

Meeting Minutes of CAKR SRC meeting held October 7, 2024.

Certified by Chair Alex Whiting 11/5/2024

Disclaimer: These minutes of the meeting of the Subsistence Resource Commission are NOT an official transcript of the CAKR Commission proceedings. Rather, the minutes serve as a summary of the topics discussed and actions taken by the Commission and as an index to the audio recording of the meeting. The official record of the Commission proceedings is the audio recording. Minutes drafted on October 25, 2024 by Emily Creek.

Audio Recording File name: *CAKR_SRC_Oct_2024*

1. Call to Order

Chair, Alex Whiting, called the meeting into session at 1:07pm on October 7. Quorum confirmed.

2. Invocation - Moment of Silence

3. Confirm Quorum- Emily Creek

Four members of the six filled seats. Quorum achieved.

4. Welcome and Introductions – Emily Creek

a. CAKR SRC members in person

- Alex Whiting
- Cyrus Harris
- Attamuk Shiedt
- Enoch Adams (phone)

Absent: Larry Westlake, excused for another Council meeting; Hilda Booth, excused for family medical

b. Agency Staff (NPS, Fish and Wildlife Service, ADFG, etc)

NPS Staff (WEAR)

- Emily Creek
- Brendan Doucet
- Raime Fronstin
- Matha Fronsini
- Scott Sample (phone)
- Joe Dallemolle

NPS Staff (Other)

- Eva Patton
- Kim Jochum (phone)
- Zakary Delisle (phone)

OSM

- Lisa Hutchinson (phone)

ADFG Staff

- Alex Hansen
- Christie Osburn
- Deb Lawton
- Helen Cold (phone)
- Mariana Mallory (phone)

Other

- Sebastian Zavoico (phone) UAF
- Taylor Stinchcomb (Phone) WCS

5. Approval of Minutes from past meetings.

Minutes from March 2024 meetings approved by the Commission. [00:32:00, go back]

Motion: Attamuk Shiedt

Second: Cyrus Harris

4/4 vote

6. Park's Welcome and Review of the Charter and Commission Purpose – Scott Sample

7. Review and Adoption of Agenda

Approved

Motion: Attamuk Shiedt

Second: Cyrus Harris

4/4 vote

8. Commission Membership Status and Elections if Needed -Emily Creek

Emily gave update on SOI re-appointment and appointments. Vacancies discussed.

9. SRC Chair and Members' Reports

[00:03:07]

Attamuk Shiedt, Kotzebue: There's really no crab until very late. Hardly any trout at Sisualik this year. I get only three when I set net three different times. Salmon, late June. Got a tiny one, almost got through (the net). Next set I get a regular side. No salmon this year. Char was late going up Noatak. Noatak (river) was extra shallow, worst I've ever seen it because I was raised at Noatak. There was berries, but the weather conditions was so windy we couldn't go out like at Anigaaq we went out a couple times but it was so rough we turned around. But I heard there was a lot of salmonberries. Hardly any blackberries they more grow by Lena Hana's. Otherwise, checked out the salt lick at canyons. Barely little but left of it. Upper canyons (Noatak River) changed completely. Those two big boulders at the bend are gone, ice take it away. Its freezing up already at the canyons. How come canyons always freeze up there? There's so much eddy there, always freeze first and gets a lot thicker faster. Noatak had lots of wolves—below, behind, in front of—you could hear them howling. Lot of young pups. You see caribou and they start howling, telling each other somehow. The caribou we say were mostly females, saw a few bulls. Problem is that people leave in August to check the first crosses when the first herd crosses at Ab's (above Nimikutuk). We didn't even stop there was no caribou. Real shallow up there. Its not that far, only about 500 river miles, we drifted down we were going 18 knots downriver from the current.

Bears. They never bothered our tent this time. They sure bothered people who got caribou. Lots of bears out there. One guy say he is lucky he tie is caribou to his boat. He was fighting that rope, that's how he wake up. It's the lowest I've seen it drop. Just below Park Service could cross the river in knee boats. Lot of white fish, you could smell them plenty. Little bit above Park Service all the way to Kasuq's Wesley's camp. Got a call yesterday that they got caribou above canyons, real fat. So they are coming. We don't want to admit it's the global warming on our caribou—they're down all over, not just here. That's all I have to say.

Cyrus Harris: Not much to report, did not get out hunting all spring and summer until last couple weeks. Reports I got from ugruk hunting. My son went twice and successful both times, very good shape. Last two were huge! Was a good year for that group. Going back further last winter you all may have heard about the coastal bear that was awake in December and January. So that one was spotted crossing our area at Sisualik, my brother saw the tracks in mid-November. No signs of it until later part of December my son saw tracks staking trail at Nuvuuraq. I tracked it, it was going house to house, not getting in. It went to Attamuk, went all around. I stuck with the tracks, they were wind blown from day before. On way back, the tracks were heading up the hills—it went to one of the cabins at Nuvuuraq there was a hole in it. But the banks were so tall at Nuvuuraq that I almost got stuck and just on the other side of the hill is where the bear was hanging around. I must have woken it up, it came out looked around and went back. Was getting dark and I was not excited to crawl into the cabin so I came back to town—next day I checked—and about a week later it was spotted around town area. That's the winter coaster brown bear.

Alex Whiting: Somebody shot it.

Raime Fronstin: Was it old or something?

Alex Whiting: Umhm, no teeth.

Raime Fronstin: Oh okay, makes sense.

Alex Whiting: Hungry. Uncomfortable.

Cyrus Harris: Anyway, that's that. Other reports: Slow salmon year—subsistence boats and commercial barely caught next to nothing. Hearing about a fair amount of salmon up north of here—there are salmon just about showing up now. Really late. All this high water must've drifted them—kept them out. When the water started dropping, I hear about a few salmon showing up. Caught a few silvers a couple of weeks ago at Sisualik. Low numbers too. High water, rain, and wind is becoming the new norm. Climate change is all happening.

Alex Whiting: Those guys covered it all. The salmon are concerning. The unfortunate thing is its really hard to do research on, especially in this area. The only productive research could be done is spawning success or egg survival—but that's a hard road to hoe. I have talked with researchers over the years and just the conditions in the upper Noatak and Kobuk and getting out there. That is concerning, not good. Hopefully they will make major changes with trawling, there is some momentum and court case. As they went over, the only other thing is it was the first summer in—I guess forever—there was no beluga at Sisualik. So that was notable. Recently a few days ago there was a little bit of beluga activity, but that is sort of expected, there's been the last few years an October run into the Sound. So, the other thing was the muskox at Sisualik was absent for a while, then a bull showed up and more recently about 8 of them.

Cyrus Harris: Couple things. I was out of town about the middle part of September at migratory bird meet and got a call from a hunter 4wheeling down the coast at Sisualik and he spotted about half a dozen dead ugruk on the beach. They were not hunted, and freshly dead. There's no boats at that time over there.

Within a four mile stretch were the 6 that were there. One was already buried by a bear. Right here by Ikpigaagruk. Same time that research boat was right square outside that area—same time the ugruk are migrating in to the shallows. No DNA taken, I had the opportunity to go down but saw them already buried by the bear—the same way we’d age our food. The next week I took the same ride and the ones that were buried were taken out and consumed so it tells me the bear would rather have them aged. So, I failed to mention it. I feel like I need to answer back to the hunter, Alex got in touch with some other folks. Other thing, so good to feel at ease at Sisualik, really no muskox. So good to see elders walk, walk, walk, and pick berries and do their thing. Was good to see them to walk to and from the boat with no fear at all, haven’t seen that in a long time.

Attamuk Shiedt: At Poktokvik was over 40 up there, muskox. 46 to be exact. Across the river. Lot of young ones.

Emily Creek: On the hill?

Attamuk Shiedt: Right by the beach. Right side going up. There was a bunch of caribou crossing.

Raime Fronstin: For the ugruk did you contact NOAA?

Alex Whiting: Yes, so PSA there is the marine mammal stranding network—unfortunately Cyrus and myself were both gone so no DNA was taken.

Raime Fronstin: When were they seen?

Cyrus Harris: Second week of September.

Attamuk Shiedt: That vessel, what kind of sonar are they using? Because they can disturb the ears on beluga, they’re real sensitive.

Alex Whiting: Yes. So we tried—I was coordinating with them. They had from Kivalina to Shishmeraf and then northern Kotzebue sound to south sound. So before they even started, I gave them a list and timeline of activities and they did their best to stay away. Part of their plan was Krusenstern to Kobuk Lake on the map—they’re doing Bathymetry maps which is good. Ours are really old. There is no way for them to do it without disturbing no one or any animals. They did their best. Even now, they’re still out here and the past few years we’ve had that run of beluga—and I talked to them about it and was hoping they’d be done. It’s still possible in the next week we could have a couple hundred beluga now. I think they would’ve been good about adjusting but part of it for them is wind and they sort of have to work in areas that they can work—so I think that’s part of why they’re still here. I did check on the technology they’re using and working with people who are experts in acoustics, and they said yes they’ll hear it and yes they’ll move away—under certain circumstances, not normal, there is a small possibility of harm. But no possibility of death. It’s a heavy duty fish sonar basically—bouncing sound waves off the bottom to make a picture. Up to 400 Mega hertz and start at 50 mh. So they’re in the range that a beluga and seals can hear. I did check on that after Cyrus got a hold of me. The hunter had noted that the bear had already got at the ugruks so by time we were back it was too late to go check. But what would be helpful is to let people know that they can report suspicious strandings.

Cyrus Harris: And I mentioned there were no muskox, but it’s not that there were none—it’s that Akulaaq and Anigaaq were open all summer so they could not get across—they were all up by sealing point. Now those are closed so who knows what will happen between now and then.

Emily Creek: Just wanted to double check if there were any SRC members that are on the line?

Enoch Adams: Hi, I have been listening.

Alex Whiting: Want to give a report?

Enoch Adams: Yes. Ugruk hunting season was good, everybody get. Fishing was a little delayed, lot of dirty water—no fish with rod and reel but everybody with nets got normal amount. Caribou—finally starting to show up. Getting a few here and there, just starting. We have been told that the herd is just about 10-15 miles north of Kivalina moving toward us. Hoping they cross the river and winter in the flats. Its slow, but we are hopeful. Taikuu.

10. Park Report and Superintendent hiring update: Scott Sample

Alex Whiting: "The only thing I would say about the superintendent is that we need to do better job about letting tribes know when the superintendent disappears, and when we expect a new superintendent. Even beyond the tribes, the SRC—as the chair of the SRC I had no idea that the superintendent left, so I just think that is really bad form. And it's also not helpful for people not to know that there is somebody running this operation and who that somebody is—so I would just throw it out there to all you people working at NPS in the future that that would be extremely helpful to communicate those major changes in personnel. Especially at the top. Maybe not for everyone, but at least the superintendent. That would be helpful. Thank you."

11. New Business

A. Caribou: Alex Hansen, ADFG. No census in 2024 due to weather.

Attamuk Shiedt: We know bulls (caribou) are late and will be in the rut. And people will go after the female...I hear and understand the regulations, and I back it up—but now what we going to do if the bulls are in rut? Not many people can tell which cows don't have fawns, I tried explaining it. And the eagles go after the fawns. I'd rather protect the caribou, eagles were never up here in that number before.

Alex Hansen: We will just have to deal with the tension between wanting caribou and the cows, because we are hoping in 10-20 years we will still have caribou. The reason dealing with the bulls and not just the 1 cow—but the reason that was valuable is it'll be easier if we have to start adjusting that 15 number from the 5 per day—coming down will be easier.

Cyrus Harris: BOG was interesting and heartbreaking. We tried to protect caribou and put limit on ourselves under one condition—that sport hunting is closed. It backfired on us. I look at the board of game voting members out of 7, 6 are transporter and guide affiliated. 1 Native. We got out voting, something is wrong.

[brief discussion on how BOG was created and how the composition is decided, and actions people can take to get more rural or Native representation]

Alex Hansen: The good news for this meeting, is the federal government has been responded to our concerns of caribou and moose in this region.

Attamuk Shiedt: I should have mentioned earlier on my report: People from Selawik, Noorvik and Kiana at Noatak River. They don't care what it costs their diet is caribou. Someone from Kivalina flew to Noatak to hunt with relatives. Noatak people had to show them the river—down to no prop. They thought they could just go up like Selawik. No its different. First time I ever see that. One boat was there 3 weeks from Selawik.

[concern over sport hunters flying to head waters of Kelly and Kuguuraq and cutting off herd]

Alex Hansen: I suspect of what we actually saw of overflights and hunters is very reduced this year. [in relation to sport hunters, one of two transporters pulled out due to weather in summer 2024].

Cyrus Harris: Through social media it's a really big eye soar seeing these sport hunters come in on Alaska air day in and day out. I mean people just bash bash bash its crazy...its like a tundra, a moving tundra coming out of AK air. So its hard to see that there was a reduction when the activity is still the same.

Raime Fronstin: We did hear a lot of people who were at the hotel who stayed weeks because the weather they couldn't get out and went home [...] even last year, a lot less successful hunters. As a result one of the two transporters cut all their clients and told them not to come up this year...this also translates to less flights because their pushing out further and have less time to do more flights...success rate of even getting off the ground from Kotzebue is down.

Cyrus Harris: I'd encourage the folks on social media to come join our meetings.

B. Muskoxen: Christie Osburn shares about Tier II Sisualik Hunt

Alex Whiting: The boundaries, still working on that? I think the hillside would work; just don't know how you'd describe it in plain language.

Christie Osburn: Will encompass all of Sisualik spit, from the State's perspective a defining geographic feature is really helpful. This not clearly named channel would be fairly ideal. I'm less excited about the cut bank because its hard to describe.

Alex Whiting: The hillside is obvious

Christie Osburn: And ultimately because it's a small hunt we will work with the permit holder—but to put into actual regulations it does get a little weird. If you were a hunter on the landscape, what is clear?

Cyrus Harris: Ikpigaagruk is really noticeable you can't go beyond.

Alex Whiting: The hill is more obvious than the creek—it's the point to the ocean.

Christie Osburn: Where the hill ends on the other side that gets weird.

Christie Osburn: Anyone who gets the permit will be required to get landowner permission.

BREAK [2:45pm]

RESUME [3:07pm]

C. Research Update

i. Beavers: Sebastian Zavoico and Carolyn Brown (for Helen Cold)

[note: 45 minute presentation]

Enoch Adams: Beavers are causing a lot of problems in the Kivalina River and Wulik River, started around 2004. I wanted to know, I think Point Hope is starting to see beaver too, not sure. But they've gone as far north as Kivalina river. I want to know how they migrate. Kelly river to Wulik? Are you able to track their migration and how far north have you found beaver.

ii. Wolf: Raime Fronstin

iii. Brown Bear: Zakery Delisle

Alex Whiting: Will you try again?

Zakery Delisle: We are talking about the options.

iv. IK Predator Studies: Taylor Stinchcomb

12. Old Business

i. Park updates

a. Cultural Resources: Brendan Doucet

Alex Whiting: Results of GPR in the spring? Give us a sense of the impact.

Brendan Doucet: Yeah. [Mentions seasonal local hire]

Alex Whiting: I would advise if you have opportunity for local people that don't require a big fat resume, I would act like you really want to hire local. Take all possible avenues to get word out. Approach it from that sense that you want to hire local and make an effort. Go pop into some organizations, a month or two before. Act like you really want to find someone local, it's a small time. Post at AC and post office, radio, visiting, facebook—take all avenues. Especially for a job like that, some young person could go work out at Krusenstern.

b. Subsistence Resources: Emily Creek

Emily Creek: Is there any interest in a joint-KOVA/CAKR meeting?

Alex Whiting: If there was a big region-wide thing, like getting into the weeds on caribou that would be good. But until then I like it the way it is, sort of gives us a little time.

c. Natural Resource: Raime Fronstin

d. Interp and Ed: Emily Creek on behalf of Interp team

Emily Creek: [Introduce Sisualik/CAKR video] We are interested in feedback about expanding it or edits.

Cyrus Harris: Good interview. The right people. Yes, should be a bigger project. Wouldn't happen over night.

Alex Whiting: Sense she's here and interested. Something like that expanded would be good—more people. And some camps that are still going strong would be nice.

Cyrus Harris: heading out in the boat, fish at the fishrack, and one of the interesting things is the **qaluṇniutit (north slope dictionary... NANA region spelling?)** and how its built, not just a fish trap.

Alex Whiting: That would be awesome. We've been trying to do that! Very small window.

Cyrus Harris: Yeah, I'm there and camera man isn't.

Emily Creek: I will work with Rachel when she's back from furlough and work with you guys and see if we can come back to camp.

Cyrus Harris: Even if its just segments. Catch some old photos from the 1800s. That would really steal the show.

e. VRP: Scott Sample

ii. Regional Office: Eva Patton

Cyrus Harris: How's the placenames

Emily Creek: Noatak? That project was specifically Noatak Village to Upper Noatak. We also entered into a general agreement with NANA lands to do upper Kobuk. Starting with Shungnak. But the long-term goal is to reach the entire region. Hoping our deliverables for Noatak may help inform the other areas.

Cyrus Harris: Oh interesting. All Iñupiaq.

Emily Creek: yes, for us here we are working on just the NANA region. But there is a lot of placenames work being done across the state which is exciting.

Cyrus Harris: Take the map and get the correct spelling?

Emily Creek: Yeah so that is a big process and will go community by community. But if that community's tribal council wants those names public and wants assistance, we will be able to provide technical assistance in submitting traditional names. But each community will choose which names are public and which are private to the community.

Cyrus Harris: Yeah. Should be corrected. I am mostly speaking of Sisualik.

Emily Creek: We could talk about what that process would look like to fix some of the names on the map.

Cyrus Harris: Some of the newer generation are mistaking Nuvuuraq for Sisualik and such.

Emily Creek: I am happy to talk anytime about placenames and if theirs is names that the Kotzebue council is interested in submitting.

Alex Whiting: Yeah I thought someone was doing some stuff on the Baldwin Peninsula and I am not sure where that is.

Emily Creek: Oh cool. Yeah and you'll probably be hearing from us this year, we will be updating our unigrid, our park brochure, and we'd like to incorporate the proper names and spellings on the park maps. Bering Land Bridge just did there's, so that will be a good example.

Cyrus Harris: Awesome.

iii. Other agency: none present (ADFG presented day before)

iv. Public Comment: none.

13. Close out SRC business

Alex Whiting: Are we done? No quorum so we don't have to vote. We can figure out dates later, still got time. Thank you.

5:10pm ADJOURN.