**Koyukuk River AC meeting- *DRAFT***

**Fairbanks, AK**

**Meeting was to run correspondingly with Western Interior Regional Advisory Council meeting to occur in Fairbanks on October 8-9th, which is why it was not held in one of the communities represented by the AC but due to the partial shutdown of the federal government, the RAC did not occur**

**October 7, 2013**

**Members Present:**

William Derendoff, Joss Olin, Shawn Huffman, Darrel Vent, Jack Wholecheese, Huslia;

Jack Reakoff, Wiseman Village;

Donavan Liners, Evensville/Bettles;

Eddie Bergman, Harding Sam, Alatna;

Stanley Ned, Pollock Simon Jr, Gilbert Vent, Allakaket

**Guests:**

Glenn Stout, Nate Pamperin, Seth Wilson, Nissa Pilcher, Roy Nowlin ADFG

Mike Spindler, FWS

Virgil Umpenhour; Tommy Kriska

**Meeting called to order 1:26 pm**

**Approval of the agenda**

Approved with the following additions

* Discussion on a couple of multiregional 2013-2014 Interior BOG proposals
* Updates for 24B IM
* Fall Hunt update and other wildlife issues

**Minutes from Allakaket meeting on March 23, 2013 approved**

**Comments and Concerns of AC members**

Wholecheese: People got fined for blocking sloughs to stop pike. We should address the high pike population issue. The AC could make a proposal to the board of fish for possible making a salmon trap.

PJ: this summer we did not see very many calves around Allakaket. We had a late breakup. And the conditions of bear-we did not have green up until early may. We talked to Orville (Huntington, TCC) and the concern up there was migratory waterfowl. We wonder if they were going to nest. We haven’t seen many wolves. Worried about road to Ambler and how it will effect caribou migration, sheep, whitefish- food security for Allakaket and Alatna. How will it affect our way of life, access to other hunters, part of the roads to resources. Why not Red Dog to Ambler? Mentality when the road when in by Bettles that it was doing Bettles a favor to build a road by the community- but they don’t not let the people from Bettles use it. Exited to see the moose count numbers, provided some work, some wolf skins, happy to work with the state on this. Worried about waterfowl, fish and everything else.

Gilbert: Agree with PJ on the concerns with the new road. It is the most beautiful country I have ever seen and putting a road through will change it in ways that can never be undone.

Reakoff: Concerned with the road effecting caribou multi herds- look at Fortymile caribou herd and how hunting occurs on the road system. Same promises were offered to us on the Haul Road, that you guys are getting the road will be closed after it is put in. You can’t drive cheaper than you can fly, it is not a fun drive down the haul road, and it tears the heck out of your vehicle.

PJ: no economic development plan has been established, ANILCA could tell them where to put the road

Donovan: not only worried about what is going to disappear, but what is going to appear- dust, dirt, invasive species. The proposed road is going to go through the middle of Bettles, not to the side.

Reakoff: no positives for the folks who live in that area

Wholecheese: There are now three guides operating on the Koyukuk River now, worried about breeding stock. Hog river transporters dropped folks off, they floated, caught a big bull, tried to give meat away in Huslia but I smelled it, and it stunk,; no one wanted it and it was already spoiled. We see lots of heads [antlers] being sent out, but not much meat. Don’t know where the meat is going. Think we should start looking at cow harvest in the winter; we are having a hard time getting moose. On the way down the river counted 10 cows, 4-5 calves with the cows and only one small bull. Requests Glenn sends his count of moose when he is done with them. I guess we are lucky since a lot of folks from our village trap and hunt predators around Huslia, and maybe that is why we have so many calves around the village. If we could just talk the guides into slacking off for a year- Koyukuk River is just like our farm.

Glenn: last year we got a population survey done on the lower Koyukuk.

Darrel: Concerned with breeding stock- the bigger bulls breed with the cows and the produce smarter calves. We don’t have the survival rate we need. We don’t want to run into anything like McGrath or Bettles, and we are starting to see more predators. Bears are like invasive pike- survival of the fittest. We see the horns coming out but not the meat. The earlier comment on the spoiled meat, it might not have been spoiled- if you cut the outside meat off, you could still have good meat.

Questions on the definition of ‘spoiled’ and on transfer of position of meat, and if there was a Hog River Check station answered by Stout

Eddie: Huge grizzly walked through Alatna this summer.

Question on current GMU 24B IM program answered by Stout

William: Noticed that there is going to be a change- last winter didn’t see any martin tracks, and haven’t seen much wolf tracks either. We as a people should start thinking about what the changes are going to be.

Shawn: Interested in the predator control over in Allakaket- they are stuck in between two plots of federal land. Wolves are pretty smart and will figure out that there is a boundary that the shooters won’t come across- wonders if there was any way that more land can be opened up.

Joss: Grew up in in Huslia since the 50’s. The old guys use to talk about all the moose and geese in the Minto Flats, the Novie [Nowitna], and the Koyukuk River, and now we are down to just the Koyukuk River. Worried about what that means. We need to control our hunters, and I have always been against sport hunting.

Reakoff: KRCUA antler destruction stopped a bunch of hunters from going into the area. It would be way worse if that hadn’t come in. Glenn is great at controlling 30 bulls per 100 cows, but anywhere else in the state- Kenai, McGrath- is way lower. Glenn is doing a great job, there might be flaws and we can’t fence if off from the rest of the state. I am worried about the moose in 20A- those moose are skinny, even dry cows. When a bad winter comes, and all the moose die off, where are all of the moose hunters going to go? Concern with proposed Ambler road with no hunting restrictions on methods and means/access; concern with how late spring has affected, and will continue to affect the animals and plants.

Tommy: saw same day airborne- got plane numbers and turned them in but didn’t see anything come of it. Ran across a lot of hanging meat but no antlers. Called the troopers on that one too. Thought you couldn’t do same day airborne, and thought you couldn’t leave your meat behind since it was still in the field.

Questions on same-day airborne and the potential presence of meat hanging in the field answered by Stout

Donovan: seemed like there was less law enforcement presence this year- and when there is less enforcement there is less compliance

Reakoff: our trooper just started before hunting season and then took off on vacation during the actual hunting season. Not happy at all with it.

Virgil: Saw only one bear this spring- black bear, no grizz. Saw a lot of cows and calves- I think they had good success because of the flooding chased the predators away. This fall we took three bears and some wolves above Huslia. Shot last moose on Sept 21st and the fat was still white- Bull moose still eating.

Wholecheese: saw a lot of skinny calves this spring- when it floods then the willows don’t sprout.

Reakoff: everything seemed to be moved back- the moose I shot on the 16th had no smell

Bear discussion- seeing them later than normal this year, discussion on different areas and the bear population and health in those areas.

**Refuge Update- Spindler**

[comments due to partial federal government shutdown] Refuges are open to subsistence uses but closed to all other users, which is different from the refuges in the lower 48, which are all together closed. Subsistence uses includes hunting, trapping, fishing, woodcutting, ect…Also noted that the refuge will be helping state with moose counts when that gets started.

Stout: Noted that there were a lot of folks were involved in GMU 24B IM project- my boss, the Board of Game, the public process, and my assistant- Nate Pamperin.

**Update on 20B IM Program- Stout**

Stout commented that there were a lot of folks were involved in the GMU 24B IM project- his boss, Roy Nowlin, the Board of Game, the public process, and his assistant- Nate Pamperin.

 AC members asked questions on continuation of project, age/pack compilation of wolves removed, and on control pack

Discussion on Sleetmute bear control efforts and results also discussed

**Hunting season update- Stout**

Check station numbers were up; moose harvest numbers were up; success rates were about the same, bull size were about the same; less wind this year and colder weather, and cloud cover at night, more moose calling opportunities, lots of reported bear sign, only saw a couple of black bears and wolves through the check station and no grizzlies. Season extension in Galena- explanation for extension [extensive flooding in spring] and issues with it. Have seen the number of moose reported in Huslia going up- it looks like Huslia did well this year. Antlerless moose season interest addressed. Moose population trend discussed. Moose drawing permit allocation and numbers discussed. Reaching population estimates with having a antlerless season discussed. Accuracy of trend counts and areas counted discussed-

**Subsistence Division Update- Wilson**

Brief comment on the household surveys being conducted for the last three years in Allakaket and Alatna- Wilson noted that he would be leaving this weekend to continue those.

**Comment on 2013-2014 BOG Proposals**

**PROPOSAL 68 -** *Change the Unit 21D moose permit hunt, DM818, to a general hunt.*

No Comment

**PROPOSAL 69**- *Allow moose hunting guides in Units 21D and 24 to select another client if original applicant is unable to hunt.*

Author was in attendance, and explained intent of proposal. AC noted that while they would rather see the moose in this area being hunted by locals, they prefer guided hunters to non-guided hunters since the guides have to operate under strict ethical and business guidelines while the non-guided hunters do not. The AC also noted that wanton waste is more prevalent under non-guided hunters and the meat is also more likely to leave the area, whereas the guides know how to take care of the meat better, and under the current guide, Huslia gets a lot of the meat and the meat is well taken care of.

The KRAC would like to make note that that the guide who will take the person hunting, the person who will get to go hunting, the person who will receive the meat, the meat quality itself, as well as the Department through the additional Pitman Robertson funds will all benefit from the passing of this proposal.

12 **Support** 0 Oppose

**PROPOSAL** **70**- *Retain the winter registration moose hunt in Unit 24B, Amended to include the described portion on GMU 24C currently in regulation (RM833).*

This AC submitted this proposal. Allakaket really appreciates this opportunity to have this hunt.

12 **Support** 0 Oppose

**PROPOSAL** **71**- *Modify the Kanuti Controlled Use Area boundaries to reinstate the original dimensions of the Kanuti Controlled Use Area to circa 2009.*

The state’s efforts at the IM in Unit 24 shows that there is a lack of harvest by local people and that is a proponent of maintaining the IM.

12 **Support** 0 Oppose

***PROPOSAL******72****- Allow the taking of brown bears at black bear bait stations in Units 24C and 24D.*

Members from Allakaket and Huslia believes that passing of this proposal would be beneficial for additional predator control. Concern was raised about what was to be used for bait- this area carries a lot of respect for this animal and this method of hunting is not typical for this animal or this area where we live off of the land. The AC questioned federal implications and the current black bear baiting permitting process.

12 **Support** 0 Oppose

**PROPOSAL** **73**- *Extend the lynx season in Unit 21*

Amendment: The Koyukuk River AC supports this proposal if it would also include GMU 24 to create a more consistent trapping regulation on lynx.

12 **Support as amended** 0 Oppose

**PROPOSAL** **41**- *Modify season dates for Dall sheep in the Interior Region; resident hunting season for Dall sheep shall be August 3rd to September 20th. Nonresident hunting season shall be from August 10th to September 20th. Drawing permit areas will start seven days earlier for Alaska residents and if there is a split season, the second half will be shortened by seven days for non-residents such that residents can start the second half seven days prior to non-residents*

Residents should have an opportunity before nonresidents for game animals. One member stated that he couldn’t fill his federal tag [in the Brooks Range] that was a 7/8ths curl this year- there were plenty of ¾ curls where he was hunting, but no 7/8 to full curl. Non-guided residents, even those that know the area very well, cannot compete with guided hunters’ whose guides operate out of planes. Residents need a better opportunity, especially in heavily hunted areas. We already discussed earlier in the meeting that there is a lack of enforcement in the Brooks Range, and it makes it that much easier to harvest an illegal sheep or shoot one and leave it if it isn’t legal. Nonresidents are being guided, and those guides are making a lot of money off of these hunts. A season extension way is the easiest, cheapest way to do this.

12 **Support** 0 Oppose

**PROPOSAL** **50**- *Review the customary and traditional use worksheet for the Teshekpuk Lake caribou herd and determine whether there are customary and traditional uses; if so, establish amounts reasonably necessary for subsistence.*

A positive finding for ANS for the Teshekpuk Lake caribou herd should include GMU 24. The caribou by Bettles are now Teshekpuk Lake caribou, and not Western Arctic caribou. We feel that the Teshekpuk Lake herd utilizes GMU24 and we support a positive finding for ANS for this herd. Allakaket noted that this herd utilized land near their community this winter, and the village was able to go hunt it and get some much needed meat in the community during the last part of winter.

12 **Support** 0 Oppose

**PROPOSAL 51**- *Lengthen the wolf season in Units 12, 19, 20, 21, 24, and 25 to August 5 - June 15.*

Members expressed opposition to hunting wolves in June when they don’t have much fur, although one member did speak positively of taking more wolves anytime, but most members felt that the season was already extended once not that long ago and we don’t believe it resulted in more wolves being taken. The AC would be open to other ideas to increase wolf harvest in the area without extending the season.

**Motion to take up proposal 51 failed**

**PROPOSAL** **52**- *Reauthorize resident grizzly bear tag fee exemptions throughout Interior and Eastern Arctic Alaska*

No discussion

12 **Support** 0 Oppose

**PROPOSAL** **56**- *Remove the salvage requirements for brown bear meat taken at bait stations in the Interior Region*

The AC is very against this. This is not in line with tradition, with culture. Brown bear meat is good, we are eating it over on the table right there. If people want to take meat over bait stations, then those people should harvest that meat. If we harvest a nonedible big animal, we burn it, that is how we show respect. It was noted that no member has a bait station, and that it is not a traditional way of hunting.

0 Support 12 **Oppose**

**PROPOSAL** **76**- *Allow sidelock muzzleloading rifles to be used within the Dalton Highway Corridor Management Area.*

The AC noted that this is already a heavily hunted area, that it is already a drawing permit only for moose even with an archery only stipulation, there is already a sheep overharvest issue within this area.

0 Support 12 **Oppose**

**PROPOSAL** **74** & **75** *Change resident season for caribou within the Dalton Highway Corridor Management Area and create a youth hunt*

This is an allocation issue, and there is very few caribou in the corridor during this time.

**No Action**

Proposal 175- *Review and determine the advisory committees that have jurisdiction for approving antlerless moose hunts.*

AC did not think this proposal was written in a very readable manner. The AC wishes to retain their ability to authorize antlerless hunts in all subunits of GMU 24, regardless of which specific subunit most members reside.

The AC would like the proposal to be amended as follows:

Unit 24A Koyukuk River Unit

Unit 24B Koyukuk River ~~Sub~~**U**nit

Unit 24C Koyukuk River ~~Sub~~**U**nit

Unit 24D Koyukuk River ~~Sub~~**U**nit

**12 Support as Amended** 0 Oppose

**Federal Subsistence Proposals**

**WP14-29-** Unit 24B amended and 24C---*All drainages of the Koyukuk River Aug. 25-Oct. 1 Downstream from and including the Henshaw Creek drainage—1 antlered bull by Federal registration Dec. 15-Apr.15 Permit (FM2402).*

Referenced comments for the BOG Interior Proposal 70

**12 Support** 0 Oppose

**WP14-30** -*Unit 24A---except that portion within the Gates of Aug. 20-Sept. 30 the Arctic National Park---1 ram with 7/8 curl horn or larger by Federal Registration permit (FS2404)*

If there is no biological problem with the sheep population, federally qualified hunters should be able to take any ram and not look for the ‘four-leaf clover’ on the side of the mountain. Finding a 7/8th curl is getting to be very difficult, much less a full curl. Allocation has shifted to the full curls, non-local residents are taking all of the larger sublegal sheep and are either clueless they are sublegal till they go to get them sealed, or hiding them after the animal is down if they do realize it. There are too many hunters and not enough legal sheep. Wiseman use to get five-six sheep. Now one or two is normal. Don’t want a half curl- smaller, less meat, but a small sheep is better than no sheep. **There are management problems in the Dalton highway corridor and subsistence needs are not being met.**

12 **Support** 0 Oppose

Interior BOG representative-

 Pollock Simon Jr.

 1st alt- Jack Wholecheese

 2st alt- Darrel Vent

Meeting Adjourned at 5:00 pm