

MR. HARRIS: At the risk of Alaska taking up 0 percent of the time, since we take up 20 percent of the land mass, we'll quickly add these additional comments. Again, I'm Tom Harris. In addition to being president of Alaska Village Initiatives, I'm also a member of the Tongass Tribe, of which the Tongass National Forest was named after. Our number one concern is outreach. Indeed the programs are there, but the outreach is not occurring. And we would admonish that the Farm Bill deal with the outreach effectively. While in Alaska in 2001, 523,000 came to the state, not a single dime of that made it to native lands. We are pleased to report that there has been an improvement of the 12 million that comes into the state now, approximately one million five made it to native lands, but that's one million five as previously reported for 45 million acres, the equivalent of the entire state of Oregon and Washington.

During this time we have seen a dramatic drop in moose population, some 48 percent over a 15-year period. We are down to a 140,000 now, and it appears to be the lowest moose population on record, and it continues to decline. That's an enormous impact to rural Alaska of some \$37 million as we replace that food with store bought food at \$5 to \$6 a pound frozen. One of the reasons that we are seeing this drop is that we believe that America doesn't know about what is happening there. In fact, when tourists come to Alaska, they leave states with more wildlife than we have. For the record, Alaska is ranked last in the United States now for grazing wildlife production per acre. Dead last. We don't miss it by a little. We miss it by a lot. Arizona ranked No. 49.

It's production of wildlife, grazing wildlife is twice that of Alaska. It's not unique to the United States, even British Columbia right door has a harvest rate twice what Alaska's is. Part of the concerns we have also are the regional equity issues. Alaska is treated as one state, and, therefore, we are looking at the minimum, 12 million, yet we understand that Texas and California have received over 150 million. We do request that the agency address that in the Farm Bill to address some of the enormous challenges ahead. We're also very concerned about staff training. One of the individuals in there in the positions, while well meaning and good hearted, don't know what their job is. We've run across agents who don't know how to fill out an EQIP application, yet they are to provide technical assistance to us.

We are also very concerned about the role of the erosion control. Virtually, 100 percent of the erosion control money being spent in Alaska today is being spent in one county, one borough, and it's not for ag-related property. It's to protect real estate in the Matsu Valley. We are a community that supports cooperative conservation as outlined by the President. We are looking now for the agency to cooperate with us as we try to develop together. Thank you.

MR. RACINE: Thank you. Are you headed for the mike?