February 25, 2023 Minto-Nenana Advisory Committee Meeting

- Call meeting: 10:06am
- Role Call: Victor (Duke) Lord, Kathleen Deminetiff, Larry Ketlzer, Eva Burk, Carl Frank, Olivia Henaayee Irwin, Louis Silas, Charlie Titus
- Guests: Tony Hollis, Kyle Campbell, Al Barrett, Janessa Newman, Caroline Ketlzer
- Chair Comments: We appreciate all the hard work of our committee this week (i.e. Bison meetings, BOG proposal meetings, council meetings, etc.)
- Public Comments:
- Approval of Agenda-
    - **Bison Debrief** (Eva motion, Carl second)
    - BOG Proposals
    - Other fisheries, wildlife, and committee business as needed

Bison Debrief

- Nenana made it clear that our place in this meeting is not considered consultation and do not want the discussion
- Full Board of Director Resolution to TCC
    - Collective of TCC, Minto Council, Nenana Council,
- Kathleen: We're going to need some long term plan, we have to think long term
    - Henaayee: Al Barrett brought up the May 1st deadline for submission of proposals for the Southeast Board of Game. Will take up statewide issues, could include bison for Ceremonial and Potlatch uses
- Eva: Theme of "Hey what's happening to our traditional foods'' popping up as issues throughout the region. We don't have the big agency and staff to respond to mismanagement
    - Concerns for Bison habitat as it is related to moose. When our fish started declining we opened hatcheries and looked at what happened.
- Victor (Duke) Lord: I do really enjoy buffalo meat. I hate commenting here or there about this issue.
- Louis Silas: I'm still in support of the Bison restoration project. This is an experimental population, and they can be taken out if we ever wanted them to.
    - We could do some good at the management plan level
- Eva Burk: I'm in favor of a bison farm - that would be us building a relationship with the animal and making sure it's cared for in times of climate change. In a controlled environment where their impact on the ecosystem as a whole can be studied
- Caroline Ketzler: We don't have a problem with Bison, we have an issue with the State railroading our people into a situation with little time to make decisions in an informed way.
    - I appreciate that we can still disagree but have a solid foundation as a people
- Charlie Titus: I've been thinking about this alot, the history of the state dealing with us goes back before statehood into territorial days. We've always been treated as second-class citizens.

    - Chief Thomas and Judge Wickershom suggested a big reservation. In 1960 (ish) Senator Stevens was Minto's attorney, they put a big square by Old Minto (Halfway to Nenana), then they diminished it to little bitty checkers.
    - "You (the State) kill all our moose"
    - Our elders never said they wanted Bison, when the conversation first came to Minto they all opposed it
    - Why the last minute push? We only have a few months to deal with it.
    - I don't like to see changes, I didn't grow up with Bison, I never ate Bison. I just don't see it helping in any way.
- Victor (Duke) Lord: I want to thank Janessa Newman for joining from Rampart, because then other ACs can support our resolutions and proposals
- Henaayee: How can the AC support the Full Board Resolution?
    - Chief: The AC can vote to support the Full Board Resolution
- Janessa Newman: I would love to see an ask for TCC to do their own assessment/report on how bison can impact the ecosystem - something we can have in our control to counter the state's EIS
- Al Barrett: Keep resolution consistent, the last sentence asks to address fish, but the budget and resources can't be switched. So, we might want to remove the last sentence.
- Chief Ketlzer: Charlie we kept the resolution specific to the Lower Tanana area, Minto has the ability to say yes to Wood Bison if they want just like all of us. We kept it site specific to not step on any Tribal toes.
- Charlie Titus: This area is good for the State but it's good for us. Gwich'in don't want them either.
- Louis Silas: I think we also need to have a plan in place in the case that the state continues to move toward putting bison in the flats. What would we do if they're put there anyway despite the opposition?
    - Example: C&T Finding or write up proposals for Southeast meeting

Steps Moving Forward: There's time to sign on, March 6th we will meet for resolutions.

- We need everyone in the room for the vote so let's wait and vote. Also Minto Council will vote on Tuesday.

Proposal 171: Motion-Carl, Second-Louis
Tony Hollis: 3,000 hunters in Unit 20B- if 10% of hunters don't report then 300 moose would go uncounted

- Carl Frank: I think this is a good plan to get more moose numbers and data to get a better count, as Alaskans we should take on the responsibility
- Victor (Duke) Lord: With how forgetful I am, I'd probably get on the list. What's the difference?
- Tony Hollis: Not much difference. Availability would
- Victor (Duke) Lord: Our villages would need some help to understand this new change
- Tony Hollis: The first year, no one would go on the failure to hunt list
- Victor (Duke) Lord: Hey, we're voting in support one of your proposals

- Eva Burk: Long history of mistrust and it will take a while for that to settle. I do fill out permits for other people like my dad or Charlie Wright. I get phone calls and emails, they do reach out.
- Charlie Titus: I probably will be put on the failure to report list

Vote: Motion- Carl, Second- Louis
PROPOSAL 171: SUPPORT, *unanimous consent*

Proposal 172: Motion-Carl, Second-Louis

- Tony Hollis: The area is in the southern portion of 20A, South of Healy
- Henaayee: Seems to provide a second-chance opportunity to hunt
- Carl Frank: When we talk about muzzleloaders people talk about how they take a long time to reload, would they just be wounding animals not killing them. Can they reload fast enough?
- Tony Hollis: They are fairly effective, it's a drawing permit. It would be maybe 20 drawing permits
- Henaayee: Until the State can open hunts for Alaska Natives, we don't want to see the expansion of hunts.
- Kathleen: Muzzle huts with the round ball and steel, unless they have guns that can keep shooting, they only have one chance to shoot, these animals will suffer. Olivia your comments are correct, we shouldn't open up all these other hunts until we have rights
- Carl Frank: I'd personally oppose it. Wounded animals are a concern, our people don't muzzle hunt
- Charlie Titus: It's such a small group of people, we never had muzzle loaders, oppose
- Janessa Newman: Would the amount of permits allowable be subtracted from the total number of moose then can be taken from the larger area?
- Tony Hollis: Harvestable surplus, bull:cow ratios vary to above objectives sometimes. If this hunt happened, the number of permits would be based on what they are not taking
- Victor (Duke) Lord: Is there any education about muzzleloaders
- Motion-Carl, Second-
    - Victor- Neutral
    - Larry- Oppose
    - Kathleen- Oppose
    - Eva- Oppose
    - Louis- Neutral
    - Carl- Oppose
    - Henaayee- Oppose
    - Charlie- Oppose

Proposal 173: Motion-Louis, Second-Victor

- TRM AC: Janessa Newman- Opposed, due to traditional principles. We attribute the antlerless hunts to decline the population more sharply than we would like to see. Based on our customary principles.
- Tony Hollis: We reauthorize antlerless hunts every year even if we don't hold a hunt as a management tool. There has been zero harvest of hunts.
    - Only cow harvest of 20A in the past few years has been for potlatch

    - 2022 count- 11,000 moose in Unit 20A, it's within our objective 10-15,000; however, because of the 2020 winter we had suspended all cow hunts
- Henaayee: I don't support this as a management tool
- Eva Burk : I don't support this either. Tony do you have data on where there are antlerless hunts and where they don't in the State?
- Tony Hollis: There are a lot of other Units that use antlerless hunts. The department has always brought this up each year, the AC gets a say on whether or not they support it.
- Eva Burk: It would be nice to have a list of those Units to know where they support it and where they oppose it/where there are cow hunts. I'm all for precautionary measures.
- Charlie Titus: I remember when we were in support, but I think I was off the AC then. I always opposed it, when I thought about the history of when we voted against cow moose hunts we had very little support. It puts a bad feeling in us. The religious purpose of it- we grew up on this animal, feeding us, supporting us. I have no support for any antlerless moose hunts. When I voted in support, I voted against my own beliefs.
- Tony Hollis: The antlerless reauthorizations make it feel like oh we're going to have antlerless hunts, but we won't open them.
- Carl Frank: I've always opposed it, and I don't support it. We're trying to talk about a unified front and TRM would know best.

Vote: Motion- Larry Ketlzer , Second- Louis Silas

OPPOSE
Victor- Oppose
Larry- Oppose
Kathleen-Oppose
Carl-Oppose
Eva- Oppose
Charlie Titus- Oppose
Olivia Irwin- Oppose

Proposal 176- Motion-Victor, Second- Carl

- Louis Silas: What's the department's stance on this?
- Tony Hollis: It's allocation, so we're neutral on it. This current regulation is the only Unit where nonresidents are allowed to take an any-bull. This would align regulations with surrounding Units in terms of restrictions on bull harvested. 20 is currently the only unit that has an any-bull moose harvest allowance.
- Carl Frank: I support this, because it limits nonresidents.

Vote: Motion- Louis Silas, Second, Duke

- Victor- Support
- Larry- Support
- Kathleen-S
- Eva- S
- Carl-S

- Charlie- S
- Olivia-S
- Louis-S

Proposal 177

- Tony Hollis: Department does not support this proposal, concerns for population

Vote: Motion- Kathleen , Second- Louis
Unanimous Opposition

Proposal 178- Motion-Carl, Second- Louis

- Eva Burk: With the moose collisions, this is important to discuss. There's a time of year and a time of day that moose are getting hit. While there are a lot of collisions, but there are other things to solve the problems like moose lights, etc.
- Carl Frank: We are concerned for safety, and that's what I was thinking in that meeting. I don't believe in the winter cow hunt at all. I'm going to oppose this proposal l
- Charlie Titus: I thought about this after the meeting a long time, I said to myself "geez, I'm voting against my own beliefs", it wasn't the right vote. I'm going to oppose it.
- Tony Hollis: Want to put factors on the record
    - Here in town, the moose come into town, not because there was a lot here before, but because there aren't predators in town.
    - It's not just car collisions. Late in the year, Feb & March, because the moose get antsy and start charging people
    - 120 animals killed/year by cars or a government agency
    - Outside of the FMA we do not have intention of cow huts
- Eva Burk: I appreciate the additional information, but FMA still has low numbers. I don't think antlerless hunts will solve these issues
- Carl Frank: Safety is important to us, but it's still in Unit 20B with low moose numbers and goes against our traditional beliefs of our people. What if Fairbanks was its own small management area?
- Tony Hollis: I like this idea Carl!
- Kathleen: If the state of Alaska can transfer Bison, then why can't they take some of the moose and transport them out?

Vote: Motion- Carl, Second-Louis

- Victor (Duke) Lord: Oppose
- Larry Ketlzer: Oppose
- Kathleen: Oppose
- Carl: Oppose
- Eva: Oppose
- Charlie: Oppose
- Louis: Oppose
- Olivia: Oppose

Comments: MN- Antlerless Hunt; Letter of Opposition

Tony Hollis: Can we have discussion, what's the ACs comments on the antlerless harvest of cow harvest?
Carl Frank: Moose have been a big part of our potlatches whether in death or celebration. They are very ceremonial, so whether in the winter/fall it will be used as ceremonial. Anytime of the year, moose have to be available for ceremonial hunt and our religious rights
Eva Burk: We just had to take a cow for my dad's potlatch, it wasn't easy. When we're out there hunting for potlatch, there's a timeline of activities. Spiritual connection with moose, it's hard to put into scientific terms. With salmon decline we have to preserve what we have for future generations
Olivia Irwin: The moose give themselves to us, it allows us the option, we are not going out with the intention of getting a cow moose
Louis Silas: When we have to take a moose for potlatch, it's honoring that person, and everyone in our communities are important and deserve to be honored. It's not an easy decision to take a cow.
Charlie Titus: Tony, I believe that what you're saying and what I'm saying is on record. It's a matter of survival, I don't get what we have to explain again. We just keep bringing these reasons up, religion, relationship with the animals.
Kathleen: It's because of our traditional spiritual culture that we grew up with
Tony: This question will come out, it will be a discussion. I understand the religious portion of potlatch hunts, I've fought to keep those in Unit 20B. More potlatch moose shot in 20B than any other unit. There's abuse of the system, some folks hunt for potlatches who shouldn't.
Carl Frank: Fairbanks is a hub for many Tribes, it's the most accessible and easy to get to

Proposal 179:

- Tony Hollis: Concerns, it would create the only moose season on the road system that goes to September 30th
- Charlie Titus: We do experience climate change out in Minto-Flats, September 25th last day in 20A (but it's not on the road system)
- Olivia Irwin: Would it be worth it to amend to include other Units.
- Tony Hollis: I think this shift needs to be statewide, it's a bigger conversation with more of the state. The statewide meeting might be a good place for this.
- Olivia Irwin: What would a proposal for statewide change look like?
- Tony Hollis: He'd have to consider; better hunting 15-30th, weathers cooler, moose are further into rut, more vocal, easier to get that time of year. I would have to consider if 15 days was the length of moose season, because hunters would be more successful later.
- Eva Burk: Charlie Wright talks about this too. Our people need to be reporting when they aren't successful.
- Carl Frank: These date shifts are so hard to mess with. Native people don't want them too far into the rut. We lose interest in the bulls too late in the season. You can taste the rut in the meat.
- Consider amendment for Will increase hunting pressure

Vote: Motion-Louis, Second-Carl

- TNA- with comments

Proposal 210: Already Opposed

Proposal 174-175 for a vote: Motion- Eva, Second- Olivia
Unanimous Opposition

Staff Comment Letter- Yes

Final Comments
Carl Frank: Thanks Tony for being patient and being here. We appreciate you working with us and building the relationship.
Tony Hollis: I will continue to work with you guys. We might not agree but we will continue to work together.
Louis Silas: These conversations are healthy, we are doing a really good job!

Meeting Adjourned: 1:39pm