Middle Yukon River Fish & Game Advisory Committee
Special Meeting on Ambler Road Proposed Regulations
Sunday, November 15th, 2026 at 1:00 pm
by web/teleconference

I. **Call to Order:** 1:19 pm by Percy Lolnitz (chair)

II. **Roll Call**

Present:	Koyukuk -	Percy Lolnitz (chair), Leo Lolnitz
	Galena -	Shanay Kriska, Jason Johnson
	Nulato -	Tom Kriska
		Mickey Stickman (alternate)
		(Re-appointed by Chair during meeting)
	Kaltag -	Earl Esmailka (alternate)
		(Re-appointed by Chair during meeting)
Undesignated alternates:		Doug Patsy (Nulato), Joe Turner (Kaltag)
		(Appointed by Chair during meeting)

Quorum Established

Absent: Arnold Demoski (vice chair), Teekona Sweetsir, Georgiana Madros, Calvin McGinty, Patrick Madros Jr.

III. **Fish and Game Staff Present:** Kyle Campbell (ADFG Boards Support)

IV. **Guests Present**: Dave Lorring (Board of Game), Diloola Erickson

V. **Approval of Agenda**
Motioned by Shanay Kriska, 2nd by Earl Esmailka; approved unanimously

VI. **Approval of Previous Meeting Minutes:** April 15th, 2026 - tabled

VII. **New Business**

Provide commentary on the Board of Game Special Meeting regarding the Ambler Road to be held November 20th, 2026 by web conference. **Written comments are due November 16th at 8:00 am**.

The Middle Yukon River Fish & Game Advisory Committee made two motions, the first one was general opposition to the State of Alaska's proposed construction of the Ambler Industrial Mining Road, and the second motion was to recommend that the Board of Game oppose the Department of Fish & Game's proposed regulations establishing a 2-mile wide corridor closed to hunting and trapping along the Ambler Road during the upcoming November 20th Board of Game Special Meeting Regarding the Ambler Road. Both motions passed unanimously.

Motion 1: **General Opposition to the Ambler Road**

- **Made by:** Mickey Stickman, **Seconded by:** Tom Kriska

Discussion Highlights:

- Mickey noted the committee had previously opposed the road and recommended reaffirming that position on record with a new date.

- Tom Kriska raised broad concerns: the road opens remote country to outside trappers, hunters, and development, threatening traditional trap lines and hunting grounds.
- Leo Lolnitz emphasized the road is still only proposed and that opposition should be renewed on behalf of communities like Hughes and Allakaket whose voices were not heard.
- Mickey highlighted that the Ambler Road would cross Henshaw Creek, historically a major fall chum salmon spawning area.
- Shanay Kriska and Jason Johnson stressed younger generations have a stake, and that BLM surveys identified over 35 impacted communities.
- Doug Patsy warned of additional mining roads potentially developing to the south.

Result: Passed unanimously by roll call vote

Motion 2: **Recommend that the Board of Game Oppose ADF&G's Proposed Regulations Establishing a Hunting & Trapping Closure along a 2-mile Wide Corridor on either side of Proposed Ambler Road for 10 years**

- **Made by:** Mickey Stickman, **Seconded by:** Tom Kriska

Discussion Highlights:

- The proposed regulations are premature since no road exists yet.
- Tanana Chiefs Conference submitted comments requesting no action or deferral to the Kotzebue Board of Game meeting.
- A State closure could inadvertently cut off village hunters from their own subsistence areas.
- The proposed corridor covers 420 square miles across Units 23 and 24.

Result: Passed unanimously.

Individual Member Comments – Middle Yukon Advisory Committee (Nov. 15, 2026)

Percy Lolnitz (Koyukuk)

- Noted the committee had previously opposed the Ambler Road and emphasized the need to reaffirm that stance.
- Raised concern that even distant mining/road activity would impact downriver communities via gravity-fed waterways.
- Questioned the accuracy of Fish & Game moose population counts and how outside hunting permits undermine local subsistence.
- Expressed concern about fencing along the corridor disrupting wildlife migration.

Mickey Stickman (Nulato)

- Noted the committee's Western Arctic Caribou Working Group also opposes the road.
- Highlighted that the Ambler Road would cross Henshaw Creek, historically hosting 500,000 fall chum salmon spawns.
- Warned that Alaska Silver and Gold is already seeking permits for a road 8 miles below Kaltag along a ridge that is entirely state-owned land.

Tom Kriska (Nulato)

- Argued the corridor distance (1 or 2 miles) is insufficient to protect traditional trap lines from outside access.
- Warned the road sets a precedent leading to more roads and development, comparing it to a "cancer."
- Advocated for a controlled use area on the Kaiyuh Flats due to high moose density and outside hunting permits.

Leo Lolnitz (Koyukuk)

- Questioned the need for regulations on a road that doesn't yet exist.
- Mentioned Hughes and Allakaket residents' voices were not heard in prior proceedings.

Shanay Kriska (Galena)

- Expressed strong opposition to the Ambler Road, noting no community would accept a road through their own lands.

Jason Johnson (Galena)

- Noted BLM identified over 35 impacted communities, far more than the few mentioned.
- Warned that supporting the proposal sets a dangerous precedent allowing state/federal closures for hypothetical future projects.

Earl Esmalka (Kaltag)

- Cautioned against a "no action" stance, arguing it could be used against the committee if the road proceeds.

- Supported opposing the road outright to ensure the committee's voice is on record.

Doug Patsy (Nulato)

- Warned that approving this road could lead to additional roads south of the region, citing active mining at Flat, Ophir, Takotna, and Illinois Creek.
- Suggested the committee push for a controlled use area and invite Ruby's AC to collaborate.

Guest Comments:

Diloola Erickson

- Explained the proposal arose from a political MOU between the State, Doyon, and NANA as a condition for road right-of-way.
- Stated the Fairbanks AC unanimously opposed the proposal and TCC submitted comments requesting no action or deferral to Kotzebue.
- Noted the corridor closure applies only to State land, potentially cutting off village hunters from subsistence areas since there are no federally qualified users under State law.
- Noted that the road crosses 26 miles of federal land with no companion Federal Subsistence Board proposal.

VIII. **Set next meeting date:**
December 8th, 2026 tentatively at 10:00 AM by web/teleconference

IX. **Adjourned at 3:10 pm**

Minutes Recorded By: Zoom AI with formatting by ADFG staff
Minutes Approved By: Percy Lolnitz (Chair)
Date: 11/15/2026