Coordinator: ...standing by. All participants will be in a listen-only mode until the question-and-answer session. During that time, if you'd like to ask a question, please press Star 1. I'd like to inform all parties that today's call will be recorded. If you have any objections, you may disconnect at this time. I'd now like to turn the call over to your host, Ms. Linda Belton. Thank you. You may begin whenever you're ready.

Linda Belton: Hello, and good morning, my name is Linda Belton. I am National Tribal Liaison for NOAA. Thank you for joining us today for this call. Again, I want to give you instructions for the webinar. If you're joining by phone, all participants need to join by phone for audio, and that number is 888-455-9725, with the participant code of 9096248.

Participants are in listen-only mode during the presentation, and verbal comments would be accepted after the presentation. The meeting is being recorded. We wanted to remind you again that it will - meeting is being recorded. And to provide a comment after the presentation, if you're on the phone, the Verizon operator will provide directions to press Star 1, so it is clear that you have a comment.

The Verizon operator will call on you by name when it's your turn, and your microphone will be unmuted, so you can speak. Again, if you want to make a comment, you press Star 1, and the operator will introduce you to the call. For written
comments, the written comments should be submitted via email to infrastructure.tribal@NOAA.gov.

And now, I'd like to turn you over to Senior Advisor for Tribal Affairs Mr. - Dr. Zach Penney. Thank you.

Dr. Zach Penney: Thank you, Linda. Good morning, everybody. Yes, I'm Zach Penney, and I'm the Senior Advisor to NOAA for Fisheries and Tribal Engagement. To get us started off in a good way, I want to start off by introducing Lance Fisher and Giovanna Gross.

Lance Fisher is from the Northern Cheyenne Nation of Montana, and Giovanna is from the Oglala Lakota Nation and also is of Northern Peruvian descent. Giovanna and Lance will sing us - they sing to keep their languages alive and to inspire youth and celebrate life. So, to get us started off in a good way, I'm going to hand it off to Lance and Giovanna to open us up with a song. Thank you.

Giovanna Gross: Thank you. I'm just going to briefly introduce myself in my language. My name is Giovanna Gross, and (native language). So, I just did a basic introduction, just saying, you know, hello my relatives. I shake your hand with a good heart. Just my name, where I come from.

My family comes from the medicine root district of Pine Ridge Reservation, and also the providence of Lambayeque, Peru. And I'm going to pass it over to Lance Fisher here so he can introduce himself formally.

Lance Fisher: (native language). Good day. My name is Lance Fisher. I am from the Northern Cheyenne Tribe. My Cheyenne name translates to Medicine Bear. We would like to offer a prayer song in Lakota taught to us by John Around Him Jr. ((Singing)). Thank you.

Dr. Zach Penney: Thank you, Lance, Giovanna. That opened that up for us today and starting in a good way. So, and moving on, I want to go ahead and quickly just offer a few opening remarks and then cover the agenda. So, we've gone through the welcome and the prayer.
So, I'm relatively new to NOAA, but I wanted to greet everybody, and thank you for joining today's conversation with Dr. Spinrad and the NOAA team. I'm Dr. Zach Penney, and I'm a senior advisor in Fisheries and Tribal Engagement. So, I'm just starting my fourth week. I'm Nimiipuu. I'm a Nez Perce tribal member, I grew up in Idaho, and, you know, I just started this appointment this month.

But before joining NOAA, I worked for the Columbia Inter-Tribal Fish Commission for seven years. And as a matter of fact, up to this point, I think I've only worked for tribes or tribal commissions for the majority of my career. So, it was only a couple of weeks ago that I was sitting on the tribal side of the table.

So, my role today is to moderate this listening session on three provisions within the Infrastructure Investment and Jobs Act. Specifically, our conversation today is going to be focused on funding available or funding that's been carved out for tribes related to fish passage, the Pacific Salmon Coastal Recovery Fund, and Regional Ocean Partnerships.

We're still very early in the process. So, you know, it's extremely important for NOAA to get tribal input to inform how NOAA gets these funds to tribes. And from reading the room and from what I understand, this is probably the earliest that NOAA has done this with these consultations.

So, as we get going, a couple of things that are important to understand. Number one is that this session for NOAA is for NOAA to listen to the tribes. So, today, Dr. Spinrad and team will be in listening mode to hear your comments and suggestions about these three provisions within the infrastructure bill. Written comments are also very welcome, and we will provide context for written comments later in the agenda.

Number two, please treat today as the first opportunity to provide comments to NOAA, not the last. The dialogue and variability of these three infrastructure buckets that we're going to talk about, the funding that this is going to span over the next five years, so 2022 to 2027.
And then number three, please be respectful about speaking time. So, there are multiple tribes on today's call, and I want to make sure everybody has a chance to speak. Again, we're very early in this process, so there will be time later for follow-ups with NOAA, if that's desired.

So, as we move on, you know, we're going to cover three things, presentation of fish passage, Regional Ocean Partnerships, and Pacific Coastal Salmon Recovery Fund, and then we'll open it up to tribal input. So, what I'm going to do now, though, is, I want to hand this over to Dr. Spinrad, who is the Undersecretary of Commerce for Oceans and Atmosphere and the NOAA administrator.

So, Dr. Spinrad is responsible for the future direction and oversight of the agency and its over 12,000 employees, including developing NOAA's portfolio of products and services to address the climate crisis, enhancing environmental sustainability, and fostering economic development, and creating a more just and equitable, diverse, and inclusive NOAA workforce. So, with that, Dr. Spinrad.

Dr. Rick Spinrad: Thank you, Zach. I really appreciate that introduction. And it's a pleasure to have you on board working on these important issues. I am the NOAA Administrator. I started in this position, moving from the high desert of Oregon back in July of this past year.

I want to start by thanking you all for taking time to join us today. We do understand that consulting with federally recognized tribes is a critical aspect of the sound and productive relationship between the US and sovereign Indian tribal governments. Tribal nations are the original stewards of our lands and our waters, and have been the most effective managers and protectors of biodiversity.

So, it's an honor and a privilege to hear from you. As you heard from Zach, on November 15th, 2021, President Biden signed the Infrastructure Investment and Jobs Act, which provides more than $13 billion for direct investment in tribal communities across the country.

The funding from this act provides a unique opportunity to advance NOAA's critical
mission from weather and climate services, to managing fisheries, marine protected areas, and coastal management. NOAA's goal is to ensure these funds balance stewardship and economic opportunity, while implementing the work that needs to be done.

The funding from this act is a vital component in advancing the work our nation and world need to do to become climate-ready. And in fact, NOAA's Climate Ready Nation Initiatives, while it's in the formative stage, critically depends on engagement that is currently underway with NOAA and our partners.

The Climate Ready Nation Initiative will target our current investments like this act, as well as future ones, to address climate risks and key impact areas, including floods, fire, drought, extreme heat, and building resilience. Today, we're taking a step in engaging interested tribes in a sustained dialogue about this funding.

Right now, we are seeking your input to inform our early planning decisions around three critical provisions of the Infrastructure Act related to NOAA programs. One, fish passage. Two, the Pacific Coast Salmon Recovery Fund. And three, the Regional Ocean Partnerships.

We look forward to additional opportunities to consult, partner, and engage with you in the weeks, months, and years to come, on these opportunities, as well as other relevant NOAA actions. Please keep in mind that today we will largely be listening to your input rather than responding per se to it.

We intend to release a summary of these comments we receive, while also incorporating them into the execution of these infrastructure provisions. And now, I look forward to hearing from the tribal representatives that joined us today. I'll let Dr. Penney introduce our other panelists and move on to comments. Dr. Penney?
Barry Thom, Regional Administration or Administrator for NOAA Fisheries in the West Coast region, to cover the Pacific Salmon Coastal Recovery Fund. And Keelin Kuipers, who’s the Deputy Director for National Ocean Service Office for Coastal Management, to cover the Regional Ocean Partnerships.

So, what I'll go ahead and do is, I'll hand this off to Carrie and then Carrie will hand it off to, I do believe, Keelin. So, Carrie, the floor is yours.

Carrie Selberg Robinson: Good morning, everybody. As Zach said, my name is Carrie Selberg Robinson. I'm the Director of the Office of Habitat Conservation, and I am pleased to be here today to talk to you about one provision in the infrastructure bill focused on fish passage.

And this includes funding to support fish passage through the removal of dams and other extreme barriers, to help protect and restore habitat, sustain fisheries, recover, protect the species, and maintain resilient ecosystems in communities. So, up to 50% of the funding will be reserved for tribes and provided through a competitive grant process under our community-based restoration program.

And tribes will also be eligible for the other portion of the funding under fish passage. We have a couple of questions we'd like to focus on today, as well as any other input you have to provide on the fish passage provision. Our two questions are, first, how can NOAA align this fish passage funding with tribal priorities and needs?

And second, NOAA will use a grant mechanism that results in cooperative agreements to allocate these funds. And we are interested in your recommendations for how NOAA awards these funds to engage with and support tribes, including funding going directly to tribes, and funding going to other tribal serving or partner organizations. And with that, I will pass it off to Keelin.

Keelin Kuipers: Thank you, Carrie. Good morning. I'm Keelin Kuipers, and I'm the Deputy Director of the Office for Coastal Management. Our organization works with coastal partners to
support the resilience of our nation's natural coastal - natural cultural committee and economic resources.

I'm going to be speaking just for a moment here today about the provision in the infrastructure bill in support of Regional Ocean Partnerships. So, there is $56 million that is included. And this investment will support our Regional Ocean Partnerships, which are voluntary, multi-state, and typically governor-established forums that identify shared priorities and take action on a diversity of ocean and coastal issues important to their geographies.

These longstanding partnerships provide coordination and collaboration across states, tribes, and federal agencies on regional, coastal, and ocean issues, and NOAA has provided a variety of support mechanisms for them over the years. Our intention with this funding is to support two distinct activities each year.

First is for the established Regional Ocean Partnerships to coordinate the interstate and intertribal management of ocean and coastal resources. And second, to enhance associated sharing integration of federal and non-federal data in regions. And then I also want to share with you some questions that we have for your feedback and comment on today.

We have four questions around this provision. The first is, has your tribe identified coastal and ocean management issues and priorities? Have you discussed those issues and priorities with other tribes in the region? Does your tribe work in coordination with the four established Regional Ocean Partnerships and or the five IOOS regional associations? If so, what works well and what aspects need improvement? And I should also define that acronym, IOOS. It's the Integrated Ocean Observing System.

The third question is, what types of activities relate to ocean resource management priorities or to enhancing sharing of ocean data and knowledge do you anticipate these funds will help support?

And finally, what are your recommendations for how NOAA awards these funds to
engage with and support tribes, including funding going directly to tribes or other
tribal serving or partner organizations? So, thank you in advance for your comments
this morning, and I will now turn it over to Barry.

Barry Thom: Thank you, Keelin, and good morning, everybody. I hope you're doing well. I am
Barry Thom. I'm the West Coast Regional Administrator for NOAA Fisheries, and I'm
here to talk to you today about the Pacific Coastal Salmon Recovery Fund.

And as the name implies, the Pacific Coastal Salmon Recovery Fund is funding that's
distributed to Pacific coastal states, California, Oregon, Washington, Idaho, Alaska,
and the tribes within that same geographic area of Pacific salmon. There are three
main purposes for The Pacific Coastal Salmon Recovery Funds.

The first is to - is focused on those stocks, those salmon and steelhead stocks that
are listed under the Endangered Species Act or at risk to be so listed. The second
provision really supports any projects for salmon and steelhead that are important to
tribal treaty rights or subsistence fishing, native subsistence fishing along that coastal
area.

And the third component is just conservation of Pacific coastal salmon and steelhead
habitat. Like the other provisions, we have four main questions that we're interested
in your input today relating to the PCSRF. The first is, are there modifications or
refinements needed to increase the accessibility of these funds to tribes or tribal
commissions and consortia?

The second is, should these funds have different priorities than the preexisting Pacific
Coastal Salmon Recovery Fund program? For example, prioritizing these funds for
large-scale projects that address primary limiting factors. The third is, how can the
PCSRF grant program further support tribes and tribal commissions and consortia on
Pacific salmon and steelhead recovery efforts?

And the last is, are there other ways to determine the allocation of funds amongst the
tribes and tribal commissions or consortia to achieve the desired outcomes of the
Pacific Coastal Salmon Recovery Fund program? And with that, I think we're going to
end with a series of overarching questions across all the programs. I'll turn it back, I think, to Zach.

Dr. Zach Penney: Yes. Thanks, Barry. Thanks, Carrie and Keelin, for covering those. So, to sort of set the stage for today's conversation, we wanted to put these three sort of overarching questions for you to look at. And these are, what examples do you have of processes that facilitate access to federal funding or missteps from other programs that provide important lessons for us?

And what additional information or support would be most helpful to your tribe in accessing these NOAA funds? And what other requests, questions, or feedback do you have for NOAA at this stage? So, these are some of the larger questions that we'd like to hear from you about today.

So, with that, I do want to open this up now for the tribes to speak. We ask that when providing comments, that the participants on the call be mindful that there are actually many voices and comments that need to be heard today. So, please keep that in mind.

And I'd actually like to ask the Verizon operator to explain to individuals on the phone - to show kind of how they add the comments and how to do that. So, with that, let's go ahead and - well, before - one more thing before we move on.

For any specific comments and questions regarding, whether it's the Regional Ocean Partnerships, Pacific Salmon Coastal Recovery Fund, or Fish Passage, we'll have Carrie, Barry, and Keelin, here to kind of help answer any specific question, if that comes up.

So, yes. Verizon operator, if you please explain to folks on the phone, you know, how to go ahead and ring in if they have a comment to share. Thanks.

Coordinator: If you have a question or a comment, and you dialed with a guest code, please dial Star 1 at this time. Again, at a Star 1 to get in the queue. Thank you.
Dr. Zach Penney: It is mighty quiet out there. Are we having any - anybody chimed in yet?

Coordinator: No, there are no participants in the queue.

Dr. Zach Penney: Just so I'm clear, when you say no participants in the queue, do we have folks that have dialed in, though, and were able to see the introduction and have view of the PowerPoint?

Coordinator: Yes, there are. Though what we're doing right now, and I know that we said that we were doing Q&A at the end, but we're just doing - if you want the participants who have dialed in with a guest code to speak at this time, they would press Star 1. The individuals who've dialed in with the leaders' code have already - have an open mic, so there's no need for that. But if you're allowing the participants to speak at this time, they can press Star 1.

Dr. Zach Penney: Okay. Thanks.

Coordinator: Okay, Miss Kelly Dennis, your line is now open.

Kelly Dennis: Hello. Can you hear me?

Dr. Zach Penney: Yes, we can hear you.

Kelly Dennis: Okay, sorry. I'm not really familiar with this WebEx platform and missed the beginning of the presentation. But I'm with the Shinnecock Indian Nation Council of Trustees, Councilwoman, Secretary. And we - the Shinnecock Indian Nation is a coastal tribe where most of our tribe members live on a peninsula that, you know, we always face dangers and storms.

There's constant - we see the constant impacts of climate change with our offshore erosion. And, you know, we appreciate really greatly the NOAA and being able to - there was a fisheries grant that has come through before, but we did have some issues with that funding, given that, I guess, the Bureau of Indian Affairs, BIA, the
regional eastern region, I guess, they had to have a breakdown of how we would be using the funding from NOAA.

And they didn't really have all the information at all. Whereas, you know, NOAA had said that, you know, we could use our funding for a lot of different ways that for - you know, as an impact to mitigate the impacts of COVID-19. And the Bureau of Indian Affairs kind of just thought that it was just going to be another payout to tribe members, and we had to correct them on that and was not really - I don't know.

I just - we wish that there would have been more information between the agencies about what the funding is for. So, if it's not going to be direct funding to tribes from NOAA, and if there's going to be a pass-through through the regional BIA, we just hope that there's better communication about what funds are allowable. And yes, just to have that communication better. That's all.

Dr. Zach Penney: Thank you. We appreciate that comment.

Anybody else out there? Star 1 to dial in and provide a comment.

Coordinator: Our next comment comes from Daniel Stone. Your line is now open.

Daniel Stone: Hey, good morning. Can you hear me?

Dr. Zach Penney: We can.

Daniel Stone: Oh, good morning, everybody. This is Danny Stone. I'm here with the Shoshone-Bannock tribes in Idaho. I just had a couple of quick comments. My first one relates to kind of the once in a long-time opportunity here to spend large amounts of capital on some high-priority projects for production measures, especially those that are related to conservation.

At least here in the Columbia River Basin, it's exceptionally difficult for us to obtain the funding to engage in conservation measures of production facilities. And I know
that for the past, I don't know, probably five or six years, the priority has really been tributary or freshwater habitats throughout the basin.

And I would like NOAA fisheries to consider some investments, at least with a portion of the funds for those high priority deferred maintenance issues that we have that are kind of plaguing right now, the hatchery system in the Columbia River Basin. By and large, and this isn't an absolute, but by and large, the majority of all treaty tribal harvest is occurring associated with those facilities, those production facilities.

And in order for them to remain functional for the next several years, the next decade, even in the short term, we're going to need some investments. So, that would be the first comment. And I'd just note that, you know, Lower Snake River Compensation Program and all of the other facility managers can get you a list of those requests that they have outstanding already.

The next one would be really kind of reordering the paradigm for what we consider to be habitat-type projects. So, typically, we're investing in, you know, river restoration, bank restoration, watershed rehabilitation, including forest products, and forest landscape restoration.

But really, the most important function, at least here in Idaho, is kind of the lack of marine-derived nutrients. So, I'm sure you guys are all aware of the conveyor belt that occurs here in Idaho, where you know, our connection to the Pacific is determined by the amount of fish coming back into these watersheds.

And without the marine-derived phosphorus and nitrogen coming into these watersheds, we're continuously in export mode. Soils are exceptionally poor up here, lots of (unintelligible). We have a lot of retentive capability.

And so, relative to my first comment, which is, we need to invest in some of those conservation measures for low tech production measures, we should really start to consider fundamental connections of nutrient enhancement, primarily with fish in the watershed as being a key part of how this habitat formed and how we can maintain its continuity.
So, that's about all I've got on my end. Thank you again for your time and your guys' attention to the tribes here.

Dr. Zach Penney: Thanks, Danny. Appreciate the comment.

Coordinator: Our next comment comes from Casey Baldwin. Your line is now open.

Casey Baldwin: Hello. Good morning. Casey Baldwin, marine research scientist with Colville Tribes. My first question is for Carrie Robinson. On the Fish Passage funding, I'm wondering if - so, the Colville tribes and other tribes at Yucca are embarking on a feasibility evaluation for Fish Passage in Chief Joseph Grand Coulee. I'm wondering if research and evaluation of feasibility is going to be eligible for that fish passage funding.

Carrie Selberg Robinson: Thanks so much for that question. I think I would need to know a little bit more. I wouldn't want to answer that question on the fly. So, we will take down your name and information and make sure to get back to you with a response to your question. I just - I want to make sure that we answer it properly. And I'm not sure that I could answer it on the fly, but we'll get back to you soon.

Casey Baldwin: Okay. Thank you. The second question is for Barry. With respect to the questions you put out there for PCSRF funding. The fourth one, you ask if there are other ways to determine the allocation of funds amongst tribes.

I'm wondering - I guess I'm not familiar with what the current mechanism is for determining the allocation among tribes. Is there - could you explain what the current one is, and so we can have an idea of what alternatives might work better for us?

Barry Thom: Yes. Thanks, Casey, and thanks for that question. So, the current program is a competitive process where all the - both these individual tribal applications, as well as the tribal consortia applications that come in, are - go through a rigorous technical review of four or five technical reviewers per proposal and then a panel review.
So, each of those proposals is scored based on the selection criteria that are in the federal funding opportunity. And then those proposals are basically ranked in order of their review, and then the funding allocations are determined by a panel across the agency based on those competitive scores that come in. Hopefully that's a little bit

Casey Baldwin:  Okay. So, is there a portion of the existing funding that is allocated specifically to tribes, or is the tribal funding that's currently going through PCSRF just competitive with all the other grant applications as well?

Barry Thom:  Yes, good question. There is no specific provision that allocates a minimum amount that goes to tribes. Historically, though, I will say, over the 20 years of the program, 10 to 15% of the funding at a minimum has went to tribes or tribal consortia, and there are - well, the overall applications are in three bins, states, tribal consortia, and tribes.

Those proposals are all looked at in their entirety across all eligible applicants when the panel review is conducted.

Casey Baldwin:  Okay. Thank you.

Dr. Zach Penney:  Thanks, Casey. Other comments.

Coordinator:  As a reminder, if you'd like to make a comment, please press Star 1 at this time. Again, that is Star 1. Our next comment comes from Starlyn Miller. Your line is now open.

Starlyn Tourtellott Miller:  My name is Starlyn Tourtellott Miller. I'm an attorney for Menominee Indian Tribe of Wisconsin. We have two dams that prevent passage of a relative we see, (nimau) is what we call it. It's a lake sturgeon. And we also have a lot of flooding in our downtown area because of these dams.

So, that's how we're interested in this discussion. And what I would say is, as to the
first comment that you received, I'm forgetting the name of that person, do you all have an MOA between BIA and NOAA?

I do know that we've had some experience with new funding for Menominee, where USDA and BIA had to work together. They worked very closely, and that was for the FDPIR for food distribution programs on Indian reservations. And that process went very smoothly because they did work closely together. So, those are my comments right now.

Dr. Zach Penney: Thanks, Starlyn. And I am actually not aware if there is an MOA between NOAA and the Bureau of Indian Affairs. I would need to go back and talk with the team to determine if that exists and sort of what some of the hurdles are there.

If there are other folks on the panel that have an understanding of that, please feel free to answer, but this is one I would definitely need to take back and get some more information on and get back to you. I'm not hearing anything yet. Let me go ahead and look into that for you. I appreciate the comment.

Starlyn Tourtillott Miller: Wawaenon.

Dr. Zach Penney: Other comments out there?

Coordinator: And we do have another participant who would like to make a comment here. Jared Erickson, your line is now open.

Jared Erickson: Okay. Can you guys hear me?

Dr. Zach Penney: We can. Go ahead.

Jared Erickson: Okay. I just want to make sure. I kept kind of pressing Star 1, and I don't know if it was connecting me. So, I had a question, and I know you guys can't really maybe state too much on the review panel, but do you guys look at the impact of what it would have for the overall fisheries, say, you know, passage above Chief Joseph Grand Coulee Dam, the potential impact that could have positively for the system?
And, you know, holding us to the federal trust responsibility for like getting our fish back to - for Columbia, especially at a lot of our other Yucca tribes. Has it been looked at as far as - is there any review to that, or they just looked at the technical one?

Barry Thom: This is Barry. Maybe I'll take a run at that. Well, the - I can't speak specifically to like the technical review or the specifics of the Upper Columbia, the impact of the projects on whether it's fish production or production of fish, whether wild or hatchery fish, are evaluated as part of the technical review.

We do want to see the outcomes of those projects and to look at those as part of the technical review moving forward. But I don't have any specifics in terms of Upper Columbia versus Snake or other parts of the country.

Jared Erickson: Okay. I just- yes, I'm trying - going off of Casey's question because - so, I'll leave it for later, but thank you.

Carrie Selberg Robinson: I'll chime in there, too. For the fish passage provisions, I can't get into details, but yes, we do look at the positive outcomes that would come from a fish passage project on fisheries.

Jared Erickson: Okay. So, I mean, to Casey's question, so is staffing, you know, some of the things that - these are costs associated with - we're looking out to Phase 2 implementation to, you know, get to where we want to get infrastructure wise potentially in the future. I mean, there's going to be some stuff in the interim passage that maybe - that could be funded.

But I'm just trying to think like - that's why I ask - I guess Casey had a good question. I know you guys are going to get back to him, but is that going to be funded like staffing and other things associated with it? I'm sure you guys are familiar with Phase 2 and from that brief. I know Michael Tehan is and maybe some others, but.
Barry Thom: Yes. Maybe Carrie or - I'll just try. So, as part of the - at least for the Pacific Coastal Salmon Recovery Fund, when grants come in, we do find some level of capacity funding for tribes, tribal consortia in terms of during planning and other work to make sure projects can get on the ground.

It is a component of many applications, although we try to make sure a majority of funds are used for sort of on-the-ground implementation of projects. But capacity and staffing and the planning component is recognized as a use - as a potential use of those funds to make sure we get the right projects in the right places.

Jared Erickson: Okay. Thank you. And I hope it's looked out at tribes. I know you guys mentioned that. That's what that - you know, your federal trust responsibility to us to get some of these projects done and to get some of these runs reestablished. So, thank you guys for your time. Appreciate it.

Dr. Zach Penney: Thanks, Jared. Other comments?

Coordinator: There are currently no other comments.

Dr. Zach Penney: Folks, there's still lots of time left, but maybe one of the things we can do is, if you do have written comments that you'd like to submit, maybe we can go ahead and put up that email right now about if you do have some comments you want to submit, if that's easier. There is a place you can submit those to NOAA. So, if we can throw those up on the screen really quick.

Dr. Rick Spinrad: Hey, Zach, this is Rick Spinrad. Just a quick comment, if I may.

Dr. Zach Penney: Yes, sir.

Dr. Rick Spinrad: Yes. I was focused in on the question about the nature of the agreements between NOAA and BIA, and actually took a little bit of time while we were listening here. I am not aware of a formal MOU or MOA between NOAA and BIA. The only things I could find were certain project-specific agreements that we've had with the weather service or the fisheries service.
So, for the caller who asked about that, to the best of my knowledge, we do not have that. And Zach, as you indicated, it's something that we ought to study up on and just see with what the appropriate need for that might be and how valuable it might be in moving forward. Thank you.

Dr. Zach Penney: Yes. Thanks, Dr. Spinrad, I appreciate that. So, up on your screen, if you do have - if you don't want to make a verbal comment today, again, plenty of time to do so. Star 1. But if you do have written responses, you can submit those to infrastructure.tribal@noaa.gov. That comment period closes on March 22, 2022.

So, you also have that option. And if you're feeling shy today, you can also throw a comment in the chat, and we'll do our best to address it. But yes, phone lines are still open. I feel like a radio deejay. And this is my first tribal listening session that I guess been on the NOAA side of things.

I guess I'm looking to Dr. Spinrad, Barry, Carrier, or Keelin, in terms of how we want to - if folks are, you know, somewhat quiet, how you'd want to keep going forward with this.

Dr. Rick Spinrad: Yes, I'm happy to weigh in. We've done a few consultations, and there's never any guaranteed end time on this. We set up the schedule for a full two hours in case we've got heavy engagement. I think the important thing for the folks on the line to know is that this doesn't end when we shut down this call, that we do see the opportunity for getting your input as a standing relationship.

And so, I'd encourage you to take advantage of the email sites that we've identified and feel free to weigh in. We should give people another round. I'd be happy to let Carrie and Keelin and Barry weigh in with any closing comments, but I think we've gotten some really good input from the folks who have engaged.

And if we have no more comments, we can go ahead and wrap up, but recognize this is the start of the dialogue. So, let me just ask Barry, Keelin, and Carrie, if you'd like to add any additional comments at this point.
Carrie Selberg Robinson: No. Just echo your thanks to everybody who joined us today. And I also want to reemphasize the point that staff made at the very beginning, which is, we see this as the beginning of the conversation, and we will look forward to engaging with you in the future.

Barry Thom: And echo that thanks. And also, if people do come up with questions, there is a session tomorrow as well that's announced. So, if you are looking to join again, if you come up with another question, feel free to join tomorrow, but really appreciate the comments, and we'll stay coordinated on some of those Upper Columbia questions that came in from Casey and others. So, thanks.

Keelin Kuipers: So, thank you as well for everybody's comments and participation today. And definitely strongly encourage you to submit written comments if you have them. This is something that, you know, we really want to engage in this ongoing dialogue with you about all three of these provisions. So, we appreciate all the questions today. And so, we thank you for your time today.

Dr. Zach Penney: All right, well, thanks all. So, you know, we're committed to providing a summary of these listening sessions that we'll post the transcripts from calls on the NOAA Legislative Intergovernmental Affairs Tribal Resources page. As Barry said, there will be another listening session tomorrow, which might be a little bit better for some of us on the Pacific coast and on Mountain Time.

But we do intend to release a summary of the comments we receive, and how we'll consider the comments in our execution of the infrastructure provision. So, with that, I think we can call it a close. So, thank you, everybody, for tuning in today. We appreciate it.

Dr. Rick Spinrad: Thank you.

Coordinator: Thank you, everyone, for your participation. That concludes today's call. You may disconnect at this time.