

U.S. DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR  
BUREAU OF INDIAN AFFAIRS

ALASKA SUBSISTENCE CONSULTATION

Washington, D.C.  
Thursday, January 20, 2022

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2 Before:

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## 1 P R O C E E D I N G S

2 (3:07 p.m.)

3 MR. NEWLAND: Good morning. Hello,  
4 everybody. My name is Bryan Newland. I am the  
5 assistant secretary for Indian Affairs here at the  
6 U.S. Department of the Interior, and I want to  
7 thank you all for taking some time today to join  
8 us for our government-to-government consultation  
9 on federal subsistence policy in Alaska.

10 Before we begin, I want to make sure  
11 that we take a moment to start this gathering in  
12 the right way. We do not have a Tribal leader or  
13 representative designed to offer a prayer today,  
14 but instead of doing that I just want to a moment  
15 of silence to acknowledge everybody being here and  
16 offer you an opportunity to pray for us to have a  
17 good meeting in your own way.

18 (Moment of silence)

19 MR. NEWLAND: All right. (Speaks in  
20 Native language), thank you (Speaks in Native  
21 language). Again, my name is Bryan Newland. I'm  
22 here from the Department of the Interior. This is

1 a government-to-government consultation between  
2 the United States. We have three agencies  
3 represented here today, the Department of the  
4 Interior, U.S. Department of Agriculture, and the  
5 Department of Commerce, and Tribes in Alaska. We  
6 know we have observers on from congressional  
7 offices.

8 I want to make sure I remind everybody  
9 that Congress is one of the three branches of the  
10 federal government and shares in our trust  
11 responsibility to Indian people and Tribal  
12 Nations. And I also want to reiterate that this  
13 is a government-to-government meeting and is not  
14 open to the press or the public. It is not on the  
15 record for attribution to the press. So, if you  
16 are a member of the media, we ask that you  
17 disconnect at this time.

18 I want to make sure before we get too  
19 much further in that I just share that the  
20 Department of the Interior, the Department of  
21 Agriculture, and the Department of Commerce, we  
22 all share a desire to strengthen our work that

1 we're doing to support the exercise of subsistence  
2 rights for Native people in Alaska; that that  
3 includes not only securing the right to harvest,  
4 but supporting the ecosystems and habitat that  
5 support the exercise of those rights. And toward  
6 that effort we're here today to hear directly from  
7 you on how we can better carry forward in our  
8 trust responsibility and our relationship with you  
9 to support your subsistence rights.

10 At this time I want to acknowledge some  
11 other folks who are on the line from the  
12 Department of the Interior. We have with us Rose  
13 Petosky, who is a counselor in our office, in the  
14 Assistant Secretary's Office. We have Gene  
15 Peltola, who is BIA's regional director in Alaska.  
16 I see we have Scott Aiken from the Fish and  
17 Wildlife Service. And we also have a new Park  
18 Service regional director for Alaska on the line  
19 as well, Sarah Creachbaum.

20 And we're going to get to Raina Thiele  
21 in a moment, somebody who's well known to most of  
22 you and needs little introduction in this

1 audience, I'm sure. But before we get to Raina, I  
2 want to turn it over to my friend and colleague  
3 from the USDA, Heather Dawn Thompson.

4 MS. THOMPSON: Thank you so much, Brian.  
5 My name is Heather Dawn Thompson. I'm a citizen  
6 of the Cheyenne River Sioux Tribe in South Dakota.  
7 I'm the Director of the Office of Tribal Relations  
8 within the Office of the Secretary at the United  
9 States Department of Agriculture. And I'm joined  
10 today with my colleague, Dave Schmid, whom many of  
11 you know. He's my Co-consulting Official for the  
12 United States Department of Agriculture. He is  
13 the Regional Forester for the Region of Alaska for  
14 the United States Forest Service. It's good to  
15 see you, Dave.

16 I want to thank the Department of  
17 Interior for the historic nature of this joint  
18 federal agency consultation. We have heard from  
19 Tribal Leaders that you want us to work more  
20 together in this collaborative action, and we hope  
21 this is along the lines of what you have  
22 requested. The Secretary of Agriculture,

1 Secretary Vilsack, is equally committed to  
2 Subsistence Policies in Alaska, and I think you  
3 saw him announce the Indigenous Group Sovereignty  
4 Initiative in November at the White House Federal  
5 Nations Summit, of the Subsistence Policy is an  
6 important policy of that Initiative.

7           You've also been meeting with Dave in  
8 the Southeast Alaska Sustainability Initiative  
9 conversations, which are integrative to these  
10 conversations today, as well. We very much look  
11 forward to you input today and tomorrow with  
12 Tribal Leaders, and as you know, we have a  
13 consultation right now. We also have one tomorrow  
14 for those who are not able to join us at the same  
15 time. Also for elected Tribal leadership and  
16 Tribal organizations. And then next week on  
17 Friday, we'll have a consultation for Corporation,  
18 Village and Regional Corporation.

19           You can also submit written comments.  
20 We welcome your written comments by February 15 at  
21 noon eastern time. We'll provide that email in  
22 the chat for you to submit your written comments.

1 I'll turn it back over to Brian. We very much  
2 look forward your consultation.

3 MR. NEWLAND: Thanks so much, Heather.  
4 And thanks for joining us, to our friends at USDA.  
5 At this time I want to send it over to Raina  
6 Thiele, who represents Secretary Haaland as her  
7 Senior Advisor here. Raina.

8 MS. THIELE: Great. Thank you so much,  
9 Secretary Newland. Hello everybody. My name is  
10 Raina Thiele. I serve as Senior Advisor to the  
11 Secretary for Alaska Affairs and Strategic  
12 Priorities. I am from Bristol Bay, Alaska,  
13 northern Pedro Bay Village, from rural and urban  
14 Alaska, but am really excited that you all came to  
15 this incredibly important session because one of  
16 the most actions I think we can take with the  
17 input we've received from across the Alaskan  
18 Native community, that we hope this convocation  
19 has heard directly from all of you your  
20 recommendations about Subsistence Policies in  
21 Alaska.

22 And I don't want to take up too much



1 time, but I did want to acknowledge a couple of  
2 other folks we have from the Department of the  
3 Interior side, because, you know, I think it  
4 really goes to show how high a priority this is  
5 for the Secretary and for the Department. We're  
6 also joined by Karen Cogswell who is our Acting  
7 Fish and Wildlife Service Director for Alaska;  
8 Crystal Magnetty (phonetic), also from Alaska Fish  
9 and Wildlife Service. We have Sarah Boreo from  
10 Fish and Wildlife Service, as well as Sue  
11 Detweiler, and we're also joined by some of our  
12 colleagues from the National Park Service, Maya  
13 Luke (phonetic) and Jana Jackson from BLM, as well  
14 as Sarah Boreo from Fish and Wildlife Service. So  
15 thank you all for joining us today, and we really  
16 look forward to all of your testimony as we go  
17 forward. And with that, I will turn it over to  
18 our NOAA colleagues who we are very excited to  
19 have joining us today. And I'll turn it to  
20 Assistant Administrator of NOAA, Janet Coit.

21 MS. COIT: Thank you, Raina. Thank you,  
22 Brian and Heather, and thank you to all the Tribal

1 Leaders who are taking time today to speak with  
2 us. My name is Janet Coit, and I am the Assistant  
3 Administrator at NOAA Fisheries. I am also the  
4 Acting Assistant Secretary for Oceans and  
5 Atmosphere, and I am joined today by two of my  
6 colleagues, Kelly Cryc, who is the Deputy  
7 Assistant Secretary for International Fisheries;  
8 also the point person at NOAA on Arctic issues.  
9 And Doug Mecum, whose byline there says "Robert  
10 Mecum," but he is the Acting Administrator of the  
11 Alaska Regional Office of NOAA Fisheries.

12 Just wanted to say that I'm grateful to  
13 you at Interior and USDA for inviting NOAA to  
14 participate in this consultation, and I'll be here  
15 tomorrow and again next week. Working  
16 government-to-government is an important priority  
17 for Secretary Mondel (phonetic) and really  
18 important around Fisheries issues. Subsistence  
19 economic opportunities for Tribes is something  
20 that I want to both support and listen and learn  
21 more about today.

22 Just one more comment. Just wanted to

1 make the point that NOAA is a science-based  
2 organization, and we fund and support a lot of  
3 research, both with the Tribes, with the states,  
4 with partners, and understanding the complexity of  
5 what's going on in our ecosystems, in particular,  
6 some of the changes going on in Alaska due to  
7 climate change and other forces is something that  
8 we're very focused on, and I'm sure of great  
9 concern to people today. So, again, we work at  
10 the regional level, the national level, and are  
11 here today to listen and take input on important  
12 issues from all of you. So thank you.

13 MR. NEWLAND: Thank you so much for  
14 joining us today. All right, we are now going to  
15 move into the consultation portion. In order to  
16 do that, we want to make sure that we're setting  
17 the table for the discussion. Most of you have  
18 received the copy of a letter to Tribal Leaders  
19 from the Department of the Interior and Department  
20 of Agriculture. There's a link in the chat, and  
21 Raina Thiele is going to share the framing  
22 questions outlined in that letter before we open

1 the floor.

2 MS. THIELE: Absolutely, and I'm just  
3 going to go ahead and share my screen for those of  
4 you who are on Zoom. I'm a visual learner myself,  
5 so I feel like this is always a good way to absorb  
6 information. But hopefully, most folks have seen  
7 these four or five questions, in either in the  
8 Federal Registered Notice or in the Dear Alaskan  
9 Native Leader letter. But I'll quickly run  
10 through them just so folks have an idea what the  
11 Secretary is looking for in terms of the input  
12 that would be most useful as we go forward. Of  
13 course, this is not limited in any way. But the  
14 first question is "How has climate change affected  
15 Subsistence? What changes could be made to  
16 Subsistence policies, regulations, or laws to help  
17 you adapt to those changes?"

18 Question number 2: "How can Federal  
19 Agencies better cooperate with Alaska Native  
20 Tribes, Alaska Native Consortia, Alaska Native  
21 Organizations, and Alaska Native Corporations to  
22 promote Subsistence Harvest opportunities and

1 protect habitat?"

2 Question 3: "How does the State  
3 management machine affect implementation of the  
4 Federal Priority Overall Precedence?"

5 Question number 4: "How can the Federal  
6 Subsistence Board and the Federal Subsistence  
7 Program be changed to better accommodate Alaska  
8 Native Subsistence needs?"

9 And question 5: "What difficulties have  
10 you experienced in accessing Subsistence  
11 resources?" And there is one additional question  
12 included in the Federal Registered Notice which  
13 also asked for input on designations of rural  
14 versus non-rural parts of the State. Now these  
15 questions are meant to be guideposts, but, again,  
16 are not meant to be restrictive. So, thank you so  
17 much.

18 MR. NEWLAND: With that, we will start,  
19 open the floor up to hear from Tribal Leaders  
20 Representatives. We want to make sure that we are  
21 prioritizing designated representatives of  
22 Federally-recognized Tribes, as well as Consortia

1 and Inter-Tribal Organizations. The first person  
2 we want to provide an opportunity to speak is Mike  
3 Williams. Mr. Williams, before you do speak, I  
4 want to make sure, if you wish to speak, you can  
5 raise your hand here in Zoom through the "Raise  
6 Your Hand" feature. If you go to the bottom of  
7 your screen, you see a banner; it says  
8 "Reactions." And under that there's a button to  
9 raise your hand, and that's the tool that we're  
10 going to use to call on folks. If you're dialing  
11 in by phone, I believe that the way to raise your  
12 hand is \*6. So, Mr. Williams.

13 MR. WILLIAMS: Good morning. My name is  
14 Michael Williams, Senior. I'm currently the Chief  
15 of the Akinak (phonetic) Native Community, and I  
16 really appreciate this opportunity to get our  
17 issues heard by the Department of Interior, and my  
18 thanks to the Secretary of Interior, Deb Haaland,  
19 and to all of you that are working, and to you,  
20 Assistant Secretary, that is working for all of us  
21 in all of our lands.

22 I think that climate change has really

1 impacted us in the Kuskokwim River. We have had  
2 salmon die on the river in the past, and low water  
3 and many salmon have floated down the river  
4 because of the heat in the summer. And we were  
5 saddened by witnessing those events that affect  
6 our salmon on the river, and I'm sure it affects  
7 other rivers like the Yukon and the Norton Sound  
8 and other parts of the State on that, and not only  
9 the salmon. Our caribou has really declined in  
10 our area, and the nochetna (phonetic) herds cannot  
11 be hunted now because of the shortage of numbers.  
12 We have not had a hunt for a couple of years, or  
13 so, on that need, but we're relying on other  
14 resources, such as moose from the lower Yukon,  
15 especially when we have that opportunity in the  
16 winter to supplement that catch.

17 And I think that those questions that we  
18 have. You know, I think the State government has  
19 been managing these resources and especially the  
20 commercial fisheries, and I'm sure it has a (audio  
21 skip)

22 MR. NEWLAND: Mr. Williams,

1                   MR. WILLIAM: And with the issue of  
2 (audio skip)

3                   MR. NEWLAND: Is this -- all right. Mr.  
4 Williams will be happy to bring you back up. This  
5 is one of the unfortunate challenges we have with  
6 virtual consultations, especially in places that  
7 don't have a lot of access to high speed internet  
8 connections. But we'll be happy to bring you back  
9 to finish your comments, Mr. Williams, when you're  
10 able to reconnect, if you can hear me. The next  
11 speaker that I saw in the queue was Kenneth  
12 Whitesell from Tlingit and Haida, and then after  
13 Kenneth I have Katherine Martin and Eva Burk.

14                   MR. WHITESELL: Hi, Good morning,  
15 everyone, and thank you so very much for this  
16 opportunity. My name is Kenneth Whitesell. I'm a  
17 NASA Resource Specialist with Tlingit and Haida.  
18 I'm also an 11-year Navy veteran, so I'm real  
19 happy to be back home working on the things that I  
20 do. But I was hired back in 2017 to write the  
21 Climate Change Adaptation Plan. I did that and  
22 then I went on to write the Social Economic Impact



1 Assessment of Climate Change. These are all  
2 regional plans and action strategies for all of  
3 southeast Alaska. These have been Tribally  
4 approved by the Executive Council, so these are  
5 the statements of the Council. And everything you  
6 want to know about climate change, and I wrote  
7 these, by the way, so I'm intimately familiar with  
8 them.

9 Everything you want to know about what  
10 the Tribe is concerned about is in those two  
11 documents I put in the chat. And just throw in a  
12 sideball curve here -- I'm one of those unicorns  
13 that is an urban Native that's forbidden from  
14 subsisting. I think the reason that urban Natives  
15 weren't allowed to subsist was because of the  
16 infrastructure in urban areas.

17 Has anyone taken a look at your  
18 infrastructure lately, especially Costco? The  
19 shelves are barren. We're not going to have time  
20 for policy decisions on this. We're going to need  
21 something done now. We need to subsist now in  
22 Alaska. Alaska's going to be so different. All

1 of our stuff gets shipped in. Every community's  
2 the last mile. It is something that needs to  
3 happen now. Subsistence needs to be opened for  
4 everyone in Alaska. Not Native, non-Native. For  
5 everyone.

6 But I can bore you guys to death on  
7 anything you want to know about climate change,  
8 but there's harmful algae blooms, there's  
9 shellfish, there's berries, there's seaweed,  
10 there's salmon. They're all highlighted. There's  
11 all Strategy Mitigation Plans. There's everything  
12 you want to know about southeast Alaskan climate  
13 change is in those two documents. Thank you.

14 MR. NEWLAND: Thank you very much. All  
15 right, so Katherine, I said you were on deck, but  
16 we do have Michael Williams back, and I want to  
17 make sure we give the Chairman an opportunity to  
18 finish his comments. And then we'll come to  
19 Katherine and Eva.

20 MR. WILLIAMS: Sorry about our internet  
21 connection has been bad, and I'll try to make my  
22 comments brief. I think the State government has

1       been managing for a while, and it has come to a  
2       point where we have to have Federal intervention  
3       for conservation purposes for our Subsistence  
4       resources, especially salmon in the summer, and  
5       that is what we have been doing. We've been  
6       providing the Special Action Request to the  
7       Special Subsistence Board on the Kuskokwim River  
8       to manage for conservation purposes for  
9       Federally-qualified user zone, and I think our  
10      preference on that Federal with rural preference  
11      should be Native preference, and we should have  
12      first crack at any resource that we have concerns  
13      for conservation because we depend on our way of  
14      life in making sure that we feed our families in  
15      the winter, and I feel for the Yukon River  
16      families now. We haven't had enough catches to  
17      share our foods with them, with our salmon,  
18      because we have limited amounts of catches that we  
19      have on the Kuskokwim River.

20                    But our hearts go out, and we thank the  
21      Bristol Bay folks that have sent those resources  
22      to the Yukon River. We appreciate that, and

1 thanks to our brothers and sisters in the Bristol  
2 Bay area. But I think we need to make sure that  
3 we strengthen our ilk (phonetic) in terms of  
4 making sure that we have priorities for Indigenous  
5 people that need that resource. And because of  
6 the shortages that we are experiencing, it must be  
7 done. We have no other choice. And of course,  
8 we're depending on other species, such as (audio  
9 skip) and other species that we depend on.

10 MR. NEWLAND: Chairman Williams, I'm  
11 very sorry. We'll give you another chance to get  
12 you connection addressed. And this is an  
13 opportune time to reiterate that we also welcome  
14 written submissions and comments during this  
15 consultation process. We'll make sure that we  
16 share that information. It's in the letter, and  
17 we can provide that information to you in the chat  
18 box about where and how you can submit. At this  
19 time, we'll turn to Katherine Martin and then Eva  
20 Burk, followed by Mary Peltola.

21 MS. MARTIN: Thank you very much. My  
22 name is Katherine Martin. I'm a Tribal member of

1 Memtasa (phonetic) Traditional Council. My  
2 grandmother is the late Katie John. I want to  
3 start out first thanking the Department of the  
4 Interior for doing this consultation with Tribes  
5 on Subsistence. Climate change is affecting our  
6 area of Ahtna Region. We are in the interior of  
7 Alaska. We are seeing salmon that are smaller  
8 because they are running at three years instead of  
9 five years. Also, warmer Fall temperatures are  
10 causing migration to happen later in the year.

11 Federal agencies need to work with  
12 Tribes on recognizing their Tribal membership and  
13 not just resident. My point on this: I am not  
14 able to fish at Encinitas where my grandma fought  
15 for her right to fish there because I'm not a  
16 member of the village listed in the Regulation. I  
17 have filed for Individual CNT (phonetic)  
18 Application for the Federal Subsistence Board to  
19 approve. That is in the process right now. Even  
20 that -- though this would just be for me and not  
21 my children. My children would have to file their  
22 own application as well. Why couldn't I have

1 filed one application for all my family?

2 Also, Encinitas right now is protected  
3 from anybody coming in to fish because it's a  
4 Native Allotment and its being private land.  
5 We've had requests from Residents that do qualify  
6 to put wheels in there, but we say "no" to protect  
7 that area for Katie John, Doris Charles and Jean  
8 Henry's family.

9 In regards to State management, it seems  
10 that there is the only ruler in the State, the  
11 Federal Agencies depend and just follow what the  
12 State recommends. Whenever our Elder said you  
13 have to have a lawyer and a surveyor to hunt just  
14 so you can follow all the regulations. I now am a  
15 grandmother, and I am teaching my grandchildren,  
16 like my children, our cultural ways of hunting and  
17 fishing. The way the system is set up and is  
18 going, I'm being regulated out of my culture, just  
19 to follows all the rules. I do follow the law and  
20 regulation, but one day I might end up in court  
21 fighting for my culture to survive.

22 The Federal Subsistence Board needs to

1 realize there are many cultures in Alaska, and  
2 some are similar and some are very different. The  
3 way it is right now, anyone can come to the Ahtna  
4 Region to hunt and fish. We are on the road  
5 (phonetic) system, and many of our areas are being  
6 taken over by outside folks. One thing about  
7 Ahtna culture is you don't just go and hunt and  
8 fish in another person's area. Many of our camps  
9 are family-owned and wasn't on a piece of paper.  
10 Like I said earlier, the only reason the Encinitas  
11 is protected is it's a Native Allotment and  
12 privately owned.

13           Some of the difficulties in getting  
14 Subsistence Resources is the population that comes  
15 in the area. I have to use other people's fish  
16 wheels by invitation to get my salmon. To hunt  
17 for moose and caribou I need to go back to my  
18 village and meet them then, depending on the  
19 animals, if we get anything. I remember one year,  
20 we didn't see one bull moose that Fall because the  
21 weather was so warm, and they weren't moving.

22           Lastly, I'm going to share a story of my

1 grandmother and how we were raised. This happened  
2 in 2002. Mathatsu (phonetic) was hit by an  
3 earthquake after hunting season. That following  
4 year in 2003, only one person in the village got a  
5 moose. The animals were just gone for about a  
6 year in that area. So my grandma called my  
7 husband and I in December of 2003, and she said  
8 "Go get a moose. We are hungry and we need meat."  
9 So my husband went out and got a moose, and we  
10 shared it throughout the village. Was this a  
11 Permitted Hunt? No, it wasn't. Was it permitted  
12 according to our culture? Yes, because we fed and  
13 took care of the people in the village, which is  
14 our family. Again, thank you for this  
15 opportunity.

16 MS. THIELE: Thank you so much,  
17 Katherine. And before we go to Eva, we do have  
18 Mike Williams back on line, who has reconnected.  
19 Back over to you, Mike.

20 MR. WILLIAMS: Yeah, I changed to my --  
21 so I think on the Kuskokwim River we have had a  
22 working relationship with the Kuskokwim River



1 Tribal Fish Commission, and the Refuge here when  
2 we are approved by Federal Subsistence Board to  
3 manage that from the mouth to the Aniak, and those  
4 are the Federal waters that we have  
5 Federally-qualified users that are only allowed to  
6 fish when we are approved by the Federal  
7 Subsistence Board. And that has been working well  
8 for us in the Kuskokwim, and for the most part, we  
9 have been meeting. There are calls that we have  
10 set for ourselves, so we're rebuilding on the  
11 Kuskokwim River, and we need to continue to  
12 rebuild that so we can get away from the  
13 restrictions on the Kuskokwim River. So if we  
14 allow all of the State residents to fish on the  
15 Kuskokwim River, there's not going to be any fish  
16 left. Because we have to do conservation on the  
17 Chinook and Chum at this time. I got only two  
18 Chums all summer long, so as we usually put up at  
19 least 2,000 Chums for ourselves and for our dogs  
20 on the river and our villages. So those are some  
21 of the things that I think the Federal Subsistence  
22 Board need to continue to work with the earlier

1 recognized Tribes on the rivers to make sure that  
2 there's enough food for everyone for the winter.  
3 So I just really appreciate and we'll be  
4 submitting written comments, and I'd like to thank  
5 our Refuge for working with our Tribes on the  
6 river to make sure we have enough for the future,  
7 and we'll continue to work with the Fish and  
8 Wildlife Service, and also the State managers to  
9 make sure that our fishery is alive for the best  
10 interests of our survival out here in the  
11 Kuskokwim River. I'd like to thank all of you for  
12 this opportunity. But I wanted to make other  
13 comments but I'll include those other comments on  
14 climate change impacts on the river, on our  
15 erosion issues and also the thawing of the land,  
16 and so I'll share that written comments, and we  
17 may be knocked off again, so I'll make my comments  
18 to that. Thank you very much.

19 MR. NEWLAND: Thank you so much. I  
20 appreciate your patience with this and taking time  
21 to share your comments. I look forward to your  
22 written submission. Next up we have Eva Burk, and

1       then Mary Peltola, and then Natasha Hayden. And  
2       if you're dialing in by phone, you can press \*6 to  
3       raise your hand.

4                   MS. BURK: Good morning. Thank you for  
5       allowing me to speak today. I'm Eva Don Burk.  
6       I'm from Nenana and Manley (phonetic) Hot Springs.  
7       I grew up on the Tanana River, and we lived a very  
8       traditional lifestyle. At that time in my  
9       childhood we earned a living commercial fishing on  
10      the Tanana River, and there were two fish plants  
11      on either end of our fish camp: One in Manley,  
12      one in Nenana, but both hired local people. Those  
13      fish plants have been closed for some time. The  
14      picture of the smokehouse behind me is my  
15      grandfather's smokehouse that he built back in the  
16      sixties. And because the commercial fishing shut  
17      down and my dad worked as a carpenter, we stayed  
18      summers in Nenana, and we didn't get to go to fish  
19      camp as much any more because our fish camp is 90  
20      river miles away from Nenana. It's pretty remote.  
21      And this fish right there was the first fish that  
22      we put up in 31 years at this camp, and I did that

1 with my children in teaching them our ways.

2 And we did that first batch in 2020, and  
3 we weren't able to run our wheel or use that camp  
4 last summer in 2021, and so that's an issue in  
5 itself. I just wanted to share that story. It's  
6 kind of, I thought, a personal story of what's  
7 happening. A river that used to support  
8 commercial fishing cannot even feed us any more,  
9 and I'm 39 years old.

10 Today with me I have Charlie Ray from  
11 Rampart, Alaska. He's representing the Tribe of  
12 Rampart. I'm representing my Tribe, Unangan  
13 Native Village, and speaking on their behalf.  
14 I've prepared some written comments, but I just  
15 wanted to share that story first.

16 First, we're responding to the questions  
17 asked, and then we have a couple specific  
18 requests. Charlie and I got together here and  
19 wrote these things down. ANILICA, the Alaska  
20 National Interest Lands Conservation Act, Title  
21 VIII, and the Alaska Native Claims Government Act  
22 failed to protect Subsistence rights. Our

1 Subsistence needs have not been met in 20-plus  
2 years, while commercial and sport fishing continue  
3 to be prioritized for economic reasons. We have  
4 the last wild King salmon run in the world. At  
5 the beginning of 2021, one King salmon was worth  
6 two barrels of oil. That's how important salmon  
7 is to our economy, and that presents a problem.  
8 As these management systems continue, there will  
9 be no fish for future generations. We have to  
10 revisit these Federal laws and Acts and make the  
11 proper amendments. I'm not a lawyer, but I know  
12 that these have not worked.

13 Office of Subsistence Management and  
14 Federal Subsistence Board, they need more funding  
15 and staff. I understand there is one man  
16 responsible for the needs of 229 Tribes in Alaska.  
17 That's not enough, and we need Tribal  
18 representation and support within that office.  
19 NOAA and Alaska Department of Fish and Game,  
20 they're predictive modeling for fish and wildlife  
21 counts do not account for landscape and habitat  
22 changes.

1           The environment is changing too rapidly,  
2           and we experience extreme events back-to-back.  
3           From droughts and fires one year to severe  
4           rainstorms and flash flooding the next, the health  
5           of the ecosystem is not stable and predictable.  
6           These changes cannot be captured or defined by a  
7           variable in the predictive modeling system that  
8           exists. I believe it says right on NOAA's page:  
9           They can predict three years in the future. Our  
10          people plan for future generations, not three  
11          years.

12           I also work for the Alaska Center for  
13          Climate Assessment and Policy, and I am a natural  
14          resources management student, a Master of Science  
15          at the University of Alaska, Fairbanks, so I just  
16          wanted to add that bit about where some of that  
17          climate research came from.

18           Alaska pollock is one of the top species  
19          targeted by the U.S., and bycatch is a form of  
20          wanton waste. We use every species of fish that  
21          we catch in our nets and wheels. We waste  
22          nothing. Additionally, the effects of large

1 trawlers on the ocean floor, food chain, and  
2 productivity, is having devastating effects on the  
3 health of our ocean system. We need to move away  
4 from these production and export models that  
5 subsidize and support these large trawlers.

6 Because of emergency situations that  
7 climate change and now supply chain disruption  
8 partly due to Covid are causing, Tribes need the  
9 authority, backed by the Federal government, to  
10 issue special action requests for community  
11 hunting and fishing for food security reasons. We  
12 need to be able to immediately act at the local  
13 level.

14 The Executive Order issued for Tribal  
15 Consultation and Inclusion of Indigenous  
16 Traditional Ecological Knowledge in Federal  
17 decision-making, as well as these Alaska-specific  
18 listening sessions and virtual consultations, they  
19 are a good starting point. So I am really happy  
20 to see that. I'm really happy to see Indigenous  
21 representation in the Department of Interior.  
22 That is very hopeful for our people. But

1 additionally, we need real partnerships and  
2 collaborations, as well as dedicated legal and  
3 financial resources. These Subsistence issues and  
4 our continued inability to meet our Subsistence  
5 needs have been going on for over 50 years across  
6 generations during my entire lifetime. We need  
7 Indigenous Traditional ecological knowledge to  
8 guide land and water resource stewardship.

9           As the original caretakers of Mother  
10 Earth, we live in deep relationship with our plant  
11 and animal relatives. This is the fundamental  
12 difference in our value systems. There are not  
13 infinite natural resources on this planet, and the  
14 exploitation of these resources for economic gain  
15 is not sustainable. We are seeing the  
16 consequences of our past decision-making.  
17 Indigenous knowledge is key to the systemic  
18 changes we need to restore our relationship with  
19 the land and waters and with each other, as human  
20 beings.

21           Some of the specific requests that we've  
22 heard from other people is putting a cap on



1 bycatch. In 2022 there's 500,000 bycatch Chum  
2 were allowed, and we're not even getting Chum in  
3 our river, and so there needs to be some kind of  
4 hard cap. If we're being shut down on the Yukon  
5 and Tanana Rivers to not be able to fish, there  
6 also needs to be shutdowns in commercial fisheries  
7 as well. Everybody needs to play a role in the  
8 conservation. Not us bearing the brunt of taking  
9 on the conservation of the river.

10           So we need Tribal representation on the  
11 North Pacific Fishery Management Council.  
12 Indigenous knowledge is not an add-on or inclusion  
13 to scientific research or decision- making. It's  
14 its own knowledge system. It must be recognized  
15 as such and respected. We can help guide the path  
16 back to restoration and balance. This means real  
17 leadership roles, allocation of resources and  
18 understanding that our most knowledgeable people  
19 may not hold PhDs but should still be principal  
20 investigators on Federal research and  
21 policy-making.

22           More staffing and resources for the

1 Office of Subsistence Management and the Federal  
2 Subsistence Board, including Tribal  
3 representation: We need to work towards Alaskan  
4 Native Corporation and Tribe managing fish and  
5 wildlife on their land, as well as Federal public  
6 land, including national parks, preserves and  
7 wildlife refuges. There are clauses in each of  
8 those public lands that allow for mineral, oil and  
9 gas extraction, but at some point resource  
10 development and the health of the ecosystem are  
11 going to clash, and so there has to be some point  
12 that we recognize we need to restore balance and  
13 go more into conservation mode instead of pushing  
14 for resource development in areas sensitive  
15 environments that don't make sense.

16 And we need to work toward restoring  
17 Tribal relationships with their Traditional land  
18 use areas that exist in Federal public land  
19 boundaries. An example of this is in Nenana  
20 working with Denali National Park to do a sheep  
21 hunt for our community, and I believe in the past,  
22 Cantwell has been able to do something like that.

1 And then, Charlie, did you want to add anything?

2 MR. RAY: Yeah. My name is Charlie Ray.  
3 I represent and am a Councilmember of the Rampart  
4 Village Council. I just wanted to say a little  
5 bit about climate change, cycles of animals and  
6 fish. Right now we're seeing a change in the  
7 amount of moose that are going away in our area.  
8 It's really hard to find a moose, and asking and  
9 trying to get proper moose counts is really hard  
10 because of the lack of funding. That's what we're  
11 told. But not having any management changes is  
12 really causing hardship on our people. We're now  
13 seeing a change where we're seeing caribou come  
14 back in the country now and the moose are going  
15 away. So we really need a close look at the way  
16 people are getting their food. With the lack of  
17 salmon in the Yukon River and the lack of moose,  
18 people are having a real hard time. We really  
19 need to make some changes and find a way to do  
20 some better counting and better management.  
21 Climate change is causing a lot of havoc on our  
22 small salmon, and our salmon rivers and streams in

1 the Interior. Like we put in the statement  
2 earlier, we're having flash floods in the  
3 springtime. Two springs ago we had flash floods  
4 that came out on top of the ice while there was  
5 still ice on the Yukon. I know that devastated  
6 the King salmon, and those creeks are full of King  
7 salmon, and they washed out on top of the ice and  
8 froze and were eaten by the birds. So there's a  
9 lot of things happening. We have low water one  
10 year and high water and flooding. There's some  
11 drastic changes happening due to climate. We  
12 really need to look into those. Our ecosystem is  
13 in rough shape right now and going through some  
14 drastic changes.

15 I've seen a lot of change in my life.  
16 Rampart used to have its own cannery when I was a  
17 small child. There was fish wheels and people  
18 bringing fish here from both sides: Upriver,  
19 downriver and the commercial fishing management.  
20 Now we're down to nothing and it's a sad thing to  
21 see, and hopefully today, our words will help to  
22 make some change. I really appreciate this chance

1 to talk. I just came in and didn't have time to  
2 really prepare too much, and I'd just like to say  
3 thank you for your time today, and I look forward  
4 to more in the future. Thank you.

5 MS. BURK: Just appreciate the chance to  
6 speak today and that you all set up these  
7 consultations and listening sessions. We really  
8 appreciate that. So thanks for the effort and  
9 listening today.

10 MR. NEWLAND: Thank you so much. I  
11 really appreciate your thoughtful comments, and  
12 I've got a lot of notes that I took from that, and  
13 I look forward to your written submission, as  
14 well. Appreciate your taking time with us. Just  
15 the order of speakers going forward. We have Mary  
16 Peltola next, followed by Natasha Hayden, Mike  
17 Miller a 907 phone number, and Tom Harris.

18 MS. PELTOLA: Good afternoon. My name  
19 is Mary Peltola. I'm the Executive Director of  
20 the Kuskokwim River and our Tribal Fish Commission  
21 based in Bethel. We represent Tribes on the  
22 Kuskokwim River. Can you hear me okay? Okay,

1 good. It's good to see so many familiar faces,  
2 both Agency staff and old friends from around the  
3 State. Thank you for the opportunity to share,  
4 and also, thank you for posing these questions to  
5 us. These questions give us a good starting point  
6 to share what's on our mind.

7           The first question is "How has climate  
8 change affected Subsistence?" Having no snow pack  
9 for five or seven consecutive years, I think, has  
10 done a lot of damage that we don't even fully  
11 understand. You can see it in ptarmigan because  
12 ptarmigan burrow into the snow to keep warm, and  
13 they, you know, research has shown that in the  
14 Spring they're often fatter than in the Fall  
15 because of the protection the snow gives the  
16 ptarmigan, as well as the camouflage that it gives  
17 them. And they have really been decimated. We're  
18 starting to see more ptarmigan, but I think  
19 ptarmigan is a good indicator of the effects that  
20 it has across the board. I know our moose/caribou  
21 herd is not doing well right now. For a number of  
22 reasons, but some biologists suspect that snow

1 pack has impacted the caribou as well, and our  
2 break-ups give us important signals to our Chinook  
3 salmon. I think that the cold ice water coming  
4 out of the mouth of the river is a trigger for  
5 Chinook salmon to start heading up the river.

6 Our Elders have known for years that we  
7 have salmon that run underneath the ice. And they  
8 have words for those salmon. We have reports of  
9 salmon being caught underneath the ice. Within  
10 the last month a Chum salmon was caught underneath  
11 the ice. It had a lot of dark markings, like it  
12 was late in spawning, obviously. And when we have  
13 Springs where there's a mush-out or the ice rots  
14 in place, our Chinook salmon are often late.

15 And I think one of the things I wanted  
16 to share is that I think it's important for  
17 Agencies and managers to incorporate Traditional  
18 knowledge. And I've shared with many of you  
19 before on the Kuskokwim, our best indicator of how  
20 our run is going to do in the coming year is large  
21 -- you know, one of the most solid pieces of  
22 information that we get is from James McBrien

1 (phonetic), how the migratory birds have returned.  
2 He has shown us that there's a direct correlation  
3 between, especially geese -- Canadian geese and  
4 Chinook salmon. And for the last five summers  
5 there have been an uncanny hundred percent  
6 correlation in -- you know, if the geese are late,  
7 the Chinook are late. If the geese are early, the  
8 Chinook are early. This summer it was so  
9 fine-tuned that he observed that the geese --  
10 there was a strong push of geese, a lag or a gap,  
11 and then an even stronger push of geese, and  
12 that's exactly what it turned out to happen with  
13 the Chinook run.

14 I think we need, and unless we had this  
15 system of the Refuge partnering with the Kuskokwim  
16 River Intertribal Fish Commission having our  
17 in-season managers with real Traditional knowledge  
18 at the table, we would never know this. And it  
19 just makes me curious as to how much -- how many  
20 more things like this we're oblivious to? So one  
21 of the things I would like to suggest is many,  
22 many more partnerships with all these that are



1 managed with Traditional knowledge-holders. And  
2 another thing I'd like to ask is that the Agencies  
3 consider -- you know, I don't think there's a way  
4 in regulation right now to go beyond  
5 co-management. But if there were some -- I mean,  
6 we've seen the successes in the health field of  
7 638-compacting, and I'm not sure why we're just  
8 restricting ourselves to a co-management  
9 situation. I think that it would be wise of this  
10 Administration to look further down the road to  
11 having Intertribal Agencies or other Agencies be  
12 able to fully manage Federal resources. So that  
13 was one of the things I wanted to share.

14           And then looking at the questions that  
15 you posed to us: "How can Federal Agencies better  
16 cooperate with Alaska Native Tribes, Alaska Native  
17 Consortia, Alaska Native Organizations, and Alaska  
18 Native Corporations to promote Subsistence harvest  
19 and opportunities to protect habitat?" And that's  
20 really -- my last suggestion was really to that  
21 question. "How does the State management regime  
22 implement Federal policy for rural residents?" I

1 think it complete dominates all management in our  
2 State and overshadows and there's -- I don't know  
3 how much the Feds are acquiescing to State  
4 managers, or how much it's a reflection of Federal  
5 management having started employing all these  
6 retired State of Alaska employees. ComFish  
7 employees have permeated every aspect, every  
8 portion of Federal management and really brought  
9 with them their culture of State's rights. And  
10 one of the things I've learned from the Black  
11 Lives Matter movement is that the trend with  
12 State's rights, all the way from the southern  
13 States, to western States, to Alaska -- it's very  
14 racist. Alaska Natives, you know Subsistence uses  
15 used to only comprise only two percent of the  
16 total resource. In recent years, it's less than  
17 one percent, and I think a lot of that is because  
18 the protections that we used to have under Katie  
19 and John are not there any more. Federal Agencies  
20 are so suggestable. You know, you look at the  
21 Federal Subsistence Board, we had two members on  
22 there who were very invested in States rights, and

1 I think, you know, having the composition of the  
2 Federal Subsistence Board really set up at our  
3 disadvantage to begin with, with five Agency  
4 staff, and then three public members who are  
5 Native, if you look at the qualifications for the  
6 three public members, they are so much more than  
7 what the Agency staff has to know. Many of the  
8 Agency representatives are very new to Alaska, or  
9 if they have experience in Alaska, it's in a town  
10 that's not really a Native town, and they consider  
11 that having Subsistence understanding.

12 You know, one tour of duty in one town  
13 that isn't even a Native town doesn't mean you  
14 understand Subsistence. So this composition of  
15 five Agency staff to three public members, I think  
16 you really have to look at that. And I think that  
17 needs to be addressed for us to be able to have  
18 ANILCA honored. ANILCA is being trampled on every  
19 day of the week with every species. So that's my  
20 comment on that.

21 How can the Federal Subsistence Board  
22 and Federal Subsistence Program be changed? I just

1 talked about that. How should the Federal  
2 Subsistence Board define World Residence for  
3 purpose of Federal Subsistence priority? I think,  
4 you know having, you know, we all, I think -- I'm  
5 an Alaskan native. I'm a member of the ONC Tribe  
6 out of Bethel, Alaska Native Council. As it  
7 stands now, there are a lot of loopholes on our  
8 river for non-federally qualified users, during  
9 federal management, to come and fish in  
10 tributaries, so that's a problem. But I really do  
11 feel it should be native people -- should be able  
12 to go to their home areas and be able to fish.  
13 They can still help with any aspect of fish camp,  
14 except -- the actual take -- they can't drive the  
15 boat, they can't pull the net and pick the fish  
16 out. I think they should be able to do that. I  
17 think they should, you know with ungulates. I  
18 think they should be able to pull the trigger or  
19 set the snares or traplines with small game. So,  
20 that's that, and I just really appreciate just all  
21 the forums that you have been having. I think it  
22 is so important for us to keep our communication

1 lines open.

2 MR. NEWLAND: Thank you so much Mary. I  
3 appreciate hearing from you. I'm glad to see you  
4 and thanks for taking the time to share your  
5 comments with us today. I do want to clarify  
6 something I said earlier about how to raise your  
7 hand by telephone. I misspoke when I said \*6. If  
8 you want to raise your hand, and you are dialed in  
9 on your phone, please press \*9, not \*6, \*9. So,  
10 next up, I'm just going to read what we have on  
11 queue here, we have Natasha Hayden, Mike Miller,  
12 third will be phone number 2424, that's the last  
13 four digits and then Tom Harris. Natasha?

14 MS. HAYDEN: Good afternoon, Natasha  
15 Hayden, Native Village of Afognak. I'm born and  
16 raised in Kodiak, in the Gulf of Alaska. I'm  
17 going to speak to the first three questions  
18 briefly. I do want to lend my support and  
19 agreement to everything that has been recommended  
20 before me and described. So, for question 1, I'm  
21 going to take a little different approach to  
22 answer the question about how climate change is

1 affecting subsistence, and what changes could be  
2 made to policies regulations or laws. I would  
3 like to recommend that, state that, I believe and  
4 I think it is starting to become agreed across the  
5 state, that the best available science is evolving  
6 rapidly. Changes -- it is changing almost in real  
7 time, and that the regulations could be revised  
8 that would mandate increased conservation by  
9 reducing how optimum yield is defined. I believe  
10 that there are hard caps are in place -- are based  
11 on what -- best available science, and also, we  
12 are set during times of very, very high abundance  
13 with the species, before even the large industrial  
14 scale fishing. I'm talking about fishing right  
15 now, sorry. Fishing methods had become prevalent,  
16 that in -- to promote our ability to obtain our  
17 subsistence needs those caps for industrial scale  
18 fisheries, there need to be a larger buffer built  
19 in between what is considered optimum yield, and  
20 what had been in the past. So, I because I,  
21 because the best available science is evolving so  
22 quickly. One of the -- so, the another suggestion

1 that I have, that I -- that would be an  
2 opportunity for us to work toward that is amending  
3 the. I'm sorry I have it written down, working  
4 with Congress to include the tribes as partners,  
5 in coastal zone management program. Right now, I  
6 think there is 39 states or territories that are  
7 eligible and Alaska is the only one that doesn't  
8 participate in that program. And, tribes are  
9 listed as stakeholders within that program, but  
10 because the State of Alaska is a bit of a  
11 gatekeeper, tribes are not eligible to access any  
12 of the dollars that are available to participate  
13 in that program, and have a seat at the table  
14 while projects are being developed. I think that  
15 is another opportunity. So, I guess that was --  
16 that would be speaking to question #2, working  
17 with the tribes and consortia. Another  
18 recommendation I would have is full funding for  
19 regional tribal marine management co- management  
20 bodies. Right now, we've got, and this is also  
21 going to addressed in my -- my other  
22 recommendation and I haven't heard a lot of people

1 talk about blood quantum. Alaskan native people  
2 are the only indigenous people in the world, I  
3 believe that have got, have a demonstrated amount  
4 of Alaska nativeness (phonetic) to be considered  
5 indigenous, in quite a few different programs and  
6 for several different reasons. And, that is --  
7 it's well -- it's a huge issue, and that rolls  
8 right into co- management bodies for marine mammal  
9 harvesting. We are lacking in adequate funding in  
10 our co-management -- our mammal management bodies,  
11 such as the stellar sea lion commission, and, the  
12 -- I'm trying to think of -- it's all -- it is a  
13 great opportunity, because so many of you, it is  
14 fish and wildlife, and it's also National  
15 Fisheries in my region, that we've got sea lions  
16 and sea otters are under two different agencies,  
17 and it is complicated, and then you have to have,  
18 you have to be one quarter of Alaskan native, to  
19 participate in harvesting of those things, so.  
20 All of those problems, just sort of giving you  
21 some context to what it is I am talking about,  
22 that we have issues here in our region. The --



1       how does the state management regime effect  
2       implementation of federal policies? One of the --  
3       one of the big problems and I think this is --  
4       this is problem, state and -- something federal  
5       management needs to look at, is the ground fish  
6       fisheries -- federal fisheries -- this is not the  
7       state thing -- this is still the federal thing,  
8       the Ground Fish Fisheries Observer Program is  
9       housed under the Alaska Fisheries Science Center,  
10      which is located in Seattle, Washington. So, that  
11      in itself, is -- is a big issue. The -- growing  
12      up here in Alaska in a fishing family, when ground  
13      fish fisheries started to -- to go on the rise,  
14      knowing about the Observers - the Observer  
15      Program, I always thought that that was like a  
16      monitoring, that there was this sort of oversight  
17      as to, you know, trying to ensure that as little  
18      destruction and by-catch was being done to our  
19      environment as possible. But, I think that it has  
20      evolved into, I'm not sure how much equal parts,  
21      but it is scientific data collecting system, which  
22      is also critically important, more so than just

1 observing to ensure that the actors are acting in  
2 good faith, and are actually -- you know, that the  
3 fishing behavior and any sort of like by-catch  
4 incidents or mammal takes, are being documented  
5 appropriately. And, so recommendation for a  
6 Alaskan Native Tribal Fisheries Monitoring or  
7 Observer Program, that could be developed for the  
8 Federally managed fisheries, that are being  
9 prosecuted in our waters, outside of our door,  
10 whereas right now, all of those observers are  
11 having to come from the Alaska Fisheries Science  
12 Center. That's based out of Seattle, and are  
13 currently required to have a Bachelor's of Science  
14 degree before they can even enter into the  
15 Observer Training Program, which is prohibitive  
16 for our people to have an opportunity to  
17 participate, in that aspect of fisheries  
18 management. So, Alaska Native Fisheries  
19 Monitoring Alaskan Observer Program, the Gulf of  
20 Alaska. My last point is going to be about  
21 by-catch management, in the Gulf of Alaska. So,  
22 recently there was a halibut abundant space

1 management, that was implemented -- or hasn't been  
2 implemented yet, but, had been gone through the  
3 North Pacific Fisheries Management Council, which  
4 is taking steps towards by-catch production. But,  
5 the need to have done that to begin with, is a  
6 demonstration of the inability of a Catch-Share  
7 Program to have the tools it needed for the, you  
8 know, the reduction of by-catch to the extent  
9 practicable. So now the State of Alaska is  
10 looking towards by-catch reduction in the Gulf of  
11 Alaska, and wanting to go back to the same  
12 toolbox, and is having conversations about  
13 catch-share programs in the Gulf of Alaska,  
14 because much of our fisheries are not rationalized  
15 well. The catch-share programs have not done well  
16 for the Alaskan Native people. The IFQ (phonetic)  
17 program, the other, some of the other state  
18 management programs, had led to decrease of 50 to  
19 100% of permit holdings in our communities across  
20 the Gulf of Alaska. That is up to 100% of  
21 communities that are not of people in the  
22 communities who have, who no longer have access to

1 the fisheries in our region. This is dramatic and  
2 severe, and so if there is going to be a push  
3 towards another catch-share program in the Gulf of  
4 Alaska, we need to have a CDQ (phonetic) program  
5 for our people and our region to have an  
6 opportunity and to be able to participate in those  
7 fisheries that are right outside of our door. I  
8 think that is it -- I was trying to go fast  
9 because I know that there is a lot of people that  
10 are in line. I'm wholeheartedly in support of the  
11 subsistence needs and issues and recommendations  
12 from my brother and sisters in the interiors of  
13 Western Alaska, and would be happy to answer any  
14 questions. And, I am really grateful that you are  
15 all here and this is a fantastic lineup so thank  
16 you.

17 MR. NEWLAND: Thank you Natasha, I  
18 appreciate your comments and I appreciate the time  
19 you took to share with us today. Next up, we have  
20 Mike Miller and then phone number ending in 2424.

21 MR. MILLER: Thank you, can you hear me,  
22 okay?

1                   MR. NEWLAND: Yes, sir.

2                   MR. MILLER: Thank you. My name is Mike  
3 Miller and I am calling in from Sitka Alaska.  
4 Tribal council member for the last 20 something  
5 years. I'm calling in as a Chairman of Indigenous  
6 Peoples Council for Living Mammals. It is an  
7 umbrella organization, that was created for  
8 National Fisheries and Fish Wildlife Service,  
9 issues related to co-management, and we have  
10 membership from started with Norton Sound and  
11 then, beluga whales, and all the way down  
12 following the coast, with the Bering Sea, the  
13 Aleutians, the gulf to Southeast Alaska. So, I  
14 really do appreciate the time to chat, and I  
15 appreciate it is dual agencies. We spend a lot of  
16 time talking to one and then talking to another,  
17 and sometimes it is just small nuances that change  
18 as you carry on conversation --- one to the other,  
19 and stalls stuff out a lot of time. We really  
20 appreciate being here today. I'm going to go  
21 through just a couple of, you know, questions and  
22 -- and first, you know, I'm talking and our

1 organizations are working under the Marine Mammal  
2 Protection Act. So, it is a bit different than  
3 the Federal Subsistence Board Program, so we  
4 don't, keep in mind that we do work under a bit  
5 different rules, even though they are under, yet,  
6 management responsibilities as well. The climate  
7 change issue is, of course, it affects all of us  
8 and the sea ice conditions -- things like that are  
9 very visible, and easy to point out as it relates  
10 to beluga whales, walrus hunting or polar bear  
11 populations. It affects marine mammal populations  
12 all around the coast, and ocean conditions and  
13 warm block issues or things like that effect  
14 forage fish and ocean productivity, which, in  
15 turn, goes up the chain. The marine mammals live  
16 in them, which if that's the availability, to our  
17 hunters around the state. We are starting to see  
18 more and more, you know around the state, over the  
19 last 10 years or so, the unusual mortality events,  
20 which oftentimes aren't explained. They happen and  
21 you'll see dying or diseased animals, but they go  
22 away again, oftentimes before enough research can

1 be done. That is one of the things -- our marine  
2 mammal organizations could be, and have been, but  
3 could be, utilized further to be the front-line  
4 folks for having or getting information to  
5 agencies to provide help there. We are starting  
6 to see, you know, shifts in population, for those  
7 of you know, Alaska, you know imagine our surprise  
8 in Sitka, to see beluga whales here in the Spring  
9 last year. There was one that died on a beach in  
10 Mexico. Those are anomalies that are telling us  
11 something, they don't know what those are, but, it  
12 is really important, to be spending a lot of  
13 effort on trying to figure out what is happening,  
14 so that we can try to mitigate losses for the  
15 harvesting. The best changes that we are  
16 promoting with our organization relates to a wide  
17 breadth of issues. Everything from who can  
18 harvest, to specific harvest management plans,  
19 and what our groups are working towards is a  
20 change, because the environmental protection act  
21 is a blanket, that our blanket covers everybody  
22 equally across the state. And our groups are

1 increasingly interested in allowing for more  
2 regional or species-specific harvest management  
3 initiatives and those are largely allowed for  
4 already for NPA (phonetic), so we don't  
5 necessarily need the new regulations or laws, but  
6 I think some of the interpretations of what is  
7 allowed, like delegations of authority, and  
8 specifically, the proper funding, to allow these  
9 regional harvest management initiatives to be  
10 created -- is really important. So, definitely,  
11 to allow specific changes, there is already a  
12 Title V for NNPA (phonetic), which allows for a  
13 polar bear unique harvest management initiatives,  
14 but we'd like to increase that, to allow for other  
15 regions to do that to -- to address the unique  
16 situations that different parts of the state have  
17 from other parts. We're definitely following up  
18 with our proposed language to get to that point.  
19 The federal agencies that we work with are Marine  
20 Mammal Management with interior and protections  
21 resources with National Fisheries. And, I'll say  
22 for our organizations, we've had a lot of ups and



1       downs, but I would say that, by and large, I think  
2       those, in particular, those branches of the  
3       agencies are working fairly well with our  
4       consortia. And, again, all of our organizations  
5       are tribal authorized consortia of folks that  
6       represent lots of hunters around the state. We  
7       definitely would hope though, it is really  
8       important that we get support, when we go for  
9       funding increases to congress or even within the  
10      agencies that we have support up the chain, not  
11      just the Alaska region, but, from the larger  
12      management in DC, to make sure that our  
13      organizations are funded appropriately to the  
14      tasks that we are trying to do. And,  
15      definitely, when we come up with ideas, that it is  
16      better incorporated as an agency directive as  
17      well, because we have promoted some changes to  
18      streamline and update things like even the  
19      handling of our funding. But, we have been  
20      rejected to a kind of archaic system, that just  
21      takes up a lot of our time and it certainly is  
22      not as effective. The state management policy

1 wise, a lot of our organizations are obviously  
2 reporting to the state policy decision, but I'll  
3 have to say that some of our organizations, when  
4 it comes to hands on research and working on  
5 populations monitoring and tagging, tracking and  
6 stuff like that, has in comes cases, some good  
7 working relationships with the state. We do have  
8 definite concerns about it, but I can't throw the  
9 entire system out, and that is specific to the  
10 marine mammal program. I'm just speaking to that.  
11 I won't speak to the Federal Substance Board  
12 necessarily, because I'm talking NPA, but, lastly,  
13 you know, it is more difficult to access substance  
14 resources personally, and I'll speak to Steven,  
15 you know, we absolutely support the issues, like  
16 on the rivers and Sitka herring egress subsistence  
17 gatherer, you wouldn't think I'd have that much of  
18 a connection to it, but traditionally, I've always  
19 traded, much as people did for milleniums, ice  
20 those fish eggs up and I get fish back, and it  
21 does impact me if they're not getting fish. The  
22 issues I think are felt across the state -- if

1 somebody isn't getting what they normally harvest,  
2 so. There are some other things to definitely  
3 talk about, I think we need to have better  
4 disaster funding accessibility, when those  
5 disasters happen to subsistence, and often times,  
6 it is everyone else that is kind of covered, but  
7 the damages are equally damaging to subsistence  
8 harvesters, and it is finally a challenge and so  
9 hopefully that kind of thing can change. I think  
10 I covered the points that I wanted to cover, I'll  
11 be following up with some written comments, but I  
12 really do appreciate the time to present to you  
13 guys today. So, thank you.

14 MR. NEWLAND: Thank you Mr. Miller, I  
15 appreciate your comments as well and that you took  
16 the time to join us. Before going to our next  
17 speaking on the phone, I just want to give  
18 everybody the 30-minute warning, before this  
19 consultation is up, so I ask our speakers to be  
20 mindful that we have by my count 1, 2, 4, speakers  
21 in queue, but also reminder that we are having  
22 additional consultations including tomorrow, and

1 we have are accepting written comments. So, with  
2 that we'll move to -- I believe it is Vivian  
3 Korthuis, #2424.

4 MS. KORTHUIS: Good afternoon, can you  
5 hear me?

6 MR. NEWLAND: You, betcha.

7 MS. KORTHUIS: Thank you. Good  
8 afternoon, everyone my name is Vivian Korthuis I  
9 am the CEO of the Association of Village Council  
10 Presidents. I am Yu'pik and a member of the  
11 Emmonak Tribe. Thank you for holding this tribal  
12 consultation, I also want to thank and recognize  
13 the native and consortium tribes who are online,  
14 or on the phone to provide testimony or just to  
15 listen. AVCP (phonetic) is the largest tribal  
16 native consortium in the nation to represent 56  
17 federally recognized tribes and we are located on  
18 the Yucatan/Delta region of West Alaska, where  
19 subsistence is the basis of our way of life. In  
20 my comments today, I am going to -- in my prepared  
21 comments today I'm going to speak a little bit  
22 about climate change and I have specific

1 recommendations. First climate change -- climate  
2 change is affecting our way of life. The salmon  
3 crash in our region we recently experience for the  
4 last 2 years. An example, of a region wide  
5 ecosystem change, not only are salmon crashing,  
6 but seals, birds, crabs and other Bering Sea  
7 species, also who are also dying. We now have  
8 animals that live on land, such a moose who are  
9 found over 5 miles offshore in the Bering Sea, at  
10 the mouth of the Yukon River. I call them Ocean  
11 Moose. I have personally witnessed this. Climate  
12 change is happening -- there is no doubt.  
13 Statistics and data would call these Ocean  
14 Moose -- anomalies and science tends to discount  
15 thee anomalies, because it does not make sense in  
16 traditional hard science. Hard science needs  
17 traditional science to help make sense of what we  
18 are witnessing due to climate change. We need  
19 both. Our elders and hunters have predicted these  
20 types of things because they are our traditional  
21 knowledge holders. This demonstrates how  
22 important it is to listen and to incorporate

1 indigenous knowledge in federal policy decisions,  
2 and in our agencies impacting our subsistence and  
3 way of life. The effects of climate change,  
4 combined with overfishing and by-catch, increased  
5 fishing, increased shipping, pollution and oil  
6 spills and the lack of solid stewardship, have  
7 brought us to this crisis point. This crisis is  
8 impacting over 100 federally recognized tribes and  
9 tribal communities on the Yukon, Kuskokwim and  
10 Northern Sound region, equal to more than 40% of  
11 Alaska. This summer households on the Kuskokwim  
12 harvested less than 5% of historical subsistence  
13 harvest. Yukon river families harvested 0%. This  
14 should set off alarm bells at all levels of policy  
15 making within the federal and state government.  
16 Alaska law requires state agencies to provide a  
17 reasonable opportunity to subsistence uses first,  
18 before providing other uses of fishing and game  
19 population. However, in times of food insecurity  
20 and dealing with an unstable subsistence  
21 population, this subsistence priority does not  
22 benefit rural communities where access to food is

1 limited, and the cost of living is several times  
2 that of the communities on the road system on --  
3 in the lower 48. Further, because of climate  
4 change, the timing of when animals are available  
5 or unsafe hunting conditions make it difficult or  
6 impossible to subsist during regulation open  
7 windows. I have four recommendations that I am  
8 going to speak to. First, prioritize tribal  
9 participation in ecosystem conservation and  
10 cooperation, cooperative management of subsisted  
11 resources and their habitats by implementing  
12 tribal co-management of species important to  
13 tribes, and to create indigenous knowledge into  
14 federal subsistence monitoring, research,  
15 management and regulatory decision-making  
16 processes. Second, mandate tribal participation  
17 in federal fisheries decision-making bodies by  
18 directing NOAA to immediately seek tribal  
19 consultations on all decisions, regardless of  
20 timing, regarding subsistence resources  
21 traditionally used by tribes. Support adding two  
22 voting seats, tribal seats appointed by tribes for

1 the North Pacific Fisheries Council. Ensure  
2 Alaska Native Tribal Tribes, tribal representation  
3 on all North Pacific Management Council bodies and  
4 committees. Expand tribal representation on  
5 federal subsistence boards to rule making,  
6 increased and increase the number of staff  
7 available to support tribal representatives and  
8 move the Office of Subsistence Management, out  
9 from under the administrative supervision of the  
10 US Fish and Wildlife Service, and under direct  
11 supervision of the Office of the Secretary of  
12 Interior. Third, identify and designate  
13 indigenous protected areas, ecological marine  
14 conservation areas to protect tribal values and  
15 resources in line with the tribal leaders  
16 statement on 30 x 30 (phonetic) and, last,  
17 prioritize implementation and participation in the  
18 Northern Bering Sea Climate Resilience Area.  
19 Again, thank you for engaging in this  
20 consultation. In closing, our villages on the  
21 Yukon Kuskokwim Delta experienced a devastating  
22 salmon crash. It has touched every household and



1 every family in our region and has directly  
2 threatened food security, for our Alaskan native  
3 people. There are approximately 15 more weeks to  
4 the Spring rivers breaking up, and, that is, when  
5 we expect the salmon to start returning to our  
6 rivers. We are in a critical time now, where  
7 instead of preparing for a bountiful harvest of  
8 salmon, we are worried about what is going to  
9 happen this summer if another crash happens. We  
10 need answers and we need the federal government to  
11 help lead by listening to our recommendations and  
12 implement actions now. Thank you.

13 MR. NEWLAND: Thank you Vivian for  
14 joining us today by phone. I just want to ask  
15 before you disconnect, are you -- you will be  
16 submitting those for recommendations in writing as  
17 well?

18 MS. KORTHUIS: Yes, we will do that.

19 MR. NEWLAND: Okay.

20 MS. KORTHUIS: I can do that.

21 MR. NEWLAND: We have -- we did have  
22 lots of note takers on the line, including myself,

1 we do have a court reporter, taking -- preparing a  
2 transcription of this consultation, but I just  
3 want to make sure that when folks are offering  
4 concrete recommendations -- we ask that -- we  
5 encourage folks to submit those in writing as  
6 well. Thank you. All right, we are at 4:35 --  
7 4:35 eastern time, I apologize. Some of us are  
8 going to have to depart at 5:00 pm and we have a  
9 few speakers in the queue. So, the next person we  
10 had was Tom Harris followed by Will Micklin and  
11 Marce Simeon.

12 MR. HARRIS: Thank you, can you hear me?

13 MR. NEWLAND: Yes.

14 MR. HARRIS: Very good. My name is Tom  
15 Harris I'm the CEO for Knikatnu, Inc., the village  
16 corporation in the valley, with Wasilla as our  
17 home community, and I'm also vice president of the  
18 Capax (phonetic) Corporation and I'm also from  
19 southeast of the Tongass tribe. My comments today  
20 are meant to be challenging to the agency, and our  
21 asking you to be aware of certain things. First  
22 of all, we are using the US language and we use

1 the word subsistence, but do we really know where  
2 the word comes from? In the English language it  
3 comes from 1207 when King John signed the Charter  
4 of the Forest. The Charter of Liberties, the  
5 precursor to the Magna Carta and the precursor to  
6 the United States Constitution. We signed that  
7 Charter of Liberties, because at that time,  
8 subsistence hunters were being taken and drawn and  
9 quartered in their villages. They were taking the  
10 kings there. In effect, we are drawn and  
11 quartered families here now, we are putting our  
12 members in prison because they cannot feed  
13 themselves on their own lands. The largest  
14 land-owning group in America. We are speaking the  
15 English language today because of that law. After  
16 that law was passed, England never lost another  
17 war. That is how important subsistence is. Many  
18 of us have ancestry and multiple cultures. I have  
19 the name Harris which makes Scotch-Irish of the  
20 Pig (phonetic) Tribe and I recognize my elders  
21 teachings, remember who you are -- remember who  
22 you come from. I ask you to remember this issue

1 -- that how important subsistence is. The phrase,  
2 best available science is used often, to describe  
3 how we are going to manage Alaska, and that is  
4 very upsetting to many of us, those of us who have  
5 studied the history of best available science. It  
6 was most notably tied to eugenics, and most  
7 notably, used by the German army in WWII. Best  
8 available science as described by the former  
9 commissioner of Fish and Game, means they do not  
10 acknowledge traditional knowledge. Traditional  
11 knowledge is the mother of all science and you  
12 cannot manage this system unless you acknowledge  
13 traditional knowledge, and I speak as a member of  
14 a tribe who documents 14,000 in Southeast Alaska.  
15 WE know climate change. All of you at your  
16 computers, when this is over, type in New York  
17 State King Salmon and you will see that they are  
18 harvesting King Salmon at fantastic rates. In  
19 fact, the bag limit for King Salmon in New York  
20 today is 5. In my hometown of Ketchikan it is 1.  
21 The technology that they are using -- Salmon is  
22 not indigenous to New York, or to any of the big

1 great lake states, but King Salmon is there  
2 because they are using the technology derived from  
3 the cultural knowledge of Saxum, and the community  
4 of the Tlingit and Haida tribes there. I  
5 encourage that having us having a subsistence take  
6 is not enough. We need to be involved in a  
7 subsistence management. They are seeding the  
8 rivers in New York, through the Great Lakes,  
9 through Sacramento through New Zealand, Patagonia  
10 -- they are seeding rivers, putting eggs into the  
11 rivers. That technology is not being used in  
12 Alaska and it is outlawed by the State of Alaska.  
13 We want more food, you need to give us the  
14 traditional right we had to reseed our own lands.  
15 The Fog Woman is downtown Ketchikan the Fog Woman  
16 Pole, specifically talks to the issue of reseeding  
17 the rivers, not hatcheries. We have wonderful  
18 rivers that are now sterile. The mighty Yukon  
19 River, the second largest river on the continent.  
20 It doesn't have Kings and New York does. Beshaw  
21 (phonetic), shame on us. I encourage the agency  
22 to consider that we are the only state in the

1 nation that does not allow the private landowners  
2 to participate in the management of wildlife on  
3 their own lands. If we want this solved, we have  
4 to be involved in the management. The industry  
5 that is claimed to be Wildlife Management in  
6 America is based on the teachings of Aldo Leopold.  
7 You have to ask yourself who taught Aldo Leopold.  
8 His teachers were Dena'ina speakers. The same  
9 Dena-ina speakers that are in the Alaska, the same  
10 language, yet his students now are denying the  
11 Dena speakers the right to reseed their own  
12 rivers. I plead with you, I encourage you, Alaska  
13 should not be the last productive wildlife state  
14 in the nation. It should not be that more  
15 wildlife is harvested within 50 miles of DC than  
16 was harvested in all of Alaska. All of those are  
17 facts and we need to have this discussion. The  
18 issue is -- was is this racism? Having ancestry  
19 in multiple cultures, I'm upset to say it may be,  
20 but it more stupid than it is racism. No  
21 Americans have more access to wildlife habitat  
22 than Alaska. Why is Alaska the least productive

1 wildlife state in the nation. If we do not fix  
2 this, we have to ask ourselves the question. If  
3 we cannot feed ourselves, can we even protect our  
4 families can we protect this nation. No culture  
5 in America contributed more to the defense of the  
6 United State Government than the Alaskan Native  
7 cultures. We put more soldiers online than any  
8 other culture on a percentage basis. Allow us to  
9 feed ourselves so we can continue to feed our  
10 families and we can protect our country. And I'm  
11 not asking for n native rights, I'm asking for US  
12 Citizens rights here. I'm asking for Charter  
13 Liberty Rights, Charter of the Forest Rights, so  
14 thank you for letting me expound and I yield my  
15 time to the next speaker, thank you.

16 MR. NEWLAND: Thank you, Mr. Harris I  
17 appreciate you taking time with us and for your  
18 comments today. Our next speaker in the queue  
19 that we had was Will Micklin and then Marce Simeon  
20 that one that had the -- after Will?

21 MR. MICKLIN: My English name is Will  
22 Micklin, my TeikWeidi Clan name is Yaan Yaan

1 Eesh., House of Kaats, Tantakwaan now from the  
2 Ancolin (phonetic) River in Yacatage (phonetic)  
3 Creek. I am Tantakwaan, the house the man who  
4 married the bear, the Tongass tribe. Our  
5 territories are the Ketchikan area, Tongass area,  
6 Portland canal area, Canadian area, Zyus  
7 (phonetic) Island, Gundis (phonetic) island and  
8 Nas River, net island and Duke and neighboring  
9 islands. I acknowledge Tom Harris, my clan  
10 brother, both Talinguit both from the Tongass  
11 tribe, and I acknowledge Richard J. Peterson,  
12 President of the Central Council of Clinton Union  
13 Tribes of Alaska, Kagwaantaan clan on his father's  
14 side, and I say this not just to identify myself,  
15 but to acknowledge that we as spirits are tied to  
16 our lands, our traditional lands and territories,  
17 and the resources that we derive from it. Central  
18 council of the Tlingit tribes of Alaska, is a  
19 regional tribe for all of southeast Alaska, over  
20 135,000 square miles and over 32,000 tribal  
21 citizens. So, I speak to you today to address the  
22 subsistence priority, or what we prefer to call,



1 the traditional hunting and fishing and gathering,  
2 native resources and foods, as a priority that has  
3 not provided adequate protections for native  
4 rights. There is widespread dissatisfaction with  
5 native American communities, with the limited  
6 nature of the federal subsistence program. You've  
7 heard this in a number of consultations,  
8 congressional oversight hearings, going back all  
9 the way to ANILCA and ANCSA enactments from  
10 Alaskan native tribes from ANCSA corporation and  
11 other Alaskan native organizations and entities,  
12 who have all expressed our frustration with the  
13 way federal subsistence priority has been  
14 implemented. Clearly, ANCSA recognizes native  
15 American tribes, not by direct reference but,  
16 through its definitions of native groups and  
17 villages. The marine mammal protection act  
18 prohibits take, or provides an exemption for  
19 Alaskan natives, but imposes in regulation not in  
20 the statute, but in regulation, a minimum blood  
21 quantum to exercise that right. And then, ANILCA  
22 affirmed a subsistence use priority for rural

1 Alaskans in Title 8 rather than to Alaskan  
2 natives, because the state of Alaska, objected to  
3 a native preference, however, the provisions of  
4 section 803 and 804 clearly, clearly intend to  
5 define subsistence uses for Alaskan natives and  
6 for the record, I wish to clarify the earlier  
7 remarks of Kenneth Whitesell, who is our natural  
8 resources department, at Clinton and Heidel  
9 (phonetic). He works for Desiree Duncan and Ray  
10 Paddock, III and he mentioned, expressed a desire  
11 for all Alaskans, are to benefit from subsistence  
12 and clearly what he meant, was Alaskan natives.  
13 Including under the provision of Section 803 and  
14 804, of ANILCA. So, let us not be mistaken, lets  
15 make clear the priority is to Alaskan natives, as  
16 an inherent indigenous right of people who are on  
17 their territories, as my Clan brother Tom Harris  
18 said, in direct evidence for over 14,000 years.  
19 Our concerns over the management of the  
20 subsistence is extended to the Katie John series  
21 of cases, and that, perhaps more than any other  
22 subsistence case, exemplifies the battle waged

1 between federal tribal and state interests over  
2 jurisdiction of Alaskan native subsistence rights.  
3 I think Rosita Worl, Sealaska Corporation Board  
4 Member, expressed this with great clarity in her  
5 prior statement that where she said, and I quote,  
6 "Forty-two years after ANCSA passed and 33 years  
7 after ANILCA passed, neither the Department of  
8 Interior or the State of Alaska has lived up to  
9 Congress' expectation that Alaska natives  
10 subsistence needs would be protected. The US  
11 interprets public lands, definition of ANILCA, in  
12 that interpretation about 60% of water, land in  
13 the state is under federal jurisdiction, that  
14 means there are over 104 million acres owned by  
15 the state and another 44 million acres owned by  
16 ANCSA Corporation, that are not concerned public  
17 lands under federal law, that do not enjoy these  
18 intended protections that we admit have not --  
19 whose expectations have not been met. Footnote,  
20 two of the certain two really preserves federal  
21 jurisdiction over subsistence, fishing under the  
22 99 rule, the congress with the administration

1       could step in to expand federal subsistence  
2       fisheries jurisdiction or rework entirely the  
3       federal protections, you know the hunting, fishing  
4       and gathering rights, that were diminished by  
5       ANCSA. The cooperative federalism regime  
6       envisioned by the state congress and the native  
7       community, that was intended. Today we can see  
8       has clearly failed. In what to do, central  
9       council, we believe that the benefits of  
10      co-stewardship and the -- as the application of  
11      indigenous knowledge is vital. And, yet, that is  
12      within the context of the many years of failures  
13      of the implementation and application of the laws  
14      intended to protect native rights with the recent  
15      Tribal Nations Summit, the Joint Order,  
16      Secretarial Order Issues regarding Co-stewardship.  
17      I'm concerned, I've already heard from Bureaus in  
18      Interior and my experience with the departments in  
19      USDA, is that what I have heard, is that they are  
20      not eager to pronounce or act on this secretary  
21      order or executive orders. They haven't reviewed  
22      it yet, there are not sure they agree with it yet.

1 And, I don't what is what we can do if, in fact,  
2 our federal partners don't have their lines of  
3 authority intact, President Executive Orders and  
4 Department Secretarial Orders are discretionally  
5 in the application by the subsidiary bureaus and  
6 agencies, then it is very difficult for natives to  
7 succeed in a cooperative relationship. However,  
8 what is set forward in the co- stewardship,  
9 co-management and compacting in contracting under  
10 this self-determination act, are significant  
11 opportunities for us to move forward. Clearly, we  
12 need to accept the failure that has occurred  
13 today, and look to the mechanism that we know can  
14 work, if in fact, we have willing partners,  
15 willing to engage us in exercising in what we  
16 believe is our inherent rights. Central Council  
17 is reaching out to our federal partners and have  
18 also done so with federal and state leadership, in  
19 order for continued engagement and productive  
20 mutual relationships that fulfill the duties of  
21 our trustee and the trust relationship which is a  
22 government relationship, and is that is where we

1 -- we think we need to start in actually applying  
2 the -- not just the status, but the promises are  
3 long standing and recently announced at the Tribal  
4 Nations Summit. Thank you for the opportunity to  
5 speak, particularly to you guys, our federal  
6 partners that I see today, that I know by prior  
7 engagement and success, that you are indeed  
8 dedicated to the task and I thank you for your  
9 attention, and on behalf of President Peterson, we  
10 will submit our written comments.

11 MR. NEWLAND: Thank you, Will. I  
12 appreciate your comments today. In particular, I  
13 appreciate you highlighting recently secretarial  
14 orders or co-management and co-stewardship. I do  
15 want to take this opportunity to emphasize that if  
16 there are executive orders or secretarial orders  
17 or policies or regulations that you believe are  
18 not being executed or fulfilled in the field, we  
19 certainly want to hear about that. And, in respect  
20 to the co-management orders, this is a new  
21 opportunity, and we want to make sure that you  
22 understand, you hear directly from me, from

1 Heather Dunn at USDA, we are inviting proposals  
2 for co-management. Creative proposals in new ways  
3 of approaching this, so if you bring us those  
4 proposals and ideas we will work with you, to try  
5 to sort through them and get something in place,  
6 but this is a directive from both of our cabinet  
7 secretaries to seek out co-management proposals  
8 from across Indian country. I do note that -- I  
9 know that we are up against our scheduled  
10 deadline. I want to apologize that I have a hard  
11 stop in 5 minutes I have to leave, I believe Raina  
12 Thiele also, may also have to leave at the same  
13 time. We do have a folks on from some of our  
14 other agencies, who have agreed to stay on and  
15 hearing from the speakers who are already in the  
16 queue, and then remind you, all that there is  
17 another consultation scheduled for tomorrow, if  
18 you haven't had an opportunity to speak. And, I  
19 am just so grateful that so many of you took the  
20 time to come out today, to share your views in a  
21 respectful way, to give us guidance on our work as  
22 we go forward. It's always great to hear from you

1 and I thank you for your time. I'm going to turn  
2 over the moderator duties to Heather Dawn Thompson  
3 from the USDA and thank you and I will talk to you  
4 tomorrow.

5 MS. THOMPSON: Thanks so much Bryan and  
6 Raina, we appreciate your partnership on this. I  
7 think we have two tribes that are left on the  
8 line. I know Marce and Gloria, you are both from  
9 Tazlina and I can't tell if you are on the same  
10 line, or on different lines or which one of you  
11 want to speak on behalf of the tribe. And, then  
12 Gloria from Copper. So Marce and Linda - I'm  
13 sorry Marce and Gloria.

14 MS. SIMEON: We are on different lines,  
15 and we do have some different comments, so if it  
16 is okay, we can both go separately, and I'll go  
17 ahead and go first since I had my hand up first,  
18 if that is all right.

19 MS. THOMPSON: All right, thanks Marce.

20 MS. SIMEON: Thank you, I made some  
21 notes here, but I just wanted to say my name is  
22 Marce Simeon. I'm originally from the middle



1 customer (phonetic) area and a tribal member of  
2 Crooked Creek. My husband and I have resided in  
3 the Cup (phonetic) River area for almost 20 years,  
4 so we're pretty familiar with this area of the  
5 state as well. I wanted to concur with a lot of  
6 the comments that have been made over the course  
7 of this consultation. There are a lot of things  
8 that we are in agreement with when it comes to  
9 tribal position and statements that were made. I  
10 really do appreciate Tom Harris' comment about  
11 information driven based subsistence management,  
12 and we understand the biologists and all these  
13 important factors that come into effect, when we  
14 are looking at management. But, is almost -- has  
15 become so information driven, that it is not as  
16 dynamic as it could be, and we have to have a  
17 responsive method to manage our resources.  
18 Climate change has impacted every level of  
19 subsistence activities as many people know,  
20 traditional hunting, harvesting is a 100% dictated  
21 by weather conditions. Nobody goes out berry  
22 picking with big rain and those types of things.

1       So, you look at the weather and then you assess  
2       how you are going to proceed with your subsistence  
3       activities, that comes from hunting, gathering,  
4       all of these different types of things. And when  
5       we are looking at climate change, it directly  
6       impacts how we are able to continue to utilize  
7       that. Speaking from an individual from my  
8       household, we utilize our subsistence foods,  
9       regularly. You know, our dinners are probably 3-4  
10      times a week, things that we have processed and  
11      caught, put away from the land, from the oceans,  
12      from the rivers and prepared for our family to  
13      use. These are foods that don't have  
14      preservatives that don't have additives, that are,  
15      you know, taken care of from field to table, in  
16      how we prepare these things for our family. And  
17      our entire family is involved in that process.  
18      You know when our children were toddlers, we had  
19      them labeling and putting stuff away, and you can  
20      do what you can do, but they are always active and  
21      engaged in that process. So, I'm also the Tribal  
22      Administrator for the Village of Tazlina, and I

1 wanted to express how important it is to be a  
2 tribal leader and how it weighs on you to ensure  
3 the safety of your community -- health and safety,  
4 and especially when we are looking at pandemics  
5 issues, food security is incredibly concerning and  
6 how do we make sure that people in our communities  
7 are not hungry, we're taking care of the elderly  
8 and the tribe, has taken on a very big role, when  
9 it comes to those things. And we don't have -- a  
10 perfect example of this, is there is no way to  
11 apply as a tribal entity for a caribou tag.  
12 Anything that we use we have to request  
13 individuals to give up or help use their tag to go  
14 and get a caribou that we can distribute to  
15 elders. There are a lot of people in these  
16 communities, even our federal subsistence  
17 permitted system, we have to use -- we have to use  
18 - as a tribal entity, we have to use a community  
19 wheel and I register that wheel, and I use my  
20 permit, and the number of fish that are recognized  
21 from my household to other community members. You  
22 know that first fish that we get out of our wheel

1 every year, goes directly to our elders, so me  
2 being a tribal entity and having to use personal  
3 or information resources, to help take care of the  
4 community is cumbersome. As entities, we are  
5 taking care of others, we should have the ability  
6 to apply for these things. A large burden comes  
7 on us as Tribal Council Members, employees to  
8 ensure that people are taken care of. I have a  
9 few more comments here. I wanted to say it is  
10 difficult to sustain resources as well. Being  
11 from the CUP River Valley, we notice a large  
12 influx of people from different areas, because we  
13 are on the system, it is easier to get to it. It  
14 is less expensive to get to your vehicle, rather  
15 than hop on an airplane, so we have a large  
16 majority of people from urban areas coming into  
17 our area, and with resources being limited, it is  
18 directly impacting how the people of this area are  
19 able to fill their freezers. To have some  
20 regulation or restrictions to prioritize the people  
21 out here with regards to those subsistence  
22 activities is imperative. Just a couple more. I

1 think I just kind of wanted to restate what  
2 Katherine Martin said earlier in this testimony,  
3 which is really important to say. We are getting  
4 regulated out of our identify, we are getting  
5 regulated out of our culture, we are getting  
6 regulated out of our lifestyles and that is  
7 devastating. Richard Pratt had shared before,  
8 kill the Indian, save the man and this is the last  
9 level of assimilation. It is heartbreaking to  
10 think that people can't feed themselves. Thank  
11 you.

12 MS. THOMPSON: Thank you. I know these  
13 are challenging conversation that hit close to  
14 heart. So, thank you for that. Gloria and then  
15 Linda Peet will be our last speaker today.

16 MS. STICKWAN: My names Glorida  
17 Stickwan, can you hear me?

18 MS. THOMPSON: Yes, we can Gloria.

19 MS STICKWAN: I serve on the South  
20 Central Subsistence Regional Advisory Council.  
21 The Wrangell-St. Elias Subsistence Resource  
22 Commission, and the Alaska Migratory Bird

1 Co-management Council, and I also serve as the  
2 President of Native Village of Tazlina. I made a  
3 few bullet points about trying to touch on all the  
4 four questions, and the first one I had down was  
5 -- improvement that could be to the federal  
6 policies regulations and laws to provide to  
7 subsistence priority. I think the federal agency  
8 should make less restrictive regulations on  
9 federal public lands, for subsistence uses.  
10 Restrictive companion requirement hinder hunting  
11 and fishing activities. Subsistence on our  
12 national parks, Wrangell-St. Elias park, is trails  
13 are limited to trails or via trails that are  
14 limited to, or managed by, this federal agency,  
15 and they are monitored for damage which could be  
16 closed, if there are damaged too much. They - we  
17 must hunting -- we got to stay one -- hunting we  
18 have to establish and maintain trails, we have to  
19 have snow machines use only within 6 inches on the  
20 ground. When you hunt out in the field, unless  
21 you get a permit before you hunt on Wrangell-St.  
22 Elias low lands, Unit 11 in our area, you can only

1 use dead and down trees, you can't cut any trees  
2 down while you are out there, so you have to get  
3 that permit before you go out and hunt. While you  
4 are out in the field you have to carry a heavy  
5 bear pouf container in addition, to your regular  
6 packing gear. Then, they have requirements for  
7 camp set ups, it has to be so many feet away from  
8 rivers and creeks. All of these requirements  
9 hinder subsistence uses. I want to speak to dual  
10 management. It's confusing for the -- the  
11 federally qualified subsistence users. We have  
12 National Park regulations, state and federal  
13 regulations that we must know or be cited for  
14 noncompliance. We must know if we are hunting on  
15 state -- hunting on state or federal lands.  
16 Federal lands is not marked -- so it is hard to  
17 tell which land you are on, especially if you are  
18 hunting. And I want to say that subsistence, we  
19 are not being met under the state or federal  
20 management systems. State subsistence laws  
21 section 16.05258 (phonetic) is open to all  
22 eligible residents in Alaska. Federal qualified

1 subsistence users must compete with state hunters  
2 and game management unit 13 is where -- the most  
3 popular place to hunt for moose and caribou. We  
4 are impacted by the urban hunts that come out here  
5 to hunt. They have a duty socioeconomic reasons  
6 they have -- we can't compete with those hunters,  
7 because they have an advantage to harvest moose,  
8 because ORV (phonetic) and we are not able to  
9 travel off road with ORV'S because we don't have  
10 them. Safety is a concern in the field because  
11 there are too many hunters. I wanted to switch  
12 over to Chinook and Sockeye Salmon. Chinook and  
13 Sockeyes are not returning to spawning grounds,  
14 their returns have been low, and we were seeing  
15 they are not diverse, as Katherine mentioned  
16 earlier, where we are seeing -- continuously  
17 seeing and catching small Sockeyes and Chinook.  
18 We are not meeting our subsistence needs -- we  
19 used to get 300 in one day and now we are just  
20 lucky if we can get 10 in one day. That is not  
21 meeting subsistence needs. I wanted to speak to  
22 federal and state management systems. I believe



1       that the federal and state boards are not  
2       instituting measures to include regulations to  
3       provide for subsistence uses. We have for in  
4       season fishing management for the state  
5       subsistence fisheries, forest fisheries, and  
6       personal use fisheries. To get better data or  
7       returns, so that federal and state governments can  
8       make informed decisions, but these requests are  
9       continuously disregarded at meetings. I believe  
10      more research needs to be done on counts of fish  
11      and wildlife, climate change and how it affects  
12      subsistence usage must be conducted in marine  
13      waters, fresh waster systems and on state and  
14      federal public lands. Data count on wildlife in  
15      federal lands are lacking. State and federal  
16      management systems are based upon inaccurate data.  
17      The State of Alaska has protection in place to  
18      protect erosion and damage, but are not compliance  
19      in compliance with its own regulations. Trails on  
20      state lands, must be protected from erosion and  
21      permanent damage. I hear some things about  
22      climate change and how it is affecting subsistence

1 uses. There is plant overgrowth occurring in Game  
2 Management 11, Game Management 12, and Game  
3 Management 13, some of the areas where most of us  
4 hunt. We are getting -- there are spruces are  
5 overtaking willows and willows are the primary  
6 source of food for moose. Used to be when -- you  
7 could see for miles, Also, when there was just  
8 small brushes there and now it is just covered  
9 with spruce and you will not be able to see the  
10 forest because of the forest now. Other plant  
11 growths are taking over areas for berries too, and  
12 because of the warm temperature glaciers are  
13 melting earlier in the season, and we are having  
14 high water in the summer months, and it is  
15 occurring earlier and lasting longer. And, of  
16 course Hawkeyes don't like to run up the river  
17 when the water is high. And more rain is causing  
18 waters in the rivers as well. Warmer temperatures  
19 is expecting in returns of sockeyes, smaller  
20 sockeyes and kings. Food sources for salmon and  
21 marine are being overtaken. Potential forest  
22 fires from spruce overgrowth. Overgrowth will

1 affect wildlife and plants. There is more  
2 lighting and causing more fires in Game Management  
3 Unit 11. Unit 11 is made up of mostly  
4 Wrangell-St. Elias, the preserve system. And,  
5 then I had some things to say about the Federal  
6 systemic board, I think that when they do taped  
7 trial consultation with tribes they should give  
8 the analysts of the fish and wildlife proposals.  
9 Present it -- should be presented with the tribes.  
10 They do consult with us, but they just answer  
11 questions about the proposal of fish and wildlife  
12 but they don't, we don't get any analysis in it  
13 until later on. I just think if you are  
14 consulting with tribes, we just should be able to  
15 asked questions and get our answers to our own  
16 questions. I believe that fish and game has an  
17 influence on the regulatory process, policy, plans  
18 and decision making at the federal Subsistence  
19 Board Meeting. I wanted to say the regional  
20 directors of conservation system units and  
21 superintendents of parks and reserves change every  
22 few years. With these changes, the regional

1 directors and supervision of public lands have to  
2 learn about laws in Alaska, and they have to learn  
3 about management of federal lands in there -- for  
4 their -- how to manage those lands. It is a process  
5 that is continuously -- it seems like it, changes  
6 a lot and it is a learning process for them.

7 MS. THOMPSON: Yes.

8 MS. STICKWAN: Thank you.

9 MS. THOMPSON: Thank you Gloria. It is  
10 a really thoughtful response. I appreciate you  
11 staying on being able to provide that for us. And  
12 then, our last speaker, not sure if you are on the  
13 phone or on the line.

14 MS. PETE: I'm on Zoom.

15 MS. THOMPSON: Hi, great to see you.

16 MS. PETE: Hi. My name is Linda Pete.

17 MS. THOMPSON: Where are you calling  
18 from?

19 MS. PETE: I'm a tribal member of the  
20 native village of Gakona and I am also a  
21 shareholder of AHTNA, inc. I'm not going to  
22 testify in the order of your questions. But, I'll

1 touch on each of them in my testimony. How the  
2 federal agencies cooperate with tribes. We in the  
3 AHTNA region and are unique from -- different from  
4 the rest of the state of Alaska. All our villages  
5 merge with AHTNA, Inc, so, they are the landowners  
6 in our area. We -- there is limited federal land  
7 to hunt on -- so our competition is -- we are in a  
8 lot of competition with the urban area hunters.  
9 Our goal for our villages and AF (phonetic) is to  
10 manage our fish and wildlife on our own land.  
11 Currently, we are under state management. I don't  
12 agree with the federal management how they do with  
13 their -- they are always following what the state  
14 does and they are not really managing. I think  
15 the state manages for the state sport fishing and  
16 the sport hunters. We have been fighting for our  
17 customary and traditional rights for time of  
18 memorial so I pray and hope our tribal members can  
19 manage our own lands. I also believe that the  
20 federal board is a joke. All the people from  
21 different agencies making decision for us, don't  
22 have a clue about our customs and traditional

1 rights to hunt and fish. We -- this is our lives  
2 they are dealing with. We are often regulated out  
3 of our customary and traditional rights, we want  
4 to be the decision makers. Also, the state of  
5 Alaska needs to relinquish the land that they have  
6 not selected. All the other corporations had a  
7 deadline, the state doesn't have no deadline and  
8 we are going on how many years now, 30-40 years?  
9 If they relinquish those lands, it will give us  
10 more opportunity to hunt under federal. I think  
11 the majority of state selected lands are in the  
12 AHTNA region and they are under state management  
13 currently. If they are relinquished, they will  
14 come under federal management. So that needs to  
15 happen soon -- I think that should be a priority  
16 of the property of interior to the state to  
17 relinquish the lands, and in the village are  
18 people are meeting their needs for hunting and  
19 fishing. Being on the road system we are  
20 bombarded with urban hunters with our fish and  
21 wildlife. We -- there's, you know, the state of  
22 Alaska has given out 10,000 permits for the moose

1 population and from our village, I think only one  
2 person harvested a moose this year. You know,  
3 that's one -- that's nothing. That's only enough  
4 to feed their family. I don't know if they share.  
5 It is nothing to be messing with -- we need to get  
6 thing straightened out here. The state doesn't  
7 acknowledge climate change. Our whole state of  
8 Alaska is affected by climate change and mentioned  
9 during previous testimonies, and we all need the  
10 land for our food. Also, you know, we are -- our  
11 area is basically is mostly state managed. And  
12 even this week, we are fighting to keep our  
13 hunting rights in a Board and Game Meeting. It's  
14 a constant battle for us, and so we need to work  
15 out something here to -- to get our families fed  
16 and our villages. Thank you for your time and  
17 opportunity to speak here today, we will also be  
18 submitting written comments. Thank you very much.

19 MS. THOMPSON: Thank you so much, Linda.  
20 Our partners want to thank you from the Department  
21 of the Interior to the USDD, and US Forest Service  
22 and NOAA. You know, all of our consultations are

1 challenging, but perhaps nothing more so than  
2 subsistence, when you are talking about the health  
3 of our families, your economies and your culture.  
4 And, so we appreciate the professionalism which  
5 everybody came today with really concrete  
6 recommendations for us to hear. I know that  
7 myself and my colleagues were wildly taking notes,  
8 and we do have a transcript for us to be able to  
9 go back and really think and reflect on each of  
10 your comments, but we do want to also encourage  
11 you to submit your written comments, because  
12 sometimes, you know, you think of things you want  
13 to say afterwards, you want to be sure we don't  
14 mince your words incorrectly, and so once we end  
15 the Zoom, you're not going to have this  
16 information probably in the chat. I want you to  
17 have a moment to take information in the chat,  
18 there is an email [ak@ios.doi.gov](mailto:ak@ios.doi.gov) and that is the  
19 email address to send in any written comments you  
20 want to put on the records and the record will be  
21 open until February 15th. Just a reminder, there  
22 are two more consultations left on this same



1 subject. So, if you have attended this one you  
2 don't have to go to the others, but you are  
3 welcome to do so, and encourage others to do so.  
4 Tomorrow is again for elected tribal leaderships  
5 and elected tribal government organizations, and  
6 then next Friday, is for the village and regional  
7 corporations. I have a surprise for you tomorrow,  
8 if you want to dial in for just a moment.  
9 Secretary Hollands (phonetic) is going to do  
10 welcome remarks in the very beginning. If you  
11 have already spoken, we don't need you to speak  
12 again, but just enjoy her words, and then we will  
13 turn to folks that did not have the opportunity to  
14 speak today. So, if there is anybody from your  
15 villages -- your communities, your regions that  
16 you know wanted to speak, and haven't, and you  
17 were on today and just didn't have a chance yet,  
18 please do dial in tomorrow. Dave, I know you have  
19 been thinking about these issues for quite some  
20 time and you know a lot of these tribal leaders.  
21 Do you want to close us out with some words of  
22 thought?

1                   MR. SCHMID: Yes, thank you. Heather  
2                   Don and mostly I'll extend my gratitude and  
3                   appreciation for all of the folks that have taken  
4                   time. I appreciate the respectful comments and  
5                   take them very seriously - I take them to heart as  
6                   well. I have the honor and privilege of sitting on  
7                   the Federal Subsistence Board. I represent the  
8                   Secretary of Agriculture there, and I have shared  
9                   this is the most important work we do. I have a  
10                  lot of things on my planner. But listening and  
11                  hearing from all of you, these are real, and I  
12                  think a Heather Dawn and others have shared when  
13                  it comes to subsistence and food security and  
14                  livelihood it is just critical. So, my commitment  
15                  is to continue to work for you through you through  
16                  consultation and through co-management here and as  
17                  we move forward. Just mostly thank you for  
18                  attending today, and I plan on attending all of  
19                  the sessions, that I am able to do so. Thank you,  
20                  Heather and Heather Dawn.

21                   MS. THOMPSON: Thank you Dave, thank you  
22                   tribal Leaders and tribal citizens, thank you

1 NOAA, DOA and other USDA partners. Everybody have  
2 a blessed and safe afternoon and we'll see many of  
3 you again tomorrow afternoon.

4 MR. WALKER: Heather, Heather I have one  
5 question Heather.

6 MS. THOMPSON: Yes.

7 MR. WALKER: Yes. Sir. My name is  
8 Robert Walker and I'm with Tribal Council. I  
9 didn't hear the Office of Subsistence Management  
10 on part of this OSM is out of Anchorage, are they  
11 part of this program too, OSM? US Forest Service  
12 is on the line and Rose do you happen to know if  
13 the staff are on the line?

14 MR. SCHMID: I'm not sure if there were  
15 on with this session in particular, but I think  
16 they will at others. They may have been on --  
17 we've had a lot of people come on so I'm not  
18 certain.

19 MS. THOMPSON: I'll check into that and  
20 make sure that they have the invitation for  
21 tomorrow and the next one. Thank you for the  
22 reminder.

1                   MR. WALKER: Ye, thank you for the  
2 reminder because you know. The OSM (phonetic)  
3 boards that they take care of for the state of  
4 Alaska. I really should be part of this program  
5 too, because we have Eastern interior and Western  
6 Interior and Tutiel (phonetic).

7                   MR. THOMPSON: They are on the line they  
8 are texting us in the chat. Liz, Lisa and John are  
9 all on the line. So, thank Lisa, Jonathan and  
10 team for being on the line and for letting us  
11 know.

12                   MR. WALKER: All right thank you.

13                   MS. THOMPSON: Okay, thanks guys  
14 appreciate it have a great day.

15                   (Whereupon, at 5:25 p.m., the  
16 PROCEEDINGS were adjourned.)

17                   \* \* \* \* \*

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CERTIFICATE OF NOTARY PUBLIC

DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA

I, Kendra Hammer, notary public in and for the District of Columbia, do hereby certify that the forgoing PROCEEDING was duly recorded and thereafter reduced to print under my direction; that the witnesses were sworn to tell the truth under penalty of perjury; that said transcript is a true record of the testimony given by witnesses; that I am neither counsel for, related to, nor employed by any of the parties to the action in which this proceeding was called; and, furthermore, that I am not a relative or employee of any attorney or counsel employed by the parties hereto, nor financially or otherwise interested in the outcome of this action.

(Signature and Seal on File)

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Notary Public, in and for the District of Columbia

