authority letters change requests.

29

30 Presenting the issue will be Lisa
31 Grediagin, Wildlife Division Supervisor.

32

33 MS. GREDIAGIN: All right. Thank you,
34 Madame Chair. And the meeting materials for this
35 agenda items begin -- they're in Volume II, Book B on
36 Page 1,365. And for the record.....

37

38 (Laughter)

39

40 MS. HOWARD: Madame Chair had that
41 memorized.

42

43 MR. GREEN: I read this and I -- all
44 three of them. And I think we should have a motion on
45 the floor to approve the -- into law.

46

47 (Laughter)

48

49 MADAME CHAIR PITKA: Thank you for

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0119

1 that. And I really appreciate your diligence.

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MS. GREDIAGIN: Yeah. Yeah. And for the record there's three volumes so if you're starting your collection, you know, you need to get all three.

So good.....

MR. GREEN: That was the first one anyway.

MS. GREDIAGIN: So for the record my name is Lisa Grediagin, I'm the Wildlife Division Supervisor with the Office of Subsistence Management. And this agenda item, the Unit 6, deer/moose delegation of authority letter, was submitted by the Southcentral Council as a proposal last year. But since it's -- actually it's just an administrative change, not a regulatory change, OSM invalidated the proposal. And then basically it presented back to the Council at their fall meeting, they discussed it and then we put it on the agenda for the Board to discuss now since we invalidated a proposal.

And so I'm going to turn this over to Judy with the Southcentral Alaska Subsistence Regional Advisory Council to discuss the details of their request further, but basically the request is to rescind the delegation of authority letter to the Cordova District Ranger for in-season management of moose and deer in Unit 6. And again this was submitted as a proposal last year, but was invalidated since it's an administrative change and not regulatory change.

Thank you.

MADAME CHAIR PITKA: Yes, go ahead, please.

MS. CAMINER: Thank you, Madame Chair. And thanks, Lisa, too. My name's Judy Caminer, I'm the Vice Chair of the Southcentral RAC. The RAC has discussed for many, many years delegations of the authority because them seem -- of course they make sense to do, but they never seem to get rescinded if the circumstances warranted that which we feel is the case in this particular Unit 6 moose and deer proposal. We were told at our last fall meeting after again many years of discussing how to approach this situation

0120

1 problem to write a letter to the Board requesting to
2 rescind the delegation of authority which is definitely
3 in progress, I have a draft right here, or to mention
4 this, bring it up at a board meeting.

5

6 So the Council would like to express
7 our concerns about delegations of authority. Other
8 than the public members who attend a Board meeting
9 there's really not an avenue for public involvement in
10 the same way the regulation process occurs. And the
11 Council believes that when this authority was
12 originally given in this particular case to the Forest
13 Service was for an emergency situation and really only
14 temporary in nature. This appears not to be the case
15 currently. The original request was made in 2013 and
16 was never revoked. This designation -- this delegation
17 of authority letter we don't recall it might have been
18 coming before the Board in a regulatory fashion that
19 would have allowed the public and the Council to
20 comment on the permanence of this authority.

21

22 In regard to designate, excuse me,
23 delegations of authority in general, they contain
24 language that the Federal Managers need to inform or
25 coordinate with the Councils and the tribes and we feel
26 that these lang -- these language inserts should be a
27 little bit more strong, that there should be some
28 incentive for the Federal Manager to do this
29 consultation and likewise if it's not sufficient that
30 there might be some way to -- I don't want to say
31 punish, to rebuke the Manager for not fulfilling the
32 consultation with the Councils and the tribes. There's
33 also language to the extent practical. And again
34 that's up for consideration.

35

36 Now we understand that these
37 delegations of authority are made when situation can
38 often be critical time sensitive, but we do expect good
39 faith effort for communication to occur, not only with
40 the Councils, but with the tribes.

41

42 I guess the bottom line is there's
43 really -- does not seem to be a policy in place to
44 review delegations of authority either at the Council
45 or the Board level. And the list of these letters
46 continue to grow. We were provided with a list of all
47 the delegations at our last meeting which is something
48 that we had asked for.

49

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0121

1 So there's no clear track outlined in
2 any public facing document that's easily discernible
3 for the Councils or the public to rescind or review
4 these letters. To this Council it feels very easy to
5 install a permanent designation, but it's very hard to
6 get them rescinded.

7

8 Thank you.

9

10 MADAME CHAIR PITKA: Thank you for
11 that.

12

13 MS. BOARIO: Madame Chair, Fish and
14 Wildlife Service. I'm just wondering if Lisa or maybe
15 the Forest Service or the RAC have the history of why
16 -- what was the emergency situation that first set up
17 the letter and why it might not be needed now.

18

19 MS. GREDIAGIN: Yeah, through the
20 Chair. I can attempt to answer that question. So I
21 looked -- I mean, I didn't do a thorough, thorough
22 review, you know, of all the transcripts about this
23 issue, but looking at the regulatory history there were
24 a lot of special actions and proposals in 2012, 2013,
25 2014, regarding deer and moose in Unit 6. And there
26 were several special actions where it was a temporary
27 delegation of authority to just extend the season, you
28 know, extend the deer season for the rest of December.
29 And then that was it. There was -- I could not find a
30 clear proposal that specifically generated this
31 delegation of authority letter. I mean, like I said
32 there was a number of them, special actions and
33 proposals that discussed delegation of authority, it
34 was mentioned, but didn't clearly specify in this
35 letter. And from the OSM files and records the first
36 iteration of this letter I could find was in 2014. So
37 that was the earliest it was issued and then it
38 appeared in the handy dandy book in 2016, you know, the
39 list in the back of the book.

40

41 So I think without, you know,
42 thoroughly reviewing all the transcripts there was --
43 there wasn't a clear link between a proposal and this
44 delegation of authority letter.

45

46 MADAME CHAIR PITKA: Thank you. Does
47 anybody else have additional question.

48

49 MR. VANORMER: Yeah. Thank you, Madame

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0122

1 Chair. I guess for the Southcentral RAC I'm curious
2 was there something that precipitated the desire other
3 than just the principle of having the delegated
4 authority letter out there. I mean, was there an
5 action taken that didn't follow the spirit of the
6 letter in terms of consulting with the Resource
7 Advisory Committee or Council, I'm sorry, or something
8 of that nature or is it just simply a matter of kind of
9 the principle and administrative clean up here?

10

11 MS. CAMINER: Thank you. Through the
12 Chair. Not that I recall. I would not have been the
13 one consulted and I think there could have been some
14 sense that perhaps the consultation was as full or
15 complete as it could have been. I think -- I believe
16 where the Council's coming from at this point is that
17 it's just not needed anymore. There had been a
18 resource issue and the population did need to be
19 monitored closely. Now I think while that situation
20 may not have improved hugely there's just not hunting
21 going on in that area. So perhaps you're right, it's
22 more the principle at this point that there doesn't
23 seem to be a process for removing these delegations.

24

25 Thank you.

26

27 MADAME CHAIR PITKA: Thank you for that
28 answer. I appreciate it.

29

30 MS. BOARIO: Madame Chair.

31

32 MADAME CHAIR PITKA: Yes.

33

34 MS. BOARIO: Just another question.

35

36 MADAME CHAIR PITKA: Go right ahead.

37

38 MS. BOARIO: I -- would there -- are
39 there any implications of rescinding it at this time.
40 It would be good to get clarity.

41

42 Lisa, I don't know if you.....

43

44 MS. GREDIAGIN: Yeah, basically I know
45 there's some representatives from the Forest Service
46 that might better be able to respond than I can, but
47 the Unit 6C moose hunt is a pretty complicated moose
48 hunt where the permits are allocated between State and
49 Federal regs. Like 100 percent of permits are -- of

50

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1 the antlerless moose permits are given to the Federal
2 -- under Federal regulations and like 75 percent of the
3 bull permits and the -- they're closely managed under
4 the harvest quota. And it's a little unclear if this
5 delegation of authority letter is rescinded how that
6 quota would be set on the Federal side. Right now the
7 Cordova District Ranger has a delegation of authority
8 to set that quota on an annual basis and also to close
9 Federal lands if needed to nonsubsistence uses.

10

11 And there's another closure review,
12 WCR24-41, that the current recommendation is to rescind
13 that closure and part of the justification for
14 rescinding that closure is because of this delegation
15 of authority letter. And if it's rescinded then OSM
16 would request that closure review be removed from the
17 consensus agenda and considered on a non-consensus
18 agenda because there's some implications for, you know,
19 that we just weren't getting -- considering the
20 analysis or when we present it to the Councils because
21 we had assumed this delegation of authority letter, you
22 know, would be in place to manage that hunt and, you
23 know, address concerns with rescinding the closure if
24 needed.

25

26 So I don't know if anyone else wants to
27 add anything here or if I did an adequate job of
28 summarizing that.

29

30 MR. VANORMER: Madame Chair. So my
31 understanding is.....

32

33 MADAME CHAIR PITKA: Go ahead.

34

35 MR. VANORMER:that that
36 delegation of authority letter if kept in place would
37 be a tool to help manage a further measure we're going
38 to be taking up here later. So if we were to rescind
39 the delegation of authority letter then that in-season
40 manager wouldn't have the opportunity to establish
41 closures or other limits while in-season, we'd have to
42 come back to the Board again for any sort of changes
43 based on circumstances in the field at the time; is
44 that right?

45

46 MS. GREDIAGIN: Yes, but it would -- I
47 mean, it would -- delegation of authority letters which
48 again I think is one of the main sticking points with
49 the Southcentral Council is -- I mean, they're

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1 administrative, so the Board can just make -- they can
2 rescind it at this meeting, but hypothetically through
3 an email vote the Board could reinstate it. And if my
4 understanding is correct that sort of -- it -- that
5 sort of lack of process and involvement from, you know,
6 the public or from the Councils is why the Council
7 takes issue with these delegation of authority letters
8 is that there's no real process, it's just the Board
9 through an email can rescind, add, you know, modify it,
10 issue a new one or not.

11

12 And some delegation of authority is in
13 the unit specific regulations and ever since I started
14 at OSM like nine years ago it's been a process to
15 remove that delegation of authority from the unit
16 specific regulations and put them in these letters.
17 And there's a lot of flexibility in the letter, I mean,
18 it's a lot more flexible, it makes the unit specific
19 regs a lot cleaner, but then you remove that public
20 process, you know, of any modifications to these, the
21 delegation of authority.

22

23 MADAME CHAIR PITKA: Thank you very
24 much for that answer. So right now we're on Board
25 discussion with Staff and proponent. Does anybody else
26 have any discussion points.

27

28 (No comments)

29

30 MADAME CHAIR PITKA: Okay. If not
31 we're at Board motion.

32

33 MS. CREACHBAUM: Madame Chair.

34

35 MADAME CHAIR PITKA: Yes. Sorry. Go
36 ahead.

37

38 MS. CREACHBAUM: Sorry.

39

40 MADAME CHAIR PITKA: Oh, go ahead.

41

42 MS. CREACHBAUM: Sorry. I'm interested
43 in understanding if it's possible to amend the
44 delegation of authority letter in order to address the
45 concerns of the RAC.

46

47 MS. CAMINER: Through the Chair. I
48 think there's two answers to that. Yes, certainly it
49 can be amended to cover the consultation, communication
50

0125

1 aspects of things, but it wouldn't address as Lisa
2 mentioned or I was trying to say, but didn't do a very
3 good job of it, that there isn't the involvement of the
4 public or sometimes even the RAC when delegation of
5 authority letters are written and sent out.

6
7 MS. CREACHBAUM: So it -- a follow-up
8 question, please. So it -- it's actually the letter,
9 the function of the letter itself?

10
11 MS. CAMINER: Yes, that would be
12 correct.

13
14 MS. CREACHBAUM: Okay. Thank you.

15
16 MADAME CHAIR PITKA: Okay. Does
17 anybody else have any further Board discussion or Board
18 questions.

19
20 MR. VANORMER: Yeah, one more.

21
22 MADAME CHAIR PITKA: Go ahead.

23
24 MR. VANORMER: Madame Chair. Thank
25 you. For Lisa. Is this delegation of authority letter
26 novel compared to any other delegation of authority
27 letters that are submitted to in-season managers that
28 makes it any different?

29
30 MS. GREDIAGIN: No, not particularly.
31 I mean, like someone mentioned, I mean, these
32 delegation of authority letters, I think they kind of
33 started around 2014 and since then they just keep
34 getting more and more and more as we go through the
35 process. And so there's a lot of kind boilerplate
36 language in these delegation of authority letters and
37 really the major differences between delegation of
38 authority letters are of course the species and area it
39 applies to. But the main difference is under the scope
40 of delegation section. And, I mean, this is a pretty
41 broad scope of delegation so I think -- I don't know if
42 -- yeah, it sounds like the Southcentral Council has an
43 issue with like the letter itself more than the
44 specifics of it, but I would say not particularly,
45 there's nothing unusual about this one.

46
47 MADAME CHAIR PITKA: Okay. So I've
48 looked around the room six times.

49
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0126

1 (Laughter)

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MADAME CHAIR PITKA: Any further questions please raise your hand very vigorously. But at this time I'd like to open the floor for a Board motion.

MR. VANORMER: Madame Chair, I move to adopt the proposed -- the proposal to rescind the delegation of authority letter to the Cordova District Ranger for in-season management of moose and deer in Unit 6.

If I get a second I'll explain why I intend to oppose my motion.

MS. BOARIO: Fish and Wildlife Service seconds.

MADAME CHAIR PITKA: Thank you.

MR. VANORMER: All right. The Forest Service opposes rescinding the delegation of authority letter to the Cordova District Ranger for in-season management of moose and deer in Unit 6 because the purpose of the Board delegated authority to in-season managers is to provide a tool that enables in-season managers to quickly, efficiently and effectively make decisions to ensure conservation of healthy wildlife populations, continued subsistence uses of wildlife, for reasons of public safety and assure the continued viability of wildlife populations. If the delegation of authority letter were rescinded the authority would return to the Board and changes in harvest quotas and the closing, opening or adjusting seasons and harvest of and possession of limits for moose and deer could then only occur through the biannual season setting process that we're in right now or by the Board deliberating on all emergency or temporary special action requests.

Got a little bit more here. However the Board could also choose to reauthorize this delegation after four years when the sunset took effect without having to go through the regulatory and public review process. Therefore any request -- any requested sunset period could be made moot by the Board's decision. Delegations of authority should be viewed as enabling long term and responsive management for

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1 conservation of wildlife resources while benefiting
2 subsistence uses at the same time. So allowing for a
3 sunset of this management tool would not be in the best
4 interest of the resource or for subsistence users.

5

6 Thank you, Madame Chair.

7

8 MADAME CHAIR PITKA: Thank you for
9 that. So at this time we're under deliberation.

10

11 (No comments)

12

13 MADAME CHAIR PITKA: Council Chairs,
14 would you -- do you have anything to say at this time.

15

16 MS. CAMINER: I'll -- I think I'll
17 leave it to your discussion.

18

19 Thank you.

20

21 MADAME CHAIR PITKA: Thank you.

22

23 MR. REAKOFF: I'm reading the.....

24

25 MADAME CHAIR PITKA: Yes. Go ahead,
26 Jack.

27

28 MR. REAKOFF:I'm reading the
29 current delegated authority and it actually has quite a
30 bit of notification of the Council Chairs, the
31 perspective of the Chairs and alternate effect of
32 Councils. I'm not exactly sure. We have a moose hunt
33 in Unit 24, a winter hunt. I'm contacted by the
34 Nowitna Refuge in regards to whether that hunt should
35 open or not. I feel that -- my experience is the
36 consultation process with the Chairs works pretty well
37 and we discuss the snow depth, cow/calf ratios, et
38 cetera, et cetera. So I'm not -- I do feel that there
39 should be a process to eliminate, you know, maybe in
40 the review process, we have a closure review process,
41 there should be some process that Councils could
42 approach the Board on. But I -- I'm not exactly sure,
43 it's your discretion on this one.

44

45 Thank you, Madame Chair.

46

47 MADAME CHAIR PITKA: Thank you for
48 that. Okay. I'm usually not the one calling for the
49 question so I was kind of confused about that.

50

0128

1 (Laughter)

2

3 MADAME CHAIR PITKA: But if we're done
4 with Board deliberations now's the time to call
5 question. So question.

6

7 MS. HOWARD: Somebody else.

8

9 MADAME CHAIR PITKA: Well, I wanted to
10 call the question, but somebody else has to.

11

12 (Laughter)

13

14 MS. CREACHBAUM: Question.

15

16 MADAME CHAIR PITKA: Thank you very
17 much. We'll have a roll call vote, please.

18

19 MS. HOWARD: Thank you, Madame Chair.
20 So let's start with Bureau of Indian Affairs, Jolene
21 John.

22

23 MS. JOHN: Bureau of Indian Affairs
24 votes yes and concurs with the justification offered by
25 the Southcentral Council to support my vote.

26

27 MS. HOWARD: Thank you.

28

29 Bureau of Land Management, Steve Cohn.

30

31 MR. COHN: Thank you, Madame Chair.
32 This is Steve Cohn, Bureau of Land Management. Bureau
33 of Land Management votes to oppose the request.
34 Delegation of authority letters require consultation
35 with RAC Chairs and a variety of different State and
36 Federal entities depending on the letter. The RAC is
37 always made aware of management decisions prior to them
38 being enacted by the Federal Manager. Since these
39 letters are administrative in nature they can be
40 reviewed by the Board outside the of the regulatory and
41 public review process even if there is a sunset
42 provision included in the letter. Delegated authority
43 is used so that Federal Managers can make timely
44 decisions based on current biological metrics. Without
45 them these types of actions would have to go through
46 the regulatory process which is time consuming.

47

48 All that said I do think there's merit
49 to the issue or the question around reviewing the

50

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1 language of these letters more generally. For example
2 the language in this letter Federal Mangers are
3 expected to work with Managers from the State and other
4 Federal agencies, the Council Chair or alternate, et
5 cetera. That could be strengthened I think with
6 language like replacing expected to work with language
7 like shall work. So I think looking at the language of
8 these letters sort of more universally to ensure a more
9 defined process for how these consultations occur I
10 think would be helpful.

11

12 MS. HOWARD: Thank you.

13

14 Fish and Wildlife Service, Sara Boario.

15

16 MS. BOARIO: Fish and Wildlife Service
17 opposes rescinding for the reasons previously stated by
18 our colleagues at the Bureau of Land Management and the
19 Forest Service.

20

21 MS. HOWARD: Thank you.

22

23 National Park Service, Sarah
24 Creachbaum.

25

26 MS. CREACHBAUM: The National Park
27 Service opposes rescinding the delegation of authority
28 to the Cordova District Ranger for in-season management
29 of moose and deer in Unit 6 for the reasons stated by
30 the Forest Service, the BLM and the Fish and Wildlife
31 Service.

32

33 MS. HOWARD: Thank you.

34

35 USDA Forest Service, Chad VanOrmer.

36

37 MR. VANORMER: Yeah, the Forest Service
38 opposes rescinding the delegation of authority letter
39 for the purposes I stated as well as for my fellow
40 Board members here as well.

41

42 Thank you.

43

44 MS. HOWARD: Public member and Chair,
45 Rhonda Pitka.

46

47 MADAME CHAIR PITKA: I vote to support
48 the rescinding of the delegation of authority letter.
49 I think that it should have stronger language in it and
50

0130

1 more of a process around the communication back with
2 the Regional Advisory Chairs. I think some of this
3 process is a lot at the discretion of the manager and
4 doesn't include strong enough language to report back.

5

6 MS. HOWARD: Thank you.

7

8 And, Madame Chair, did you also have a
9 proxy vote for public member Brower?

10

11 MADAME CHAIR PITKA: He did not say.

12

13 MS. HOWARD: He did not say. All
14 right. I just wanted to be clear.

15

16 So with your vote, Madame Chair, motion
17 to rescind the delegation of authority letter for Unit
18 6 deer and moose fails, four opposed, two in support.

19

20 MADAME CHAIR PITKA: Thank you. And
21 now we're on to Unit 17A and 17C, Nushagak Caribou.

22

23 MS. GREDIAGIN: Thank you, Madame
24 Chair. The meeting materials for this agenda item are
25 found on Page 1,371 of Volume II, Book B. And this is
26 a similar issue as before where this was submitted by
27 Togiak Refuge as a proposal last year, but again since
28 it's just to change the delegation of authority letter
29 it's an administrative change and not a regulatory
30 change so we invalidated this. But then, you know,
31 decided to bring it up at this meeting for the Board's
32 discussion and action. And the Togiak Refuge was just
33 requesting additional authority be delegated to them to
34 manage the Nushagak Peninsula Caribou Herd specifically
35 to -- that they could set the number of permits
36 available by community. So kind of allocate the number
37 of permits each year for each community. And I believe
38 Kenton Moos, the Refuge Manager at Togiak and the
39 proponent of this proposal's also online if needed to
40 address any questions or to speak to this issue.

41

42 Thank you.

43

44 MADAME CHAIR PITKA: Yes. Yes, we'd
45 like to hear from Ken.

46

47 Thank you.

48

49 (Pause)

50

0131

1 MADAME CHAIR PITKA: Is he still
2 available online or.....

3
4 MS. GREDIAGIN: We're checking.

5
6 MADAME CHAIR PITKA: Thank you

7
8 (Pause)

9
10 MS. GREDIAGIN: Yeah, my apologies,
11 Madame Chair. It does not look like he's on at this
12 time.

13
14 MADAME CHAIR PITKA: Is he offline
15 completely or is he just unable to comment back.

16
17 MS. GREDIAGIN: His dot is yellow.

18
19 (Laughter)

20
21 MADAME CHAIR PITKA: He is away. Okay.
22 Can we take five minutes and then get -- see if we can
23 call him and get him back online.

24
25 MS. GREDIAGIN: Yes.

26
27 MADAME CHAIR PITKA: Okay. Thank you.
28 So we'll take five minutes and that's like a government
29 five minutes. Five minutes.

30
31 Okay. Thank you.

32
33 (Off record)

34
35 (On record)

36
37 MADAME CHAIR PITKA: So I believe we
38 have the Refuge Manager online.

39
40 REPORTER: Kenton.

41
42 MADAME CHAIR PITKA: Kenton.

43
44 REPORTER: Kenton Moos.

45
46 MR. MOOS: Yeah, good afternoon. Can
47 you hear me now?

48
49 MADAME CHAIR PITKA: Yes. Yes, we can.

50

0132

1 Thank you so much for coming back online.

2

3 MR. MOOS: Oh, yeah. No worries.

4 Sorry about that. It wouldn't let me -- allow me to
5 unmute on the phone. So I apologize.

6

7 So through the Chair. Just a quick
8 synopsis of what we're asking for here is the Nushagak
9 Peninsula Caribou Herd is a or that was reintroduced in
10 1988 and it's a small herd, it's a micro herd. And the
11 purpose for the herd was initially to provide
12 additional opportunity for local communities here in
13 Bristol Bay, particularly the six communities that are
14 a part of our working group which includes Dillingham,
15 Aleknagik, Manokotak, Twin Hills, Togiak and Clark's
16 Point. This herd has been managed -- it's because it's
17 such a small herd it -- management has actually been
18 very effective with this working group which also
19 includes the State of Alaska, BBNA and Choggiung Tribal
20 Limited as well. And in the management plan that we
21 currently are operating under is -- it's a rel -- again
22 a relatively small herd and the whole purpose in our
23 management currently is to keep it at a controlled
24 level because the amount of lichen that had been -- the
25 forage on the peninsula particularly of lichen is --
26 can be very limited -- limiting. And it's a matter of
27 whether we want to keep them in the area or they
28 potentially could move. So that's what we're managing
29 for is to keep the herd local and to management it with
30 that in mind.

31

32 So the management strategy that we've
33 taken as far as harvest is concerned is that we --
34 we're targeting a population of 400 with optimal --
35 with the upper and lower limit of 600 to 200.
36 Currently we're above the 400 mark and so our
37 management strategy is to provide opportunity to those
38 six communities. And the way we've done it in the past
39 and what we're requesting here is exactly what we've
40 been doing since the beginning of the management of
41 this herd is in times where we have access what we
42 typically do is allocate five permits for each of the
43 six communities and then after that additional
44 opportunity is allocated by the population of the
45 community. So for instance Dillingham being the
46 largest community would get more permits when harvest
47 is available than let's say Clark's Point which has
48 very few people. So and that's the strategy we've been
49 using for quite a while. In the case where we've had
50

0133

1 some population explosions where we've had large
2 quantities of caribou, we have actually opened it up to
3 essentially just come get a permit and harvest because
4 we've needed to knock that herd back because of the
5 concerns that we have with the habitat on Nushagak
6 Peninsula. And we've actually gone up to five permits
7 per person limit.

8
9 We've also in times where the numbers
10 have been extremely low we've gone to a strategy of no
11 harvest. Now since I've been here for five years now
12 there's only been one year where we've been in that
13 scenario where the population was right around 200 and
14 at that time actually the recommendation to our working
15 group was no harvest. They wanted to see a minimal
16 harvest so we agreed with that. It was a five permit
17 harvest and the working group agreed since Manokotak is
18 the closest community to that resource and they depend
19 on it probably the most we would give all five permits
20 to them. They voluntarily did not hunt that year in
21 order to see the population rebound.

22
23 So that's sort of the strategy that
24 we're using as far as harvest is concerned in a
25 nutshell. If there's any additional questions I'll --
26 I'm here to answer or try to answer and I also have
27 Andy Aderman who is big game Biologist and who's been
28 managing -- working with and managing this herd since
29 the mid '90s here. He's got a lot of experience with
30 it and has been part of this working group like I said
31 since the mid '90s.

32
33 And I'll leave it at that unless you
34 have some questions.

35
36 MADAME CHAIR PITKA: Thank you very
37 much. So at this time I would like to open the floor
38 to Board discussion with Staff and the proponent.

39
40 MS. BOARIO: Madame Chair. Fish and
41 Wildlife Service, Sara Boario. I would just add that I
42 think this is -- this delegation of authority letter is
43 a good example of bringing management of the
44 subsistence resource closer to the people in need.

45
46 And thank you, Kenton, for joining us
47 -- joining us today to walk us through that.

48
49 MADAME CHAIR PITKA: Thank you very
50

0134

1 much. Also I'd like to include the RAC Chairs and the
2 State Liaison if they have comments.

3

4 Go ahead, Bristol Bay RAC.

5

6 MR. DUNAWAY: Thank you, Madame. Dan
7 Dunaway, Bristol Bay RAC Vice Chair. I think we were
8 very briefly briefed on this at the fall meeting. If I
9 may kind of insert some personal comments, I don't
10 recall we had any significant action, but I've been
11 invited and attended a number of these community
12 meetings for a long time now as I'm also Secretary to
13 the Advisory Committee, Fish and Game Advisory
14 Committee. And mostly I just get to sit and watch.

15

16 I've been really impressed with the
17 cooperative, collaborative, congenial function of that
18 group. When it was really scarce resources I remember
19 I was really kind of in awe. Dillingham had a few more
20 caribou and I don't think any were looking like they'd
21 be allocated to Aleknagik and I forget why, but just
22 kind of in the spirit sharing in the area I think
23 Dillingham said well, we can give two caribou to
24 Aleknagik and somebody can go catch those for the
25 elders. We have Gayla who's here in the room has sat
26 on that, I think Woodsy has too. It's really kind of a
27 grassroots for the people kind of operation and I think
28 it's a really good system.

29

30 Thank you.

31

32 MADAME CHAIR PITKA: Thank you for
33 that. Any other RAC Chairs.

34

35 (No comments)

36

37 MADAME CHAIR PITKA: Do you guys have
38 comments.

39

40 UNIDENTIFIED VOICE: Thank you, Madame
41 Chair. No, we do not.

42

43 MADAME CHAIR PITKA: Thank you. So
44 I'll be entertaining a Board motion right now.

45

46 MS. BOARIO: Madame Chair, Fish and
47 Wildlife Service. I would like to make a motion to
48 support this change to the delegation of authority
49 letter and if I get a second I will explain further.

50

0135

1 Don't fight over it.

2

3 MS. CREACHBAUM: NPS seconds.

4

5 MS. BOARIO: Madame Chair, this change
6 will add language to the delegation as written, quote,
7 set the number of permits per community, end quote.
8 This is an administrative change to support the work of
9 the Refuge with the consensus of the Nushagak Peninsula
10 Caribou Planning Committee. The Nushagak Peninsula
11 Caribou Herd is a very small herd as you heard the
12 manager share. And the current management has worked
13 well because the primary communities near this herd
14 have been actively participating in establishing a
15 caribou management plan and then establishing harvest
16 objectives annually. These communities are then
17 responsible for the Federal permit issuance at the
18 local level.

19

20 We appreciate the efforts, I appreciate
21 the efforts of the Refuge and the Planning Committee
22 and the State to work together. I also want to
23 acknowledge previous testimony here today to encourage
24 us to continue to strengthen those relationships and to
25 strengthen shared management of this herd. So in
26 addition to this delegation I want to note that there
27 are additional steps outside of this room to continue
28 that work together as well.

29

30 Thank you, Madame Chair.

31

32 MADAME CHAIR PITKA: Thank you for
33 that. So under deliberation anybody can make comments
34 right now or we can call the question.

35

36 MS. CREACHBAUM: Question.

37

38 MADAME CHAIR PITKA: Thank you, Ma'am.
39 Okay. Can we get a roll call vote.

40

41 Thank you.

42

43 MS. HOWARD: Yeah, thank you, Madame
44 Chair. So motion is to support the change to
45 delegation of authority letter for the Unit 17A and 17C
46 Nushagak Caribou.

47

48 We'll start with Bureau of Indian
49 Affairs, Jolene John.

50

0136

1 MS. JOHN: Requesting that you come
2 back later to me.

3
4 MS. HOWARD: What's that?

5
6 MADAME CHAIR PITKA: Push to the end.

7
8 MS. HOWARD: Push to the end. Okay. I
9 will come back to you.

10
11 Bureau of Land Management, Steve Cohn.

12
13 MR. COHN: BLM votes to support the
14 request, the requested modification to the delegation
15 of authority for the Togiak National Wildlife Refuge
16 Manager will allow for increased management
17 flexibility.

18
19 MS. HOWARD: All right.

20
21 Fish and Wildlife service, Sara Boario.

22
23 MS. BOARIO: Fish and Wildlife Service
24 votes yes.

25
26 MS. HOWARD: National Park Service,
27 Sarah Creachbaum.

28
29 MS. CREACHBAUM: National Park Service
30 votes to support.

31
32 MS. HOWARD: USDA Forest Service, Chad
33 VanOrmer.

34
35 MR. VANORMER: The Forest Service votes
36 to support as well.

37
38 MS. HOWARD: Pubic member and Chair,
39 Rhonda Pitka.

40
41 MADAME CHAIR PITKA: I vote to support.
42 Thank you.

43
44 MS. HOWARD: And then circling back
45 around to Bureau of Indian Affairs, Jolene John.

46
47 MS. JOHN: BIA Supports. Thanks.

48
49 MS. HOWARD: And with public member
50

0137

1 Brower still not here, Madame Chair, motion passes.

2

3 MADAME CHAIR PITKA: Thank you. Thank
4 you very much for that. I appreciate it.

5

6 So now if I'm looking at my notes we
7 will head on to Number 7 on the agenda, but we have
8 something to do before then.

9

10 So we have a request for the BIA for a
11 motion.

12

13 MS. JOHN: Madame Chair. Thank you.
14 It's my understanding that removing a proposal from the
15 consensus agenda requires a formal request from a
16 Federal Subsistence Board member. As per these
17 procedures I would like to remove WP24-18 from the
18 consensus agenda and have it fully deliberated by the
19 Board for subsequent action at this meeting.

20

21 MADAME CHAIR PITKA: Thank you. And
22 I'd like to get a second on the motion.

23

24 MS. BOARIO: Fish and Wildlife Service
25 seconds.

26

27 MADAME CHAIR PITKA: Is there any
28 deliberation.

29

30 (No comments)

31

32 MADAME CHAIR PITKA: If not, now is the
33 time to call the question if you wish to.

34

35 MS. JOHN: Question.

36

37 MADAME CHAIR PITKA: Thank you. Do we
38 need a roll call vote or is a voice vote fine?

39

40 MS. HOWARD: Up to you, Madame Chair.

41

42 MADAME CHAIR PITKA: I think we can do
43 a voice vote on this one.

44

45 All in favor of the motion say aye, all
46 opposed say no.

47

48 IN UNISON: Aye.

49

50

0138

1 MADAME CHAIR PITKA: Okay. Now all
2 opposed say no.

3
4 (No opposing votes)

5
6 MADAME CHAIR PITKA: Hearing none the
7 motion carries. Thank you very much. I appreciate it.
8 Thank you for the motion, BIA.

9
10 Now we are on to Number 7 on the
11 agenda. 2021 to '23, subpart C and D, proposals and
12 closure reviews.

13
14 Are you ready?

15
16 MS. GREDIAGIN: I believe Orville's
17 coming up to do the summary of the tribal consultation.

18
19 MADAME CHAIR PITKA: Thank you.

20
21 MR. LIND: Good afternoon, Madame
22 Chair, Board members. And RAC Chairs and members,
23 welcome. My name is Orville Lind, I'm the Native
24 Liaison for the Office of Subsistence Management. And
25 at this time I'm going to give a draft, a brief
26 overview of the consultation that was conducted
27 yesterday from 9:00 to 12:30. And I have to say that
28 that consultation yesterday had the most involvement in
29 the consultation on a regulatory cycle since 2014 since
30 I've been on board. So we had some very good
31 involvement and discussions. Really much appreciated
32 folks that decided to come in person and also join us
33 on the phone. Again it was the largest consultation
34 that we've had since 2014. So that just tells me word
35 is getting out, tribes are getting involved and we all
36 are getting better at this process. Yesterday we had
37 seven tribes, 12 tribal members, four corporation
38 members that joined us and I will not give a brief
39 overview of what was discussed.

40
41 This consultation summary when approved
42 will be available to tribes and corporations that
43 request it. Since it was the longest three and a half
44 hours consultation it takes a little while before we
45 can get everything put together correctly. Thank you
46 for your patience.

47
48 So during the consultation there was
49 some talk about the notifications that went out to the
50

1 tribes and corporations, not enough time to be able to
2 prepare for the proposals before them. There was a lot
3 of talk about climate change impacts all through the
4 State of Alaska on all the resources. There was talk
5 about the boundaries of hunting the traditional hunting
6 areas that caused some frustration because of the
7 animals being on the other side. There was also talk
8 about migration patterns changing, not only the
9 waterfowl, but moose, caribou and a lot of talk about
10 salmon. As you know we've been hearing this for
11 several years about salmon, the increase in some areas
12 where a lot of Alaska is decreasing in several species.
13 We talked about salmon studies from another
14 organization. We also talked about the proxies of
15 salmon was brought up. There were talks about the
16 regulations that really were burdensome to some of the
17 hunters out there. You've heard it over and over again
18 about the paperwork that had to be done for a
19 subsistence user in order for them to go out and feed
20 their families. There was talk about the efforts to
21 build relationships with the Refuges out there, the
22 field offices. And that this is very important, it
23 needs to be done, the relationship needs to start
24 mending, to start working together. And we're all in
25 this together it was said several times.

26
27 Law enforcement. There needs to be
28 some movement towards building relationship with the
29 law enforcement out there. There's a lot of
30 misinformation, misunderstood information out there and
31 it needs to come together. And they all -- they all
32 need to come together and work together. There was
33 also the history of how the resources used to be
34 plentiful and now that there's several users out there
35 that utilize the resources in Alaska and there's
36 different levels of impact out there and this needs to
37 be addressed. There needs to be better management on
38 all sides and to address the declining populations.

39
40 And lastly it was really appreciated
41 both from the locals and some of the Chairs and the
42 Board that it is very beneficial for us to speak about
43 these things that are happening in our State. But it's
44 not only happening in our State, but elsewhere. And
45 they're very appreciative of this Federal subsistence
46 program and the processes. And there needs to be more
47 education on how this Federal subsistence program
48 works.

49
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1 And that concludes a draft, quick
2 overview summary, Madame Chair.

3

4 MADAME CHAIR PITKA: Thank you very
5 much, Orville Lind.

6

7 Does anybody have any questions of
8 Orville Lind.

9

10 (No comments)

11

12 MADAME CHAIR PITKA: I really
13 appreciated the tribal consultation time at the
14 beginning of the meeting. Tribes can also request
15 tribal consultation at anytime during the year just by
16 sending Orville a letter or a note.

17

18 So at this time we're at announcement
19 of the consensus agenda.

20

21 Lisa Grediagin.

22

23 MS. GREDIAGIN: Thank you, Madame
24 Chair. Again for the record this is Lisa Grediagin,
25 Wildlife Division Supervisor with the Office of
26 Subsistence Management. The consensus agenda contains
27 all of the proposals and closure reviews for which
28 there is agreement among the Federal Subsistence
29 Regional Advisory Councils, the Federal InterAgency
30 Staff Committee and the Alaska Department of Fish and
31 Game concerning Board action. The consensus agenda can
32 be found after the public meeting agenda in the Board
33 meeting materials. The analyses for these are
34 contained in Volume I of the meeting materials. Anyone
35 may request that a proposal or closure review be
36 removed from the consensus agenda and considered
37 individually by the Board. However the Board must
38 officially make a motion and vote to approve removing
39 any proposal or closure review from the consensus
40 agenda. After the Board acts individually on all of
41 the non-consensus proposals and closure reviews the
42 Board will take up the consensus agenda and vote on it
43 collectively towards the end of this meeting.

44

45 Thank you, Madame Chair.

46

47 That concludes announcements of the
48 consensus agenda.

49

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0141

1 MADAME CHAIR PITKA: Thank you very
2 much. And we're getting updated consensus and non-
3 consensus agenda printed so they'll be available soon.

4
5 So right now we're like to open public
6 comment on consensus agenda items, but also the
7 opportunity is available at the beginning of each day
8 until the final day that we meet -- until the final
9 action, not the final day. Which is on the final day.

10

11 (No comments)

12

13 MADAME CHAIR PITKA: Oh, we haven't had
14 any blue request forms and I don't see anybody jumping
15 up so that this time I would like to Board deliberation
16 and action on non-consensus agenda items.

17

18 WP24-01. Statewide brown bear.

19

20 MS. KENNER: Madame Chair, are you
21 ready.

22

23 MADAME CHAIR PITKA: Yes. Please go
24 ahead whenever you're ready.

25

26 MS. KENNER: Thank you, Madame Chair.
27 Hello, Madame Chair, members of the Board. My name is
28 Pippa Kenner and I'm an Anthropologist at the Office of
29 Subsistence Management in Anchorage. The analysis for
30 proposal WP24-01 begins on Page 419 of your meeting
31 materials. This proposal was submitted by Kaleb
32 Rowland of McCarthy, Alaska and is a request to allow
33 the sale of brown bear hides. Mr. Rowland says
34 subsistence users in many areas of Alaska must salvage
35 the hides of brown bears, however hides must not be
36 sold. The proponent continues that the hides of many
37 other legally harvested big game species may be sold
38 and brown bear should be added to this list.

39

40 So next I'm going to quickly summarize
41 some of the conservation concerns for brown bear --
42 brown bears in Alaska in general. So Alaska has an
43 estimated 30,000 brown bears Statewide. With higher
44 densities on Kodiak Island, the Alaska Peninsula and
45 the ABC Islands of southeast Alaska which are
46 Admiralty, Baranof and Chichagof. Brown bear
47 populations are extremely sensitive to disruption and
48 this is because brown bears have the lowest
49 reproduction rate of any North American mammal. In
50

1 some areas with low population densities such as in
2 northern Alaska brown bear populations are often
3 managed conservatively for several reasons. One is
4 that large home ranges are required to meet resource
5 needs, another is female brown bears generally do not
6 successfully reproduce until they are more than five
7 years old and have low reproductive rates, small
8 litters and long intervals between litters. Another is
9 that sows exhibit high fidelity to home ranges with
10 little out migration or in migration and the last is
11 monitoring methods are imprecise and expensive. So
12 brown bear harvest limits reflect the population of
13 brown bear in each wildlife management unit. So brown
14 bear harvest limits of two bears a year exist in only
15 those management unit with higher densities of brown
16 bears. All other units are one brown bear or less per
17 year.

18
19 So if this proposal is adopted the hide
20 must be sealed by ADF&G per our Federal regulations.
21 Sealing requirements provide biologists with important
22 information for management such as the sex and age of
23 brown bears that have been taken. Sealing also has to
24 -- help to track the sale of wildlife parts to validate
25 that an animal is legally harvested and to provide
26 documentation to allow people traveling to another
27 country to obtain an export permit for the item to be
28 legally taken across international borders. And
29 because of existing Federal regulations if this
30 proposal is adopted the edible meat of a brown bear
31 must be salvaged and the hide must have the claws
32 attached.

33
34 When considering this proposal it's
35 important to note that selling the hide of a legally
36 harvested brown bear is legal under State regulations
37 including on most Federal public lands except for lands
38 designated as a national park or monument because these
39 lands are only open to hunting under Federal
40 subsistence regulations. State regulations don't
41 apply. This means that the primary effect of adopting
42 this proposal would be to allow the sale of a brown
43 bear harvested on lands designated as national park or
44 monument. However under State regulations the hide of
45 a legally harvested brown bear may be sold only if it
46 takes -- if it is taken in an area with a two brown
47 bear harvest limit.

48
49 So our conclusion begins on Page 142 of
50

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1 your Board materials. Our conclusion is to support the
2 proposal with modification to allow the sale of brown
3 bear hides taken from areas where the Federal harvest
4 limit is two bears every regulatory year and after
5 first obtaining a permit to sell a brown bear hide
6 available at the time of sealing from an ADF&G sealing
7 officer. In addition to satisfying State requirements
8 limiting legal sales to only brown bears taken from
9 areas with two brown bear harvest limits would be a
10 protection from overharvest because there's like to be
11 fewer conservation concerns in those areas.

12

13 And finally I'd like to end with an
14 acknowledgement that the effect of this modification
15 does not address the proponent's intent. He wants to
16 be able to sell the hide of a brown bear harvested from
17 Federal lands in Unit 11 which has a one brown bear
18 harvest limit. By law the State of Alaska must seal
19 brown bear hides and the Federal Subsistence Board does
20 not have the authority to change that law. We hope
21 that local State and Federal agencies will be able to
22 work with the proponent to find new solutions.

23

24 Thank you, Madame Chair and members of
25 the Board. That's the end of my presentation and I'm
26 available to try to answer your questions.

27

28 Thank you.

29

30 MADAME CHAIR PITKA: Thank you very
31 much. So at this time any questions right now.

32

33 UNIDENTIFIED VOICE: Pippa, I have some
34 questions about the -- and I have -- these may be more
35 appropriately answered by the State so my apologies and
36 we'll move over there, but just one clarification I
37 think from you. The sealing of the hides, the
38 regulation that requires that and the two bear harvest
39 limit, that is -- is that a subsistence regulation or
40 just a regulation everywhere for everybody?

41

42 MS. KENNER: Thank you, Madame --
43 excuse me. Thank you for the question. Through the
44 Chair. So I think you're talking about in the State
45 regulations, it's for resident hunters. You're a
46 resident hunter in an area -- some of the areas do have
47 two brown bear harvest limits.

48

49 UNIDENTIFIED VOICE: Okay.

50

0144

1 MS. KENNER: It's for resident
2 hunters.....

3
4 UNIDENTIFIED VOICE: Gotcha.

5
6 MS. KENNER:you have to be
7 resident of the State of Alaska. That's the only
8 issue.

9
10 UNIDENTIFIED VOICE: Understood. Thank
11 you. I think my other questions are better wait --
12 wait for the State.

13
14 MS. BOARIO: Madame Chair.

15
16 MADAME CHAIR PITKA: Yes, go ahead.

17
18 MS. BOARIO: Pippa and might implicate
19 Ken here with this question too. The related
20 consideration of CITES, and I have to look -- the
21 Convention on International Trade and Endangered
22 Species of Wild Fauna and Flora. Can you explain that
23 related consideration for everybody here and again for
24 myself.

25
26 MS. KENNER: Thank you for the
27 question. Through the Chair. Yes, so that's directly
28 related to this sealing requirement and I'd like to ask
29 Ken Lord to answer that.

30
31 MR. LORD: So the regulations
32 implementing CITES have a specific regulation that
33 regulates how furbearers including brown bear, it
34 specifically says brown bear, are handled and can be
35 traded internationally. And what is required is an
36 acknowledgement from the place of origin, the
37 government of the place of origin, that the item being
38 sold or traded or taken internationally was taken in a
39 way that doesn't present a population concern for that
40 area. And so that's the reason -- one reason for
41 requiring a -- a sealing requirement and also the
42 acknowledgement from the State that the hide can be
43 sold.

44
45 We don't have that system in place in
46 the Federal program or the Federal government. We rely
47 on the States to do it. So one concern I have with
48 this proposal is how people -- even if we allow the
49 sale of other hides how those folks are going to
50

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1 present documentation that the CITES requirement is
2 being met.

3

4 MS. BOARIO: Madame Chair.

5

6 MADAME CHAIR PITKA: Thank you.

7

8 MS. BOARIO: Follow-up question.

9

10 MADAME CHAIR PITKA: Yes.

11

12 MS. BOARIO: Fish and Wildlife Service.
13 And, Ken, do you know what like the consequences are if
14 someone inadvertently violated CITES without having the
15 proper documentation?

16

17 MR. LORD: Yeah, it's -- well, in
18 theory it's a criminal -- it's a criminal violation.
19 What happens from a practical perspective in most cases
20 is the item just gets taken by the government when the
21 -- you know, when -- by the Fish and Wildlife Service
22 when it's being shipped or moved out of State. There
23 is the option of citing that person as well and which
24 in most cases is a class B misdemeanor for failing to
25 -- failing to declare. And the maximum penalty for
26 that is a \$5,000 fine although in the years I've been
27 doing this I've never actually seen a \$5,000 fine, it's
28 usually a couple hundred dollars at the most.

29

30 MADAME CHAIR PITKA: For -- thank you
31 for that question.

32

33 MS. CREACHBAUM: National Park Service.
34 Pippa, back to the conservation concern. If a person
35 takes a bear in a one bear unit where the harvest limit
36 is one bear as a subsistence hunter federally-qualified
37 in National Park what -- I'm curious as to it's a
38 subsistence take and if that hide is sold under
39 subsistence regulations why does that raise a
40 conservation concern anymore than a two bear limit
41 because the bear doesn't need his skin at that point?

42

43 (Laughter)

44

45 MS. KENNER: So this is Pippa Kenner
46 for the record and thank you for the question. So my
47 understanding of this issue, it might -- my
48 understanding of this issue is that we -- our
49 regulations say that if you harvest a brown bear

50

0146

1 anywhere in the State before it leaves the State or
2 before it leaves the unit where it was harvested at a
3 minimum you have to have it sealed by.....

4

5 MS. CREACHBAUM: Yeah.

6

7 MS. KENNER:ADF&G. And you
8 cannot sell the hide of a bear harvested in an area
9 with a one brown bear limit and therefore you wouldn't
10 be able to get the permit that they have for the sale
11 of a brown bear.

12

13 MS. CREACHBAUM: Okay. So follow-up
14 question, please. So if a permit system was available,
15 let's say one magically materialized that was made
16 available by the State or either a Federal agency and
17 would a person who was a subsistence -- Federally-
18 qualified subsistence hunter who took a bear be able to
19 get their bear -- is there any reason why they wouldn't
20 be able to get that hide sealed?

21

22 MS. KENNER: Again this is Pippa for
23 the record. Thank you for the question. Well, yeah,
24 the international treaty that says the State's
25 responsible for monitoring the harvest and sale of
26 brown bear hides.

27

28 MS. CREACHBAUM: Okay.

29

30 MS. KENNER: So it would take
31 negotiation. We have entered into negotiations with
32 the State before for sealing brown bear claws that
33 people use in handicrafts. It was illegal, but people
34 traditionally do it. We went into a multi year
35 negotiation with the State through a working group and
36 we reached consensus and a -- this Board adopted a
37 proposal and the State supported it to allow the
38 sealing of brown bear claws that are not attached to
39 the hide and to allow their incorporation into
40 handicrafts to be legally sold.

41

42 MS. BOARIO: I have a -- I have a
43 question.

44

45 MADAME CHAIR PITKA: Go ahead, Sara.

46

47 MS. BOARIO: Fish and Wildlife Service
48 with a -- I guess a follow-up question on all this. So
49 to be CITES compliant only a State process works, a
50

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1 State permit is the option, Ken? Just to make -- I
2 just want to make sure I'm absolutely clear that for
3 example if the Park Service decided they wanted to set
4 up a system to seal and provide that record they can't,
5 it has to be the State?

6

7 MR. LORD: Yeah. The CITES regulations
8 specifically says it can be a State or tribal program
9 that can be.....

10

11 MS. BOARIO: Oh.

12

13 MR. LORD:approved for that.

14

15 MS. BOARIO: See you're like cool.

16

17 MADAME CHAIR PITKA: Thank you. That's
18 helpful. Okay. Does anybody have any other questions
19 for Pippa at this time.

20

21 (No comments)

22

23 MADAME CHAIR PITKA: Okay. So if not
24 then we'll have summary of public comment.

25

26 (No comments)

27

28 MADAME CHAIR PITKA: Was -- who's doing
29 the public comment.

30

31 MS. KENNER: Thank you, Madame Chair
32 and members of the Board. There were no public
33 comments submitted during the public comment period for
34 this proposal.

35

36 Thank you.

37

38 MADAME CHAIR PITKA: Thank you so much.
39 Okay. Oh, okay. So at this time we'd like the summary
40 of the tribal and ANCSA corporation consultation.

41

42 MR. LIND: Yes, Madame Chair, Board
43 members. We conducted consultations on the 2024/'26
44 wildlife proposals. Region 1, 2, 3, 4 and 5 were
45 conducted on November 14 where only a request for the
46 overview of WP24-01 or the bear hides was asked. And
47 then we did another consultation for regions 6 through
48 10 on November 16th where a question was asked about
49 the State mirroring the current regulation on bear
50

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1 hides in units where they have a two bear limit. And
2 is the State that doesn't have as many bears will there
3 be more restrictions made. Staff replied there's no
4 change in the harvest of brown bear in the two bear
5 units and in conclusion is to mirror so that we could
6 be able to allow subsistence users to get a permit,
7 bring the hide in and seal it at the same time.

8

9 Thank you, Madame Chair.

10

11 MADAME CHAIR PITKA: Thank you so much,
12 Orville Lind. So at this time we'd like to open the
13 floor for tribal or Native organization testimony
14 either on the phone or in person. We don't have any
15 cards available so please raise your hands if you have
16 any and please come to the front for public testimony.

17

18 (No comments)

19

20 MADAME CHAIR PITKA: Okay. So at this
21 time we're moving on to Advisory Group testimony. So
22 if the State ACs, the SRCs, the working groups or the
23 -- did we receive any Advisory Group testimony on this
24 matter.

25

26 (No comments)

27

28 MADAME CHAIR PITKA: Okay. So we would
29 like to open the floor to public testimony now. And
30 Pippa already let us know that we didn't receive any
31 written comments on this proposal during the comment
32 period.

33

34 (No comments)

35

36 MADAME CHAIR PITKA: Okay. Regional
37 Advisory Council recommendations.

38

39 MR. HERNANDEZ: This is Don Hernandez
40 for the Southeast RAC. Our RAC decided to take no
41 action on this proposal. I guess we -- our comment was
42 that we would like to hear more about what the cultural
43 thoughts and implications were for some of the rest of
44 the RACs on this.

45

46 Thank you.

47

48 MADAME CHAIR PITKA: Thank you for
49 that.

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0149

1 Southcentral.

2

3

MS. CAMINER: Thank you. This is Judy
4 Caminer. The Council supported the proposal as written
5 for our region because there is a one bear limit and
6 therefore OSM modification would not satisfy the
7 proponent. The proposal could be beneficial to
8 residents of smaller communities to help with some
9 income.

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Thank you.

MADAME CHAIR PITKA: Thank you very
much. Bristol Bay.

MR. DUNAWAY: Yeah. Dan Dunaway, Vice
Chair of Bristol Bay RAC. Right now I can't put my
hands on our official statement and I'm lost. So I'm
looking to our Coordinator. I know this is an interest
-- a topic of interest to us. I know the State has
allowed two bear harvest and I know some guides trying
to sell these hides and it's not easy.

Okay. Allowing brown bear hides to be
sold without a limit on how many times the hide could
be resold would not negatively affect -- impact brown
bear populations. It would create additional economic
opportunities for subsistence leaders. We've found
that folks are taking these extra hides because there's
been so much bugaboo about this worldwide and
nationwide that -- and everything's done legally, but
it -- the market is so limited. I've talked to
taxidermists about this, try to figure out a way
through. But sec -- second sale or resale for a
taxidermist, they might have like a great bear skull or
needs to recover some animal, but he couldn't resell it
after that and it really hurt. So they had some folks
take a bear, get it even tanned and they're stuck with
a thousand dollar bill and they can't send it on. So
that's what we're talking about.

And it -- we feel we have an excess of
brown bears in our area that the State Advisory
Committees have been real supportive and the RAC was
supportive of the pretty drastic harvest that occurred,
what do they call it, intensive management harvest.

So that -- that's our position because
folks could possibly benefit and maybe reduce the

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1 expenses to the State.

2

3 Thank you.

4

5 MADAME CHAIR PITKA: Thank you for
6 that.

7

8 Yukon-Kuskokwim.

9

10 MS. ROGERS: Thank you, Madame Chair.
11 Alissa Nadine Rogers for the record. For WP24-01 to
12 allow the sale of brown bear, our Yukon-Kuskokwim Delta
13 Council opposed WP24-01. Our Council is opposed to the
14 sale of brown bear hides because of the concern an
15 increase in harvest rates to an unstable level if the
16 sale of the hides were allowed. We noted that it is
17 difficult to obtain accurate population estimates for
18 brown bears and that brown bears have a slow
19 reproductive rate. So if anything happens in any
20 region it's going to take a while for them to bounce
21 back.

22

23 The Council thought this issue might be
24 best dealt with on a region by region basis rather than
25 a Statewide basis because different areas have
26 different brown bear population sizes and the cultural
27 values related to the harvest and use.

28

29 Thank you.

30

31 MADAME CHAIR PITKA: Thank you very
32 much for that. I appreciate it.

33

34 At this time we have Kodiak/Aleutians
35 on the phone.

36

37 MS. HUTCHINSON-SCARBROUGH: Yes, hello.
38 This is Lisa Hutchinson-Scarborough, I'm the Council
39 Coordinator for the Kodiak/Aleutian RAC. And our
40 Chair, Rebecca Skinner, had another meeting and so she
41 asked me to present and I'm sorry I can't be there in
42 person. I'm kind of home here with Covid.

43

44 But anyway so the Kodiak/Aleutian
45 Subsistence Regional Advisory Council did support this
46 proposal. The OSM modification would not have allowed
47 the sale of brown bear hides in the Kodiak/Aleutian
48 region because the harvest limits are at most one brown
49 bear per regulatory year. But the Council had

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1 considerable discussions and concerns about whether
2 residents of the Kodiak/Aleutian region would consider
3 it culturally appropriate to allow for the sale of
4 brown bear hides or if it would lead to a significant
5 unsustainable increase in brown bear harvest in their
6 region.

7

8 However the Council voted to support
9 the proposal as written by the proponent because they
10 believe that the proposal would allow subsistence users
11 in their region to utilize the resource more fully
12 while potentially making some additional money off
13 brown bear harvest to offset the high cost of living in
14 rural Alaska.

15

16 Thank you, Madame Chair and members of
17 the Board.

18

19 MADAME CHAIR PITKA: Thank you very
20 much and I hope you get better soon.

21

22 Okay.

23

24 Western Interior Regional Advisory
25 Council.

26

27 MR. REAKOFF: Thank you, Madame Chair.
28 Western Interior Regional Advisory Council voted to
29 support the proposal with the OSM modification. The
30 Council said the regulation will not allow subsistence
31 users in their region to utilize -- correction, will
32 allow subsistence users in their region to utilize this
33 resource more fully, potentially making some additional
34 money to subsidize their subsistence way of life. The
35 recommendation -- recommended by modification,
36 recommended by OSM to allow this in areas where there
37 are two brown bear harvest limits would put this
38 regulation in line with State regulations. So we
39 support using this only where there's two bear -- brown
40 bear limit.

41

42 Thank you, Madame Chair.

43

44 MADAME CHAIR PITKA: Thank you very
45 much.

46

47 Seward Peninsula.

48

49 MR. GREEN: Thank you, Madame Chair.

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1 Seward Peninsula Regional Advisory Council voted to
2 support with OSM's modification as Unit 22 has two bear
3 harvest limit. The Council noted that more bears have
4 been seen in this unit in the last few years and that
5 while currently bears are not seen as a food resource,
6 they have been in the past. And while facing times of
7 other food shortages they may become a more common food
8 source again. The Council also noted that this could
9 be a way to help support a subsistence way of life.

10

11 Thank you, Madame Chair.

12

13 MADAME CHAIR PITKA: Thank you so much
14 for that.

15

16 Northwest Arctic.

17

18 MS. CHAPA: Good afternoon, Madame
19 Chair, members of the Board. My name is Gisela Chapa
20 and Chair Baker couldn't make the meeting so I'll be
21 presenting the justification on his behalf.

22

23 The Northwest Arctic RAC voted to
24 support WP24-01 as written because the change will
25 better align State and Federal regulations with the
26 understanding that there will be administrative
27 hurdles. The change will also increase the capacities
28 of subsistence users to sell brown bears from the
29 region.

30

31 MADAME CHAIR PITKA: Thank you very
32 much for that comment.

33

34 Eastern Interior.

35

36 MR. WRIGHT: Thank you. Through the
37 Chair. The Eastern Interior voted to support WP24-01
38 with modifications to also allow the sale of black bear
39 hides. The Council noted that there are no
40 conservation concerns for brown bear or black bear
41 population. Currently Federally-qualified users,
42 subsistence users, are being limited from fully
43 utilizing the entire animal they harvest by the
44 prohibition of the sale of hides. Some Federally-
45 qualified subsistence users are harvesting and eating a
46 lot more bears because the salmon, moose and caribou
47 numbers are low. Some users report that they have bear
48 hides piling up because they do not know what to do
49 with them all.

50

0153

1 Thank you, Madame Chair.

2

3 MADAME CHAIR PITKA: Thank you.

4

5 North Slope.

6

7 MR. FRANTZ: Thank you, Madame Chair.

8 Brower Frantz, North Slope Regional Advisory Council.

9 The North Slope RAC supported with the OSM

10 modification. The Council said the North Slope region

11 has a two bear harvest limit and the proposal will not

12 affect hunting opportunities and will allow for the

13 sale of hides. Also the - it's a great way for

14 assisting with population efforts such as the Western

15 Arctic Caribou Herd so it will help with the predators

16 in lowering the numbers and kind of incentivizing the

17 take of bear hides, being able to sell them. So you're

18 in more than one way protecting moose and caribou.

19

20 Thank you.

21

22 MADAME CHAIR PITKA: Thank you very

23 much for that. So at this time we are going to the

24 Alaska Department of Fish and Game comments, to the

25 State liaison.

26

27 MR. MULLIGAN: Thank you, Madame Chair.

28 The Alaska Department of Fish and Game could support

29 the proposal if it is modified to only allow the sale

30 of brown bear hides with claws attached in areas where

31 the Federal harvest limit is two bears every regulatory

32 year and after first obtaining a permit at the time of

33 sealing from an ADF&G sealing officer. The State

34 allows the sale of brown bear hides in certain units

35 where the bag limit is two brown bears per regulatory

36 year. There's a harvest limit of two or more brown

37 bears per regulatory year currently in portions or all

38 of Unit 16, 17, 19A, D, E, 20E, 21, 22A, B, D, E, 23,

39 24B, 25D, 26A and just coming up in this regulatory

40 year that will be applicable where we passed -- the

41 Board of Game passed a two bear limit in Unit 18. But

42 that's coming up this coming season.

43

44 Thank you, Madame Chair.

45

46 MADAME CHAIR PITKA: Thank you very

47 much for that. So now we are at the InterAgency Staff

48 Committee comments, the ISC Chair.

49

50

0154

1 MS. LAVINE: Thank you, Madame Chair,
2 members of the Board. My name is Robin LaVine,
3 Subsistence Policy Coordinator and Chair of the
4 InterAgency Staff Committee. The ISC has the following
5 comments.

6
7 Varying support or opposition
8 statements were provided by Regional Advisory Councils
9 across regions based on differing cultural practices.
10 Council recommendations and actions vary from support,
11 support to -- with modifications to no action taken and
12 opposition. Therefore it's relevant to note that the
13 Board can support or oppose this proposal for each
14 region individually or regulations could state that
15 these pract -- that these practices may be allowed.

16
17 The recommended modification by OSM is
18 based on the Convention on International Traded and
19 Endangered Species of Wildlife, Fauna and Flora or
20 CITES requirements and the ability of the State to seal
21 hides. CITES is designed to protect threatened
22 populations of brown bears elsewhere in North America
23 outside of Alaska. But selling the hide of a brown
24 bear legally harvested in Alaska is allowed only if the
25 State of Alaska issues a permit reporting that the sale
26 will not be detrimental to the survival of brown bears
27 in the wild.

28
29 Thank you, Madame Chair.

30
31 MADAME CHAIR PITKA: Thank you very
32 much for that. So at this time I'm going to open the
33 floor for Board discussion with Council Chairs and the
34 State Liaison.

35
36 MS. CREACHBAUM: National Park Service,
37 Sarah Creachbaum. Mr. Mulligan, I need some help in
38 understanding maybe. We've been working very hard as a
39 group and with our support members here to try to
40 figure out a way to get to yes on this one. And it
41 seems to me and I could be wrong so this is why I'm
42 kind of getting to the question, I'll layout what is on
43 my mind and then maybe we can get clarity and get this
44 resolved. But to me it seems like a qualified
45 subsistence hunter who got a bear, whether it was one
46 or two, and was -- could -- should be able to legally
47 sell that hide, helping him or herself to recoup some
48 of the great expense of processing that animal and that
49 subsistence may be different of course from regular
50

0155

1 hunting. I guess my question is when you -- the -- is
2 the State A, prepared to take on the additional
3 workload of sealing the hides, does that -- is that
4 going to cause any hardship?

5

6 MR. MULLIGAN: Through the Chair,
7 member Creachbaum. Are you asking if this passes with
8 the OSM modification we're prepared to take on that?

9

10 MS. CREACHBAUM: Yes.

11

12 MR. MULLIGAN: Okay. So the answer is
13 yes because, I mean, currently I'm -- I was looking
14 through -- we -- well, right now anybody I think is
15 interested except, you know, in Park Service lands, can
16 already do that so we don't anticipate that much of an
17 uptick to begin with.

18

19 MS. CREACHBAUM: Uh-huh.

20

21 MR. MULLIGAN: We have sealing
22 officers, it's not just, you know, at our main offices.
23 Troopers and other personnel can seal so we've got
24 those people -- I guess what I'm saying is we have the
25 network in place, we don't anticipate an increase
26 because we're already providing that for where we have
27 two bear limits in a lot of places already. Those
28 folks I think that would be taking advantage of the two
29 bear limit and the ability to sell hides is probably
30 already doing so under State regulations except where
31 in -- where it would now apply to you if this passes.
32 So that would not be -- I don't want to demean or
33 diminish it, but not a lot -- it would be a small
34 amount of folks and we're ready for that.

35

36 MS. CREACHBAUM: Okay. And.....

37

38 MADAME CHAIR PITKA: And if you have a
39 follow-up question go ahead.

40

41 MS. CREACHBAUM: I'm sorry.

42

43 MADAME CHAIR PITKA: No, I said go
44 ahead.

45

46 MS. CREACHBAUM: Oh, okay. It's going
47 to take me a second to formulate this question. If
48 there's any other questions on the floor please proceed
49 and I'll.....

50

0156

1 MADAME CHAIR PITKA: I just have a
2 clarification. So you mentioned that the Troopers
3 would go and seal -- seal bears. Is that the common
4 thing that they do? I'm sorry, I'm from rural Alaska
5 and I can't even get the Troopers out there to
6 investigate crimes. So my concern is that this
7 actually won't have much of a net effect.

8
9 MR. MULLIGAN: Through the Chair. I'm
10 not inferring that they will go and travel, but where
11 their detachments are you can also take it to them, not
12 that they would fly out and do that sort of thing. You
13 have to do -- make it to one of our offices and -- hold
14 on just a second.

15
16 (Pause)

17
18 MR. MULLIGAN: Through the Chair,
19 member Pitka. Just after conferring with my colleague
20 here, you know, it is possible for other people, not
21 State of Alaska employees to get certified to seal
22 hides. We don't have many, but that is an option for
23 folks that they could come to us to get that training.
24 So in places where, you know, communities may not be
25 able to get to an area offices right away, I mean, if
26 someone was willing and could get that training to help
27 the community seal those hides to conduct this
28 practice, it is an option.

29
30 MADAME CHAIR PITKA: Thank you for that
31 clarification. I appreciate it.

32
33 Oh, go ahead.

34
35 MR. LORD: And can that person then
36 issue the certificate of -- for sale as well?

37
38 MR. MULLIGAN: Through the Chair, Mr.
39 Lord. Yes, because they'll be a certified sealing
40 officer.

41
42 MADAME CHAIR PITKA: Okay. So what
43 that would not allow is it would not have -- there
44 would be no CITES certification issued which would mean
45 it could not be sold internationally, but could be sold
46 in Alaska, U.S.?

47
48 (No comments)

49
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0157

1 MADAME CHAIR PITKA: Okay. Okay. Jack
2 Reakoff.

3
4 MR. REAKOFF: Madame Chair, the Area
5 Biologist for Unit 24, Glenn Stout, has told us if
6 bears are taken in Unit 24B where there's a two bear
7 limit the people that harvest bears there could
8 actually -- he would accept them being shipped in, he
9 would pay the freight in and they would pay the freight
10 back, postage one way or the other, to accommodate the
11 sealing practice.

12
13 So just information for the Board on
14 rural sealing.

15
16 MADAME CHAIR PITKA: Thank you for
17 that.

18
19 MS. CREACHBAUM: Madame Chair.

20
21 MADAME CHAIR PITKA: Yes, go ahead,
22 Member Creachbaum.

23
24 MS. CREACHBAUM: So what I -- what --
25 what's kind of bothering me here is connecting the
26 ability to sell the hide of a bear taken by a
27 Federally-qualified subsistence user to a harvest limit
28 when the harvest limit can change. So if we could
29 figure out a process where we could seal the hide
30 locally that would address both the proponent's concern
31 because this poor gentleman has to drive four hours
32 both ways from McCarthy to get a hide sealed, but he'd
33 be able to sell that hide and that wouldn't change
34 across all the units if the harvest limit changed. So
35 the two would be disconnected, right, the ability to
36 sell a legally harvested hide under subsistence
37 regulations would be separate from the hide -- the
38 harvest limit which seems to be cleaner to me, but
39 that's just me.

40
41 (No comments)

42
43 MS. CREACHBAUM: I've stunned you all.

44
45 MADAME CHAIR PITKA: Okay. So if -- do
46 we have further questions from the.....

47
48 Go ahead.

49
50

0158

1 MS. ROGERS: Thank you, Madame Chair.
2 Alissa Nadine Rogers, YKRAC for the record. It just
3 dawned on me if they're going to be selling subsistence
4 caught bears there's a cap on our subsistence amount of
5 -- amount of the subsistence that we could sell. And I
6 think that's like \$500.

7
8 MS. KENNER: Madame Chair.

9
10 MADAME CHAIR PITKA: Yes.

11
12 MS. KENNER: Hi. This is Pippa Kenner
13 for the record. So, Alissa, through the Chair. So
14 you're talking about in Federal regulations there's a
15 cap?

16
17 (No comments)

18
19 MS. KENNER: There isn't a cap in
20 Federal regulations. Concerning customary trade we do
21 have limits on how much fish you can sell in some
22 areas, how much salmon you can sell, but we don't have
23 a regulation limiting how many -- well, if it was legal
24 how many bear hides you could sell.

25
26 MR. MULLIGAN: I'm sorry, Madame Chair.
27 Through the Chair.

28
29 MADAME CHAIR PITKA: Yes.

30
31 MR. MULLIGAN: Madame Chair, I can't --
32 not off the top of my head I have no idea about that
33 cap. Sorry. Yeah, I'm in there too.

34
35 MADAME CHAIR PITKA: Brower.

36
37 MR. FRANTZ: Yeah, Brower for North
38 Slope RAC. So I had kind of a question about the sale,
39 but so there are previously caught bears from prior
40 years that are already tanned, sealed, would that then
41 make that legal to sell previously caught bears, brown
42 bears?

43
44 (Laughter)

45
46 MADAME CHAIR PITKA: I'm not sure.
47 Hold on. By sealed you mean by a sealing officer?

48
49 MR. FRANTZ: Yeah. I mean, it -- it's
50

0159

1 not new to them, they -- they've already been doing
2 this. We've got brown bears and had them sealed --
3 well, you have to have them sealed in order to get them
4 tanned. They won't take it otherwise so you have to
5 have them sealed. So it's not something that's brand
6 new, it's already being done in locations and we got
7 our sealed in Barrow and shipped them off. But that's
8 just a general question because we do have brown bear
9 that are already sealed and tanned but would -- would
10 -- would the older ones before the date of making it
11 legal be legal to sell?

12

13 (No comments)

14

15 MADAME CHAIR PITKA: You stumped
16 everyone. Hold on.

17

18 (Laughter)

19

20 MR. LORD: No, just had to sort of
21 think through it.

22

23 So for sales going, you know, outside
24 of the country you would need the certificate allowing
25 sale from the State, but if the Board clarifies that
26 those older hides could be sold within the United
27 States without that certificate I think it would be
28 pretty clear at that point. We -- I mean, we'd be in
29 good shape to sell those older hides.

30

31 MR. MULLIGAN: Member Frantz through
32 the Chair. Unfortunately I'd have to get one of our
33 attorneys to figure that one out. It's stumped both
34 Mark and I trying to figure that out. It's a great
35 question though, but it would take one of our attorneys
36 figuring it out. And I'm just adding a note and I'm
37 more than happy to track that down. Unfortunately as
38 soon as I can send off an email and if I do get an
39 answer during this meeting I will share it with
40 everybody.

41

42 MADAME CHAIR PITKA: Well, maybe now is
43 a very good time to take a 15 minute break before we
44 get that email and then maybe we'll have an answer or
45 we're all still stumped.

46

47 Oh, 3:30, please.

48

49 (Off record)

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0160

1 (On record)

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(On record)

MADAME CHAIR PITKA: Hi, it's 3:30. So during Board deliberations and discussions I'd really appreciate it if we could keep side conversations to an absolute minimum.

Thank you so much for that.

Okay. So we were at a question to the State and I wasn't sure if we had an answer or not.

MR. MULLIGAN: Thank you, Madame Chair. Just for FYI, the sale is not retroactive for hides that were harvested when a unit, subunit, was only one bear per regulatory year. So it has to be harvested, sealed and certificate of sale given when it is the two bear limit which then triggers the authorization of sale. And just for clarity certificate of sale needs to be asked for at the time also of sealing and just to clarify and I will apologize for the confusion, certificate of sale actually needs to be authorized by ADF&G personnel. It cannot be done by one of our designated sealing officers which means member of the public or even the Troopers. So I apologize for that, just got that clarification and wanted to share it.

MADAME CHAIR PITKA: Thank you so much for that clarification. I appreciate it. And thank you -- whoops.

You had a follow-up.

MR. FRANTZ: Yeah, just now that we have the language here is that something that's going to be implemented with -- you know, if it does pass is that language going to be implemented to where it's visible?

MADAME CHAIR PITKA: Sorry, what do you mean by visible?

MR. FRANTZ: So we weren't able to see the -- like the legalities of what he just explained and none of us knew about it, but now he's given us this explanation. Is this going to be published with the -- if the sale of bear hides does pass is that language going to be or go along with it to where people will actually know instead of having to try to

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1 dig to find this out at a later time?

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MS. HOWARD: Madame Chair, through the Chair to Chair Frantz. I believe for -- as we are pulling transcripts from this to draft the Federal regulation that will go into the final rule we can ensure if it does in fact pass that we include those details within the Federal -- within the final rule and those Federal regulations to help clarify so that it's in one spot. Is that what you're asking?

MR. FRANTZ: Yes, thank you.

MR. REAKOFF: Madame Chair.

MADAME CHAIR PITKA: Yes, go ahead.

MR. REAKOFF: I feel that the final rule should stipulate that those are printed in the handy dandy or in the regulation so that the public knows. And as a matter of fact I would suggest that the State does the same thing, that they actually publish the -- that the request at sealing for the sales certificate is actually -- the public knows they got to actually request it. If that doesn't show up in the State regulation book or the Federal book the public know when the -- oh, I got my bear sale, they said oh, I got a ticket because I didn't have a certificate. The public should know what the -- what the -- that that's part of the process.

Thank you, Madame Chair.

MADAME CHAIR PITKA: Thank you for that.

Member Boario.

MS. BOARIO: Madame Chair, Fish and Wildlife Service. Mr. Mulligan, I'm following up on your comments just a moment ago and making sure I'm following. So I heard you talk about the State offering a certificate of sale from the two bear harvest areas. Is the State willing to consider a certificate of sale from a one bear harvest area or help me understand that?

MR. MULLIGAN: Through the Chair, member Boario. I can't answer that. We -- no one has

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1 come and asked -- posed us to that question to
2 negotiate whether or not we'd be willing to during this
3 whole process.

4

5 MADAME CHAIR PITKA: Yes, go ahead.

6

7 MS. BOARIO: A follow-up, Madame Chair,
8 Fish and Wildlife Service. Mr. Mulligan, but do I hear
9 you saying you don't have a conservation concern. That
10 -- what I heard you say is you would like -- if that
11 was to move forward there should be some kind of
12 negotiation and conversation, but is there something
13 else we should be aware of?

14

15 MR. MULLIGAN: Through the Chair,
16 member Boario. I was assuming that was the
17 conversation whether or not we would be willing to seal
18 and offer the certificate of sale in places where there
19 is a one bear limit. And that's where I was saying
20 we'd have to negotiate on that. And it could be
21 depending on the unit we could have conservation
22 concerns with what we would view as the incentive for
23 sale would cause an increase and we may not be willing
24 to do that. It just would be on a case by case basis I
25 presume. But until I sit down with the folks who
26 conduct that and with wildlife conservation leadership
27 I am hesitant to answer in any sort of certainty to
28 you.

29

30 MS. BOARIO: Thank you.

31

32 MADAME CHAIR PITKA: Fair enough.
33 Thank you very much for the question. I appreciate it.

34

35 Is there any other Board discussion at
36 this time.

37

38 (No comments)

39

40 MADAME CHAIR PITKA: Okay. So we're
41 still at Board discussion with the Liaisons and the
42 Council Chairs.

43

44 Go ahead.

45

46 MR. MULLIGAN: Madame Chair, just
47 because we've been talking about folks knowing what the
48 regs are and just to answer the question of will it be
49 visible. In the State handy dandy on pages 16 and 17

50

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1 contains that information about sealing, but then the
2 use of game which is -- and then right there at the top
3 left when it pertains to brown and grizzly bears. So I
4 just wanted to point that out to the group.

5

6 Thank you.

7

8 MADAME CHAIR PITKA: Thank you for
9 that. I appreciate it.

10

11 MS. BOARIO: Madame Chair, Fish and
12 Wildlife Service. Sorry to ask maybe a stupid
13 question, but I'm just trying to wrap my mind around
14 what like next steps would look like and what
15 negotiations would look like regarding the conver --
16 continuing conversation with the State? Maybe there's
17 no answer, but I'm putting it out there.

18

19 MADAME CHAIR PITKA: I also don't have
20 an answer.

21

22 MS. CREACHBAUM: I can tell you that
23 I'd like to try, very much want to try.

24

25 MADAME CHAIR PITKA: So are we at a
26 place where we can go to a Board motion.

27

28 Member Creachbaum.

29

30 MS. CREACHBAUM: Madame Chair, I move
31 to defer Wildlife Proposal WP24-01 for all regions
32 until the Federal Subsistence Board's summer work
33 session on August 7th and 8th, 2024 in order to allow
34 time to explore issues, options for issuing a permit
35 for sale under the Federal system. If I get a second
36 I'll explain why I intend to vote in support of my
37 motion.

38

39 MADAME CHAIR PITKA: Okay. We're
40 waiting for a second now.

41

42 MR. COHN: Second.

43

44 MADAME CHAIR PITKA: Okay. BLM
45 seconded.

46

47 MS. CREACHBAUM: Thank you, Madame
48 Chair. The Subsistence Regional Advisory Council's
49 recommendations varied greatly on this proposal by
50

0164

1 region. The majority, five of the RACs supported as
2 written and three RACs supported with the OSM
3 modification. Additionally all of the four Subsistence
4 Resource Councils, the Kobuk Valley, Gates of the
5 Arctic, Aniakchak and Wrangell-St. Elias who made
6 recommendations on this proposal supported it as
7 written. In deference to the majority of the RACs and
8 the SRCs supporting this proposal as written, we want
9 to do our due diligence in exploring a path forward.

10

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The NPS supports the sale of brown bear
hides harvested under Federal subsistence regulations
for consumptive use where no difference should be made
between units with varying brown bear harvest limits.
Federal subsistence regulations require that the edible
meat of bears be salvaged for human consumption so the
bear must be hunted for food. If this proposal passes
the hide may then be sold under customary trade
provisions as recognized in Section 803 of ANILCA.
Since consumption of the meat of the bear is required
allowing for sale of bear -- brown bear hides is not
expected to cause an increased harvest or conservation
concern, but will allow for subsistence hunters to
benefit from the sale of the hide under customary trade
provisions.

I want to acknowledge that this request
from the proponent of this proposal, Mr. Rowland, who
lives in a resident zone community of Wrangell-St.
Elias and Preserve in Unit 11 with a one bear harvest
limit and the burden for him to drive four hours to the
nearest sealing office. Making it possible to sell the
hide of the brown bear harvested to fee his family
would offset some of these additional costs that he
incurs.

Deferring action on this proposal until
the Federal Subsistence Board work sessions scheduled
in August will allow time to explore options for
Federal subsistence hunters to obtain a permit for sale
through a Federal agency which if established would
then allow for supporting the proposal as written.

Thank you, Madame Chair.

MADAME CHAIR PITKA: Thank you very
much. I have -- I think we would like a roll call vote
after somebody calls the question.

0165

1 MR. VANORMER: I call the question.

2

3 MADAME CHAIR PITKA: Thank you very

4 much.

5

6 MR. VANORMER: Forest Service.

7

8 MS. HOWARD: Okay. So I will start
9 with the maker of the motion, National Park Service,
10 Sarah Creachbaum.

11

12 MS. CREACHBAUM: National Park Service
13 supports for the reasons stated.

14

15 MS. HOWARD: Thank you. Fish and
16 Wildlife Service, Sarah Boario.

17

18 MS. BOARIO: Fish and Wildlife Service
19 supports for the reasons stated by my colleague from
20 the Park Service and also would during this time
21 between now and August like to suggest that potentially
22 we establish a working group to negotiate with the
23 State. And I don't know if maybe that should have been
24 an amendment to your proposal, but I think we can
25 probably set up a working group regardless. So, yes.

26

27 Thanks.

28

29 MS. HOWARD: Thank you.

30

31 Bureau of Indian Affairs, Jolene John.

32

33 MS. JOHN: BIA supports to defer for
34 reasons stated by the National Park Service.

35

36 MS. HOWARD: Thank you.

37

38 Bureau of Land Management, Steve Cohn.

39

40 MR. COHN: BLM supports deferral of
41 Wildlife Proposals WP24-01 for the reasons stated by my
42 colleague from the National Park Service.

43

44 MS. HOWARD: Thank you.

45

46 USDA Forest Service, Chad Vanormer.

47

48 MR. VANORMER: The Forest Service
49 supports deferring WP24-01 for the reasons cited by my

50

0166

1 colleague at the Park Service.

2

3 MS. HOWARD: Thank you.

4

5 Public member, Charlie Brower.

6

7 MR. BROWER: Support WP24-01.

8

9 MS. HOWARD: Turn your mic on, Charlie.

10

11 MADAME CHAIR PITKA: Charlie, turn your
12 mic on.

13

14 MR. BROWER: Yes.

15

16 MADAME CHAIR PITKA: Turn your mic on.

17

18 MR. BROWER: Oh. Support WP24-01.

19

20 MADAME CHAIR PITKA: To defer?

21

22 MR. BROWER: To defer. Excuse me.

23

24 MS. HOWARD: Thank you, Charlie.

25

26 And public member Brower, you have the
27 proxy vote for Tony Christianson?

28

29 MR. BROWER: Support defer.

30

31 MS. HOWARD: Thank you.

32

33 And public member and Chair, Rhonda
34 Pitka.

35

36 MADAME CHAIR PITKA: I -- I support the
37 deferral. Normally I would oppose a deferral just
38 because I think that we've taken a lot of time, but --
39 but I think this gives us time to form a working group
40 and come to negotiations with the State of Alaska so we
41 have a more collaborative process.

42

43 Thank you.

44

45 MS. HOWARD: Thank you, Madame Chair.
46 Motion to defer the decision to the summer work session
47 of the Federal Subsistence Board passes unanimously.

48

49 MADAME CHAIR PITKA: Thank you so much.

50

0167

1 Now we are on to WP24-02/03, Unit 1C goats.

2

3

4 MR. ROBERTS: Good afternoon, members
5 of the Board, Council Chairs. My name is Jason
6 Roberts, I'm an Anthropologist for OSM. I'll be
7 presenting a summary of the analysis for Wildlife
8 Proposals WP24-02 and 03. These proposals were
9 analyzed together because they're similar. The
10 analysis for these proposals begins on Page 448 of your
11 meeting book.

11

12

13 Proposal WP24-02 was submitted by
14 Nicholas Orr of Juneau requesting to extend the
15 mountain goat season in Unit 1C within the drainages of
16 Chilkat Range south of the south bank of the Endicott
17 River from October 1st through November 30th to July
18 24th through December 31st.

18

19

20 Proposal 24-03 was submitted by the
21 Southeast Council requesting to extend the mountain
22 goat season within the same area of Unit 1C to August
23 1st through November 30th and to close mountain goat
24 hunting in this area to non-Federally-qualified users
25 from August 1st through August 31st.

25

26

27 The proponents of both proposals state
28 that extending the Federal season for mountain goat
29 would provide a more meaningful priority for Federally-
30 qualified subsistence users in the proposal area. The
31 proponents of WP24-03 note that the proposal area was
32 the site of a timber sale in the 1970s which resulted
33 in the creation of a docking facility and logging roads
34 that provide pretty easy access to alpine zones,
35 however there are only a few boats to dock in this area
36 safely and this has led to increased competition for
37 access. People also set up camps which block the roads
38 and restrict access. The proponents note that a
39 priority opportunity to hunt goats in the proposal area
40 during the month of August without competition from
41 non-Federally-qualified users is important because the
42 State moose season opens on September 15th and the area
43 gets more crowded after this time.

43

44

45 Looking at the regulatory history, the
46 Federal Subsistence Board adopted the State's customary
47 and traditional use determinations for goats in Unit 1C
48 once the Federal program began. Since this time the
49 customary and traditional use determination for goats
50 in Unit 1C has been expanded to include all rural

50

1 residents of units 1 through 5 in keeping with the
2 Southeast Council's recently stated preference to
3 recognize customary and traditional uses of subsistence
4 resources more inclusively.

5
6 The Federal season in the proposal area
7 currently runs from October 1st through November 30th
8 and it appears that these season dates have not changed
9 for some time. At their January, 2023 meeting the
10 Alaska Board of Game adopted proposal 31 to extend the
11 resident goat season in the southern end of the Chilkat
12 Range in Unit 1C from September 1st through November
13 30th to August 1st through November 30th.

14
15 Looking at the general harvest history
16 throughout Unit 1C, the average reported yearly
17 mountain goat harvest for all users throughout Unit 1C
18 was 43 for the most recently published five year
19 reporting period between 2013 and 2017. This yearly
20 average was higher than that recorded for the previous
21 reporting period. The average annual number of goat
22 hunters throughout Unit 1C was also higher during the
23 most recent -- most recently reported hunting period.
24 The success rate of nonresidents hunters has been
25 substantially higher than that of resident hunters in
26 Unit 1C in recent years possibly because nonresident
27 hunters are required to hire a hunting guide or hunt
28 with a resident Alaskan relative. In general goat
29 harvest in Unit 1C increases across the course of the
30 season with the greatest amount of harvest taking place
31 generally in November. Boating was the most common
32 transportation method used to reach goat hunting
33 locations in Unit 1C from 2013 to 2017. However as the
34 Southeast Council member from Gustavus explained the
35 primary use of boats to reach favored hunting locations
36 in the proposal area can lead to user conflict and
37 competition for access in places with limited spots for
38 safe anchorage.

39
40 It's important to note though that the
41 differences in reported harvest and success rates for
42 Federally-qualified users, non-Federally-qualified and
43 nonresidents were not as substantial when looking
44 specifically at the proposal area from 2003 to 2022.
45 Because of issues of timing and accessibility later in
46 the season the proposal area does not seem to be as
47 popular of a goat hunting location as some other hunt
48 areas in Unit 1C. Stormy weather and poor anchorage
49 tends to restrict accessibility here during the latter
50

0169

1 months of the season when snow typically drives goats
2 down to lower, more easily reachable locations.
3 Therefore it appears that a lot of the goat hunting
4 that takes place here tends to occur at higher
5 elevations earlier in the season. As the Southeast
6 Council member from Gustavus explained hunting goats in
7 the proposal area in August is easier. There's better
8 weather, you don't have to worry about storms as much.
9 Similarly the proponents of Board of Game proposal 31
10 also noted this issue as part of their justification
11 for extending the State season in this area. However
12 the issue of weather and accessibility restricting goat
13 hunting opportunities later in the season could also be
14 heightening issues of competition and user conflict
15 earlier in the season in an area with limited points of
16 anchorage. It may also limit the use of the proposal
17 area for goat hunting for all user types.

18
19 Though hunting effort and harvest did
20 vary from year to year an average of about three and a
21 half Federally-qualified users and seven non-Federally-
22 qualified users reported hunting each year in the
23 proposal area from 2003 to 2022. Reporting hunted --
24 reported hunting effort and harvest in the area by
25 nonresidents was minimal. Federally-qualified users
26 reported harvesting about one goat per year, non-
27 Federally-qualified users harvested roughly two goats
28 per year and nonresidents harvested less than one goat
29 per year in the proposal area during this time. The
30 average success rates of Federally-qualified and non-
31 Federally-qualified users were roughly the same while
32 nonresidents enjoyed a slightly better success rate.
33 The highest number of Federally-qualified users hunting
34 goats in the proposal area during this time came from
35 Hoonah, Gustavus and Sitka. Most of the non-Federally-
36 qualified users came from Juneau.

37
38 The OSM conclusion is to support WP24-
39 02 with modification to extend the season in the
40 proposal area to run from July 15th through December
41 31st and to oppose WP24-03.

42
43 The justification is that extending the
44 Federal season for mountain goats on the Federal public
45 lands within the drainage -- within the proposal area
46 to this time would provide a more meaningful preference
47 for Federally-qualified users. The Federal subsistence
48 season in the area is currently only open from October
49 1st through November 30th while the State season in the
50

0170

1 same area was recently extended to August 1st through
2 November 30th. The OSM modified version of WP24-02
3 would provide Federally-qualified users with an
4 extended season to harvest goats from the area as well
5 as two windows to hunt goats without potential
6 competition from Federally-qualified [sic] users.
7 Extending the preferential opening to Federally-
8 qualified users into the month of July may be
9 particularly beneficial considering the difficulties
10 posed by stormy weather later in the season. Adopting
11 this modified version of WP24-02 would also provide a
12 meaningful subsistence preference without enacting the
13 closure to non-Federally-qualified users during any
14 period of the current State season. Based on the data
15 we could find WP24 does not appear to -- WP24-03 does
16 not appear to meet the requirements for closure to non-
17 Federally-qualified users.

18

19 That's the end of my presentation and
20 I'm here to answer any questions you might have.

21

22 MADAME CHAIR PITKA: Okay. So at this
23 time Board member questions for the analyst.

24

25 (No comments)

26

27 MADAME CHAIR PITKA: Okay. I'm not
28 seeing any. Thank you for that.

29

30 So right now we'd like the summary of
31 written public comments.

32

33 MR. ROBERTS: OSM received a total of
34 four written public comments on this proposal during
35 the initial comment period. I think we've received a
36 couple that should have been passed around to you
37 during this meeting. These comments that we initially
38 received can be found starting on Page 484 of your
39 meeting book. One public comment was submitted in
40 opposition to WP 24-02. The writer of this comment did
41 not provide a specific reason for opposing the
42 proposal. Three public comments were submitted in
43 opposition to WP24-03. These commenters noted that
44 there's currently no conservation concern to justify a
45 closure to non-Federally-qualified users and that
46 competition alone is not a valid reason to restrict
47 opportunities for non-Federally-qualified users. They
48 also noted that recent harvest quotas have not been met
49 in the proposal area and that people living in places

50

0171

1 like Juneau should also have the opportunity to hunt to
2 meet their needs in a place that is relatively close
3 by.

4

5 MADAME CHAIR PITKA: Thank you very
6 much for that. I appreciate it.

7

8 So now we are at the summary of tribal
9 and ANCSA corporation consultation.

10

11 MR. LIND: Madame Chair, Orville Lind,
12 Native Liaison for OSM. During the consultation
13 sessions held on November 14th and 16th we did not have
14 any comments or questions on WP24-02/03.

15

16 Thank you, Madame Chair.

17

18 MADAME CHAIR PITKA: Thank you for
19 that. Now we will go into tribal and Native
20 organization testimony. Is there anybody present who's
21 going to be -- or online to testify.

22

23 (No comments)

24

25 MADAME CHAIR PITKA: If not can we have
26 Advisory Group testimony, the State ACs, SRCs, working
27 groups.

28

29 (No comments)

30

31 MADAME CHAIR PITKA: Okay. So seeing
32 none I'd like to open the floor to public testimony.
33 And we have one card from Mark Richards from the
34 Resident Hunters of Alaska.

35

36 Thank you, Mr. Richards.

37

38 MR. RICHARDS: Thank you, Madame Chair,
39 members of the Board. For the record my name is Mark
40 Richards, I'm representing Resident Hunters of Alaska.
41 As stated earlier we were the proponent of proposal 31
42 last year at the Board of Game meeting to extend the
43 season to start on August 1st. Main reason was that
44 weather conditions were poor later in the season and
45 this would allow easier access and docking. I have
46 seen that the Southeast Regional Advisory Council has
47 voted to take no action based on it not being a
48 criteria for a closure and that is our position as
49 well.

50

0172

1 Thank you.

2

3 MADAME CHAIR PITKA: Thank you very
4 much. I appreciate that.

5

6 Okay. Is there any other public
7 testimony, is there anything online.

8

9 Okay. We have one person online.

10

11 MR. DECKER: This is Zach Decker. I
12 still have my hand raised. Am I on call?

13

14 MADAME CHAIR PITKA: Yes. Yes, you
15 are. Thank you, Zach.

16

17 MR. DECKER: Thank you. Madame Chair,
18 through the Board. I'd like to address WP24-02 and 03.
19 I support the ADF&G comments on the area. I think that
20 a modification in matching the State season dates for
21 Federally-qualified users should be appropriate. But
22 extending the hunting season into July, is a critical
23 time for young goats and nannies and kids. And that
24 it's critical habitat to be in the area pushing them
25 around, hunting during that time. And so I think
26 matching the season with the State season should be
27 adequate with possible December, but right now I think
28 with the recent change in extending the season into
29 August that it should be matched. I don't feel that
30 it's appropriate to extend the season into July for
31 those reasons.

32

33 So I appreciate your time and -- on
34 this.

35

36 MADAME CHAIR PITKA: Thank you for your
37 testimony. And thank you again for calling in for this
38 proposal. I appreciate it.

39

40 MR. DECKER: Thank you.

41

42 MADAME CHAIR PITKA: And it looks like
43 we have Madeline Demaske online.

44

45 (No comments)

46

47 MS. LAVINE: Madeline, if -- we see
48 your hand is raised. And we can't hear you right now.
49 You can press star, six to unmute your line.

50

0173

1 (No comments)

2

3 MS. LAVINE: Madame Chair, Madeline
4 cannot get her Teams platform to unmute itself.

5

6 Madeline, you might have better luck if
7 you call in directly.

8

9 (No comments)

10

11 MADAME CHAIR PITKA: Okay. So she'll
12 be calling in in a moment.

13

14 Okay. Is there anybody else who's
15 going to testify until she gets on?

16

17 (No comments)

18

19 MADAME CHAIR PITKA: Okay. So until
20 she gets queued up can I get the Regional Advisory
21 Council recommendation, please.

22

23 Thank you very much.

24

25 Mr. Hernandez.

26

27 MR. HERNANDEZ: Thank you, Madame
28 Chair. Don Hernandez for the Southeast RAC.
29 Concerning the two proposals, the Council voted to
30 support proposal WP24-02 with the OSM modification.
31 This proposal would extend the Federal season into
32 July, from July 15th and extend it into December,
33 December 31st. And our justification was that we felt
34 that extending the seasons would provide a meaningful
35 priority for Federally-qualified users without
36 unnecessarily restricting non-Federally-qualified
37 users. And we took no action on 24-03, that was a
38 proposal that proposed a closure for non-Federally-
39 qualified. And we did feel -- we felt that this
40 proposal did not meet the requirements for a closure of
41 harvest to non-Federally-qualified users.

42

43 Thank you.

44

45 MADAME CHAIR PITKA: Thank you very
46 much for that. Okay. We're we able to get Madeline
47 online?

48

49 MS. LAVINE: She says she's called in

50

0174

1 and is ready.

2

3 Madeline, please press star, six to
4 unmute yourself.

5

6 (No comments)

7

8 MS. LAVINE: And we still can't hear
9 you.

10

11 MADAME CHAIR PITKA: Well, hopefully we
12 can get that ironed out in a few moments, but Alaska
13 Department of Fish and Game comments, State Liaison.

14

15 MR. MULLIGAN: Thank you, Madame Chair.
16 For the record the Alaska Department of Fish and Game
17 will provide I would say more extensive comments on 03,
18 but in regards to 02 would feel a better option to just
19 align State and Federal seasons. As you heard briefly
20 the time period to July 15th is considered a critical
21 period for nannies and their kids and disturbance of
22 goats is not recommended, but also as a statement from
23 the Northern Wild Sheep and Goat Council which
24 represents multiple agencies from across the country on
25 goat management, it is expected that there would be
26 some negative impacts if goats were disturbed beyond
27 this July 15th deadline as well.

28

29 Speaking to WP24-03, we oppose this
30 proposal which would exclude non-Federally-qualified
31 users from hunting on Federal public land in the RG15
32 hunt area during the month of August. We contend that
33 the proposed closure is not warranted under Title VIII
34 of ANILCA where there is neither a conservation concern
35 or a concern for the continued subsistence uses. Based
36 on ADF&G's analysis of hunter participation, harvest
37 and hunt management over the last 20 years none of
38 these reasons apply. As said there's no conservation
39 concern for mountain goats in this RG15 hunt area. The
40 hunt has not been closed by emergency order in nearly
41 20 years and the State season was recently expanded to
42 offer an additional month of opportunity for Alaskan
43 resident hunters. Even if the opening date for the
44 Federal season is changed to August 1st the proposal
45 would also close the entire RG15 hunt area where --
46 when Federally-qualified users almost never use the
47 northern two-thirds of the hunt area. Even in the
48 southern portion no restrictions on non-Federally-
49 qualified users are needed to continue subsistence use

50

0175

1 of goats. Records of this permit issued and mandatory
2 hunt report clearly demonstrate that the observed
3 declining goat hunting and harvest by Federally-
4 qualified users are resulting from a declining interest
5 in this hunt.

6
7 Let's see. I would say one thing just
8 to reiterate before I move on is that when we say that
9 we haven't had to issue an emergency closure in the
10 last 20 years as many of you know that goats are
11 managed on a point system which means that we have a
12 harvestable surplus with X amount of points, but the
13 taking of goats every season has not hit that limit and
14 so we have not needed to have a reason to close that
15 hunt by emergency order.

16
17 One thing that -- well, we'll just
18 point out is that we just had our first season with the
19 expanded hunt season for Alaska residents and we took a
20 look at who applied for those permits and there was no
21 Federally-qualified users who had applied for that
22 permit.

23
24 Thank you, Madame Chair.

25
26 MADAME CHAIR PITKA: Thank you for your
27 comments. I appreciate it.

28
29 Back to Madeline. Is she able to get
30 on?

31
32 MS. LAVINE: Madeline is on the line,
33 but she seems to have a challenge unmuting her phone.

34
35 Madeline, try star, six and say hello.
36 And then try it again. And there -- your phone itself
37 may actually have a mute and unmute option which could
38 help as well.

39
40 (No comments)

41
42 MS. LAVINE: I'm so sorry that we can't
43 make this work for you. We do have someone else on the
44 line who has their hand raised. And while we're
45 waiting for Madeline maybe to work out some of her --
46 the challenges, Nicholas Orr is on the line to provide
47 testimony.

48
49 MADAME CHAIR PITKA: Okay. Nicholas
50

0176

1 Orr, please go ahead.

2

3 (No comments)

4

5 MS. LAVINE: And, Nicholas, you are --
6 seem to be joining through Teams.

7

8 MR. ORR: Are you there?

9

10 MS. LAVINE: Yep.

11

12 MADAME CHAIR PITKA: Yes, please go
13 ahead.

14

15 MR. ORR: So I also was having problems
16 with the phone, like I couldn't raise my hand or unmute
17 myself. I'm just like putting that out there. So I
18 had to -- I -- now I went through Teams and now I can
19 get in.

20

21 Anyway I wanted to say that WP24-02 was
22 my proposal. It's kind of in response to Wildlife
23 Proposal 24-03 because I felt there was a compromise
24 that could be made where we didn't disadvantage non-
25 Federally-qualified users for apparent -- no like real
26 reason given that there's like no significant harvest
27 in the area.

28

29 Just as a way of introduction I'm on
30 the Juneau-Douglas Advisory Committee as well as a
31 board member of Territorial Sportsmen, but I did not
32 represent those organizations when I made this
33 proposal, but that was my thoughts when I made it. And
34 I just want to say I support the OSM modification.

35

36 Thank you.

37

38 MADAME CHAIR PITKA: Thank you very
39 much, Mr. Orr. Okay. One more time for Madeline?

40

41 (No comments)

42

43 MADAME CHAIR PITKA: Poor Madeline.
44 Okay. That's fine. Maybe she can submit written
45 comments.

46

47 So we are the InterAgency Staff
48 Committee comments. The ISC Chair, please.

49

50

0177

1 Thank you.

2

3

MS. LAVINE: Thank you, Madame Chair
4 and members of the Board. The ISC provided their
5 standard comment and I'm going to read it to you this
6 one time and in the future when they have provided
7 their standard comment I'll just say standard comment.
8 But when I do say standard comment this is what I mean.

9

10 The InterAgency Staff Committee found
11 the analysis to be a thorough and accurate evaluation
12 of the proposal and it provides sufficient basis for
13 the Regional Advisory Council recommendation and the
14 Federal Subsistence Board action on this proposal.

15

16 Thank you, Madame Chair.

17

18 MADAME CHAIR PITKA: Thank you very
19 much. I appreciate that.

20

21 Now we are at Board discussion with
22 Council Chairs and State Liaison.

23

24 Any questions from Board members right
25 now.

26

27 (No comments)

28

29 MADAME CHAIR PITKA: Okay. Yes, go
30 ahead, member Boario.

31

32 MS. BOARIO: Yeah, Madame Chair, Mr.
33 Mulligan. I was just looking up and I see in the NWSCG
34 statement the no disturbance between May 1 and July
35 15th that you commented on, but in your comments you
36 also said and beyond the July 15 date. And but the
37 State opens August 1 and there's obviously not much
38 time difference between -- I mean, there's not a ton of
39 time between July 15 and August 1. Is there really --
40 how much of a significant difference is that?

41

42 MR. MULLIGAN: Through the Chair,
43 member Boario. After conferring with my colleague here
44 who's the Regional Supervisor down there, when it comes
45 to young of the year, kids, two weeks growth is a big
46 difference and a big impact on when folks can disturb
47 them.

48

49 MS. BOARIO: Madame -- Madame Chair,

50

0178

1 follow-up question. You guys have.....

2

3 MADAME CHAIR PITKA: Yes.

4

5 MS. BOARIO:I guess the
6 additional research to this area on that sounds like
7 maybe that's not in our report?

8

9 MR. MULLIGAN: Not specific to that
10 area, but when we look at I would say the growth in --
11 how do I put that, just reactions to disturbance for
12 those young of the year with nanny -- or nannies with
13 kids, yeah, it's -- I mean, we see that go down
14 exponentially and I think I -- it's safe to say that,
15 you know, when the Board picked the August 1st that was
16 probably up to the line that we were comfortable with
17 or else they probably would have given more time, but
18 that was where we were starting to get uncomfortable
19 and hence why we recommended that time frame and we're
20 okay with it.

21

22 MS. BOARIO: Madame Chair, and I keep
23 forgetting.....

24

25 MADAME CHAIR PITKA: Yes.

26

27 MS. BOARIO:to say Fish and
28 Wildlife Service. Another follow-up. Is -- can
29 someone remind me is it legal to hunt a nanny with a
30 kid?

31

32 MR. MULLIGAN: Through the Chair.

33

34 MR. SCHUMACHER: Through the Chair to
35 member Boario. It is not legal to harvest nannies with
36 kids however disturbing nannies with kids may be an
37 inevitable consequence of hunting in the area.

38

39 MS. BOARIO: Thank you.

40

41 MADAME CHAIR PITKA: Thank you. I'm
42 sorry, I didn't get your name for the record. My
43 apologies.

44

45 MR. SCHUMACHER: Oh, excuse me. For
46 the record my name is Tom Schumacher. I'm the Regional
47 Supervisor for the Wildlife Conservation Division in
48 southeast Alaska.

49

50

0179

1 MADAME CHAIR PITKA: Thank you so much.

2

3

Mr. Hernandez, Southeast RAC.

4

5

MR. HERNANDEZ: Yeah, thank you. Maybe another question for the State. You mentioned your point system. Is part of the function of the point system to protect the harvest of -- say if you were to get a -- take a nanny goat in the season does that affect the point system and possibly trigger a early closure, is that how it works?

10

11

12

13

MR. MULLIGAN: Through the Chair, member or Southeast RAC member Hernandez. Yes, as you probably know nannies will give you double the points. So one point for male, two for female. And so you would reach your cap faster if you had a predominant or if hunters took more nannies and so you would reach that. But, you know, we have stuff online, I know in some areas we're -- we have developed education materials to identify males versus females to try to reduce that.

22

23

24

MR. HERNANDEZ: Okay. Thank you, Madame Chair. Yes, I was -- I was aware of the point system, I just hadn't heard previously about the disturbance of the nannies with kids during the hunting season. That's kind of new information for me.

28

29

30

Thank you.

31

32

MADAME CHAIR PITKA: Thank you very much. Did we have another written comment. Okay. Sorry. We'll wait for this discussion to wrap up and then go to the public comment.

35

36

37

I thought I saw somebody's hand up over here.

38

39

40

(No comments)

41

42

MADAME CHAIR PITKA: Okay. It looks like the discussion has wrapped up. Now we would like to go back to Madeline's comment. And thank Madeline for her persistence.

44

45

46

47

MS. LAVINE: Thank you, Madame Chair. This is Robbin LaVine. I'll read Madeline's comment to you and the Board and for the record.

48

49

50

0180

1 She says thank you, Madame Chair.
2 Hello. For the record my name is Madeline Demaske and
3 I am speaking on behalf of Safari Club International.
4 I want to thank you for the opportunity to comment in
5 opposition to Wildlife Proposal 24-02/03.

6
7 Safari Club opposes this proposal for
8 the reasons set forth by the Alaska Department of Fish
9 and Game and because the Federal Subsistence Board only
10 has authority to close Federal public lands to hunting.
11 Extending a season beyond the State season length
12 overreaches the subsistence priority set forth in
13 Alaska National Interest Lands Conservation Act. Not
14 only does the proposal lack State and Federal support,
15 but it runs counter to the directives set out in ANILCA
16 and the Federal Subsistence Board's implementing
17 regulations. The proponents have failed to show how
18 the proposal is necessary to conserve the mountain goat
19 population or for the continuation of subsistence use.

20
21
22 The Board should reject this proposal
23 because it requests relief outside the subsistence
24 priority established in ANILCA. ANILCA Section 815.3
25 allows the Board to close Federal public lands to
26 nonsubsistence hunting only when necessary for the
27 conservation of healthy populations of fish and
28 wildlife or to continue subsistence uses of such
29 populations. ANILCA does not authorize closure due to
30 perceived competition. Neither of these limited
31 justifications exist on the facts as presented. There
32 is no conservation concern for the mountain goat
33 population in Unit 1C and none of the harvest data
34 suggest Federally-qualified users are having any issues
35 harvesting mountain goats.

36
37 Thank you again for the opportunity to
38 comment on this important proposal. And we urge you to
39 reject the proposal to extend the mountain goat season
40 in Unit 1C in Wildlife Proposal 24-02/03.

41
42 MADAME CHAIR PITKA: Thank you very
43 much. And thank you very much, Madeline.

44
45 I'd like a short break right now.
46 Okay. Ten minutes, but I'm seeing five minutes. Okay.
47 Five minutes and then we'll come back. 4:25, so seven
48 minutes. We'll be compromised.

49
50

0181

1 (Off record)

2

3 (On record)

4

5 MADAME CHAIR PITKA: Okay. So break
6 has been over. At this time we were at Board motion,
7 discussion and action. So I would like to have a Board
8 motion at this time. Sorry. For WP24-02 and 03.

9

10 MR. VANORMER: All right. Madame
11 Chair, I'd like to make a motion.

12

13 MADAME CHAIR PITKA: Yes, please.

14

15 MR. VANORMER: All right. Madame
16 Chair, this is the Forest Service, Chad Vanormer. I'd
17 like to make the motion. And I guess I move to adopt
18 WP24-02 with modification to extend the Federal season
19 for goat hunting in the proposal area to July 24th to
20 December 31st. And I recognize this isn't what the RAC
21 asked for necessarily, but following I'm going to also
22 make a motion that we take no action of WP24-03. And
23 I'll explain why I intend to support my motion.

24

25 MR. BROWER: Second.

26

27 (Teleconference interference -
28 participants not muted)

29

30 MADAME CHAIR PITKA: Okay. Can you
31 please mute your line if you're on the phone. Now
32 we're unmuted.

33

34 Okay. I'm sorry, please -- please
35 proceed.

36

37 MR. VANORMER: All right. Thank you,
38 Madame Chair. The Forest Service supports WP24-02 with
39 the OSM or with the modification to extend the season
40 for goat hunting to July 24th through December 31st and
41 continue to take no action on WP24-03.

42

43 We feel like this extended season would
44 provide additional opportunity to Federally-qualified
45 subsistence users to help meet their subsistence needs
46 and provide a more meaningful priority. I acknowledge
47 too that the Council recommended that we open the
48 season on July 15th, but listening to some of the
49 conservation concerns expressed by the State and others
50

0182

1 we wanted to find a compromise and shorten that a
2 little bit, but still provide a meaningful preference
3 for Federally-qualified users in the area.
4 And so this proposal would not restrict non-Federally-
5 qualified users is how we feel.

6
7 Thank you.

8
9 MADAME CHAIR PITKA: Thank you very
10 much. Okay. So we're under discussion, Board
11 discussion at this time.

12
13 MR. ROBERTS: No, I was just going to
14 make a point that that would be adopting the motion as
15 submitted, the proposal as submitted, WP24-02.

16
17 MR. VANORMER: Thank you.

18
19 MADAME CHAIR PITKA: Excellent point.
20 Thank you very much.

21
22 MADAME CHAIR PITKA: So would you like
23 to amend your motion to say as originally submitted.

24
25 MR. VANORMER: I amend my motion to
26 adopt 24 -- WP24-02 as originally submitted.

27
28 MADAME CHAIR PITKA: Does the second on
29 the amendment concur.

30
31 MR. BROWER: I concur. Second.

32
33 MADAME CHAIR PITKA: Thank you very
34 much, Mr. Brower. Okay. Now we are under discussion.

35
36 (No comments)

37
38 MADAME CHAIR PITKA: If not did I hear
39 somebody say question.

40
41 MR. BROWER: Madame Chair, just a
42 question. So we'll do -- do one at a time or both,
43 one.....

44
45 MADAME CHAIR PITKA: Both.

46
47 MR. BROWER:we support, one with
48 no action taken?

49
50

0183

1 MADAME CHAIR PITKA: Yes.

2

3 MR. BROWER: Question.

4

5 MADAME CHAIR PITKA: I did hear
6 question. Okay. Can we have a roll call vote, please.

7

8 MS. HOWARD: Certainly, Madame Chair.

9

10 So we'll start with the maker of the
11 motion. USDA Forest Service, Chad Vanormer.

12

13 MR. VANORMER: I support.

14

15 MS. HOWARD: Bureau of Indian Affairs,
16 Jolene John.

17

18 MS. JOHN: Bureau of Indian Affairs
19 supports and concurs with the justification offered by
20 the U.S. Forest Service just a moment ago.

21

22 MS. HOWARD: Thank you.

23

24 Bureau of Land Management, Steve Cohn.

25

26 MR. COHN: BLM moves to adopt WP24-02
27 to extend the Federal goat season in the proposal area
28 to July 24th to December 31 and take no action on WP24-
29 03 based on the rationale provided by the Forest
30 Service.

31

32 MS. HOWARD: Thank you.

33

34 Thank you. Fish and Wildlife Service,
35 Sara Boario.

36

37 MS. BOARIO: Fish and Wildlife Service
38 supports and concurs with the justification offered by
39 my colleague at the Forest Service.

40

41 MS. HOWARD: Thank you.

42

43 National Park Service, Sarah
44 Creachbaum.

45

46 MS. CREACHBAUM: National Park Service
47 supports with the justification provided by my
48 colleague at the Forest Service.

49

50

0184

1 Thank you.

2

3 MS. HOWARD: Thank you.

4

5 Public member, Charlie Brower.

6

7 MR. BROWER: Support.

8

9 MS. HOWARD: Thank you.

10

11 And, member Brower, you have the proxy
12 for Anthony Christianson?

13

14 MR. BROWER: Support.

15

16 MS. HOWARD: Thank you.

17

18 And public member and Chair Pitka.

19

20 MADAME CHAIR PITKA: Yes, I support.

21 Thank you.

22

23 MS. HOWARD: Thank you. Madame Chair,
24 motion to adopt WP24-02 as submitted and take no action
25 on WP24-03 passes unanimously.

26

27 MADAME CHAIR PITKA: Thank you very
28 much. So at this time because we're getting late in
29 the -- in the day and actually thought that would be a
30 little bit further than we are, I'd like to begin with
31 24-04, Unit 4 deer with the analysis. And then we'll
32 get as far as we can get.

33

34 MR. ROBERTS: Okay. Hello again,
35 Madame Chair, members of the Board, Council Chairs. My
36 name is Jason Roberts, I'm an Anthropologist at OSM.
37 And I'll be presenting a summary of the analysis for
38 Wildlife Proposal 24-04. The analysis for this
39 proposals begins on Page 489 of your meeting book. And
40 I apologize in advance, this one's a little more
41 detailed than normal.

42

43 Proposal 24-04 was submitted by the
44 Southeast Council. The proponents are requesting to
45 close the Federal public lands on Admiralty Island
46 draining into Chatham Strait south of the Thayer Creek
47 drainage, but excluding the Hasselborg Lake and
48 Hasselborg Creek drainages to non-Federally-qualified
49 users from November 1st through the 15th. This
50

1 proposed closure area corresponds approximately to
2 wildlife analysis areas 4041, 4042 and 4055. And you
3 should see that in Figures 1 and 2 on Page 494 and 495
4 of your meeting book.

5
6 The proponents note that they submitted
7 24-04 to establish a meaningful preference for the
8 continuation of subsistence uses of deer by Federally-
9 qualified users in the Angoon area. Angoon residents
10 depend on deer as a key component of their subsistence
11 way of life, however the proponents assert that
12 residents in the area have been experiencing
13 difficulties harvesting enough deer to meet their
14 subsistence needs because of increasing competition and
15 user conflict with non-Federally-qualified users. The
16 proponents explain that non-Federally-qualified users
17 anchor boats in small bays, often inhibiting access to
18 subsistence users' primary hunting effort -- areas.
19 The proponents further note that high fuel costs,
20 depressed local economies, small boats and inclement
21 weather are all impacting the ability of Angoon
22 residents to meet their subsistence needs. Angoon
23 residents cannot afford to have unsuccessful deer hunts
24 or travel far from their community to hunt. And the
25 proponents note that non-Federally-qualified users
26 exacerbate these concerns by obstructing access,
27 competing for deer and potentially altering deer
28 behavior all of which decrease the chances of
29 successful subsistence hunts.

30
31 Looking at the regulatory history
32 except for a two year period in the early '90s the
33 Federal subsistence season for deer in Unit 4 has run
34 from August 1st through January 31st with a harvest
35 limit of six deer. However harvest of antlerless deer
36 has only been permitted from September 15th to January
37 31st. Temporary changes to season dates and harvest
38 limit reductions have occurred from time to time over
39 the years typically in response to deep snow winters
40 resulting in increased deer overwinter mortality.
41 Since 1992 the deer -- State deer season in Unit 4
42 remainder has run from August 1st through December 31st
43 with the harvest of antlerless deer only permitted from
44 September 15th through December 31st. In 2019 the
45 Board of Game adopted Proposal 18 increasing the State
46 harvest limit from four to six deer in Unit 4
47 remainder. In 2022 the Southeast Council submitted
48 proposal WP22-07 requesting for a closure of Federal
49 public lands on Admiralty Island to deer hunting by
50

1 non-Federally-qualified users running from September
2 15th through November 30th. This proposal was
3 motivated by conservation concerns for the local deer
4 population. At its April, 2022 meeting the Board
5 deferred this proposal and two other Unit 4 deer
6 proposals requesting the various user groups in the
7 area work together to create more mutually acceptable
8 solutions to these issues. A public meeting was
9 subsequently held regarding these issues.

10

11 The Southeast Council modified its
12 recommendations for WP22-07 following the public
13 meeting and at its fall, 2022 meeting the Council
14 supported WP22-07 with modification to reduce the
15 proposal area to roughly half its original size and
16 change the originally proposed closure to a reduced
17 harvest limit of two male deer for non-Federally-
18 qualified users within the remaining proposal area.
19 This modification was recommended to focus the proposal
20 on the area most utilized by Federally-qualified users
21 and reduce potential impact on non-Federally-qualified
22 users. WP22-07 was subsequently rejected by the Board
23 at its February, 2023 regulatory meeting. The stated
24 justification was that the available data on deer
25 populations in Unit 4 did not meet the criteria
26 required to close land or implement harvest
27 restrictions for the purposes of conservation. However
28 the Board member from the Bureau of Indian Affairs
29 dissented on the basis that local knowledge had been
30 provided through the regulatory process indicating that
31 Federally-qualified users were having difficulty
32 harvesting sufficient deer.

33

34 The Board of Game considered State
35 proposal 10 and 11 at their January, 2023 southeast
36 region regulatory meeting. These proposals requested
37 reducing the harvest limit for residents and
38 nonresidents to four deer in Unit 4 remainder. The
39 proponents for both proposals listed the possible
40 closure of Federal lands to deer hunting by non-
41 Federally-qualified users as key factors in submitting
42 their proposals. Both proponents suggested that a
43 harvest limit reduction would protect deer populations,
44 help reduce user conflicts and avoid a Federal public
45 lands closure. The Board of Game adopted proposal 10
46 with modification to reduce the nonresident harvest
47 limit throughout all of Unit 4 to two male deer. The
48 resident harvest limit remained six deer.

49

50

1 The current proposal, WP24-02 -- 04,
2 I'm sorry, is similar to the previous proposal 22-07 in
3 that it requests a closure to deer hunting by non-
4 Federally-qualified users on a portion of Admiralty
5 Island. However the closure requested under the
6 current proposal is about half the size and nine weeks
7 shorter in length than the closure originally requested
8 under 22-07. Further as stated in the discussion 24-04
9 is motivated by concerns that high levels of
10 competition from non-local hunters in the proposal area
11 are posing a threat to the continuation of subsistence
12 for local Federally-qualified users. At their fall,
13 2023 meeting the Southeast Council voted to support 24-
14 04 with modification to remove wildlife analysis area
15 4041 from the proposed closure area and reduce the
16 proposed closure period by five days to November 1
17 through the 10th.

18
19 So subsistence -- looking at
20 subsistence practices in the area deer have been a key
21 resource utilized by Angoon community members for
22 generations. And generally represent the most
23 significant terrestrial source of meat for rural
24 residents of southeast Alaska. In comprehensive
25 household surveys conducted in Angoon over the past
26 four decades deer have consistently ranked as the first
27 or second resource in terms of bulk contribution to
28 subsistence, trailing only salmon or non-salmon fish.
29 Angoon residents previously harvested significant
30 numbers of deer along west Chatham and northwest
31 Admiralty Island during the years when the commercial
32 fishing industry was stronger and fish canneries
33 operated in these areas. Unfortunately the decline of
34 the commercial fishing industry and associated loss of
35 income coupled with the rising cost of fuel and other
36 consumer goods have all contributed to human population
37 declines and food security issues witnessed in Angoon
38 and similar rural communities in the southeast in
39 recent years.

40
41 Subsistence studies and Council meeting
42 testimonies have described the ways that the loss of
43 commercial seiners and fishing income have required a
44 shift to smaller boats making shorter subsistence
45 harvesting trips shorter or closer to home.
46 Subsistence studies conducted by ADF&G in Angoon have
47 demonstrated a substantial reduction in harvest area
48 witnessed over the course of these three studies, the
49 last three studies. From the most recent study the
50

1 researchers noted the 2012 Angoon harvest areas are
2 considerably smaller and are concentrated close to
3 town, along shorelines and in Mitchell Bay. During the
4 surveys there were many comments made about the
5 increasingly high cost of fuel limiting harvest
6 activities and that subsistence harvests have changed
7 dramatically from previous years. One factor likely
8 influencing this contraction of search and harvest
9 areas is loss of commercial salmon permits as a local
10 commercial fishing fleet not only is a source of
11 capital to sustain subsistence harvesting activities,
12 it also provides a source of equipment like boats
13 capable of traveling long distances. Similar studies
14 of other rural Alaskan communities have documented this
15 issue noting significant reductions in the number of
16 trips and distances traveled to conduct subsistence
17 activities as a result of the impacts of rising fuel
18 costs and depressed local economies. Therefore
19 reductions in deer hunters, hunter days and harvest
20 reported by Angoon residents during recently reporting
21 period -- periods could at least be partially related
22 to these impacts. Still reductions in the number and
23 distance of the trips that Angoon residents can afford
24 to take to harvest subsistence resources would almost
25 certainly contribute to issues of user conflict,
26 competition and food insecurity in the area.

27
28 Some hunters have suggested that
29 observed declines in the local deer populations and
30 difficulty harvesting deer are related to recent mild
31 winters which have resulted in deer being spread out
32 through the forest rather than easily concentrated or
33 concentrated and easily visible on beaches. However
34 residents of Angoon have noted their increasing
35 reliance on smaller boats using limited fuel to
36 navigate narrow embayments closer to home has made
37 hunter competition in these areas a much more
38 significant issue. Approximately 80 percent of all
39 recent deer harvests in Unit 4 have been made by boat
40 based hunters and local knowledge attests that only a
41 few boats can hunt in these narrow areas that
42 characterize the proposal area without negatively
43 affecting hunter success. Because access in some
44 inlets is very limited and localized depletions of deer
45 are possible in these areas. Though the deer
46 population appears to be plentiful on a unit wide basis
47 residents have noted that localized population declines
48 do occur and that Unit 4 deer populations may not be
49 tracked at a fine enough scale to consistently capture
50

1 these localized depletions. Studies have found that
2 deer pellet sampling strategies historically used to
3 monitor deer populations in the region do not provide
4 an accurate index of deer populations when extrapolated
5 beyond the local scale of the survey. Localized
6 depletions can also impact -- exacerbate the impact of
7 competition within a smaller harvest area.

8

9

10 In Angoon prey switching strategies
11 that would help resident compensate for insufficient
12 harvest of a primary resource like deer are complicated
13 by policy restrictions, ongoing declines in other
14 subsistence resources and increasingly unpredictable
15 and severe weather patterns. During the most
16 subsistence study conducted by ADF&G in 2012 in Angoon
17 nearly half of the households in Angoon were considered
18 to be experiencing low or very low food security. The
19 rate of very low food security experienced by Angoon
20 households was greater than that experienced in any of
21 the other four rural southeast communities surveyed as
22 part of this study. Deer was the subsistence resource
23 that Angoon household most reported needing more of
24 during this study and food insecure conditions increase
25 substantially during the late fall and winter months in
26 Angoon with the highest levels of food insecurity
27 typically occurring in November. November has also
28 been the month with the majority of deer harvest and
29 hunter effort has taken place throughout Unit 4 in
30 recent years. This trend is consistent for all user
31 types.

31

32

33 Looking at harvest history, hunter
34 harvest and effort reporting is one of the many methods
35 that managers use in combination to monitor deer
36 population trends in this area. However Southeast
37 Council members have noted that calculations of hunter
38 effort and success may be misleading because
39 subsistence users often only document their successful
40 hunts. These calculations can also be based on less
41 than ideal reporting rates resulting in uncertainty
42 about the accuracy of extrapolated data. That being
43 said proximity to Angoon appears to be a key factor for
44 residents when selecting deer hunting locations. From
45 2000 to 2021 approximately 39 percent of Angoon
46 residents reported deer harvest and 42 percent of their
47 reported hunting days took place within the wildlife
48 analysis areas covered by this proposal. The Angoon
49 area and Hood Bay area has accounted for almost all of
50 this hunting effort and harvest while a relatively

50

1 minimal amount of hunting effort and harvest by Angoon
2 residents occurred in Whitewater Bay. However local
3 knowledge attests that Angoon residents do regularly
4 use Whitewater Bay for deer hunting. Angoon residents
5 reported utilizing the Pybus Bay and fishery, Thayer
6 Creek areas the most of any wildlife analysis areas
7 located outside the proposal area. Still both of these
8 wildlife analysis areas are located adjacent to the
9 proposal area. Angoon residents -- additionally the
10 location of about 20 percent of the total harvest and
11 17 percent of hunting days reported by Angoon resident
12 cannot be determined from the information returned and
13 is unknown. It's possible that some of this took place
14 in the proposal area or thereabouts.

15
16 In most years Federally-qualified
17 subsistence users harvested more deer from the proposal
18 area due to the larger number of hunters. On average
19 roughly 45 percent of all hunters utilizing the area
20 were Angoon residents. Non-Federally-qualified users
21 typically composed 39 percent of hunters in this area.
22 And the available yearly data on reported hunter days
23 and harvests in the proposal area showed similar
24 trends. Reported hunter effort and harvest by non-
25 residents here was relatively minimal. It's important
26 to note though that the proportion of non-Federally-
27 qualified user hunter effort and harvest in the
28 proposal area increased fairly substantially over the
29 two most recent reporting periods. During this 10 year
30 span non-Federally-qualified users accounted for an
31 average of 48 percent of all reported hunters, 57
32 percent of all reported hunter days and 47 percent of
33 all reported harvest taken from the area. This change
34 also corresponded with a substantial decline in the
35 human population of Angoon. A substantial decline in
36 the average number of hunter days and harvests reported
37 by Angoon residents, but a relatively small reduction
38 in the average number of reported Angoon hunters. This
39 could further indicate that Angoon hunters are
40 shortening the number and length of trips they're
41 taking and can take to conduct subsistence activities.
42 Perhaps most significantly the average yearly number of
43 hunter days reported by non-Federally-qualified users
44 in the proposal area more than doubled between the 2001
45 to 2010 period and the 2011 to 2020 period. This does
46 suggest that competition from non-Federally-qualified
47 users in the proposal area has increased.

48
49 So the OSM conclusion is to support
50

0191

1 WP24-04 with the Council's modification to remove
2 wildlife analysis area 4041 from the proposed closure
3 area and reduce the proposed closure period to November
4 1 through November 10.

5

6 And I can read the justification here.
7 Deer have consistently ranked as one of the most
8 important subsistence resources harvested by Angoon
9 households in previous subsistence studies, however
10 Angoon households reported substantial levels of food
11 insecurity during the most recent study conducted by
12 ADF&G and deer were the subsistence resource that
13 Angoon households most reported needing more of.
14 Reported simultaneous declines in key subsistence
15 resources, changing and increasing severe weather
16 patterns, economic declines coupled with rising fuel
17 prices and policy restrictions all make it difficult to
18 compensate for increased competition for deer in the
19 proposal area. There's qualitative and quantitative
20 data that supports residents' claim that competition
21 with non-locals has been threatening the continuation
22 of subsistence uses of deer and that a limited closure
23 to non-Federally-qualified users is necessary to
24 continue these uses.

25

26 First, residents of Angoon have noted
27 that because of the declines in the commercial fishing
28 industry and associated economic issues they've had to
29 change their deer hunting methods to focus their
30 efforts closer to home. This issue has been documented
31 in the ADF&G subsistence study recently -- mentioned
32 earlier. Local knowledge attests to the fact that only
33 a limited number of boats and users can hunt in the
34 narrow bays and other preferred locations due to issues
35 of access and competition. Residents have also noted
36 that localized depletions of deer in these preferred
37 hunting areas are possible and this exacerbates issues
38 of competition and conflict and that deer populations
39 in Unit 4 may not be tracked at a fine enough scale to
40 consistently capture these issues. Third, residents
41 have also explained that their difficulties in
42 harvesting deer are not well represented in the
43 quantitative data collected on deer harvests and hunter
44 effort. Residents have noted that hunter effort and
45 harvest reporting tend to underestimate the amount of
46 hunting effort taking place and overestimate hunting
47 success rates. Still the quantitative data presented
48 in the analysis shows the number of days hunted by non-
49 Federally-qualified users in the proposal area has

50

0192

1 increased substantially in recent years.

2

3

4 The OSM modification would increase
5 subsistence harvest opportunity for Federally-qualified
6 users in the Angoon area by allowing for a 10 day
7 period where residents could hunt in their most heavily
8 utilized areas closest to home during a very important
9 time in the local deer harvest season with reduced
10 competition from non-local hunters. Though Angoon
11 residents' ability to harvest deer in the month of
12 January does current provide a degree of Federal
13 subsistence priority allowing for harvest in times of
14 necessity and during opportunistic encounters January
15 does not appear to be a preferred time for deer
16 harvesting due to the often poor condition of deer and
17 severity of weather at this time in the season. As
18 ADF&G notes in their comments on this proposal January
19 was the least hunted month for Angoon residents
20 accounting for about 4 percent of Angoon residents'
21 reported hunting day and 3 percent of their reported
22 harvest from 2013 to 2022.

22

23

24 Under the modified proposal non-
25 Federally-qualified users would maintain the ability to
26 hunt the other approximately 83 percent of Admiralty
27 Island during this 10 day closure including those areas
28 of northern Admiralty Island that appear to be most
29 important to Juneau based hunters. Excluding wildlife
30 analysis area 4041 from the proposed closure area may
31 be appropriate because it appears to account for less
32 Angoon hunter effort and harvest than the other areas.
33 And reducing the size of the proposed closure area will
34 reduce the impact on non-Federally-qualified users.
35 Reducing the length of the proposed closure period
36 would also reduce the impact on non-Federally-qualified
37 users.

37

38

39

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48

49

50

And so I'm sorry for that rather
lengthy presentation, but that -- that's all I've got
now and I can answer any questions you might have.

MADAME CHAIR PITKA: I really
appreciate the in depth analysis and thank you for
that. And I also appreciate the key points on the
board.

So right now we are asking questions of
the analyst.

0193

1 (No comments)

2

3 MADAME CHAIR PITKA: You did a very
4 thorough job. Thank you.

5

6 Okay. So can we get the summary of
7 written public comments.

8

9 MR. ROBERTS: Yes, so I'll give you the
10 public comments we received earlier. You've received
11 some more during this meeting that I'm sure you've
12 hopefully had a chance to look at.

13

14 OSM received a total of 37 written
15 public comments on this proposal. These comments can
16 be found starting on Page 550 of your meeting book.
17 One commenter -- one comment was submitted in support
18 of the proposal. The commenter noted that subsistence
19 hunting and fishing are subject to disproportionate
20 levels of regulation and scrutiny. The commenter
21 thought that this proposal was an innovate way to not
22 only support, but to prioritize subsistence users'
23 household needs and invest in local food security.

24

25 Thirty-six public comments were
26 submitted in opposition. These commenters noted that
27 ADF&G data shows that there are no conservation
28 concerns regarding deer populations in the area, the
29 populations are generally healthy and the level of
30 competition for deer in the area does not warrant a
31 closure. The primary issue impacting deer hunting
32 recently has been the impact of warmer winter weather
33 that has not produced as much snow particularly early
34 in the season. This lack of snow means that deer are
35 not being pushed down to the beaches where they can be
36 more easily harvested via the beach hunting methods
37 favored by many locals. They also state that this
38 proposal would restrict the rights of long term
39 seasonal residents and others with local ties to the
40 other area to hunt deer, enjoy the beauty of the area
41 and share and pass down cultural traditions with family
42 and friends. The commenters also note that this
43 proposal does not consider the impact of other
44 Federally-qualified subsistence users coming into the
45 area to hunt deer. Non-local Federally-qualified
46 subsistence users may be harvesting more deer from the
47 area than non-Federally-qualified users the commenters
48 note.

49

50

0194

1 MADAME CHAIR PITKA: Thank you very
2 much for that. Can I get the summary of tribal and
3 ANCSA corporate consultation.

4
5 MR. LIND: Madame Chair, Board members,
6 RAC Chairs. During the consultation sessions, November
7 14 and 16th, we did not have any questions or comments.

8
9 Thank you, Madame Chair.

10
11 MADAME CHAIR PITKA: Thank you so much
12 for that. So right now we'd like to get tribal or
13 Native organization testimony. Is there any online. I
14 don't have any cards in front of me otherwise I would
15 say that.

16
17 MS. LAVINE: So this is just a reminder
18 for those online that if you would like to speak and
19 you are a member of a tribe or ANCSA corporation you
20 may press star, six to unmute yourself. You can also
21 press star, five to raise your hand and enter the
22 queue.

23
24 (No comments)

25
26 MADAME CHAIR PITKA: Thank you so much
27 for that. Advisory Group testimony, State ACs, SRCs,
28 working groups, et cetera.

29
30 (No comments)

31
32 MADAME CHAIR PITKA: It doesn't appear
33 that we have any. Okay. And we don't have any in the
34 room.

35
36 And right now I'd like to open the
37 floor to public testimony. Mark Richards is in the
38 room and I have his card in front of me for 24-04.

39
40 MR. RICHARDS: Good afternoon again,
41 Madame Chair, members of the Board. For the record my
42 name is Mark Richards, representing Residents Hunters
43 of Alaska. We continue to oppose Wildlife Proposal
44 WP24-04. These -- I was going to comment on all three
45 proposals, would that be okay if I commented on 24-04,
46 05 and 06 together?

47
48 MADAME CHAIR PITKA: Yeah. Yeah, we'll
49 write those comments down.

50

0195

1 MR. RICHARDS: That way you don't have
2 to see me again.

3
4 MADAME CHAIR PITKA: Not that we mind.

5
6 MR. RICHARDS: So these three proposals
7 are basically a do over from last year's meeting. And
8 as Mr. Roberts mentioned at last year's meeting most of
9 the Board voted those proposals down based on the fact
10 that they did not meet the criteria under ANILCA for a
11 closure. And as Mr. Roberts suggested the BIA member
12 was the only one that voted in dissent.

13
14 We just don't see anything that's
15 really changed. This continues to be an issue. It's
16 like we don't really have adequate information that
17 subsistence needs aren't being met. I mean, we're
18 cognizant of the fact that if they aren't we would
19 support this, but we just don't see any evidence that
20 subsistence needs aren't being met. What we see is
21 that locals don't like the competition from non-locals.
22 And that's understandable, nobody likes competition
23 from other hunters. But we still don't see that that's
24 a reason to pass this proposal.

25
26 And I just want to say that if this
27 proposal passes which it looks like it's going to, we
28 would like to see some more information available.
29 Like if you're going to pass this proposal then we
30 should do something so we can find out for sure whether
31 it really helps Angoon residents or not. I mean, right
32 now there's a lot -- what Mr. Roberts just said, a lot
33 of what he said was suggested this or it's all
34 anecdotal information and they're trying to show that
35 oh, well, we don't have, you know, adequate deer
36 information all over. And so just a lot of this is all
37 conjecture as far as the deer population. We know the
38 deer are abundant we had a mild winter this winter so
39 there's no conservation concerns at all for the deer.
40 So I would just ask this Board when you consider these
41 proposals, they're going to come up again and again,
42 these are really about competition between non-locals.

43
44 And one of the main reasons we are
45 opposing this proposal is because of the effects it has
46 on the people -- the Federally-qualified users who used
47 to live in the area, but now for whatever reason they
48 have moved on to Juneau or to other communities that
49 don't qualify. And so, you know, this happened up in
50

0196

1 Northwest at the Kotzebue meeting. I asked one of the
2 Rangers and the Troopers well, what do you do so then
3 when people that used to live here, but are no longer
4 Federally-qualified users come home to hunt like are
5 you -- are you ticketing them or, I mean, what are you
6 doing. And they said no, no, we don't do anything
7 about it, we know it happens. So we still don't know
8 that either. I mean, what -- what is happening.

9
10 And it just -- we just urge you not to
11 keep setting these precedents where you're passing
12 things that ANILCA doesn't tell you you have the
13 authority to do based on competition alone between
14 other users. And again if we really felt the
15 subsistence needs weren't being met or subsistence
16 opportunity in the future was prevented we would
17 support this, but we are not seeing this with this
18 proposal and with all due respect we oppose it.

19
20 Thank you.

21
22 Happy to answer any questions.

23
24 MADAME CHAIR PITKA: Thank you very
25 much. Okay. Looks like we have public testimony on
26 the phone.

27
28 Zach Decker.

29
30 MR. DECKER: Through the Chair, Board
31 members. Zach Decker out of Juneau here. Commercial
32 hunting guide, business owner, work and live in the
33 area. Not only that, as a private landowner within the
34 -- within the designated areas we're speaking of here
35 and cabin owner in that -- in that area.

36
37 I'm actually happy that Mr. Vanormer is
38 on the Board here today, that he could speak to the --
39 his history as the local district Ranger, the many
40 regulatory and things that have come forward with
41 commercial uses through the Shoreline Two process, the
42 record of decision in that, that restricted commercial
43 operations in these areas for deer and whatnot to
44 support the local community.

45
46 As far as WP24-04, you know, we're
47 opposed to it. Once again we are a private landowner
48 in the area that does live in Juneau and we would be
49 restricted during that time period of use. But also I
50

0197

1 support Mr. Richard's comments. You know, much of this
2 is subjective, you know, how to -- perception as to
3 what they see. You know, I'm aware of this -- even
4 this past winter a local Sitka boat was in contact with
5 us and they were -- they went to that site to go and
6 hunt, it's a beautiful yacht looking boat, has one or
7 two boats off of it and they pulled into Whitewater Bay
8 and hunted for a few days. You know, the speculative
9 motion would be that they -- they were out of Juneau or
10 they were non-locals, you know, and I think that we've
11 seen the effect of local Angoon residents, we're very
12 sensitive. You know, over this past year our company
13 and ourselves personally have donated over a thousand
14 pounds of meat from moose that was harvested in Canada
15 to deer and goat populations hunted -- that were hunted
16 with our company that was donated to the local village
17 and to support them. And we see the need that they
18 might need, but I don't see the Federal land closure
19 aspect of this proposal or the WP24-05 or WP24-06, that
20 are supported to have these areas closed for even 10 to
21 15 days in November. That would be -- not, you know,
22 disparaging against other local community involvement.

23

24 So with that I'm open for any questions
25 or comments, but I just don't feel that the -- I like
26 the States recommendation on this. There's not a
27 biological concern for deer, deer numbers are high and
28 I think that hunter effort, getting out of the skiff,
29 not hunting the shoreline and accessing the forest is
30 more needed. And to bring up the point that, you know,
31 State lands begin below rooted vegetation so, you know,
32 even some of these areas that the deer are low on beach
33 and they get -- they can still be hunted below that
34 high tide line in this and so kind of makes it a little
35 confusing regulation.

36

37 So I'll leave that with you and happy
38 to answer any questions at this time.

39

40 MADAME CHAIR PITKA: Thank you so much.
41 So at this time I'd like to call Nicholas Orr.

42

43 MR. ORR: Hello. Can you hear me?

44

45 MADAME CHAIR PITKA: Yes, thank you.
46 Please go ahead.

47

48 MR. ORR: First I wanted to say that I
49 do believe that the Juneau Advisory Committee submitted

50

0198

1 a letter on this -- on these proposals, WP24-04, 05,
2 06. I know we didn't submit anything like right here,
3 but I believe during the public comment period we did
4 submit a letter. I just wanted to put that out there.

5
6 So my name is Nicholas Orr, I'm a
7 member of the Juneau-Douglas Advisory Committee as well
8 as a Board member of the Territorial Sportsmen here in
9 Juneau. I'm here today commenting on WP24-04. Under
10 ANILCA non-Federally-qualified users can be restricted
11 when there's a conservation concern or it is necessary
12 for the continuation of subsistence uses. I would like
13 to say that if there was a conservation concern or if
14 non-Federally-qualified users were legitimately
15 impacting the continuation of subsistence uses I and
16 many others in Juneau would step up and say hey, these
17 areas need to be subsistence only. And that said it
18 doesn't appear non-Federally-qualified users are
19 impacting the continuation of subsistence activities in
20 this area.

21
22 I think looking at the continuation of
23 subsistence uses is the sort of thing that requires a
24 two part test. The first part is does this pass the
25 smell test or put another way, does this make sense.
26 Does it -- so does it make sense that non-Federally-
27 qualified users who travel over 75 miles by boat in
28 November from Juneau to the northern edge of the
29 proposed closure area, I don't think it makes sense
30 unless you have some sort of connection to the
31 community of Angoon. And that's who this would impact
32 is people who are from Angoon, but now live in Juneau.

33
34 The second part of the test is what do
35 the numbers say. The average number of non-Federally-
36 qualified users utilizing this area over the past nine
37 years is minimal, like 30 or so. And during that time
38 period the trend for non-Federally-qualified users is
39 decreasing. Then you look at hunter ethicacy numbers,
40 is the Federally-qualified user hunter ethicacy
41 suffering. And that's probably the best measure of
42 whether Federally-qualified users are being impacted.
43 But hunter ethicacy numbers show that the proposal area
44 has the second best hunter ethicacy for deer in the
45 entire State, at one point 1.9 days per deer and
46 actually has improved over time. So the numbers don't
47 support the idea that non-Federally-qualified users are
48 impacting the continuation of subsistence uses and
49 neither does common sense.

50

0199

1 Finally the OSM notes that the modified
2 proposal they're supporting represents a compromise
3 that won't have a significant impact on non-Federally-
4 qualified users. While the time period is not long it
5 does represent approximately 30 to 50 percent of the
6 rut depending on who you talk to and that seems pretty
7 significant. And what's more I would add that just
8 because the OSM believes their supported proposal's a
9 compromise does not mean that it meets the criteria for
10 restricting non-Federally-qualified users under ANILCA.

11
12 I urge you not to pass this proposal.
13 Thank you.

14
15 And if you have any questions I'm right
16 here.

17
18 MADAME CHAIR PITKA: Thank you very
19 much for your testimony and your time today.

20
21 So at this time I'd like to call -- I
22 don't have an identifier, but it's the number ending
23 1186. So if that's your phone number please hit star,
24 six and unmute your phone and give your testimony.

25
26 MR. BETHERS: Hello.

27
28 MADAME CHAIR PITKA: Yes, I can hear
29 you. Hello.

30
31 MR. BETHERS: Hello. Am I live?

32
33 MADAME CHAIR PITKA: Yes, you are live.
34 Can you please identify yourself for the record.

35
36 MR. BETHERS: Okay. Yes, sure. Thank
37 you very much. My name is Mike Bethers and I'd like to
38 thank you for this opportunity to comment on Wildlife
39 Proposals 24-04, 24-05 and 24-06.

40
41 I'm an old guy from Juneau, I've been
42 hunting deer for over (indiscernible) years now. And I
43 don't -- I hunt in the woods, I don't hunt the beaches.
44 I don't shoot from boats. I spend about 50 days a fall
45 in the woods getting our venison. And if an old guy
46 like me, broken down as I am, can easily get
47 (indiscernible - distortion) these are -- in the world
48 that Federally-qualified hunters in the villages can't.
49 And the way I see this, you know, that non-Federally-
50

0200

1 qualified Juneau hunters are not preventing village
2 hunters from getting deer. (Indiscernible --
3 distortion) available to show that the Federally-
4 qualified hunting effort is drastically reduced in
5 these areas. This is why the harvests are down and the
6 only way to get those harvests up is to put more
7 hunters in the woods. And that's off the beaches and
8 in regard to -- often away from the roads.

9
10 Angoon and Hoonah and Pelican are known
11 to have the very best, most productive deer hunting in
12 the State. Populations are robust and the Federally-
13 qualified hunters still hunting, they're shooting more
14 deer now than they were several years past.

15
16 These facts demonstrate how very
17 excellent the deer hunting is in these years subject to
18 these proposals. And if it (indiscernible -
19 distortion) it's the best (indiscernible - distortion)
20 I just don't see the Juneau hunters causing so much
21 trouble, you know. I think the fact is that the Juneau
22 hunters are not interfering with the village numbers --
23 village hunters, I'm sorry.

24
25 With regard to Angoon this proposal
26 makes it sound like Juneau hunters are making frequent
27 boat trips to Angoon to hunt, but this is just -- I
28 mean, most of the non-Federally-qualified hunters
29 hunting in Angoon have been hunting there for years,
30 they have family ties, friend ties in Angoon and
31 they've been making these annual hunts for years. I
32 think that's where the -- most of the pressure any non-
33 Federally-qualified hunting comes from. But I don't
34 think that really -- I would hope (indiscernible -
35 distortion).

36
37 The data shows that about 29 Juneau Fed
38 -- non-Federally-qualified hunters hunt the huge area
39 that Angoon proposes to close. Twenty-nine non-
40 Federally-qualified hunters throughout out this area
41 over the course of the deer season would have
42 absolutely no detectable impact on availability of deer
43 to the local hunters. I think any professional
44 resource manager with a basic knowledge of deer, their
45 life history and hunting would know this. And further
46 most of the Federal lands in this proposed closure
47 aren't even hunted by the Federally-qualified users.

48
49 In regard to safety and marksmanship,
50

0201

1 no offense intended here at all, but I've had some
2 experience hunting with village folks is decades past,
3 but for the most part they were -- I think they
4 probably tended to scare more deer than any deer
5 hunters I've (indiscernible - distortion). I meant no
6 -- no offense in that, but I will not agree that the
7 spooky in Angoon or anywhere is because of a hunter
8 other user group.

9

10 In regard to Hoonah, Hoonah's got its
11 own set of problems. (Indiscernible - distortion)
12 years ago (indiscernible - distortion) and North
13 Chirikof with logging roads and clear cutting their
14 once excellent wildlife habitat. Deer hunting used to
15 be for the most part boat based and that's the type of
16 hunting -- we hunted from boats or we got out of town,
17 had excellent hunting. But now since the roads were
18 put in, road hunting has turned into the road hunting
19 show. It's easy and it's real popular and because of
20 years of this the deer had moved away from the roads to
21 survive so you still got a lot of hunters crowded in a
22 little line around the roads and fewer deer available.
23 Even with that situation Hoonah still has one of the
24 very, very best, most productive deer hunts in the
25 State. And I think that could easily be improved even
26 better if the guys would get off the roads and get into
27 boars and get out of town a little bit and get away
28 from that road system. Federally-qualified effort is
29 greatly reduced and even the number of subsistence
30 fishing permits is down from years past in the village.
31 And it looks like Hoonah is drifting away from the
32 subsistence lifestyle and becoming more dependent on
33 the ferry system and maybe the big stores in Juneau. I
34 hate to say it, but it sure looks like it.

35

36 In regard to the Hoonah hunters that
37 flock -- the Juneau hunters that flock to Hoonah on the
38 ferry system, you know, it's not happening as much as
39 it used to because the ferry service is more reduced
40 and there's less non-qualified hunters from Juneau
41 going there than there were years ago.

42

43 And with regard to Pelican, I -- that
44 place is remote enough and it's probably expensive
45 enough, I don't think the Juneau hunters are ever going
46 to be numerous enough there to mess up the hunting for
47 the local hunters.

48

49 In conclusion I'd ask you to oppose

50

1 Wildlife Proposal 24-04, 05 and 06. Federally-
2 qualified hunters in Angoon, Hoonah and Pelican already
3 have a huge priority for deer resource, they live
4 exactly where the hunting starts and begins, they live
5 right there, you know, they don't have to travel
6 anywhere. Federally-qualified hunters already have
7 seven months, that's 184 days or over half a year to
8 shoot six deer per hunter. Most of this time there
9 isn't a non-Federally-qualified Juneau hunter within
10 miles of the hunting areas. Federally-qualified
11 hunters have the month of January to themselves.
12 That's a month longer than the non-qualified guys. And
13 Federally-qualified hunters can have -- easily have
14 somebody else harvest their deer for them. Deer
15 populations in these areas subject to proposals are at
16 or near full carrying capacity, there's no conservation
17 issues. This last winter deer also survived well even
18 though we had some pretty good snowfall.

19
20 And the Federally-qualified community's
21 asking for more advantage here in these proposals.
22 They already have the very best, most productive deer
23 hunting documented in the entire State. Federally-
24 qualified hunters that are still hunting are shooting
25 more deer now than they did in years past. And I don't
26 think if the Federally-qualified hunters are not
27 getting sufficient deer in 184 days of hunting
28 opportunity I don't think 10 days of exclusive
29 opportunity is going to make any detectable difference.

30
31 But none of these proposals will impact
32 non-qualified hunting on State owned beaches and
33 private property in Angoon, Hoonah and Pelican.
34 Closing the Juneau hunters out of the uplands as
35 proposed, it's going to displace them to the beaches
36 where you could expect increased conflict with
37 Federally-qualified village hunters. That's about
38 that.

39
40 Anyway in regard to the identification
41 of these Juneau hunters that are causing the disruption
42 I would really like to know how it's proposed or
43 determined that the boats anchoring in local areas are
44 disturbing deer around Angoon there I saw are from
45 Juneau. And how you tell if they're not Federally-
46 qualified hunters from one of the other eight or 10
47 Federally-qualified villages in southeast. I would
48 guess that with only an average of 29 non-qualified
49 Juneau hunters using the large area proposed for
50

0203

1 closure around Angoon the entire deer season one would
2 be seeing very, very few Juneau boats. It's my bet
3 that you can't tell where a non-local boat comes from,
4 you know, but they point the finger at Juneau anyway
5 and I don't think it's probably correct.

6
7 But thank you for this opportunity.
8 And once again I'd urge you, the Subsistence Board
9 members, to oppose Wildlife Proposal 24-04, 05 and 06.

10
11 Thank you.

12
13 Any questions I welcome. Thank you.

14
15 MADAME CHAIR PITKA: Thank you very
16 much, Mr. Bethers, I appreciate your comments today.

17
18 So we have unknown user as Number 4. I
19 think they have their hand raised, right?

20
21 (No comments)

22
23 MADAME CHAIR PITKA: Okay. So unknown
24 user with your hand raised, please state your name and
25 spell it for the record.

26
27 MR. BEASON: Hi, this is Ryan Beason,
28 can you hear me?

29
30 MADAME CHAIR PITKA: Yes. Can you
31 please state your name and spell it for the record.

32
33 MR. BEASON: Ryan Beason, R-Y-A-N B-E-
34 A-S-O-N.

35
36 MADAME CHAIR PITKA: Okay. Go ahead.
37 Thank you.

38
39 MR. BEASON: Thank you for your time,
40 everybody. My name is Ryan Beason, I am the President
41 of Territorial Sportsmen. We're a local sports
42 organization here in Juneau with approximately a
43 thousand members. We have continued to oppose all
44 these deer proposals, 24-04, 05 and 06. We have been
45 since the inception of these three or four years ago.
46 I'll try not to hit every point that was previously
47 mentioned to save time, but the biggest thing is these
48 proposals were overwhelming voted down a year ago.
49 Nothing has changed since then. They've reworded them,
50

0204

1 changed the dates and kind of repropose these again.
2 Again this is a 10 day period, but it's a 10 day period
3 where it's prime hunting, where most people travel and
4 hunt for this area, it's the prime rut. Again it's
5 going to have a huge effect when there is no need for
6 this.

7

8 I think the biggest thing is that we
9 should work together on these issues. We're becoming
10 enemies of each other, the Federally-qualified and non-
11 Federally-qualified. It's scary. What's next is --
12 you know, what's going to happen next. It's hard to
13 picture. When we do have a bad winter here in three or
14 four or five years is it a completely closure to non-
15 Federally-qualified users, I would hope not, but again
16 I think that's -- by setting this precedent it's, you
17 know, hard to factor what's going to come in the
18 future.

19

20 And I will say I do hunt these areas, I
21 have a cabin in the northern Chichagof area. I've had
22 the best hunting I've had in recent years, I've seen
23 the least amount of hunters I've seen in recent years.
24 So I don't think there's any issue there whatsoever as
25 far as deer or competition that have been mentioned in
26 these proposals.

27

28 Lastly I'm here for questions, but
29 ultimately I continue -- we as an organization oppose
30 these proposals. We are happy to work together to try
31 to figure out solutions to these proposals, but by
32 limiting non-Federally-qualified users for the 10 day
33 period during the prime rut we feel is not needed at
34 this time.

35

36 Thank you.

37

38 MADAME CHAIR PITKA: Thank you so much.
39 I appreciate your comments and we've also got your
40 written comment in the packet.

41

42 Wait, was that unknown user, we're
43 done?

44

45 (No comments)

46

47 MADAME CHAIR PITKA: No, we're not
48 done. I'm getting a no, we're not done. Okay. Carry
49 on then, ma'am. Where are we at.

50

0205

1 MS. LAVINE: Madame Chair, this is
2 Robbin LaVine. For the remaining person online with
3 your hand raised and we have you identified as unknown
4 user, if you can find a way to unmute yourself, you can
5 do so by -- on your phone by pressing star, six. If
6 you joined via Teams try to unmute yourself via.....

7
8 MR. HOWARD: Hello.

9
10 MS. LAVINE: Oh, there you are. Oh,
11 well, yeah. Unknown user, go right ahead.

12
13 MADAME CHAIR PITKA: Please state and
14 spell your name for the record.

15
16 MR. HOWARD: My name's Albert Howard.

17
18 MADAME CHAIR PITKA: Albert Howard.

19 Okay.

20
21 MR HOWARD: A-L-B-E-R-T H-O-W-A-R-D.

22
23 MADAME CHAIR PITKA: Thank you. Please
24 go ahead.

25
26 MR. HOWARD: Thank you, Madame Chair.
27 I'm here to speak to proposal WP24-04. I live in
28 Angoon, Alaska. I've hunted with my father since I was
29 so -- I'd say eight years old on Admiralty Island. I'm
30 55 now. So it's safe to say I hunted for about 47
31 years on Admiralty Island minus the four years I served
32 in the army as a veteran of foreign war.

33
34 Madame Chair, you've heard testimony
35 about the impacts this is having on Juneau and the fact
36 that they don't hunt in these areas. And I'm not sure
37 why they're opposed to it. You've also heard the
38 Territorial Sportsmen mention that these have been
39 going on for quite some time and they've opposed it
40 ever since it started. And they're open to
41 communication, but yet they haven't communicated with
42 me.

43
44 You've also heard the fact that there's
45 people from Angoon that live in Juneau that this has an
46 impact on. Madame Chair, I asked them permission to
47 use their name because I also asked the Juneau
48 organization if these gentlemen belong to their
49 organization as they're referring to them as a talking
50

0206

1 point. The names are John Crossman, Jr., Wally Frank,
2 Jr., Demetris Johnson, my son, Clinton Howard, my
3 brother Dermot Howard. Madame Chair, they understand
4 that we are trying to accomplish something for the
5 residents of Angoon and our ability to hunt. You heard
6 Mr. Decker say that he saw a yacht that was in
7 Whitewater Bay. We hadn't -- we started an AC here in
8 Angoon and yesterday we met for the first time with
9 eight people present. One of them was a high school
10 student and he also saw that same vessel.

11

12 What I'm -- as I'm subsistence user I'm
13 charged with the responsibility to maintain our way of
14 life, but I'm also not given the resources the State of
15 Alaska has to support the position. As an example the
16 YouTube video that was put out right after these
17 proposals came to be. And in the YouTube video the
18 State stated the reason these proposals are put into
19 place was because of deer populations, that isn't true.
20 The reason these proposals are put in place and I wish
21 the people in Juneau would come and talk to me about it
22 because I see it, it isn't anecdotal. I looked up the
23 definition of anecdotal, if anything's anecdotal the
24 information they're giving you is anecdotal. Because
25 if they're not down in Whitewater Bay or Hood Bay or
26 Chyeak, they're basing everything they think is true by
27 what the Department of Fish and Game gives them.

28

29 Madame Chair, we heard the Department
30 of Fish and Game did their pellet samples in Mitchell
31 Bay. That's maybe 5 percent of the island. And the
32 thing I'm left with today, Madame Chair, is the fact
33 that I regret ever doing these proposals and I should
34 have left it alone because the State of Alaska by their
35 YouTube video has brought more hunters to the island.
36 And the only way to get Juneau residents to understand
37 what that means to Angoon is take the whole Auke Bay
38 area and have a different boat come in there every day.
39 A different boat come into Auke Bay every day hunting.
40 That's basically the same size as I'm asking for in
41 these bays. If you get a boat coming in there every
42 day that's not a resident of Juneau hunting it's going
43 to have an impact on the population. It -- whether or
44 not they're successful or not, the impact is what I
45 learned when I was 10 years old. I shot at a deer and
46 missed it and my dad said you're never going to see
47 that again because as soon as that deer hears an engine
48 he's up in the woods.

49

50

0207

1 And let me explain something, Madame
2 Chair, I keep hearing this and it's kind of offensive.
3 As a 10 year old kid I had to go in the woods and learn
4 to hunt with my dad and it was keep up or be left
5 behind. And if you're left behind you learned how to
6 walk back through the same way you came. That's how I
7 learned to hunt, Madame Chair. I didn't have a GPS
8 like the gentlemen have now. I guarantee you if they
9 didn't have those they wouldn't know where the muskegs
10 are that I know without a GPS. So as far as Albert
11 Howard and residents of Angoon not hunting in the
12 woods, we know this area pretty well without a GPS
13 because a lot of us can't afford it. I know how to
14 call a deer with a leaf, without a -- because that's
15 what we had. I saw my dad pick a leaf and when we
16 started hiking up in the woods he kept a leaf in his
17 mouth and when we got to where we were going we -- he
18 blew his leaf.

19
20 It -- I wish I would have kept the
21 original proposal in place, but I got talked into
22 making it smaller and less than -- and I don't
23 understand why we have to give up 17 percent of the
24 island to make everyone else happy. It -- you know,
25 that's the only way I can get people from Juneau to
26 understand what we're trying -- we're not trying to
27 compete with them, that -- we don't have a problem with
28 that. And I saw Juneau hunters this winter and the way
29 they hunt they can keep hunting around me if they want
30 to because I wasn't impressed. But what happens is
31 when you miss a deer, I don't get a chance at it
32 because when they hear my engine coming they take off.
33 They hear me blow a deer call they don't come because
34 somebody shot at them and they're trained.

35
36 Having a conversation with me is
37 important to understand what I'm trying to accomplish.
38 These bays are important to our community because they
39 provide safety for our youth hunters. It's common
40 sense. Some of the comments are contradicting
41 themselves. The hunter success is less because we have
42 less hunters, that still doesn't make sense to me
43 because if I don't have success it's still me and it's
44 what I see. It isn't because there's two of me and now
45 there's only one of me. So that argument is kind of
46 void. It's almost like offering us to fish gillnets on
47 fish that aren't there. Let's add more hunters to the
48 area where there's already unnecessary pressure by
49 other hunters. We're not asking for a whole lot, we're
50

0208

1 just asking for our god given right to feed ourselves
2 without having to go into a bay with a fancy yacht,
3 with other boats with them, with deer hanging off of
4 it. To hear a young gentleman from high school at our
5 meeting yesterday feeling bad that he was going to hunt
6 for his grandparents last winter, went where he -- his
7 dad showed him how to hunt in Whitewater Bay and there
8 was a boat in there. You can't -- anyone that's hunted
9 -- all these people you hear testifying know that if
10 they -- if they are what they say they are they know
11 this for a fact that if you go into a bay and there's
12 already a boat in there you might as well keep going
13 because most of the time the boat has other boats with
14 him. As an example if there's only five muskegs in
15 that bay and there's five boats, you better believe
16 each muskeg's got a person in it. So why would I --
17 why would I go in that bay. I would have loved to ask
18 them questions just so you guys better understand where
19 I'm coming from, but I'm respectful.

20

21 ANILCA gives us an opportunity to
22 provide for ourselves. And, Madame Chair, it's always
23 in certain circles it's said Natives only want to live
24 off of food stamps and welfare. And this is just me
25 being honest. People -- you know, they want you to be
26 honest and then when you're honest they get offended.
27 If we were allowed the access to our resources my
28 grandfathers were, we wouldn't need welfare. We'd go
29 out -- right out here and get what we need. We know
30 how to do that. But we're stuck within our system and
31 all we have is ANILCA to help us maintain a certain way
32 of life and try not to be a burden on the State. We
33 don't want handouts, that -- that is -- that's never
34 been who we were as people.

35

36 I heard a gentleman he's given away
37 moose meat and I appreciate that, but we grew up on
38 deer meat and seal meat. And everything this area
39 provides for us. One of the things that isn't part of
40 this formula and we discussed yesterday was the sea
41 cucumber fishery that started on Admiralty Island and
42 now the sea cucumber fishermen fish in October and they
43 see deer, they're opportunists as well, if they see
44 deer they're going to go take the deer while their
45 hunting or while they're sea cucumber fishing.

46

47 I'd welcome anyone on the phone to come
48 to Angoon and see our harbor. The biggest boat you're
49 going to see is probably my boat, a 18 foot Olympic

50

0209

1 because I'm too old to be in a Lund anymore. Everyone
2 else is in a Lund.

3

4

5 We're not asking for special
6 privileges, we don't mind the competition from Juneau,
7 what we do mind is when they miss deer and train them
8 to run away when we show up.

8

9

10 I'm not a Facebook politician, I'm not
11 trying to accomplish anything for likes on Facebook. I
12 see a lot of social media surrounding this. What I am
13 trying to do is represent my community in a fashion
14 that allows us to take care of ourselves, take care of
15 each other like we've always done. I have a hard time
16 understanding why Juneau area hunters feel that it's
17 important that we're having an impact on them. When I
18 originally started the process I wanted the whole west
19 side of Admiralty for Angoon. And then I heard
20 comments and Juneau and Gustavus so I moved the
21 boundary closer to Angoon to try to find common ground
22 to where Juneau would say oh, that makes sense. They
23 don't want to negotiate, they want us to just say let's
24 go with what the State says and I don't agree with
25 that. If I did, Madame Chair, we wouldn't be having
26 this conversation and I would have never submitted the
27 proposal.

27

28

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I feel -- I feel really bad about
submitting this because the State brought more hunters
here with their YouTube video. And that was a lesson I
learned on my own that to put a little more thought
into something before I do anything. And I should have
done that not knowing the State when they recite the
constitution, Article 14, Section 8, says all resources
belong to all Alaskans equally. So when you spend
money creating a YouTube video that opposes a proposal
I put in, that's not true representation of our
constitution. I am an Alaskan resident, always have
been my whole life. I understand the State laws and
Federal laws because our elders taught us we have to
walk in both worlds and the only way to do that is to
understand both sides of the law and ANILCA is part of
that. And just because they say there isn't a
conservation concern doesn't make it so.

I -- you know, I'd rather go back to
the original proposal where we ask for September 15th
through November 30th because it feels like I was
negotiated right out of the intent I was trying to do.

0210

1 All I'm asking is let's try this, see what -- see what
2 happens and by golly I'll give the gentleman my phone
3 number and if things turn out good I'll tell him, I'll
4 say hey, this is working great for Angoon.

5

6 MADAME CHAIR PITKA: Thank you.

7

8 MR. HOWARD: And to the question of how
9 do I know it's not anyone else, but a Juneau boat, I
10 know people from Cake and Sitka. I've got a lot of
11 friends in both places. I communicate with Cake on a
12 regular basis, almost daily with the Organized Village
13 of Cake because I work for the tribe as well. So I'm
14 not doing this because of a competition thing, I'm
15 doing this for a survival thing of our community. I
16 welcome you guys to come visit us in the wintertime.
17 Visit, not come and go hunting, just come see. I
18 mentioned this at a meeting one time. There's
19 something about going out hunting and coming back with
20 everything you went out for. And the only way I could
21 explain that feeling is you gentlemen and ladies going
22 home with your paycheck. That's the same feeling, a
23 successful hunt. The opposite is also true. Spending
24 the last few dollars of your pack and coming home with
25 nothing.

26

27 Madame Chair, I mentioned if we don't
28 have success we can't go to Costco, we can't go to
29 Carr's. I could talk about this all day long, but I
30 wish.....

31

32 MADAME CHAIR PITKA: Oh, sorry. I --
33 well, it's 5:45 right now. I'm sorry, can you
34 please.....

35

36 MR. HOWARD: I understand that, but
37 there was also.....

38

39 MADAME CHAIR PITKA:begin to wrap
40 it up.

41

42 MR. HOWARD: I understand.

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44 MADAME CHAIR PITKA: Yeah, we're not
45 going to be able to finish this proposal tonight so
46 we're going to come back at it tomorrow morning. Thank
47 you very much for your testimony today.

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49 MR. HOWARD: Thank you for your time.

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MADAME CHAIR PITKA: Yeah, thank you very much for your time, I really appreciate it. And I appreciate all the comments that we've gotten today.

MR. HOWARD: Thank you.

MADAME CHAIR PITKA: So at this time I would like to recess until tomorrow morning at 9:00 a.m. And we will begin -- we'll begin with public testimony on this proposal right after we do non-consensus agenda items.

Thank you all for your time and your attention today. I really appreciate it. Very, very diligent work, you guys.

(Off record)

(PROCEEDINGS TO BE CONTINUED)

