

NORTHWEST ARCTIC FEDERAL SUBSISTENCE
REGIONAL ADVISORY COUNCIL

PUBLIC MEETING

TELEPHONIC - ALASKA
March 16, 2020
9:00 a.m

COUNCIL MEMBERS PRESENT:

Michael Kramer, Chairman
Barbara Atoruk
Louie Commack
Enoch Shiedt
Replogle Swan

Regional Council Coordinator, Zach Stevenson

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P R O C E E D I N G S

(Teleconference - 3/16/2020)

(On record)

CHAIRMAN KRAMER: Good morning, everybody. Mike Kramer, Chairman. Number one, the invocation. I'd like to go ahead and start off by saying a very sincere condolences to all the people who lost loved ones within the last couple weeks here in Northwest Alaska. I know it's been pretty devastating, but our thoughts and prayers are with all of you guys.

If we could have a moment of silence.

(Moment of silence)

MR. SHIEDT: Hello. Attamuk here. Can't hear nothing.

(Moment of silence)

CHAIRMAN KRAMER: Okay. Attamuk, thank you for joining us. I just sent very sincere condolences to all the people in the region who have lost loved ones over the last week from the Chairman and the Board.

I'd like to go ahead and call this meeting to order at 9:01 Monday morning.

Item number 3, roll call, Secretary.

MS. ATORUK: Well, I'll have to call it by -- Reppi, are you on?

(No response)

MS. ATORUK: Louie Commack.

(No response)

MS. ATORUK: Enoch Shiedt.

MR. SHIEDT: Here.

MS. ATORUK: Thomas Baker.

1 (No response)

2

3 MS. ATORUK: Barb. We don't have a
4 quorum, sir. You only have three members online.

5

6 Thank you.

7

8 MR. SHIEDT: Hang on. Louie is trying
9 to call me. Maybe he can't get through. Hello?

10

11 CHAIRMAN KRAMER: Yeah, I'm here.

12

13 MR. SHIEDT: I've got to put it on
14 hold. Louie is trying to call me. Maybe he's having a
15 hard time connecting.

16

17 CHAIRMAN KRAMER: Okay. We'll give him
18 a few more minutes.

19

20 MR. SHIEDT: Yeah. Let me see if I can
21 call him back.

22

23 CHAIRMAN KRAMER: Okay.

24

25 MS. ATORUK: Is Brenda (sic) still on
26 from Deering? Zach?

27

28 MR. STEVENSON: Barb, can you hear me?

29

30 MS. ATORUK: Yeah, I can hear you.

31

32 MR. STEVENSON: I haven't heard him
33 sign on yet.

34

35 MS. ATORUK: I know, but is she still a
36 Council member from Deering?

37

38 MR. STEVENSON: Yes.

39

40 MS. ATORUK: Okay. Thanks.

41

42 MR. KRON: Real quick, Mr. Chair. Tom
43 Kron here at OSM. As Zach said, if we don't have a
44 quorum yet, we'll have to hold off on voting on things,
45 but you can still go ahead with non-action items,
46 Council member reports, various items and then come
47 back to approve the agenda, those kinds of things, and
48 officers when we do have a quorum. So we can go ahead
49 and proceed if you wish.

50

1 Thank you, Mr. Chair.

2

3 MS. ATORUK: We're trying to get a
4 Council member online.

5

6 MR. SHIEDT: Attamuk here. Louie says
7 he's trying to get in, trying to call, but he's not
8 getting through.

9

10 MS. ATORUK: How could he not?

11

12 MR. SHIEDT: I don't know.

13

14 MS. ATORUK: Zach, maybe you can try
15 and call him.

16

17 MR. STEVENSON: I'm going to sign off
18 for a moment, Mr. Chair, and try to get Louie Commack
19 phoned in. One correction, through the Chair, Raymond
20 Lee, Jr. is from Buckland, not Deering.

21

22 MS. ATORUK: I was just asking about
23 Brenda from Deering. Brenda Moto from Deering is a
24 Council member, right?

25

26 MR. STEVENSON: Yeah, the -- Raymond
27 Lee, Jr. is our only Council member from the
28 Buckland/Deering area.

29

30 MS. ATORUK: Oh, so Brenda, what's her
31 name, Moto is gone?

32

33 MR. STEVENSON: Beverly.

34

35 MS. ATORUK: Oh, Beverly?

36

37 MR. STEVENSON: Yeah.

38

39 MS. ATORUK: Okay. I thought she was
40 still on.

41

42 MR. STEVENSON: No. I'm going to sign
43 off to try to reach Louie. I'll be right back.

44

45 MR. SHIEDT: I just put it on hold and
46 call him. So how many do we have right now without
47 Louie? There's three of us only?

48

49 MS. ATORUK: There's only three of us.

50

1 You, me and Mike. So we don't have a quorum, but we'll
2 just be discussing issues and topics and probably
3 tabling them for the fall meeting.

4

5 MR. SHIEDT: Okay.

6

7 (Off record comments)

8

9 MS. ATORUK: Mike, the Council members
10 we have, if you have the list in front of you, it's
11 Reppi from Kivalina, Louie from Ambler, Raymond Lee,
12 Jr. from Buckland, Enoch and Thomas from Kotzebue. Is
13 that it? Including you that's seven?

14

15 CHAIRMAN KRAMER: Yeah.

16

17 MR. STEVENSON: Zach Stevenson dialing
18 back in. Louie, are you there?

19

20 (No response)

21

22 MR. STEVENSON: Mr. Chair, was Louie
23 Commack able to dial in?

24

25 CHAIRMAN KRAMER: I haven't heard him
26 yet.

27

28 MR. STEVENSON: While we're waiting for
29 him to dial in would you mind if I just shared a few
30 minor additions to the agenda?

31

32 CHAIRMAN KRAMER: That's fine.

33

34 MR. STEVENSON: Okay. I was asked by
35 our Acting Regional Director Tom Doolittle after item
36 number 5, review and adopt the agenda, to do a brief
37 safety update. With the permission of this Council I
38 would imagine that would take no more than a minute or
39 two. It would be under item number 5, safety update.

40

41 CHAIRMAN KRAMER: Uh-huh.

42

43 MR. STEVENSON: Under item number 10,
44 new business, item A, Fisheries Program Information
45 update. That update will be given by Karen Hyer.

46

47 CHAIRMAN KRAMER: Okay.

48

49 MR. STEVENSON: Under item 11, agency

50

1 reports, 11(c), Bureau of Land Management, we have
2 Walker Gusse and Bruce Seppi joining us.

3
4 Under National Park Service we'll be
5 joined by Maija Lukin tomorrow.

6
7 Under U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service we
8 have Susan Georgette and Bill Carter representing the
9 Selawik National Wildlife Refuge.

10
11 Under item 11(f), Alaska Department of
12 Fish and Game we have a presentation from Alex Hansen.
13 Also with the State of Alaska we have Captain Rex
14 Leath.

15
16 Lastly, under Office of Subsistence
17 Management we have presentations from Tom Kron, who is
18 on the teleconference this morning, who will be joining
19 us tomorrow as well, and Orville Lind.

20
21 That concludes the updates to the
22 agenda, Mr. Chair.

23
24 CHAIRMAN KRAMER: Okay. That sounds
25 good.

26
27 MS. ATORUK: Do we have somewhere on
28 the agenda on the reorganization of the Council?

29
30 MR. STEVENSON: Yeah, we have that
31 coming up in just a moment. That's item number 6, the
32 election of officers. Right now we need an action to
33 determine whether or not the Council approves that
34 draft agenda. We need to adopt it if the Council
35 approves it.

36
37 So we need a motion to adopt the draft
38 agenda.

39
40 CHAIRMAN KRAMER: We're at number 4.

41
42 MR. SHIEDT: I move to approve the
43 agenda as amended or changed or whatever.

44
45 MR. STEVENSON: Thank you, Mr. Shiedt.
46 Do we have a second?

47
48 CHAIRMAN KRAMER: Second.

49
50

1 MR. STEVENSON: Second from Member
2 Kramer. So we had a motion from Mr. Shiedt to adopt
3 the agenda as modified and we have a second from the
4 Chair.

5
6 MR. SHIEDT: It's going to be hard
7 without anybody.

8
9 MR. STEVENSON: Any discussion.

10
11 (No comments)

12
13 MR. STEVENSON: Hearing none.....

14
15 MS. ATORUK: We go along, I guess.

16
17 MR. SHIEDT: Yeah, I think we've got no
18 choice. Boy, at a meeting where there's no quorum.

19
20 MR. STEVENSON: Excuse me. You're
21 absolutely correct, Attamuk. I had forgotten that
22 Louie was not on the call. You're correct. We can't
23 take action on the agenda because we don't have four
24 members right now.

25
26 MR. SHIEDT: Somebody is calling in.
27 Maybe it's Louie.

28
29 MS. ATORUK: Look for Thomas. Call
30 Thomas Baker to come in and attend. We need four.
31 He's not that busy on a funeral basis.

32
33 MR. STEVENSON: I just got a text
34 message from Louie stating that he's getting the
35 recording when he's trying to call in to the
36 teleconference. I'm not sure what that's about. Mr.
37 Chair, I'm going to continue to try to reach Louie.

38
39 CHAIRMAN KRAMER: Okay.

40
41 (Off record comments)

42
43 MR. STEVENSON: Mr. Chair. This is
44 Zach Stevenson dialing back in. I just talked with
45 Louie and I confirmed.....

46
47 MR. COMMACK: I'm on, Zach.

48
49 MR. STEVENSON: Did he join us?

50

1 MR. COMMACK: Yeah, I got through.

2

3 MR. STEVENSON: Just to catch you up,
4 Louie, we were on item number 5 on the agenda, which
5 was reviewing and adopting the agenda. We simply
6 stated who would be speaking on several of the topics.
7 There's a safety update under agenda item 5. Under
8 item 11, agency reports, Bureau of Land Management, we
9 have Walker Gusse and Bruce Seppi.

10

11 Under National Park Service, 11(d), we
12 have Maija Lukin presenting. Under item 11E for Fish
13 and Wildlife Service we have Susan Georgette and Bill
14 Carter. Under item 11(f), Alaska Department of Fish
15 and Game we have Alex Hansen presenting. Also with the
16 State of Alaska we have Captain Rex Leath. Under item
17 11(g) Office of Subsistence Management we have Tom Kron
18 and Orville Lind.

19

20 We had a motion from Mike Kramer to
21 adopt the agenda as modified, seconded by Enoch Shiedt.
22 We didn't have a quorum, which we have now, to adopt
23 that motion. So, Mr. Commack, do you want to weigh in
24 on that motion to adopt the agenda as modified?

25

26 MR. COMMACK: Yeah. I thought about it
27 last night. Are we going to spend eight hours on the
28 agenda and the meeting itself?

29

30 MR. STEVENSON: Through the Chair,
31 Louie. This is a pretty skinny meeting book right now.
32 We may get done early.

33

34 MR. COMMACK: The reason I ask is we're
35 having a lot of phone problems up here. We keep
36 getting cut off every day because of the storm I would
37 think. So how many items do we have?

38

39 MR. STEVENSON: We have a total of 12
40 items on the agenda and right now we're on item 5,
41 review and adopt the agenda.

42

43 MR. COMMACK: Okay. I'll agree to
44 that.

45

46 MS. ATORUK: Excuse me, for the record.

47

48 CHAIRMAN KRAMER: Yeah, go ahead.

49

50

1 MS. ATORUK: Zach, Enoch made the
2 motion and Mike seconded that for correction, please.

3
4 Thank you.

5
6 MR. STEVENSON: Thank you, Barb.

7
8 CHAIRMAN KRAMER: And we skipped item
9 number 4, welcome and introductions.

10
11 MS. ATORUK: I think we're good on
12 that. We hear everybody's online except for Council members.

13
14 CHAIRMAN KRAMER: Okay.

15
16 MR. STEVENSON: Mr. Chair.

17
18 CHAIRMAN KRAMER: Go ahead.

19
20 MR. STEVENSON: Just for clarification
21 is there anyone who's joined us on the teleconference
22 that has not introduced themselves so far. If so,
23 would you please state your name.

24
25 MS. HYER: Hi, this is Karen Hyer with
26 U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service. I'm here in the
27 Anchorage office.

28
29 MR. LIND: Camai. This is Orville
30 Lind, Native Liaison at OSM office. Good morning,
31 everyone.

32
33 MS. ATKINSON: Hi, this is Hannah at
34 Western Arctic National Parklands.

35
36 MR. STEVENSON: Good morning, everyone.
37 Thanks for joining us.

38
39 MS. PETRIVELLI: This is Pat Petrivelli
40 with Bureau of Indian Affairs here in Anchorage.

41
42 MR. STEVENSON: Good morning, Pat.

43
44 DR. REAM: Good morning, everyone.
45 This is Joshua Ream, Regional Subsistence Program
46 Manager for the National Park Service.

47
48 MR. HANSEN: Alex Hansen here, Alaska
49 Department of Fish and Game, Kotzebue.

50

1 MS. OKADA: Good morning. This is
2 Marcy Okada, Gates of the Arctic National Park and
3 Preserve calling from Fairbanks.
4

5 MR. SCHAEFFER: Good morning. This is
6 Damon Schaeffer with NANA calling from Anchorage.
7

8 CHAIRMAN KRAMER: Is there anybody else
9 online?
10

11 (No comments)
12
13

14 CHAIRMAN KRAMER: Hearing none. Item
15 5.5 is a safety report by Zach.
16

17 MR. STEVENSON: Thank you, Mr. Chair.
18 I wanted to thank everyone for participating by
19 teleconference. Usually we meet in person and we are,
20 as of last week, OSM has rescheduled the remaining five
21 Regional Advisory Council meetings to teleconferences
22 out of concern for the recent spread of the Coronavirus
23 or Covid-19.
24

25 In an effort to ensure as best we can
26 public participation in this process while also trying
27 to reduce the potential exposure to this virus. I was
28 asked to share a brief safety update and specifically
29 just encourage people to be mindful of how they're
30 feeling and if people don't feel well to visit with
31 your physician and also to be mindful of elders and
32 youth in our communities who might be more vulnerable
33 and that we be mindful of others during these unusual
34 times.
35

36 What I am noticing is that the concern
37 for others and respect for elders and youth are values
38 that are essential to the Inupiat Ilitqusia, the
39 traditional Inupiat values. I know that these are
40 uncertain times, but I also know that by working
41 together we will rise above these challenges and do so
42 in a way that's positive.
43

44 I just wanted to thank everyone for
45 your participation today. Remember to be good to our
46 neighbors during these uncertain times. That concludes
47 my safety update, Mr. Chair.
48

49 MR. KRON: Mr. Chair. Again, this is
50

1 Tom Kron here at OSM. You had a motion to adopt the
2 agenda as modified and it was seconded, but you have
3 not voted on it yet. Just a comment/recommendation.
4

5 Thank you, Mr. Chair.
6

7 CHAIRMAN KRAMER: Okay. Thank you.
8 With that motion and being seconded, all those in favor
9 of adopting the agenda please say aye.
10

11 IN UNISON: Aye.
12

13 (No opposing votes)
14

15 CHAIRMAN KRAMER: That's four,
16 unanimous consent. Adoption of the agenda has been
17 approved. Item number 6, election of officers. Zach,
18 it's up to you guys and the board. Do you guys want to
19 go ahead and table that until the next meeting?
20

21 MR. SHIEDT: Attamuk here. I'd like to
22 table it because we need to have elections with all
23 members. I feel like we need to table this. I propose
24 we table this.
25

26 MS. ATORUK: Second it.
27

28 MR. COMMACK: I agree.
29

30 CHAIRMAN KRAMER: Seconded. All those
31 in favor say aye.
32

33 IN UNISON: Aye.
34

35 (No opposing votes)
36

37 CHAIRMAN KRAMER: That's four,
38 unanimous consent to move the election of officers to
39 the next fall meeting. Item number 7, review and
40 approval of previous meeting minutes.
41

42 MS. ATORUK: I can't get into my email
43 to see anything. We can even table that until the fall
44 meeting.
45

46 MR. COMMACK: I agree.
47

48 MR. SHIEDT: I'll second your proposal,
49 Barb, to table it. I have it, but it's not fair to the
50

1 others.

2

3 CHAIRMAN KRAMER: All in favor of
4 moving the approval of the previous minutes to the fall
5 meeting 2020 please say aye.

6

7 IN UNISON: Aye.

8

9 (No opposing votes)

10

11 CHAIRMAN KRAMER: That's four, motion
12 carried. Approval of moving the previous meeting
13 minutes to the fall 2020 meeting.

14

15 Number 8 reports. Council members.
16 We'll start with Louie up on the Kobuk.

17

18 Go ahead, Louie, you're first.

19

20 MR. COMMACK: Oh, okay. Thank you, Mr.
21 Chair. Welcome to everybody and thank you for being
22 online with all the commissioners and everybody else.
23 As you're all aware, everybody is very cautious of
24 what's going on in our region. Other than that I have
25 a report on -- we've been very fortunate this winter.
26 There's been caribou above Shungnak and Kobuk and
27 across Ambler all winter long. We're very grateful for
28 that.

29

30 Other than that people -- we had a hard
31 winter. People have been trying to haul wood and
32 maintain heating their homes, but now it's starting to
33 warm up a little bit. With that thank you very much.

34

35 CHAIRMAN KRAMER: Thank you.

36

37 Barbara, you're next.

38

39 MS. ATORUK: Okay. Good morning,
40 everyone. I'm calling in from Kiana and we're very
41 aware of what's going on downstate, within the state of
42 that coronavirus. We still have tissue on our shelves
43 here and then not as bad as downstate or even in
44 Anchorage.

45

46 We're doing good here in Kiana except
47 for rabid foxes and lynx are coming into the village
48 and attacking some animals, some of our pets. So a lot
49 of foxes are being put down. The boys would go around

50

1 chasing the fox until they get it or a lynx. The lynx
2 attacked some people, I think, and was hitting into the
3 walls of the house or the poles or whatever, but they
4 got that one too. Any dog that was tied up that is
5 attacked is being put down.

6
7 Yesterday we were being the main
8 hunters because we were right on the street and can see
9 animals coming up from below the hill and we did see
10 one and then put it on VHF and the boys went out and
11 got that one.

12
13 Other than that hunters are coming in
14 with some caribou. The odd thing was yesterday I got a
15 call saying a bull caribou was harvested, but when they
16 opened it up, it smelled really bad, like it was in
17 rut. Is that possible? Has anybody ever experienced
18 that this time of year? I didn't know what to do when
19 they called me or say anything. I said if it is, then
20 I wouldn't eat it. That was the only call that I got.

21
22 Other than that everyone is doing good.
23 It has been a hard winter. It's been very cold. We're
24 not used to that 40 below anymore like we were used to.
25 Other than that everyone else is taking care of each
26 other and helping each other here. We have to.

27
28 I don't think anything else to say but
29 have a good morning.

30
31 CHAIRMAN KRAMER: Thank you, Barbara.

32
33 Go ahead, Attamuk.

34
35 MR. SHIEDT: Okay. Good morning all.
36 I have a couple here. It's a hard winter for us and
37 it's been cold. Starting with the fall we hardly get
38 any sheefish, which is unusual. A couple people puts
39 nets at the mouth and at Pike Spit they hardly get any.
40 Like the guy with the dog team he put up nets and in
41 four days he got four sheefish only and after that he
42 get only two, another three days, so they're doing
43 something. But the tide was coming in strong, so they
44 must be way up the river.

45
46 Noatak people were commenting that they
47 were getting rabid fox and lynx at the village and
48 there's rabbits in town. So that's due to the probably
49 warming, they're affecting all over. These are the
50

1 things I hear at Kivalina and Noatak. They saw a rabid
2 fox too at Kivalina.

3
4 I said this at our winter meeting in
5 Anchorage that a kid from Buckland, Ed Noorvik, and
6 they were pulled out from Facebook because they were
7 told that they were going to get cited for hunting and
8 I never see him, but I hear about him. They were
9 showing pictures of -- at fall after boating, with
10 snowmachine. That there was worms in the hind quarter,
11 not in the joint. Most times between the sections, you
12 know, they got different sections. Like in the hind
13 quarter, even on the front they were seeing some.

14
15 And I talked to the kid and he said
16 don't even mention my name. I'm scared I'm going to
17 get cited. I'm not going to use my snowmachine. I
18 think that's the trouble we're having right here due to
19 that citation they had at Kivalina and it's affecting
20 all over.

21
22 Our ice conditions are favorable this
23 year. It's unusual, it's cold. I got a call from
24 Kivalina saying, yeah, we have ice this time. Look
25 better for spring break up. It's going to happen and I
26 hear people from Nome sure would like to come this way
27 for crabbing. I know we have nothing to do with the
28 ocean that much, but they're getting wiped out toward
29 Nome.

30
31 That's all I have except it's cold, ice
32 is thick. It's over four feet already.

33
34 That's all I have. Thanks.

35
36 CHAIRMAN KRAMER: Thank you, Attamuk.
37 I suppose I'll give my Council and Chair report at the
38 same time. I agree with everybody that the winter has
39 been very cold. I've been wanting to try to get up to
40 Kobuk to do some trapping up that way, but 30 below is
41 not fun on an old man anymore.

42
43 We started getting a lot of snow in the
44 beginning portion of the year all the way up to just
45 January. We had a serious lack of snow. When we did
46 get snow, it just blew away. There's a lot of bare ice
47 out there. That's kind of a blessing in a way because
48 it made the ice thicker and safer for people to travel.

49
50

1 In the fall people were having some
2 problems trying to get caribou because of them just not
3 wanting to come near the river. As for the winter
4 caribou harvest, a lot of people have been harvesting
5 some behind Kotzebue on the lower portion of the Noatak
6 up by Joneses Trail and back behind Sheshalik and the
7 Igikpak (ph) Mountains, in that area.
8

9 As for moose I've heard some people
10 harvest some moose and fair amounts of moose harvested.
11 Other than that we haven't had really very many
12 problems around here. Some foxes have been coming into
13 town, a lot of rabbits running around town.
14

15 I still get questions after the caribou
16 herds, you know, the amount of caribou we still have
17 left in the herd. We'll probably hear that when Fish
18 and Game comes up. It's always been an interesting
19 concern.
20

21 Other than that that's about all I have
22 to say.
23

24 MR. STEVENSON: Thank you, everyone.
25 Through the Chair. That brings us to item number 9 on
26 the agenda, which is public and tribal comments on
27 non-agenda items. We do this each morning of a
28 meeting. Are there any public or tribal comments on
29 non-agenda items that people would like to address to
30 the Chair.
31

32 (No comments)
33

34 MS. ATORUK: I don't think we have any
35 public.
36

37 MR. STEVENSON: Okay. Hearing none.
38 We can always come back to that too if that comes up
39 over the next day or two.
40

41 That takes us to item number 10, new
42 business. To the Chair, item 10(a) is the Fisheries
43 Program informational update. I believe that brings us
44 to Karen Hyer.
45

46 MS. HYER: Good morning, Council
47 members. This is Karen Hyer with Office of Subsistence
48 Management and I have two updates that I'm going to be
49 presenting to you this morning.
50

1 The first one is just an update on
2 where we are with our Fisheries Resource Monitoring
3 Program. That is the program within OSM that funds
4 research throughout Alaska. The second part of my
5 presentation will be -- our fisheries regulatory cycle
6 is now open so we're accepting proposals. We'll start
7 with the funding then we'll move to the regulation.
8

9 The 2020 Monitoring Program was
10 presented to you when we were last together in
11 Kotzebue. On January 28th through the 30th the Federal
12 Board met and they recommended funding of the draft
13 plan that we had presented to you. Currently two
14 projects are funded in your area.
15

16 The first one is traditional ecological
17 knowledge of Dolly Varden and whitefish species in
18 Northwest Alaska. That project was presented in your
19 book at our last meeting and it is an HMTEK project
20 that will collect information on harvest throughout
21 that region.
22

23 The second one that was funded in your
24 region is a life history variability in mixed stock
25 analysis of Dolly Varden on the Noatak River. Again,
26 that project was summarized in your book at the last
27 meeting. It is going to collect life history
28 information on Dolly Varden in the Noatak River and
29 both of those will be funded and they will start this
30 summer.
31

32 2020 will be the first field season of
33 those two projects. So we're wrapping up the 2020 and
34 we're starting the 2022. It's kind of a continual
35 process with this program.
36

37 So I just want to kind of briefly go
38 over the whole cycle again so you understand where we
39 are in the process. We start out and we go to the
40 Council and ask them what their research priorities
41 are. So we'll be doing that this fall.
42

43 Once we've established the research
44 priorities we'll be putting out very late fall, early
45 winter a notice of funding opportunity where we let the
46 investigators know what the priorities are and that
47 they can submit proposals. They'll be submitting
48 proposals that will be due in the spring and then we'll
49 start the review process.
50

1 Just to remind the board the very first
2 part of the review process is the Technical Review
3 Committee and they review all the proposals. Then it
4 goes out to the RACs and the RACs are allowed to
5 comment on the proposals and then it comes back to our
6 office and we put them all together.

7
8 The Interagency Staff Committee
9 comments on the proposals and then we put together a
10 draft plan that the Board approves. So that's the
11 complete cycle and we're finishing the 2020 with the
12 Board's approval and now we're beginning to fund those
13 projects.

14
15 This summer, working up to the fall
16 meeting, is our opportunity to work with the Federal
17 and State managers and the Regional Advisory Councils
18 to kind of gather information and identify the data
19 gaps. Then at this fall meeting we will be presenting
20 -- or we will be giving the RAC the opportunity to
21 develop the priority information needs.

22
23 Right now I'm interested in anybody
24 that wants to work with us to help develop the PINs and
25 you can volunteer now or you can volunteer later. I'll
26 be working with Zach and we'll continue to do outreach
27 to collect the information that then we'll bring to the
28 Regional Advisory Council this fall to develop the
29 formal PINs.

30
31 Does anybody have any questions about
32 that?

33
34 MR. STEVENSON: Karen, may I add one
35 brief clarification?

36
37 MS. HYER: Yes, Zach.

38
39 MR. STEVENSON: The word PIN is the
40 priority information needs, the recommended research
41 that this Council would like to see done on subsistence
42 fisheries issues for the Northwest Arctic Region. What
43 Karen is speaking to is the opportunity for this
44 Council to suggest research ideas or topics that you
45 would like to see funded in the year ahead.

46
47 This is a unique opportunity where you
48 can help to voice some of the interests or needs that
49 you might see in the region for more information on
50

1 subsistence fisheries. Those requests are then
2 reviewed by the State and Federal fisheries managers.
3 Together, that local knowledge and scientific knowledge
4 is used to select research topics that then are made
5 available for proposals and people can submit their
6 ideas to fund that research.

7

8

That's how this process works.

9

10 Again, the opportunity is for this
11 Council to make some recommendations on research
12 priorities or what Karen was calling PINs.

13

14

Thanks, Karen.

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At this point we're going to start seeking that input. It's an informal form of input that we then put together into the formal PINs. At this point it's very much a discussion of what you're seeing, where you think the data gaps are and bringing to us information that you have from your local villages.

MR. STEVENSON: Karen, one quick question for me, through the Chair.

CHAIRMAN KRAMER: Yeah, go ahead.

MR. STEVENSON: Thanks, Mr. Chair. Karen, I know in the past the Office of Subsistence Management had requested a group be formed that helped to recommend those priority information needs for subsistence fisheries research. Is OSM still using that approach? Is a group needed to identify and help recommend those priority information needs?

Thank you.

MS. HYER: No, Zach, we're not putting together a group anymore. In fact, we're just going

1 out to individuals and asking for individual input.
2 Our solicitor recommended we not use working groups,
3 but we still need that local knowledge. So people can
4 volunteer now and we can contact them or we'll just be
5 following up and contacting them in the next couple
6 months.

7
8 MR. STEVENSON: Thanks, Karen. That's
9 clear. Through the Chair. Is there anyone that would
10 be interested in sharing some recommendations for
11 subsistence fisheries research that they would like to
12 see done or we could have Karen follow up with you
13 after this meeting by telephone.

14
15 Thank you, Mr. Chair.

16
17 CHAIRMAN KRAMER: I think both of those
18 species are very important to our region, especially
19 Kivalina and Noatak. I don't know of very many people
20 harvesting char or trout up in the Kobuk or in the
21 Buckland River. I know this year I've seen a lot of
22 harvesting in Noatak and Kivalina. Hopefully by this
23 fall we'll have a few more members and hopefully we'll
24 have someone from Noatak.

25
26 MS. ATORUK: Mr. Chair.

27
28 CHAIRMAN KRAMER: Yeah, go ahead.

29
30 MS. ATORUK: I was thinking about this
31 the other day when I was thinking about the fish since
32 this is a fish meeting. On the salmon studies that
33 have been going on on the Kobuk every summer it's been
34 very helpful for us here at the village for that. If
35 we would share some reports on how the salmon is doing,
36 I know it's doing good, but then still the health of
37 the salmon and now the reports that are going in
38 regarding even the sheefish that they are doing studies
39 on on the river. Is there a way we can get copies or
40 hear the report on how that is going or how they are
41 doing?

42
43 Karen, do you have that report or do we
44 need to go to Fish and Game who initiates that study
45 here on the Kobuk River?

46
47 MS. HYER: Mr. Chairman. Council
48 members. I would be happy to get that report and give
49 it to you. I'll follow up with you later, Barb, after
50

1 this meeting and make sure that I'm giving you exactly
2 what you want. Yeah, I'd be the person that would help
3 organize that. If there's something in addition to the
4 report that you would like as a presentation to the
5 RAC, I'd be happy to organize that for you.

6
7 In addition, I failed to mention, we
8 had two investigators that we're going to present when
9 we're going to meet in person. The first one was Penny
10 Crane and she works in the genetics lab. The last time
11 we were together you had requested a presentation from
12 her. She has that presentation ready to go.

13
14 The second one was Bill Carter from the
15 Refuge up in Selawik and he has a presentation of his
16 work through the FRMP. I recommend both of those
17 presentations are very important to the RAC and they're
18 both somewhat detailed and I recommended that they
19 postpone those presentations so they could actually
20 meet with you in person and answer your questions. It
21 would give the RAC an opportunity to engage further.

22
23 So the next time we meet in person
24 together those two will be presenting and I will work
25 with you, Barb, and if you want anyone from the State
26 to come too we can organize that. Any time you want
27 some information or you want it presented please let me
28 know because I am more than happy to get that to you.

29
30 Any other questions?

31
32 MS. ATORUK: If it's possible if
33 they're going to give reports, can they send us copies
34 of their reports that they have made to present to us
35 in the fall so we could be ready or have some questions
36 regarding?

37
38 MS. HYER: Absolutely, Barb. We can
39 certainly arrange for that so you can see everything
40 ahead of time.

41
42 MS. ATORUK: All right. Thank you
43 much.

44
45 MR. CARTER: This is Bill Carter in
46 Kotzebue. The sheefish report that we did on the
47 Selawik is already on the OSM website that you can
48 download if you want to look at it ahead of time.

49
50

1 MS. ATORUK: Okay. Thank you.

2

3 MS. HYER: Barb, I'd be happy to follow
4 up with a hard copy sent to you also.

5

6 MS. ATORUK: Yes, please. Thank you.

7

8 MR. COMMACK: Karen, this is Louie.
9 Could you also send me a hard copy?

10

11 MS. HYER: Absolutely. At any time I
12 can send you a hard copy of anything and I'll be sure
13 to get Bill's work to you. Feel free to contact me
14 directly or Zach any time if there are any reports you
15 want.

16

17 MR. COMMACK: Mr. Chairman. My concern
18 is maybe -- I fished over the last few falls and there
19 seemed to be a lot of sheefish in Upper Kobuk. There's
20 no more dog teams that people used to rely on to feed
21 the dog teams, so there is a lot of sheefish up here.
22 Maybe we should be grateful for that, but I don't know
23 what's the numbers.

24

25 Thank you very much.

26

27 CHAIRMAN KRAMER: Karen, this is Mike.
28 I'd like a hard copy of that also.

29

30 MS. ATORUK: Just send it to all the
31 Council members. There's only seven of us.

32

33 MR. SHIEDT: Yeah, might as well.
34 Attamuk here.

35

36 MS. HYER: Absolutely. Because I know
37 sometimes the internet is a little bit slow as it gets
38 farther and farther away from Anchorage. I'd be happy
39 to send everybody hard copies.

40

41 CHAIRMAN KRAMER: Is there any further
42 questions for Karen from the Council.

43

44 MS. ATORUK: Thank you, Karen.

45

46 MS. HYER: Okay, Mr. Chairman and
47 Council members. I just want to briefly go over our
48 fisheries regulatory cycle update. That's on Page 10
49 of your books.

50

1 We are now accepting regulatory
2 proposals to change fisheries regulations throughout
3 Alaska. There's a couple really important things to
4 highlight here. First, our deadline is April 20th, so
5 any proposal needs to be submitted to our office by
6 April 20th. These proposals can be submitted as
7 individuals or as the Council.
8

9 If there's some burning issues, we can
10 discuss them right now. I've been talking to Barb a
11 bit. She's had some concerns about some regulatory
12 issues and we've already started discussing those.
13 Barb, I did send you a text this morning, but I'm not
14 sure whether you've gotten it yet or not just to follow
15 up.
16

17 Now is the time if the Council has any
18 concerns or they're interested in any proposals, we can
19 certainly discuss them here now or you can work with
20 Zach later or me later to develop them. The big thing
21 is they need to be submitted to our office by April
22 20th. Our analysis process begins and they'll be
23 presented to the Federal Board in January 2021 and then
24 they will actually be put into the books for the period
25 of time starting in 2021.
26

27 If there are any questions, please let
28 me know or if you have any concerns, let's discuss them
29 now.
30

31 MS. ATORUK: Okay. I've got answered
32 the questions I had on that proposal proposed on the
33 upper Kobuk on the stream fishing. So that's covered
34 and I'm good about it. At the time they were doing
35 that proposal I understood for them to be saying Kobuk
36 and Selawik delta, but then I've learned now that it is
37 Kobuk and Selawik drainage and that covers all the
38 sloughs all the way up to the beginning of the Kobuk
39 River.
40

41 Thank you much.
42

43 CHAIRMAN KRAMER: This is Chairman
44 Kramer. I know there's been a lot of concerns
45 regarding warmer water temperatures. I've been
46 noticing -- I'm not too sure who it is, but it's
47 something Alaska Observatory, been monitoring the ocean
48 ice and the weather in Northwest Alaska for the last
49 year or so. I mentioned to them about the warmer
50

1 temperatures in the water, that they start trying to do
2 some -- a lot of people up here try to crab in the
3 wintertime or the summertime and, you know, possibly
4 hang out some thermometers that can record that data so
5 we have something to fall back on in case something
6 decides to crash.

7
8 We don't know what kind of effect it
9 has on salmon up in the stream beds and trout and
10 sheefish. I'd like to have a continued study on that
11 especially in the streams and rivers in Northwest
12 Alaska and also the ocean.

13
14 MR. SHIEDT: Attamuk here. I'll follow
15 up on what Mike said. As commercial fishermen this
16 summer, we got the results. There was a lot of salmon
17 out there, but when I went up the river, up the river
18 was colder than the ocean. Sorry, the other way. The
19 ocean was colder than the river and they weren't going
20 up the river because the water is too warm. The temp
21 has a lot to do with our fish. They were coming in
22 late big time.

23
24 Thank you.

25
26 MS. ATORUK: I second that. That's
27 right, they were slow. After Fish and Game did their
28 studies and stuff the fish came in and then they closed
29 like about August 20 or so, their last week of fishing.
30 After they were done the salmon came in. Some of the
31 locals put nets out and stuff and shared with us here
32 at the village of Kiana. I forgot to mention that.
33 Thank you, Attamuk.

34
35 MR. CARTER: This is Bill Carter in
36 Kotzebue again. Brendan Scanlon and I have been
37 discussing water temperature monitoring program that
38 has stations around all the villages. It's still in
39 preliminary planning process because we're looking for
40 a particular type of temperature monitor that can be
41 easily downloaded by people in the village rather than
42 having us go out and look at all these monitors on a
43 regular basis trying to cut down on the cost of this.

44
45 That is in the process and hopefully
46 we'll have it ready to go for the FRMP beginning of
47 next year.

48
49 CHAIRMAN KRAMER: Thank you. Any

50

1 further questions.

2

3

(No comments)

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MS. HYER: Mr. Chair and Council.
That's all I have for the fisheries issues. Again, I
just want to remind you that any time you have any
questions or you need any follow up or you want hard
copies of any papers, please feel free to contact
either Zach or I and we'll be sure to get those to you.

Thank you.

CHAIRMAN KRAMER: Thank you, Karen.
We're on item 10(c), approval of 2019 annual report.

Zach.

MR. STEVENSON: Thank you, Mr. Chair.
If I may share a brief summary of the purpose of the
annual report. The annual report is something that the
Council develops for delivery to the Federal
Subsistence Board once a year.

It is a powerful way for the Council to
voice its interests and concerns to the Federal land
managers who develop the regulations for managing fish
and wildlife for subsistence purposes in Alaska.
Oftentimes these are issues that may have come up
frequently on your Council or major concerns or issues
of interest to the Council.

The annual report is a way to bring
those issues to the attention of those Federal land
managers and also to help stimulate some conversation
where as the land managers review the annual report
they then respond in writing. So it's a way to
document those concerns or issues and also to help get
a response and stimulate conversation, dialogue with
those agencies.

The annual report right now is on Page
13 of the meeting book. If there are additions or
things that the Council would like to see added to that
report, they can add to that over the next two days.
Right now on Page 13 of your meeting book you will see
that there are two items that are on the annual report.

The first was addressing the impacts to

1 Federally qualified subsistence users from the proposed
2 Ambler Road. The Council had voiced concern about air
3 quality during construction, how the road might affect
4 subsistence users and in particular disturbing the lead
5 migration of the Western Arctic Caribou Herd. Also
6 expressed concern about effects to water quality,
7 fisheries habitat, and spawning areas.
8

9 On Page 14 meeting book, the second and
10 final item on the annual report was a request for
11 support for the development of a youth education
12 program to provide training for greater participation
13 in the Subsistence Regional Advisory Councils and the
14 Federal regulatory process. That item was requested by
15 former Council Member Tristan Pattee of Ambler.
16

17 The thought there was to help provide
18 support for youth and developing an education program
19 that would provide training, particularly training that
20 would help to get youth involved in the RACs, in the
21 Regional Advisory Councils. This training could help
22 prepare the next generation of leaders to serve on the
23 Councils and encourage youth leadership in their
24 communities.
25

26 Thank you, Mr. Chair.
27

28 MR. COMMACK: Mr. Chairman.
29

30 CHAIRMAN KRAMER: Go ahead, Louie.
31

32 MR. COMMACK: Zach, I'm just curious
33 how the Federal government proceeds with the big
34 projects. Say it could be oil and gas on Federal lands
35 or mining or timber cutting. That process itself. I
36 know there's been a green light from the Trump
37 Administration of all the projects in the Federal
38 lands. Sometimes I think it's without due process.
39 That means having a good dialogue with the people that
40 are going to be impacted in such a big way. Is that
41 part of your report under regulatory process?
42

43 MR. STEVENSON: Through the Chair.
44 Responding to Louie Commack's question. One of the
45 roles of the Regional Advisory Council is to provide a
46 place or a forum where opinions or questions around
47 Federal land management can be voiced and responded to.
48 That includes issues that affect not only Federal lands
49 but State lands too. That is why this Ambler Road
50

1 issue was addressed because there were several Council
2 members that saw this issue as a concern and wanted to
3 have the issue addressed by the Subsistence Regional
4 Advisory Council.
5

6 That is part of what the Council was
7 formed to do, was to create a safe space where those
8 types of issues can be addressed and that hasn't
9 changed. That is still the case. When there are
10 issues of interest to this Council, if there is
11 agreement that that issue should be addressed, we
12 address it. That's part of how we do business.
13

14 Did that answer your question, Louie?
15

16 MR. COMMACK: Partly. Mr. Chairman.
17 When we bring out issues of this magnitude, big
18 projects say across Alaska or wherever, I know it's
19 happening Lower 48 too. They call it consultation. It
20 seems like they come in and try to do a consultation
21 after the deciding vote or whoever decides what's going
22 to happen. We try to put in our two cents, but it's
23 already sort of decided. I sometimes don't agree with
24 the process itself. It should be -- the people should
25 be contacted, have a dialogue and then the process
26 should go wherever it's supposed to go for final
27 determination.
28

29 MS. ATORUK: Through the Chair.
30

31 CHAIRMAN KRAMER: Go ahead, Barb.
32

33 MS. ATORUK: That goes with the same
34 thing as impact on Ambler Road. This is after the
35 fact. It's a done deal. I don't know why we would be
36 even asking or talking about it to try to put our input
37 in regarding the Ambler Road.
38

39 I think this is what Louie is talking
40 about. We need to be informed from the ground up, from
41 the bottom up and be involved in it. Then we're only
42 considered as the advisory for fish and wildlife. Just
43 an advisory. We don't have that much teeth to put in
44 any kind of recommendations towards anything that goes
45 on on Ambler Road.
46

47 That request for support that Tristan
48 had put in was good. I was in support of that. I
49 didn't realize or didn't think early on that he was
50

1 already out of the Council. He was a good addition
2 earlier on. So I'm just saying that in thought. Thank
3 you.
4

5 MR. SHIEDT: Attamuk here. My thought
6 is that too. It always happens after. If you look at
7 protocol for the Park Service, they're going to --
8 mining like that is going to be approved no matter what
9 we say. I think as Natives, Barbara, Chair, what we
10 need to do is we need to study even down to the mouth
11 to try and delay it. Our input won't do nothing, but
12 we need to have a stronger voice saying we need to
13 study a lot of things before the road could be built.
14 Hopefully we delay it another 50 years.
15

16 Thank you.
17

18 CHAIRMAN KRAMER: I agree on that. I
19 think the Regional Advisory Council should be -- there
20 should be a permit process because it's a subsistence
21 concern and it's a subsistence resource concern with
22 that road project or mine or any other thing that they
23 plan on doing.
24

25 It states within that permit that we
26 approve or disapprove that we have final say because
27 it's our subsistence resources. It's food on our
28 table. It's food for our family. It's food for our
29 future generations to come. Do they necessarily care?
30 We don't know.
31

32 I think we're part of a Federal agency,
33 OSM. We work under them. We should be able to have
34 final say so on a permit that we go over, we approve.
35 We look at the permit and with the information that
36 they provide. If we don't approve, then that's final
37 say. The State of Alaska shouldn't have any other
38 power over our decision because we live here. We
39 survive on that stuff. With the cost of food and all
40 this other stuff it's going to take a drastic impact on
41 a lot of people that live up here.
42

43 MR. STEVENSON: Mr. Chair.
44

45 CHAIRMAN KRAMER: Go ahead, Zach.
46

47 MR. STEVENSON: If I may add briefly.
48 Responding to Louie's question a moment ago. One tool
49 that the Council has in its toolbox that it can
50

1 exercise or use when it wants to is called cooperating
2 agency status. What that means is that when any
3 Federal agency is considering a big project, those
4 affected can request through that agency to be a
5 cooperating agency, meaning that as the plans for a
6 project were being developed those cooperating agencies
7 have to be consulted directly so that their interests
8 or concerns are addressed in the planning process
9 rather than at the end of the project when it's already
10 been decided.

11
12 In the case of the Ambler Road there
13 were a number of communities that are in the area of
14 where that road might be developed that were selected
15 -- requested I should say to be cooperating agencies,
16 meaning that when Park Service and BLM were looking at
17 the proposed project they met with those groups and
18 requested their input, their opinions, their
19 information and tried to answer their questions as the
20 project was being scoped or designed.

21
22 That is a tool that this Regional
23 Advisory Council can use in the future that when big
24 projects are being considered if the Council wants to
25 participate and learn about what's being considered and
26 share its views as the project is being developed it
27 can do that. You have that authority and you can
28 exercise that authority if and when you want to.

29
30 Thank you, Mr. Chair.

31
32 MS. ATORUK: Through the Chair. We're
33 kind of behind that now. We're kind of lacking. We
34 didn't know or understand that to begin with, but I
35 knew about the cooperating business and it's kind of
36 hard to get in, but then it can work. With this Ambler
37 Road we're way far behind already. It's so far ahead
38 of time. Even trying to put an input in right now is
39 kind of nil. When we get to this executive order, this
40 is going to be a different light.

41
42 MR. SHIEDT: You're right, Barbara. In
43 the beginning they went to the corporations and NANA
44 was behind them to make this Ambler Road possible due
45 to minerals that could hopefully be in there. They
46 went to the wrong people to begin with. They went to
47 NANA and Doyon.

48
49 MS. ATORUK: And not go to the IRA

50

1 offices in the villages up here, up this way.

2

3 MR. COMMACK: What's that, Barb? I got
4 cut off.

5

6 MS. ATORUK: And not going to the IRA
7 office which are kind of running in and out in the
8 Upper Kobuk.

9

10 CHAIRMAN KRAMER: Any further questions
11 on that one?

12

13 MR. COMMACK: Yeah. Mr. Chair.

14

15 CHAIRMAN KRAMER: Go ahead, Louie.

16

17 MR. COMMACK: Zach, when the Gates of
18 the Arctic going to decide or discuss the Federal land
19 that the road has to go on, has that been done already?

20

21 MS. ATORUK: Yeah.

22

23 MR. STEVENSON: Through the Chair.
24 Louie, we have Marcy Okada joining us for agency
25 reports and I would direct that question to Marcy. I
26 don't have the answer to that right now.

27

28 MS. ATORUK: Through the Chair. We are
29 on the annual report. We just have two items on there
30 regarding the impact of the Ambler Road and then
31 request support submitted by Tristan Pattee at the
32 moment? These are the only two items on the annual
33 report?

34

35 CHAIRMAN KRAMER: Yeah.

36

37 MR. STEVENSON: Mr. Chair. I'm sorry,
38 Barbara. Go ahead.

39

40 MS. ATORUK: No, go ahead.

41

42 MR. STEVENSON: Through the Chair. I
43 was just going to.....

44

45 MR. COMMACK: Mr. Chair. Mr. Chair.

46

47 CHAIRMAN KRAMER: Go ahead.

48

49 MR. COMMACK: This is Louie again. I'm

50

1 speaking in regards that I'm concerned about
2 subsistence or subsistence component within all this
3 dialogue we've been having with whomever it's not being
4 discussed like it should be. The Ambler Road was
5 approved 40 years ago and yet the subsistence component
6 of this whole thing it's not really talked about until
7 we started about two, three years ago trying to make
8 sure that culture and our hunting and fishing is
9 protected and it's in there in paper.

10

11 CHAIRMAN KRAMER: Okay. Zach.

12

13 MR. STEVENSON: Through the Chair.
14 Thank you for that comment, Louie. I was just going to
15 state that even though we have that approval of the
16 annual report on item 10(c) of the agenda, we have had
17 other Councils table that item until the end of their
18 agenda so that if there are other issues or interests
19 that come up during their meeting they can include that
20 in their annual report. So you have that authority if
21 you want to table this issue for approval until the end
22 of the meeting and then add those items that may come
23 up to your report you may certainly do that.

24

25 Thank you, Mr. Chair.

26

27 CHAIRMAN KRAMER: All right.

28

29 MS. ATORUK: Okay. Things to add on to
30 the annual report at the end of this meeting? Because
31 I know it has to be submitted.

32

33 MR. STEVENSON: Through the Chair.
34 Barb, were you suggesting that we table item 10(c)
35 approval of the annual report until the end of the
36 meeting?

37

38 MS. ATORUK: I guess so because I'm
39 trying to look for it on my email here to see if I
40 could read up on it, but then I can't find it. Yeah,
41 let's table it until the end of the meeting and then
42 bring it back up and then see if anyone has any more
43 other issues that we need to put in on the annual
44 report because it needs to be submitted. We can't
45 table it until the fall meeting.

46

47 MR. SHIEDT: Chairman. Attamuk here.

48

49 CHAIRMAN KRAMER: Go ahead, Attamuk.

50

1 MR. SHIEDT: Yeah, Barbara is right.
2 On some of those emails Zach sent us I can't even open
3 some of them. It takes forever. I'm looking for it
4 right now and I can't even open some. Okay, thank you.
5

6 CHAIRMAN KRAMER: Does anybody have any
7 objections to moving it to 11(h)?
8

9 MS. ATORUK: So moved.
10

11 MR. SHIEDT: I'll second it. I'm
12 trying to be on mute same time. I'll second. Attamuk.
13

14 CHAIRMAN KRAMER: Okay.
15

16 MR. COMMACK: Question.
17

18 CHAIRMAN KRAMER: All those in favor of
19 moving the approval of fiscal year 2019 annual reports
20 to 11(h). That will be a separate bullet after agency
21 reports. So we can discuss that after the agencies
22 have given their reports. All those in favor.
23

24 IN UNISON: Aye.
25

26 (No opposing votes)
27

28 CHAIRMAN KRAMER: So moved. So the
29 annual report will be moved to 11(h) and that will be a
30 separate bullet to agency reports.
31

32 Anything else, Zach?
33

34 MR. STEVENSON: Motion carries. Thank
35 you, Mr. Chair.
36

37 CHAIRMAN KRAMER: Okay.
38

39 MS. ATORUK: Mr. Chair.
40

41 CHAIRMAN KRAMER: Go ahead, Barbara.
42

43 MS. ATORUK: I have a question, Zach.
44 On this what you sent out to us on email, I have a
45 winter 2020 executive order, RAC appointments, 2020
46 Northwest Arctic, OSM winter, Alaska RealID. Where in
47 this is the agenda?
48

49 MR. STEVENSON: Mr. Chair.
50

1 CHAIRMAN KRAMER: Go ahead, Zach. You
2 mean the annual report? Go ahead, Zach.

3
4 MS. ATORUK: No, I'm looking for the
5 agenda on this email that Zach sent out.

6
7 MR. STEVENSON: Through the Chair. The
8 agenda is in the winter meeting book and that's on
9 Pages 1 and 2 of the meeting book.

10
11 MS. ATORUK: Which one is the winter
12 meeting book on what you emailed out? Where is the
13 agenda? Did you email the agenda out or you sent out
14 the book?

15
16 MR. STEVENSON: Through the Chair.

17
18 CHAIRMAN KRAMER: Go ahead, Zach.

19
20 MR. STEVENSON: The agenda is on Pages
21 1 and 2 of the meeting book and the meeting book was
22 included in the attachments that I emailed to everyone.
23 The meeting book was attachment number 1, winter 2020
24 NWARAC meeting book. If you open that first attachment
25 and look at Pages 1 and 2, that's where the agenda is
26 located.

27
28 MS. ATORUK: Through the Chair.

29
30 CHAIRMAN KRAMER: Go ahead, Barbara.

31
32 MS. ATORUK: We are having a problem
33 previewing this file. That's what it's saying here.
34 So I can't get into it. We're having problems with it
35 period. So in the future -- I know you guys are
36 short-staffed. That's the excuse you guys put out. We
37 used to be pushed to make a complete paperwork sent out
38 to the Councils before any meeting is done. Whether it
39 be draft or any form of writing, it was sent out to the
40 Councils.

41
42 I'm trying to say we can't print
43 anything out from our emails if we have emails out
44 here. That needs to be considered. So with that I --
45 I can listen some more.

46
47 Thank you.

48
49 MR. STEVENSON: Through the Chair. May

50

1 I respond?

2

3

CHAIRMAN KRAMER: Yeah, go ahead.

4

5

6 MR. STEVENSON: I want to thank Barbara
7 Atoruk for that comment and it's absolutely correct
8 that the sharing of meeting materials in a timely way
9 before a meeting is key to effective participation in
10 these Regional Advisory Council meetings. I agree 100
11 percent. No question.

11

12

13

14

15

16

17

18

19

The winter 2020 meeting book and the
materials for that meeting book were submitted four
months ago. The meeting books were not received until
very recently and there was not enough time to mail
them out. I agree completely that having meeting books
ready and at least a month in advance is essential to
effective meeting participation.

20

21

Thank you, Mr. Chair.

22

23

MS. ATORUK: Through the Chair.

24

25

CHAIRMAN KRAMER: Go ahead, Barbara.

26

27

28

29

30

31

32

33

34

MS. ATORUK: Zach, when you are
submitting those paperwork in to have the meeting book
ready, you had the hard copies and those are at best to
even send those out to us so we have an idea. You have
them already. If you submitted them four months ago,
you could have sent us hard copies then of what was
being submitted so we have at least something to go on
at these meetings.

35

36

Thank you.

37

38

MR. STEVENSON: Through the Chair.

39

40

41

42

CHAIRMAN KRAMER: Louie, were you
having any problems pulling up your information?
Hello, Louie.

43

44

45

MR. COMMACK: I'm not even -- because
it don't work for me up here.

46

47

48

49

50

CHAIRMAN KRAMER: Okay. One thing I'm
wondering is that I think what we should do is continue
this meeting tomorrow and these materials can be faxed
to their IRAs so they have a clearer understanding of

1 what we're talking about instead of proceeding with
2 this meeting and them being left out. I think it would
3 be very wise for us to make sure all of us have the
4 appropriate paperwork.
5

6 MR. SHIEDT: Attamuk here. I had to
7 ask my granddaughter to fix my computer just to be able
8 to open these. If it's going to happen tomorrow, I
9 won't be here completely tomorrow. I've got to take
10 care of my niece for her buriel, coffin-making,
11 cross-making tomorrow because they're going to have the
12 funeral Thursday and I haven't even started yet.
13

14 MS. ATORUK: Attamuk, you're in a
15 better position than we are. You can go into Fish and
16 Wildlife Service and they can print those out for you.
17 Zach, if you can fax the office in Kiana, even the
18 agenda, at Kiana NANA office.
19

20 MS. GEORGETTE: This is Susan. I could
21 go fax it right now if that would be helpful. I'm
22 happy to print anything for people in Kotzebue. If we
23 were going tomorrow I could put stuff on Bering Air,
24 but I'll go fax the agenda right now, Barb.
25

26 MS. ATORUK: Okay. Can you fax it to
27 the NANA office at 475-2267.
28

29 MS. GEORGETTE: I will do that right
30 now.
31

32 MS. ATORUK: Zach, if you would
33 transfer all this information to email to Monique (ph).
34 I don't know what her email address is though.
35

36 MS. GEORGETTE: I have her email
37 address. I could email that to her right now too.
38

39 MS. ATORUK: Okay. Could you do that,
40 please?
41

42 MS. GEORGETTE: Yes, I'll go do that
43 right now.
44

45 MS. ATORUK: Okay. Thank you much.
46 That office, Zach, can be used and it's better instead
47 of sending it to the Council members because we really
48 don't have any printers, we have no way of printing
49 these out and stuff. We each in the villages out here
50

1 have NANA offices and they're very helpful people.
2 They can print it out and give it to us. So that's
3 information that you need to keep for you to use for
4 future use. If you ask us and talk to us on texting
5 us, please quit sending so much information on our
6 messenger lines. That fills up our boards up here. I
7 have to keep deleting because of that. It takes up so
8 much space. That would be appreciated.

9
10 Thank you.

11
12 MR. STEVENSON: Through the Chair.
13 Copy that, Barb.

14
15 MS. ATKINSON: This is Hannah.
16 Following those questions I wanted to know if, Louie,
17 there's a place we can send materials for you in
18 Ambler.

19
20 MR. COMMACK: I got another email.
21 I'll call you.

22
23 MS. ATORUK: Louie, do you have a NANA
24 office?

25
26 MR. COMMACK: Yeah, we do. I got
27 another email that might work.

28
29 MS. ATORUK: Are you able to print?

30
31 MR. COMMACK: I don't know. We'll find
32 out. Yeah, we're able to print. When my email don't
33 work sometimes we try to use the other one. Sometimes
34 it don't work either. We'll get it here somehow.

35
36 MS. ATORUK: Okay.

37
38 MR. STEVENSON: Through the Chair. I
39 wanted to add in response to Barb's point a moment ago
40 about the late circulation of the meeting books. The
41 Council, if it would like, may add that to its annual
42 report to the Federal Subsistence Board.

43
44 Thank you, Mr. Chair.

45
46 CHAIRMAN KRAMER: Yeah, I think adding
47 to the circumstances this whole virus thing has been
48 catching everybody off guard, you know, and making
49 everybody rush and try to get things out to us. That's
50

1 very understandable, you know. We've kind of got to be
2 patient with what you guys are doing there in
3 Anchorage. We just need to have our materials faxed to
4 an organization in these communities.
5

6 Thank you, Zach, for everything that
7 you do and your staff. You guys are working hard and
8 the Park Service and Fish and Wildlife for assisting us
9 in getting all of our necessary paperwork to continue
10 this meeting.
11

12 What's the plan? Are we going to
13 continue after lunch after they've received all their
14 hard copies or what's your guys' plans?
15

16 MS. ATORUK: It's only 10:30.
17

18 CHAIRMAN KRAMER: I know. I just don't
19 want to leave you, Barb, in the dark without the
20 necessary paperwork to be able to understand what we're
21 talking about.
22

23 MS. ATORUK: I know. If that stuff is
24 faxed, I know if Monique is in the office, she'll run
25 it down to me. I mean we just got this stuff Friday at
26 5:00 and there was no way for me to try to get it
27 printed out and our meeting was happening today. So I
28 was stumped with having to print anything out anyway to
29 start with. I know coronavirus is scaring everybody
30 right and left. If we want to go on with this meeting,
31 we need to stay focused to to have this meeting going.
32 That's just what I'm saying.
33

34 Thank you.
35

36 MR. KRON: Mr. Chair. This is Tom Kron
37 with OSM here in Anchorage. Barb is exactly right.
38 I've got about two dozen Northwest Arctic Subsistence
39 Regional Advisory Council books here in front of me.
40 Again, given what happened here last week and on
41 Friday, the decision to go with teleconferences for the
42 remaining five Council meetings happened Friday. So
43 Zach has been scrambling to let people know. Again, it
44 sounds like we have help there from the Refuge, the
45 ability to try to fax these out to the Council members
46 that are participating.
47

48 If we can do this annual report item
49 this afternoon, that would be great. If it needs to be
50

1 transferred until tomorrow morning. One thing you
2 could do today is vote since you have a quorum vote to
3 accept the annual report with modifications that are in
4 process, for example.

5
6 Again, we apologize and I think
7 everybody is aware that things have been changing so
8 fast and information has been coming out and various
9 organizations have been cancelling meetings across the
10 country in response to the coronavirus issue. Again,
11 I'm sorry about all this and appreciate everybody
12 joining and trying to make the best of this situation
13 as we can.

14
15 Thank you, Mr. Chair.

16
17 MR. SHIEDT: Everybody is right.
18 Attamuk here. I think this meeting was rushed to have
19 a teleconference to give Zach time to get back to us
20 because we delayed about a week. I know it might be a
21 problem, but we are pushing Zach a little too fast. We
22 don't want to blame nobody, but due to that virus and
23 everybody is scared of it, even me at my age. I mean
24 some people get it tonight, they will have to go
25 through their packets and go through them.

26
27 I'm in a bind right now. I've got to
28 make a coffin, I've got to make a cross, I've got to
29 make a cover, I'm in charge of digging. I want to
30 start that tomorrow. To me, I've got no choice. I've
31 got to excuse myself tomorrow. And my boiler is down
32 too of all things.

33
34 MR. KRON: Mr. Chair. Again Tom Kron
35 with OSM. Essentially what we were told on Friday was
36 that we can't postpone the meetings. They've already
37 been moved once. At this point we can't move them
38 again. So we're going to have to proceed as best we
39 can. Again it sounded like there was a possibility of
40 getting stuff sent out, so we could take this annual
41 report discussion up after lunch.

42
43 Again, one option with the annual
44 report for example might be for Zach to just read the
45 items. It's only a page and a half and he could just
46 read that over the phone so people could hear what
47 resulted from your fall meeting. Again, in terms of
48 delaying this meeting until next week we can't do that.

49
50

1 Thank you, Mr. Chair.

2

3 MR. SHIEDT: Okay, thank you.

4

5 MR. STEVENSON: Mr. Chair, may I
6 respond?

7

8 CHAIRMAN KRAMER: Go ahead, Zach.

9

10 MR. STEVENSON: I would be happy to
11 briefly read for the Council the annual report. It's
12 only two pages if you would like that.

13

14 Thank you, Mr. Chair.

15

16 CHAIRMAN KRAMER: Would the Council
17 members listen to that? Is that the wish of the
18 Council?

19

20 MS. ATORUK: Go ahead. He can read.

21

22 CHAIRMAN KRAMER: Okay.

23

24 MR. STEVENSON: Reading the draft
25 annual report. The report is addressed to Anthony
26 Christianson, the Chair of the Federal Subsistence
27 Board, and reads: Dear Chairman Christianson, the
28 Northwest Arctic Subsistence Regional Advisory Council
29 or Council submits the fiscal year 2019 annual report
30 to the Federal Subsistence Board under the provisions
31 of Section
32 805(a)(3)(D) of the Alaska National Interest Lands
33 Conservation Act or ANILCA.

34

35 At its public meeting held in Kotzebue,
36 Alaska, on October 28-29, 2019, the Council identified
37 concerns and recommendations for this report. The
38 Council finalized and approved this report at its
39 winter 2020 meeting in Kotzebue. The Council wishes to
40 share information and raise a number of concerns
41 regarding the implementation of Title VIII of ANILCA
42 and the continuation of subsistence uses in the
43 Northwest Arctic Region.

44

45 Here's the first issue, number 1.
46 Impacts to Federally qualified subsistence users from
47 the proposed Ambler Road. The Council requested a
48 report on the proposed Ambler Road from the Bureau of
49 Land Management (BLM), the lead agency in the Ambler

50

1 Road Environmental Impact Statement. The Council asks
2 the Board to assist the Council on receiving the
3 information
4 from BLM on how they plan to reduce impacts.
5

6 Then I have bullets for consideration.
7 The first is to air quality during road construction
8 and post-construction road usage, from the release of
9 naturally occurring asbestos known to cause cancer.
10

11 The second bullet reads: To Federally
12 qualified subsistence users resulting from disturbances
13 to the lead migration of the Western Arctic Caribou
14 Herd.
15

16 The third bullet states: To water
17 quality, fisheries habitat, and important spawning
18 areas.
19

20 Lastly, to Federally qualified
21 subsistence users from disturbances to graves,
22 cultural, archaeological, and historic sites. That
23 concludes the first item.
24

25 The second item reads: Support for the
26 development of a youth education program to provide
27 training for greater participation in the Subsistence
28 Regional Advisory Councils and the Federal regulatory
29 process.
30

31 It goes on to states the Council
32 requests the Board to provide support and direction in
33 developing an education program to provide training for
34 youth to participate in the Subsistence Regional
35 Advisory Councils and the Federal regulatory process.
36 The Council believes that such training could help
37 prepare the next generation of leaders to serve on the
38 Councils and encourage youth leadership in each
39 community.
40

41 The Council also believes that youth
42 education could help reinforce science, technology,
43 engineering, and mathematics
44 instructions in the classroom and provide for hands-on
45 training about how to participate in the Federal
46 regulatory process. Such an experience will provide
47 opportunities to youth to learn traditional knowledge
48 of hunting, fishing, and gathering from elders. At the
49 same time, it will prepare youth for leadership
50

1 position in their communities and strengthen the
2 Councils.

3
4 The report concludes with: The Council
5 thanks you for the opportunity to assist the Federal
6 Subsistence Management Program in meeting its charge of
7 protecting subsistence resources and uses of these
8 resources on Federal Public lands and waters. We look
9 forward to continuing discussions about the issues and
10 concerns of subsistence users of the Northwest Arctic
11 Region. If you have questions about this report, please
12 contact me via Zach Stevenson, Subsistence Council
13 Coordinator, and it provides my email and phone number.

14
15 Sincerely, Michael Kramer, Chair.

16
17 Then cc'd on the report are the Federal
18 Subsistence Board; this Council; the Acting Assistant
19 Regional Director of Office of Subsistence Management,
20 Tom Doolittle; Suzanne Worker, who is the Policy
21 Coordinator of OSM; Greg Risdahl, the Fisheries
22 Division Supervisor also with OSM; Chris McKee, the
23 Wildlife Division Supervisor at OSM; Tom Kron, who is
24 on the call this afternoon; Lisa Maas, the Wildlife
25 Biologist with OSM; Hannah Voorhees, the Anthropologist
26 with OSM; myself; George Pappas, the State Subsistence
27 Liaison at OSM; Ben Mulligan, the Deputy Commissioner
28 at Alaska Department of Fish & Game; Mark Burch, the
29 Special Projects Coordinator of ADF&G; the Interagency
30 Staff Committee; and, lastly, the Administrative
31 Record.

32
33 That concludes the Council's draft
34 Annual Report.

35
36 Thank you, Mr. Chair.

37
38 CHAIRMAN KRAMER: Thank you for that
39 report, Zach. Does anybody have any further questions
40 from the Council?

41
42 MS. ATORUK: Mr. Chair. For the time
43 being, with the kind of crunch we are on right now, I
44 would move to go ahead and approve the annual report
45 that we have at hand and get it prepared for
46 submission.

47
48 MR. SHIEDT: I second that.

49
50

1 MS. ATORUK: Thank you.
2
3 CHAIRMAN KRAMER: There's a motion on
4 the floor, seconded by Attamuk. All those in favor say
5 aye.
6
7 IN UNISON: Aye.
8
9 (No opposing votes)
10
11 CHAIRMAN KRAMER: Okay. Motion carried
12 for the approval of the annual report.
13
14 MR. COMMACK: Mr. Chair. I barely
15 could hear you. I'm having problems again.
16
17 CHAIRMAN KRAMER: Okay. Motion carried
18 by unanimous consent.
19
20 MR. COMMACK: What's the vote?
21
22 CHAIRMAN KRAMER: For yeas, yeses.
23
24 MR. COMMACK: Did you say on the annual
25 report?
26
27 MS. ATORUK: Approving the annual
28 report as Zach read to us.
29
30 CHAIRMAN KRAMER: Yes, it was the
31 annual report.
32
33 MR. COMMACK: Thank you. I ask that
34 you do a roll call.
35
36 CHAIRMAN KRAMER: Okay. Roll call
37 vote. Louie Commack.
38
39 MR. COMMACK: If we're dealing with --
40 if I may, Mr. Chairman, if we're dealing with
41 submitting the closure report, the 2019 closure report,
42 I have some concerns in regards -- some of the
43 questions I have concerns would be discussed further,
44 maybe after 1:00 o'clock. Is that the plan?
45
46 MS. ATORUK: No. We were voting on it
47 now because Zach just read the annual report to us and
48 then because of the time.....
49
50

1 MR. COMMACK: I'm talking to the
2 Chairman.

3
4 MS. ATORUK:right now I was
5 asking.....

6
7 MR. COMMACK: I'm talking to the
8 Chairman. I'm not talking to you.

9
10 MS. ATORUK:approve it.

11
12 CHAIRMAN KRAMER: Okay. Louie, you
13 said you had discussion?

14
15 MR. COMMACK: Are we going to have
16 further discussion on Marcy's report?

17
18 CHAIRMAN KRAMER: Yeah, we can go ahead
19 and have further discussion when Marcy does her report.
20 Does any of the Council members have any problem with
21 that?

22
23 MR. COMMACK: What is the deadline to
24 submit this report, Zach?

25
26 MR. STEVENSON: Through the Chair.
27 Louie.

28
29 CHAIRMAN KRAMER: Go ahead, Zach.

30
31 MR. STEVENSON: Through the Chair,
32 responding to Louie's question. What we're aiming to
33 do by the end of this meeting is to have an annual
34 report that is approved by this Council. Any changes
35 that this Council would like to see made to the annual
36 report would be then made after this meeting and
37 submitted. So what we're trying to do now is to vote
38 on the annual report that the Council feels accurately
39 represents its interests and concerns to be presented
40 to the Federal Board.

41
42 Thank you, Mr. Chair.

43
44 CHAIRMAN KRAMER: Do you want to
45 rescind our votes and continue to have discussion on
46 the annual report?

47
48 MR. COMMACK: On my vote, Mr. Chairman,
49 I would like to delay my vote until I hear a report

50

1 from Marcy.

2

3 CHAIRMAN KRAMER: Does any of the
4 Council members agree with that?

5

6 MS. ATORUK: Marcy who?

7

8 CHAIRMAN KRAMER: Okada.

9

10 MS. OKADA: Mr. Chair. This is Marcy
11 Okada. I don't have to give my full report, but I
12 could provide a quick update on the Ambler Mining
13 District Road for Gates of the Arctic.

14

15 MS. ATORUK: Because (cut out) asking,
16 Louie. We're just asking.

17

18 MR. COMMACK: It's up to me how I want
19 to vote. Don't pressure me.

20

21 MS. ATORUK: I know it is.

22

23 MR. COMMACK: Don't talk down on me.

24

25 MS. ATORUK: I'm not talking down on
26 you. I'm just.....

27

28 MR. COMMACK: I'm doing the best I can.

29

30 MS. ATORUK:(cut out).....

31

32 MR. COMMACK: I'm doing the best I can.
33 Point of order, Mr. Chair.

34

35 CHAIRMAN KRAMER: Point of order.

36

37 MR. COMMACK: I'm not voting right now
38 because there's some concerns I want in the final
39 report to the Federal Board. I think they're missing.

40

41 CHAIRMAN KRAMER: Does the Council
42 agree with Louie? Do we want to rescind and do our
43 discussion.....

44

45 MR. STEVENSON: Mr. Chair.

46

47 CHAIRMAN KRAMER:after noon? Go
48 ahead, Louie.

49

50

1 MR. STEVENSON: Zach. We were in the
2 middle of a roll call vote and I know we just heard
3 from Louie Commack. Do we want to hear from the
4 remaining members of that roll call vote?
5

6 Thank you, Mr. Chair.
7

8 MR. COMMACK: Mr. Chair.
9

10 CHAIRMAN KRAMER: Go ahead, Louie.
11

12 MR. COMMACK: We're going to do a 2019
13 closure report on what is happening. This is a very
14 important document that's going to go before our people
15 that might have major decision-making to all the
16 people. So I would like to see some of the information
17 I don't have. Maybe an email or fax. Because I know
18 this is a very important document that we're dealing
19 with.
20

21 Thank you.
22

23 CHAIRMAN KRAMER: Okay. Is it still
24 the wish of the board to continue to have the approval
25 of the 2019 annual report to 11(h) as we had it earlier
26 and we'll be able to receive information from Marcy
27 Okada regarding a lot of that information on the Ambler
28 Road Project.
29

30 MS. ATORUK: Mr. Chair.
31

32 CHAIRMAN KRAMER: Go ahead.
33

34 MS. ATORUK: You're on roll call vote
35 right now. Louie was just stating his issues when you
36 called on him. So you need to complete the roll call
37 vote.
38

39 MR. COMMACK: Right. So you've got
40 three more to go.
41

42 MS. ATORUK: Yeah.
43

44 CHAIRMAN KRAMER: I've got Louie.
45 Barbara.
46

47 MS. ATORUK: I'll go with yes to submit
48 the annual report.
49
50

1 CHAIRMAN KRAMER: Louie.

2

3 MR. COMMACK: I will wait until I hear
4 more from the report that Marcy will report.

5

6 CHAIRMAN KRAMER: Okay. Attamuk.

7

8 MR. SHIEDT: Yes.

9

10 CHAIRMAN KRAMER: Okay. I say no
11 because Louie is right. We need to be provided more
12 information on that report regarding the Ambler Road
13 Project. It's a tie, two and two. My suggestion is
14 that we table it until 11(h) as planned on the agenda
15 until we hear further information from Marcy Okada
16 during the agency reports. So it is a tie.

17

18 Any further questions from the Council.

19

20 MS. ATORUK: I think what Zach read was
21 pretty informative on what kind of information that
22 we're submitting and I don't know what more can be
23 added on to the annual report that was just read to us.
24 We were tabling it until when, 11(h), after Marcy gives
25 her report and then she really don't have nothing much
26 to report on it as she stated earlier. What more we
27 can add on to the annual report that is not already
28 there?

29

30 MR. STEVENSON: Mr. Chair.

31

32 CHAIRMAN KRAMER: Go ahead, Zach.

33

34 MR. STEVENSON: Responding to the point
35 that Barbara Atoruk just raised. Next on the agenda
36 are agency reports. There are several items under
37 agency reports. If I understand the request from Louie
38 correctly, because the vote was tied the motion has
39 failed, and that would lead us to delay the approval of
40 the annual report until hearing from Marcy Okada.
41 Marcy Okada is under the National Park Service updates.
42 If the Council wishes, we could move that to the very
43 first agency report and that would be the next item the
44 Council will hear on the agenda.

45

46 Thank you, Mr. Chair.

47

48 MS. ATORUK: Mr. Chair.

49

50

1 CHAIRMAN KRAMER: Go ahead, Barbara.
2
3 MS. ATORUK: Can we move Marcy Okada's
4 report up to be the first to give the report, please.
5
6 CHAIRMAN KRAMER: Okay. If it's the
7 wish of the board.
8
9 MR. COMMACK: How many pages is that
10 report?
11
12 MR. SHIEDT: To have a chance to look
13 at it, they're going to fax it to Ambler.
14
15 MR. STEVENSON: Through the Chair.
16 It's two pages, Louie.
17
18 MR. COMMACK: Okay. I'll give you my
19 email, Zach, or somebody. Who's going to email me?
20
21 MR. STEVENSON: I can send it to your
22 -- it's in the meeting book, Louie. It's on Page.....
23
24 MR. COMMACK: I don't have nothing,
25 Zach. No meeting book.
26
27 MR. STEVENSON: Okay. We'll fax it to
28 you, Louie. When we take a break I'll get your fax
29 number, okay.
30
31 MR. COMMACK: Okay. Call me during the
32 break.
33
34 MR. STEVENSON: Okay. Thank you.
35
36 MR. COMMACK: Thank you very much.
37
38 CHAIRMAN KRAMER: Zach, do you want to
39 go ahead and start on the agency reports?
40
41 MR. STEVENSON: I'm showing it's a few
42 minutes before 11:00. Do you want to continue with
43 agency reports or break for lunch?
44
45 CHAIRMAN KRAMER: We can go ahead and
46 break for lunch because I know I have some questions
47 for Department of Fish and Game regarding that bill
48 that was sent to the House of Representatives. I don't
49 understand why a bill was submitted into the House of
50

1 Representatives without further review of the
2 subsistence Regional Advisory Council and the Fish and
3 Game Advisory Council to have input on that bill that
4 was being decided on in the House of Representatives.
5

6 If we can break for lunch, let's go
7 ahead and continue on at 1:00 p.m.
8

9 MR. SHIEDT: Thank you very much. Bye.
10

11 MR. STEVENSON: Thank you, Mr. Chair.
12 We're going to take a break and we'll reconvene at 1:00
13 p.m.
14

15 (Off record)
16

17 (On record)
18

19 CHAIRMAN KRAMER: This is Chairman Mike
20 Kramer. It is 1:00 p.m. and we are reconvening our
21 meeting. Everybody that's on the phone can you please
22 announce yourself.
23

24 MR. COMMACK: This is Louie.
25

26 MS. MIKOW: Hi. This is Beth Mikow,
27 with Division of Subsistence, Alaska Department of Fish
28 and Game.
29

30 MS. VOORHEES: Good afternoon. This is
31 Hannah Voorhees with Office of Subsistence Management.
32

33 MR. SCHAEFFER: Good afternoon. This
34 is Damon Schaeffer with NANA Regional Corporation.
35

36 DR. REAM: Good afternoon. This is
37 Joshua Ream, Alaska Subsistence Region Coordinator,
38 Program Manager for the National Park Service.
39

40 MR. SHIEDT: Attamuk Shiedt, Kotzebue.
41

42 MR. COMMACK: Louie from Ambler.
43

44 MR. SEPPI: This is Bruce Seppi, BLM,
45 Anchorage Field Office.
46

47 MR. KRON: Mr. Chair. This is Tom
48 Kron. Here with me is our court recorder and George
49 Pappas. Thank you, Mr. Chair.
50

1 MS. OKADA: Good afternoon. This is
2 Marcy Okada with Gates of the Arctic National Park and
3 Preserve.

4
5 CHAIRMAN KRAMER: Anyone else.

6
7 MR. STEVENSON: Good afternoon, Mr.
8 Chair. This is Zach Stevenson with the Office of
9 Subsistence Management calling in via teleconference
10 from Eagle River. I've also been informed that Captain
11 Rex Leath with the Department of Public Safety has been
12 called into a meeting, but he will rejoin the
13 teleconference shortly.

14
15 Thank you, Mr. Chair.

16
17 CHAIRMAN KRAMER: Do we have Lance and
18 Alex on the line?

19
20 (No response)

21
22 CHAIRMAN KRAMER: No. How about
23 Barbara?

24
25 (No response)

26
27 CHAIRMAN KRAMER: Okay. Please make a
28 note at this time we are three members. We don't have
29 a quorum. Zach, do you want to just go ahead and
30 continue with the agency reports?

31
32 MR. STEVENSON: Sure, Mr. Chair. I
33 believe we had first on the agenda National Park
34 Service with Marcy Okada reports both on the Ambler
35 Road issue and one of the supplemental materials that
36 was emailed to Council members was an update on sheep
37 for the Gates of the Arctic National Park and Preserve.
38 So I'll transfer over to Marcy Okada.

39
40 MS. OKADA: Hello. This is Marcy Okada
41 with the National Park Service, Gates of the Arctic
42 National Park. I'll start our update with the Ambler
43 Mining District Road.

44
45 August of last year the National Park
46 Service released a draft Environmental and Economic
47 Analysis, also called an EEA, for public review and
48 comments. This document was prepared in response to a
49 right-of-way application submitted by the Alaska
50

1 Industrial Development and Export Authority as part of
2 the proposed Ambler Mining District Industrial Access
3 Project.
4

5 Approximately 20 miles of the proposed
6 road crosses National Park Service lands in the western
7 Kobuk River unit of Gates of the Arctic National
8 Preserve. The comment period for the draft EEA closed
9 on October 29th, 2019 and the final EEA is expected to
10 be completed sometime this month.
11

12 So that's just a quick update on the
13 Ambler Mining Road.
14

15 Are there any questions on that?
16

17 (No comments)
18

19 CHAIRMAN KRAMER: Any questions from
20 Council members.
21

22 MR. COMMACK: Mr. Chair.
23

24 CHAIRMAN KRAMER: Go ahead, Louie.
25

26 MR. COMMACK: When do I bring up this
27 letter? I just received a letter, the annual report.
28 I just got a copy of it, two pages. When do we discuss
29 that or make any amendments to it or any concerns?
30

31 CHAIRMAN KRAMER: Okay. That will be
32 11(h). That was a separate bullet that we added,
33 Louie.
34

35 MR. COMMACK: Okay. Thank you.
36

37 CHAIRMAN KRAMER: Okay. Go ahead,
38 Marcy.
39

40 MS. OKADA: I also have a longer update
41 on our Subsistence Resource Commission and some updates
42 on projects that are occurring with the Western Arctic
43 Caribou Herd as well as the sheep survey update.
44

45 I'll just continue with that. Our
46 Gates of the Arctic National Park Subsistence Resource
47 Commission met last November in Fairbanks. The
48 commission received updates on all four arctic caribou
49 herds; the Western Arctic, Teshekpuk, Central Arctic
50

1 and Porcupine Herds. In addition to this the
2 commission was provided updates on the Ambler Mining
3 Road and various wildlife population survey results.
4

5 Lastly, the SRC took action on Federal
6 subsistence wildlife proposals and Board of Game
7 Western Arctic and Interior Eastern Arctic Region
8 proposals.
9

10 The next meeting was scheduled for
11 April 15th and 16th in Shungnak, but will now be held
12 as a one-day teleconference on April 15th.
13

14 Moving along to four Western Arctic
15 Caribou Herd projects that National Park Service
16 biologists are working on. As you folks already know,
17 the Park Service and Alaska Department of Fish and Game
18 have been deploying collars for decades on Western
19 Arctic Herd caribou. In the fall of 2019 they were
20 able to deploy 43 GPS collars. Additionally, the
21 biologists will use this collar information to track
22 the distribution movements, migration and survival of
23 the Western Arctic Herd.
24

25 The second project focused on
26 statistically analyzing the seasonal aspects of caribou
27 survival by using data location where GPS satellite
28 collars have stopped moving. In the late fall of 2017
29 to 2018, which was a particularly wet and snowy winter,
30 there was an over twofold increase in the risk of
31 mortality of caribou. The causes of the higher
32 mortality during this time are still unknown, but are
33 likely linked to extreme weather conditions, which may
34 be increasingly more common in the future.
35

36 Last summer Park Service biologists
37 teamed up with the University of Cincinnati to initiate
38 a study on the Western Arctic Caribou Herd using
39 dropped antlers in order to understand how long this
40 herd has been using its calving grounds. This is done
41 by extensively surveying areas that are good at
42 preserving antlers and then radiocarbon dating the
43 antlers.
44

45 Areas in the southern portion of the
46 calving area along the Utukok and Colville Rivers were
47 surveyed. A fair number of antlers were found and are
48 being dated this winter. Further surveys will be
49 conducted this coming summer.
50

1 Finally, for the fourth project, we
2 have observed the highest rates of non-migration for
3 the Western Arctic Caribou Herd in recent years and
4 biologists are working to understand whether those that
5 migrate are somehow different than those that don't
6 migrate.

7
8 For approximately one week this
9 mid-March Park Service biologists will be conducting a
10 non-invasive fecal sampling project in the northern and
11 southern portions of the Western Arctic Herd's range.
12 Biologists will fly to recent feeding craters of
13 caribou and collect fresh fecal samples and those will
14 then be analyzed for pregnancy rates, stress hormones
15 and diet.

16
17 Are there any questions on the caribou
18 update?

19
20 MS. ATORUK: Mr. Chair.

21
22 CHAIRMAN KRAMER: Go ahead, Barbara.

23
24 MS. ATORUK: Marcy, since I probably
25 have the total information on how many GPS collars
26 there are outside within the region here?

27
28 MS. OKADA: So if I'm understanding
29 correctly, Barbara, you just want to know how many GPS
30 collars were deployed this past year in the fall time?

31
32 MS. ATORUK: How many there are out
33 there total if you have that. I know you guys deploy
34 like 20 per year.

35
36 MS. OKADA: I believe there's 49 in
37 total.

38
39 MS. ATORUK: Oh, okay. Thank you.

40
41 MR. HANSEN: This is Alex Hansen, Fish
42 and Game in Kotzebue. We have 92 total combined.

43
44 MS. ATORUK: Is that including the 49?

45
46 MR. HANSEN: We had deployed 49 this
47 fall, but total between Fish and Game and Park Service
48 collars we have 92 GPS collars on air right now.

49
50

1 MS. ATORUK: That's just on the ones
2 that got through here or is that up north too?

3
4 MR. HANSEN: Just the Western Arctic
5 Herd.

6
7 MS. ATORUK: Oh, okay. Wow, gee,
8 that's lots. These are mostly on males, right?

9
10 MR. HANSEN: Mostly on females. We
11 only have a few on males.

12
13 MS. ATORUK: Okay. Thank you.

14
15 CHAIRMAN KRAMER: Go ahead, Marcy.

16
17 MS. OKADA: Finally for Dall sheep,
18 results from a 2019 survey indicate that Dall sheep
19 numbers continue to be low in the northeastern portion
20 of Gates of the Arctic compared to before 2013. We
21 estimate that there are about 1,300 sheep in the
22 northeastern portion of Gates of the Arctic, which is
23 still 55 percent fewer than before 2013. The ratio of
24 lambs to ewe-like sheep, which is a measure of
25 potential population growth, has been above average in
26 recent years.

27
28 Nonetheless, the sheep population has
29 not recovered from the 2013 crash. The National Park
30 Service will continue annual surveys in the
31 northeastern portion of Gates of the Arctic in order to
32 monitor changes in sheep population demographics. This
33 year in 2020 all sheep in Gates of the Arctic will be
34 surveyed this summer.

35
36 We also have a new sheep biologist
37 named Will Deacy and he's based out of our Fairbanks
38 Park Service office.

39
40 MS. ATORUK: Okay. So I noticed a
41 letter from Eastern Interior on sheep.

42
43 MR. STEVENSON: Through the Chair.
44 This is Zach. May I respond to Barb's question?

45
46 CHAIRMAN KRAMER: Yeah, go ahead.

47
48 MS. ATORUK: I'm sorry. I was just
49 talking to myself, but I may as well talk to you too.

50

1 I just was reading the letter from Eastern Interior.
2 Is that on sheep, Marcy? Is that within our region or
3 is that a different region? Why are we getting a copy
4 of their letter on our board?
5

6 MR. STEVENSON: Marcy, if I may,
7 through the Chair.
8

9 CHAIRMAN KRAMER: Go ahead.
10

11 MS. OKADA: Please go ahead.
12

13 MR. STEVENSON: This is Zach Stevenson
14 responding to the question from Council Member Barbara
15 Atoruk. Barb, I had gotten a request from the Chair to
16 share two correspondence letters that were requested on
17 March 4th at the Eastern Interior Alaska Subsistence
18 Regional Advisory Council meeting that happened about a
19 week and a half ago in Fairbanks.
20

21 The Eastern Interior is the other
22 region I coordinate and Mike Kramer had asked me to
23 share with the Council the two correspondence letters
24 that were requested by the Council. I think that
25 they're helpful in one regard in that where there are
26 issues of shared interest, be that on Board of Game
27 proposals or on subsistence resources that are
28 important to both regions like sheep, this is an
29 example of how one of the other Regional Advisory
30 Councils have shared issues.
31

32 In the first letter you see about two
33 dozen different Board of Game proposals that were
34 addressed by the Council and it shows whether the
35 Council supported a proposal or they opposed it and
36 their justification. That letter is about seven pages
37 long.
38

39 The other letter is a request from the
40 Council also directed to the Board of Game addressing
41 an interest in developing a hunter ethics and hunter
42 education program to address the resource conflict
43 issues in the region that exists between Federally
44 qualified subsistence users and commercial hunters and
45 guides around the harvest of sheep in the Red Sheep
46 Creek and King Creek area of the Eastern Interior
47 Region.
48

49 So that's why those two letters were
50

1 shared with the Council and I hope that provides
2 clarification for you, Barbara.

3
4 MS. ATORUK: Yeah, it does. If it's
5 within their region, it's their business to deal with
6 it within their region.

7
8 MR. STEVENSON: Right. They were not
9 addressing the Northwest Arctic Region. They were only
10 addressing their own region and it provides an example
11 for this Council about what a neighboring RAC is doing
12 in their own area. Just for our information.

13
14 MS. ATORUK: Thank you.

15
16 MR. STEVENSON: You're welcome.

17
18 MR. KRON: Mr. Chairman. If I could
19 real quickly. We need people that are listening in
20 that are not talking to *6 to mute their phones. We're
21 getting some background noise.

22
23 Thank you, Mr. Chair.

24
25 MR. STEVENSON: Mr. Chair. I had one
26 point of order if I may, just a clarification.

27
28 CHAIRMAN KRAMER: Yeah, go ahead.

29
30 MR. STEVENSON: I recall from this
31 morning that there was a request to table the vote on
32 approving the fiscal year 2019 annual report until
33 after Marcy Okada had given her update -- pardon me,
34 this case on the Ambler Road issue. Do we want to take
35 up the vote at the end of the meeting? I just wanted
36 to make sure we didn't overlook that vote.

37
38 Thank you, Mr. Chair.

39
40 MR. SHIEDT: Chairman.

41
42 CHAIRMAN KRAMER: Go ahead.

43
44 MR. SHIEDT: Attamuk here. Barbara,
45 for your information, our caribou when Susan Georgette
46 and I used to do surveys, they always go Allakaket,
47 Huslia and other village and they used to get our
48 caribou and with collars they were going there. They
49 always hunted and harvested our Western Arctic Caribou

50

1 Herd.

2

3 MS. ATORUK: Yeah, I knew that. I just
4 was asking about that letter from Eastern Interior on
5 the sheep.

6

7 MR. SHIEDT: Okay.

8

9 CHAIRMAN KRAMER: One of the main
10 reasons why I asked for that information on Dall sheep
11 is because Gates of the Arctic is our far eastern
12 portion of the Game Management Unit 23 by Kobuk,
13 Shungnak and Ambler.

14

15 The other question I had for Marcy, is
16 that area still open for hunting?

17

18 MS. OKADA: Mr. Chair, you're correct.
19 The most eastern portion of Unit 23 includes the
20 western portion of Gates of the Arctic and that area is
21 still open, but because it's the Gates of the Arctic
22 National Park it's open to the resident-zoned
23 communities of Ambler, Shungnak, Kobuk. Our
24 understanding is there's not any harvest coming out of
25 those communities heading into Gates of the Arctic.

26

27 CHAIRMAN KRAMER: Okay. Does the
28 population there seem to be somewhat stable?

29

30 MS. OKADA: So this coming summer the
31 entire Park where there's sheep habitat will be
32 surveyed. The last full survey was done in 2015. So
33 we should get results from this coming summer survey to
34 see how that population is doing.

35

36 CHAIRMAN KRAMER: Okay.

37

38 MS. ATORUK: Mr. Chair.

39

40 CHAIRMAN KRAMER: Go ahead.

41

42 MS. ATORUK: I think the reason why the
43 upper Kobuk where it hunts that sheep is because the
44 elders were asking them to leave them alone so they
45 could multiply in growth. I think that's why they
46 weren't hunting them, the upper Kobuk. Louie might
47 know, right, Louie?

48

49 MR. COMMACK: Thank you. During our

50

1 Gates of the Arctic meeting it was discussed and
2 decided on the sheep hunting in upper Kobuk because of
3 the decline in population. The population of the
4 sheep went way below what we could allow hunting. The
5 decision was to stop all hunting because of the decline
6 in population.

7
8 CHAIRMAN KRAMER: Okay. Louie, did
9 Marcy answer your questions that you had regarding the
10 Ambler Mining area?

11
12 MR. COMMACK: Whenever you get to 11(h)
13 I guess. The letter that I finally got, I don't know
14 if any of you got it.

15
16 MR. STEVENSON: You're referring to the
17 annual report? Pardon me, through the Chair.

18
19 CHAIRMAN KRAMER: Go ahead.

20
21 MR. STEVENSON: Just for clarification,
22 Louie, you're referring to the draft annual report,
23 correct?

24
25 MR. COMMACK: Right.

26
27 MR. STEVENSON: That's the letter I
28 read earlier on the record to the Council. Louie, did
29 you have any further questions for Marcy on that Ambler
30 Road issue?

31
32 MR. COMMACK: Yeah, okay. The EIS will
33 be released sometime this month?

34
35 MS. OKADA: So BLM is the lead agency
36 on the final environmental impact statement or the EIS
37 and National Park Service is coinciding our release of
38 the final EEA along with BLM's EIS and it's slated to
39 be released sometime this month.

40
41 MR. COMMACK: Okay. You're saying the
42 Park Service is aligning itself with the BLM EIS
43 report?

44
45 MS. OKADA: Yes. So our final EEA or
46 environmental and economic analysis is due to be
47 released sometime this month along with BLMs final EIS.
48 The Park Service is planning to release our final
49 environmental and economic analysis, so it's an EEA,
50

1 and that's for the approximately 20 miles that would go
2 through Gates of the Arctic.

3
4 MR. COMMACK: When is that? The same
5 time as BLM?

6
7 MS. OKADA: Yeah, we're coinciding the
8 release with BLM.

9
10 MR. COMMACK: So you're saying BLM and
11 the Park Service (indiscernible - phone chatter).

12
13 MS. ATORUK: Attamuk.

14
15 MR. SHIEDT: What?

16
17 MS. ATORUK: We're hearing all your
18 conversation and interfering with the teleconference.

19
20 MR. SHIEDT: I just put it on mute.
21 Sorry about that.

22
23 MS. ATORUK: Okay. Thank you. You may
24 continue.

25
26 CHAIRMAN KRAMER: Go ahead, Louie.

27
28 MS. OKADA: Through the Chair. Louie,
29 if you could repeat your question.

30
31 MR. COMMACK: Okay, Marcy. Could you
32 speak up louder? What I'm trying to get at is the BLM
33 EIS and the Park Service will release date of notice on
34 their decision or is that what you're saying?

35
36 MS. OKADA: Just to clarify it's the
37 final EIS and final EEA that would be released sometime
38 this month. Later, after the release of both
39 documents, a record of decision, which is the final
40 decision, will be made sometime later and that date is
41 yet to be determined.

42
43 MR. COMMACK: Okay. So the final
44 decision by BLM will be sometime later. We don't know
45 what month?

46
47 MS. OKADA: Yeah, that's correct.
48 There's no solid timeframe for that at this point.

49
50

1 MR. COMMACK: Oh, okay. The reason I
2 ask these questions is when we get into that letter
3 then I'll have other questions pertaining to that
4 letter and the date of notice of BLM and Park Service.
5 Thank you.

6
7 MS. OKADA: Mr. Chair. Just one final
8 agenda item for Gates of the Arctic. It's a
9 reappointment letter for the Gates of the Arctic
10 National Park Subsistence Resource Commission. We're
11 just asking the Northwest Arctic Regional Advisory
12 Council to reappoint Louie Commack to our commission.

13
14 At our last SRC meeting held in
15 Fairbanks this past November it was noted that Mr.
16 Commack's term will be expiring in October 2020 and
17 that would be before your next scheduled meeting. I
18 think you folks decided to meet in early November. So
19 if you could reappoint Mr. Commack to our Gates of the
20 Arctic National Park Subsistence Resource Commission at
21 this time. He would like to continue serving on the
22 commission.

23
24 CHAIRMAN KRAMER: Okay. So we're going
25 to have a motion on the floor to reappoint Louie
26 Commack to Gates of the Arctic Resource Commission.

27
28 Is there a motion.

29
30 MS. ATORUK: Are you making a motion?
31 I'll second it. There's only three of us online I'm
32 sure.

33
34 CHAIRMAN KRAMER: Yeah, that's a
35 motion.

36
37 MS. ATORUK: I second.

38
39 CHAIRMAN KRAMER: Seconded by Barb.
40 All those in favor say aye.

41
42 MS. ATORUK: We really don't have a
43 quorum to make an action right now because Attamuk is
44 not online. There's only three of us. We need four to
45 take action.

46
47 CHAIRMAN KRAMER: I think he just muted
48 it, so I'm unsure. Hello, Attamuk, are you there?

49
50

1 (No response)

2

3 MR. STEVENSON: Hello, Attamuk, are you
4 with us?

5

6 (No response)

7

8 MR. STEVENSON: Mr. Chair. I don't
9 hear Attamuk on the line. Because we don't have a
10 quorum to adopt actions, do you want to table the
11 recommendation to reappoint Louie Commack to the Gates
12 of the Arctic SRC until we have quorum?

13

14 CHAIRMAN KRAMER: Okay. That sounds
15 good.

16

17 MS. OKADA: Thank you, Mr. Chair and
18 Council members for your time. I'll just be online for
19 that tabled agenda item.

20

21 CHAIRMAN KRAMER: Okay. Thank you,
22 Marcy. Zach, if I'm correct, we're on 11(a).

23

24 MR. STEVENSON: That's correct, Mr.
25 Chair.

26

27 CHAIRMAN KRAMER: Okay. We'll continue
28 with tribal governments. Is there any tribal
29 governments that have comments or suggestions?

30

31 (No comments)

32

33 MR. STEVENSON: Mr. Chair.

34

35 CHAIRMAN KRAMER: Yeah, go ahead.

36

37 MR. STEVENSON: Under 11(b), Native
38 organizations and Alaska Native corporations I believe
39 Damon Schaeffer with NANA corporation is on the phone.

40

41 CHAIRMAN KRAMER: Okay.

42

43 MR. STEVENSON: Through the Chair.
44 Damon Schaeffer, are you still there with NANA?

45

46 MR. SCHAEFFER: Yeah. Sorry about
47 that. I was trying to figure out how to get the mute
48 off. Can you hear me now?

49

50

1 CHAIRMAN KRAMER: Yeah, we can hear
2 you.

3
4 MR. SCHAEFFER: Okay. Great.
5 Typically, this is usually where I deliver the report
6 for this last season's Trespass Program. We've been, I
7 think with everybody else, in preparation for this
8 coronavirus. Everything has been slowed down a little
9 bit, so we don't have that report that would be
10 delivered today, but it will be ready and available at
11 the next meeting. I just wanted to inform the group
12 about the reports.

13
14 Then I wanted to be available to answer
15 any questions if there were any comments or questions
16 from the group regarding this past season's trespass
17 program.

18
19 CHAIRMAN KRAMER: Any questions for
20 Damon?

21
22 MS. ATORUK: No, but I think you guys
23 are doing good. In Kiana we're talking about starting
24 to have meetings about the spring hunt including this
25 summer caribou hunt because we ran into some little
26 problems last fall when they were hunting.

27
28 Thank you, sir. Have a nice day.

29
30 MR. SCHAEFFER: Yeah, you bet. You
31 know, what I would like to mention though is that we
32 formed the working group. They call it the Northwest
33 Arctic Conservation Law Enforcement Working Group.
34 Really long name. Joe Dallemolle came up with that, so
35 you have to give him a hard time about that.

36
37 That group was formed because we
38 received a recommendation from the RAC to form this
39 working group so we could work as a group cooperatively
40 to address some of the issues that we hear about
41 regarding subsistence impacts in the region. We've got
42 the group formed and we've had some meetings.

43
44 We put together this overview with the
45 mission and we shared that with this committee, but
46 we've also shared it with other groups. We went to the
47 Western Arctic Caribou Herd Working Group and we talked
48 about the work that we're doing and how we're working
49 as one with all the landowners in our region and we've
50

1 had lots of positive responses from that.

2

3 So I wanted to thank the RAC for the
4 suggestion and instructing us to form this group and
5 it's been great. Then this last season being able to
6 -- when we do hear concerns or reports from low flying
7 aircrafts or improperly salvaged animals or trespassing
8 issues, because we have this group we've been able to
9 respond more efficiently to the issues that we're
10 getting from the region. So thanks to the RAC for the
11 suggestion.

12

13 Again, I think from the rest of the
14 groups in the state having this working group is almost
15 a pilot program and the hope is that the other groups
16 will do something similar within the other regions in
17 the state.

18

19 Thank you.

20

21 MR. STEVENSON: Mr. Chair. May I add a
22 brief point?

23

24 CHAIRMAN KRAMER: Go ahead.

25

26 MR. STEVENSON: I just wanted to thank
27 Damon for his efforts and the efforts of Park Service,
28 the Selawik Refuge, NANA and BLM for helping to get
29 this started. I think the Council was really excited
30 to see the collaboration that's happening now to share
31 information between these various land management
32 agencies, helping to resolve some of these issues
33 around caribou. I just wanted to thank you, Damon, for
34 that.

35

36 Also, briefly mention that Joe
37 Dallemolle, who is unavailable to be on the call this
38 afternoon, had talked to me about a month ago and
39 wanted to follow up on a request from the Chair that
40 was made about a year ago to invite the Federal
41 Aviation Administration to shre a brief report and
42 update the Council on what steps are needed to address
43 some of the concerns around low flying aircraft that
44 may be diverting the Western Arctic Caribou Herd.

45

46 Unfortunately the FAA is unavailable
47 this afternoon, but if this Council would like an
48 update from the FAA, Federal Aviation Administration,
49 at their fall meeting, Joe Dallemolle has graciously

50

1 offered to help set that up. So I just wanted to
2 mention that while we're on the subject of law
3 enforcement and caribou.

4

5 Thank you, Mr. Chair.

6

7 CHAIRMAN KRAMER: Okay. That sounds
8 good.

9

10 MS. ATORUK: Through the Chair.

11

12 CHAIRMAN KRAMER: Go ahead, Barbara.

13

14 MS. ATORUK: Damon, what's the name of
15 that group?

16

17 MR. SCHAEFFER: It is Northwest Arctic
18 Conservation Law Enforcement Working Group. It's a
19 long one.

20

21 MS. ATORUK: Yeah. I haven't even
22 heard of that. I just knew about the Western Arctic.

23

24 MR. SCHAEFFER: Yeah, it's brand new,
25 recently formed. We've got some outreach efforts that
26 we're going to do this year. Our last meeting we talked
27 about getting some brochures together about the group
28 and the work that we're doing and putting together some
29 posters. So I'm working with our NANA communications
30 team on what we can do to get the information out about
31 this working group. Yeah, we're excited. We've seen
32 lots of positive benefits from the group.

33

34 MS. ATORUK: Is this the group that we
35 discussed having all the law enforcement people
36 together and having a meeting and then giving some
37 information?

38

39 MR. SCHAEFFER: Yes, it is.

40

41 MS. ATORUK: Oh, okay. I remember now.
42 Thank you. I'm glad it's going.

43

44 MR. STEVENSON: Through the Chair.

45

46 MR. COMMACK: Yeah, Mr. Chair.

47

48 MR. STEVENSON: Go ahead.

49

50

1 CHAIRMAN KRAMER: Go ahead, Louie.

2

3 MR. COMMACK: Oh, okay. Thank you.
4 Good job, Damon. I brought this up before that, first,
5 the whole Kobuk River Valley is off to the sport
6 hunters. I brought this out many times that from Kobuk
7 on up we need to start to focus on that because we
8 already know there are planes coming in. We don't know
9 what else goes on all the way up to the Great Lakes.

10

11 I've been always concerned about that
12 and I'd just like to know if you guys are starting to
13 pay more attention to upper Kobuk that's above Kobuk
14 and all the way up to the rivers that are still being
15 used for subsistence hunters.

16

17 MR. SCHAEFFER: To respond to that,
18 yes. These past few seasons, I've been in charge of
19 this program for about three seasons now. In the
20 beginning we had one officer in each community and I
21 think as we've talked about the importance of this
22 program with the Borough and with our NANA board, the
23 two major funders for the program, we've gotten a lot
24 more support from the group which is financially.
25 That's what we need to be able to do some of these
26 extended patrols and hire more officers. These last few
27 years we've definitely received more support and we've
28 increased the amount of officers.

29

30 In 2018 we had 10 officers. In 2019 we
31 had 15. Then the projections for 2020 is that we're
32 going to try to hire two officers in every village for
33 a total of 20 officers. That's the goal is to be able
34 to do that. It depends on recruiting. Sometimes we
35 struggle with recruiting officers in villages depending
36 on projects. Last year there was a lot of work in
37 Kivalina with the road and some of the erosion projects
38 that they had going. They had three projects going in
39 that community, so we struggled with recruiting, trying
40 to find some officers.

41

42 This next season we're planning for a
43 longer season, more officers and more coverage. We
44 want to get our officers not just in NANA lands, but to
45 help service some of the other areas for the Park or
46 Fish and Game, Fish and Wildlife. Again, that working
47 group we're trying to figure out how we can do like a
48 memorandum of agreement, MOA or MOUs, to where they can
49 use our resources, the trespass program officers, to

50

1 help them try to cover some of their areas as well.

2

3 CHAIRMAN KRAMER: Thank you, Damon.
4 Any further questions for Damon.

5

6 (No comments)

7

8 CHAIRMAN KRAMER: Zach, one thing I
9 wanted to try -- I don't see that law enforcement
10 section under agencies.

11

12 MR. STEVENSON: Rex Leath with the
13 Department of Public Safety and Wildlife Troopers was
14 on the call this morning and as I stated earlier he had
15 to step out for a moment. He has another meeting going
16 on, but I know he planned to rejoin the call. It might
17 be worthwhile maybe every 15 minutes or so just to ask
18 if he's rejoined us. He may be listening.

19

20 CHAIRMAN KRAMER: Okay. Maija is going
21 to do her presentation tomorrow.

22

23 MR. STEVENSON: Okay.

24

25 CHAIRMAN KRAMER: As far as I know. Is
26 anybody at the Park Service that can confirm that right
27 now on the line?

28

29 MS. ATKINSON: If Maija isn't on the
30 phone, this is Hannah, and I'll be giving the report.

31

32 CHAIRMAN KRAMER: Okay.

33

34 MR. STEVENSON: Mr. Chair. Before we
35 move on I just want to let you know I've just emailed
36 Rex Leath and asked him to let us know when he's back
37 on the call.

38

39 CHAIRMAN KRAMER: Okay.

40

41 MR. STEVENSON: One other housekeeping
42 question, Mike, before we shift gears. Would the
43 Council like to keep this agenda item on the agenda for
44 our fall meeting, which is an ongoing update from this
45 Northwest Arctic Conservation Law Enforcement Working
46 Group just to keep us up to date on what they're doing?
47 Is that what you'd like to see on the agenda for the
48 fall?

49

50

1 CHAIRMAN KRAMER: Yeah, I think that
2 would be wise to have that on every agenda. That would
3 be the law enforcement group.
4

5 MR. STEVENSON: Okay. Copy that. One
6 other quick housekeeping item. I wanted to let the
7 Council know that per the Chair's request I have
8 emailed you a link from the Alaska Legislature for
9 House Bill 19. It's titled an act exempting certain
10 water taxi operators from regulation as transportation
11 services by the Big Game Commercial Services Board and
12 providing for an effective date.
13

14 I'm going to suggest that folks take a
15 look at that this evening and if there are any
16 questions on that we can address that tomorrow. Thank
17 you, Mr. Chair.
18

19 CHAIRMAN KRAMER: Okay. I have a few
20 questions on that law enforcement group comes up or the
21 National Park Service regarding that gentleman that was
22 up here illegally guiding for bears. Find out more
23 information on that. Do we know why it took so long
24 for them to find this guy and have these charges filed
25 against him. This happened up on the Noatak.
26

27 MS. ATKINSON: This is Hannah. Joe is
28 not in the office this afternoon, but I can give your
29 question to him.
30

31 MR. SCHAEFFER: You know what I will
32 mention. His name was Seth McMillan. He was with the
33 BLM and he was in our region. We had him up in
34 Kotzebue for the summer. I hope that we get Seth back
35 because he fielded a lot of reports through our
36 trespass officers and through communities and through
37 people just contacting me directly. He made an
38 extremely excellent effort to address every single one
39 of those reports.
40

41 There was just one of him. Between him
42 and Scott Bjork and Scott Bjork is moving on. I've met
43 his replacement. He seems like he's going to be a
44 great officer to address some of the issues in our
45 region. But between Scott and Seth and Joe as well,
46 yeah, they -- yeah, I was definitely impressed by their
47 response to some of the issues that we were fielding.
48 We fielded a lot of issues.
49
50

1 I mean I think -- there was a point
2 that we had received so many concerns from Kivalina
3 that we actually flew over there as a group in Scott
4 and Seth's plane and then we held a community meeting
5 as a working group to let everybody know we're
6 addressing the issues. Some of the planes that they
7 saw flying low it might have been Seth or Scott
8 investigating a report. So just to reassure that
9 community that everybody was working hard to try to
10 take care of some of those concerns.

11
12 MR. STEVENSON: Through the Chair. I
13 have a quick question.

14
15 CHAIRMAN KRAMER: Go ahead.

16
17 MR. STEVENSON: This question is for
18 Damon. Damon, this is Zach Stevenson. Would a letter
19 of support from this Council to BLM requesting the
20 reappointment of Seth or Scott in their position be of
21 value at this time?

22
23 MR. SCHAEFFER: It's always of value.
24 I haven't seen it in previous years that we've had a
25 plane and pilot and an officer from BLM in our area for
26 the entire summer. We'll have them for certain times
27 where they'll do like maybe limited field trips.

28
29 Yeah, it would be great to have someone
30 there all season. Otherwise it's just Scott or his
31 replacement. So having two planes available in
32 different directions. There was a point we lost Scott
33 to -- he was doing an investigation over in Unalakleet
34 or Dillingham.

35
36 Yeah, so we still had Seth in the area
37 to help address some of the issues. So I think there's
38 value to writing up a recommendation from the RAC to
39 BLM saying we'd like to continue to have a person in
40 our region throughout the summer season and fall
41 hunting season to address some of the issues that we're
42 receiving from the communities. It would be great.

43
44 MR. STEVENSON: Roger that. Through
45 the Chair. Mike, I had a quick clarification.

46
47 CHAIRMAN KRAMER: Go ahead.

48
49 MR. STEVENSON: First I wanted to thank

50

1 Damon for that really informative update and just
2 remind the Council that as Damon stated the reason that
3 this Northwest Arctic Conservation Law Enforcement
4 Working Group got started was because this Council had
5 requested greater local participation in law
6 enforcement around resolving some of the user conflicts
7 with caribou. That letter was taken very seriously by
8 the land managers who formed this group.
9

10 So what I'm hearing Damon requesting is
11 a letter to the Federal Subsistence Board perhaps first
12 thanking the BLM for their support by providing through
13 aircraft, pilot and an officer to address caribou law
14 enforcement last season, but also requesting that that
15 kind of support continue this fall. If that's
16 something the Council wishes, all we would need to do
17 is submit that letter to BLM requesting that same kind
18 of support this year.
19

20 Thank you, Mr. Chair.
21

22 CHAIRMAN KRAMER: Yeah, I agree with
23 that letter. If we could make sure we get that out to
24 them, Zach.
25

26 MR. STEVENSON: Yeah, we can certainly
27 do that. Like I said, you would just need a motion
28 from this Council with a vote of support and we can
29 work on -- pardon me. I take that back. We don't need
30 a motion. If you say it on the record, it's done.
31 We'll get that letter to you for review, Mr. Chair.
32

33 Thank you.
34

35 No motion is needed.
36

37 CHAIRMAN KRAMER: Was there any further
38 questions from the Council for Damon?
39

40 (No comments)
41

42 MS. ATORUK: Thanks, Damon.
43

44 MR. SCHAEFFER: Yeah, thank you.
45

46 MR. COMMACK: Thank you, Damon.
47

48 MR. SCHAEFFER: Yeah, thank you.
49
50

1 CHAIRMAN KRAMER: Thank you, Damon.

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CHAIRMAN KRAMER: Thank you, Damon.

MR. SCHAEFFER: You bet.

CHAIRMAN KRAMER: I know that when the other agencies start coming up and start doing their reports, I want a report as to commercial services in their areas. They used to give them at the winter meeting. So if you can make sure they tally up these numbers and get that information to us, I'd be obliged.

Moving on to 11(c), Bureau of Land Management.

MR. SEPPI: Mr. Chair. Members of the Board. This is Bruce Seppi with the Anchorage Field Office BLM. I just wanted to clarify quickly going back to the Ambler Road. That environmental impact statement that's coming out later this month is being written by the Central Yukon Field Office in Fairbanks, not the Anchorage Field Office. So surely if you have questions about that or when it comes out, those questions should be directed up to Fairbanks to the Central Yukon Field Office. Tim LaMarr is the field manager.

I should also mention that that EIS will include Section 810 Subsistence Impacts Analysis that's part of it that BLM has written. It's important to stay in contact with that.

Also all this talk about law enforcement and actually most of the area up in Unit 23 is part of the Anchorage Field Office and Seth McMillan is based out of Fairbanks and our law enforcement guys help each other out. I'm not sure how Seth was able to spend so much time last year up there. I'm glad that he did. He was helping us out. We also have a law enforcement ranger pilot. His name is Walker Gusse and he would also love to be up there, although a lot of his time has been taken up with the Mulchatna Caribou Herd right now and other law enforcement issues.

When you do send that letter, be sure you also send it to Anchorage Field Office asking for law enforcement help from BLM because we'll make every effort we can to help with that.

Finally, I just wanted to mention, all

1 of you probably know Dan Sharp retired last October and
2 various people in BLM have been acting for him, but
3 that position was out this winter. It closed February
4 20th and BLM hopes to have that position filled in the
5 next few weeks. That is a statewide BLM subsistence
6 coordinator position based in Anchorage.

7
8 That's about all I have if there's any
9 questions.

10
11 MR. STEVENSON: Through the Chair.
12 Bruce, I had just one clarification if I may.

13
14 MR. SEPPI: Sure.

15
16 MR. STEVENSON: For those who might be
17 unfamiliar with what an 810 analysis is, I know this
18 issue had come up in our fall meeting, would you mind
19 briefly clarifying what an 810 analysis is and why that
20 might be of interest to this group.

21
22 Thank you.

23
24 MR. SEPPI: Sure. I feel it is of
25 interest to this group. As Marcy had mentioned,
26 there's an EEA which the Park Service has written and
27 this road is unique in that it goes through the Park
28 Service and they have written essentially an impact
29 analysis or an EIS that pertains to the Park sections
30 of the road, but BLM has been assigned the
31 environmental impact statement for the rest of the road
32 from the Haul Road going north, the Dalton Highway all
33 the way over to the Ambler Mining District, and the
34 parts that aren't on the Park Service.

35
36 So every EIS, whether it's a land use
37 plan or other kinds of large projects that require an
38 environmental impact statement, by law it also has to
39 include -- in Alaska it has to include a Section 810 of
40 ANILCA, which is it reviews the impacts to subsistence
41 that the project will have.

42
43 So a draft of that had come out with
44 the draft environmental impact statement and now after
45 public comment the final subsistence impacts analysis,
46 we call it the 810, will also come out. So please be
47 aware of that. That's also coming out of the Fairbanks
48 office. This board will want to be sure they see that.

49
50

1 MR. STEVENSON: Through the Chair. I
2 just had one further clarification to request from
3 Bruce if I may.

4
5 MR. SEPPI: Sure.

6
7 MR. STEVENSON: Bruce, help me here.
8 I'm trying to understand alphabet soup. You talked
9 about an environmental impact statement. Am I
10 understanding correctly that that's a report that looks
11 at what might the impacts be for the different road
12 locations that could be developed? Is that correct?

13
14 MR. SEPPI: Yeah. An environmental
15 impact statement is part of NEPA. A lot of acronyms
16 here, but National Environmental Policy Act. Any time
17 there's a major proposal on Federal lands we do what's
18 called an environmental impact statement. It looks at
19 impacts and it sets up alternatives and the Ambler Road
20 actually has three alternatives and those alternatives
21 are different routes that this road can take.

22
23 Two of the routes are very similar.
24 They take slightly different routes farther north and
25 then there's one that takes an angle farther south from
26 the Dalton Highway and angles up not being on Park
27 Service lands, I believe. So it looks at all three of
28 those alternatives and then BLM or the proponent of the
29 project picks a preferred alternative and they say this
30 is the one we think is economically and environmentally
31 the most desirable one. That's one of the routes that
32 are north that go essentially straight across from the
33 Dalton Highway to the Ambler Mining District.

34
35 So that EIS will look at all three of
36 those alternatives and talk about the impacts of each
37 of those routes as well as the 810. The subsistence
38 impacts analysis will look at each of those
39 alternatives and compare impacts to subsistence for
40 each of them.

41
42 MR. STEVENSON: Thank you, Bruce. Just
43 one last question.

44
45 MR. SEPPI: Sure.

46
47 MR. STEVENSON: The 810 analysis that
48 you mentioned, that's similar to the environmental
49 impact statement or EIS in that you're looking at a

50

1 bunch of different potential development options or
2 ways that roads can be developed, but in this case an
3 810 analysis looks at what might be impacts to the
4 subsistence users. Am I right?

5
6 MR. SEPPI: Yeah. The 810 is directly
7 related to the EIS. It looks at the very same
8 alternatives and it's built off of the EIS and the EIS
9 gives these three alternatives, so the subsistence
10 impacts analysis looks at those three alternatives and
11 discusses each of them and is written in the document
12 what will be the impacts and how could you mitigate
13 those impacts and why do you have to do those impacts
14 and they look at each of them.

15
16 And I will say from most environmental
17 impact -- or all environmental impact statements in
18 Alaska have an 810 that's unique to Alaska of course
19 because of ANILCA, but then it will declare what the
20 impacts to subsistence are, whether it's the
21 availability of subsistence resources, the abundance of
22 subsistence resources or access by subsistence users to
23 those resources and it reviews the impacts of each of
24 those and pretty much lays out how that project will
25 impact subsistence.

26
27 MR. STEVENSON: Thank you, Bruce.
28 Through the Chair. Addressing Louie Commack's request
29 earlier for updates on this process. The Council may
30 request an update on that Section 810 report if it
31 would like one.

32
33 Thank you, Mr. Chair.

34
35 MR. SEPPI: Okay. Yeah.

36
37 CHAIRMAN KRAMER: Our suggestion is we
38 do get a copy of that.

39
40 MR. SEPPI: Absolutely.

41
42 CHAIRMAN KRAMER: The other question I
43 had was did you guys have any commercial services occur
44 in the BLM lands of Game Management Unit 23. If so,
45 did you guys have in your reports?

46
47 MR. SEPPI: We do. We have six guides
48 and outfitters that work in Unit 23 mostly in the
49 Squirrel River area, some farther north. Because of

50

1 the closures of caribou all of their activity they do
2 have permits, but the vast majority of their activity
3 has been pretty slow because of the closures.
4

5 CHAIRMAN KRAMER: Okay. Was there any
6 harvests reported?
7

8 MR. SEPPI: I don't have that, but I
9 believe not for caribou. Some of the outfitters in the
10 Squirrel River have been or at least one had been
11 guiding bear hunts and they were active this fall, but
12 other than that I don't believe there were any caribou
13 harvests.
14

15 CHAIRMAN KRAMER: Okay. Were there any
16 other.....
17

18 MR. COMMACK: Mr. Chairman.
19

20 CHAIRMAN KRAMER: Go ahead, Louie.
21

22 MR. COMMACK: Thank you. My question
23 is on the 810 analysis. When whoever reviewed a
24 subsistence plan, we've heard three, four years that
25 all across Alaska and probably the rest of the nation
26 there was a lot of opposition to the road. I don't
27 know if that's being considered, plus the fact that we
28 are now dealing with sustainability of the animals that
29 we depend on. I don't know if that's been part of your
30 concern or discussion, but when we're looking at
31 population increase and whatever goes on with it, my
32 concern has always been the sustainability of what we
33 depend on for food security.
34

35 MR. SEPPI: Mr. Chair and members of
36 the Council. That's very true and I wanted to point
37 out that an 810 analysis is a different law. It's part
38 of ANILCA and it looks at an EIS and flatly states the
39 impacts and whether there's opposition to the project
40 or not it really doesn't weigh into that. An 810
41 analysis is just trying to put out there will
42 subsistence resources be impacted or not.
43

44 From the draft I had seen earlier it
45 definitely states that there will be impacts in
46 probably all of the alternatives, but whether there's
47 people against or for the Ambler Mining Road or any
48 project in the EIS it doesn't go down that road. It's
49 just talking about whether there's impacts or not and
50

1 it puts it out there. That will have to be considered
2 by managers when they make a final decision and sign
3 the record of decision that says the project will go
4 forward on Federal lands.
5

6 MS. ATORUK: Through the Chair. We
7 don't know and then we have it here on our annual
8 report asking such questions that nobody knows yet.
9 But maybe we'll give them an eye-opener to think about
10 it. But to prepare an annual report we need to just
11 discuss anticipated subsistence uses of fish and
12 wildlife populations within the region. An evaluation
13 of current and anticipated subsistence needs for fish
14 and wildlife populations within the region.
15

16 To put the Ambler Road thing into the
17 annual report, I think that's besides the point of our
18 Charter and what our responsibilities are as Council
19 members. I'm just putting that in for possible
20 discussion.
21

22 MR. STEVENSON: Through the Chair. May
23 I respond briefly to Barb's point.
24

25 CHAIRMAN KRAMER: Go ahead.
26

27 MR. STEVENSON: I think the important
28 thing to remember is that the Regional Advisory
29 Councils serve the important role of making information
30 available to the region on any subsistence matters that
31 this Council feels are important. The Councils do not
32 exist as a means to advocate for or against something.
33 That's not their role. That's not their job.
34

35 So when it comes to, for example,
36 reviewing an environmental impact statement or
37 reviewing a Section 810 review of how a project might
38 affect subsistence uses, it would be really appropriate
39 to say I am concerned about how a project might affect
40 this resource in this area at this time and I recommend
41 that this be considered.
42

43 But it is not appropriate to say we
44 support or don't support the project because, again,
45 the Council is not a forum for advocating for or
46 against something. Rather, it's a forum for sharing
47 information based upon traditional knowledge and based
48 upon the best available science.
49
50

1 Is that distinction clear?

2

3 MS. ATORUK: Yeah. Thank you. I just
4 glanced through that executive order thing. We're
5 being watched as it is. D.C. is watching us to see
6 what we're doing and then they're trying to cut us off.
7 Lucky we have people out there that are defending us to
8 still be meeting today. That's how important it is for
9 us to be alert and see what we're doing and see we are
10 doing it right for the moment.

11

12 MR. STEVENSON: Yeah. Thank you, Mr.
13 Chair.

14

15 CHAIRMAN KRAMER: Is there any further
16 questions for BLM.

17

18 (No comments)

19

20 MS. ATORUK: Thank you, BLM.

21

22 MR. SEPPI: You betcha. Thank you.

23

24 CHAIRMAN KRAMER: Next on our agenda is
25 National Park Service. Do we want to continue

26

27 MR. STEVENSON: That's up to you. I
28 think we have Hannah Atkinson up next for Western
29 Arctic Parklands.

30

31 MS. ATKINSON: Yeah, if Maija isn't on
32 the phone, I'm able to cover it. I sent out a report
33 this morning. I'm sorry about it being late, but we're
34 happy to mail or fax it to anyone so they can have
35 access to it, but you may not be looking at it in front
36 of you.

37

38 I can go through the report. I won't
39 be able to answer your questions, but I can take down
40 questions that would either go to Maija or Joe. Would
41 you like me to give the report?

42

43 CHAIRMAN KRAMER: Yes.

44

45 MS. ATKINSON: Okay. Did anyone get
46 access to this? I also sent it Monique and I sent it
47 to Louie's email.

48

49 MS. ATORUK: If you sent it to Monique,

50

1 I think that office is closed today.

2

3 MS. ATKINSON: Oh, I see. All right.
4 We will make sure people get it after the meeting, but
5 I can run through it. The first page is a summary of
6 the spring 2020 Kobuk Valley Subsistence Resource
7 Commission. We had the meeting on February 6th and
8 7th. The second page is the Cape Krusenstern
9 Subsistence Resource Commission summary. We had that
10 meeting on February 4th and 5th.

11

12 Then we have an update from the
13 Interpretation and Education Program. There's nothing
14 too big in this update. Wintertime is kind of an off
15 season for our Interpretation and Education Program.
16 They do the school visits with their education and
17 outreach ranger Nicole Shephard going to the schools
18 and doing programs.

19

20 They also held a large event in
21 Kotzebue for the winter solstice called the Festival of
22 Lights. That was really successful. They usually have
23 more going on during the summer and a bigger update.

24

25 Then we have the cultural resource
26 update. Justin is here if you have any questions on
27 that one on any of the activities. There's a summary
28 of the Inupiaq place names workshop held on January
29 14th and 15th in Kotzebue.

30

31 Raime Fronstin, the biologist, is also
32 here if you have any questions on National Park Service
33 wildlife surveys, but he has a good update that goes
34 through caribou, moose and Dall sheep and muskoxen and
35 brown bears. Just giving updates on what has been
36 done.

37

38 Then Joe's report talks about his 2019
39 incidents. Then he had a brief update on the Northwest
40 Arctic Conservation Law Enforcement Working Group. Not
41 too detailed, but it has on there purpose, larger
42 purpose as a group and what they've been doing.

43

44 A more recent update for Joe on the Law
45 Enforcement Program. They've been trying to get more
46 data on wood harvest in the Monument and the Preserve
47 and they have been working with people to try and get
48 more returns on the permits that we have. We have
49 permits that are for harvesting wood on the Monument,

50

1 the Preserve or the Park. Anything greater than 3
2 inches in diameter standing trees.

3
4 We have some data gaps in that, so we
5 got funding from the Subsistence Advisory Council for
6 the Park Service to look into wood harvest in Cape
7 Krusenstern National Monument and we'll be working with
8 the Native Village of Kotzebue to talk to subsistence
9 users, a lot of allotment owners in the Monument and
10 asking them about wood harvest.

11
12 Then moving into the commercial use
13 activities report. Joe has put together the
14 information from 2019. I'll read through this in more
15 detail because you already had questions about this.
16 His report has notes at the top that says these
17 statistics are only for commercial operators. They do
18 not account for non-commercial visitation, hunting or
19 flights.

20
21 All three hunting guide companies
22 operated in Noatak National Preserve in 2019. There
23 was a total of 16 guided hunting trips and 11 companies
24 holding CUAs operated in 2019. Two companies are based
25 in Kotzebue. One company is based in Ambler and others
26 are based outside the NANA region.

27
28 Some of the totals. Animals harvested
29 via transporters and guides in Noatak National Preserve
30 there were 14 grizzly bears taken, 165 caribou taken,
31 two moose taken and five wolves taken. That is both
32 transporters and guides. On his report you can see it
33 broken out that transporters -- who harvested animals
34 with transporters and how many people harvested with
35 guides.

36
37 For the flight numbers we have totals
38 for the air taxi/transporter flights. There were 245
39 in Noatak National Preserve, 144 for Kobuk Valley
40 National Park and 25 for Cape Krusenstern National
41 Monument. He has some graphs that illustrate what
42 people were doing during their transported activities.

43
44 Any questions?

45
46 MR. KRON: I think this is Maija
47 speaking, but if you would identify yourself so we can
48 make sure we've got that straight for the record.

49
50

1 MS. ATKINSON: Sorry. This is Hannah
2 Atkinson. I'm the cultural anthropologist for Western
3 Arctic National Parklands.

4

5 MR. COMMACK: Mr. Chairman.

6

7 CHAIRMAN KRAMER: Go ahead, Louie.

8

9 MR. COMMACK: This is Louie. Hannah,
10 the 245 and 144 I didn't quite catch you on the two
11 numbers there.

12

13 MS. ATKINSON: Okay. You'll have this
14 in front of you so you can review it. Total air
15 taxi/transporter flights in Noatak National Preserve
16 there were 245 flights. In Kobuk Valley National Park
17 there were 144 flights. Cape Krusenstern National
18 Monument 25 flights.

19

20 They're not all for hunting. That's
21 all the different flights that they have for the
22 different activities. It could be like people doing
23 float trips or fishing or sightseeing. It also
24 includes non-NPS scientific research. So that's just
25 number of flights.

26

27 There's some graphs on this update that
28 shows hunters and non-hunter activities. For example
29 I'll just take the largest number of flights within
30 Noatak National Preserve 245 flights and then there's a
31 graph that shows that 11 of those were fishing, 177
32 were hunting, 18 were rafting, 23 were scientific
33 research and 12 were tour and sightseeing, and 4 were
34 recreation and hiking.

35

36 For Cape Krusenstern National Monument
37 and Kobuk Valley National Park you can see in the graph
38 that none of them were for hunting and that makes sense
39 because those are closed except for to resident-zoned
40 communities doing subsistence hunting and also people
41 with customary and traditional use. Most of the
42 flights were tours and sightseeing.

43

44 MS. ATORUK: Is there monetary stuff
45 involved in doing these?

46

47 MS. ATKINSON: Oh, definitely. We have
48 some data reported on that. Let me see what's on this
49 sheet. On this report Joe has commercial gross income

50

1 to companies for operations in WARE and he has the
2 numbers listed out by Park. So you can see the total
3 amount of money that was made for companies operating
4 in Noatak National Preserve.
5

6 MS. ATORUK: Where does the money go
7 to? To the companies or to you guys or.....
8

9 MS. ATKINSON: I would have to look
10 into that question more. I'm sorry. I don't want to
11 give the wrong answer. I know most of the money goes
12 to the companies, but our concession for the Park I
13 think is making some money on it.
14

15 MS. ATORUK: Okay.
16

17 MR. STEVENSON: Through the Chair.
18

19 CHAIRMAN KRAMER: Go ahead, Zach.
20

21 MR. STEVENSON: Addressing the question
22 from Barbara Atoruk. On the report that Hannah Atkinson
23 with Western Arctic National Parklands shared, if you
24 look at Page 21, it shows 2019 commercial use and
25 concessions activity report and it has the commercial
26 gross income to companies operating in Western Arctic
27 National Parklands and the amount of revenue, money
28 that was generated in their financial disclosure by
29 Park unit. So it shows \$815,226 generated in Noatak
30 National Preserve, \$289,106 generated in Kobuk Valley
31 National Park, and \$46,020 for Cape Krusenstern
32 National Monument, for a total of \$1,150,352 for all
33 those units combined.
34

35 Thank you, Mr. Chair.
36

37 MS. ATORUK: Oh, wow.
38

39 MS. ATKINSON: Just to clarify that's
40 the company's earnings.
41

42 MR. STEVENSON: Thank you, Hannah.
43

44 CHAIRMAN KRAMER: I know that last fall
45 I've seen a lot of hunters come in and leave. I work
46 out at the airport and I do see a lot of guns come in,
47 but the one thing I don't see is very much meat
48 leaving. We closed the caribou hunting on these
49 Federal lands for a reason and that was to help us to
50

1 make sure that their traditional migrations continued
2 through areas where they haven't migrated through in a
3 long time and it's been some benefit.
4

5 But I know the main reason why we
6 pushed for that closure was to, one, eliminate
7 transporters and guides. Those are the first to leave.
8 Here sometime soon we'll hear Fish and Game agency
9 report regarding caribou herd population and whether
10 it's still within that threshold of conservation or
11 below according to the Western Arctic Caribou Herd's
12 diagram that they have set forth for the caribou
13 population thresholds for conservation purposes. We go
14 by the aircraft and we go by the census to ensure that
15 the first people that are eliminated are transporters
16 and guides.
17

18 So sometime soon when we hear our
19 report from Alaska Department of Fish and Game on the
20 population it would be my suggestion that the Federal
21 agencies take more action to eliminating transporters
22 and guides because if our caribou herd is maintaining
23 stable or dropping, it would be wise that we take
24 necessary precautions to ensure the survival of our
25 caribou herd continue for years to come and for
26 generations of subsistence users in the future.
27

28 With that being said, once we hear the
29 populations from Alaska Department of Fish and Game we
30 as the Council should push the Federal agencies to
31 pushing the elimination of transporters and guides.
32

33 The other thing I had was I read that
34 there was an illegal bear drag hunter on the Noatak and
35 it was brought about on Facebook. I've seen it and I
36 think AND. My question there was like why did it take
37 so long to get this guy. These guys are out there
38 patrolling and this guy has a commercial concession,
39 then why wasn't his credentials questioned in the
40 beginning. You know, why did it let him take how many
41 grizzly bears. I know that grizzly bears are a
42 problem, but still, you know, the point of harvesting
43 animals under a fake guiding outfit took this long to
44 finally catch him.
45

46 MR. STEVENSON: Through the Chair.
47

48 CHAIRMAN KRAMER: Yeah, go ahead.
49
50

1 MR. STEVENSON: Thank you, Mike.
2 Through the Chair. This is Zach Stevenson. I heard
3 earlier that Joe Dallemolle, who oversees law
4 enforcement for the Park Service in Western Arctic
5 National Parklands is unavailable to participate in the
6 teleconference this afternoon, but the interest in
7 hearing an update on that law enforcement matter
8 regarding the illegal take of game in Western Arctic
9 National Parklands, that interest would be relayed to
10 Joe and potentially addressed at our fall meeting. So
11 I just wanted to mention that so we were able to
12 demonstrate we heard that concern and it's being
13 addressed.

14
15 I also wanted to point out that I
16 recently received a text message from Susan Georgette
17 who mentioned that at 3:00 p.m. this afternoon, in half
18 an hour, she has a manager's teleconference she has to
19 participate in addressing coronavirus and she wanted to
20 make sure that she was able to get on the agenda before
21 3:00 so that she could be certain to share her update
22 with the Council.

23
24 Thank you, Mr. Chair.

25
26 CHAIRMAN KRAMER: Okay.

27
28 MR. COMMACK: Mr. Chairman.

29
30 CHAIRMAN KRAMER: Go ahead, Louie.

31
32 MR. COMMACK: Thank you, Hannah, for
33 the numbers. Correct me if wrong, but I wrote down
34 815,000, 289,000, 46,000 amounts to 1,150,000 and I see
35 that 815,000 is hunters. That's taking a lot of
36 caribou out and that's not putting the number of bull
37 caribous subsistence hunters take say on the Kobuk
38 River. I've heard a lot of numbers over the years how
39 much bull caribou are taken. Somebody said one time
40 10,000 in the fall or whatever number they came out
41 with.

42
43 Throughout the years we had moose
44 closure, sheep closure, caribou population decline,
45 which made the numbers lower for subsistence hunters.
46 We had activity along the Kobuk River. A lot of
47 hunters as the years go by. That was my concern about
48 how long is the sustainability going to go on. How
49 long before we start to take drastic actions because of

50

1 the sustainability problem we might encounter in the
2 future.

3

4 Thank you.

5

6 MS. ATKINSON: Hi. Thanks, Louie.
7 Your concerns are heard. I just want to clarify that
8 the \$800,000 in income that's made in Noatak National
9 Preserve that's not just from hunting. That's from all
10 transporting and guiding activities. Looking at the
11 numbers of animals taken or even the seaway flights
12 that are for hunting would be a better thing to look
13 at. So like 177 of the total 245 flights were for
14 hunting. It doesn't say that that's all for caribou
15 either. So just to add some variance, but it
16 definitely doesn't eliminate your concern, so I hear
17 that too.

18

19 MR. COMMACK: Okay. Thank you very
20 much.

21

22 CHAIRMAN KRAMER: Any further questions
23 from the Council for Hannah.

24

25 (No comments)

26

27 MS. ATORUK: Thanks, Hannah.

28

29 CHAIRMAN KRAMER: Hannah, did you have
30 any more.....

31

32 MS. ATKINSON: Thanks everyone for
33 having this meeting. It's challenging I know, but good
34 to get on the phone and talk with all of you.

35

36 CHAIRMAN KRAMER: Were you done with
37 your report?

38

39 MS. ATKINSON: That is all for the
40 National Park Service.

41

42 CHAIRMAN KRAMER: Okay. Hearing no
43 further questions, we'll go ahead and move on to the
44 United States Fish and Wildlife Service.

45

46 MS. GEORGETTE: Thank you, Chair and
47 Council members. This is Susan Georgette. I'm the
48 Refuge Manager for Selawik National Wildlife Refuge.
49 Bill Carter is with me too. He's our fisheries

50

1 biologist.

2

3 I just had a few things to update you
4 on since your last meeting. The first one is that the
5 Western Arctic Caribou Herd Working Group meets
6 annually in December and I know you're all familiar
7 with that group, so I won't go into the background on
8 that. But the group did vote for approving an updated
9 version of the management plan for the Western Arctic
10 Herd and there's been a committee that several of us
11 have worked on and several of the working group members
12 for the past year.

13

14 The new plan is going to be available
15 soon. It's not a Selawik Refuge document, so I feel a
16 little uncomfortable bringing it up under the Refuge
17 report. Fish and Game, Park Service, BLM and the
18 working group itself are all very heavily involved with
19 that. But just an FYI.

20

21 A second thing is that we had an artist
22 last summer come to Selawik Refuge named Lindsay Carron
23 and she did this beautiful piece of artwork that
24 features caribou and wildlife and scenery from Selawik
25 Refuge that also has portraits of three generations of
26 people from Selawik: May Walton, Frank Berry, Jr., and
27 Shaylynn Ticket. I wish I had handouts I could give
28 you of that piece of work.

29

30 Last week she came back to Kotzebue and
31 we all went out to Selawik and we presented the tribal
32 council and the people in the artwork and the community
33 framed copies of this print. It's really cool because
34 the intention of the artwork is to celebrate the
35 connection between Alaska Native people and the land.

36

37 Fish and Wildlife Service tends to have
38 a tradition nationally of being very wildlife oriented
39 and we really wanted to acknowledge that in Alaska
40 people's connections to the land are equally important.
41 She's doing a piece of artwork for every Refuge in
42 Alaska over time. She's doing a couple a year. Maybe
43 the next meeting we can give you copies of that
44 artwork. It's very nice.

45

46 We've been working with Dr. Ken Tape at
47 the Geophysical Institute at UAF to do a project
48 mapping the westward movement of beaver onto the Refuge
49 over the last decades and looking at where the

50

1 concentrations of beaver are. I know that comes up at
2 a lot of meetings. He could use satellite imagery to
3 do some work on that.

4
5 Bill is working with the Native Village
6 of Kotzebue monitoring the algal blooms and the slump
7 on the Selawik River that became active again this year
8 and also on water temperature monitoring, which you
9 mentioned earlier.

10
11 Finally, for our commercial use
12 reports, we had four transporter permits in 2019 and we
13 have one guide who is authorized to hunt or guide on
14 the Refuge, but last year we only had two hunters that
15 were transported to the Refuge who took two moose, one
16 brown bear and no caribou.

17
18 So, for the same reason that BLM
19 mentioned, the non-resident moose hunting is closed in
20 Game Management Unit 23 right now and our guide has
21 basically abandoned the Refuge. He has not taken any
22 clients there since 2016. Our transporters are not
23 very active there at all either. So that's the
24 commercial use report for Selawik Refuge.

25
26 That's all I had unless you have
27 questions.

28
29 Thank you.

30
31 CHAIRMAN KRAMER: Thank you for your
32 report. Are there any questions from the Council.

33
34 (No comments)

35
36 MS. ATORUK: Taikuu (in Inupiaq).

37
38 MS. GEORGETTE: Thank you for all your
39 work.

40
41 CHAIRMAN KRAMER: If there's no further
42 questions.

43
44 (No comments)

45
46 CHAIRMAN KRAMER: Okay. Hearing none.
47 We'll go to section (f) Alaska Department of Fish and
48 Game.

49
50

1 MR. STEVENSON: Mr. Chair.

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CHAIRMAN KRAMER: Yeah, go ahead.

MR. STEVENSON: Before transitioning to the Alaska Department of Fish and Game, and I know we had Alex Hansen on the phone earlier, I received an email from Captain Rex Leath with the Department of Public Safety and he's available to follow ADF&G if the Council wishes to give a law enforcement update.

Thank you, Mr. Chair.

CHAIRMAN KRAMER: Is that the wish of the Council?

MS. ATORUK: Do it.

CHAIRMAN KRAMER: Okay. We can go ahead and go to the Alaska Department of Fish and Game.

MR. HANSEN: Through the Chair. This is Alex Hansen, Alaska Department of Fish and Game based in Kotzebue, caribou biologist for the Western Arctic Herd.

By way of a brief update for the Western Arctic Herd, the 2019 census we estimated or counted 244,000 caribou, which was a slight dip from the 2017 census of 259. So over those two years we saw a minimal decrease of about 6 percent, which is not a super big concern right now. As most of you are aware we had some rough winters in our survival of adult cows specifically was higher than normal.

Some positive signs that we're seeing our calving surveys we have been seeing high birthing rates for a number of years. No concerns there. Our recruitment surveys with our spring short yearling surveys we're seeing good numbers there in the 18-20 or above. That would be the number of young animals coming in each year, each season. So those are the individuals that are surviving through the winter. Things are looking pretty good on that front and have been since about 2016.

As was mentioned previously, we did have a successful year of captures on the Kobuk River this year. We were able to get out 49 collars, which

1 was able to bring our collar count up to where it
2 needed to be. So we're in good position there.

3
4 Previously in 2017-2018 we struggled to
5 get collars out on the Kobuk River with a total of
6 seven being deployed on adult cows in those two years
7 combined. So last year in the spring we reverted to
8 net gun captures and we were able to deploy an
9 additional 31 collars to bring our collar count up high
10 enough to conduct a successful census this summer.
11 That's the update on that front.

12
13 I also provide a brief update on what
14 took place on the regulatory side of things. We just
15 went through the Board of Game process in Nome in
16 January and looked at a number of proposals. I thought
17 it might be pertinent to update the group on the
18 proposals.

19
20 Proposal 20 was to open a year-round
21 resident season for bull caribou harvest in Unit 23.
22 That proposal carried through the Board of Game.
23 Starting in July the caribou bulls will be open year
24 round in Unit 23.

25
26 Proposal 21 was a proposal to reduce
27 the Unit 23 resident bag limit 25 caribou annually,
28 which only five could be cows. That proposal failed
29 and was voted down at the Board of Game.

30
31 The next one was number 22. That was
32 to extend the season for taking of cow caribou in Unit
33 23 Remainder from March 31st, extending that 15 days to
34 April 15. That proposal failed as well. So that
35 extension did not take place.

36
37 Proposal 23 was to restrict the use of
38 snowmachines for taking caribou in Unit 23 and this
39 proposal failed as well. There was some interest on
40 this and there's some possibility they might take that
41 up at the statewide Board of Game meeting I think
42 coming up later this summer.

43
44 Number 24 was the final one we looked
45 at and that was to allow for the take of caribou calves
46 in Unit 23. As you recall there was some discussion
47 about that at previous RAC meetings. This proposal
48 carried with the amendment to include 22 and 26A. So
49 here again beginning in July of this year it will be
50

1 legal to harvest calves in Unit 22, 23 and 26A.

2

3 So with that I'd be happy to field any
4 questions concerning the Western Arctic Herd or the
5 regulatory or management type questions. I'd be happy
6 to help you.

7

8 MS. ATORUK: Did you say that cow
9 season from March 31st to April 15?

10

11 MR. HANSEN: Yeah, Beverly, through the
12 Chair. That was a proposal to extend that and that
13 proposal was not supported.

14

15 MS. ATORUK: Oh, okay. Thank you.

16

17 MR. HANSEN: We feel like it's still
18 important to conserve the cows.

19

20 MS. ATORUK: Okay. I like to be
21 Beverly too.

22

23 MR. HANSEN: Okay.

24

25 MR. STEVENSON: Mr. Chair. Quick
26 clarification.

27

28 CHAIRMAN KRAMER: Yeah, go ahead.

29

30 MR. STEVENSON: Thank you, Mr. Chair.
31 I just wanted to remind the Council that like the
32 examples that were provided for the Eastern Interior
33 RAC, if this Council has any comments that it would
34 like to submit to the Alaska Board of Game on any of
35 these proposals, it may do so and I am ready, able and
36 willing to assist the Council in composing any letters
37 or correspondence to the Board of Game to express the
38 Council's views on Board of Game proposals.

39

40 Thank you, Mr. Chair.

41

42 CHAIRMAN KRAMER: Okay. Any other
43 questions I have is, you know, we push so hard for us
44 to be able to harvest caribou with snowmachines. This
45 winter I still haven't gotten a caribou. I probably
46 only put five miles on my snowmachine. I know that
47 some are being harvested and it is minimal. So trying
48 to eliminate snowmachines as a use of being able to
49 position caribou with the intent to harvest and catch

50

1 caribou with snowmachines should remain in effect.
2 This is for subsistence purposes.
3

4 Them trying to eliminate it is
5 detrimental to the people who live here within the NANA
6 region or Game Management Unit 23. The reason why we
7 put that in place was to make it legal for people to be
8 able to harvest caribou. This year alone we didn't
9 have very much snow up until around the end of January.
10 We just started getting some more right now.
11

12 With the lack of amount of snow the
13 caribou, from what I hear that people have harvested,
14 were pretty healthy. They did have fat content. So
15 the thing with the Board of Game trying to consider
16 that again is kind of -- it's going to be detrimental
17 to our ability to be able to harvest these animals. I
18 teach my children not to run them if they don't have
19 to. Kind of wait and harvest them as they walk by.
20

21 This winter alone we haven't seen very
22 much caribou from November until the present time
23 today. We haven't seen big groups of caribou like they
24 used to do coming towards Kotzebue by the hundreds or
25 thousands. This year they have taken an alternative
26 route and it's probably not due to the pressure that
27 we've put on them. Their migration just goes wherever.
28

29
30 So them trying to eliminate us to be
31 able to harvest caribou from a snowmachine is just
32 wrong. If I can't catch any in the fall, then I'm
33 going to have to catch them in the winter. I don't
34 like to run them if I don't have to. I usually like to
35 sit and wait for them or happen to drive up on them and
36 take one or two, I do. That's with respect to the
37 animal. They have a hard winter. They live out here
38 year round enduring the temperatures, the climate. So
39 trying to ensure that they have an easy winter is
40 always considered from subsistence users.
41

42 So if that issue comes back up at the
43 Board of Game, I suggest we write a letter to the Board
44 of Game stating that they not support that. But they
45 need to have clear, definite and defined wording with
46 the intent to harvest. The purpose of them chasing
47 caribou is with the intent to harvest. So that
48 protects us and ensures that the people are following
49 the law, the rules, going out and not trying to run
50

1 them just for the heck of it. That ensures the people
2 who are doing it legally that they can continue to hunt
3 caribou with that transportation using a snowmachine.
4

5 Are there any other further questions
6 by the board on that issue?
7

8 MR. HANSEN: If I may, through the
9 Chair, just provide some clarifications on that.
10

11 CHAIRMAN KRAMER: Go ahead.
12

13 MR. HANSEN: So basically what the
14 intent of that was, just to provide some language as
15 guidance, there was no intent to remove the use of
16 snowmachines for harvest. It was just simply an effort
17 to try to make something a little bit more enforceable
18 and potentially the trooper can speak to that. There's
19 certainly no interest in removing that exemption of
20 using a snowmachine to harvest caribou. That is still
21 in place.
22

23 CHAIRMAN KRAMER: Okay. The other
24 thing is I'd like to get a revised copy of the
25 management of the Western Arctic Caribou Herd threshold
26 limits. I don't see that in the booklet. I'd kind of
27 like for all the Council members to get that with the
28 new threshold limits and the current population count.
29

30 MR. HANSEN: As Susan mentioned, the
31 management plan is almost finished and that will be
32 available shortly, so you'll have that in your hand.
33

34 MS. ATORUK: Through the Chair. Do you
35 monitor the collars throughout the winter?
36

37 MR. HANSEN: Yes. Through the Chair,
38 Barbara. We do monitor the collars. I'm looking at
39 those constantly and I will mention that going into
40 this winter and currently our survival is quite high at
41 this point. So things are looking very good this
42 winter as opposed to the last couple of winters.
43

44 MS. ATORUK: Yeah, because they're
45 coming right into the village here on the other side of
46 the airport. They fixed our airport last summer and
47 then put that green stuff on to grow grass and they're
48 feeding on that over there on the other side of the
49 airport.
50

1 MR. HANSEN: Yeah.

2

3 MS. ATORUK: People always go take
4 pictures and stuff, but no one going out to harvest
5 any. They're going in to the Squirrel I think.
6 Hunting up there instead of right there. It is good
7 meat. The one we got was real healthy and enjoying it.

8

9 Okay. Thank you.

10

11 CHAIRMAN KRAMER: When do they look at
12 the next census?

13

14 MR. COMMACK: Mr. Chairman.

15

16 CHAIRMAN KRAMER: Go ahead, Louie.

17

18 MR. COMMACK: I didn't catch 6 percent
19 decrease. Is that caribou population?

20

21 MR. HANSEN: Through the Chair to
22 Member Commack. Yeah, there was approximately a 6
23 percent decrease between 2017 and 2019, which is not
24 alarming. If we look at the population estimates,
25 those confidence intervals do overlap, so we can say
26 that it was probably decreased a little bit, but not at
27 an alarming rate. Nothing major to be concerned about
28 there. In the past we've seen decreases 15 percent or
29 higher and those are certainly a little bit more
30 alarming.

31

32 MR. COMMACK: Okay. Thank you.

33

34 CHAIRMAN KRAMER: The question I had
35 was when will the next census occur. Are they going to
36 try to do that this coming summer?

37

38 MR. HANSEN: Under the current plan,
39 also the recommendations from the working group, then
40 also our management operational plan, which I'm in the
41 process of writing now, we intend to do the next census
42 in 2021. So we'll skip a summer and then do it the
43 next year unless we see extremely high mortality rates.
44 Then we'll pull together a census and get a count. But
45 we're not seeing that right now and based on the
46 management recommendations from that plan if we were to
47 detect a change, it would have to be pretty significant
48 to make management level changes.

49

50

1 CHAIRMAN KRAMER: Uh-huh. Yeah,
2 because I've noticed and I've heard from a lot of
3 people that a lot of the caribou aren't migrating very
4 far south like they usually do. We've had some groups
5 here within the area of Kotzebue, Krusenstern, on the
6 other side of Igachuks, Noatak, hatchery area, Aggie,
7 over towards Camp Sivunniigvik that have wintered
8 within this area. I'm not too sure as to how many are
9 north of the Noatak of our Western Arctic Caribou Herd.

10

11 One other thing is -- the other
12 question I have is what does the population look like
13 for the Teshekpuk? Are they still remaining stable?

14

15 MR. HANSEN: The Teshekpuk, first and
16 foremost for your question there, is the Teshekpuk was
17 last censused in 2017. They're going to make an
18 effort to census the Teshekpuk in 2020, this coming
19 summer. The population had increased at that time. So
20 it was up and things were looking very good up there.
21 They went through a period of decline and then they
22 rebounded very quickly.

23

24 To your point about distribution being
25 different than in the past, we have certainly seen a
26 lot fewer animals cross the Kobuk and head south on the
27 traditional winter range of the Seward Peninsula.
28 We're not seeing that like we have done in the past.
29 Approximately half of the collars are still on the
30 North Slope or up in the mountains at this point.
31 About half came down, half did not.

32

33 CHAIRMAN KRAMER: Okay. Thank you.
34 The other question I had is are there any Federal
35 agencies that are looking at doing food studies as to
36 whether they're eating themselves out of house and home
37 or maintaining or remain stable for a while?

38

39 MR. HANSEN: I know there was some
40 enclosure type studies that BLM was doing a number of
41 years ago. I'm not sure where that is. There has been
42 some diet composition stuff analysis that the Park
43 Service has done, but I don't have the information to
44 speak to that.

45

46 CHAIRMAN KRAMER: Okay. Was there any
47 further questions from the Council?

48

49 (No comments)

50

1 MS. ATORUK: Thank you, Fish and Game.

2

3 CHAIRMAN KRAMER: How about harvest on
4 the Fish and Game side of it? How was the harvest?
5 Did you have any commercial services?

6

7 MR. HANSEN: No, we monitor harvest
8 through the permitting system, so that's something
9 we're working really hard on is to get harvest report
10 returns from local hunters. That is certainly 95
11 percent or more of the harvest occurs from local
12 hunters in Unit 23, 22 and 26A. Whatever we can do to
13 help folks get those 907 permits filled out is very
14 useful to us.

15

16 We monitor non-local and non-resident
17 hunters for a very long time and we have accurate
18 numbers from those individuals. Most recently, kind of
19 going off ballpark numbers, they harvest less than five
20 percent of the harvest and at this point even less than
21 that. Probably 250-300 animals a year. Probably up a
22 little bit from that from year to year, but that's
23 roughly say 300 out of 12,000 that are harvested come
24 from non-locals and most of those are bulls.
25 Biologically speaking, it's very insignificant.

26

27 CHAIRMAN KRAMER: Uh-huh. I know that
28 bill that's going through the legislature I've never
29 really gotten to read it and I know that's talking
30 about commercial services and Game Management Unit 23.
31 You know, it's always been a history that the Board of
32 Game has been very, very powerful over, to look over
33 subsistence users and be able to decide on the
34 commercial services side more than the conservation
35 side. I still haven't read that whole bill yet. I'm
36 hoping that Zach sends that out to us either via email
37 or a hard copy. I'd like to look over it more.

38

39 MR. STEVENSON: Mr. Chair.

40

41 CHAIRMAN KRAMER: Go ahead, Zach.

42

43 MR. STEVENSON: Yeah, Mike, that House
44 Bill 19 was emailed to all the Council members at 1:42,
45 just over an hour ago. If you would like, I would be
46 happy to read that bill for you in its entirety from
47 the State Legislature's website. The bill is about a
48 page and a half long.

49

50

1 MR. PAPPAS: Zach, this is George.
2 That was the bill from last year. That's the most
3 recent information. That was submitted last year. We
4 put the request in last week. Nothing was on deck.
5 Put the request in this morning. Nothing has changed
6 since last week. That's the most recent information
7 that the Legislative Liaison's Office could actually
8 send us. So that is from last year.

9
10 MR. STEVENSON: Thank you, George.
11 Through the Chair. I also wanted to add that Mr.
12 Pappas has corrected me, and thank you, George, that
13 the Board of Game meetings are done for this winter.

14
15 MS. ATORUK: Yep.

16
17 MR. STEVENSON: Thank you, Mr. Chair.

18
19 CHAIRMAN KRAMER: Okay. Yeah, I was
20 contacted probably about two weeks ago by
21 Representative Lincoln's assistant regarding how
22 concessions were awarded through the State and Federal.
23 Then I did call and I got some information and I
24 forwarded it to them regarding that to Representative
25 Lincoln's assistant, Elizabeth Ferguson, because she
26 had some questions and she knew that I had worked in
27 the past as an assistant guide. I know I didn't really
28 get into how the Federal side was awarded, but now I'm
29 a little more educated on it. I did advise her exactly
30 what I was told and passed it on to her before that
31 bill.

32
33 I'll read it more once I get to open it
34 later. Is there any further questions for the
35 Department of Fish and Game on caribou or any other
36 harvests from the board.

37
38 (No comments)

39
40 MR. STEVENSON: Mike, did you want to
41 take a break now to review that bill?

42
43 CHAIRMAN KRAMER: Yeah, we can go ahead
44 and do that.

45
46 MR. PAPPAS: Zach, and to the Chair,
47 yes, the bill you're looking at HB-19 was last year and
48 it's related to how they treat hunters, hunter's gear
49 and guides being transported on water taxis. This has

50

1 nothing to do with awarding concessions for guide
2 areas. That's not part of it, but I will try to
3 forward it on.

4

5 Thank you, Mr. Chair.

6

7 MR. KRON: Mr. Chair, real quick. Tom
8 Kron. A couple action items. It sounded like we're
9 going to lose a Council member tomorrow. So again the
10 reappointment of Louie to the SRC and the annual report
11 approval and your future meeting dates. If we could
12 address those items today for sure, that would be much
13 appreciated. I'm just concerned that we're going to
14 lose our quorum here.

15

16 Thank you, Mr. Chair.

17

18 MS. ATORUK: We lost our quorum
19 already. There's just three of us.

20

21 CHAIRMAN KRAMER: Yeah. During this
22 break, Zach, can you try and get a hold of Reppi or one
23 of them so we can maintain a quorum at least for an
24 hour or more and get these priority things taken care
25 of.

26

27 MR. STEVENSON: Yes, Mr. Chair. What
28 time would you like to reconvene?

29

30 CHAIRMAN KRAMER: What time is it now?
31 3:00 o'clock. How about 3:15 or 3:20.

32

33 MR. STEVENSON: 3:20 it is.

34

35 MS. ATORUK: Or call Attamuk back or
36 something.

37

38 CHAIRMAN KRAMER: Yeah. Try and get a
39 hold of another Council member and get these balls
40 rolling.

41

42 MR. STEVENSON: You got it. Talk to
43 you at 3:20. Thanks everybody.

44

45 (Off record)

46

47 (On record)

48

49 MR. STEVENSON: Mr. Chair, it sounds

50

1 like I've heard a few beeps on and off just a minute
2 ago. Reppi, have you joined us?

3

4 MR. SWAN: Yes, I'm here.

5

6 MS. ATORUK: All right! Glad you're
7 there, Rep.

8

9 MR. SWAN: Yeah. I'm sorry I didn't
10 call in earlier. We've been busy recovering from
11 sickness and keeping the house clean.

12

13 MR. STEVENSON: Welcome, Reppi.

14

15 MR. SWAN: Thank you.

16

17 MR. STEVENSON: Louie, are you on the
18 call, Louie Commack?

19

20 MR. COMMACK: Yeah, I'm on the phone.

21

22 MR. STEVENSON: Okay. We have a
23 quorum. Through the Chair. I just wanted to briefly
24 do a quick housekeeping update. We still have on the
25 agenda the Office of Subsistence Management report with
26 Tom Kron and Orville Lind. Then selecting our future
27 meeting dates. We're aiming to get this wrapped up
28 today by 4:00.

29

30 I had a request from Tom Kron that
31 before going further that we please address the action
32 item of the reappointment of Louis Commack to the SRC,
33 the approval of the annual report and selecting future
34 meeting dates.

35

36 Lastly, I wanted to mention that
37 Captain Rex Leath with the Alaska Department of Public
38 Safety and wildlife troopers is presently in a meeting
39 that's running longer than expected addressing the
40 coronavirus. So he may not be able to join us by
41 teleconference this afternoon, but we'll invite him
42 back to the fall meeting.

43

44 Thank you, Mr. Chair.

45

46 Action items would be next.

47

48 CAPT. LEATH: Through the Chair. Zach,
49 this is Rex Leath. I am on the phone now.

50

1 MR. STEVENSON: Oh, thanks, Rex.
2
3 MS. ATORUK: Okay. Mr. Chair, let's do
4 the action items while we have a quorum so we don't
5 have to worry about them.
6
7 CHAIRMAN KRAMER: I copy that. Are we
8 ready to start taking these on?
9
10 MR. STEVENSON: Through the Chair.
11 Mike, we had a request from Marcy Okada earlier with
12 Gates of the Arctic National Park and Preserve
13 requesting support from this Council to reappoint Louie
14 Commack to the Gates of the Arctic National Park and
15 Preserve SRC. What is the wish of the Council on that
16 request?
17
18 MS. ATORUK: So moved.
19
20 CHAIRMAN KRAMER: Okay, there's a
21 motion.
22
23 MR. STEVENSON: Is there a motion?
24
25 MS. ATORUK: Yes. I made a motion.
26
27 CHAIRMAN KRAMER: Is there a second.
28
29 MR. SWAN: Second. Reppi Swan.
30
31 CHAIRMAN KRAMER: Reppi Swan seconded.
32
33 MR. SWAN: Question.
34
35 CHAIRMAN KRAMER: The question has been
36 called.
37
38 MS. ATORUK: Roll call vote.
39
40 CHAIRMAN KRAMER: Okay. Council Member
41 Atoruk.
42
43 MS. ATORUK: Yes.
44
45 CHAIRMAN KRAMER: Council Member Louie
46 Commack.
47
48 MR. COMMACK: Yes.
49
50

1 CHAIRMAN KRAMER: Council Member Reppi
2 Swan.
3
4 MR. SWAN: Yes.
5
6 CHAIRMAN KRAMER: Council Member
7 Kramer. Yes. Motion is so moved.
8
9 MR. STEVENSON: Through the Chair.
10
11 CHAIRMAN KRAMER: Go ahead, Zach.
12
13 MR. STEVENSON: The next action item on
14 the agenda was the approval of the draft fiscal year
15 2019 Annual Report to the Federal Subsistence Board.
16
17 MS. ATORUK: So moved.
18
19 CHAIRMAN KRAMER: We have a motion. Is
20 there a second?
21
22 MR. SWAN: What was the motion? I
23 missed the motion.
24
25 CHAIRMAN KRAMER: The motion was to
26 approve the 2019 annual report that is given to the
27 Board of Game.
28
29 MR. STEVENSON: No, no, the Federal
30 Subsistence Board.
31
32 CHAIRMAN KRAMER: Yeah, Federal
33 Subsistence Board, correct.
34
35 MR. COMMACK: Second.
36
37 CHAIRMAN KRAMER: Seconded by Louie.
38 Question, discussion.
39
40 MR. COMMACK: Mr. Chair. Discussion.
41
42 CHAIRMAN KRAMER: Discussion. Go
43 ahead.
44
45 MR. COMMACK: Is this the one I talked
46 about earlier where I wanted to speak on some of the
47 issues?
48
49 MS. ATORUK: Yes, it's the time to talk
50

1 about it.

2

3

CHAIRMAN KRAMER: Yeah.

4

5

MR. COMMACK: Okay. Thanks very much.
6 I got a copy about 12:00 or 12:30, the letter. I
7 thought about it and I don't know if the board or
8 Council will agree, but I think there should be
9 additions in wording to some of the -- when we asked
10 for information from BLM, how they plan to reduce
11 impacts. The first point was the air quality,
12 construction, post-construction, road usage, asbestos
13 known to cause cancer.

14

15

16

17

18

19

If I may, Mr. Chairman, I'd like to
propose that we add on and other illnesses that we
don't know about. We don't know what
else that asbestos creates.

20

21

22

23

24

25

The second one, the qualified
subsistence users impact on the disturbance of the
animals. Mainly the caribou herd which includes the
bear, the moose, the sheep and world-class breeding
grounds. That includes all the animals.

26

27

28

29

30

31

The third one, the water quality, fish
habitat, spawning areas. I would like to add on that
we include world-class spawning areas, which is Upper
Kobuk for the sheefish, salmon, trout, grayling, and
breeding grounds for many other animals.

32

33

34

35

36

37

38

39

40

I'm trying to be more detailed on the
listing and be more specific to the letter or the
amendments. Also that we're able to reach out
environmental groups across the United States on
indigenous lands being affected. We're not the only
indigenous people being affected by construction on our
lands. There are other countries, Canada, North
Dakota, that are affected, the indigenous peoples.

41

42

43

44

MR. STEVENSON: Through the Chair. If
I may interrupt for just a moment, Louie, through the
Chair.

45

46

47

48

49

50

CHAIRMAN KRAMER: Go ahead.

MR. STEVENSON: Responding to the
request from Louie Commack. As I stated earlier, the
role of this Council is to share information, but not

1 to advocate for or against projects. So I'm concerned
2 about the request to use this Council as a way for
3 networking, in this case other environmental groups.
4

5 If that's something that the Council
6 wishes to be done, Council members may do that on their
7 own, but I'm very concerned about doing that on behalf
8 of this Council. I feel it's not consistent with our
9 Charter.

10

11 Thank you, Mr. Chair.

12

13 MR. COMMACK: Okay. So we could do it
14 as individuals, not through this Council.

15

16 MR. STEVENSON: Correct.

17

18 MR. COMMACK: Okay. Thank you for
19 correcting me.

20

21 MS. ATORUK: What you were saying was
22 directly going against what we have on our Charter.

23

24 MR. STEVENSON: I made a note through
25 the Chair of the addition to the Annual Report
26 reflecting the language that Louis Commack just stated
27 and I made a note of that. Those will be reflected in
28 the edits for the Annual Report.

29

30 Thank you, Mr. Chair.

31

32 MR. COMMACK: I'm only asking this
33 Council if these could be considered. I'm doing my
34 best to speak out for the people that will be affected.
35 Zach, you can read this over how you understand it. It
36 also could be not approved.

36

37 MR. STEVENSON: Through the Chair, Mr.
38 Kramer. I've noted the request from Louie Commack to
39 add the language to the first bullet point and other
40 illnesses we don't know about as well as adding the
41 language disturbances to the Western Arctic Caribou
42 Herd, bear, moose, sheep and world-class spawning areas
43 for sheefish, trout and grayling and other animals.

44

45 Thank you, Mr. Chair.

46

47 MS. ATORUK: Is the road on this side
48 of the mountains or the other side of the mountains?
49 The other side has no connections to our stream, our
50

1 river.

2

3 MR. COMMACK: The mine will be built
4 end of Ambler Road, Ambler River.

5

6 MS. ATORUK: Oh, it will cross the
7 Ambler River.

8

9 MR. COMMACK: No, it's on the side of
10 Ambler River on the mountain side on the river.

11

12 MS. ATORUK: Oh.

13

14 CHAIRMAN KRAMER: I can't recall which
15 route was it that was going to be going through the
16 area that contains natural reoccurring asbestos. I
17 think that if we were to see those routes and which
18 ones would be more conservative on behalf of the
19 subsistence users, the wildlife, you know. Not only
20 the humans would get cancer, also the wildlife within
21 the area would be breathing in this stuff.

22

23 I know that the concerns from Louie and
24 what other types of illnesses or conditions that they
25 cause, I think it would be wise to see if we can find
26 out which route will be crossing that area or which
27 route would have less impact on the natural reoccurring
28 asbestos in that area.

29

30 MR. STEVENSON: Hey, Mike.

31

32 CHAIRMAN KRAMER: Yeah.

33

34 MR. STEVENSON: This is Zach. My
35 recollection from our fall meeting was that the
36 environmental impact statement identified areas where
37 existing occurrences of asbestos or asbestos minerals
38 might be an issue. My understanding was that,
39 particularly through Tristan Pattee, his concern was
40 that the disturbance of those areas really needed to be
41 minimized. Why? So that the risk of affecting air
42 quality and human health through exposure to asbestos
43 really would be minimized as much as possible. That
44 would attempt to state as broad as possible let's avoid
45 disturbing that asbestos so that people and animals
46 don't get sick.

47

48 I hope that clarifies your question.

49

50

1 CHAIRMAN KRAMER: Yeah.

2
3 MR. STEVENSON: Thank you.

4
5 MR. COMMACK: The other issue is the
6 fish migrate, the sheefish and the salmon, the
7 whitefish from Lower Kobuk and then in front of Ambler
8 there's the Ambler River that goes north and there's a
9 Kobuk River that turns to the right. So when we talk
10 of fish, we're going to affect -- if something should
11 happen to the tailing pond or whatever happens, it's
12 coming down the Ambler River and over Kiana, Noorvik
13 and probably Kobuk Lake. That's the concern.

14
15 MR. STEVENSON: Through the Chair. I
16 had a brief comment for Louie.

17
18 CHAIRMAN KRAMER: Go ahead.

19
20 MR. COMMACK: Go ahead.

21
22 MR. STEVENSON: Thank you for that
23 comment about concerns about water quality and
24 migration of sheefish from the Lower Kobuk to the
25 Ambler River. What we've tried to express in this
26 letter and we could certainly clarify is concern from
27 impact from tailing ponds or potential mining discharge
28 into areas that are known to support fish or spawning
29 areas.

30
31 The other part of that issue that I
32 heard last time at our fall meeting was concern about
33 the effect of vehicles or trucks transporting mining
34 materials or ore and areas where those vehicles might
35 be crossing streams and potentially discharging waste
36 into fish spawning areas. We were attempting to
37 address both of those concerns that I heard at our fall
38 meeting.

39
40 I hope that's clear.

41
42 Thank you, Mr. Chair.

43
44 MR. COMMACK: Mr. Chair. Zach. It's
45 very clear. I know the road will cross thousands of
46 creeks, probably lakes, streams. For 220 miles of it
47 there's going to be lots of bridges and everything else
48 that they need to construct the road. That includes
49 airports, corridors to the Kobuk River, probably

50

1 corridors to the Great Lakes just to build that road.

2

3 MR. STEVENSON: Through the Chair. If
4 I may clarify one point.

5

6 CHAIRMAN KRAMER: Go ahead.

7

8 MR. STEVENSON: One of the questions I
9 remember hearing a lot when I worked for the Borough in
10 Kotzebue was how will this information be used and for
11 what purpose. So to answer those questions for this
12 topic on the annual report, this information would be
13 used by BLM and by Park Service when they are preparing
14 their analysis or their Section 810 review and they
15 would say, okay, what are the concerns of the Northwest
16 Arctic Subsistence Regional Advisory Council and how
17 can we address those concerns.

18

19 So, for example, they would look at how
20 can we avoid releasing asbestos when we're building
21 roads or they might say how can we avoid disturbing
22 sensitive spawning areas or areas that we know sheefish
23 and grayling or other important subsistence fish use.
24 How do we minimize disturbing those areas so that there
25 are enough fish for people to eat.

26

27 That's how this information would be
28 used. I just wanted to be clear on how the land
29 managers would use this information. Thank you, Mr.
30 Chair.

31

32 CHAIRMAN KRAMER: Is there any further
33 questions on that one, Louie?

34

35 MR. COMMACK: Okay. This whole letter
36 is about reducing impacts on the people. I think it's
37 a good letter with the additions I wanted to add on of
38 my concerns, but you don't have to vote for it. You
39 vote up and down on it.

40

41 Those are a lot of concerns from the
42 people. They are concerned of maybe sustaining or fish
43 and game. You probably already know that throughout
44 the years. We closed like I stated earlier, moose,
45 sheep. We've closed off even before the road itself.
46 We've gone through declines of caribou populations
47 before the road itself. What's going to happen when we
48 build the road?

49

50

1 So these are my concerns and I'm
2 grateful that you allowed me to speak on behalf of my
3 people I represent.
4

5 Thank you. Thank you very much.
6

7 MR. STEVENSON: Through the Chair.
8

9 CHAIRMAN KRAMER: Go ahead.
10

11 MR. STEVENSON: Do we have a motion to
12 adopt the fiscal year 2019 annual report as amended?
13

14 MS. ATORUK: We have to amend. We
15 already have a main motion on the floor, so we need to
16 make another motion to make amendments.
17

18 MR. STEVENSON: Taikuullapiaq, Barb.
19

20 CHAIRMAN KRAMER: Do we have a motion
21 to amend?
22

23 MR. SWAN: Move to amend.
24

25 CHAIRMAN KRAMER: There's a motion on
26 the floor.
27

28 MS. ATORUK: Who made a motion?
29

30 MR. SWAN: Reppi Swan.
31

32 CHAIRMAN KRAMER: Is there a second.
33

34 MR. COMMACK: Second.
35

36 CHAIRMAN KRAMER: Seconded by Louie.
37 All those in favor say aye.
38

39 IN UNISON: Aye.
40

41 (No opposing votes)
42

43 CHAIRMAN KRAMER: Unanimous vote. Is
44 there anything else?
45

46 MS. ATORUK: The main motion now.
47

48 CHAIRMAN KRAMER: Okay.
49
50

1 MR. STEVENSON: Mr. Chair.
2
3 CHAIRMAN KRAMER: Go ahead.
4
5 MR. STEVENSON: The last action item I
6 had before us was.....
7
8 MS. ATORUK: Mr. Chair.
9
10 CHAIRMAN KRAMER: Yeah, go ahead. We
11 still have the main motion on the floor.
12
13 MS. ATORUK: Yeah. After the amendment
14 motion we need to go back to the main motion and then
15 approve the Annual Report as amended.
16
17 MR. STEVENSON: Thank you.
18
19 CHAIRMAN KRAMER: Is there a motion on
20 the floor?
21
22 MS. ATORUK: There is a motion. We
23 just had a discussion and we did the amendment, now we
24 need to vote.
25
26 CHAIRMAN KRAMER: Okay. All those in
27 favor of amendment.....
28
29 MR. STEVENSON: Motion to adopt the
30 Annual Report as amended.
31
32 MS. ATORUK: That motion is there
33 already and then the amendments. Okay, as amended.
34 Okay. Second.
35
36 CHAIRMAN KRAMER: All those in favor
37 please say aye.
38
39 IN UNISON: Aye.
40
41 (No opposing votes)
42
43 MR. STEVENSON: Okay. It passes
44 unanimously.
45
46 CHAIRMAN KRAMER: Yeah, unanimous
47 pass. So our next action item was future meeting.
48
49 MR. STEVENSON: Yes, Mr. Chair. First
50

1 we have selecting the meeting date for the fall 2020
2 meeting. Right now we have the date of Tuesday
3 November 3rd and Wednesday November 4th for the
4 Northwest Arctic RAC meeting in Kotzebue. Does the
5 Council want to hold those dates or pick other dates?
6 What do you think?

7
8 MS. ATORUK: We were happy with them
9 the first time. I make a motion to move that we keep
10 our meeting dates for November 3 and 4, 2020 in
11 Kotzebue.

12
13 CHAIRMAN KRAMER: I second that.

14
15 MR. COMMACK: Question.

16
17 CHAIRMAN KRAMER: The question has been
18 called. All those in favor on continuing to have the
19 fall meeting November 3rd and 4th say aye.

20
21 IN UNISON: Aye.

22
23 CHAIRMAN KRAMER: Any nays.

24
25 (No opposing votes)

26
27 CHAIRMAN KRAMER: Motion carried.

28
29 MR. STEVENSON: Thank you, Mr. Chair.
30 The last was the winter 2021 meeting dates and we don't
31 have any dates selected yet. We could certainly do the
32 same dates next year for our winter meeting, March 16th
33 and 17th, if the Council would like.

34
35 MS. ATORUK: Let's do it the week of
36 the 14th of February. March is too busy. I would like
37 to ask to see if we can have it on the 18th and 19th of
38 February, 2021.

39
40 MR. STEVENSON: Will you bring
41 Valentine chocolates for everybody?

42
43 (Laughter)

44
45 MS. ATORUK: Whatever. I so move. Do
46 I have a second?

47
48 CHAIRMAN KRAMER: I know that it's very
49 difficult for me to get time off. I normally have
50

1 Tuesdays and Wednesdays off. So if we could try to
2 make it somewhat easier on me because I have to put in
3 leave several months in advance.
4

5 MR. STEVENSON: Mike, are there other
6 dates you'd like to propose?
7

8 CHAIRMAN KRAMER: March 2nd or March
9 3rd.
10

11 MR. STEVENSON: Any objection?
12

13 MS. ATORUK: Like I said earlier, for
14 myself I'm speaking, March is a busy month.
15

16 MR. STEVENSON: I'll be happy either
17 way as long as I get my Valentine's chocolates.
18

19 MS. ATORUK: Me too. Whatever you guys
20 want. Go ahead.
21

22 MR. STEVENSON: What do we think? Did
23 we find a compromise on those dates?
24

25 MS. ATORUK: What dates, Zach?
26

27 MR. STEVENSON: The dates of February
28 18th and 19th or the dates of March 2nd and 3rd, 2021.
29

30 CHAIRMAN KRAMER: This is Mike. I was
31 briefly disconnected.
32

33 MR. STEVENSON: Okay. I was just
34 asking if we might be able to confirm or find a
35 compromise between the suggested dates of Thursday,
36 February 18th, 2021 and Friday, February 19th, 2021 or
37 Tuesday, March 2nd, 2021 and Wednesday, March 3rd,
38 2021. What does the Council think?
39

40 MS. ATORUK: I made a motion for 18 and
41 19 and I had a second.
42

43 CHAIRMAN KRAMER: Does everybody agree
44 with that motion?
45

46 MR. SWAN: I second on her motion.
47

48 CHAIRMAN KRAMER: Okay. All those in
49 favor of having our meeting February 18th and 19th,
50

1 2021 please say aye.
2
3 IN UNISON: Aye.
4
5 CHAIRMAN KRAMER: Any nays.
6
7 (No opposing votes)
8
9 CHAIRMAN KRAMER: Hearing none.
10 That's when our meeting will be 2021. Unanimous vote.
11 Is there any more action items that we needed to take
12 care of, Zach? Hello?
13
14 MS. ATORUK: I don't know what happened
15 to Zach, but I don't think so.
16
17 MR. STEVENSON: I'm sorry. I had you
18 on mute. Can you hear me now?
19
20 CHAIRMAN KRAMER: Yeah, I can hear you.
21
22 MR. STEVENSON: Okay. Thank you, Mr.
23 Chair. That concludes the action items. We had two
24 remaining reports to wrap up for the next 10 minutes.
25 One was from the Office of Subsistence Management.
26 Orville Lind said that if there's not enough time to
27 get him on the agenda, he can deliver his information
28 at the Federal Subsistence Board meeting. We also have
29 Rex Leath with the Department of Public Safety.
30
31 Thank you, Mr. Chair.
32
33 CHAIRMAN KRAMER: What is the wish of
34 the board?
35
36 MS. ATORUK: So we don't hear from OSM
37 then? Are we done?
38
39 MR. STEVENSON: We have Tom Kron
40 standing by to do the OSM report.
41
42 MS. ATORUK: Okay. We'll hear from
43 Tom. Right, through the Chair?
44
45 CHAIRMAN KRAMER: Yeah.
46
47 MR. STEVENSON: Through the Chair. Tom
48 Kron, are you there?
49
50

1 MR. KRON: Yes, Mr. Chair, Zach. I'm
2 ready and waiting. I'm looking forward to talking with
3 Barb again. It's awesome.

4
5 MS. ATORUK: Thank you, Tom. We're
6 waiting for you then.

7
8 MR. KRON: I'll start. I believe Zach
9 included the report as one of the attachments that he
10 sent everybody, but I'll just start then. This won't
11 take too long.

12
13 As most Council members are aware, the
14 Office of Subsistence Management had to reschedule the
15 winter 2020 Council meetings until March and early
16 April to assure compliance with the Federal Advisory
17 Committee Act or FACA. Thank you all for the patience
18 and for working with us to reschedule the meeting.

19
20 Also thanks again to everyone for
21 helping out with the teleconference today due to the
22 recent virus concerns. Updated Council Charters have
23 been included in each Council book and your Council
24 book has the new Charter on Pages 21 through 25. These
25 include provisions that allow the Charters to have
26 includes new provisions that allows for Councils to
27 have alternate members. We are pleased that the
28 Secretary of Interior signed the Council Charters
29 making them valid through December 2021.

30
31 Last year the Federal Subsistence Board
32 received 63 applications to fill 46 vacant or expired
33 seats. The Board recommended to the Secretaries of
34 Interior and Agriculture to appoint or reappoint 42
35 incumbents and new applicants to the 10 Councils. Of
36 these 22 appointments were approved and arrangements
37 were made for these individuals to participate in the
38 winter 2020 Council meetings.

39
40 OSM pushed hard, harder than ever to
41 recruit additional Council members, nominations and
42 applications for the current appointment cycle. Plus
43 the Council nomination application deadline was
44 extended through March 2nd.

45
46 Gene Peltola vacated the Assistant
47 Regional Director position at OSM in June 2019 to
48 become the Alaska Regional Director for the Bureau of
49 Indian Affairs. Over the past 21 months Tom Doolittle

50

1 did an outstanding job leading OSM as the Acting ARD
2 for OSM. Thank you very much to Tom.

3
4 Ms. Susan Detwiler was recently
5 selected to be our new Assistant Regional Director for
6 OSM. She expects to be here by the end of March.
7 Susan has over 25 years of experience working in Alaska
8 with U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service and the U.S. Forest
9 Service. She first went to work for OSM and Fish and
10 Wildlife Service in 1989 when the Subsistence Program
11 consisted of just two people.

12
13 After leaving OSM in 2000, Susan went
14 to work in other areas within the Fish and Wildlife,
15 including as the Subsistence and Native American
16 Liaison and Endangered Species Coordinator in Alaska
17 and the Wildlife and Sport Fish Restoration Division
18 Chief in Region 8 down in California and Nevada.

19
20 She has over 30 years of Federal
21 service. She has a master's degree in natural resource
22 policy from the University of Alaska Fairbanks and a
23 bachelor's degree in wildlife management from Humboldt
24 State University. Most recently Susan comes from the
25 U.S. Environmental Protection Agency as a director of
26 the Alaska Operations Office.

27
28 Susan says she's enjoyed her time in
29 the Subsistence Program and is very happy to be coming
30 back. Please join us in welcoming Susan back to OSM.

31
32 Since the fall of 2019 Council meetings
33 there have been a number of staffing changes at OSM.
34 Tom Evans, one of our wildlife biologists, retired.
35 While another wildlife biologist, Megan Klosterman,
36 left OSM for a position with the National Park Service.
37 Our Budget Analyst Durand Tyler took a promotion with
38 the new Joint Administrative Operations Division or
39 JAO. Even in his new position Durand has continued to
40 help make travel arrangements and logistics for the
41 Council meetings this winter.

42
43 OSM Executive Secretary Pam Raygor left
44 for a promotion at the Bureau of Safety and
45 Environmental Enforcement. Our Pathways anthropologist
46 student, Kristin Brummer, left to finish her master's
47 degree. Jared Stone, a fisheries biologist for the
48 Fisheries Division, took a promotion with Alaska Fish
49 and Wildlife Marine Mammals program.

50

1 With all these departures OSM staffing
2 was down about 40 percent. The good news is OSM has
3 filled four vacancies over the last month. Tina Baker
4 took a lateral transfer from the JAO Division to become
5 our Office of Subsistence Management Administrative
6 Specialist. Michelle St. Peters returned to OSM after
7 working for the Wildlife and Sport Fish Restoration
8 Program for about a month to resume her duties as the
9 Grants and Agreements Specialist. While Sabrina
10 Schmidt and Catherine Avery were selected to fill two
11 vacant administrative assistant positions.

12
13 With these new arrivals OSM is still
14 down about 35 percent. However, by the end of the
15 calendar year we hope to fill at least three to four
16 additional vacancies. OSM is currently waiting on
17 Human Resources at Fish and Wildlife Service to
18 advertise one Fishery Biologist position and the
19 Anthropology and Council Coordination supervisor
20 positions, leaving us down about 28 percent.

21
22 Thank you, Mr. Chair.

23
24 I'd be happy to answer any questions
25 that you have.

26
27 CHAIRMAN KRAMER: Thank you. Is there
28 any further questions.

29
30 MS. ATORUK: Thank you, Mr. Kron.

31
32 MR. COMMACK: Mr. Chair.

33
34 CHAIRMAN KRAMER: Go ahead, Louie.

35
36 MR. COMMACK: Mr. Chair. I'm just
37 curious about the budget. I don't know what's
38 happening with the Federal budget.

39
40 MR. KRON: Mr. Chair, Louie. What I am
41 hearing is that the Federal budget, the portion that
42 comes to Office of Subsistence Management to support
43 the program here and the Councils, that that Federal
44 budget is down a little bit, but very close to what
45 we've had in prior years, so we're expecting near
46 status quo budgets.

47
48 Thank you, Mr. Chair.

49
50

1 MR. COMMACK: Thank you.
2
3 MR. STEVENSON: Through the Chair.
4
5 CHAIRMAN KRAMER: Go ahead, Zach.
6
7 MR. STEVENSON: Thank you, Mr. Chair.
8 I just received a text message from Orville Lind who
9 stated that he had to leave. He catches a public
10 transportation back to his home in the Valley, but he
11 said he would be more than happy to share his update at
12 the fall Council meeting on government-to-government
13 consultation if the Council wishes.
14
15 Thank you, Mr. Chair.
16
17 CHAIRMAN KRAMER: Okay. That sounds
18 good.
19
20 MR. STEVENSON: Then last we had
21 Captain Rex Leath with the Alaska Department of Public
22 Safety.
23
24 CAPT. LEATH: Good afternoon. Through
25 the Chair. This is Rex Leath. I apologize for my
26 repeated times I had to step off the phone today
27 numerous times. We're trying to deal with this
28 response to the coronavirus. So thanks for your
29 patience.
30
31 I can start off just in general terms.
32 As far as our patrol efforts and our plans for 2020 for
33 the Northwest Arctic including the Kotzebue region and
34 the areas east of there up to the headwaters of the
35 Kobuk, also to the north near Point Hope and Point Lay.
36
37
38 We have a new trooper arriving in the
39 region. He will be there in June. His name is Steven
40 Cantine. He will be there with his wife and four
41 children. He's a pilot as well. We're getting him
42 brushed up on his pilot skills so that he can patrol
43 the entire region the best he can.
44
45 For this summer and fall efforts when
46 it comes to patrol efforts, we don't have any new plans
47 to do anything differently than we've done in the past.
48 As normal, we're going to be monitoring the commercial
49 industry and the personal use industry up in that area
50

1 specifically during the fall as it pertains to caribou.
2 We're going to be watching on the northern edge of the
3 population base from basically west of Noatak all the
4 way to the headwaters of the Noatak as the herd starts
5 to migrate south to try to prevent any violations that
6 may occur and proactively address any illegal
7 activities that we come across.

8
9 That same trooper will be addressing
10 the fisheries and the commercial fisheries in the area.
11 Again, nothing is planned out of the ordinary as far as
12 how we plan to patrol the Kotzebue Sound and the Kobuk
13 and Noatak Rivers this year. There will be some
14 maritime patrol, some patrol in boats, but some of that
15 will be in airplanes as well.

16
17 Then in the fall as usual we usually
18 bring in some assistance of additional troopers. With
19 the reduction in the non-resident hunts in the area,
20 we've seen less activity on the non-resident side
21 obviously with hunting for moose and caribou, but we're
22 still planning on bringing up some temporary assistance
23 to the region to help cover everything from the Selawik
24 Refuge area all the way up into the Upper Noatak and
25 Kobuk and Squirrel River valleys.

26
27 So that's kind of a nutshell overview.
28 One thing I will comment on as well we are monitoring
29 the Ambler Road development potential and we do have
30 planning in place to address if that road is developed
31 on how we're going to ensure that the environmental
32 area there and the wildlife that traverse that region
33 are properly protected from violations. So we are
34 getting ahead on that. That is going to require that
35 we're watching the area from Coldfoot basically all the
36 way to Ambler.

37
38 Not only with troopers in the Kotzebue
39 region respond, but for those of you upriver in Ambler,
40 Shungnak and Kobuk you know that Kobuk is a long ways
41 from Kotzebue for a pilot to get to in a hurry. So
42 we'll also be patrolling that area from the Coldfoot
43 region as well.

44
45 So that's kind of my overview.

46
47 If you have any questions, I'd be glad
48 to answer any questions you have.

49
50

1 CHAIRMAN KRAMER: This is Chairman
2 Kramer. I know there's always a lot of concerns
3 regarding people going from the Haul Road all the way
4 to Ambler. My question is, is there going to be
5 certain entity security checkpoints? Like, for
6 instance, we have NANA and across Parklands.
7

8 The other question is like Anaktuvuk
9 Pass, any of those other communities, Bettles maybe,
10 that will be passing by, will they or their region or
11 Game Management Unit be able to provide -- you know,
12 there's a bunch of security measures of a lot of
13 concerns regarding people trying to go down that road
14 to go and hunt and stuff like that other than local
15 subsistence users. Our concern is non-resident hunters
16 trying to go up that road and is there going to be
17 multiple entity checkpoints throughout that entire road
18 and not allow any unnecessary people to be going along
19 that road?
20

21 CAPT. LEATH: Through the Chair. Mr.
22 Kramer, that's a great question. Right now, and I
23 can't speak for the long-term proposal on how that road
24 will be used, but as of right now the intention and the
25 proposal through the Ambler Access Program is for that
26 road not to be a public road and for that road to be
27 maintained and monitored by the owner or owners of that
28 property. Whoever is developing that road the plan
29 right now is for them provide a secure access point.
30 There is no dialogue right now. If you go to -- I'm
31 sure you've been to ambleraccess.org, you can see the
32 map and the proposed language on how that road is
33 intended to be used.
34

35 Again, there's no intention right now
36 that I can see, we've been monitoring this, for that
37 road to be wide public access. As to whether or not
38 there will be multiple security checkpoints and who
39 will monitor those security checkpoints, that would be
40 for the property owner or the property lessee to manage
41 that. But those are great questions.
42

43 CHAIRMAN KRAMER: Yeah, that's always
44 going to be a concern, you know. Here in Northwest
45 Alaska we're starting to get some pretty rough drugs
46 coming into this region. We could have multiple
47 checkpoints to not allow that type of material to be
48 coming on that road, whether it be day or night, where
49 there's 24-hour coverage. This is just to protect the
50

1 people and our subsistence resources. At least that
2 way we would feel better knowing that that road is
3 secure and to where these items are not crossing into
4 our region or Game Management Unit and causing problems
5 here in the region.

6
7 MR. STEVENSON: Through the Chair,
8 Mike. I had a quick clarification if I may.

9
10 CHAIRMAN KRAMER: Go ahead, Zach.

11
12 MR. STEVENSON: One part of this
13 discussion that hasn't been had is raising the concern
14 around public access with the permittee, the entity
15 that will permit the road, as well as the funder, the
16 agency that will provide a lot of the funding for the
17 road. If the Council wishes, those two entities could
18 be invited to the fall meeting so the Council could
19 further explore this if the Council so wishes.

20
21 Thank you, Mr. Chair.

22
23 CAPT. LEATH: Through the Chair. This
24 is Rex Leath again. Mr. Kramer, as to your question
25 and your concerns, rightfully so, about the security
26 of the region when it comes to alcohol and narcotics
27 importation, I can speak directly to that. I lived in
28 Kotzebue and I worked for the Statewide Drug
29 Enforcement Unit for the State Troopers while I lived
30 there in Kotzebue and I patrolled that entire region
31 whether it was by air, by boat or by snowmachine in the
32 winter, interdicting bootleggers and drug dealers.

33
34 I can tell you that any road that would
35 be put in place like that if it's not open to public
36 access but if it's controlled by a landowner or a
37 private company, those entities have the right to
38 establish policies that people that traverse on that
39 road have to abide by.

40
41 I would encourage the region
42 potentially to converse with the North Slope Borough
43 and the companies that operate in the oilfields. They
44 have policies in place for their employees or anyone
45 who accesses their facilities and select roadways
46 there. They have to submit to certain types of
47 screening and bag checks.

48
49 The State of Alaska, we can't require

50

1 individuals on a publicly maintained road to consent to
2 a search for that type of event, but private entities
3 can. So that would be a great topic to bring up as the
4 formula and the policy is drafted as to how those roads
5 or road is going to be used in the future.

6

7

CHAIRMAN KRAMER: Okay. Thank you.

8

9

MR. COMMACK: Mr. Chairman.

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11

CHAIRMAN KRAMER: Go ahead, Louie.

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MR. COMMACK: This is Louie. I know we've spoken about this issue many times. When that road is built, it's a public entity and uses public dollars, how do they keep the mining claims, the owners of the mining claims, the resort builders, recreational builders, airports and selling off State lands and allotments. When you use public dollars, you're going to run into a lot of problems.

CHAIRMAN KRAMER: Is there any further questions.

MR. STEVENSON: Through the Chair.

CHAIRMAN KRAMER: Go ahead, Zach.

MR. STEVENSON: Thanks, Mike. I'm not able to answer that question right now. That was why I had suggested if the Council wishes that we invite ADA, who would be helping to fund this projects, to the fall meeting as well as the entity, whoever will be permitting the road, so that they can speak to these public access issues more directly.

Thank you, Mr. Chair.

CHAIRMAN KRAMER: Okay. I agree with that.

MR. COMMACK: Yeah, me too.

CHAIRMAN KRAMER: Is there any further questions.

(No comments)

CHAIRMAN KRAMER: The only question I

1 have, I know you're only speaking for yourself and the
2 rest of the law enforcement group, what was the
3 citation count for this fall, winter, so far to date?
4

5 CAPT. LEATH: Through the Chair. So
6 the citation count when it comes to wildlife or
7 resource violations in the region, I don't have that
8 exact number in front of me because it varies greatly
9 what type of issues we cite people for. If you let me
10 know the general topic -- if you want this for wildlife
11 violations, I can obtain that number for you and
12 provide it back to you probably in an email to this
13 group if that works for you, sir.
14

15 CHAIRMAN KRAMER: Yeah, that works good
16 because I know that that working group is very helpful.
17 We always want to know that violators are being charged
18 and us being reminded that these violators are being
19 properly handled and taken to court. Just to ensure
20 that we have -- we know that you guys are doing an
21 awesome job out there by citing people or issues
22 because it is a big concern.
23

24 CAPT. LEATH: Through the Chair. Sir,
25 I'll collect that number for you. I will provide it
26 back in an email here in the next couple days to this
27 group. So the board also knows, one thing we've been
28 trying to strive for is also prevention through
29 education. So we've been trying to increase our
30 educational outreach especially to the younger
31 generation of hunters in Alaska.
32

33 We've had a couple cases there in
34 Kotzebue with some youths that live in town that
35 committed some violations last fall and we were able to
36 work with the parents and the courts to use education
37 from them. Also through some elders in the region to
38 work with them to teach them -- not necessarily
39 penalize them, but show the right way to harvest so
40 that in the future they grow up to be proper consumers
41 and proper gatherers rather than people that get
42 penalized but maybe never taught the right way to do
43 it.
44

45 CHAIRMAN KRAMER: Yeah, I agree with
46 that. Is there any further questions from the Council
47 regarding this issue.
48

49 (No comments)
50

1 MS. ATORUK: Thank you.

2

3 MR. STEVENSON: Through the Chair. We
4 have closing comments.

5

6 CHAIRMAN KRAMER: Closing comments.
7 Why don't we go ahead and start with Louie Commack.

8

9 MR. COMMACK: Could you skip me for a
10 while. I need to get my notes here.

11

12 CHAIRMAN KRAMER: Okay. We'll go to
13 Barb.

14

15 MS. ATORUK: Okay. This has been my, I
16 think, second teleconference meeting in my lifetime,
17 but it's been interesting. Interesting to see who is
18 interested enough to call in for their meeting. We
19 need to do better the next time. We have an idea now
20 what happens. I use my landline and put it on the
21 speakerphone and it works just fine.

22

23 It's good to hear all of you. A lot of
24 old friends are still there. BLM in Nome, Tom Kron.
25 I'm surprised to hear that Sue Detwiler is coming back
26 to OSM. She used to be my boss there when I was there
27 years ago, so that will be interesting to see her.
28 Probably at our next meeting. Thank you to Mr.
29 Doolittle too who stepped in and held the reigns for
30 the time being.

31

32 And thanks, Zach, for everything.
33 We'll get better. We're learning.

34

35 MR. STEVENSON: Quyanaqpak, Barb.

36

37 MS. ATORUK: You all have a nice
38 weekend.

39

40 CHAIRMAN KRAMER: Okay. Reppi.

41

42 MR. SWAN: Sorry I didn't call all day.
43 I've been busy with my boys being sick and myself. So
44 I've been cleaning the house. At least I got the last
45 part of it.

46

47 CHAIRMAN KRAMER: Yeah. It's always
48 good to have you here, Reppi. We've got a
49 representative from Kivalina. Hopefully by this next
50

1 fall meeting we have these three positions filled and
2 we can meet and greet our new Council members.

3
4 It's always a pleasure hearing all the
5 agencies doing their part and informing us on certain
6 issues. I know this meeting was a little different.
7 Everything was cut a little short, a day short, eight
8 hours short, but we did manage to take care of a lot of
9 business. Hopefully this coming fall we'll all meet
10 again.

11
12 Once again I'd like to give our sincere
13 condolences to the families. We've lost loved ones
14 within the last several weeks. I know there's been
15 quite a few deaths happen. Our sincere condolences
16 from the Council and everybody throughout the region.
17 It's always a pleasure working with you guys. This is
18 like my second year of being in charge or the chairman.
19 I'm just getting used to the process, so please bear
20 with me.

21
22 Taikuu. Zach, do you have anything?

23
24 MR. STEVENSON: Yeah. Thank you, Mr.
25 Chair. I wanted to thank each of our Council members
26 for your participation. You always inspire me and I'm
27 always energized by the questions you ask and your
28 efforts to protect the subsistence way of life. I
29 wanted to thank you all for your participation.

30
31 I also wanted to thank all of our
32 agency partners, particularly for your flexibility
33 during some very unusual circumstances when we had to
34 reschedule and do this by teleconference. It wouldn't
35 have been possible without your support. I wanted to
36 thank you very much for that.

37
38 I also wanted to close in stating that
39 I care deeply for each of the communities in the
40 Northwest Arctic. It used to be my home and it to me
41 feels like a second home. With the virus going around
42 now I would say the same thing to each of you that I
43 would say to my family, which is show love for each
44 other and support each other during this tough time and
45 it will get better.

46
47 With that I want to end on a positive
48 note and just say thank you for all that you do.
49 Qayaannaqpauraq.

50

1 MS. ATORUK: Okay. Move to adjourn.
2
3 CHAIRMAN KRAMER: Do I have a motion to
4 adjourn.
5
6 MS. ATORUK: So moved.
7
8 CHAIRMAN KRAMER: Do we have a second.
9
10 MR. SWAN: Second.
11
12 CHAIRMAN KRAMER: All those in favor of
13 adjournment please say aye.
14
15 IN UNISON: Aye.
16
17 (No opposing votes)
18
19 CHAIRMAN KRAMER: Okay. Motion to
20 adjourn. Everybody have a safe summer, spring, fall
21 harvest season. We'll see you guys in the fall. Thank
22 you.
23
24 MR. STEVENSON: Thank you, everybody.
25
26 MS. ATORUK: Bye.
27
28 (Off record)
29
30 (END OF PROCEEDINGS)
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