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Lawrence Persig from Nenana, Ron Nusinginya from Barrow and Steve Matthews from Fairbanks speak at a hearing on subsistence

Jeff Kennedy, moderator

Series: Potlatch series

Nenana, Alaska

October 5, 1977

Unidentified song

On October 5 Democratic Representatives Nels Anderson of Dillingham and Steve Cowper of Fairbanks conducted a hearing in Nenana concerning subsistence. It was one of a series of hearings held throughout the state to determine if subsistence could be defined and how to manage Alaska's diminishing stock of fish and game.

Lawrence Persey, a five-year resident of Nenana, offered his definition of subsistence. He said in his book if a person is going to eat it then it is subsistence. He said the state can manage its fisheries by throwing the big boats from Seattle out of the state. He can't see a 50 ton commercial boat coming from out of state and then telling a person that he can't eat salmon in the state of Alaska. He said this isn't fair. He talked about the 200 mile limit for fisheries and fishing competition. He thinks getting the foreign and out of state fishers out of the state. He talked about an article about what people in Barrow eat. He thinks there should be more Fish and Game people out in the field. There are sports hunters who are hunting just for the horns. He said if they want to control hunting they need to control the sports hunters. Jeff Kennedy said Steve Cowper asked Persey who should have priority fishing Alaska's dwindling resources. Persey said the ones who eat the fish should be the ones that catch the fish.

Instrumental song by Tommy Garrett

Jeff Kennedy said Ron Nusinginya gives the perspective of the hunters of Arctic coast. Ron Nusingiya said it is said it has been reported that the whale is getting depleted. He talked about his mother-in-law who is over eighty years old. She has been subsistence living for her entire life. They had moose during the winter and fish during the summer. What is being depleted has been commercialized. He said he has nothing against the commercial fisherman. His way of his diet is like his mother-in-law – a little bit of moose meat, duck, fish, etc. He still thinks that the people that were born and raised in Alaska should have a chance at subsistence.

A melody of hunting songs from Baker Lake and Chesterfield Inlet of Hudson's Bay, Canada.

Steve Matthew, liaison officer for the villages of the Tanana Chiefs Conference. Mathew talks about the lack of control of Fish and Game regulations. He said there is not enough local control

of the game. He talked about migratory birds. They are only allowed to be shot after September 1 in Alaska. They fly down south into Canada and Mexico where there are no controls. He wonders why they can't get birds in the spring as they migrate. They aren't in Alaska after September 1. He talked about moose and the lack of bull moose. He said that isn't very good management. There was a recent article about brown bear and bear predation on moose calves. This is something that Indians have known about for hundreds of years. Indian knowledge should be used for game management. He said he makes a good wage, but they can barely keep their head above water, the cost of living in Fort Yukon, and misuse of welfare. He said the elders are the backbone of the country. He talked about people coming into the Koyukuk for hunting. He said there should be hunting controls for people that make over a certain amount of money.