

ALASKA MIGRATORY BIRD CO-MANAGEMENT COUNCIL

FALL MEETING - ZOOM

SEPTEMBER 29, 2020

Members Present:

Ryan Scott, Alaska Department of Fish and Game  
Eric Taylor, U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service  
Gloria Stickwan, Ahtna Intertribal Resource Commission  
Priscilla Evans, Chugach Regional Resources Commission  
Brandon Ahmasuk, Kawerak  
Cyrus Harris, Maniilaq Association, Kotzebue  
Taquilik Hepa, North Slope Region, Barrow  
Coral Chernoff, Sun'aq Tribe of Kodiak  
Jennifer Hooper, Association of Village Presidents  
Heidi Kritz, Bristol Bay Native Association  
Peter Devine, Aleutian/Pribilof Island Association  
Randy Mayo, Tanana Chiefs

Executive Director, Patty Schwalenberg

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907-243-0668 - sahile@gci.net

## 1 P R O C E E D I N G S

2  
3 (ZOOM - 9/29/2020)4  
5 (On record)6  
7 CHAIRMAN SCOTT: Well, good morning  
8 everybody. I'm Ryan Scott with the Department of Fish  
9 and Game down here in Juneau and we did this once  
10 before, last spring, and that went pretty good. But  
11 I'm going to go out on a limb and suggest that all of  
12 us have learned a lot about Zoom in the last three or  
13 four months and it's -- you know it's not perfect,  
14 obviously I think we'd all really prefer to be in the  
15 same room with each other but at least we can continue  
16 to do business and address things that the Council  
17 needs to.18  
19 So I guess I will call the meeting to  
20 order at 9:05 this morning.21  
22 Next item on the agenda is a moment of  
23 silent to consider our work here and those who are with  
24 us and those who aren't with us. So if you'd join me  
25 just for a second for a moment of silence.26  
27 (Moment of Silence)28  
29 CHAIRMAN SCOTT: All right, thank you  
30 very much for that.31  
32 Before we get to -- just making sure  
33 we've got all the folks that need to be at the table,  
34 virtual table that is, seating of the alternates and  
35 everything else, I guess, you know, this platform, it  
36 can be challenging for all of us. I don't know all the  
37 ins and outs and I'll just state that up front and ask  
38 for your forgiveness over the course of the day. I  
39 know there's a place somewhere to raise your hand. I'm  
40 also great at just looking and seeing if people raise  
41 their hands on video, if you're on video, you can do  
42 that, and if you're on the phone, you know, just let us  
43 know that you have a comment or you would like to  
44 discuss something.45  
46 Patty, I don't know, if you could maybe  
47 help me kind of monitor that as well. I'm not sure I  
48 -- I don't actually know where the hand raising thing  
49 is.

50

1 MS. SCHWALENBERG: Yeah, I can help.

2

3 CHAIRMAN SCOTT: Thank you. All right,  
4 moving on then. Let's just confirm that we have all  
5 the Council members present and we have the alternates,  
6 if there are any alternates for this meeting. Anybody  
7 filling in today?

8

9 MS. SCHWALENBERG: Yes, Mr. Chairman.  
10 If I could share my screen.

11

12 CHAIRMAN SCOTT: Yes, ma'am.

13

14 MS. SCHWALENBERG: We have an alternate  
15 for the Bristol Bay Native Association, Heidi Kritz is  
16 on the line I believe. Heidi, are you on the line?

17

18 MS. KRITZ: Good morning, yes, I'm  
19 here.

20

21 MS. SCHWALENBERG: Good morning. She  
22 is going to be sitting on behalf of Gayla Hoseth for  
23 the Bristol Bay Native Association. And that is the  
24 only alternate that I am aware of.

25

26 CHAIRMAN SCOTT: Okay. Well, thank you  
27 for joining us Heidi. Thank you for filling in for  
28 Gayla.

29

30 Patty, do you want to call the roll and  
31 we'll officially find a quorum.

32

33 MS. SCHWALENBERG: Yes, I can.

34

35 Association of Village Council  
36 Presidents.

37

38 (No comment)

39

40 MS. SCHWALENBERG: Jennifer.

41

42 MS. HOOPER: Oh, sorry, can you hear me  
43 now?

44

45 MS. SCHWALENBERG: Yeah.

46

47 MS. HOOPER: Sorry, I have my phone  
48 muted in the computer. Jennifer Hooper here. I'm not  
49 sure if Martin Andrew was able to call in for the

50

1 meeting so I may be the AVCP rep.  
2  
3 MS. SCHWALENBERG: Okay.  
4  
5 Bristol Bay Native Association.  
6  
7 HEIDI: Good morning, I'm here.  
8  
9 MS. SCHWALENBERG: Chugach Regional  
10 Resources Commission. Is Priscilla on?  
11  
12 (No comment)  
13  
14 MS. SCHWALENBERG: Ahtna InterTribal  
15 Resources Commission.  
16  
17 MS. STICKWAN: Yes, Gloria Stickwan.  
18  
19 MS. SCHWALENBERG: Hi, Gloria.  
20  
21 Kawerak, Jack or Brandon.  
22  
23 (No comments)  
24  
25 MS. SCHWALENBERG: Brandon, is Jack on,  
26 or are you still on Brandon? I thought I saw you on  
27 there.  
28  
29 (No comments)  
30  
31 MS. SCHWALENBERG: Oh, maybe he got cut  
32 off.  
33  
34 Where was I.  
35  
36 Aleutian/Pribilof Island Association.  
37  
38 MR. DEVINE: Peter Devine, here.  
39  
40 MS. SCHWALENBERG: Good morning.  
41  
42 Sun'aq Tribe of Kodiak.  
43  
44 MS. CHERNOFF: Yes, this is Coral, I'm  
45 here.  
46  
47 CHAIRMAN SCOTT: Maniilaq Association.  
48 Cyrus.  
49  
50

1 MR. HARRIS: Cyrus Harris here.  
2  
3 MS. SCHWALENBERG: North Slope Borough.  
4  
5 (No comments)  
6  
7 MS. SCHWALENBERG: Okay. The U.S. Fish  
8 and Wildlife Service.  
9  
10 MR. TAYLOR: Good morning, everyone.  
11 This is Eric Taylor.  
12  
13 MS. SCHWALENBERG: Tanana Chiefs  
14 Conference, Randy.  
15  
16 MR. MAYO: Here, along with Staff  
17 Deborah Lind and possibly some of my regional board  
18 members may be listening in.  
19  
20 MS. SCHWALENBERG: Okay.  
21  
22 MR. HONEA: Yeah, Don Honea sitting in.  
23  
24 MS. SCHWALENBERG: Hi Don.  
25  
26 MR. HONEA: Good morning.  
27  
28 MS. SCHWALENBERG: And then Department  
29 of Fish and Game.  
30  
31 CHAIRMAN SCOTT: Good morning everyone,  
32 I'm here.  
33  
34 MS. SCHWALENBERG: Good morning. Mr.  
35 Chairman, we have a quorum.  
36  
37 CHAIRMAN SCOTT: Well, gosh, if we  
38 don't get anything else done today at least we got that  
39 one. Nice work everybody.  
40  
41 MS. SCHWALENBERG: I'd like to remind  
42 everyone to mute their microphones if they can. And  
43 Brandon said he's here but his computer locked up so.  
44  
45 CARLA: This is Carla from Kaktovik. I  
46 can barely hear what's being said. Is there a way for  
47 -- my volume is turned all the way on my phone.  
48  
49 MS. SCHWALENBERG: Is that any better?  
50

1 If everyone could turn their volumes.....  
2  
3 CARLA: Yes. Well, it was at  
4 first.....  
5  
6 (Cell phone interruption)  
7  
8 MS. SCHWALENBERG: Okay.  
9  
10 CHAIRMAN SCOTT: That's a great  
11 ringtone.  
12  
13 MS. SCHWALENBERG: Sorry about that.  
14 It's called whatever my phone can be that's the  
15 loudest.  
16  
17 CHAIRMAN SCOTT: All right. I hope  
18 everybody.....  
19  
20 MS. SCHWALENBERG: I think we can go  
21 on.  
22  
23 CHAIRMAN SCOTT: I'm sorry, I didn't  
24 hear you.  
25  
26 MS. SCHWALENBERG: I think we can move  
27 on with the agenda.  
28  
29 CHAIRMAN SCOTT: Great. Thank you.  
30 Thanks everybody, again, for joining us this morning.  
31 Next up is introductions and we'll start with Council  
32 members.  
33  
34 Eric.  
35  
36 MR. TAYLOR: Thank you, Mr. Chair. I'm  
37 Eric Taylor. I'm the chief of Migratory Birds here for  
38 the Alaska Region for U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service.  
39 Welcome.  
40  
41 CHAIRMAN SCOTT: And, Heidi.  
42  
43 MS. KRITZ: Good morning. My name is  
44 Heidi Kritz. I work in the Natural Resources Department  
45 at BBNA.  
46  
47 CHAIRMAN SCOTT: Great. And, again,  
48 I'm Ryan Scott, from Fish and Game down here in Juneau.  
49  
50

1                   Patty, could you introduce -- Patty  
2 and/or Eric, the Staff members that are helping us out  
3 today. I don't know if Cheryl's here.

4  
5                   MS. SCHWALENBERG: Let's see.....

6  
7                   MR. TAYLOR: Patty, I'll be happy to  
8 introduce the Fish and Wildlife Service folks if you'd  
9 like.

10  
11                   MS. SCHWALENBERG: Yeah, and then for  
12 the State we have Liliana Naves and Laura  
13 (indiscernible) who both work in Subsistence Division.  
14 Dr. Jim Fall at the Subsistence Division (indiscernible  
15 - garbled) with Migratory Birds.

16  
17                   MR. TAYLOR: Thanks. Julian, would you  
18 like to introduce yourself.

19  
20                   MR. FISCHER: Yeah, good morning.  
21 Julian Fischer, I'm here with the Migratory Bird  
22 Program and I supervise the waterfowl section. Good  
23 morning.

24  
25                   MR. TAYLOR: Thanks, Julian.

26  
27                   Dave.

28  
29                   MR. SAFINE: Good morning. Dave Safine  
30 here. I work in the waterfowl section for Julian here  
31 in Anchorage. Good morning.

32  
33                   MR. TAYLOR: Thanks, Dave.

34  
35                   Will.

36  
37                   MR. LACY: Good morning. I'm Will  
38 Lacy, I'm the budget analyst for Migratory Bird  
39 Management. Good morning.

40  
41                   MR. TAYLOR: All right, thanks Will.  
42 Let's see, am I missing anyone. I don't see anyone on  
43 at least my screen. If anyone else is from Fish and  
44 Wildlife Service could you please pipe up.

45  
46                   MR. FROST: Hey, Eric and others. This  
47 is Chuck Frost, biometrician with the Migratory Bird  
48 Division in Anchorage.

49  
50

1 MR. TAYLOR: All right, thanks, Chuck.

2

3 MR. STARK: Yeah, good morning  
4 everyone. This is Rory Stark. I'm with the U.S. Fish  
5 and Wildlife Service, Office of Law Enforcement.

6

7 MR. TULIK: Good morning everyone. My  
8 name is Christopher Tulik with Yukon Delta Refuge. I'm  
9 a lead Refuge Information Technician.

10

11 MS. SWEENEY: Good morning. (In  
12 Inupiaq). This is Brittany Sweeney. I work for the  
13 Fish and Wildlife Service in (In Inupiaq), Kotzebue.  
14 The homeland of the Inupiaq and I'm happy to be here.

15

16 MR. DANIELS: Good morning. This is  
17 Brian Daniels. Waterfowl biologist at Yukon Delta  
18 National Wildlife Refuge.

19

20 MR. TAYLOR: Is that everybody.

21

22 MS. PLETNIKOFF: Hi. This is Karen  
23 Pletnikoff with the Aleutian/Pribilof Islands  
24 Association.

25

26 MR. OSNAS: This is Erik Osnas from the  
27 U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, Migratory Bird  
28 Management. Thanks.

29

30 MS. DUBLIN: This is Robbin Dublin with  
31 the Alaska Department of Fish and Game, Subsistence,  
32 listening in. Thank you.

33

34 MR. PEARCE: Hey, this is John Pearce  
35 with the U.S. Geological Survey in Anchorage, Alaska.  
36 Good morning.

37

38 MR. MATHEWS: My name is Vince Mathews  
39 with Yukon Flats. I will stay off the video because  
40 the bandwidth, there's a whole bunch of problems with  
41 the internet.

42

43 CHAIRMAN SCOTT: All right, is that all  
44 the Staff members.

45

46 (No comments)

47

48 CHAIRMAN SCOTT: It looks like it but  
49 things are changing, they're moving.

50



1 All right. And I saw a minute ago,  
2 Todd Sanders, are you still with us from the Pacific  
3 Flyaway Council.

4  
5 MR. SANDERS: Yes, thank you, Mr.  
6 Chairman, Todd Sanders, U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service  
7 Pacific Flyaway representative.

8  
9 CHAIRMAN SCOTT: Great, thank you Todd.

10  
11 Other guests and members of the public  
12 or anybody else who hasn't had an opportunity to  
13 introduce yourself.

14  
15 MS. SCHWALENBERG: I think the Native  
16 Caucus was -- needs to introduce themselves.

17  
18 CHAIRMAN SCOTT: Please do.

19  
20 MS. HEPA: Good morning, Patty and Mr.  
21 Chairman. This is Taqulik from the North Slope Borough  
22 Department, Wildlife Management.

23  
24 CHAIRMAN SCOTT: Good morning.

25  
26 MS. STICKWAN: Good morning this is  
27 Gloria Stickwan from the Copper River region.

28  
29 CHAIRMAN SCOTT: Don't be bashful  
30 folks.

31  
32 MS. CHERNOFF: This is Coral Chernoff  
33 representing the tribes of Kodiak Island.

34  
35 MR. DEVINE: Good morning, Mr. Chair.  
36 Peter Devine representing Aleutian/Pribilof region.

37  
38 MR. MAYO: Yes, Mr. Chair, Randy Mayo  
39 with the Tanana Chiefs region and a few of my board  
40 members may be on the line also.

41  
42 MR. HARRIS: Good morning. This is  
43 Cyrus Harris representing Maniilaq Association  
44 representing the Northwest Arctic region.

45  
46 MS. HOOPER: Good morning. Jennifer  
47 Hooper with Association of Village Council Presidents.

48  
49 MS. KRITZ: Good morning. This is

50

1 Heidi Kritz representing the Bristol Bay region.

2

3 MS. KAYOTUK: Good morning. This is  
4 Carla Kayotuk from the North Slope Borough.

5

6 CHAIRMAN SCOTT: Okay, anybody else out  
7 there that we haven't heard from.

8

9 MR. SIMON: Good morning. This is Jim  
10 Simon. I'm a consultant for the purposes of this  
11 meeting for Tanana Chiefs Conference and the Ahtna  
12 InterTribal Resource Commission. Good morning.

13

14 CHAIRMAN SCOTT: Thanks, Jim. Good to  
15 see you.

16

17 (Pause)

18

19 CHAIRMAN SCOTT: Okay, Patty, I think  
20 we -- if we didn't get everybody I apologize. I'm  
21 going to say we got the Lion's Share however and I'm  
22 sure we'll hear from folks throughout the day. And,  
23 again, thanks everybody for joining us this morning and  
24 being here and working through the Zoom platform and  
25 doing a little bit of, you know, just adjusting to what  
26 we have to do in the world as we know it right now.

27

28 Next is review and adoption of the  
29 agenda. I hope folks have had an opportunity to look  
30 at it. It looked like this morning, Patty, there might  
31 have been some email challenges getting packets out to  
32 everybody, does that seem largely taken care of?

33

34 MS. SCHWALENBERG: Mostly but a lot or  
35 some of the Native caucus members were unable to  
36 receive such a big file.

37

38 CHAIRMAN SCOTT: Okay.

39

40 MS. SCHWALENBERG: And I tried to email  
41 out as many documents as I could one at a time and I  
42 got maybe about one-third of the way through them. So  
43 I'll probably be sharing the screen for some of the  
44 items.

45

46 CHAIRMAN SCOTT: Yep, I think that  
47 would be great, there's a work around around that.

48

49 MS. SCHWALENBERG: Yes.

50

1 CHAIRMAN SCOTT: Any suggested changes  
2 to the agenda, and, I don't know, Patty, do you want to  
3 potentially share your screen now so if folks haven't  
4 had an opportunity to look at it we could just at least  
5 give them a glance at it.

6  
7 MS. SCHWALENBERG: Sure.

8  
9 CHAIRMAN SCOTT: I think part of the  
10 take home message is we have a full day.

11  
12 MS. SCHWALENBERG: Very full.

13  
14 CHAIRMAN SCOTT: Okay, thank you,  
15 Patty. I know that's really quick for some folks and  
16 for that we certainly apologize. Is there any  
17 additions or changes that folks would like to see on  
18 the agenda.

19  
20 (No comments)

21  
22 CHAIRMAN SCOTT: I don't know, do we  
23 need a motion to adopt the agenda?

24  
25 MS. SCHWALENBERG: Yes.

26  
27 MR. DEVINE: This is Peter. I make a  
28 motion to approve the agenda as presented.

29  
30 UNIDENTIFIED VOICE: Second.

31  
32 CHAIRMAN SCOTT: Okay. So we have a  
33 motion to adopt and it's been seconded. Can I ask for  
34 unanimous consent?

35  
36 IN UNISON: Aye.

37  
38 CHAIRMAN SCOTT: I didn't hear any  
39 opposition so I think we're good to go. We've got a  
40 road map for the day. Thanks everybody.

41  
42 Next, we're going to talk a little bit  
43 about Dr. Jim Fall with the Alaska Department of Fish  
44 and Game. And Patty I believe you have something  
45 prepared.

46  
47 MS. SCHWALENBERG: Yes, I do. So we  
48 learned a couple weeks ago that Dr. Jim Fall will be  
49 retiring from the Alaska Department of Fish and Game

50

1 and so I included in the packet a letter from the  
2 Chugach Regional Resources Commission for Jim. But we  
3 also prepared this write up for you and I'd like to  
4 read that now.

5  
6 Recognition of Dr. Jim Fall upon his  
7 retirement presented at the fall meeting of the Alaska  
8 Migratory Bird Co-management Council September 29,  
9 2020.

10  
11 The Alaska Migratory Bird Co-management  
12 Council would like to thank and recognize Jim Fall for  
13 his extensive contribution along several decades  
14 supporting sustainable subsistence harvest and uses of  
15 Alaska's foods and resources (indiscernible - garbled)  
16 Migratory Birds.

17  
18 In December Jim is retiring from his  
19 position as the research director for the Division of  
20 Subsistence for the Alaska Department of Fish and Game.

21  
22 Along Jim's career in Alaska starting  
23 in the 1970s Native cultures have experienced an  
24 accelerated pace of change in (indiscernible) economic  
25 and cultural context within subsistence uses that fish  
26 and wildlife take place. As modern harvest management  
27 continues to evolve in Alaska, Jim has played a key  
28 role helping crafting harvest regulations that are  
29 meaningful and cultural appropriate for Alaska's  
30 indigenous people.

31  
32 Following the amendment of the  
33 Migratory Bird Treaty Act in 1997, Jim worked with many  
34 partners to document customary and traditional uses of  
35 birds in the regs. This work was and is essential to  
36 establish eligibility to participate in the subsistence  
37 harvest of migratory birds. Customary and traditional  
38 use findings are also key for consideration by the  
39 Alaska Board of Game of subsistence uses of birds in  
40 the fall/winter season and Jim has helped in that area  
41 as well.

42  
43 Jim has proactively served on many  
44 AMBCC committees such as the Technical, Harvest,  
45 Survey, (indiscernible - garbled) fall/winter harvest  
46 and Emperor Goose Management Committee. He was also  
47 instrumental in developing and fine tuning the AMBCC  
48 harvest survey and related research. Merging social  
49 and biological sciences, Jim has fostered consensus  
50

1 amongst the partners in support of regulations proposed  
2 by the Native Caucus to legalize sustainable  
3 subsistence harvest practices. Jim has always been  
4 very respectful of other people's perspectives and his  
5 calm and thoughtful demeanor has helped us all,  
6 especially when addressing contentious topics.

7  
8 We thank you, Jim, for your hard work,  
9 guidance, and the pleasure of working with you. Our  
10 upcoming leaders shall look to your contributions as  
11 the AMBCC continues to strive to support conservation  
12 with co-management. We wish you much health in your  
13 retirement. And in my language we say (In Native).

14  
15 Thank you.

16  
17 And now I'd like to invite the  
18 Executive Committee of the Native Caucus to say a few  
19 words starting with Taqulik Hepa.

20  
21 MS. HEPA: Thank you, Patty. I just  
22 want to take the time to congratulate Dr. Fall and also  
23 to thank him on behalf of the Native Caucus. I know my  
24 experience in interacting with him and working with  
25 him, learning with him, from him over the years has  
26 been very helpful, meaningful, and I know that he had a  
27 big heart in trying to understand and learn the ways of  
28 rural Alaska, our Native ways on how we hunt and  
29 sustain ourselves through the resources, in particular,  
30 with migratory birds.

31  
32 So I just wish you the best and thank  
33 you for all the work that you have done and the things  
34 that you have taught each and every one of us  
35 throughout the different regions in the AMBCC.

36  
37 MS. SCHWALENBERG: Thank you, Taqulik.  
38 Now I would like to invite Eric Taylor to say a few  
39 words.

40  
41 MR. TAYLOR: Thanks, Patty. Jim,  
42 congratulations on your retirement. I was listening to  
43 Patty's letter that the AMBCC drafted and I think the  
44 remarks on you being respectful, calm and thoughtful  
45 are, indeed, your most endearing and impressive  
46 characteristics. I had the benefit of working with you  
47 on the AMBCC Technical Committee, the Emperor Goose  
48 Management Plan Committee and most recently on the  
49 revision of the Harvest Survey. You were always

50

1 prepared. You always listened. You offered up sound,  
2 relevant, reasonable and defensible ideas. You also  
3 did not shy away from asking tough questions.

4  
5 I want to say from the Fish and  
6 Wildlife Service, thank you, for your persistence, your  
7 passion and your professional dedication, not only for  
8 the conservation of migratory birds but also on the  
9 Alaskans who depend upon subsistence for their  
10 livelihood. I wish you good health, happy trails to  
11 you and yours, and, again, congratulations, and thank  
12 you.

13  
14 MS. SCHWALENBERG: Thanks, Eric.

15  
16 And, finally, Ryan.

17  
18 CHAIRMAN SCOTT: Thank you, Patty.  
19 Well, Jim, as a relative newcomer to the AMBCC, but  
20 certainly not to the Department, I -- it's hard to  
21 follow statements after, you know, Patty, Taqulik and  
22 Eric because all those things ring true.

23  
24 I guess, for me, I've learned a lot  
25 from you in just a few years and I've always very much  
26 appreciated our conversations about a variety of  
27 topics. One of the things that strikes me and it picks  
28 up sort of on other comments where you're calm and cool  
29 but willing to do the hard work, I think that an  
30 organization and a group of people, such as us, with  
31 this Co-management Council, it is such a wonderful  
32 thing, and many people on this Council, you know, serve  
33 like this as well, but to have those anchor points. To  
34 have somebody who's a constant and consistent, who is  
35 willing to get in there and get their hands dirty and  
36 do the hard work and ask the tough questions and  
37 provide guidance and suggestions, whether it be data or  
38 a historical context, whatever it might be, and you've  
39 been able to -- I've seen you do that just, in again a  
40 few years.

41  
42 So thank you for your time and your  
43 dedication to the AMBCC, all the members across the  
44 state of Alaska.

45  
46 From a Department perspective, we're  
47 going to miss you, you know, we see people that have  
48 the longevity that you have and the knowledge and the  
49 experience, you know, it's great that you made it to  
50

1 retirement, I'm super happy for you but we're going to  
2 miss you. So thank you again for everything and good  
3 luck to you and best wishes in your next endeavors.

4

5 Thank you, Patty.

6

7 MS. SCHWALENBERG: And one final thing,  
8 Jim, before I ask you to say a few words, is, we  
9 ordered a jacket for you, it's a three-in-one  
10 (indiscernible) jacket, it has the logo on it  
11 (indiscernible - garbled) and we hope that it provides  
12 you warmth, not only from the winter cold but our  
13 gratitude and best wishes for you.

14

15 Thanks, Jim.

16

17 DR. FALL: Well, thanks everybody for  
18 your kinds words. I think over the years I've really  
19 tried very hard to be supportive of the work of AMBCC  
20 and, more broadly, all the good work that all of you  
21 do. I have to say that it really means a lot to me to  
22 hear this acknowledgement that those efforts have been  
23 appreciated. It really, really means a lot.

24

25 I should add, however, that I'm not  
26 going to disappear. I'm not moving to Montana or the  
27 Bahamas or even New Jersey, I'm staying here. And I do  
28 intend to arrange for some volunteer work with the  
29 Division so there will be ways to find me, maybe not  
30 all the time but, again, I'm not going anywhere, at  
31 least not too distant. So, again, thanks, and in the  
32 language of the Dena'ina people of Cook Inlet and  
33 Anchorage, (In Native). Thank you very much.

34

35 CHAIRMAN SCOTT: Thanks, Jim. It's  
36 good to know you're going to be around and we could  
37 find you. We'll make sure Lilly keeps tabs on you as  
38 well.

39

40 Okay.

41

42 So Item No. 8 on our agenda, an  
43 invitation for public comments. Do we have any members  
44 of the public that would like to comment to the  
45 Council.

46

47 (No comments)

48

49 CHAIRMAN SCOTT: All right, hearing

50

1 none. Item 9. Adoption of Council action items, and,  
2 I believe, Patty that was part of an email that went  
3 out this morning?

4  
5 MS. SCHWALENBERG: Yeah, let me see if  
6 I can bring that up.

7  
8 (Pause)

9  
10 MS. SCHWALENBERG: Oh, here we go.  
11 These look a little different than normally because we  
12 didn't have (indiscernible), so Eric very bravely  
13 jumped in and provided the action items and so I really  
14 thank you for that. Thank you, Eric.

15  
16 CHAIRMAN SCOTT: So I guess we'll just  
17 start at the top under Action Item No. 1. Everybody's  
18 aware, I imagine, but if not, there are -- a Board of  
19 Game proposal was submitted to eliminate the non-  
20 resident season for Emperor geese. The proposal book  
21 for both the January and March meetings are now  
22 available online. We're not doing, I understand, our  
23 Board section is not going to be printing a hard copy  
24 book this year. It's a cost saving measure, frankly.  
25 But that proposal from the AMBCC is in there. I'm  
26 sure, you know, we'll get to talking a little bit about  
27 this but there are also 80 other Emperor goose  
28 proposals.

29  
30 MS. SCHWALENBERG: Holy.

31  
32 CHAIRMAN SCOTT: It got a lot of  
33 attention. And Jason Schamber, I'm very appreciative  
34 of his time. He's been working on organizing those and  
35 getting information ready for those and it'll be --  
36 because we have two Board meetings, we'll be putting  
37 Department comments out -- our first one -- our first  
38 group for the Region 4, kind of the Southwest and  
39 Central Alaska areas, I believe they will be out in  
40 November. I'll have to doublecheck that, but that's  
41 the target date. And then the others will follow  
42 sometime in late January for the statewide meeting.

43  
44 So Action Item No. 1 was accomplished.  
45 And it was a good proposal and we'll provide some  
46 additional background here in the coming months for  
47 that.

48  
49 Any questions on No. 1.

50



1 (No comments)

2

3 CHAIRMAN SCOTT: Okay, hearing none.  
4 Action Item 1A. I don't know if there was -- oh, that  
5 was, again, associated with that Board of Game  
6 proposal.

7

8 Action Item No. 2. Interest in an EIS  
9 for National Parklands on enforcement. I have to say I  
10 did not do any followup on this and I apologize,  
11 Gloria, after that discussion. But I would be  
12 interested if anybody else on the meeting has any  
13 additional information on that item.

14

15 MS. SCHWALENBERG: Is that a Federal  
16 EIS they're talking about on National Park Service  
17 lands?

18

19 CHAIRMAN SCOTT: That's how I interpret  
20 it, yeah.

21

22 MS. SCHWALENBERG: I also have to  
23 apologize I did not followup on this either since we  
24 got the action items but will look into this and get  
25 back to the Council again.

26

27 CHAIRMAN SCOTT: Well, we can certainly  
28 -- I will make sure that myself and I can talk to  
29 Patty, and whoever else wants to be involved, and we  
30 can dig into it.

31

32 Rory, I know that National Park Service  
33 is not your bailiwick but since it's an enforcement  
34 item, I'm just curious have you heard anything about  
35 this?

36

37

38 MR. STARK: You know, I haven't heard  
39 anything about it.

40

41 CHAIRMAN SCOTT: Okay, great, well,  
42 thank you. yeah.

43

44 MR. STARK: Yep.

45

46 CHAIRMAN SCOTT: So we have that one  
47 left that's still outstanding and by the time we get  
48 back together next spring, if not sooner, I'll see if I  
49 can dig anything up on it.

50

1 So, Patty, procedurally, do we need to  
2 vote on these?

3  
4 MS. SCHWALENBERG: Yes, we need a  
5 motion to approve the action items.

6  
7 CHAIRMAN SCOTT: Okay. Can we get  
8 somebody to make that motion please.

9  
10 MS. EVANS: I'll make a motion. This  
11 is Priscilla Evans.

12  
13 CHAIRMAN SCOTT: Thank you, Priscilla.

14  
15 MS. HEPA: This is Taqulik. I'll  
16 second it.

17  
18 CHAIRMAN SCOTT: Thank you, Taqulik.  
19 Okay, we have a motion to adopt the action items and  
20 it's been seconded. And I think I can ask for  
21 unanimous consent again.

22  
23 MS. PLETNIKOFF: Mr. Chair, this is  
24 Karen Pletnikoff. May I just clarify, if the motion at  
25 the Board of Game does not go through, is it possible  
26 to reconsider doing some education and outreach.

27  
28 CHAIRMAN SCOTT: Yeah, that's a great  
29 question, Karen. Absolutely. I would say that that  
30 should go forward regardless of what happens at the  
31 Board of Game meeting. Yeah, so thank you for bringing  
32 that to -- yeah, for putting that out there for us to  
33 consider.

34  
35 (Teleconference interference -  
36 participants not muted)

37  
38 CHAIRMAN SCOTT: All right, we have a  
39 motion and it's been seconded. All those in favor say  
40 aye.

41  
42 IN UNISON: Aye.

43  
44 CHAIRMAN SCOTT: Great, thank you very  
45 much. The motion is adopted.

46  
47 Okay. Moving on to No. 10 on our  
48 agenda, Staff reports, from Patty.

49  
50

1 MS. SCHWALENBERG: Okay. So the  
2 narrative report from me is written. I'm not going to  
3 read it all but it goes over the Emperor goose  
4 information. I worked with the Emperor goose committee  
5 at the Pacific Flyaway Council. I participated in a  
6 meeting of the InterAgency Arctic Research Policy  
7 Committees Coastal Resilience Collaboration Team, and  
8 John Pearce from USGS invited me to participate to  
9 share information about working with communities during  
10 the Covid19 pandemic. So that was a really good  
11 meeting and it actually introduced me to this group and  
12 I've been following along with their activities as it  
13 relates to climate change and the migratory birds. So  
14 it's been pretty good actually.

15  
16 The one other thing I wanted to bring  
17 up is this paragraph here about us being invited to  
18 participate in writing a chapter for a book on tribal  
19 natural resource management. So Liliana Naves and  
20 Laura Mingak of the Subsistence Division called and  
21 said that they had been asked to collaborate on a  
22 chapter of this book that's being written by the North  
23 American Bird Conservation Initiative. So I'd like a  
24 motion to approve our participation in this project if  
25 the Council members are supportive. So we would just  
26 be writing a chapter on subsistence bird, in would  
27 include the history and perspectives of indigenous  
28 participation and co-management. We wanted to conduct  
29 interviews with all the partners to get their  
30 perspective on the history and the developments that  
31 have occurred since our -- and we've been talking about  
32 writing a -- or through the AMBCC for a long time  
33 anyways, so this is kind of a good opportunity for us  
34 to do that.

35  
36 So if the Council is supportive I'd  
37 like a motion for us to participate in that.

38  
39 I ran down the committee meetings that  
40 were held during this period and items that I've been  
41 working on. I'd also like to introduce Carolina  
42 (Indiscernible - garbled) who is on the line, we have  
43 been working with them on their Inuit Circumpolar  
44 (indiscernible - garbled) to serve on this group for  
45 their food sovereignty projects. So Carolina are you  
46 on the line and I just wanted to let her introduce the  
47 report that came (indiscernible - garbled).

48  
49 UNIDENTIFIED VOICE: Hi, good morning.

50

1 Yeah, thank you, Patty. Just to clarify this report is  
2 different than the food sovereignty initiative which is  
3 facilitated by my colleague Renee, but it should feed  
4 into that initiative. So this was a report that was  
5 conducted following up on our food security report,  
6 which recommended looking at co-management structures  
7 across Inuit (indiscernible) so in other areas. And so  
8 it looked at management structures in the Nugalet\*  
9 settlement region of Canada and here in Alaska. But it  
10 legally looked at those structures but very importantly  
11 it strongly highlights and puts at the forefront this,  
12 and also numerous recommendations. And so it's thought  
13 that this report can help the food sovereignty  
14 initiative in its moving forward. And I hope that  
15 Elvee\* will find the input from all of the Inuit  
16 contributing authors and the recommendations of value.

17  
18 Right now we're submitting a grant to  
19 be able to print more copies and so hopefully in the  
20 near future we'll be able to provide all of you with a  
21 hard copy but for now you can also access it online and  
22 please feel free welcome to contact us with any  
23 questions at any point about the report.

24  
25 Qu yana.

26  
27 MS. SCHWALENBERG: Thank you, Carolina,  
28 can you send me the link to that and I can share that  
29 with the Council members then.

30  
31 UNIDENTIFIED VOICE: Yeah, absolutely.

32  
33 MS. SCHWALENBERG: Okay.  
34 (Indiscernible)

35  
36 UNIDENTIFIED VOICE: No, it gets a  
37 little confusing because they're the same names but it  
38 was intentional that they were the same names because  
39 one is supposed to feed into the other so -- but, thank  
40 you very much.

41  
42 MS. SCHWALENBERG: Okay. And that's it  
43 for my report, Mr. Chairman. If we can just get a  
44 motion or a vote on my request for working on the book  
45 chapter.

46  
47 CHAIRMAN SCOTT: Great, thank you,  
48 Carolina and Patty for all of that. I think it's a  
49 great opportunity for us to capture the AMBCC history

50

1 and recognize folks and the important work that gets  
2 done here for Alaskans across the state. So I  
3 certainly would entertain a motion to approve that.

4  
5 MS. HEPA: So moved, Mr. Chair. This  
6 is Taqulik.

7  
8 CHAIRMAN SCOTT: Thank you, ma'am. Can  
9 I get a second.

10  
11 MR. HARRIS: Second. Cyrus.

12  
13 CHAIRMAN SCOTT: Thank you, Cyrus. We  
14 have a motion to approve contributions or being  
15 involved in that chapter and it's been seconded. All  
16 those in favor say aye please.

17  
18 IN UNISON: Aye.

19  
20 CHAIRMAN SCOTT: Anybody opposed,  
21 please say nay.

22  
23 (No opposing votes)

24  
25 CHAIRMAN SCOTT: Hearing none. Patty,  
26 I think you're good to go.

27  
28 MS. SCHWALENBERG: Great. Thank you so  
29 much.

30  
31 CHAIRMAN SCOTT: Thank you Lilly and  
32 Laura and look forward to seeing that.

33  
34 It's interesting to me, we just got  
35 done talking about Jim Fall and it seems like he would  
36 be a pretty good contact for some of that.

37  
38 MS. SCHWALENBERG: Yep.

39  
40 CHAIRMAN SCOTT: Okay, thank you again,  
41 everybody. Moving on, No. 11. Regional representative  
42 reports. And, Patty, I don't know if you have a  
43 thought process on how to move through those. It might  
44 just be easy just if you call on each individual and we  
45 could hear from them and just keep going down the line.

46  
47 MS. SCHWALENBERG: (Indiscernible -  
48 garbled) since we don't have a cable (indiscernible -  
49 garbled).

50

1 CHAIRMAN SCOTT: Patty, you were a  
2 little broken up, it might have just been me but I'm  
3 not sure who you called on first.

4  
5 MS. SCHWALENBERG: Jennifer Hooper from  
6 AVCP.

7  
8 CHAIRMAN SCOTT: Jennifer.

9  
10 MR. SANDERS: Yeah, this is Todd. It's  
11 really breaking up a lot.

12  
13 MS. SCHWALENBERG: Just me?

14  
15 MR. TAYLOR: Yeah, Patty, this is Eric.  
16 You are breaking up so maybe you could speak a little  
17 bit closer to your microphone.

18  
19 MS. SCHWALENBERG: Okay, is that any  
20 better?

21  
22 MR. TAYLOR: Yes, much better, thanks.

23  
24 MS. SCHWALENBERG: Sorry. Go ahead,  
25 Jennifer.

26  
27 MS. HOOPER: Thanks, Patty. So I'm  
28 trying to think back. I guess Martin Andrew, the new  
29 WCC Chair, he was elected back in February. We were  
30 able to squeeze in our regional meeting, you know,  
31 prior to everything happening and he's from Kwethluk.  
32 Have not had a lot of communication with the WCC since  
33 that meeting. We elected to not hold a fall meeting.  
34 It's just -- you know, technology is not the easiest to  
35 work with, you know, out in rural Alaska and without,  
36 you know, surveys happening, and they're not being --  
37 you know, a lot of new information to share, we elected  
38 to not have a formal WCC meeting.

39  
40 I did get a request after that from the  
41 Refuge to see about, you know, the potential for  
42 bringing the group together to talk about a few issues  
43 specific to the 30 day closure out here and it's been  
44 -- we had our convention last week and have not had a  
45 chance yet to get with administration to see what they,  
46 you know, think about trying to reconvene everyone, at  
47 least by teleconference, to meet with the Refuge.

48  
49 I think our spring 30 day closure

50

1 process went pretty well. We had several back and  
2 forths, as we usually do, and then the Refuge, you  
3 know, made the ultimate determination, you know, it was  
4 pretty close to what, you know, a lot of people were  
5 asking for.

6  
7 And I think we've had a fairly normal  
8 weather year, you know, summer -- spring, summer, fall,  
9 weather-wise. It seems to be a little, you know, more  
10 closer to, you know, what we've been used to in the  
11 past. I think everyone's just, you know, gearing up --  
12 we had, I'm sure, you know, a lot of people have seen  
13 in the media especially, lately, the Yukon fisheries  
14 really tanked terribly and so we're working on, you  
15 know, potential fishery disaster requests for the Yukon  
16 specifically, and then going to a separate conversation  
17 here this week for the Kuskokwim. We're also working  
18 with AFN, who is, I guess been asked by the Department  
19 for some guidance and feedback on the Federal Cares Act  
20 funding that came through for the State.

21  
22 And I think everyone's just preoccupied  
23 with, you know, Covid. It's really -- has taken  
24 priority for a lot of people's time and resources and  
25 we've had several, I guess, you know, for rural Alaska,  
26 large, you know, positive case occurrences and had a  
27 couple of communities that had obvious community  
28 spread. Hopefully things have calmed down from that.  
29 But it's starting to pop up slowly, you know,  
30 throughout the region in other villages so I think  
31 that's the focus right now on everyone's mind, along  
32 with, you know, trying to prepare for the winter.

33  
34 Thank you.

35  
36 CHAIRMAN SCOTT: Thank you, Jennifer.  
37 Does anybody have any questions or comments for  
38 Jennifer.

39  
40 (No comments)

41  
42 CHAIRMAN SCOTT: Okay. Patty, who's up  
43 next?

44  
45 MS. SCHWALENBERG: I forgot to unmute.  
46 Heidi Kritz is next.

47  
48 CHAIRMAN SCOTT: Could you repeat that  
49 Patty.

50

1 MS. SCHWALENBERG: Heidi Kritz with  
2 BBNA.

3  
4 CHAIRMAN SCOTT: Thank you. Heidi, are  
5 you still with us. Oh, there you are.

6  
7 MS. KRITZ: Good morning, yes, I am  
8 here. I am the program activities coordinator for the  
9 Natural Resources Department. This year we -- or this  
10 fall we were not able to have a YKC meeting due to  
11 Covid. But right now people are out and about hunting  
12 birds and they're getting some ducks and geese and  
13 there's a lot of spruce hen out here this year.

14  
15 Yeah, everyone in Bristol Bay has been,  
16 you know, preoccupied as well with Covid and trying to  
17 adjust from working from home and getting all the  
18 technology set up. So that's been a little bit of a  
19 struggle but we're getting there, and it looks like  
20 it's going to be getting better.

21  
22 I don't have much to report.

23  
24 CHAIRMAN SCOTT: Thank you, Heidi.  
25 Anybody have any questions or comments for Heidi.

26  
27 (No comments)

28  
29 CHAIRMAN SCOTT: Okay, thanks again.  
30 And, thanks again for serving in the Bristol Bay seat.  
31 Appreciate that.

32  
33 Patty, who's next on the agenda there.

34  
35 MS. SCHWALENBERG: Next we have  
36 Priscilla Evans with the Chugach region, and she has  
37 asked me to provide the report.

38  
39 So we did have a spring meeting early  
40 on before -- well, I guess it was during Covid but it  
41 was all held via Zoom. Our next meeting is scheduled  
42 for the end of this week, I believe, on Friday, and  
43 it's also being held via Zoom. And besides the climate  
44 change projects (indiscernible - garbled) water quality  
45 for ocean certification, and so that's going  
46 (indiscernible - garbled) but we're also working on a  
47 bird ID guide for the (indiscernible - garbled). What  
48 my plan is is to start with the Chugach region  
49 (indiscernible - garbled) and move to other regions

50



1 (indiscernible - garbled) endeavor that we've embarked  
2 on.

3

4 MR. TAYLOR: Patty, this is -- Patty,  
5 sorry, this is Eric. Could you speak a little bit  
6 closer to your microphone, please.

7

8 MS. SCHWALENBERG: Is that any better?

9

10 MR. TAYLOR: A little bit, thanks.

11

12 MS. SCHWALENBERG: I'm (indiscernible -  
13 garbled) but anyway, we'll be working on this bird ID  
14 guide this coming next fiscal year and once it is  
15 complete (indiscernible - garbled) if the regions are  
16 interested in participating.

17

18 And that is it for the Chugach region.

19

20 MS. HEPA: Patty, I think it would help  
21 if we ask people that are on to mute their phones when  
22 they're not talking because I think that's where it's  
23 getting difficult for us to hear you because you could  
24 hear the echo, right.

25

26 MS. SCHWALENBERG: Yeah.

27

28 CHAIRMAN SCOTT: Well, thank you,  
29 Patty, for the report and Priscilla for working with  
30 Patty. Any questions for Patty on the Chugach region.

31

32 (No comments)

33

34 CHAIRMAN SCOTT: Okay.

35

36 MS. SCHWALENBERG: Next we have Ahtna  
37 Intertribal Resource Commission, Gloria Stickwan.

38

39 CHAIRMAN SCOTT: Okay, Gloria, you're  
40 up.

41

42 MS. STICKWAN: At our fall meeting,  
43 migratory bird meeting (indiscernible - garbled)  
44 chinook, water was high most of the year and we seen a  
45 few birds fly, tundra swans. And that's about it, I  
46 guess. Jim might want to add (indiscernible -  
47 garbled).

48

49 CHAIRMAN SCOTT: Thank you, Gloria.

50

1 Jim, did you have anything else you wanted to add on.

2

3 MR. SIMON: Thank you. I don't believe  
4 so because I think further on the agenda will be the  
5 recommendations that went to the Flyaway and for the  
6 permit system. I think that will be covered later,  
7 right.

8

9 CHAIRMAN SCOTT: Okay, great. Thanks,  
10 you guys. Any questions for Gloria and/or Jim.

11

12 (No comments)

13

14 CHAIRMAN SCOTT: Okay, hearing none.

15

16 MR. FISCHER: Mr. Chair.

17

18 CHAIRMAN SCOTT: Oh, go ahead, Julian.

19

20 MR. FISCHER: Mr. Chair.

21

22 CHAIRMAN SCOTT: Yeah.

23

24 MR. FISCHER: So just looking at the  
25 Zoom screen here I can see there's a few people that  
26 are not muted and I don't have a name but phone number  
27 (907)468-1034 might be causing difficulty for other  
28 folks to hear because I see their phone lighting up  
29 quite a bit. It looks like Todd Sformo also might not  
30 be muted. And No. 386-6190. I barely heard anything  
31 that Gloria said because of the disturbance. There's  
32 also a number 360-604-2500, they're not muted either.  
33 Perhaps those folks can mute and then we'd be able to  
34 hear the speaker better.

35

36 Thanks.

37

38 CHAIRMAN SCOTT: Thanks, Julian. Yeah,  
39 it.....

40

41 MR. SFORMO: This is Todd, naming names  
42 and numbers, man, that's a tough. Just so you know I'm  
43 on the phone actually so I don't have audio on the  
44 computer so it's going to look like I'm not muted.

45

46 CHAIRMAN SCOTT: Thank you, Todd.

47 Yeah, folks just.....

48

49 MR. DEVINE: And this is Peter, I'm the

50

1 7386 number and I'm on mute.

2

3 CHAIRMAN SCOTT: Thanks, Peter. Yeah,  
4 if everybody just doublechecks and it's interesting,  
5 it's coming through different depending on where we  
6 are.

7

8 Okay, Patty, who's next.

9

10 MS. SCHWALENBERG: Next we have  
11 (indiscernible - garbled - echo) Did you hear that?

12

13 CHAIRMAN SCOTT: I heard it three  
14 times, yeah, there's definitely an echo out there.  
15 Could you repeat it, Patty, please.

16

17 MS. SCHWALENBERG: Brandon Ahmasuk with  
18 Kawerak.

19

20 MR. AHMASUK: Hello, good morning.  
21 Everybody can you hear me okay -- okay.

22

23 So this year we did not have a regional  
24 meeting either in-person due to Covid and/or  
25 teleconference. I believe it was agreed upon by our  
26 Board, you know, not to -- to keep everybody safe, not  
27 to worry about anything else other than keeping their  
28 families safe.

29

30 This year, the spring harvest, at least  
31 to the best of my knowledge went as normal. I didn't  
32 hear anything bad in regards to the spring harvest.  
33 There may have been a little less egg harvest on the  
34 islands, again, due to the bird population declines.  
35 This -- let's see what was it, about middle of this  
36 summer, and it's been continuing on until now, region-  
37 wide we've had a marine debris event. A lot of trash,  
38 plastic, like starting fluid cans washing up on our  
39 shores from, I think St. Lawrence Island to Nome,  
40 Shishmaref to I think Golovin. The majority of the  
41 trash was, I believe, from an Asian country. I don't  
42 think they've narrowed it down yet to where it came  
43 from. It has Asian writing on it. The Coast Guard has  
44 been notified. Again, they're trying to figure out  
45 where it's coming from. Again, large scale marine  
46 debris event going on.

47

48 Another thing that's been ongoing again  
49 this year, the seabird die-off. We've had numerous

50

1 birds in Nome here, I think even up by the Shishmaref  
2 area, you know, bird carcasses washing up on our  
3 shores. We've notified Gay Sheffield, I forget who  
4 else -- oh, Cathy Conitz, Robb -- I'm forgetting their  
5 names right now but we try to get the information out  
6 as soon as we can, you know, sharing this with other  
7 regions as well the best that we can.

8  
9 This fall, the harvest, again, I  
10 haven't heard anything unusual. It's -- pretty much  
11 the harvest of everything has been business as usual.

12  
13 This year I haven't heard of any birds  
14 acting weird, per se, I mean from the harmful algae  
15 blooms that have been occurring in the oceans out here.  
16 It still sounds like the birds are showing up  
17 emaciated.

18  
19 Yeah, I don't think I have anything  
20 else to add other than that, if anybody has any  
21 questions I'm all ears.

22  
23 CHAIRMAN SCOTT: Thank you, Brandon.  
24 Any questions or comments for Brandon.

25  
26 (No comments)

27  
28 CHAIRMAN SCOTT: I'll just mention you  
29 talked about a marine debris event and that extends all  
30 the way down into Southeast Alaska. And exactly as you  
31 described it, friends of mine and colleagues up in  
32 Yakutat are spending quite a bit of time on the beaches  
33 trying to clean things up and it's an uphill battle it  
34 sounds like.

35  
36 MR. AHMASUK: Yeah, it's -- I'm trying  
37 to think of -- I don't think it's been coming in  
38 surges, you know, like every month or so, I mean it  
39 just kind of constantly coming in. Again, efforts to  
40 try to clean it up, I think a few of the pictures I've  
41 seen, what was it, 10, 20, you know, 55 gallon drum  
42 garbage bagfulls of just plastic trash, other types of  
43 trash washing up. Again, just trying to figure out  
44 where it's coming from. Austin Ahmasuk, he's our new  
45 -- I shouldn't say, new, but he's our marine advocate  
46 for Kawerak, he's been in constant contact with either  
47 the Coast Guard, I almost want to say DEC, you know,  
48 just trying to keep on top of it, keep reporting it the  
49 best that we can.

50

1 CHAIRMAN SCOTT: Yeah. Yep, thank you  
2 for your efforts for sure.

3  
4 Okay, Patty, next up.

5  
6 MS. SCHWALENBERG: Next we have Peter  
7 Devine with Aleutian Pribilof Islands Association.

8  
9 CHAIRMAN SCOTT: Great, thank you.

10  
11 Peter.

12  
13 MR. DEVINE: Thank you. As what  
14 everyone else, we haven't had a fall meeting due to  
15 Covid, and it's really hard to get a teleconference  
16 done in our region. It took us three times just to get  
17 a marine mammal thing on. And, you know, with these  
18 sun spots and stuff that are going on right now it's  
19 really hard hearing everybody too. I'm getting a heck  
20 of an echo.

21  
22 But everything in the region seems to  
23 be pretty good except for about a month ago we had a  
24 big puffin die-off right after that big storm went  
25 through. I don't know if it was because the birds  
26 trying to land back up in their burroughs or nests and  
27 hitting the bluffs or whatever, but there was a large  
28 puffin die-off.

29  
30 And the fishermen are reporting lots of  
31 whales this year that died. Don't know what, you know,  
32 the water temperatures were on this side, I was out of  
33 the region and I just got back a couple days ago.

34  
35 But that's all we have on this end, Mr.  
36 Chair.

37  
38 CHAIRMAN SCOTT: Thank you, Peter.  
39 Yeah, I know, again, down in the Southeast region,  
40 there is some additional whale die-offs as well. That  
41 sounds like a West Coast issue is, you know, folks are  
42 seeing that pretty commonly these days, and that's  
43 unfortunate.

44  
45 Any questions or comments for Peter.

46  
47 (No comments)

48  
49 CHAIRMAN SCOTT: Okay, thank you again.

50

1 And, Patty, who's next.

2

3 MS. SCHWALENBERG: Next we have Coral  
4 Chernoff with the Sun'aq Tribe of Kodiak, Mr. Chairman.

5

6 CHAIRMAN SCOTT: Thank you. Coral.

7

8 (Pause)

9

10 CHAIRMAN SCOTT: Did we lose Coral --  
11 oh, nope, there she is.

12

13 Coral, we can't hear you, I'm not sure  
14 what's happening.

15

16 (Pause)

17

18 UNIDENTIFIED VOICE: I see in the chat  
19 box that Patty muted everyone, I think you have to hit  
20 star six on your phone if you're using a phone.

21

22 CHAIRMAN SCOTT: Oh, good catch, thank  
23 you.

24

25 (Pause)

26

27 MS. SCHWALENBERG: I believe she's  
28 unmuted now. Coral, can you hear us?

29

30 (Pause)

31

32 CHAIRMAN SCOTT: Well, do we want to  
33 come back to Coral, and see if we can address our  
34 technical difficulties.

35

36 MS. SCHWALENBERG: Yeah, let's do that.  
37 The next one on the list is Cyrus Harris from Maniilaq  
38 Association.

39

40 MR. HARRIS: Good morning. Can you  
41 hear me now?

42

43 (No comments)

44

45 MR. HARRIS: Hello?

46

47 CHAIRMAN SCOTT: Yeah, sounds good  
48 Cyrus.

49

50

1 MS. SCHWALENBERG: Yeah, we can hear  
2 you.

3  
4 MR. HARRIS: Okay. Yeah, just as well  
5 as all the other regions, we didn't have any meetings  
6 up this way. We attempted to have a spring meeting  
7 last March, I believe it was, and that got cancelled  
8 due to the Covid. We didn't attempt to have a fall  
9 meeting, mainly because of this Covid19 pandemic travel  
10 restrictions, village hunkering down, so there was a  
11 lot going on in that area.

12  
13 So on my personal observations along  
14 the coast here, along Sisolik, where I live, a fair  
15 amount of Canadian Geese as we speak, wigeons, nice  
16 healthy and fat. I had some sightings of some snow  
17 geese that were flying through.

18  
19 Tides are changing. We had a fair  
20 amount of below low tides, of course that happens with  
21 north wind. But I see the tides coming in and out a  
22 lot more faster than normal. A few swans. The  
23 majority of the cranes already headed south.

24  
25 It's been freezing this past couple of  
26 days but we're seeing some warmer weather coming in  
27 here. Didn't really see much debris, but, of course,  
28 knock on wood, we didn't have our real fall storm yet.  
29 Up until that happens we will get a lot of whatever is  
30 out in the ocean to wash up.

31  
32 But, yeah, not much more to report on  
33 this side.

34  
35 CHAIRMAN SCOTT: Thank you, Cyrus. any  
36 questions or comments for Cyrus.

37  
38 (No comments)

39  
40 CHAIRMAN SCOTT: Okay. Patty, who's  
41 next.

42  
43 MS. SCHWALENBERG: Next we have Taqulik  
44 Hepa, with the North Slope Borough.

45  
46 CHAIRMAN SCOTT: Great, thank you.

47  
48 MS. SCHWALENBERG: Taqulik.

49  
50

1 MS. HEPA: Hi. Thank you, Patty. Can  
2 you guys hear me good?

3  
4 CHAIRMAN SCOTT: Yes, ma'am.

5  
6 MS. HEPA: Okay. So as others, our  
7 fall meeting was postponed. We were going to have a  
8 meeting tomorrow but due to our hunker down status and  
9 community spread we decided it wasn't in our best  
10 interest to do so so we'll wait to see when we can  
11 actually have a meeting as others have indicated as  
12 well.

13  
14 For spring hunting, we had a good,  
15 successful hunt for geese and eiders across the North  
16 Slope, as well as egg picking. And there was a bit of  
17 confusion about the regulations for this year. We  
18 thought that we were going to do the regulations where  
19 we communicate with the egg pickers to decide when the  
20 30 day closure was going to start and because the  
21 regulations weren't reflective of that we postponed  
22 that for a year until they could be correctly noted in  
23 the regulation booklet. But we did practice some of  
24 the protocols in some of our communities. Identified  
25 local egg pickers to help us identify when it was time  
26 to wrap up the -- to prepare for the 30 day closure and  
27 thanks to Todd and Carla and others who've helped with  
28 that effort.

29  
30 We had a good year for geese nesting  
31 near our community and I haven't heard from other  
32 communities but near Barrow lots of white-fronted geese  
33 near -- or nested very close to Barrow. And just  
34 recently they left, about a week ago, most of the  
35 white-fronted geese have left. I was kind of watching  
36 to see what triggered and it was the changing of the  
37 color of the grass and ponds starting to freeze up.

38  
39 We had a pretty cold summer. I think,  
40 you know, when we hit 42, 43, 44 degrees it was a  
41 really nice day. So I kind of remember 39 degrees as  
42 our -- probably our most common or average temperature  
43 for the summer.

44  
45 But it was good to see the Black brant  
46 pass Barrow on their way back to their wintering  
47 grounds and that happened not too long ago as well.

48  
49 But anything else I'm missing Todd or  
50



1 Carla.  
2  
3 TODD: Nope, it sounds good to me.  
4  
5 MS. HEPA: All right, thank you.  
6  
7 TODD: There was one plant -- I was  
8 just going to remind you one fireweed that did not even  
9 flower.  
10  
11 MS. HEPA: Thank you, Todd, for  
12 bringing that up. Yeah, so we -- again, the cold  
13 weather changed our Arctic plant growth around  
14 Utqiagvik.  
15  
16 CHAIRMAN SCOTT: Thank you, Taqulik and  
17 Todd. Any questions for those guys.  
18  
19 (No comments)  
20  
21 CHAIRMAN SCOTT: I'm glad working with  
22 the local egging folks worked out and that's a great  
23 idea to get some practice in that and I'll be --  
24 that'll be interesting to hear how it goes in the  
25 upcoming seasons. But I'm glad you were able to put  
26 some of that in place.  
27  
28 Patty, who's next on tap.  
29  
30 MS. SCHWALENBERG: Next, is Randy Mayo  
31 with Tanana Chiefs and then we'll go back to Coral.  
32 She tried hanging up and calling back in and so we'll  
33 see if that works.  
34  
35 CHAIRMAN SCOTT: Thank you.  
36  
37 Randy.  
38  
39 (Pause)  
40  
41 CHAIRMAN SCOTT: Did we lose Randy.  
42  
43 MR. MAYO: Can you hear me Mr. Chair.  
44  
45 CHAIRMAN SCOTT: You're in good shape,  
46 loud and clear.  
47  
48 MR. MAYO: Okay. Randy Mayo here  
49 representing the Tanana Chiefs region.  
50

1                   Due to the Covid thing when it first  
2 started becoming an outbreak and we -- TCC region  
3 didn't have a spring meeting but we were able to have  
4 our fall meeting with teleconference. Patty was on the  
5 line with us and we were able to do the fall meeting  
6 for the TCC region. And I followed up with my own  
7 subregion and gave a report to gather input and what  
8 not. Now there's 43 tribal communities in our region.  
9 It's spread far and wide. I, myself, represent, like  
10 13 tribes so, you know, trying to -- what we're working  
11 on is our communication strategy for our vast region  
12 and try to get input and observation so we can -- so I  
13 can have more accurate picture of what's going on  
14 across our region. It seems like on our -- on our  
15 subregional teleconference there were no issues with  
16 regulation and people didn't indicate that they weren't  
17 getting their needs meet through the spring hunt.

18  
19                   I did notice that, you know, concern in  
20 the falltime up in my area, the geese really didn't  
21 gather up they just kind of disappeared and left, you  
22 know. But I noticed an increase in some swans around  
23 my home community, out hunting. And this is just a  
24 little while ago so people out hunting were running  
25 into, you know, a duck or two to get something to cook  
26 on the fire for supper while we're out looking for  
27 moose.

28  
29                   But kind of one of the things in my  
30 immediate region or the Western Yukon Flats, I had a  
31 conversation with Vince Mathews about what I noticed.  
32 I was looking at some USGS map of our area from the  
33 1980s that indicated there was large water bodies and I  
34 remembered those big lakes and what not, and then I  
35 mentioned to him that I looked at the internet  
36 satellite map, what they call Google, it's that Google  
37 Earth, right, oh, yeah, and then I noticed that a lot  
38 of the water isn't there anymore. And, you know, how  
39 is that going to affect the reproductivity for the  
40 Yukon Flats area. So I wanted to follow up with him on  
41 that a little more, you know, where a lot of these were  
42 really big lakes and what not. When I was out hunting  
43 and stuff noticed some of the difference.

44  
45                   Because I was out hunting that I missed  
46 the harvest survey committee meeting that took place  
47 recently. I'm on that committee. And I guess it  
48 concerned the 2020 harvest survey work. But I did  
49 follow up with Jim Simon and Liliana Naves and Vince  
50

1 Mathews on the topic and based on that I gave my input  
2 on that endeavor.

3  
4 So when we had our fall meeting, one of  
5 my fellow Yukon Flats Board member, out of Fort Yukon,  
6 when he gave his report at -- you know, like Taqulik  
7 mentioned, that we had a very like more normal summer  
8 where it was how it used to be, you know, on the cool  
9 side, but it was very wet and there was a lot of high  
10 water on the Yukon River, not so much in the lakes but  
11 on the main river, that, you know, it was observed that  
12 due to that high water, you know, it affected the  
13 accessibility for, you know -- well, not only the high  
14 water but how the break-up's been going lately, weather  
15 changes, the ability to harvest spring birds and one of  
16 the things that was observed is all that high water may  
17 have affected geese nests that, you know, nest out on  
18 the islands and bars in the Yukon -- you know, sand  
19 bars in the Yukon River may have been washed down  
20 stream during the -- the water didn't even go down even  
21 -- even this past fall it was still pretty up there for  
22 this time of year.

23  
24 So then, you know, we put the word out  
25 about are these -- you know, due to changing  
26 environments does the regulations still work for us to  
27 meet our spring needs, and so far the indication we're  
28 getting back from our large region is, you know, so  
29 far it's still -- those spring dates still work for us  
30 in the region.

31  
32 But that's just about it, the TCC  
33 report.

34  
35 CHAIRMAN SCOTT: Thank you, Randy. Any  
36 questions or comments for Randy.

37  
38 (No comments)

39  
40 CHAIRMAN SCOTT: Okay, hearing none. I  
41 think we're going to try to swing back around to Coral.

42  
43 (Pause)

44  
45 CHAIRMAN SCOTT: Yeah, still not  
46 hearing you Coral. Patty, is she unmuted on your end?

47  
48 MS. SCHWALENBERG: Yes, she is. And  
49 she hung up and tried to log back in. Does anybody

50

1 have any suggestions, I don't know what else to do. Is  
2 your volume turned all the way up Coral.

3  
4 (No comments)

5  
6 LILLY: Here is Lilly. If Coral call  
7 my cell phone, I can put on the speakers here and I get  
8 her to my audio on my computer, for instance.

9  
10 MS. PARRISH: Coral, this is Julia  
11 Parrish. One thing you might try is going to the  
12 microphone in the bottom left corner, pushing the up  
13 button and then hitting test speaker and microphone.  
14 That sometimes will automatically turn your audio on.

15  
16 (Pause)

17  
18 CHAIRMAN SCOTT: Okay, well, Coral, do  
19 you want to just try to call in on your phone.

20  
21 (Pause)

22  
23 CHAIRMAN SCOTT: Let's give her just a  
24 second and see if she's able to just get on her phone.

25  
26 (Pause)

27  
28 CHAIRMAN SCOTT: Patty, do we have any  
29 other regional reports or is Coral the last one?

30  
31 MS. SCHWALENBERG: She's the last one.  
32 So maybe we can continue working on that and we'll let  
33 her slide into the agenda when we have this resolved.

34  
35 CHAIRMAN SCOTT: Absolutely.

36  
37 MS. SCHWALENBERG: So the next thing on  
38 the (cuts out).....

39  
40 CHAIRMAN SCOTT: Patty, all of a sudden  
41 you went to mute.

42  
43 MS. SCHWALENBERG: Oh, I might have  
44 done that. The next thing on the agenda are the  
45 Council Committee reports and the first one under that  
46 section of the agenda is Jason Schamber with the Alaska  
47 Department of Fish and Game reporting on the Emperor  
48 Goose subcommittee.

49  
50

1 CHAIRMAN SCOTT: Great, thank you.  
2  
3 Jason.  
4  
5 MR. SCHAMBER: Good morning everyone.  
6 For the record my name is Jason Chamber. I'm with the  
7 Waterfowl Program at the Alaska Department of Fish and  
8 Game. I also serve as the Chair of the Emperor Goose  
9 subcommittee so I'll be providing an update of a  
10 committee meeting that we convened on August 17th via  
11 Zoom videoconference.  
12  
13 That meeting was attended by most of  
14 the committee members. They were able to make it as  
15 well as a couple of other invitees.  
16  
17 The purpose of the meeting was to begin  
18 discussions of possible revisions to elements of the  
19 two Emperor Goose Management Plans, those being the  
20 Pacific Flyaway Council Plan and the AMBCC Plan. Both  
21 of those plans contain similar elements. They were  
22 structured to be complimentary to one another. The  
23 meeting that we convened in August was considered the  
24 first of a couple of additional future meetings on this  
25 topic.  
26  
27 So if folks recall, that the management  
28 plans were signed in 2016, and they included a  
29 disclaimer of sorts that the management framework for  
30 Emperor geese that we agreed to and outlined in the  
31 management plans when they were formulated were more or  
32 less considered interim for the first three years the  
33 hunts were open. And at the sunset of those three  
34 years, which 2019, was the final year in that series,  
35 the subcommittees would review available data and that  
36 would include any data that was collected during those  
37 first three hunt years and reevaluate the major  
38 elements of the management framework for any updates or  
39 adjustments that may alter the course of how we manage  
40 Emperor geese. And those elements that were identified  
41 in the management plans to be considered for  
42 reevaluation were the population objective, which if  
43 you remember was set at an index of 34,000 birds. The  
44 population assessment method, which was -- is the Yukon  
45 Kuskokwim Delta coastal zone survey that's conducted on  
46 an annual basis by the Fish and Wildlife Service during  
47 the summer period. And then finally the harvest  
48 strategy which is basically a set of population  
49 thresholds that define regulatory packages by which we  
50

1 manage the harvest of Emperor geese. So these  
2 population thresholds determine if the seasons are open  
3 under certain conditions or the seasons are closed.

4  
5 So any modifications or revisions that  
6 the committee might recommend to these elements I just  
7 mentioned and approved by the Councils would be  
8 considered amendments to the plans for the remainder of  
9 the five year term limit. Now that term limit ends in  
10 2021, so next year, so we're bumping up on the end of  
11 that five year timeline.

12  
13 At the meeting we spent most of our  
14 time reviewing available information including harvest  
15 data from the spring, summer and fall, winter hunts  
16 these last three years. The underlying population  
17 model that was constructed by Fish and Wildlife  
18 Service, if you remember, that's the thadilogistic  
19 model and that was used to inform the prescriptive  
20 population thresholds that we set in the harvest  
21 strategy. Those are the thresholds that determine the  
22 regulatory package that we use for a given hunt year.  
23 And we also reviewed aspects of the outreach and  
24 education efforts, both past and present, but primarily  
25 present efforts given that we're currently in a zone of  
26 population status that would require conservation  
27 measures to be implemented. One of those being an  
28 increase in outreach and education.

29  
30 We did engage in some initial  
31 discussion later in the meeting of possible adjustments  
32 to elements in the management plans. We identified a  
33 couple of items for additional review at future  
34 meetings. One being the population objective, there  
35 was a question raised about the necessity of having the  
36 population objective. So that'll be discussed at a  
37 future meeting. We also discussed things that could be  
38 done to update the thadilogistic model that underwrites  
39 the harvest strategy. Any updates or modifications may  
40 lead to renewed discussions of prescriptive population  
41 threshold values and whether those may need to be  
42 adjusted based on any model updates.

43  
44 Finally, we recognized the need to deal  
45 with instances where we lack survey data to inform  
46 regulatory decisions. As you all know this actually  
47 occurred this year when the survey on the Yukon Delta  
48 was cancelled due to the Covid19 pandemic. So the  
49 committee met in late spring, early summer to discuss

50

1 the issue and decide on a course of action, given that  
2 regulatory decisions for the 2021 hunt seasons were to  
3 be made by this fall. So at a future meeting we'll  
4 review and discuss some potential available options to  
5 address this issue.

6  
7 In general, though, committee members  
8 agreed that the current management framework that we're  
9 using for Emperor geese is working and folks were  
10 comfortable with what was initially established in 2016  
11 when the management plans were formulated. However,  
12 with a few additional refinements or adjustments that I  
13 just mentioned. But folks felt that we didn't really  
14 need to engage in any major revisions or complete  
15 overhauls of the elements of the plans.

16  
17 Near the end of the meeting we  
18 identified a couple of tasks to be accomplished between  
19 now and a future meeting to possibly help frame the  
20 discussions at the next meeting and allow us to dig a  
21 bit deeper into the content. First of which was the  
22 Fish and Wildlife Service and Fish and Game will work  
23 on putting together options for dealing with the  
24 absence of survey data. Those may be using a three  
25 year average of the survey data or a different modeling  
26 approach. So we'll present those options so that the  
27 committee can weigh the advantages or disadvantages of  
28 each of those options and maybe move toward a decision  
29 on adopting a reasonable or workable approach should  
30 another instance like this last summer arise in the  
31 future. As well the two agencies will be working on  
32 updating the model that underlies the harvest strategy  
33 with some new information that we gained the last few  
34 years, and possibly with some needed input values from  
35 partners that would include the Native caucus. And we  
36 recognize that the model updates could spark additional  
37 conversation at a future meeting about the need for  
38 adjustments to the population thresholds and the  
39 harvest strategy. And finally a few agency folks will  
40 put together updates on various research projects that  
41 they're working on that could help inform  
42 decisionmaking. Those include an Emperor goose  
43 management project that's conducted by Fish and Game  
44 Division of Subsistence and Lilly Naves will provide an  
45 overview later on at this meeting. Also some research  
46 that the Yukon Delta National Wildlife Refuge, Brian  
47 Daniels is conducting in Western Alaska. And then  
48 finally some satellite telemetry work that Fish and  
49 Game is also conducting currently.

50

1                   So the committee agreed to continue  
2 evaluating the available data and further our  
3 discussions at a future meeting and that's likely to be  
4 scheduled for later this winter or early spring.

5  
6                   So to close, I'll mention that the  
7 minutes of the meeting were compiled by Patty, big  
8 thank you to her for that, and they appear in the  
9 packet so if anybody is interested in a little more  
10 detail about what transpired at the meeting they can  
11 check those out, or, alternatively, give me a call and  
12 we can chat about it further.

13  
14                   So with that, that concludes the update  
15 and I'd be happy to take any questions.

16  
17                   CHAIRMAN SCOTT: Great. Thank you,  
18 Jason. Any questions or comments for Jason.

19  
20                   (No comments)

21  
22                   CHAIRMAN SCOTT: Well, I guess I have  
23 one. You know thinking about changes that'll be  
24 recommended by the committee and brought to the AMBCC  
25 to the management plans for Emperor geese, what's the  
26 sequence of events as far as involving the Pacific  
27 Flyaway Council with that?

28  
29                   MR. SCHAMBER: I think the Flyaway  
30 Council would primarily be focused on the count -- the  
31 Pacific Flyaway Council Management Plan itself. I'm  
32 not sure that they would weigh in on the AMBCC plan  
33 necessarily.

34  
35                   CHAIRMAN SCOTT: Great. Yeah, that  
36 makes sense and I would assume that the Council, not  
37 having been there when the AMBCC went through this the  
38 first time, I imagine the Council does, you know, at  
39 least have an opportunity to see it and read it and  
40 that probably helps really inform their decisions for  
41 harvest strategy and population management.

42  
43                   MR. SCHAMBER: Yeah, and I guess I  
44 should mention that because the plans are complimentary  
45 they share many of these elements that we're  
46 discussing, and so a change to one plan would mean a  
47 change to the other plan so.

48  
49                   CHAIRMAN SCOTT: Great, thank you. Any

50



1 other questions or comments for Jason.

2

3

(No comments)

4

5

6

CHAIRMAN SCOTT: Okay, hearing none. I understand Coral's back with us.

7

8

(Pause)

9

10

CHAIRMAN SCOTT: We can see you.

11

12

13

MS. SCHWALENBERG: But we can't hear you.

14

15

(Pause)

16

17

18

19

20

21

22

23

CHAIRMAN SCOTT: Okay, maybe she's going to give it another try. So we're into old business and Council committee reports. I've been trying to watch the time here, we've been going at it for about an hour and 45 minutes or so, do folks need a break to stretch their legs and maybe grab a cup of coffee, something along those lines.

24

25

26

MS. EVANS: Yes, please.

27

28

29

CHAIRMAN SCOTT: Okay. I was just waiting for one, thank you, Priscilla. Patty, are you okay if we take a 10 minute break.

30

31

32

MS. SCHWALENBERG: No, no, that's fine. That's what I was thinking.

33

34

35

36

37

38

CHAIRMAN SCOTT: Okay. All right everybody I think that it's 10:42 by my time, yeah, let's try to be-- let's take, you know, 10 minutes or so and we'll pick back up with old business so we'll see you in about 10 minutes.

39

40

41

MS. SCHWALENBERG: Okay.

42

43

44

CHAIRMAN SCOTT: Thanks, everybody.

45

46

47

(Off record)

(On record)

48

49

50

CHAIRMAN SCOTT: Okay. It's about 10:53 by my clock and I'm sure we'll have people in and

1 out a little bit, that's one of the beauties of Zoom  
2 meetings. But Patty let's go ahead and get started  
3 again.

4  
5 MS. SCHWALENBERG: Okay. Tamara is  
6 going to join us so she' (indiscernible - warbled).

7  
8 CHAIRMAN SCOTT: Great, thank you.  
9 Welcome Tamara.

10  
11 MS. ZELLER: Hi. Thanks. Yeah, I  
12 apologize to folks, I was in a training earlier so I'm  
13 just joining now so hopefully, yeah, I'll catch up.  
14 But let me know if you can't hear me. I'm kind of  
15 doing the phone thing, which I've never done before  
16 through a Zoom so as we're all learning, I'm sure, if  
17 it's glitchy let me know.

18  
19 So I was going to provide an update on  
20 Emperor goose outreach and what folks have been working  
21 on, myself, and just a few other notes. So hopefully  
22 you can all see my screen. I think we're all pretty  
23 familiar by now sort of why we're here and why we're  
24 doing outreach and education for Emperor geese. It  
25 actually started in 2017 when the hunt was legally  
26 opened. In the fall of 2019, the AMBCC decided to  
27 increase efforts in response to the fact that the  
28 survey indicated Emperor goose populations had fallen  
29 into what we call the yellow, according to the harvest  
30 management strategy and that just triggered a decision  
31 to increase these outreach and education efforts in  
32 order to keep the hunt open. That is what -- how I've  
33 framed our goal.

34  
35 So I'm just going to report on our  
36 efforts from May to August 2020, the most up to date  
37 info.

38  
39 The Fish and Wildlife Service began  
40 working with a contractor and part of their mission was  
41 to work with stakeholders to try to understand  
42 attitudes and values around Emperor geese and harvest.  
43 Obviously our vision for this whole effort was pre-  
44 Covid, and as everybody is experiencing, we've had to  
45 adjust and adapt and that has presented a lot of  
46 challenges with communication. Ideally we would have  
47 loved to have been in the villages talking with  
48 community members but that obviously couldn't happen.  
49 So the contractor did some stakeholder interviews,  
50

1 about 18 of them, and to try to, you know, understand,  
2 like I'd mentioned, attitudes and values on Emperor  
3 geese and harvest specifically. And some of the key  
4 findings from those interviews is that most folks  
5 didn't know that there was an apparent decline in  
6 Emperor geese populations and that there were really  
7 varying attitudes on harvest management. Some folks,  
8 they definitely want to conserve Emperor geese but  
9 don't want government to dictate, and things that we've  
10 heard, I think, all along. So in the midst of while  
11 they were conducting these interviews, the spring  
12 season happened upon us really fast so in the interim  
13 they created this poster that you see on your right,  
14 basically taking messages that the Emperor goose  
15 outreach team had created previously, and everybody  
16 seemed to still agree were relevant, so this was used  
17 in the spring and handed out -- passed along to AMBCC  
18 members and other outlets for use such as YK Delta put  
19 it in one of their papers and what not.

20  
21 Recently, I think, it was in August  
22 there was a two hour stakeholder workshop to get draft  
23 core messages and product concepts and so I guess I'll  
24 back up.

25  
26 So after the spring poster was launched  
27 and the stakeholder interviews were conducted, the  
28 contractor then got together to create sort of  
29 prototype messages that they heard from stakeholders  
30 and create prototype new posters and PSAs,  
31 incorporating the new information they got. So after  
32 that was done there was a two hour stakeholder workshop  
33 to get feedback on these draft core message and product  
34 concepts, so this is now moving forward.

35  
36 So currently we are at the stage of  
37 they're just wrapping up all those products and I'll  
38 give you a preview in the next slide about what that  
39 looks like. But in the interim, the YK Delta at the  
40 Fish and Wildlife Service placed this poster that  
41 you're seeing in your view in the newspaper and they  
42 did radio ads using outreach messages that we agreed  
43 upon at the fall 2019 meeting.

44  
45 I also created an Emperor goose  
46 question and answer document for the Yukon -- for the  
47 website and other media materials and those are  
48 currently being posted. I'm working with our web guru  
49 on that.

50

1                   Yeah, so like I mentioned these are the  
2 new posters based on all the work that the contractor  
3 did over the course of the summer. And it says draft  
4 there but these are pretty darn close to being  
5 finished. Like I said this incorporates feedback that  
6 they received during interviews, it incorporates any  
7 feedback that we were given during the workshops and  
8 they can be used throughout Emperor goose range and  
9 hopefully distributed widely. And that's sort of the  
10 next step is working on distribution and getting these  
11 out.

12  
13                   There's also a video PSA, public  
14 service announcement and radio public service  
15 announcement and those are a little bit further from  
16 completion but I'm hoping actually by the end of this  
17 week to have those done as well. So looking for really  
18 the best way to get these out, these messages out, so  
19 I'll be relying heavily on folks at this meeting for  
20 ideas on how to get the posters and what not to places  
21 that need to hear it.

22  
23                   Some other efforts going on.

24  
25                   I've been working with a Native Alaskan  
26 from Quinhagak. We're talking about a concept to  
27 produce a video and a photography essay exploring the  
28 relationship between Alaska Natives and Emperor geese  
29 and Emperor goose harvest management. We're still in  
30 the talking phase and I hope which we begin sort of the  
31 outline and exploring how to do this in the fall. And  
32 one of -- I had written a great -- a National Fish and  
33 Wildlife Foundation grant back in the fall of 2019, it  
34 seems longer than that, and part of it was -- one of  
35 the goals was to look at basically climate change and  
36 any possible effects on Emperor geese. You know we've  
37 heard over and over again the burden -- it feels like  
38 the burden to reduce take -- the burden to conserve  
39 Emperor geese falls on the subsistence hunter and by  
40 reducing take, maybe, you know, the one thing we can  
41 do, which is, you know, I still think is true, but I  
42 also heard numerous times, you know, what about these  
43 other factors. So this particular goal is to explore  
44 the effects of climate change on Emperor geese  
45 populations and, again, this was a pre-Covid project  
46 working with Audubon and Alaska Conservation Foundation  
47 go into communities and develop these community  
48 resilience plans. And those -- that has been -- hit a  
49 pause.

50

1 (Echoing)

2

3 MS. ZELLER: Can you hear me -- all  
4 right, I got some funky feedback.

5

6 Anyway, so with Covid, obviously we  
7 can't travel and also a lot of the non-profits are  
8 experiencing severe economic hardships, cutting staff  
9 that would do this work so hitting the pause button on  
10 that unfortunately. But I wanted you to know that I  
11 hear those discussions, I hear those concerns and I'm  
12 trying to incorporate that into our outreach effort.

13

14 And then I am still looking to hire an  
15 artist to create some type of emblem for this effort  
16 and I would really, really love to hire an Alaska  
17 Native artist. I've kind of hit a roadblock so I'm  
18 asking again if anybody has any ideas on how to make  
19 that happen. And it would be used on different  
20 products, it would sort of be the face of our effort so  
21 I think it's super important that it come from folks  
22 that hunt Emperor geese, and really represent the  
23 cultural and spiritual meaning of Emperor geese to  
24 those communities.

25

26 And I just wanted to say, like I think  
27 I mentioned, the success of these outreach efforts  
28 really relies on participation of everybody. I think  
29 success for this effort means that we preserve hunting  
30 opportunity for Emperor geese in the future and I -- so  
31 we need everybody's help to share these messages as  
32 community members because if it's just me going out  
33 there, or not even going out there but pushing this  
34 effort, I can only achieve so much. I live in  
35 Anchorage. I don't hunt waterfowl. And I'm White  
36 person. So I think if you're paying attention to  
37 anything in the news, you know, it needs to come folks  
38 that are really in the communities and take part in  
39 subsistence hunting. And so I really am asking for  
40 help from everybody on the AMBCC. And I guess this  
41 last sentence, increase outreach and education was an  
42 AMBCC decision so it should be an AMBCC effort. I am  
43 happy to be doing my part but it's become apparent when  
44 I've reached out to folks in the communities that there  
45 is not a great understanding of what the AMBCC is and  
46 so all they hear is the word Fish and Wildlife Service,  
47 and I can't deny who I work for and I'm proud of who I  
48 work for so it's really, I think, important that we  
49 work on this together. And I'm not saying we aren't.

50

1 But I'm just asking for help.

2

3 So with that I will answer any  
4 questions.

5

6 I'll leave that up there.

7

8 CHAIRMAN SCOTT: Thank you very much,  
9 Tamara. Any questions or comments for Tamara.

10

11 (No comments)

12

13 MS. ZELLER: Wow. Okay.

14

15 TODD: This is Todd in Barrow.

16

17 CHAIRMAN SCOTT: Go ahead, Todd.

18

19 MS. ZELLER: Oh, yeah, hi, Todd.

20

21 TODD: Hello. Hey, just a quick  
22 question on that Slide 2, it mentions somebody had  
23 interviewed 18 stakeholders, and then the next -- the  
24 bullet, is, most folks interviewed did not know about  
25 the apparent decline. I'm not on the subcommittee so I  
26 don't know a lot about this, I'm just looking at what  
27 you have on the screen. With that bullet mark and then  
28 you look at the poster on the right, it doesn't really  
29 talk about the decline either, right, so I guess I'm  
30 trying to figure out, should they have known that there  
31 was a decline, or is it necessary for the stakeholders  
32 to know there's a decline? I'm not asking it very well  
33 but I'm just trying to figure out, there may be a  
34 decline, but how is the word getting out that there's a  
35 decline and with increased conservation efforts, of  
36 course, trying to, you know, conserve more of these  
37 birds, but I'm just -- it's kind of disconnected to me,  
38 that first bullet and then the poster on the right, I  
39 guess.

40

41 Thanks.

42

43 MS. ZELLER: Okay, good question. So  
44 back in 2017 there was a different flier created and it  
45 actually shows that graph here on the slide, and then  
46 it gets more into the decline reasons. If you'll  
47 notice the very first sentence on this flier it says  
48 Emperor geese numbers have been declining so it's not  
49 as prominent maybe as in the past fliers. And, you

50

1 know, just interviewing 18 people, that's not a very  
2 large sample and so -- and it's not placing blame that,  
3 you know, outreach efforts haven't conveyed that, it's  
4 just basically an observation so that we need to do  
5 better, obviously, explaining there is a decline and I  
6 think it just speaks to more -- need for more outreach.  
7 So we've tried to tackle it a number of ways and so I  
8 guess that's the best answer I've got.

9

10 Does that help?

11

12 TODD: No, that's fine. I just couldn't  
13 make the connection between the poster there and then  
14 the comment. It does, you know, like you said, it does  
15 say decline in the first part, it seems like it would  
16 be helpful just to have, since, you know, being --  
17 since the reopening of this hunt or something like  
18 this, because I didn't know how to take that exactly,  
19 it was just a general comment, or is this, you know,  
20 something specific to this time period.

21

22 So, thanks.

23

24 MS. ZELLER: Gotcha. Those are great  
25 comments. Thank you. I appreciate the feedback.

26

27 CHAIRMAN SCOTT: Yeah, thank you, Todd.  
28 Any other questions or comments.

29

30 MR. TAYLOR: Mr. Chair, this is Eric,  
31 can I jump in here.

32

33 CHAIRMAN SCOTT: Yes, sir, please do.

34

35 MR. TAYLOR: All right, thanks. Todd,  
36 great question. And the point that caught your  
37 attention most folks did not know about the apparent  
38 decline in Emperor geese caught, I think, all of our  
39 attentions, particularly Tamara. And it's something I  
40 think Tamara's calling out for help. Later today, you  
41 know, Julian Fischer will give his presentation on  
42 status and trends and abundance of geese, including  
43 Emperor geese and that presentation, as you know, was  
44 given at both the spring and fall AMBCC meetings. We  
45 also have, in the past, when we've been able to meet  
46 in-person, Julian, Tamara, Dave Safine, or myself, have  
47 gone out to regions like Kotzebue and Bristol Bay and  
48 Bethel to also present that same information to  
49 stakeholders. We also share it with Refuge Information

50

1 Technicians, particularly on the Yukon Kuskokwim Delta.  
2 And, you know, we've also done public service  
3 announcements when the season was first opened but then  
4 also concern -- but, you know, I think the point you're  
5 making is that whatever we're doing, there appears to  
6 be some needed improvement. And whether that's making  
7 sure that Julian's presentation gets in a format out to  
8 the regional representatives, particularly in this  
9 case, the ranges of Emperor geese so that you, and  
10 Brandon and Cyrus and Jennifer and others can have  
11 something to distribute to rural residents in villages.  
12 I think that's something we're considering.

13

14 But, anyway, your point's well taken  
15 and we would jump at the opportunities if anyone has  
16 ideas on how we can be more effective in getting that  
17 message out about Emperor geese, we're all ears. So  
18 thank you for bringing it up.

19

20 MR. AHMASUK: Mr. Chair, this is  
21 Brandon.

22

23 CHAIRMAN SCOTT: Yeah, please, go  
24 ahead, Brandon.

25

26 MR. AHMASUK: So, yeah, thank you Eric  
27 for bringing that up. During our past regional  
28 meetings, even through email, we try to -- at least  
29 here in the Bering Strait region, you know, the  
30 information on Emperor geese we do our best to get the  
31 word out, share these fliers, you know, so our region,  
32 we do harvest Emperor geese. In our past regional  
33 meetings, you know, it's been one of the bigger topics.  
34 So I mean again we do try our best to get the  
35 information out so people are aware.

36

37 I just wanted to mention that real  
38 quick, but, thank you.

39

40 CHAIRMAN SCOTT: Thanks Brandon. I  
41 guess I had a couple -- a question and a comment.

42

43 One thing that appears to me that given  
44 the Board of Game schedule and the intense interest in  
45 Emperor geese, I'd like to try to find a way to get  
46 this information into the Board book. I think that's  
47 another way to get it out there. If nothing else,  
48 we'll -- I'll ask Jason Schamber to be sure to include  
49 this in the Board presentation when he goes through the

50



1 proposals. But we may be able to actually get it in  
2 the Board book as well and I think that'd be helpful  
3 for everybody.

4  
5 The other thing is, you know, the grant  
6 notwithstanding, with the two organizations that you  
7 mentioned, is funding for these efforts pretty solid  
8 and that might be a question for Eric as well. I was  
9 going back through all the packet stuff trying -- I  
10 believe it was funded by the Fish and Wildlife Service.  
11 Are we in good shape there to keep going?

12  
13 MR. TAYLOR: I'll let Tamara address  
14 that because she's in charge of the budget for the  
15 outreach. But the Covid certainly delayed the efforts.  
16 I know Tamara's been frustrated, the contractor's been  
17 frustrated, but the funding did not go away. So Tamara  
18 mentioned that she had written a grant to the National  
19 Fish and Wildlife Foundation that was ultimately funded  
20 and Tamara I'm going to let you jump in here relative  
21 to the status of your funding but I -- in terms of the  
22 Service and our program, you know, Tamara has -- this  
23 is part of her performance plan and both for this year  
24 as well as next year, but in terms of National Fish and  
25 Wildlife Service funding -- Tamara, do you want to jump  
26 in.

27  
28 MS. ZELLER: Sure. Can you hear me.  
29 I'm not -- I didn't mute myself, right?

30  
31 MR. TAYLOR: Yep, you sound good.

32  
33 MS. ZELLER: Okay. Yeah, like Eric  
34 mentioned, so the National Fish and Wildlife Foundation  
35 grant was for \$50,000 and that has not gone away but I  
36 have asked for a year extension because it was supposed  
37 to end -- I can't remember, in like 2021 or something,  
38 and just what we need to accomplish, given Covid, is  
39 just, you know, hard. So I did get an extension for  
40 another year. It doesn't increase the money. That was  
41 reliant on match, which where Audubon and Alaska  
42 Conservation Foundation come in, so there's that. Eric  
43 has been very generous to allow my time being paid out  
44 of our program to work on this as well as other Emperor  
45 goose efforts. Jason's been awesome to provide input  
46 and his time as well as several AMBCC members. So  
47 Staff time alone, I don't have a number for that, I  
48 anticipate that will keep going. I don't think  
49 anybody's said don't talk to me anymore.

50

1                   And as far as other sources of funding,  
2 I did get a generous amount of funding from the YK  
3 Delta. They had some funds that they were not able to  
4 use because of Covid and so they've put a significant  
5 amount of money into this effort. That, I was able to  
6 carry over to next year.

7  
8                   So beyond that, you know, our budget  
9 always changes, you know, but I think for the near term  
10 we're sitting pretty good. And that's just -- and  
11 that, again, is sort of relying on everybody's  
12 willingness to, you know, act as messengers and, you  
13 know, use their networks to get this message out as  
14 well. So I'm sort of counting on that.

15  
16                   I hope that answers your question.

17  
18                   CHAIRMAN SCOTT: Yeah, it sounds pretty  
19 good. And I guess if you need any support as far as  
20 getting an extension or something like that, you know,  
21 let me know and I'm happy to talk to whoever I need to.

22  
23                   MS. ZELLER: Okay, thank you.

24  
25                   CHAIRMAN SCOTT: Thank you. Any other  
26 questions or comments for Tamara.

27  
28                   (No comments)

29  
30                   CHAIRMAN SCOTT: Okay, hearing none.  
31 Well, thank you again, Tamara.....

32  
33                   MS. ZELLER: All right.

34  
35                   CHAIRMAN SCOTT: .....for being here  
36 and getting us updated and, you know, everybody who's  
37 been involved in this, it looks good. I think it's --  
38 it looks pretty good. You know there's been some  
39 comments here.....

40  
41                   MS. ZELLER: It's getting there.

42  
43                   CHAIRMAN SCOTT: .....and there, it's  
44 -- yeah, I think it's getting there for sure.

45  
46                   MS. ZELLER: Yeah.

47  
48                   CHAIRMAN SCOTT: And I think it's  
49 incredibly important and very appreciated, everyone's

50

1 efforts.

2

3 MS. ZELLER: Yeah. Yes, I echo that.  
4 Thank you to all the folks, and I'll be leaning on you  
5 some more. So thank you.

6

7 CHAIRMAN SCOTT: Thank you, ma'am.

8

9 MS. ZELLER: All right, I'll attempt to  
10 stop sharing and all that good stuff.

11

12 CHAIRMAN SCOTT: It worked.

13

14 MS. ZELLER: All right.

15

16 CHAIRMAN SCOTT: Yeah. Okay, I believe  
17 we're going to circle back around to Coral. Coral, are  
18 you there?

19

20 MS. CHERNOFF: I think I am here, can  
21 you hear me?

22

23 CHAIRMAN SCOTT: Yes, ma'am, loud and  
24 clear.

25

26 MS. CHERNOFF: Yea. Okay, so I guess,  
27 you know, we all know we've been going through some  
28 tough times with Covid so on this end I think, you  
29 know, a lot of people haven't been getting together to  
30 communicate about, you know, their hunts and everything  
31 that's going on.

32

33 So in my experience, just in the  
34 friends and family group that I've seen, people were  
35 not going out hunting and gathering as much this spring  
36 for the spring hunt, it seems, as we're usually doing.  
37 That also includes myself. My work involves a lot of  
38 -- in my art business, involved a lot of contact with  
39 the public and without being able to do that I've had  
40 to take on some extra things, you know, to make -- to  
41 pay the bills and all that so I've had less time  
42 hunting and fishing this year and more time, you know,  
43 trying to make other things work.

44

45 So we had approved at one of the State  
46 meetings, hunting for the road system for this spring,  
47 that unfortunately did not happen. I guess partly  
48 because of Covid, we didn't have the -- the rules  
49 weren't published and so therefore we couldn't have the

50

1 hunt and so we don't really know what's happening with  
2 that. This was going to be a three year trial so  
3 hopefully moving forward I think we were going to ask  
4 for an extension on our three years at some point so  
5 that this springtime was not included in our three year  
6 trial since it didn't happen.

7  
8 We've had some concern in town. We  
9 have had a development of a new dock in a major area,  
10 the feeding grounds for two- to 400 emperors almost  
11 daily, for sure, you know, several times a week. I  
12 guess we knew there was going to be a dock there.  
13 There was a change in plans and permitting. And I was  
14 kind of surprised that I could not find anything in the  
15 permitting and comments where Fish and Wildlife  
16 Service, or any division of Migratory Birds kind of  
17 raised concerns over this dock going in. It's an 11  
18 acre development. There's eelgrass there. And it's a  
19 feeding ground and hangout spot for all winterlong for  
20 ducks and most especially Emperor geese, so they're not  
21 going to have that area anymore. A bunch of gravel was  
22 pushed out over the beach in shallow waters, of course,  
23 to deeper areas to make a dock. I'm not sure -- pretty  
24 sure nothing can be done about it now. But in looking  
25 through I was kind of concerned that it looked like  
26 they had checked with Fish and Wildlife Service and  
27 maybe looked at -- I'm not sure they directly contacted  
28 them, but they did have a chart in their permitting  
29 that mentioned it looked like endangered and threatened  
30 species, so there was mention of one of the eiders and  
31 sea lions and some whales but nothing -- I didn't see  
32 any mention of migratory birds or their concern over  
33 emperors. And I guess that surprised me being that  
34 we've been talking about emperors for three, four, five  
35 years, for so long and had a plan. So anyway that's --  
36 we're going to, I guess Tom Lance at Sun'aq and I are  
37 kind of talking and I guess we'll sort of monitor like  
38 where the geese are going because a large population,  
39 like I said, did go there, sat there everyday, probably  
40 two tides everyday and fed or hung out there so I guess  
41 we'll see where those have been -- those will be --  
42 we'll see where they go now.

43  
44 So there was the road hunt. That new  
45 dock that was put in.

46  
47 I guess lastly I guess I just kind of  
48 want to acknowledge -- oh, well, I did want to say  
49 everything seems, as far as weather, fish and wildlife,  
50

1 everything -- everything this year seems to be like  
2 kind of what we used to call a normal year, although in  
3 the last four or five years we don't have any normal  
4 years, but there seemed to be no decline in species, no  
5 -- I haven't heard any die-offs. We have had, it seems  
6 like a lot more sightings of hummingbirds at people's  
7 feeders, even as recently as about two weeks ago, there  
8 was a hummingbird at someone's feeder. So we have  
9 been, over the last four or five years seen more  
10 hummingbirds on the island, and later in the season  
11 which is interesting.

12  
13 And then lastly I would just really  
14 like to acknowledge, we have an air service here,  
15 Island Air, that provides service to -- what do we  
16 have, six or seven villages and they provide a service  
17 where they will fly subsistence foods into town and  
18 around, you know, from town to the villages, they will  
19 fly subsistence foods for no charge and so I know  
20 people have put on buckets of clams. Just the other  
21 day I was reminded because someone sent us in some  
22 smoked salmon from Karluk. And I would just really  
23 like to acknowledge our air service, Island Air, for  
24 providing this service for the people around the  
25 island. There are lots of people who grew up in some  
26 villages who now live in town, or lived in town and now  
27 live in other places around the island so I know I, and  
28 as well as a lot of other families appreciate that  
29 service. So I'd just like to thank Island Air for that  
30 and acknowledge that that is something that they do.

31  
32 And I think that is all I have to  
33 report for now.

34  
35 Thank you.

36  
37 CHAIRMAN SCOTT: Thank you, Coral. And  
38 thanks for hanging in there and keep trying to connect.  
39 That effort's appreciated. Any questions or comments  
40 for Coral.

41  
42 MR. TAYLOR: Mr. Chair, this is Eric.

43  
44 CHAIRMAN SCOTT: Go ahead.

45  
46 MR. TAYLOR: All right, thanks. Coral,  
47 thanks for your report. I wanted to address a couple  
48 of things that you brought up. Indeed all of us were  
49 frustrated that after all of your work and the Sun'aq

50

1 Tribe to open up the road system this year, that we  
2 were unable to do so. The Final Rule for the  
3 subsistence season still has not published, and as  
4 everyone knows we're almost a month after the season  
5 closed for this year. I just sent a note to  
6 headquarters asking where it is and apparently it's  
7 still within the Executive Secretary Office and so  
8 we're hoping to get that published, and, obviously it's  
9 too late for this year. So I do apologize for that.  
10 We did everything we could. In fact, the Assistant  
11 Director, Jerome (Indiscernible) for Fish and Wildlife  
12 Service, I know, is contacting the Secretary's office  
13 to see if we can break that free.

14  
15 Your point about that it was a three  
16 experimental season and that we lost the first year is  
17 something that Todd Sanders and I talked about. And we  
18 went back to the proposed -- or the regulation and it  
19 says three years and because it says three years we're  
20 able to start that first year in 2021 as opposed to  
21 this year. So other than I think I will include that  
22 in the proposed rule just as a point of information as  
23 well as alert the Service Regulations Committee. First  
24 off, I don't think it's going to be a problem, second  
25 off it's not going to be that much work.

26  
27 Boy, your 11 acre dock development  
28 caught me by surprise. We have a program in the Fish  
29 and Wildlife Service, Ecological Services, the  
30 conservation plan assistance program, and when we take  
31 a lunch break today I'll fire off a note to the program  
32 manager for that to see where that stands. Typically  
33 on a project like that you're exactly right, the  
34 Migratory Bird Program would comment and provide  
35 comments to the Conservation Plan Assistance Program  
36 that submits the letter for the Fish and Wildlife  
37 Service so let me circle back with that manager and  
38 find out where that project is and if comments were  
39 submitted and see if we can get a comment. But  
40 certainly you're right, 11 acres, eelgrass beds and a  
41 wintering area for Emperor geese and other migratory  
42 birds should have been -- we should have commented on  
43 that.

44  
45 I'll also check with Robin Cochorane,  
46 the migratory bird biologist for Kodiak Refuge to see  
47 if Robin has any information on that as well.

48  
49 Pretty neat news about hummingbirds.

50

1 Not surprising. But Jim Johnson, our land bird  
2 coordinator will be interested in hearing that the last  
3 few years you've seen more of them and you've seen them  
4 later.

5  
6 And let's see, finally, boy, I actually  
7 flew Island Air a long time ago on a hunt in Kodiak for  
8 goats, and I'll leave this to you, but typically when  
9 something good like that happens, at least in the Fish  
10 and Wildlife Service, our Regional Director is happy to  
11 provide a letter acknowledging or kudos to an agency,  
12 organization or industry representative or whatever, so  
13 anyway it may be something for you to think about  
14 whether you'd like the AMBCC, I'll leave it up to the  
15 Native Caucuses, and Ryan, in terms of Fish and Game on  
16 whether they'd be supportive of that. But it sounds  
17 like something that maybe the AMBCC would like to fire  
18 off a quick letter of acknowledgement thanking Island  
19 Air for their support for subsistence users.

20  
21 Anyway, great report. I'll get back  
22 with you on that dock development.

23  
24 CHAIRMAN SCOTT: Thank you, Eric.  
25 Anybody else with questions or comments for Coral.

26  
27 (No comments)

28  
29 CHAIRMAN SCOTT: Well, Coral, I guess I  
30 have a question and a comment.

31  
32 First off, speaking of the dock  
33 construction, I, too, was unaware of it, but I'll do  
34 some digging on the Department's, as well, likely it  
35 was handled by our Habitat Division so I'll see if I  
36 can get more information and share that with you.

37  
38 The other -- the question is,  
39 recognizing that the road hunt didn't happen and, you  
40 know, that's a bummer, but it's good to hear that the  
41 three years can go on and start new, do you have a  
42 sense for how people in Kodiak are feeling about it, I  
43 mean has there been talk about it and are people  
44 concerned? I'm sure some folks are very excited about  
45 it, just, yeah, what's your take on how the community  
46 sees that hunt?

47  
48 MS. CHERNOFF: Yeah, my take is just  
49 like you said, people who hunt are very excited about

50

1 it, and people who don't enjoy people hunting are not  
2 very excited about it.

3

4 CHAIRMAN SCOTT: Okay.

5

6 MS. CHERNOFF: So it's just -- you  
7 know, it's a mixed bag for sure.

8

9 CHAIRMAN SCOTT: Yeah.

10

11 MS. CHERNOFF: And in reference -- and  
12 actually in referencing that dock that has gone in, I  
13 did not mention Alaska Department of Fish and Game  
14 because I did see that they did have a letter that they  
15 sent in and I have several letters as well as the U.S.  
16 Army Corps of Engineers, I think the plan, and just  
17 some background information if you wanted to contact  
18 Tom Lance, he has all their communications and emails  
19 about this project.

20

21 I know one of his concerns was the  
22 project -- there was permitting and then at some point  
23 in time, like by the next year, the scope of what they  
24 were doing had changed, and then when they received  
25 notice of this, there was a one month comment period,  
26 which was a pretty short comment period. But, yeah, we  
27 do have Alaska Department of Fish and Game, Division of  
28 Habitat letter that expressed only their concerns of  
29 the use of vibratory hammers and impact hammers.

30

31 But, yeah, I can send -- I can forward  
32 the information that I have. I have taken pictures out  
33 there and I see that they're filling in even more  
34 beach, it looks like, the last time I was out there.  
35 I'd be happy to go get drone footage and -- which I  
36 intended to do this week anyway and forward those to  
37 you guys.

38

39 CHAIRMAN SCOTT: Yeah, and I'll  
40 probably touch base with Habitat as well, but, yeah,  
41 I'd be curious to see what, you know, correspondence is  
42 out there and available.

43

44 Thank you.

45

46 MS. CHERNOFF: You're welcome.

47

48 CHAIRMAN SCOTT: Any other questions or  
49 comments for Coral.

50



1 (No comments)

2

3 CHAIRMAN SCOTT: Okay. Hearing none,  
4 we're still into old business and now we have the  
5 Harvest Survey Committee. Lilly, are you on with us?

6

7 (Teleconference interference - lines  
8 put on hold - line beeping)

9

10 (Pause)

11

12 CHAIRMAN SCOTT: Lilly, if you're there  
13 we can't hear you.

14

15 (Pause)

16

17 MS. SCHWALENBERG: She just sent me a  
18 text message and said she's having a little trouble.

19

20 CHAIRMAN SCOTT: Okay, we'll give her a  
21 minute.

22

23 MS. SCHWALENBERG: Yeah, just give her  
24 a couple minutes.

25

26 MS. NAVES: Okay, I'm here now. Thanks  
27 for patience.

28

29 CHAIRMAN SCOTT: Perfect.

30

31 MS. NAVES: Let me get myself together  
32 here.

33

34 So the Harvest Survey Committee,  
35 recently, we work mostly to address Covid again. So  
36 that's major part of everyone's life and business  
37 nowadays. So we felt the need to get together and work  
38 -- found -- needed to find alternatives to in-person  
39 interaction for the data collection in 2020 AMBCC  
40 harvest survey. So the Division of Subsistence of  
41 Alaska Department of Fish and Game develop preliminary  
42 set of options and a risk analysis for the data  
43 collection of the harvest survey, including different  
44 approaches, such as mail, online and phone surveys.  
45 This document, together, with the usual work plan for  
46 the harvest survey is included with the meeting  
47 materials. And the options that were developed did not  
48 involve change in the sampling frame, the five regions,  
49 the sampling goal at the community and the household

50

1 levels, community selection, household selection and  
2 data analysis, all that -- the idea was to keep with  
3 the plan that you already have. And the options  
4 referred only to alternative approaches for data  
5 collection instead of local surveyors doing in-person  
6 interviews, how else they could reach out to the  
7 households.

8  
9 So the Division of Subsistence has a  
10 key role in the implementation of the data collection,  
11 coordinate with all partners and we are responsible for  
12 making things work in a certain way and the Fish and  
13 Wildlife Service also have a key role due to funding  
14 related responsibilities. So Fish and Game met with  
15 Fish and Wildlife Service on September 10th to  
16 preliminary discuss this options and in that event  
17 still working with the Harvest Survey Committee and  
18 following this meeting Fish and Wildlife Service  
19 provided a letter on their perspectives on the  
20 alternatives that had been put forth. In this  
21 communication from Fish and Wildlife Service is also  
22 included in the meeting materials.

23  
24 So the safety of the local communities  
25 and the local surveyors is naturally top priority and  
26 those include the concerns that the survey work may  
27 indirectly lead to in-person interaction such as to  
28 compile and update household lists or to help  
29 households complete the mail surveyor, so we were  
30 worried about the direct and kind of indirect ways that  
31 the survey, who the -- with people doing their best to  
32 prevent the spread of Covid.

33  
34 So the AMBCC covers a very large area  
35 and diverse area, including five regions that are  
36 surveyed every year. So this is Bristol Bay, YK Delta,  
37 Bering Strait, Interior and North Slope. So  
38 accordingly we discussed many factors that are likely  
39 to play a role in the harvest data collection, such as,  
40 community sizes. Small communities operate a little  
41 bit different from large communities in terms of  
42 collecting harvest data so what would work in small  
43 communities and what would work in large communities.  
44 Sharing just phone numbers especially in large surveys,  
45 there is was interest in the option of a phone survey.  
46 Also steps to set contracts across agencies and many  
47 local and regional partners. We also talk about the  
48 issues that the local communities are handling to keep  
49 their essential functions going on during the pandemic.  
50

1 And also we considered the need for a strong  
2 communication plan, especially including local and  
3 regional partners.

4  
5 So at the Harvest Survey Committee went  
6 into detail in all the pros and cons of all the  
7 different options, this is a complex discussion because  
8 there are many factors and uncertainties.

9  
10 Eventually we narrowed it down to two  
11 options.

12  
13 Experimental mail survey that would be  
14 sent to all P.O. Box in communities randomly selected  
15 and maybe complimented by phone, or not to do survey in  
16 2020.

17  
18 And during the meeting as we considered  
19 all these things, we're not leaning in an obvious  
20 direction so we decided to give more time for the  
21 committee meeting members to follow up with people in  
22 their region, gather more information and have more  
23 opportunity to share perspectives. And that was  
24 followed by mail vote, where people could vote in a  
25 mail survey, or no survey, and if they had any  
26 comments.

27  
28 At the Harvest Survey Committee we also  
29 thought that this was a complex decision and it would  
30 be helpful if we could provide a recommendation to the  
31 AMBCC just because it's been a long discussion to  
32 arrive to the point where we are and the meeting today,  
33 especially by teleconference, it would be hard to go  
34 through all those ins and outs of all the options. So  
35 we voted to develop a recommendation on what to do  
36 about the 2020 survey based on the input from the  
37 Harvest Survey Committee.

38  
39 So the Harvest Survey Committee has 15  
40 members. Six members voted for a mail survey in 2020.  
41 Seven members voted for no survey in 2020. And two  
42 members did not vote.

43  
44 Although the votes are evenly  
45 distributed between mail survey and no survey, we  
46 didn't find broad support for a mail survey across the  
47 five regions that are included in the survey, so  
48 despite some support for a mail survey, in respect to  
49 the perspectives of the partners in the survey, the

50

1 regions, the Harvest Survey Committee recommends for  
2 not conducting a harvest survey in 2020.

3  
4 And this concludes the report of the  
5 Harvest Survey Committee. And the report and all the  
6 materials that were put together when we were  
7 discussing these options are available with the meeting  
8 package and I'll be -- I'll invite the members of the  
9 Harvest Survey Committee, if they would like to offer  
10 input on what I've discussed so far.

11  
12 Thank you.

13  
14 MS. SCHWALENBERG: Lilly, before we go  
15 into that, I just want to mention that we would like a  
16 motion to support the decision and recommendation of  
17 the Harvest Survey Committee when you're done getting  
18 input from the other members.

19  
20 MS. NAVES: Thanks, Patty.

21  
22 CHAIRMAN SCOTT: Yeah, thank you,  
23 Patty. And thank you Lilly for that.

24  
25 Questions, comments for Lilly, or other  
26 members of the committee.

27  
28 (No comments)

29  
30 CHAIRMAN SCOTT: Well, while folks are  
31 thinking I'll ask one. So long-term, what should we  
32 consider is the impact for not doing a survey this  
33 year?

34  
35 MS. NAVES: I'll let other people chime  
36 in if they'd like.

37  
38 (No comments)

39  
40 MS. NAVES: Or if not they can try --  
41 oh, sorry.

42  
43 MR. FALL: Well, this is Jim Fall.  
44 This did come up in the committee a bit. And I think  
45 it's unfortunate that we will have a gap in the  
46 documentation of the subsistence harvest, but on the  
47 other hand it's not unusual to have such gaps in any  
48 monitoring of harvest. A single year, you know, is not  
49 a fatal blow to understanding patterns and trends in

50

1 those harvests. The Division of Subsistence, during  
2 that committee meeting, we thought that the mail survey  
3 could be a good option because we couldn't talk to  
4 people directly and we did share that, more broadly,  
5 the Division is testing other ways to collect  
6 information because we can't do it face to face.

7  
8 And in Unalaska we are working with the  
9 Qawalangin Tribe there to test a mail survey of a  
10 comprehensive survey, which is much longer than the  
11 migratory bird survey and, there, the Tribe, did not  
12 want to postpone or cancel that work because of how  
13 important they felt the results of the work would be  
14 and there isn't annual documentation and funding for  
15 such work. So we will see how that mail effort goes  
16 there, whether we achieved the sample that we need.  
17 And we know that we'll only succeed there if we have  
18 tremendous outreach efforts, education and outreach  
19 efforts, which is going to depend a lot on our tribal  
20 partner there to do.

21  
22 In the Kuskokwim River area which is an  
23 annual survey done face to face, for salmon, an annual  
24 survey done face to face in dozens of communities, we  
25 are combining methods there, but the primary method  
26 there will be phoning. And the reason we can do phone  
27 calls there is that in the annual survey we do have  
28 phone numbers for fishers, for many fishers. Now,  
29 we're finding that many of those phone numbers are  
30 disconnected, but we're having good success so far,  
31 that just started a couple weeks ago and we're  
32 confident that in that case, the phoning will work.  
33 And, there, missing a year of harvest information would  
34 be bad because of the problems with the salmon returns,  
35 the low subsistence harvests, and it was worth it to  
36 try to figure out an alternative way to do that. And  
37 because of the -- the long time series we have there  
38 and the understanding we have of that fishery we will  
39 be able to evaluate the performance of the phoning.  
40 And some mail, there may be even some online work  
41 there, we will be able to evaluate that against other  
42 years just to see just how it performed.

43  
44 But that's a long way of saying that  
45 for the migratory bird work, we thought that we could  
46 have tried something just to see, especially since we  
47 don't know where we'll be sitting a year from now  
48 either. And testing out the mail work -- mail survey  
49 would maybe have prepared us for another year of

50

1 alternative ways of going about this. But we certainly  
2 respect the views of the partners and we can't do this  
3 without substantial investment of time and energy and  
4 knowledge from the partners to reach out to people to  
5 participate.

6

7 So if we don't do it this year, it's  
8 not the end of the world, but hopefully we'll not be in  
9 this position a year from now.

10

11

So, thanks.

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CHAIRMAN SCOTT: Yeah, thanks Jim. I mean I completely agree, missing a year is not the end of the world, and, you know, other efforts, often times require a lot of followup. So I'll be curious to hear how things go out in Unalaska as well. And, certainly, you know, we may have to -- we probably will have this discussion this year if we're in the same boat that we are this, in the future.

So thank you.

Other questions for Lilly.

MR. TAYLOR: Mr. Chair, this is Eric Taylor.

CHAIRMAN SCOTT: Yes, sir, go ahead.

MR. TAYLOR: Thank you. Thanks, Lilly, for your report, very nicely done as usual. I haven't had a chance to talk to Dave Safine or Chuck after their attendance at the meeting, but I was curious, assuming it is an off year, was there discussion by the committee on -- a couple of things come to mind: One, is looking into the mail-in survey a bit more in terms of understanding the concerns raised by the regions or what options there might be to address those concerns or if, indeed, it could be a viable option in the future.

And then my second question, any discussion -- assuming that we do not do a harvest survey this year, the other, I know potential alternative that we discussed in the Migratory Bird Program was the development of a smartphone application, you know, that we're seeing applications on phones that can do about anything, whether it's

1 order your food from a grocery store or check on  
2 traffic or whatever, but, anyway, was there any  
3 discussion on recommendations on if we do not move  
4 forward with the survey this year, on areas that you  
5 and the committee could work on.  
6

7 MS. NAVES: There was some discussion  
8 on what energy and funds could be allocated, if not  
9 doing a survey this year, I think that we may have to  
10 go on decisionmaking by steps because thinking the  
11 first part was already complex decision to come to the  
12 point where doing a survey or not doing a survey and  
13 lots of the discussion circled around that. I don't  
14 think that we considered a more complete set of options  
15 of what can be done to better meet the priorities by  
16 the AMBCC. So I think that this is the next step on  
17 the discussion here.  
18

19 MR. FALL: This is Jim, are you done  
20 Lilly?  
21

22 MS. NAVES: Yes.  
23

24 MR. FALL: Yeah, this is Jim Fall.  
25 Yeah, again, as I said before we thought the mail  
26 option was a viable one to give a try to. But, again,  
27 it would require commitment from all the partners and  
28 we'll have more information if we're in this position  
29 next year from the Unalaska experience and what we're  
30 learning in the Kuskokwim River and maybe elsewhere.  
31

32 In terms of developing some alternative  
33 data collection methods such as a smartphone app or  
34 online, we did talk about that at length, actually, for  
35 Unalaska and for the Kuskokwim and our tribal partners  
36 and others pretty much rejected doing -- going that  
37 route as the primary data collection method because of  
38 connectivity issues and development issues and the  
39 severe uncertainty about just how that would bias the  
40 response rates and the character of the responding  
41 households and individuals.  
42

43 So we did not support looking at those  
44 methods even over the next year as the primary way to  
45 collect information because of those limitations there.  
46 Probably as a communication tool, as a way to  
47 facilitate getting information to people, that's worth  
48 looking into but in terms of a data collection tool  
49 we're pretty far away from that and the methods that  
50

1 we're using now, without the -- if we didn't have the  
2 limitations on face to face data collection and hiring  
3 local people to help us we would be moving forward with  
4 the current design, which is, as we know, is still  
5 being implemented, we're three or four years into  
6 implementing and evaluating that design that we  
7 developed collaboratively and it's not the time yet to  
8 start going down a new path.

9  
10 We're in an unusual circumstance now  
11 and trying to do our best to address that. But when  
12 this circumstance is over I think we'll be back,  
13 primarily, to the design that we collaboratively  
14 developed.

15  
16 Thanks.

17  
18 MR. TAYLOR: Okay, thanks Jim.

19  
20 TODD: This is Todd.

21  
22 CHAIRMAN SCOTT: Go ahead, Todd.

23  
24 TODD: Thank you. Yeah, I was just  
25 wondering during the committee meeting, was there any  
26 discussion and maybe this is what Jim was just saying,  
27 is there any discussion in trying to figure out a way  
28 of sort of testing, not a new design or anything like  
29 that, but testing in a limited way, a mail-in survey,  
30 so that -- the design wouldn't be specifically to, you  
31 know, compliment the current design that we're  
32 operating under, but to test some aspect of future  
33 mail-in efforts in case this continues, you know, for  
34 another year or some other type of epidemic takes  
35 place. So I thought maybe this was an opportunity to  
36 make some type of a very limited testing of  
37 supplementary type of design.

38  
39 Thanks.

40  
41 MR. FALL: Well, this is Jim again, I  
42 can respond to that.

43  
44 Yeah, Todd, I mean the mail-in option  
45 that we voted on, we did see it as basically  
46 experimental. We didn't know what kind of response  
47 rates we were going to achieve. We knew it would only  
48 work with a lot of effort and a lot of outreach. We  
49 didn't really talk about limiting that effort to a

50



1 subset of regions or communities because we wanted to  
2 maintain the design, as Lilly described, we wanted to  
3 retain that sampling design that the current approach  
4 has with the five regions and the randomly selected  
5 communities and the household targets there. So it  
6 was.....

7  
8 TODD: Right. Now, I understand. I  
9 just thought maybe this was the opportunity, though, to  
10 do sort of a real experimental test so that you're not  
11 trying -- the goal isn't to maintain the current  
12 sampling design, but to test some aspect for future  
13 problems like this.

14  
15 Thanks.

16  
17 MS. NAVES: I think that the Division  
18 of Subsistence is going through this effort through  
19 different projects that we conduct in partnership and  
20 on behalf of our partners. For instance, there is the  
21 Unalaska survey that it's going through lots of process  
22 of adaptation to kind of collect data despite the  
23 pandemic and, within the Division of Subsistence, lots  
24 of our work rely on in-person interaction for data  
25 collection, so since the beginning of the pandemic, we  
26 really have had at the forefront of our minds on  
27 alternatives and the approach and how to keep doing the  
28 work that you do, to some scale, despite the pandemic.

29  
30 So I think that we're going to learn  
31 from those efforts conducted by the Division of  
32 Subsistence.

33  
34 Another opportunity for that is within  
35 the context for the Emperor Goose Harvest Management  
36 Project that we have been conducting with PR funds,  
37 that project -- and they'll give an update about it  
38 later at this meeting, it has several components. One  
39 of the components were to conduct harvest surveys in  
40 under-surveyed areas in Alaska, specifically the Kodiak  
41 and Aleutian Islands. And those surveys were  
42 originally planned as in-person interviews so we  
43 realized that now that's not an option anymore. So we  
44 planned to adapt those harvest surveys that could be  
45 conducted in context of that project -- to be conducted  
46 with not in-person interaction, with likely mail option  
47 and we have worked with the local communities, starting  
48 working last spring on community concept to do the  
49 survey, but then the pandemic hit, but when we get -- I  
50

1 slow down on the fall season, we started again touching  
2 bases with those communities working on the village  
3 concept, to work on a modified version of those harvest  
4 surveys and we are going to propose an experimental  
5 mail survey for next project. So I think that there  
6 will be some experience gained within the projects  
7 conducted by the Division of Subsistence.

8

9 MR. FROST: Hi, this is Chuck Frost. I  
10 would like to weigh in on a couple things.

11

12 From a Fish and Wildlife perspective,  
13 one of our recommendations that Eric mentioned was  
14 development of online or mobile applications that would  
15 assist in the data collection or address the other  
16 bias' that are involved in the survey. And at least in  
17 the five years or so that I've been involved in these  
18 discussions, every year we talk about a different bias  
19 that was in the survey in the current year, whether it  
20 was households that didn't get surveyed that should  
21 have, or communities that didn't get surveyed that  
22 should have or potential to only survey high harvesters  
23 and that's why an estimate is high or a reason why an  
24 estimate is low. And a mobile application, while it  
25 wouldn't be the primary source of data collection, or  
26 an online tool would not be the primary source of data  
27 collection, just like a mail survey can't be counted on  
28 to be the primary source of data collection as we heard  
29 in our committee meeting, that a lot of those would  
30 just find their way to the trash like all the other  
31 things do. But the mobile application and the online  
32 tool, I mean we're in the year 2020 right now and  
33 online and mobile applications for data collection have  
34 existed for over 20 years, so it's not -- we shouldn't  
35 be far off from this. I mean the technology to do  
36 those things and to try them out is now being  
37 implemented by high school students in high school  
38 classes.

39

40 So we could use this time and money  
41 that we've got now not doing a survey this year, as  
42 Todd mentioned, to try out some of these other methods.  
43 Whether it's an experimental mail-in survey or  
44 concurrently mail-in surveys and online form to collect  
45 data and a mobile application that would address all of  
46 the other bias' that we deal with, whether it's recall  
47 bias, or timing bias, or response rates, these are all  
48 things that are going to continue to be a problem until  
49 we address them. And so from the Fish and Wildlife

50

1 perspective, our recommendation was to use the time and  
2 money that we've got now without doing the survey to  
3 start to explore some things that we haven't in the  
4 past.

5  
6 CHAIRMAN SCOTT: Great, thank you,  
7 Chuck. I know that, as Patty mentioned, we are --  
8 we're going to need to have a motion to vote on whether  
9 or not, on your recommendation, I guess. So I don't  
10 want to lose sight of that. Are there other comments  
11 or questions on this topic for Lilly or Jim or others.

12  
13 Mr. Simon.

14  
15 MR. SIMON: Hi. Thank you, all. Yeah,  
16 I think that, you know, the use of the internet and  
17 mobile apps, it's -- from an urban perspective, yes, it  
18 seems like this has been -- we're in the 2020, 21st  
19 Century, but rural Alaska is quite different. And I  
20 think that without expanded high speed internet  
21 capacities, increased cell phone service capabilities,  
22 that's going to continue to be a challenge for this  
23 kind of electronic approach to harvest reporting. And  
24 I know the Department of Fish and Game has been -- that  
25 some in the Department of Fish and Game have been  
26 advocating for moving to online reporting processes,  
27 but if you spend any time in rural Alaska you'll  
28 quickly learn that there are some capacity and  
29 infrastructure issues associated with making that move  
30 forward.

31  
32 One of the things that I've been  
33 contemplating since the Harvest Survey Committee  
34 meeting is whether or not in the next spring, whether  
35 or not there couldn't be, you know, the random  
36 community selection and household sample design  
37 deployed and perhaps sending out, like a harvest  
38 calendar kind of a situation, to help those chosen  
39 households in the communities -- selected communities  
40 to record their information throughout the season. I  
41 know in the past, anyhow, in the Kuskokwim salmon  
42 surveys, that has provided very quality information,  
43 but the response rates were very low for that Kuskokwim  
44 salmon process. But many people who did use those  
45 calendars each year, you know, when they were late  
46 being sent out or something, people would ask where are  
47 the -- where is my harvest calendar, and that might be  
48 something for the Harvest Survey Committee to consider  
49 after getting more Subsistence Division perspective on  
50

1 these alternative data collection approaches, you know,  
2 in light of the pandemic, to consider in the spring, so  
3 that that might be able to be mailed out.

4  
5 Now, that being said, you know, I live  
6 in sort of rural Alaska, I'm on the road system, but  
7 just to get a letter from Healy to where I live,  
8 between Delta Junction, it takes over two weeks for a  
9 regular piece of mail to reach me. And so we also have  
10 some serious postal service delivery challenges  
11 currently. But anyhow I think the mail out harvest  
12 calendar to that sample for the 2021 season might be  
13 something that I've, at least, want to continue to  
14 think about and to get the expertise of Liliana and  
15 others at the Subsistence Division as to how that might  
16 be able to help to let people know who -- if they are  
17 randomly selected so that they might do their recording  
18 on their harvest calendar through the spring and summer  
19 season. I know in my discussions and, Randy Mayo,  
20 please correct me if I've mischaracterized anything  
21 that you've shared with me recently, but, I believe  
22 that Randy would like to see an improvement of the  
23 local involvement in documenting the harvest and to  
24 really better address some of the local concerns about  
25 the accuracy of the information. I, personally, agree  
26 with what Jim and Liliana have said about this new  
27 sample design, research design that's been deployed. I  
28 don't think it is time to redesign it, but, again, I'll  
29 just circle back to, I wonder how harvest calendars  
30 might be able to help given these challenges.

31  
32 Hopefully the pandemic will be over and  
33 this will be moot and we can return to the existing  
34 program with face to face, but I do know that Randy has  
35 suggested that he would like to have more Harvest  
36 Survey Committee discussions about addressing some of  
37 the bias' both that the agency Staff have as well as  
38 tribal representatives have about this program.

39  
40 Thank you.

41  
42 MR. FROST: Hi, Jim, this is Chuck  
43 again. I totally -- I just want to clarify. I totally  
44 appreciate the comment about the connectivity issues in  
45 rural communities. And just to be clear, a mobile  
46 application does not mean connectivity is required or  
47 anything else. That would -- we wouldn't use that for  
48 the survey data collection per se but, you know, to  
49 keep a catalog in there could be an educational tool

50

1 that keeps a catalog of all the different species of  
2 waterfowl and their current statuses and things like  
3 this that somebody could look at and then if the  
4 misidentification potentially, species identification  
5 being asked six months later to identify the number and  
6 type of birds that were harvested, I think that's along  
7 the lines of what you're saying with your calendar. But  
8 they'd be able to just take a -- anyone that has a cell  
9 phone and could go out, take pictures of the things  
10 that were harvested, and then when the survey rolls  
11 around six months later, there you go, you saw that you  
12 took six of whatever species and five of this other one  
13 that you potentially didn't know what it was at the  
14 time and now you've got somebody there that can look at  
15 a picture and figure it out.

16

17 So that's primarily not for data  
18 collection for the survey but for education and data  
19 collection to address bias.

20

21 MR. SIMON: Yeah, thank you, Chuck.  
22 And if it's all right, Ryan, I could respond.

23

24 CHAIRMAN SCOTT: Yes, go ahead.

25

26 MR. SIMON: Yeah, I appreciate that  
27 Chuck. And let me just say that there are, like on the  
28 Kuskokwim River, the Kuskokwim River InterTribal Fish  
29 Commission in partnership with the Bering Sea  
30 Fishermens Association, we have been collecting in-  
31 season salmon harvest information using mobile apps  
32 with community-based surveyors, you know, young people  
33 from, I think it was only four communities this year,  
34 because of funding limitations, and they do record the  
35 information on their mobile app but then they have --  
36 we've worked with providing them access to be able to  
37 upload that information into some sort of server, I  
38 don't know the details of it, but that has been working  
39 well. But there are certain communities that there are  
40 greater challenges because even having teleconferences  
41 and the cell phone service and even regular land line  
42 service in some communities along the Kuskokwim make  
43 that very challenging and especially they're -- in some  
44 of those cases there's no smartphone capabilities, it's  
45 just voice.

46

47 So I'm not suggesting that we aren't in  
48 a position to be able to slowly move forward with more  
49 digital data collection efforts but I would perceive it

50

1 as simply in the beginning stages. And I don't know  
2 what the status is recently but I do know that the  
3 Division of Subsistence was using tablets to collect  
4 information and then finding a source to be able to --  
5 a connection to be able to upload that information, and  
6 that might also be something for us to talk about at  
7 the Harvest Survey Committee of now that the Division  
8 of Subsistence has experimented with that, how is it  
9 going and is that possibly a method that could slowly  
10 be integrated into migratory bird harvest monitoring.

11

12 Thanks.

13

14 CHAIRMAN SCOTT: Great. Thanks  
15 everybody for that. Any final questions or comments,  
16 because we do need to address the recommendation from  
17 the committee.

18

19 (No comments)

20

21 CHAIRMAN SCOTT: Okay. Lilly, Jim,  
22 others, do you feel like you got what you needed to at  
23 least move to the next step or in consideration, not  
24 looking for a final project, but do you need any other  
25 suggestions or guidance that you were looking for  
26 today?

27

28 MS. NAVES: I think that the  
29 recommendation of the Harvest Survey Committee focus on  
30 the first step of the decisionmaking process, mail  
31 survey or no survey. And so I think that the motion  
32 that would go with this recommendation would parallel  
33 with the intent of the recommendation.

34

35 Naturally, we are going to have to need  
36 a decision on how to reallocate the funds and efforts  
37 that otherwise would be put in a survey this year, so I  
38 think that I would like to ask guidance to the Council  
39 on the process to move forward with that other step of  
40 the decision. I think that there is a bit of  
41 complexity on considering what to do and all the ins  
42 and outs of online applications and such. I think that  
43 a larger discussion than we can complete at this  
44 meeting today and also it has budget implications  
45 because it involves reallocation of funds. So I think  
46 that recommendation from the committee providing  
47 guidance on how to move forward with the decisionmaking  
48 process would be helpful.

49

50

1 CHAIRMAN SCOTT: Okay, yeah, I can see  
2 that. But I also think that's a pretty complex  
3 discussion, I would imagine, and well down into the  
4 weeds.

5  
6 Uh. So I think what I would suggest,  
7 you know, depending on how others feel about it is that  
8 we take up a motion on the harvest survey, on the mail  
9 out survey on whether or not to conduct that this year  
10 and I think it'd be best if we voted on it and we have  
11 a record for it, just in case there's questions down  
12 the road.

13  
14 And then depending on the wishes of the  
15 Council, you know, we can go into that discussion on,  
16 you know, further guidance for the committee and I can  
17 envision that might be as simple as, you know, can the  
18 committee get together and bring some suggestions to  
19 us. And, you know, identify some of the details that  
20 we do need to think about, the budget aspect, you know,  
21 other things that I can't -- I don't know, you know.  
22 Or it could be a very long and in-depth discussion.  
23 But I, you know, we have about half an agenda yet to go  
24 today.

25  
26 So with that can I get a motion to  
27 adopt the recommendation from the Harvest Survey  
28 Committee.

29  
30 MS. EVANS: I'll make a motion.

31  
32 CHAIRMAN SCOTT: Thank you, Priscilla.  
33 Is there a second.

34  
35 MS. CHERNOFF: I'll second, this is  
36 Coral.

37  
38 CHAIRMAN SCOTT: Thank you, Coral. So  
39 we have a motion to adopt the recommendation and it's  
40 been seconded, any discussion -- further discussion on  
41 this.

42  
43 (No comments)

44  
45 CHAIRMAN SCOTT: Okay, hearing none,  
46 Patty, can you do a roll call vote on this one please.

47  
48 MS. SCHWALENBERG: Yep. Let's see  
49 where's my list.

50

1 (Pause)  
2  
3 MS. SCHWALENBERG: Hold on one second,  
4 just bear with me.  
5  
6 CHAIRMAN SCOTT: No worries.  
7  
8 MR. TAYLOR: Jim, this is Eric. I was  
9 wondering if you, again, could repeat the motion to  
10 make sure that everyone understands what we will be  
11 voting on.  
12  
13 Thank you.  
14  
15 CHAIRMAN SCOTT: Eric, did you want me  
16 to repeat that?  
17  
18 MR. TAYLOR: Yes, please.  
19  
20 CHAIRMAN SCOTT: Okay. Yeah, no  
21 problem.  
22  
23 So the motion we'll be voting on is to  
24 accept the recommendation from the Harvest Survey  
25 Committee to not conduct a mail out survey this year.  
26  
27 MR. TAYLOR: All right, thank you.  
28  
29 CHAIRMAN SCOTT: Yes, sir.  
30  
31 MS. SCHWALENBERG: Okay. Association  
32 of Village Council Presidents.  
33  
34 (No comments)  
35  
36 MS. SCHWALENBERG: Jennifer.  
37  
38 MS. HOOPER: Yeah, sorry, I'm trying to  
39 think here. Without having discussed with our Chair,  
40 I'd go with the recommendation of the committee.  
41  
42 MS. SCHWALENBERG: Okay. Bristol Bay  
43 Native Association. Heidi.  
44  
45 MS. KRITZ: Yes.  
46  
47 MS. SCHWALENBERG: Chugach Regional  
48 Resources Commission.  
49  
50



1 MS. EVANS: Yes.  
2  
3 MS. SCHWALENBERG: Ahtna InterTribal  
4 Resources Commission.  
5  
6 MS. STICKWAN: Yes.  
7  
8 MS. SCHWALENBERG: Kawerak.  
9  
10 MR. AHMASUK: Yes.  
11  
12 MS. SCHWALENBERG: Aleutian/Pribilof  
13 Island Association.  
14  
15 MR. DEVINE: No.  
16  
17 MS. SCHWALENBERG: Sun'aq Tribe of  
18 Kodiak.  
19  
20 MS. CHERNOFF: Yes.  
21  
22 MS. SCHWALENBERG: Maniilaq  
23 Association.  
24  
25 MR. HARRIS: Yes.  
26  
27 MS. SCHWALENBERG: North Slope Borough.  
28  
29 MS. HEPA: Hi. I just want to make it  
30 clear that the recommendation was not to do a survey in  
31 2020 and I support that recommendation.  
32  
33 MS. SCHWALENBERG: Thank you, Taqulik,  
34 that's correct. Tanana Chiefs Conference.  
35  
36 MR. MAYO: Yes.  
37  
38 MS. SCHWALENBERG: U.S. Fish and  
39 Wildlife Service.  
40  
41 MR. TAYLOR: Yes.  
42  
43 MS. SCHWALENBERG: And the Alaska  
44 Department of Fish and Game.  
45  
46 CHAIRMAN SCOTT: Yes.  
47  
48 MS. SCHWALENBERG: Mr. Chairman, the  
49 motion carries with one no vote.  
50

1 CHAIRMAN SCOTT: Okay, thank you,  
2 Patty. And thank you, Lilly and others who, you know,  
3 talked about this topic and so now I guess as a Council  
4 we need to decide are we going to go a little further  
5 in this discussion to help the committee move forward,  
6 provide some guidance with that or -- yeah, or we can  
7 leave it up to them, I guess, I don't know, you know,  
8 what the other option is.

9  
10 The other thing I am watching, you  
11 know, it's 12:17 now and so we're getting a little long  
12 in the tooth again, but what's the wishes of the  
13 committee, or the Council -- sorry.

14  
15 MR. TAYLOR: Mr. Chair, this is Eric  
16 Taylor.

17  
18 CHAIRMAN SCOTT: Please.

19  
20 MR. TAYLOR: I'll throw this to Lilly  
21 and ask her opinion as well as Jim, even though Jim's  
22 about ready to pack his bags here. And, again, I have  
23 not had a chance, Lilly, to catch up with Dave or  
24 Chuck, but do you think it would be worthwhile to  
25 reconvene the Harvest Committee now that the decision  
26 has been made not to conduct a mail-in survey for this  
27 coming year, and go back to determine -- try to answer  
28 the question that you posed in terms of how to allocate  
29 the funds that would normally be used to do the in-  
30 person survey, and then flesh out alternatives or  
31 priorities and then present that to the Council at a  
32 later date? I mean is that something that you think is  
33 viable?

34  
35 MS. NAVES: Yes. I think that the  
36 discussion is really going to have to be deeper to  
37 really get the ins and outs of different options, and  
38 also to consider a broader suite (ph) of options and a  
39 broader suite (ph) of priorities for the Council as a  
40 whole and not only the Harvest Survey Committee. So I  
41 think that this needs more kind of paperwork to develop  
42 alternatives and to narrow down alternatives. And I  
43 wonder if some of this decisionmaking responsibility  
44 may be beyond the Harvest Survey Committee because, for  
45 instance the AMBCC has a Budget Committee whose  
46 objective is to determine priorities and the allocation  
47 of funds. So maybe if you can include the Harvest  
48 Survey Committee, but other people, that would  
49 represent the Budget Committee or something like that,  
50

1 other people that should be included in this process.

2  
3 MR. TAYLOR: Yeah, that's a good point,  
4 Lilly, and I failed to mention that. But since this is  
5 Fish and Wildlife Service funding and it is tied to  
6 actually conducting a survey, I will -- I'll need to  
7 check in with our budget analyst, Will Lacy, as well as  
8 our grants and agreements personnel to see what kind of  
9 sideboards. I don't foresee a problem. This sort of  
10 situation that we all find ourselves in, the Service  
11 has been really flexible in looking at providing  
12 broader sideboards to address the questions, so I don't  
13 foresee that a problem, but I will -- I'll doublecheck  
14 and get back, but I don't foresee it a problem off my  
15 first blush.

16  
17 MS. NAVES: So is the understanding of  
18 the Council that the Budget Committee should be  
19 involved with this or is this in the hands of the  
20 Harvest Survey Committee?

21  
22 CHAIRMAN SCOTT: Well, certainly I  
23 think that ultimately there has to be a budget  
24 discussion but we really don't know what that'll look  
25 like or the framework of that until Eric has a chance  
26 to dig into the budget questions and can it be used for  
27 other things and so on and so forth.

28  
29 And you'd mentioned earlier that  
30 decisionmaking may be beyond the Harvest Committee's --  
31 the Survey Committee's responsibility, and that may be  
32 true, but I envision that that committee would actually  
33 -- and I'm going to go out on a limb, you know, based  
34 on what Eric said, that he doesn't anticipate any  
35 budgetary issues, then it's really difficult for the  
36 Council to -- it's a wide open question right now, you  
37 know, and we heard it during the discussion, and lots  
38 of great ideas. So at this point, I think the  
39 committee has it and should, you know, drive that train  
40 with coming up with ideas, and thinking about the  
41 details of how to implement them, and then we'd have to  
42 come back to the Council for a decision, ultimately.

43  
44 So I think you have the ability to  
45 frame it, the committee does, as you think is best, and  
46 then ultimately the decision will come back to the  
47 Council as a whole. I do recognize there's some, you  
48 know, there's some timing issues, right, I mean,  
49 obviously, that part goes without saying, and I'm not

50

1 sure how to overcome that just sitting here right now.  
2 But if the committee could convene soon, and start  
3 fleshing out ideas, I would encourage that. And then  
4 if we need to, you know, potentially we could even have  
5 a short Council meeting, or, you know, we can figure  
6 out a way to disseminate the information and get the  
7 input and a decision back from the Council as a whole.

8  
9 I think we can do all that stuff I just  
10 said.

11  
12 MS. NAVES: Okay.

13  
14 CHAIRMAN SCOTT: Does that work for  
15 other -- that's just me. And I should preface that. I  
16 mean does that work for other Council members?

17  
18 MR. TAYLOR: It works for me, Jim -- or  
19 Scott.

20  
21 CHAIRMAN SCOTT: I answer to  
22 everything, don't worry. Okay, great, well, I didn't  
23 hear any dissenting there, so -- and Lilly I'll touch  
24 base with you as well because I'm kind of -- I'm  
25 interested in this and we can connect and stay  
26 connected that way too.

27  
28 So, thank you for that.

29  
30 Thank you, Council members for voting  
31 on that and voicing recommendations, suggestions,  
32 concerns, those are all -- I think everything was valid  
33 and kind of got a little bit of a blank canvas right  
34 now to work on.

35  
36 So okay before we break for lunch --  
37 well, Lilly, was that all, I'm sorry that was -- I  
38 didn't mean to cut you off, did you have any more on  
39 the harvest survey?

40  
41 MS. NAVES: There is the report of the  
42 harvest assessment but maybe I can do that after lunch.

43  
44 CHAIRMAN SCOTT: That'd be great, thank  
45 you. I got a note from Brandon, he asked me to circle  
46 back around and he wanted to provide some additional  
47 information to the Council.

48  
49 So, Brandon, I apologize, I didn't go  
50

1 right to you after Coral but here's your chance.

2

3 MR. AHMASUK: That's no problem, thank  
4 you, Mr. Chair.

5

6 So actually in Coral's report it  
7 reminded me of something happening in our region. So  
8 she mentioned, I believe, wet lands, or eelgrass beds,  
9 so an ongoing problem for subsistence users here in the  
10 Nome area, east of Nome, the IPOPOP LLC Mining has been  
11 trying to get a mining permit for the Safety Sound  
12 area. The Safety Sound area, Bonanza Channel, it's a  
13 huge wetlands, you know, eelgrass, very abundant in the  
14 area, I believe it's been ongoing for about three  
15 years, at least, now. Again, many subsistence users in  
16 the area are very concerned. It's a very large mining  
17 operation. The -- I think in their report, they  
18 mentioned in a single season, spring to freeze-up,  
19 they're mining outfit can fill up a large football  
20 stadium in a single season. Where they're intending to  
21 mine, again, I can't stress this enough, you know, it's  
22 an eelgrass bed area, many resources including  
23 migratory birds, you know, it's an estuary, many birds  
24 land there, having their nests, laying their eggs in  
25 the immediate vicinity. Again, a very large concern  
26 for subsistence users in the Nome area. If granted,  
27 this operation has the very real -- I'm trying to think  
28 of the word -- it'll negatively impact subsistence  
29 users for a very, very long time.

30

31 The -- in the drilling program, you  
32 know, where they're trying to find the gold supposedly,  
33 I've heard that there is very little to no gold at all.  
34 If so, it's very, very deep, and their mining operation  
35 isn't even capable of getting down to the depth to get  
36 the gold anyway.

37

38 But, anyway, I just wanted to bring  
39 that up. Sorry, if I took a little bit too long, but,  
40 again, it's a concern of subsistence users, not just  
41 for migratory birds, but all resources in the area.

42

43 But, again, thank you, Mr. Chair.

44

45 CHAIRMAN SCOTT: Thank you, Brandon.  
46 and thanks for putting it out there. You know, after  
47 our discussion with Coral, I'm glad you said something  
48 so, you know, at least on Fish and Game's end I can  
49 poke around a little bit and find out, you know, how

50

1 engaged we've been and make sure that, you know, the  
2 concerns have been voiced and I imagine the Service  
3 would be in a similar position.

4  
5 All right, well, it's coming right up  
6 on 12:30 and I think we should probably take a break at  
7 this point and is an hour okay for folks, is that too  
8 much, any concerns or comments on that.

9  
10 MS. SCHWALENBERG: One hour is good.

11  
12 UNIDENTIFIED VOICE: It's good.

13  
14 CHAIRMAN SCOTT: Okay. Well, folks,  
15 let's break now for lunch and we'll go for an hour so  
16 we'll meet back here at 1:30 p.m. And, Patty, are you  
17 just going to leave this up and running?

18  
19 MS. SCHWALENBERG: Yes, I am.

20  
21 CHAIRMAN SCOTT: Okay, great. Okay,  
22 everybody, we'll see you in about an hour and the  
23 meeting will be open and you can stay logged on or call  
24 back in. Enjoy your lunch.

25  
26 (Off record)

27  
28 (On record)

29  
30 CHAIRMAN SCOTT: On the agenda we're  
31 still in old business and Lilly, I think you were still  
32 on. It looks like you probably covered 2020 harvest  
33 data collection but you had a few more topics you  
34 wanted to discuss.

35  
36 MS. NAVES: Yes, thank you, Mr.

37 Chairman.

38  
39 The report for the harvest assessment  
40 is on Page 166 in the meeting package and it overlaps  
41 well with the icons on the meeting agenda but not  
42 completely so I will go back and forth between these  
43 two lists of items.

44  
45 At some point here I will ask to share  
46 my screen, Patty, if you could please help me with this  
47 when time comes and that's going to be in a few minutes  
48 from here.

49  
50

1 MS. SCHWALENBERG: Sure.

2

3 MS. NAVES: Thank you. So in the -- I  
4 usually provide a report on work completed and ongoing  
5 work from the harvest assessment at every AMBCC  
6 meeting. In the last spring meeting was Bridget, so  
7 this time I will provide a report going back to October  
8 last year. Catching up on where we stopped after the  
9 fall AMBCC meeting.

10

11 Soon after the fall meeting, after the  
12 AMBCC last year, I worked with Dave Otis to do the  
13 third optimal allocation analysis, the third round,  
14 third and final round of optimal allocation analysis  
15 for the sampling design of the harvest survey so that  
16 specifically is the number of communities that you  
17 survey per region, the number of households surveyed in  
18 each surveyed community and we put together a report  
19 for that and that report starts on Page 167 of the  
20 meeting package. It outlines the sampling design that  
21 we work on -- that had started working on for the 2019  
22 survey and the plan, along with the survey review is  
23 that we stick with that for at least five years before  
24 changing it again. So that was the closing work of the  
25 survey review, that we work together with the Colorado  
26 State University team between 2004 [sic] and 2019, five  
27 full years on this survey review process. So that  
28 report is in your materials there.

29

30 Also other work recently completed, I  
31 would like to talk about the 2018 final harvest survey  
32 report. And I would like to ask to share my screen,  
33 please. I think I can do that here.

34

35 And this report got a little delayed  
36 because, I mean finalizing and completing the report  
37 because we had a little delay on the review of the data  
38 but we completed it recently and finalized the report,  
39 and I'm working to send the hard copies in the mail and  
40 the electronic copy is already available online. So  
41 what you are seeing on the screen there is the cover of  
42 the report and the -- things are moving a little slower  
43 on my side.

44

45 So every year on the cover of the  
46 report, I try to find a picture that depicts people and  
47 birds in Alaska Native cultures and the broader context  
48 as a whole. So for the 2018 report I highlighted  
49 presentation of Native partners and the representation

50

1 of indigenous cultures in the meeting of the American  
2 Ornithological Society that happened here in Anchorage  
3 last summer. So there on this group of pictures is  
4 Cyrus Harris there on the T off diversity, so you can  
5 go down here -- there's always a caption that give the  
6 context of what's on the picture. So here on the  
7 caption of the cover picture it has a summary of all  
8 the activities, events and the participation of Native  
9 partners, the AMBCC representatives and otherwise  
10 partners too of that meeting. It was a big bird  
11 meeting, nationwide, and also international, because  
12 the American Ornithological Society is the biggest bird  
13 association in the world. So that is about the 2018  
14 report.

15  
16 So now the cat's out of the bag, the  
17 report is out.

18  
19 Ongoing work also it refers back to  
20 what we already discussed, the options for avoiding in-  
21 person interactions for data.

22  
23 So the next item is an update of the  
24 Shorebird Outreach Project in the YK Delta. So that  
25 one's based on working with kids and schools in the YK  
26 Delta and local teachers and under the pandemic we  
27 discussed it with many partners, that was not really an  
28 option, we didn't think that was viable to try remote  
29 interactions for that because the schools themselves  
30 are already facing many challenges. So we postponed  
31 the project until fall next year and when we start  
32 coming to that spot next fall we will reassess what the  
33 recommendation to take on again on this work.

34  
35 Now, I'd like to go to an agenda item  
36 and the talk about the transition of Staff at the  
37 Division of Subsistence of Fish and Game. So as you  
38 know I supervise a position there and in the past that  
39 used to be Jackie Keating that was there for a couple  
40 of years but Jackie moved into another position into  
41 the Division of Subsistence around November or December  
42 last year and that position was vacant for about eight  
43 months. In June this year we were eventually able to  
44 complete the hiring process for that position and I  
45 would like to take this opportunity to introduce Laura  
46 Minjack (ph), that now works with our group. So this  
47 position, just a little background there, it's largely  
48 supported by grants projects and the -- so Laura has a  
49 bachelors in ecology and a Masters in fisheries and  
50



1 wildlife sciences. She has the specific education and  
2 the experience and lots of interesting human dimensions  
3 of wildlife, management and conservation and  
4 specifically related to birds. So Laura is active with  
5 the human dimensions working groups of the Wildlife  
6 Society and the North American Bird Conservation  
7 Initiative. So Laura has been, already, since June,  
8 she kind of went on running and she brings lots of new  
9 perspectives and fresh perspectives and new connections  
10 to our group. For instance it was via Laura's  
11 connections there with the North American Bird  
12 Conservation Initiative that she put us in touch with  
13 the editors of this book on indigenous participation in  
14 wildlife management. So it's nice to be in touch with  
15 other experiences that indigenous people have in  
16 wildlife management in the Lower 48 so this has been, I  
17 think a project with lots of potential.

18  
19 So maybe I'd like to put Laura on the  
20 spot and see if she'd like to say a couple of words  
21 there on her behalf.

22  
23 Laura: Hi everyone. I'll turn my  
24 camera on so that people can see me. I know we're not  
25 in person so trying to get a little bit more personal.  
26 But thanks Lilly for introducing me. I'm excited to be  
27 here and to be involved in these efforts and I'm  
28 excited to bring my experience and my perspectives and  
29 hopefully have some helpful skills to help move forward  
30 especially in these interesting and really challenging  
31 times. I have a particular interest in working with  
32 people, a background in social science and wildlife  
33 sciences and I am very excited about doing work that  
34 involves human communities and bird communities.

35  
36 MS. NAVES: Thanks Laura. So Laura is  
37 deeply involved on the Emperor Goose Harvest Management  
38 project that we are working on. And she'll get into  
39 the shorebird outreach project when we eventually get  
40 to work on that. And she's also been happening with  
41 different things related to the AMBCC work that we do.

42  
43 But I think that making the connection  
44 there to the Emperor Goose Harvest Management project,  
45 this is the next item on the update there that I would  
46 like to cover.

47  
48 So quick background there about a  
49 couple of years ago the Division of Subsistence put a  
50

1 research proposal together to address aspects of  
2 Emperor goose harvest management. We got funding from  
3 the PR Program for that with match from the Division of  
4 Subsistence and that project has different components.  
5 And a few of these components directly relate to  
6 gathering stakeholder perspective and different kinds  
7 of stakeholders so we thought it would have all the  
8 bases covered. So one of the components of this  
9 project was a survey of fall/winter permit holders, I  
10 mean Emperor goose harvest, fall/winter harvest  
11 permit holders, and that is largely completed. We sent  
12 mail surveys to everyone that got a permit for Emperor  
13 goose fall/winter harvest in 2018 and 2019. The main  
14 line there, that would be how to get input from people  
15 participating in the fall harvest and understood that  
16 that would also cover largely sport hunters. We have a  
17 preliminary draft off of the analysis that came back of  
18 that survey and we review it and sometime soon here  
19 share it with AMBCC's partners for your review and  
20 input. So having that wrapped up we move into another  
21 component of this project that was a separate,  
22 different survey to gather expert opinion of managers,  
23 biologists and conservation professionals, people that  
24 have been actively involved in Emperor goose research  
25 -- I don't know if I said biologists there, but  
26 biologists are included too, but people that are  
27 involved with Emperor goose research and management  
28 conservation. So we structured that as (indiscernible)  
29 process, that is a process where we do -- they're  
30 planning on three rounds. First we start with a more  
31 comprehensive survey, analyze the results of that, send  
32 back to people to people that respond and do that once  
33 more. The goal there is to identify common ground and  
34 kind of stuff where people agree and also disagree. So  
35 Laura has been super helpful in implementing that. Due  
36 to the pandemic and also because of considerations on  
37 providing confidentiality of the information that  
38 people offer, Laura was key in implementing this is an  
39 online survey, we also had an option of a paper option  
40 for the survey and also even had people that called to  
41 answer the survey over the phone. So we had different  
42 ways there for people to provide information. And  
43 Laura completed the first, the analysis of this first  
44 round and soon here we are going to send out the second  
45 round. So I believe that most everyone on this meeting  
46 here received the survey, thank you for participating  
47 there, it's really key to have representation from  
48 Natives, State, biologists, managers and conservations  
49 [sic] and to have a broad range of perspectives there.  
50

1 You'll be hearing from us soon again on this. So  
2 please keep engaged with us on that process and I'm  
3 hopeful that you'll come up with something in the end  
4 there that I think that's going to help the group move  
5 forward as you work in the review of the Emperor Goose  
6 Management Plan.

7  
8 So now you address, sporthunters,  
9 managers, biologists, so we have another component that  
10 specifically address perspectives of subsistence users.  
11 We had to break it down on different components like  
12 that was the way to reach into the different  
13 demographics more efficiently, is different, the  
14 questions that will be asking it's a little bit  
15 different (indiscernible) break this down to  
16 differentiate the approaches.

17  
18 So for getting from the subsistence  
19 users. First, we had planned to do that as in-group,  
20 group, in-person, focus group kind of interview, tag it  
21 to the original meetings -- the meetings of the  
22 regional bird councils, but with the pandemic that fell  
23 apart. So we had to adapt and instead of doing group,  
24 in-person interviews, we're going forward with that as  
25 key respondent interviews to be conducted over the  
26 phone. So a few weeks ago I sent to all AMBCC partners  
27 in the regions where Emperor goose occur, I sent the  
28 draft interview questions for this interview and ask  
29 your help reviewing that and providing help as we  
30 compile a list of potential key respondent candidates.  
31 And so I had asked you guys to provide input on that by  
32 October 2nd, which is a few days from now so I'm going  
33 to send an email tomorrow asking you, please, to help  
34 with that. So when you get this email this is about  
35 what it is. And the idea is to conduct those  
36 interviews in fall/winter now coming.

37  
38 Another component of that project that  
39 I would like to talk about, bird harvest surveys, I  
40 already briefly mentioned this before, in this meeting  
41 today, bird harvest surveys that were planned from the  
42 Kodiak and Aleutian areas, those are areas that are  
43 considered under-surveyed, or it just means that there  
44 is a lack of information on harvest there for Emperor  
45 goose and those regions that are not covered by the  
46 AMBCC five region survey, so we had planned to do  
47 harvest surveys in a few communities in this areas and  
48 it was going to be a one year only in each community,  
49 but, again, with Covid, that became no longer an option  
50

1 so we are adapting plans to make that as mail survey  
2 and we will get back in touch with the communities  
3 regarding community consent later this fall/winter.

4  
5 Are there questions about any of this  
6 information that I shared, or comments.

7  
8  
9 (No comments)

10  
11 MS. NAVES: Okay, so the other item  
12 that I would like to cover on the ongoing and the  
13 upcoming work is that we completed the 2019 data  
14 collection for the harvest survey in kind of  
15 March/April this year so that was when the pandemic was  
16 already affecting us all so that also affected data  
17 collection and we fell a little short of the sampling  
18 goal there in some regions more than others. And I was  
19 a little apprehensive of what that was going to do to  
20 the harvest estimates so I followed the same model that  
21 we have done working with Dave Otis from Colorado State  
22 in previous year in the context of the optimal location  
23 analysis and I did a little evaluation of the  
24 performance of the survey on terms of what that makes  
25 the confidence coefficient of variance and such and I  
26 will say that the results are mostly adequate. I was  
27 happily surprised that things are better than what I  
28 was expecting. So I think we see some things that is a  
29 little bit of different from some years, for instance,  
30 in the Bristol Bay area, some ducks that are usually  
31 reported as harvest didn't appear on the survey this  
32 year. But when you look at the big picture, the  
33 statewide estimates, things are mostly in line what we  
34 usually see and the performance in terms of coefficient  
35 of variation are within largely the range of what I had  
36 seen the last couple of years. I don't think that  
37 there is a major concern there that this was an  
38 (indiscernible) impact on the survey so of course we  
39 want to do better than that but given the conditions we  
40 had this year, I think it's mostly adequate.

41  
42 So this performance analysis and draft  
43 harvest estimates are all packaged as a set of tables  
44 in a few pages of discussion that was distributed to  
45 the partners a few weeks ago. And I work with -- and  
46 that's the tables for all the regions. So for the next  
47 round of meetings of the regional bird councils, I work  
48 with them to set summary set of tables that belong to  
49 their individual regions so we can work together on the  
50

1 data review for 2019 and we should be prepared to work  
2 on adoption of the 2019 estimates in the spring meeting  
3 next year. So let's be in touch during winter and next  
4 spring here to work on that together.

5  
6 Jim and Laura, have I forgot about  
7 anything, or anything that you would like to add there?

8  
9 MR. FALL: I don't have anything.

10  
11 Laura: Me neither.

12  
13 MS. NAVES: Okay, thanks. Are there  
14 questions or comments.

15  
16 MR. TAYLOR: Lilly, this is Eric. Just  
17 a quick comment. I wanted to compliment you and Laura  
18 on the Emperor goose management survey that you  
19 designed and implemented that I completed. I thought  
20 it was extremely well done. I thought it was extremely  
21 well done. I thought your questions were very relevant  
22 and covered a full gamut of diversity. So anyway well  
23 done on that. I really look forward to hearing the  
24 results on that.

25  
26 So, thank you.

27  
28 MS. NAVES: Thanks, Eric. Yeah, really  
29 hopeful that this will help us in the decisionmaking  
30 process as we move forward. I really appreciate the  
31 input of everyone there and reviewing. Because every  
32 time that you put a survey out like that, that had been  
33 reviewed by a number of people and we have to do pilot  
34 tests off of each time that you put a survey out so  
35 thank you very much help in reviewing and providing  
36 positive and negative feedback on how those things are  
37 designed and constructed and helping us piloting  
38 surveys and also answering the surveys because that's  
39 the final goal.

40  
41 So thank you very much.

42  
43 UNIDENTIFIED VOICE: Quyana.

44  
45 CHAIRMAN SCOTT: All right, well, thank  
46 you, Lilly. And, Laura, welcome aboard. That's great  
47 that we've got some new faces in the Division and a lot  
48 of information there and a lot of work so thank you so  
49 much. And I'll echo Eric's comments, I thought the

50

1 survey was done very well and looking forward to seeing  
2 the results as well.

3

4 Any other questions for Lilly.

5

6 (No comments)

7

8 CHAIRMAN SCOTT: Nice job, you answered  
9 them all.

10

11 All right, thank you again you guys.

12

13 So moving through the agenda we're up  
14 to new business and first on the list is a briefing  
15 from Todd Sanders, Fish and Wildlife Service Pacific  
16 Flyaway Council representative.

17

18 Todd, you have the floor.

19

20 MR. SANDERS: Yeah, thank you, Mr.  
21 Chair. Can you hear me okay?

22

23 CHAIRMAN SCOTT: Yes, sir, loud and  
24 clear.

25

26 MR. SANDERS: Great, thank you. So  
27 this is Todd Sanders with the Fish and Wildlife Service  
28 Migratory Bird Program at Headquarters. I'm going to  
29 provide a brief overview of four activities in our  
30 program.

31

32 The first is the Migratory Bird Treaty  
33 Act scope. The Fish and Wildlife Service has been  
34 working to define the scope of the Migratory Bird  
35 Treaty Act, particularly related to incidental take.  
36 We published a proposed rule in February and a draft  
37 environmental impact statement in June with a 45 day  
38 open comment period. The purpose of the proposed rule  
39 and environmental impact statement is to codify the  
40 Solicitor's opinion about the scope of the Migratory  
41 Bird Treaty Act. Specifically, that the Act prohibits  
42 -- prohibitions apply only to affirmative actions that  
43 happens for the purpose of taking or killing of  
44 migratory birds, their nests or their eggs. We've been  
45 preparing to publish a final environmental impact  
46 statement and Final Rule. Recently, on August 11th a  
47 District Court ordered that the Solicitor's opinion be  
48 vacated, the summary judgment indicated that the  
49 opinion was unlawful with the Administrative Procedures

50

1 Act and contrary to the plain meaning of the Migratory  
2 Bird Treaty Act. Thus, we continue to wait for  
3 guidance from the Department of Interior. First, we  
4 wait for guidance on what our current interpretation of  
5 the scope of the Migratory Bird Treaty Act is in light  
6 of the vacated Solicitor's opinion; and, second, how to  
7 move forward with the Final EIS and Rule.

8  
9 The current interpretation of the scope  
10 of the Migratory Bird Treaty Act would be the no action  
11 alternative in the Final EIS. So we continue to wait  
12 for guidance there. We'll keep the AMBCC informed as  
13 the rulemaking process continues. If the Final EIS and  
14 Rule are published, they may be challenged in court  
15 similar to the Solicitor's opinion. So we'll keep you  
16 informed on that.

17  
18 The next issue is common ravens.  
19 Common ravens have increased in abundance in some areas  
20 in the Western United States in association with the  
21 anthropogenic changes across the landscape. Increased  
22 raven abundance has resulted in increased complaints  
23 and concerns about impacts to imperiled species, human,  
24 health and safety and agriculture. At the May meeting  
25 I provided that the Fish and Wildlife Service has  
26 formed a working group to work through a formal  
27 framework to address the conflict and develop a  
28 management strategies. We've been requesting  
29 information to better understand the conflicts and  
30 management options. We did this via public and tribal  
31 webinars, tribal consultations and an online portal  
32 where we accepted information. The working group is  
33 preparing a technical document to present and review  
34 available information to help inform possible  
35 management options. This document is expected this  
36 fall. And once we have that I expect the Service will  
37 then make a decision about what management options to  
38 pursue. We recognize that it's a complex issue and  
39 that it may require short and long-term solutions and  
40 multiple scales. For example, reducing anthropogenic  
41 subsidies, improving prey species habitats, and  
42 possibly direct actions on ravens including non-lethal  
43 and possibly lethal methods. If there is a need for  
44 any new regulations that would need to be proposed for  
45 public comment and may also require the development of  
46 an environmental impact statement. So that's some --  
47 any new regulations that would come from this are a  
48 ways down the road. We haven't started drafting  
49 anything in that regard. As I mentioned, the technical  
50

1 document is in preparation now, and the next step would  
2 be to look at that technical document and the  
3 management options that are identified there and  
4 figuring out how to move forward.

5  
6 The next item is the general hunting  
7 regulations. We recently published final regulations  
8 for the current fall/winter hunting season at the start  
9 of this month. Significant changes in the regulations  
10 include a reduction in the Emperor goose quota in  
11 Alaska from 1,000 to 500 birds. Also Scaup and Pintail  
12 abundances are well below their long-term averages,  
13 nationally, that's 28 and 42 percent below the long-  
14 term averages, and this has resulted in reduced bag  
15 limits of one or two birds for each of these species  
16 across the country. This, however, does not apply to  
17 Alaska, Alaska is exempt from these regulations.

18  
19 We're in the middle of the rulemaking  
20 process for the next hunting season. There are a few  
21 proposed changes at this point. We do expect Scaup and  
22 Pintail restrictions will continue in all four flyaways  
23 outside of Alaska. We also expect to remove some  
24 restrictions in Oregon and Washington that would  
25 increase the light goose bag limits up to the 20 per  
26 day allowed in the Pacific Flyaway.

27  
28 Finally, in regard to habitat  
29 conditions in spring and fall, available data indicates  
30 generally good conditions in waterfowl breeding areas  
31 and drought conditions in the contiguous Pacific  
32 Flyaway and that is persisting into the fall and may  
33 very well persist into the winter. So birds may find  
34 drought conditions when they migrate south of their  
35 breeding ranges.

36  
37 Lastly, subsistence hunting  
38 regulations. The AMBCC proposed subsistence hunting  
39 regulations for the next season have been endorsed by  
40 the Pacific Flyaway Council, they will be considered by  
41 the Service Regulations Committee in October and then  
42 we will publish those proposals for public comment. I  
43 think you're all aware that there is two changed  
44 proposals. One has to do with Emperor goose eggging,  
45 and the other has to do with upper Copper River region  
46 permit for invitational hunting.

47  
48 So just a reminder that the October SRC  
49 meeting is scheduled for October 20th and 21st. And we  
50



1 would hope that there would be AMBCC representation  
2 there should there be any questions at that meeting.

3  
4 Thank you, Mr. Chair, that concludes my  
5 briefing.

6  
7 CHAIRMAN SCOTT: Thank you, Todd. Any  
8 questions for Todd.

9  
10 MR. AHMASUK: Mr. Chair, this is  
11 Brandon.

12  
13 CHAIRMAN SCOTT: Go ahead, Brandon.

14  
15 MR. AHMASUK: Todd, maybe I heard it  
16 wrong, were you saying there was a limit on white goose  
17 harvest, 20?

18  
19 MR. SANDERS: Yes, that is correct.  
20 There is a general framework for snow goose hunting in  
21 the Pacific Flyaway and the bag limit associated with  
22 that framework is 20 per day and it'd be 60 in  
23 possession, but, yes, 20 per day. Now, we do have  
24 restrictions in certain areas where we're concerned  
25 about specific populations of snow geese, for example,  
26 Wrangell Island snow geese that winter primarily in  
27 Oregon, Washington but also parts of California, so in  
28 those areas where we have, in the past, been concerned  
29 about that population, specifically Wrangell Island  
30 snow geese, there were restrictions that were a daily  
31 bag limit fewer than the 20 allowed for the Flyaway,  
32 but now that Wrangell Island snow goose are doing very  
33 well and well over the objective, we're now removing  
34 some of those restrictions.

35  
36 So that's the change I think you would  
37 expect. Coming forward for this next year is that  
38 those restrictions down to six snow geese per day in  
39 Oregon and Washington will be relaxed and 20 per day  
40 would be the standard bag limit.

41  
42 MR. AHMASUK: Oh, okay, maybe that's  
43 where I'm getting confused. So this is the sport hunt  
44 and for Oregon and Washington?

45  
46 MR. SANDERS: Yeah, that's correct.

47  
48 MR. AHMASUK: Oh.

49  
50

1 MR. SANDERS: I'm talking about the  
2 fall season, the general fall/winter season is where I  
3 was talking about those restrictions would be removed.

4  
5 MR. AHMASUK: Okay. Okay. I was  
6 getting it confused with the spring/summer subsistence  
7 harvest and with the -- I believe it was the Service  
8 talking about harvest as many snow geese as you want.

9  
10 MR. SANDERS: Yeah, my apologies if  
11 there was any confusion there.

12  
13 MR. AHMASUK: Okay.

14  
15 MR. SANDERS: There is no bag limit for  
16 the spring/summer subsistence season for snow geese or  
17 other species -- snow geese species.

18  
19 MR. AHMASUK: Okay, thank you for that  
20 clarification.

21  
22 CHAIRMAN SCOTT: Other questions for  
23 Todd. Jim, go ahead.

24  
25 MR. SIMON: Yeah, Todd, sorry I may  
26 have not understood your discussions about the  
27 inadvertent take. So what was the -- could you review  
28 that again, briefly?

29  
30 MR. SANDERS: Are you talking about the  
31 scope of the Migratory Bird Treaty Act?

32  
33 MR. SIMON: Yeah, so it's -- was a  
34 determination that it only applies to intentional  
35 efforts to take and that -- but what I got confused by  
36 was that the Solicitor's opinion was vacated, which  
37 opinion?

38  
39 MR. SANDERS: Yeah, that's correct. So  
40 we've been trying to define the scope of the Migratory  
41 Bird Treaty Act, whether or not that specifically  
42 addresses accidental or incidental take or not and  
43 about three years ago the Solicitor's office issued a  
44 new Solicitor's opinion that indicated that the  
45 prohibitions in the Migratory Bird Treaty Act applied  
46 only to purposeful take. And so now we've been working  
47 to develop -- go through the rulemaking process to  
48 codify that in regulations. As we worked through that,  
49 yes, you are correct, in that I reported that on August  
50

1 11th the District Court did vacate that Solicitor's  
2 opinion and has indicated that it was unlawful and  
3 inconsistent with the Administrative Procedures Act.  
4 Now, some of that can be corrected, at least the  
5 Administrative Procedures Act part of it could likely  
6 be corrected by working through the rulemaking process,  
7 the proposed and Final rules. Now the court also  
8 raised some other issues that I'm not sure that would  
9 necessarily be corrected through that process, which is  
10 that the Solicitor's opinion was inconsistent with the  
11 plain or simple language of the Migratory Bird Treaty  
12 Act. So if there is a Final Rule that moves forward,  
13 it's likely this will be challenged similar to the  
14 Solicitor's opinion.

15  
16 Does that help.

17  
18 MR. SIMON: Thank you, Todd. Thank  
19 you, Todd, very much. Thank you.

20  
21 CHAIRMAN SCOTT: Other questions or  
22 comments for Todd.

23  
24 MS. STICKWAN: I had a question.

25  
26 CHAIRMAN SCOTT: Gloria, we can't quite  
27 hear you?

28  
29 MS. STICKWAN: I had a question about  
30 the Upper Copper River (indiscernible - fades out).

31  
32 CHAIRMAN SCOTT: Sure, go ahead, yeah.  
33 Having a hard time hearing you but we'll give it a  
34 whirl.

35  
36 (Pause)

37  
38 MS. STICKWAN: I just had a question  
39 about the Upper Copper River hunt.

40  
41 CHAIRMAN SCOTT: Okay, what's your  
42 question, go ahead.

43  
44 MS. STICKWAN: Have they considered  
45 about that?

46  
47 MR. SANDERS: Yes, so the two proposals  
48 from the spring, both from the Alaska Migratory Bird  
49 Co-Management Council will be going before the  
50

1 Service's Regulations Committee in October. So that's  
2 just the normal process. They would be heard by the  
3 Service Regulations Committee and they would decide  
4 whether or not to move forward with those. If we do  
5 move forward with those and I assume we would, then we  
6 would publish those in the Federal Register for public  
7 comment and then finalize those in a following rule.

8  
9 But it was just a reminder that those  
10 two proposals are moving forward in the normal process,  
11 and that the Service Regulation Committee is coming up  
12 in October, middle of October to consider those  
13 proposals. They have been in -- they have already been  
14 supported by the Pacific Flyaway Council.

15  
16 CHAIRMAN SCOTT: Did that answer your  
17 question, Gloria?

18

19 MS. STICKWAN: Yes.

20

21 CHAIRMAN SCOTT: And I'll just hit on  
22 something that Todd mentioned having, you know, AMBCC  
23 engagement in that meeting. I'm not sure, and Todd you  
24 can probably help us out here, I'm not sure how that  
25 works and it seems like Patty and maybe Patty attends  
26 that, normally I would be there as well but I have a  
27 conflict for that meeting. So we have identified an  
28 alternate to sit on the SRC for me and I'll be sure to  
29 touch base with the two people who will be going for  
30 the Pacific Flyaway Council as well.

31

32 That's a good reminder, thank you,  
33 Todd.

34

35 MS. SCHWALENBERG: And I'll be on the  
36 line as well, Mr. Chair.

37

38 CHAIRMAN SCOTT: Great. Yeah, that's  
39 perfect. Other questions or comments.

40

41 (No comments)

42

43 CHAIRMAN SCOTT: Okay, well, hearing  
44 none, thank you Todd for joining us as usual and it's  
45 good to hear from you and hopefully everything's okay  
46 down in your neck of the woods.

47

48 MR. SANDERS: Thank you, Mr. Chair.

49

50

1 CHAIRMAN SCOTT: All right, moving on  
2 in new business. It looks like Julian, you're going to  
3 provide some migratory bird population status and  
4 trends information for us.

5  
6 MR. FISCHER: Yeah, good afternoon.  
7 How's my audio coming through?

8  
9 CHAIRMAN SCOTT: Loud and clear.

10  
11 MR. FISCHER: Okay. Well, hello  
12 everybody. My name's Julian Fischer. I work with the  
13 Migratory Bird Program in Anchorage in the Waterfowl  
14 Survey Program.

15  
16 Each meeting I typically provide an  
17 update on what our survey program is coming up with,  
18 results from our aerial surveys. Like much of what has  
19 been discussed in the meeting today about activities of  
20 the AMBCC so is true for much of our survey activities  
21 this year. So I do not actually have much new  
22 information to report in terms of status and trends but  
23 I'm going to try to run through this presentation at a  
24 much more rapid rate.

25  
26 But a lot of the numbers that you'll be  
27 seeing are equal to what was presented at the last  
28 meeting.

29  
30 So there's a few new pieces of  
31 information that are out there and I'm going to share  
32 my screen. Let's see here.

33  
34 (Pause)

35  
36 MR. FISCHER: Can you see the screen  
37 here or what do you see?

38  
39 MR. TAYLOR: Yep, we see it Julian.

40  
41 MR. FISCHER: Good presentation?

42  
43 MR. TAYLOR: Yep.

44  
45 MR. FISCHER: Okay. As you know, the  
46 Waterfowl Program is primarily an aerial survey  
47 program. We do aerial surveys around the state and we  
48 are staffed by pilots, biologists and supported by two  
49 quantitative ecologists, both of whom are on the call

50

1 today, Eric (Indiscernible) and Chuck Frost.

2  
3 In short our surveys are primarily  
4 during the breeding season and in the lower right you  
5 can see an aircraft going along a transect line we  
6 count birds out to 200 meters on either side of the  
7 aircraft. We use microphones that are equipped with a  
8 laptop computer. That computer is also attached to a  
9 GPS receiver. When we report an observation we are  
10 marking that bird at a particular location at a  
11 particular time and then use that information to come  
12 up with density estimates of birds within the surveyed  
13 area and then population estimates from that. The crew  
14 is trained in aerial identification of waterfowl and  
15 flock size estimation.

16  
17 This map shows the general location of  
18 our primary surveys. Here in the middle is, in this  
19 teal color, is the area that's surveyed during a survey  
20 that's done throughout the continent. This is the  
21 portion that we do, it's called the North American  
22 Waterfowl Breeding, Population and Habitat Survey. As  
23 you can see the lines within those polygons are  
24 relatively far apart so this gives us a very broad  
25 brush look at the densities in a particular year over a  
26 very broad geographic area. The North Slope was not  
27 included in the primary development of this survey back  
28 in the '50s but we do an aerial survey up there with a  
29 separate aircraft at the same time to make sure that  
30 that important waterfowl production area is  
31 represented. And we also have a breeding pair survey  
32 here on the Western Coast of the Yukon Delta. That was  
33 set up in the mid-1980s during the goose crises and it  
34 was linked in with the Hooper Bay Agreement and the  
35 Yukon Delta Goose Management Plan.

36  
37 Okay, so from that large scale survey,  
38 the North American Survey, I've just presented some of  
39 the very long-term population abundance estimates.  
40 These are -- of ducks -- ducks that are reported and  
41 Liliana Naves' subsistence harvest survey as some of  
42 the most important resources in Alaska. The time  
43 period for each of these graphs is from the mid-1960s  
44 through 2019 and there on the left, the left two  
45 figures, mallards and pigeons, a couple of dabbling  
46 ducks, both of those, in Alaska, increased quite a bit  
47 from the mid-1960s up through about year 2000 and then  
48 it dropped a bit since then and been relatively stable  
49 for the last five to 10 years or so. Pintails in  
50

1 Alaska have been variable but there hasn't been a  
2 significantly large change statewide in the numbers.  
3 Outside of Alaska, as Todd mentioned in his  
4 presentation a few minutes ago, numbers are well below  
5 average. Scaup, here, you can see within the last 10  
6 years, numbers of Scaup have been much lower than in  
7 the past. This is consistent with what we're seeing  
8 across North America, also reported by Todd just now.  
9 And the sport regulations have been adjusted in the  
10 Lower 48 states to be more restrictive for both  
11 Pintails and Scaup for this reason.

12  
13 Earlier in the meeting today I heard  
14 Randy Mayo mention the change in water bodies in the  
15 Interior parts of Alaska, a decline in the total water  
16 surface area and the shrinking of ponds. That has been  
17 one change in the habitat that has been implicated for  
18 the change in numbers of Scaup, at least lesser Scaup  
19 that breed there. Similarly white-wing scoters, and  
20 surf scoters breed in the Interior and may be suffering  
21 the loss of water bodies in that region.

22  
23 Okay. So up on the North Slope, the  
24 primarily duck species harvested up there that I have  
25 data for are King eiders, Pintail and the longtail  
26 duck. Obviously Common eider is a very important  
27 subsistence species in that region. We don't have a  
28 survey specifically designed for Common eiders. In  
29 that region they breed in the Coastal, the Barrier  
30 Islands, and we are not currently monitoring that  
31 population. But many of the ducks that are -- many of  
32 the Common eider ducks that are harvested on the North  
33 Slope are actually Canadian breeding birds that pass by  
34 Point Barrow in the spring and fall. Nonetheless, king  
35 eider numbers have been variable but generally stable  
36 over the last 15 years or so. Pintails, they are quite  
37 variable from year to year but relatively similar in  
38 number from 2007 to 2019. Same with long-tail duck.

39  
40 I know I'm skipping through this stuff  
41 real fast, folks, but we've gone through this before,  
42 if you have any questions at the end of the  
43 presentation I'd be more than happy to jump back to a  
44 particular slide.

45  
46 I wanted to touch on spectacled eider  
47 real quick here. It's not a primary species of  
48 harvest, it's a species of concern for all of us, it's  
49 listed under the Endangered Species Act, and it breeds  
50

1 in both the Western part of the State on the Yukon  
2 Kuskokwim Delta and on the North Slope. Very different  
3 pattern of abundance going on here with numbers  
4 increasing quite a bit since the 1990s to 2019 in  
5 Western Alaska. On the North Slope much more variable.  
6 No apparent increase in numbers. And so right now the  
7 Fish and Wildlife Service is going through a review  
8 process and we're expecting to have a status review  
9 completed by the end of the year telling us where the  
10 species sits with regards to its recovery status and so  
11 that will be shared when that comes out.

12  
13 I want to move to some goose species in  
14 Western Alaska. Cackling geese, Pacific white-fronted  
15 geese and Emperor geese all breed in the coastal zone  
16 of the Yukon Delta. The vast majority of numbers of  
17 these species are in this area only. And so with  
18 cackling geese back in the 1980s numbers were very low,  
19 harvest was closed in the Lower 48 states and  
20 restricted in Alaska and the species responded quite  
21 quickly.

22  
23 (Teleconference interference -  
24 participants not muted)

25  
26 MR. TAYLOR: Eric, can you mute please.  
27 Numbers increased quite a bit through the mid-1990s and  
28 have been hovering around the population objective  
29 since that time.

30  
31 (Teleconference interference -  
32 participants not muted)

33  
34 MR. FISCHER: Okay, going on to Pacific  
35 white-fronted geese, like cacklers, Pacific white-  
36 fronts were also one of the main reasons that the  
37 Hooper Bay Agreement was signed back in the 1980s and  
38 the Yukon Delta Goose Management Plan was developed.  
39 Numbers were very low at that time with harvest  
40 restrictions. There was a rapid recovery and numbers  
41 surpassed the population objective back in the 1990s  
42 and remain well above population objective today.

43  
44 There's also white-fronted geese that  
45 next in Interior Alaska and on the North Slope. This  
46 is an entirely different population of white-fronted  
47 geese, although they are the same species. They're a  
48 different population, in that, they winter down in the  
49 Gulf of Mexico area, Texas, Arkansas, Louisiana region,  
50



1 and we are monitoring that population on the Arctic  
2 Coastal plain. Numbers are high. Taqulik mentioned  
3 earlier in her regional report that breeding was very  
4 successful year, at least in her neck of the woods of  
5 the North Slope. So we feel confident that white-  
6 fronts are doing well, at least through 2019 and I'm  
7 glad to hear that 2020 sounded like a good year for  
8 them as well.

9  
10 Okay. Emperor geese, always a species  
11 of great interest to all of us. This map just simply  
12 shows the primary breeding here on the Yukon Delta, the  
13 main migration corridor is down along the Coast of the  
14 Alaska Peninsula and then the wintering area in blue  
15 from Kodiak all the way through the Aleutians,  
16 stretching -- a few of them actually make it all the  
17 way out to the Commander Islands of Russia in winter,  
18 and then they reverse their migration in the spring.  
19 As we all know, we have a management plan for both the  
20 spring/summer season, the AMBCC management plan, and  
21 the Pacific Flyaway Council plan for the fall and  
22 winter hunt. Before these were signed we used to use  
23 an index derived from a count along the Alaska  
24 Peninsula in spring, and with these new plans the idea  
25 was to shift to a breeding pair survey on the Yukon  
26 Delta. Luckily we had numbers from the 1980s for the  
27 Yukon Delta and those are depicted in this table but  
28 these are also shown in a figure form here, the numbers  
29 from 1980s up through present. And so looking at that  
30 a little bit more closely here we all know that the  
31 species was closed to harvest for quite some time, it  
32 was opened up, the first hunt in 30 years, again, in  
33 2017. And the color here references the harvest  
34 strategy given a particular population size. So when  
35 the population's above 28,000 as counted during that  
36 survey, the spring/summer hunt is -- follows the rules  
37 of a traditional harvest and then following winter  
38 there's a 1,000 bird quota statewide. When it's in the  
39 yellow zone here, which is between 23,000 and 28,000  
40 conservation measures are considered and decided upon  
41 by the AMBCC and the fall and winter the quota drops to  
42 500. And if it's less than 23,000, as measured in the  
43 survey, both the spring/summer and the fall/winter  
44 hunts are closed. So as discussed in other  
45 presentations today, numbers were highest in 2017,  
46 dropped a little bit in '18 and '19 -- I'm sorry, this  
47 was the 2016 estimate, 2017, 2018 and then in 2019,  
48 last summer, we dropped just below that green/yellow  
49 line and so we're in that conservation measure phase.  
50

1                   Jumping on to Black brant. So Black  
2 brant also an important subsistence species throughout  
3 the state in Coastal areas. So during summer brant  
4 breed on both the Yukon Delta and on the North Slope  
5 and a few in a few small nesting colonies in other  
6 locations, but primarily on the Yukon Delta and the  
7 North Slope. The primary colonies on the Yukon Delta  
8 have experienced a decline -- a long-term decline since  
9 the 1990s. This shows the numbers dropping in 1992  
10 through 2018. I don't have the 2019 numbers to report,  
11 unfortunately. These are numbers of nests recorded  
12 from the aerial photographic survey. On the North  
13 Slope, numbers are more stable with a suggestion of  
14 some increase since 2007. There were fewer brant prior  
15 to this but I don't have those to present here because  
16 we had a different survey design and I didn't want to  
17 confuse things by presenting two different survey  
18 designs in the same figure. But suffices to say that  
19 there's roughly similar numbers now between the Yukon  
20 Delta colonies and the North Slope, overall.

21  
22                   All these brant, along with the brant  
23 that breed in Canada, and some that breed in Russia  
24 come together in fall down in Izembek Lagoon where they  
25 fatten up on the huge eelgrass reserves down there in  
26 the intertidal area and the Refuge -- Izembek Refuge,  
27 along with Migratory Birds, in more recent years,  
28 conducted aerial counts since the '60s. These are  
29 represented here. Some of those counts were done once,  
30 some with replicates and you'll notice that some of  
31 these numbers are really high or really low. You  
32 should understand that these fall counts represent not  
33 just adult birds but young produced each year as well.  
34 So in a year of low numbers, we can't distinguish  
35 whether that's just a year that there was really poor  
36 production and so there were few young birds with them  
37 because we can't really distinguish from the air  
38 whether a brant is an adult or young. They're much  
39 bigger than this by the time they get to Izembek, of  
40 course, because they're flying there. But the  
41 management index that's used to determine harvest  
42 strategy in the Lower 48 states is based on a mid-  
43 winter survey so after October, in the November,  
44 December, January period, all the birds are heading  
45 down south, down towards Mexico with a significant  
46 portion actually remaining overwinter in Izembek. And  
47 those birds have been counted since the 60s and this is  
48 the estimate here each year. We're still roughly in  
49 the 150,000 bird range with no significant change over  
50

1 that long-term period.

2  
3 Okay. So I want to just point out  
4 something new that we're doing in coordination with the  
5 U.S. Geological survey. We've been working on a way to  
6 improve our counts for Black brant in the Izembek  
7 Lagoon area during fall. So in fall when we have these  
8 birds from all over the place they're appearing in the  
9 intertidal area in large flocks. And when we fly low  
10 over those flocks there's potential to have them fly so  
11 aerial observers are challenged with not only coming up  
12 with an accurate flock estimation, flock size  
13 estimation, but there's the potential that the birds  
14 are moving around during the survey causing a lot of  
15 bias in our counts. So to try to improve that, we've  
16 embarked on a path to develop an aerial photographic  
17 survey from much higher altitudes. So we fly at 2,000  
18 feet. We've set up these transects line across Izembek  
19 Lagoon. We set cameras in the belly of the aircraft,  
20 there's two cameras here and these are attached to a  
21 GPS receiver and a computer. The pilot flies the  
22 transect line and at designated points, the camera will  
23 trigger when it comes into the location where we've  
24 programmed the computer to snap a photograph. This  
25 provides thousands of photographs of birds along these  
26 transect lines from which you can then count and come  
27 up with a population estimate. This is one example of  
28 a photograph seen from the air. This is all the way  
29 zoomed in at 2,000 feet. What you're looking at is the  
30 intertidal area with a bunch of specs across it. So  
31 with tens of thousands of photographs you can imagine  
32 this would be an extremely laborious effort to try to  
33 count. So what we're doing is we're working with a  
34 company that can use auto recognition technology to  
35 identify and count these images automatically. So if  
36 we zoom in on just one portion of one of these  
37 photographs, you can see this group of birds. You can  
38 -- hopefully on your screens you can see that this is a  
39 different set of birds, these are Black brant --  
40 there's four Black brant here, and these are Canada  
41 geese down in the lower right portion. By training a  
42 computer to identify the plumage characteristics of  
43 brant versus Canada geese, we can have an auto  
44 recognition process similar to have a smartphone can  
45 recognize a person's face in your photo app. This is  
46 still in the developmental phase but we're really  
47 excited about this technology. We will be able to keep  
48 air crews further from the ground. We'll be able to  
49 reduce our disturbance to birds. And hopefully come up  
50

1 with more accurate and less biased estimates of birds  
2 in this area.

3

4 Okay.

5

6 Moving on to snow geese. The snow  
7 geese that we see in Alaska are part of the Western  
8 Arctic population. They breed on the North Slope and  
9 in the Western portion of Northwestern Canada. They  
10 pass through the prairies of Canada and then spread out  
11 to the West Coast and down into Mexico. Now, this is  
12 the Western Arctic population.

13

14 The numbers on the North Slope have  
15 increased through time. This figure is only through  
16 2007. Prior to 2007 there were very few that were  
17 counted. There were some small colonies but the  
18 numbers have been increasing. In this one area,  
19 Teshekpuk Lake, on the North Slope, we've done a  
20 molting goose survey since the mid-1970s. At that time  
21 there were very few snow geese counted. But starting  
22 around the year 2000 numbers really took off, and  
23 they've stabilized a little bit in the most recent  
24 years, but they have our eyes wide open. And I'm sure  
25 Taqulik can talk about snow geese and how many more  
26 she's seeing up there than previously.

27

28 Snow geese also occur in Alaska that  
29 actually breed way up in Wrangell Island in Russia. So  
30 these are the birds that are passing through Cook  
31 Inlet, Yukon Delta and Western Alaska. And as  
32 mentioned a few minutes ago, the numbers in Wrangell  
33 Island have really taken off in recent years, enough so  
34 that the regulations for harvest in the Pacific  
35 Northwest are now going to be relaxed as Todd Sanders  
36 mentioned a couple minutes ago. So snow geese are  
37 abundant and increasing.

38

39 And then I'm going to talk about swans  
40 very briefly here. We have two populations of tundra  
41 swans, the Western population winter down on the  
42 Western Coast of the U.S., and then the Eastern  
43 population, they actually breed on the North Slope but  
44 then cross the continent and winter on the East Coast  
45 of the U.S. The Western population has been relatively  
46 stable since the surveys began in the mid-1980s. And  
47 the same is true for the Eastern population that breed  
48 on the North Slope, at least since 2007.

49

50



1 MR. AHMASUK: Yeah, Julian, if you  
2 could go back to the slide with the -- you're talking  
3 about how the birds are counted, there's the cameras on  
4 the plane, you're up higher -- okay, yeah. With this  
5 survey, have you guys -- I mean I'm sure you have, but  
6 have you found that less birds are taking off, a more  
7 accurate count, knowing that you're flying higher?

8  
9 MR. FISCHER: Yeah, so in an area where  
10 birds are staging in large flocks, there's natural  
11 movement as the tide changes, however, there's also  
12 when birds are getting ready to take off, if an  
13 airplane goes over they're more apt to blush and get  
14 spooked. So with this -- with flying at 2,000 feet we  
15 noticed little to no change in movement as the aircraft  
16 went over so that is -- that was certainly one of the  
17 concerns that we had about the low level survey of  
18 staging birds where you could potentially count a flock  
19 in one location, the flock would be spooked to another  
20 part of the lagoon and you'd end up double counting  
21 them. With this approach, the idea is to move across  
22 the lagoon without any birds moving. There's going to  
23 be some natural movement before you can complete one  
24 full replicate but we're trying to keep that to an  
25 absolute minimum. So the idea is to have a rapid  
26 survey at high altitude and get the count completed  
27 before a potential for double counting occurs.

28  
29 MR. AHMASUK: Okay, thank you. And  
30 then my second question, how soon is this going to be  
31 available for Emperor geese?

32  
33 MR. FISCHER: That's a great question.  
34 You know if we could implement something like this for  
35 all species we'd be really excited. The situation with  
36 brant at Izembek is a very unique situation where  
37 essentially the entire population occurs in a very  
38 constrained time period together. So it's a species  
39 that is really conducive to this kind of approach.  
40 Emperor geese, as you know, are spread out widely  
41 across, you know, the entire Alaska Peninsula. So it's  
42 not as well suited species for an approach like this,  
43 at least for a staging survey. Now, that's not to say  
44 that a photographic remote sensing type method could  
45 not be developed for a breeding pair survey and, in  
46 fact, that's something that we're very interested in  
47 doing if the technology could be developed to do so.  
48 So that would be a situation where you're flying up --  
49 you're flying high and flying along a transect line  
50

1 during the breeding period but you're going to have  
2 birds that are hunkered down on nests and so the  
3 ability to detect them would be much lower than in the  
4 situation like what we see here when the birds are all  
5 out in the open feeding on eelgrass.

6  
7 So I want to get to what you're talking  
8 about but we just haven't grasped exactly how we can do  
9 that yet with Emperor geese.

10  
11 MR. AHMASUK: Okay, thank you.

12  
13 MR. FISCHER: Yep.

14  
15 CHAIRMAN SCOTT: Other questions for  
16 Julian.

17  
18 (No comments)

19  
20 CHAIRMAN SCOTT: Well, I've got one.

21  
22 MR. FISCHER: All right.

23  
24 CHAIRMAN SCOTT: Just kind of curious,  
25 you know, recognizing that we're all in a very  
26 different world right now and surveys weren't conducted  
27 this year, and rightly so, is the Service looking at  
28 how to actually -- considering if we're not through  
29 this pandemic, is the Service looking at protocols to  
30 provide, you know, the opportunity to get surveys done.  
31 From the State's perspective, it's been a challenge for  
32 us as well, with that said, you know, we do have Staff  
33 in airplanes, you know, counting moose, caribou,  
34 whatever, so I'm just curious where the Service is at  
35 on planning for those.

36  
37 MR. FISCHER: You know that's a great  
38 question. And I think I might defer to Eric on this  
39 because he's been -- I know this is a topic of  
40 discussion among the Regional Directorate Team, it  
41 affects, not just the migratory bird group, but the  
42 Refuge program and Ecological Services program as well  
43 and I think -- and I'll let Eric speak to this, but my  
44 understanding is that we're in the very beginning  
45 stages of thinking this through. The Headquarters  
46 region as well, the Migratory Bird Program in  
47 Headquarters that is responsible for doing aerial  
48 surveys across the country is grappling with this idea  
49 as well. I mean there's ways we can come up with

50

1 population estimates based on historical data, and we  
2 can model forward, understanding how much uncertainty  
3 we've had in the past on this particular estimate, you  
4 know, we can actually come up with what we believe our  
5 best guess would be for the 2021 population. But the  
6 further you get away from actually doing the survey the  
7 more uncertainty goes forward. So, you know, if we  
8 switch to an entirely different methods for 2021 in  
9 terms of counting birds, then we'll be kind of in the  
10 same situation that the Harvest Survey Committee came  
11 up this year, where they had to consider whether or not  
12 to do a mail-in survey. The understanding that you  
13 could do a mail-in survey but the results wouldn't be  
14 comparable with the previous method. If we switched  
15 methods entirely on counting birds then it would be  
16 difficult to compare. Now, if we're going to be in a  
17 situation well into the indefinite future doing aerial  
18 surveys of this type that we typically do, then we're  
19 going to have to come up with something that's really  
20 alternative and we're just in the beginning stages of  
21 thinking about that.

22  
23 Eric, do you have anything to add to  
24 that?

25  
26 MR. TAYLOR: No, it's a good question,  
27 Ryan. The Regional Directorate Team formed a committee  
28 to look at each field project that was proposed,  
29 whether it be a migratory bird survey or a Refuge  
30 survey once the pandemic hit in March. The Service  
31 ultimately landed that almost entirely we cancelled or  
32 postponed our surveys, our aerial surveys both for the  
33 safety of our employees, because obviously you've got  
34 two people in an aircraft in a very close space where  
35 six feet can't be maintained and you've got air --  
36 despite open windows you still are in a very close  
37 area. More importantly we were concerned with the  
38 health of rural residents in rural areas. I don't know  
39 what the exact count was but I -- we have at least 130  
40 villages in Alaska that either imposed a complete  
41 shutdown or had a very tight process to allow people  
42 from outside of their area, and rightfully so, as  
43 several regional representatives reported earlier  
44 today, the incidents of positive cases is now really  
45 starting to show up in rural Alaska. But given those  
46 two caveats, protection of our employees and protection  
47 of rural residents we decided the most prudent measure  
48 was to cancel surveys. And the other reason is that  
49 almost across the board the absence of one year of data  
50



1 is not -- will not jeopardize the management or  
2 conservation of these species.

3  
4 Like Julian said, we are looking at  
5 that, you know, if we all could look at crystal ball  
6 and figure out where the pandemic is going in a year  
7 from now I could probably give you an answer on where  
8 we're going but we are going to err on the side of  
9 caution. We're not going to subject our employees to  
10 undue risk and we're certainly not going to subject  
11 rural villages to risk. You know if it was -- if a  
12 survey could be done absolutely where, you know, we  
13 start at Anchorage and land at a facility that has been  
14 cleared, like Deadhorse, for example, it'd be one  
15 thing, but we all know that mechanicals can occur with  
16 an aircraft, weather can come in and all of a sudden  
17 you're forced to land and we felt very uncomfortable  
18 doing surveys knowing that either one of those things  
19 could put a certain aircraft in a village that is  
20 closed to visitors and we did not want to do that.

21  
22 So right now we're looking at it as a  
23 case by case basis, but almost across the board we've  
24 cancelled all surveys. And at the present time I don't  
25 see it opening up in the near future.

26  
27 So, Jim, I don't know -- or Ryan, I  
28 don't know if that answers your question. If I could  
29 give you a better one I would but that's where we're at  
30 at the present time.

31  
32 CHAIRMAN SCOTT: That's great. Your  
33 reasoning is very solid and I appreciate that very  
34 much. And, yeah, good luck sorting it out. I mean it  
35 is a question for us as well and for all the same  
36 reasons.

37  
38 Other questions for Julian.

39  
40 MR. TAYLOR: Mr. Chair. I'd just like  
41 to jump in one more time. You know the topic of the  
42 regulations book has come up in previous meetings. I  
43 know Jim Simon has graciously told us about some issues  
44 in terms of errors with the regulations book. But, you  
45 know, Julian gave a couple of great examples of maps  
46 that have -- in fact I'm looking at the regulations  
47 book to my left here and the maps, the resolution of  
48 those are pretty poor but as Julian mentioned, when  
49 we're ready we're going to send these out to all the

50

1 regions and I certainly ask folks to take a critical  
2 look at the proposed revisions and offer up your  
3 recommendations on how to make these better because we  
4 can take a guess at what we think is useful but, you  
5 know, we're not staying in rural areas trying to, you  
6 know, figure out what the regulations are, so we really  
7 would appreciate your help and collaboration to make  
8 these things as good as we can.

9  
10 Thank you.

11  
12 CHAIRMAN SCOTT: Thank you. Okay,  
13 well, I think we need to get moving. We've got several  
14 things to do yet today and we need to get those  
15 accomplished. With that said, I would suggest we step  
16 down for five or 10 minutes. I don't know how people  
17 are feeling but frankly I could use a few minutes, does  
18 that work for folks.

19  
20 MS. SCHWALENBERG: Yes.

21  
22 CHAIRMAN SCOTT: Okay. Let's take a 10  
23 minute break and we'll get back here at 3:00 p.m.,  
24 sharp.

25  
26 Okay, thanks, everybody.

27  
28 (Off record)

29  
30 (On record)

31  
32 MR. KAYLOR: .....Kaylor, with  
33 Migratory Bird Management based here in Anchorage for  
34 Fish and Wildlife Service. I'm going to explore with  
35 sharing my screen really quickly and I think I've done  
36 it, or maybe I haven't.

37  
38 So, yeah, so we're going to provide a  
39 quick update on the Alaska seabird -- the die-off but  
40 as well as the work that we've been doing or haven't  
41 been doing owing to the Covid lockdown, and then  
42 Cathy's going to talk briefly about a memorandum of  
43 understanding regarding the data that has been  
44 collected by coastal communities on the seabird die-  
45 offs for the last few years and then we're going to  
46 hand it to Julia Parrish, who I think is also on the  
47 call here and she's going to talk about a NPRB , North  
48 Pacific Research Board proposal that has been submitted  
49 and hopefully will be funded and will be an example of

50

1 using that memorandum of understanding to advance the  
2 information and understanding the trends of what we're  
3 -- well, what I should say is what you and the village  
4 communities are observing.

5  
6 So I think you see my -- my opening  
7 slide here has many names on it but, again, I just want  
8 to call out the folks that have really contributed and  
9 helped us. Again, I'm Robb Kaylor but we've got Cathy  
10 Conitz and Liz (Indiscernible) from Migratory Bird  
11 Management, Heather Renner and her Staff at Alaska  
12 Maritime, which I should also talk about Kodiak, and  
13 Togiak and Kodiak, both who monitor seabirds and then  
14 as well as Ed Wiese for the State, possibly doing some  
15 work at Round Island in the Bristol Bay. We have huge  
16 support from our partners at the USGS National Wildlife  
17 Health Center, Barb Bodinsein and Bob Dussuk and  
18 that's more the necropsies to evaluate the carcasses  
19 that we're able to get from our partners and submitted  
20 to Madison for necropsy and disease testing. And then  
21 also getting tissues for harmful algae bloom evaluation  
22 and testing the concentration levels of harmful algae  
23 bloom in the tissues, if that might be a factor to why  
24 we're seeing these seabird die-offs the last few years.  
25 Gay for Alaska Seagrant based out of Nome, and then of  
26 course Brandon and Austin have been huge partners in  
27 tracking these events in the Northern Bering -- the  
28 Bering Strait region. Stacia Backenstoe and Heather  
29 Coletti from the National Park Service have also been  
30 huge contributors. And then, again, Julia Parrish, Tim  
31 Jones and Lindsey -- Jackie Lindsey from the Coastal  
32 Observation Seabird Survey Team. So the emblems along  
33 the bottom are really all of our partners and we have  
34 been working through the AMBCC to help track these  
35 seabird die-off events and they've been really key.  
36 We, of course, sit here behind a computer, currently in  
37 my basement, over by the airport, but we really rely on  
38 all of our partners so.

39  
40 Mr. Chairman, is my screen advancing,  
41 can you see that -- thank you.

42  
43 So, again, the Covid19 has really set  
44 back, I'm sure this has been a repeated part of what  
45 has been reported for the AMBCC. There are several  
46 components to seabird monitoring in Alaska. Offshore  
47 is a huge component. Cathy and Liz collaborate with  
48 partners for NOAA, other partners as well, and due to  
49 the Covid a lot of that research, the at-sea surveys,  
50

1 and that's bird distribution and density of seabirds  
2 has been curtailed this year. So very few surveys.  
3 And then as well as our other partners, both with UAF,  
4 Alaska Maritime National Wildlife Refuge and the USGS  
5 doing the monitoring at colonies has also been greatly  
6 reduced if not completely cancelled. So very  
7 unfortunate that during all these pretty impressive  
8 changes in the marine environment, unfortunately 2020  
9 we don't have much information to help track these  
10 trends and identify the factors.

11  
12 This figure here, and understanding  
13 that many people are probably just calling in and can't  
14 see perhaps, but I'm on Slide 256 out of the  
15 presentation packet that Patty sent out but essentially  
16 this is demonstrating the distribution and abundance of  
17 seabirds and the changes since 2017 to 2019. On the  
18 left side it shows the Northern Bering Sea, and this is  
19 the fish eaters. So for example, the thick billed  
20 murre, you see from 2017 to 2013 [sic] their numbers  
21 were up but have decreased in the last three or four  
22 years. To the right is the three species of auklets,  
23 these are the plankton consumers and their numbers have  
24 actually increased in the last few years. And then the  
25 maps, the red indicates areas where birds have  
26 increased compared to normal, or decreased and so the  
27 red is increasing and the blue is decreasing. And so  
28 these examples are showing thick billed murre and  
29 least auklets, which actually have been increasing, so  
30 there seems to be a shift further north of the fish  
31 eating birds, the thick billed murre, for example, and  
32 then these birds, the auklets are remaining a bit north  
33 of St. Lawrence Island, which is unusual, which we  
34 don't know if it's because they had a poor breeding  
35 season or, you know, perhaps breed early and failed and  
36 so just remaining just north of St. Lawrence Island.  
37 So just a quick update that we are seeing distribution,  
38 or changes in abundance of seabirds in the Bering  
39 Strait region.

40  
41 And then on to the seabird die-offs,  
42 which we always want to, you know, we want to be  
43 hopeful and the whole point of my presentation really  
44 is vigilance in getting reports from community members  
45 to track these changes. We know that there's a lot of  
46 changes with lack of sea ice or decreasing sea ice,  
47 changes in the fishing, more -- you know, so I'll get  
48 to that. But this is a quick timeline starting in  
49 2015/2016 in the Gulf of Alaska we had a very large  
50

1 wreck, which is the euphemism or term, I guess, for,  
2 you know, large mass mortality events, and that was of  
3 common murre. And then that continued, October,  
4 November in 2016 at St. Paul. Lauren Devine at the St.  
5 Paul tribal office tracking a rather large and unusual  
6 die-off event along with their partner COSST, the Coast  
7 Observation Seabird Survey Team.

8  
9 So I'll just quickly move through, in  
10 September -- yeah, June to September 2017, again, we  
11 had more reports from the Bering Sea and Chuckchi.  
12 2018, again, the Bering Sea and Chuckchi from May to  
13 August. And I'll show another slide with more detailed  
14 maps but the take home message from this is that even  
15 in June to September of 2020 we're still seeing a die-  
16 off event annually in the Bering Strait region. And,  
17 again, the partner emblems at the bottom, this is  
18 really -- all of this information is really key to  
19 vigilant communities reporting information. Brandon  
20 and Austin have been huge, huge in helping us track  
21 that as has Gay and then, of course, the Coastal  
22 Observation and Seabird Survey Team, COSST.

23  
24 And so just a quick 2020 Alaska seabird  
25 die-off update, so we started getting reports in May,  
26 continue to get them into September, this year there  
27 appears to be about 320 birds that have been reported  
28 dead on the beaches. And just to emphasize, that by  
29 the time a bird dies at sea, is washed up on the beach  
30 and then is counted and then that count actually makes  
31 it all the way to us in Anchorage, and then we work  
32 with our partner COSST to help, you know, create this  
33 map, it's just a fraction of the number of birds that  
34 probably died during this year. So 320 is fewer than  
35 we've seen in the last three years but it's still a  
36 concern for Coastal communities, of course.

37  
38 The birds have all been emaciated.  
39 There was an event at St. Lawrence Island, 20 miles to  
40 the east of the village of Savoonga, the birds were  
41 emaciated but they were also found with a clear waxy  
42 film of oil and those birds had actually ingested that.  
43 So while it was on their feathers it was also in their  
44 throats and in their lungs. So the cause of death was  
45 probably the interaction with the oil and it wasn't  
46 petroleum, it wasn't a petroleum based oil, it was  
47 actually probably a fish fryer vegetable oil, and so  
48 I'll get a little bit more into that. But so -- but  
49 those birds were actually in an emaciated condition as  
50

1 well.

2  
3 And as I mentioned that we send  
4 carcasses to the USGS National Wildlife Health Center  
5 for a necropsy, essentially examining the birds  
6 physical condition as well as doing disease testing,  
7 infectious and non-infectious disease, and then they'll  
8 collect samples, the gastrointestinal track, the  
9 stomach as well as the liver and part of the brain,  
10 send that back up to Anchorage for harmful algae bloom  
11 testing, just to see if there's an additional factor.  
12 We know that these birds have been starved so so far  
13 we've examined and tested 12 carcasses, all were  
14 emaciated and all were negative for Avian influenza.  
15 And the harmful algae bloom tissue testing, because of  
16 the Covid, the folks are actually just getting into the  
17 lab at the Alaska Science Center this week so they have  
18 those samples in hand and we'll hopefully have those  
19 results back to the communities very soon.

20  
21 There is a link in this slide here for  
22 our seabird die-off fact sheet and so that includes  
23 many regional representatives of the AMBCC as points of  
24 contact for reporting so a big nod to you folks for  
25 helping us coordinate these reports.

26  
27 And so this is kind of a pull-together,  
28 so these maps, again, have been developed and compiled  
29 by our partner, COSST, Coast Observation Seabird Survey  
30 Team, but from 2017 to 2020 the table at the bottom  
31 here indicates that we are seeing fewer birds in 2020  
32 but as I mentioned it's still a concern for Coastal  
33 communities relying on subsistence foods like seabirds  
34 and marine mammals. We often tout seabirds as  
35 indicators of the marine ocean health and so the birds  
36 are telling us something. So remaining vigilant and  
37 continuing to report these observations, tracking both  
38 the magnitude, the number of those, the geographic  
39 expanse, how, you know, broadly these events are being  
40 observed as well just the duration. So from May to  
41 September is -- all of it is unprecedented. But we  
42 continue to try to look at different factors that might  
43 be contributing to this.

44  
45 (Teleconference interference - lines  
46 put on hold - line beeping)

47  
48 MR. KAYLOR: On a similar but  
49 different, so this -- this slide is from the Coast

50

1 Guard, it was provided to me from Gay Sheffield at UAF  
2 Seagrant. This was from 2019. But what it is  
3 indicating -- and this, you see the map on the left  
4 side, those are the consin -- are essentially showing  
5 where fishing fleet activity, and this is using the  
6 automatic information system, the AIS, that ships can  
7 turn that AIS off but this was from the Coast Guard  
8 indicating that they really don't have the, you know,  
9 rescue and response capacity needed for this  
10 amount.....

11

12 (Teleconference interference - lines  
13 put on hold - line beeping)

14

15 MR. KAYLOR: .....of fishing that was  
16 observed. So the lower right is the Arctic Prowler,  
17 it's 120 feet long, catcher/processor with 20 people on  
18 board and what we're seeing is an increase moving  
19 further north. The red line indicates where commercial  
20 fishing cannot occur further north and as you see in  
21 this picture here, many of them are fishing just to the  
22 south of that. And, again, this is from 2019, but the  
23 point being there are a lot of fishing activity moving  
24 further north than had previously been observed.

25

26 And so with that increased fishing and  
27 that vessel traffic, in late fall 2019, there was a  
28 strike of birds crashing into a boat. It had an  
29 observer from NOAA on board, they documented 22  
30 spectacled eiders. Spectacled eiders are protected  
31 under the Endangered Species Act, they are a threatened  
32 species. The figure to the right is from Markel in  
33 2010 from Greenland, but the message being that these  
34 birds are -- with the lack of sea ice we know that the  
35 eiders are probably moving around into areas that  
36 previously they hadn't. Often they would just be  
37 sitting south of St. Lawrence Island, lack of sea ice  
38 they're moving a lot more. Increased vessel traffic  
39 and fishing traffic, there's much more activity and  
40 likelihood of, you know, bird and vessel collision.  
41 birds are attracted to the light and probably even  
42 distracted by it. So vessel strikes in Alaska 2000 to  
43 2003 were around 4,300. So another thing that I hope  
44 everybody remains vigilant in reporting their  
45 observations, what they see on their beaches and in  
46 their communities.

47

48 And then along with that increased  
49 traffic is we've gotten reports -- and so on the upper

50

1 right you see Peter Murphy, he is the coordinator for  
2 NOAA for the Marine Debris Program, he's been doing a  
3 great job, and then Brandon -- well, sorry, Austin and  
4 Gay have been helping coordinate but there were reports  
5 of a pulse of marine debris, it's got Russian and  
6 Korean writing on it. Apparently these orange boots  
7 are also washing up. They're, of course, much more  
8 detectable. A lot of it is plastic water bottles. But  
9 there's also been lubricant cans, you know, for WD-40,  
10 for example, types of things, and so unfortunately  
11 insult to injury during a marine, you know, seabird  
12 die-off and then you get a bunch of trash and, of  
13 course, this directly affects subsistence fishers,  
14 people that have nets out. The original report came at  
15 late July for seabird -- or, sorry -- it was associated  
16 with seabirds as well but Ben Pungowiyi from the Native  
17 Village of Savoonga reported seeing seabirds as well as  
18 all of this marine debris and then additional reports  
19 came from Austin and from the Norton Sound. So there  
20 is an effort -- the map on the lower right is kind of  
21 -- it indicates -- I put that red arrow in, NOAA folks  
22 tried best they could to hindcast the distribution and  
23 I mean the goal would ultimately be to assign  
24 responsibility to the entity that was responsible. Of  
25 course that's very difficult. You've got winds and  
26 coastal currents but -- so NOAA is working diligently  
27 to try to map and hindcast, but, again, remaining  
28 vigilant and getting these reports of these  
29 observations so that we can continue to track and part  
30 of it is also just educating -- it's an International  
31 issue, we don't suspect this coming from the U.S.  
32 fishing fleet as many of the plastics have foreign  
33 writing on them. But these plastics break down over  
34 time and they become micro-plastics that will, you  
35 know, affect marine mammals and marine birds. So much  
36 of a concern and something that we remain -- we want to  
37 remain vigilant on.

38  
39 Going back to the Ben Pungowiyi had  
40 reported a seabird die-off event, about 10 birds 20  
41 miles east of Savoonga on St. Lawrence Island. They  
42 were able to collect a sample. That sample was  
43 collected and sent to the Louisiana State University.  
44 It was determined that that oil was not petroleum based  
45 but rather either vegetable, fish or spent cooking oil.  
46 Of course it's all very illegal to dump anything over  
47 the side of your boat. Again, going back to we need  
48 outreach and education and then the International  
49 component of that. But the next step is doing the  
50



1 chromatograph, which is on the right side, indicates  
2 that it was not crude oil and Angela Matz with our Fish  
3 and Wildlife Service Spill Response Coordinator Team,  
4 she is working with Texas A&M to further identify what  
5 type of oil this was. So it's a process of elimination  
6 but something that we're concerned about and, again,  
7 asking the communities to remain vigilant in reporting  
8 any observations of these types of things and that will  
9 help -- it's kind of outside of the purview of the  
10 Coast Guard owing to the fact that it's not petroleum  
11 based, but we do want to continue tracking these  
12 events.

13  
14 And with that, Cathy, if you want to  
15 talk about the memorandum of understanding, I can  
16 advance and then Julia I can help advance your final  
17 slides.

18  
19 CATHY: Sure. Let's see, okay, we just  
20 mainly wanted folks to know that based on input we've  
21 had from all of our partners, communities and Alaska  
22 Seagrant, we've initiated a memorandum of understanding  
23 between Fish and Wildlife Service and COSST, that's the  
24 Coastal Observation and Seabird Survey Team that Robb's  
25 mentioned several times now. COSST has been -- have  
26 been important partners for us in terms of monitoring  
27 for baseline seabird die-off information and collating  
28 that and putting together information that we can  
29 distribute and Julia will talk more about that. But  
30 this is something we started over a year ago. It sort  
31 of got pushed to the back burner and, of course we've  
32 been going through a lot of other -- dealing with a lot  
33 of other issues the last six months or so, but now it's  
34 back on track and I think it's about ready to go  
35 through. And what this does is lay out the authority  
36 -- respective authority and roles and responsibilities  
37 of the Fish and Wildlife Service and COSST. And this  
38 is in regards to collecting and managing the  
39 information on seabird mortality, which can be -- they  
40 collected baseline information through regular  
41 monitoring of beaches but also helping in response to a  
42 large mass mortality event.

43  
44 It's a three page document at this  
45 point and it's gone through some reviews internally and  
46 as well, I think, some folks from -- well, we have sent  
47 it to some folks in Alaska Seagrant and Lauren Devine  
48 in the Pribilofs, St. Paul, community.

49  
50

1                   The main points of it are that we look  
2 at authorities and participating individuals to be sure  
3 that authorities and other individuals are informed  
4 about any unusual mortality event. Monitoring data is  
5 available -- is made available in summary form and  
6 requested information is provided in relevant forums  
7 and in a timely fashion. COSST will maintain a secure  
8 database of this monitoring data. The monitoring data  
9 that their volunteers collect and that will be given to  
10 participating organizations and individuals. And  
11 finally that will protect community specific  
12 information as requested.

13  
14                   One concern that's come up in the past  
15 also is since COSST is mainly supported by grants and  
16 some government contracts, it's a university associated  
17 organization, volunteer citizens science group, what  
18 happens if COSST loses its funded and can't continue  
19 this service and this partnership with Fish and  
20 Wildlife Service. And in that case, in the agreement,  
21 we stipulate that all the bird data and the data base,  
22 the data portal, the analytical code that relates to  
23 Alaska seabird carcasses will be transferred to the  
24 Fish and Wildlife Service here in Alaska, Migratory  
25 Bird Management.

26  
27                   So we're glad to -- you're welcome to  
28 contact me or Robb about this if you want further  
29 information and we'll let you know when it's finalized  
30 and that's my summary of the MOU.

31  
32                   Thanks, Robb.

33  
34                   MR. KAYLOR: I'm trying to unmute,  
35 sorry. So Cathy, Liz and myself are always available  
36 for any followup questions, don't hesitate to reach  
37 out. This presentation packet includes our emails.

38  
39                   And with that, I will hand it over to  
40 Julia Parrish from Coastal Observation and Seabird  
41 Survey Team.

42  
43                   MS. PARRISH: Thanks, Robb. Hi,  
44 everybody. Thank you very much for allowing me to come  
45 and be part of the U.S. Fish and Wildlife presentation  
46 today. I very much appreciate it and appreciate all of  
47 the work that you are doing. I've been sitting in  
48 today and listening to the regional reports and, as  
49 always, it's been very illuminating for me to gather

50

1 more information.

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My name is Julia Parrish. I am the executive director of the Coastal Observation and Seabird Survey Team, or COSST for short, that both Robb and Cathy have been talking about. COSST is a 20 year old organization. We've been working in Alaska since 2006, moving into the Bering and Chuckchi by 2009.

And so you're looking at a map of all of the places that we've seen die-offs. The graphic is an annual representation of what actually happened in terms of the number of carcasses that we've recorded floating in on various beaches, averaged over all those beaches, those are the grey bars and the little, what looks like an inverted checkmark black line with the yellow wash is just the long-term average, or the baseline, and whenever there's a huge big event, we calculate that statistically -- thanks Robb -- and we put that in red. So those red bars are the die-offs that Robb has been talking about in the Chuckchi.

We are privileged to work with the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service and many, many other partners, many of whom Robb and Cathy mentioned. Both, to be able to come to communities and train people to do regular monthly monitoring. Those are the data that we use to generate these baselines. We also receive information from individuals, from community organizations and from tribal government organizations, both directly and through partners. For instance, Alaska Seagrant or the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, we put that all together in mapped form and give it back to our partners, not least of which include the communities. So this gives you a sense of what we do and the servicethat we provide and in the presentation that Cathy just gave on the MOU, this is what that MOU is about. It's allowing us -- formalizing our ability to continue doing this and work for everybody and make sure at the same time that information is private to community or a government entity stays that way. So we use that data -- we, COSST, use that data with permission.

And then that gets me to the last thing that COSST does. COSST does a lot of analysis. We do a lot of science with these data. So we map them and we create graphics like this that show when events happen but we also are trying to get to why are these

1 events happening, what are the forcing factors that are  
2 creating these events and that gets -- thank you, Robb  
3 -- to this last slide. Robb mentioned at the beginning  
4 of his talk that we have an NRPB, we actually haven't  
5 submitted that grant yet and that's part of the reason  
6 that I'm talking to you today.

7  
8 So in seeking to understand the larger  
9 picture of die-offs in Alaska and actually also down  
10 into the Lower 48 and all of the ocean factors and the  
11 atmospheric factors that might be causing those die-  
12 offs, we wish to apply to the NRPB for a science grant  
13 to do that work. And as part of that grant we propose  
14 to spend time, either Zoom time, or if we actually ever  
15 get an antidote to this pandemic, in community time,  
16 presenting the information that we have to date so that  
17 everybody knows what data we have and then as we are  
18 working through the science process, presenting the  
19 results that we have. It's important to us that AMBCC  
20 be involved and that the regional reps be involved in  
21 knowing what we're doing and being the first folks that  
22 are receiving that science and that analysis, along, of  
23 course, with our agency partners so that you can give  
24 us feedback and interact with us directly on what we're  
25 finding, help us shape that and help us think about how  
26 to convey that information to communities in the best  
27 manner possible since, as both Robb and Cathy have  
28 mentioned, these die-offs are really important to  
29 Alaskans and definitely, definitely to coastal  
30 communities.

31  
32 So I'm here just to say that this is  
33 our desire to write, finalize this NRPB grant, but we  
34 wanted to, before we did that, come and let you know  
35 that this is what we were thinking of doing and have a  
36 chance to get questions and feedback from you.

37  
38 So that's all I have.

39  
40 Thank you, very much, for including me  
41 and listening.

42  
43 Robb, back to you.

44  
45 MR. KAYLOR: Yep. Thank you. And  
46 we're open for any questions if we have time, otherwise  
47 happy to follow up. And I am going -- I have got an  
48 email cued up for Peter Devine, who, I know, gave a  
49 report of puffin die-offs in the Pribis, so, Peter keep

50

1 an eye out for your inbox, I've got an email cued up.

2

3 MR. AHMASUK: Mr. Chair, this is  
4 Brandon.

5

6 CHAIRMAN SCOTT: Yeah, please, Brandon,  
7 go ahead.

8

9 MR. AHMASUK: So, Robb, if you could go  
10 back several slides, there was the showing the increase  
11 of murrets that are going north and the auklets going  
12 north -- yeah -- have you folks been discussing this  
13 information with the National Marine Fisheries Service  
14 folks, just to like compare data and what not?

15

16 MR. KAYLOR: That's a good question.  
17 I'll pass it to Cathy.

18

19 CATHY: Yeah, Brandon, it's -- all of  
20 this work is part of the Arctic Integrated Ecosystem  
21 Research Project, among others, where we -- because we  
22 partner with NOAA, they're aware of this work and we  
23 try -- and we are now in the process of putting it  
24 together with fish and plankton data, and what you're  
25 looking at here, a little bit of -- it's hard to put so  
26 much into one slide but what you're looking at is the  
27 difference the last three years, which were the warmest  
28 on record in the Bering Sea and the Chuckchi, the North  
29 Bering Sea especially, relative to the long-term mean,  
30 being from 2007 in this case. That's where we have the  
31 best data. So, yes, there's been a decrease in the  
32 Northern Bering Sea in many of these fish eating  
33 species. The auklet, and the sample down below shows  
34 the thick billed murrets and they're, in fact, the  
35 colony -- the Maritime Refuge data at the colony also  
36 indicates an increase in murrets at the Cape Lisburne,  
37 Cape Thompson colonies, so there is indication that  
38 birds -- we're not sure if they're just -- if they're  
39 moving north there or they're actually decreasing in  
40 other areas and more birds are being successful raising  
41 chicks up north. The auklets are a little more  
42 complicated, they're plankton eaters and they do nest.  
43 Of course, the Chirikoff Basin is actually always a hot  
44 spot for them but in -- and after breeding -- and they  
45 don't breed up in the Chuckchi, but they go -- move  
46 north after breeding to feed, in the past they had, you  
47 can see -- well, I don't show the Chuckchi trend up  
48 there in this set of maps -- figures.

49

50

1                   But the last couple years when they've  
2 had, apparently poor breeding success or no breeding,  
3 they haven't moved north after the breeding season,  
4 they stayed down in the Cherikoff Basin. So in that  
5 case it's not really that there's been a decrease in  
6 numbers, or an increase, rather, so much as they just  
7 shifted their distribution. Instead of being  
8 distributed across the Chuckchi Sea they're now  
9 concentrated in the Cherikoff Basin.

10  
11                   So it's different stories, different  
12 life histories going on there, but, yes, the short  
13 answer is we're working with NOAA and other university  
14 led projects to look at what's going on there with  
15 respect to birds and their prey.

16  
17                   MR. AHMASUK: Okay, thanks. The reason  
18 I was mentioning it is we've had several discussions  
19 here in Nome with the National Marine Fisheries  
20 Service, the bottom trawl survey folks, but the change  
21 in distribution of different fish species, prey  
22 species, not only for marine mammals, but for birds as  
23 well, a lot of stuff moving north, farther north than  
24 normal.

25  
26                   So, anyway, thanks for the explanation.

27  
28                   CATHY: Sure. It's a story still  
29 coming together for sure.

30  
31                   CHAIRMAN SCOTT: Other questions for  
32 Robb, Cathy, or Julia.

33  
34                   MR. DEVINE: Thank you, Mr. Chair. I  
35 just want to clarify the speaker.

36  
37                   CHAIRMAN SCOTT: Yes, sir.

38  
39                   MR. DEVINE: That bird die-off that I  
40 reported was a crab vessel that was coming from  
41 dungeness crab fishing in Ivanof Bay and they were en  
42 route to Sand Point and seen a huge die-off of puffins.  
43 And I suspect that those puffins came from Carpa Island  
44 in the Shumigan Islands, not the Pribilofs.

45  
46                   CATHY: Okay. Well, that's interesting  
47 information. It would be great to get a specific  
48 location and other information like approximate number  
49 of birds, what the conditions were and the date.

50

1 MR. DEVINE: Yes. I could talk with  
2 the fisherman the next time he comes in from fishing.

3  
4 CATHY: Sure, that'd be great. You can  
5 put him in contact.....

6  
7 MR. DEVINE: And pass that along to  
8 Patty.

9  
10 CATHY: Thank you. I will add that  
11 during our at sea surveys, we also track dead birds if  
12 we run across them. There've been a couple years where  
13 we've had unusually high numbers, which means in the  
14 dozens up to close to 100 over the course of the  
15 summer, but that compares to just one or two we might  
16 see at sea during our surveys in previous years. It's  
17 hard to see birds at sea so when you see a number of  
18 birds out at sea, we know that most of them don't make  
19 it to shore probably when there is a die-off, so it's  
20 very useful to have this at sea information and if they  
21 saw a lot of birds that indicates a really large die-  
22 off probably.

23  
24 So good information.

25  
26 CHAIRMAN SCOTT: Thank you, Peter. Any  
27 other kind of final questions for these guys, we've got  
28 to keep moving a little bit.

29  
30 MR. KAYLOR: It looked like Gloria  
31 might have her hand up. I can't see that anymore, but  
32 maybe that was old.

33  
34 CHAIRMAN SCOTT: Gloria, did you have a  
35 question.

36  
37 MS. STICKWAN: (Indiscernible)

38  
39 CHAIRMAN SCOTT: Gloria, I think you  
40 said something, I wasn't able to quite pick it out  
41 though.

42  
43 MS. STICKWAN: (Indiscernible)

44  
45 CHAIRMAN SCOTT: Yeah, I'm sorry, I'm  
46 not hearing it.

47  
48 MS. STICKWAN: No, I did not have a  
49 question.

50

1 CHAIRMAN SCOTT: Okay. I think you  
2 just said you didn't have a -- it was probably a  
3 previous question.

4  
5 MS. STICKWAN: Yes.

6  
7 CHAIRMAN SCOTT: Okay, thank you,  
8 ma'am. All right. Well, Robb and Cathy and Julia,  
9 thank you for your time and all the good work you're  
10 doing and, you know, please stay on and it sounds like  
11 you've been on all day and that's great and very  
12 appreciative.

13  
14 You know, we talked -- I mentioned the  
15 marine debris aspect a little bit earlier occurring in  
16 Southeast and it sounds exactly the same as you just  
17 described and that Brandon had described as well. So  
18 thank you for that.

19  
20 And keep us posted on the grant. I  
21 think it's obviously very worthwhile and it's  
22 important. Things are changing. Things are different.  
23 So, thank you.

24  
25 Okay.

26  
27 Next on our agenda, statewide and  
28 regional meetings and Covid19. Options for maintaining  
29 effective communication. And, Patty, I don't know if  
30 you have some initial information but Cyrus, I  
31 understand you submitted this for the agenda as well.

32  
33 MS. SCHWALENBERG: Yes, Mr. Chairman,  
34 Cyrus contacted me and was concerned about the regions  
35 being able to have their meetings due to the Covid19  
36 pandemic and was hoping to have a discussion with the  
37 rest of the Council members as to how they were  
38 handling it and if there were some tools for better  
39 communicating with the communities.

40  
41 CHAIRMAN SCOTT: It's a great topic.  
42 Cyrus, would you like to lead off.

43  
44 MR. HARRIS: Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

45  
46 CHAIRMAN SCOTT: Yes, sir.

47  
48 MR. HARRIS: Yeah, I brought this up  
49 mainly because of this pandemic that's been going on

50



1 and we weren't able to have our meeting and so it  
2 looked like we got unspent funds and where does that go  
3 from there. Would that be a carry over like before, I  
4 guess would be part of the question?

5

6 CHAIRMAN SCOTT: Okay. I'm going to  
7 ask Eric to respond to that if you can, please.

8

9 MR. TAYLOR: Well, thank you, Mr.  
10 Chair. Thanks, Cyrus, for the question. Yes, the  
11 funds that were not used in this fiscal year can be  
12 carried over. The Service is understanding the  
13 challenge for regions to hold in-person meetings just  
14 like we've had challenges in meetings in our own  
15 agencies or conducting aerial surveys.

16

17 So I also raised this question to  
18 Patty. I know we're pushing up against the time here,  
19 but I would like to hear from the regional  
20 representatives on what's working and what doesn't  
21 work, and perhaps some creative ways that we can put  
22 our heads together. So -- but, you know, in terms of  
23 funding, Cyrus, yes, it can be carried over.

24

25 MR. HARRIS: Okay, thank you. The next  
26 question I guess is, you know, this teleconference  
27 meeting we're having here and the migratory bird  
28 teleconference meeting we've been having, is it  
29 justifiable to charge to that, and how does that go  
30 about, if so, I mean I know it's going to be a tricky  
31 one because it doesn't state it on the contract.

32

33 Thank you.

34

35 MR. TAYLOR: Cyrus, I'll take a stab at  
36 that. But, again, we're interpreting regions having  
37 meetings as -- you know, if there are costs associated  
38 with holding a Zoom meeting or a Teams meeting or some  
39 other format, whether it's network costs or whether  
40 it's some other cost, I think it's -- I think it's  
41 reasonable to assume that those costs can be charged  
42 against your grant. But I -- like I said, I think I  
43 would like to hear, at some point, whether it's today  
44 or whether I'll just call all the regional  
45 representatives on the phone at some point, just to  
46 hear your ideas, you know, is it possible to have  
47 teleconferences, or, you know, as been mentioned a  
48 couple times, does cell coverage prohibit people from  
49 calling in, do people have computers that they can use,

50

1 you know, a format like we're using today, or whether  
2 that's not feasible. Whether there's some  
3 collaboration that regional representatives can use  
4 with the Refuges to perhaps use their facilities, you  
5 know, all of these are potential options and they're  
6 likely going to differ across regions. But I think the  
7 main thing is flexibility and ingenuity are the primary  
8 terms that we have to kind of put our heads together  
9 with.

10

11 MR. HARRIS: Thank you, Eric. Yeah,  
12 it's been a challenging situation to try to get our  
13 group together, our regional reps anyway with the  
14 hunker down and travel restrictions that's been going  
15 on up this way, or everywhere else.

16

17 CHAIRMAN SCOTT: Yeah, thank you, both,  
18 Eric and Cyrus. I agree with Eric, that it would be  
19 good to hear from folks and the regional  
20 representatives, you know, how things are going. I  
21 guess we heard, you know, pretty extensively that it  
22 was very difficult to get people together and that's  
23 understandable, but other ideas as well. And we'll  
24 just kind of open up the floor. With that said, I will  
25 mention that Jennifer just sent out a message to  
26 everyone that, Eric, you know, if you can confirm that  
27 those grants are going to carry over and if it's  
28 possible to get something in writing for folks, it  
29 looks like that'd be useful.

30

31 MR. TAYLOR: Yes, we can do that. And  
32 later on the agenda Will Lacy's going to give a budget  
33 update so all the regions can kind of know where they  
34 stand relative to their funding from last year, or from  
35 this year as well as some regions from last year  
36 carried over. So we can provide an update. I think  
37 Will's provided a handout that I think Patty  
38 distributed. But I'd be happy to send a note out to  
39 everyone relative to that decision.

40

41 CHAIRMAN SCOTT: Thank you.

42

43 MR. AHMASUK: Mr. Chair, this is  
44 Brandon.

45

46 CHAIRMAN SCOTT: Yes, sir.

47

48 MR. AHMASUK: So, yeah, if Eric, even  
49 if he could send out an email, you know, the carry

50

1 over, that we're allowed to do that for next year. I  
2 know, myself, I have to get with our accounting  
3 department and that is something that they've been  
4 asking about. So, yeah, if you could get that out, I'd  
5 appreciate that.

6

7 MR. TAYLOR: Will do. Thanks, Brandon.

8

9 MR. AHMASUK: Thank you.

10

11 MR. DEVINE: Mr. Chair.

12

13 CHAIRMAN SCOTT: Sorry, go ahead, my  
14 bad.

15

16 MR. DEVINE: Yes, this question is for  
17 Eric, this is Peter. Is it okay if we use some of our  
18 unspent funds to get a computer for the  
19 Aleutian/Pribilof region so I could join in a more  
20 modern arena?

21

22 MR. TAYLOR: Yes, Peter, that -- you  
23 know, that would fall under what I consider needs to  
24 modify communication so if that allows you to certainly  
25 see everybody's face and contribute yourself, that's  
26 reasonable.

27

28 MR. MAYO: Mr. Chair.

29

30 MR. DEVINE: Okay, thank you.

31

32 MR. TAYLOR: You bet.

33

34 MR. MAYO: Yeah, Randy Mayo here, can  
35 you hear me?

36

37 CHAIRMAN SCOTT: Yep, go ahead, Randy.

38

39 MR. MAYO: Yeah, that was some of the  
40 questions we had in our region on allowable costs and,  
41 you know, Cyrus touched upon it and Peter just did, so,  
42 you know, like a proposal that -- it doesn't cover  
43 these details but what I'm hearing Eric say that it  
44 (indiscernible - fades in and out) justifiable and that  
45 when we do the financial reports, we wouldn't just  
46 question (indiscernible - fades in and out)  
47 communication efficiencies.

48

49 CHAIRMAN SCOTT: Yeah, Randy, it got

50

1 really broken up there, sir, I apologize, I didn't get  
2 very much of that.

3  
4 MR. MAYO: Oh, yeah, well, you know,  
5 that question that we have here was that, you know,  
6 Cyrus and Peter mentioned these things, and Eric said  
7 that, you know, it would be allowable, so, you know,  
8 I'm just thinking about administratively when we do our  
9 narrative and financial reports, you know, however  
10 creative we have to be to increase, you know, non-in-  
11 person meetings, that those would be allowable or how  
12 -- how would you -- we wouldn't get questioned on those  
13 expenditures?

14  
15 CHAIRMAN SCOTT: Good question. Eric.

16  
17 MR. TAYLOR: Randy, it's difficult for  
18 me to, you know, render an opinion in terms of what  
19 you're thinking but the key term is, reasonable, there,  
20 and I -- you know, any expense associated with trying  
21 to allow you and Debra or others at TCC to have  
22 communications and meetings for your two regional  
23 meetings a year would be allowed. You know I'd be  
24 happy to give you a call, you know, and talk about what  
25 you're thinking. And also I'd be happy to provide you  
26 guidance on how you report this on your annual report.  
27 But, again, you know, the Service is looking at a  
28 pretty broad brush in terms of understanding that  
29 people cannot meet in person, and even though that's a  
30 requirement of the grant, in fact, that's what the  
31 agreement is for, you know, in-person meetings are not  
32 possible and so videoconferences, Zoom meetings, Team  
33 meetings, teleconferences, those are the obvious  
34 options that you and others have to choose from, and if  
35 you don't have the capability to do that because of a  
36 piece of equipment or internet service or something  
37 along those lines, I think those are all very  
38 reasonable expenses that we would consider.

39  
40 I'd be happy to give you a call and  
41 discuss as well as all the other regional reps as well.  
42 Randy, did that help?

43  
44 MR. MAYO: Oh, yeah, yeah, thanks.  
45 Yeah, thank you. Look forward to having a phone call  
46 for clarification, yeah, that helps. Thanks.

47  
48 MR. TAYLOR: I'll touch base with you  
49 later this week and send out a note to everyone else  
50

1 and set up a time with everybody to go over anything.

2

3 MR. MAYO: Okay, thank you.

4

5 CHAIRMAN SCOTT: Yeah, thanks, Randy  
6 and Eric for jumping in there.

7

8 Other suggestions, quickly, I mean we  
9 can -- you know, I think this is a great topic and  
10 obviously it's part of our changing environment in all  
11 of our situations, and it is, I think Eric used a good  
12 word, flexible, and the situation's fluid and likely  
13 will be for quite awhile, so identifying ways for us to  
14 get things accomplished and it appears the Service is,  
15 you know, more than willing and ready to jump in there  
16 and that's very appreciative.

17

18 Any final comments on this topic.

19

20 (No comments)

21

22 CHAIRMAN SCOTT: Okay. Well, thank  
23 you, everyone and feel free, you know, when it comes to  
24 the money side of things, the Service is certainly the  
25 contact but you can feel free to call me and am happy  
26 to talk about, you know, how we can continue to do this  
27 and be efficient and effective without being together  
28 in person.

29

30 MS. HEPA: This is Taqulik, I have one  
31 question.

32

33 CHAIRMAN SCOTT: Yes, ma'am, go ahead.

34

35 MS. HEPA: So if we ask for the carry  
36 forward to use the existing funds in the coming fiscal  
37 year, what about the monies that are expected to come,  
38 are we still going to apply for those or -- I think  
39 that kind of a clarification and information will be  
40 asked by our administrators when we tell them that  
41 we're going to request to do a carry forward.

42

43 MR. TAYLOR: Thanks, Taqulik for that  
44 question. So as has been in the past, and Will can  
45 provide this, he's got a table for everyone to take a  
46 look at but in essence, if you have the level of  
47 funding that you, you know, typically obtain every year  
48 and you still have that level of funding regions will  
49 not get an additional allocation for FY21.

50

1 MS. HEPA: Okay, thank you, just wanted  
2 to make sure we weren't going to be asking for more  
3 money than we can handle.  
4

5 MR. TAYLOR: Yeah.  
6

7 CHAIRMAN SCOTT: Okay. Well, thank you  
8 everybody, again. I appreciate everybody's willingness  
9 to be flexible and to try and identify ways for us to  
10 do this.  
11

12 So I just got -- it looks like we are  
13 moving through the agenda, let's see here, and the next  
14 topic is the AMBCC budget, and we've talked a lot about  
15 it already. And then I also have a request to have  
16 John Pearce speak, he'd like to provide an update and I  
17 would ask the Council if, once we get through the  
18 budget discussion, if we could hear from John, if that  
19 is okay with everybody.  
20

21 Hearing no dissent, we'll go with it.  
22

23 So, Eric.....  
24

25 MS. HOOPER: Ryan.  
26

27 CHAIRMAN SCOTT: Yes.  
28

29 MS. HOOPER: Sorry, I've got a last  
30 minute question related to the budget and everything.  
31 It might be helpful -- I know Cheryl and Donna, they  
32 always sent out reminder emails on what was due, you  
33 know, as we got towards, you know, close out and  
34 reporting, I guess it might be helpful to get a  
35 reminder maybe a little bit sooner that would also  
36 speak to whether we will need to be submitting, you  
37 know, the SDR letters, you know, as we plan and prepare  
38 to close out '20 and start '21.  
39

40 Thank you.  
41

42 CHAIRMAN SCOTT: Thank you.  
43

44 MR. TAYLOR: Thanks, Jennifer. Great  
45 question and great recommendation and I'll make sure  
46 that happens. We're in the end of the fiscal year and  
47 I know the situation has changed over time and what's  
48 been required and I know Cheryl worked with folks in  
49 the past, but I'll follow up with Will and we'll make  
50

1 sure to contact everyone relative to what forms are  
2 required and at what time, and what information needs  
3 to be on them. So thank you for bringing that up.

4  
5 CHAIRMAN SCOTT: Okay. Eric, the next  
6 item on the agenda is a budget discussion and you are  
7 highlighted there.

8  
9 MR. TAYLOR: All right, thanks, Mr.  
10 Chair. I'm going to ask Will Lacy, who's the budget  
11 analyst for the Migratory Bird Program and is the  
12 person that's most up to speed on the AMBCC to join in  
13 and share his screen in terms of a summary for all the  
14 regions. So, Will, I'll turn it over to you.

15  
16 MR. LACY: Hello, everyone, I'm Will  
17 Lacy. I'm using a combination here of my phone and a  
18 desktop. Can I just get a confirmation or a wave of a  
19 hand that everybody can hear me.

20  
21 MR. TAYLOR: We can hear you.

22  
23 CHAIRMAN SCOTT: Loud and clear.

24  
25 MR. LACY: Okay, excellent. I'm going  
26 to use my desktop to share my screen. For everyone,  
27 I'm the budget analyst for Migratory Birds. And what I  
28 have here in front of you.....

29  
30 (Teleconference interference - lines  
31 put on hold - line beeping)

32  
33 MR. LACY: .....is an answer to the  
34 question that was asked earlier concerning the amount  
35 of funds that are remaining on the grants that was  
36 issued. The highlight, of course, is your  
37 organization, and the other highlight is the money  
38 that's remaining on that grant cooperative agreement.

39  
40 I'd like to take this time to clarify  
41 something that was done in the past and isn't necessary  
42 in the future, or at this time.

43  
44 If you look at your grants closely you  
45 will notice that the verbiage for your funding year --  
46 for the funding period goes all the way through 2022,  
47 so what that means is a request for carry over is not  
48 required. We don't need a written SDR from anyone  
49 saying that they need the funds to be carried over.

50

1 This is the amount of funds that are remaining on your  
2 grant.

3  
4 I'm showing this slide first because  
5 it's necessary to see this before I talk about the  
6 budget. Because like Eric mentioned, we looked at your  
7 balances and we know what your normal allocation is  
8 from year to year and based on your balance, you know,  
9 we determined if we would be funding FY21. This is a  
10 document that I believe -- I know Patty has and it is  
11 current as of September 28th -- or 29th, the data's  
12 from the 28th, but it's unchanged. So if there are no  
13 questions about this slide I'm going to go ahead and  
14 move on to the next one.

15  
16 (No comments)

17  
18 MR. LACY: Okay, so this is our  
19 projected budget. I'd like to mention it is fluid,  
20 mostly given all of the considerations with Covid19 and  
21 the impact that it's had. The first half is our  
22 administrative cost. Then we have the harvest survey  
23 data collection cost, which is, as mentioned earlier,  
24 based on a decision not to do harvest surveys this  
25 year, the Division, Eric, will be getting with folks to  
26 discuss alternatives to, you know, data collection  
27 based on future discussions. Then we get down to the  
28 bottom part, we're talking about the grants. So on the  
29 previous slide I showed the balances that people have  
30 on hand and based on that, that's why you see a blank  
31 for these organizations right here, we will not be  
32 providing additional funding for the organizations that  
33 have a dash. We have -- we provide administrative  
34 costs to CRC and that administrative cost portion is  
35 still planned to be awarded to Ahtna based on your  
36 current balance, we would do an award for \$13,000. And  
37 for the Association of Village of Council Presidents,  
38 if you want this additional 605, that would be the  
39 difference between what is your balance and what we  
40 normally award. But I will be working with each of  
41 these organizations directly because, you know, we are  
42 using grant solutions and I want to make sure that  
43 we're all on the same page, just like you, I think you  
44 all have had no experience -- no exposure to grant  
45 solutions, because last year that was our goal, was to  
46 get all of the grants awarded before grants solutions  
47 came on board because we knew there would be delays,  
48 but now grant solutions is here and so my office, we've  
49 had limited exposure to it and I know you all have had  
50



1 none. So I'll be working with you all one on one on  
2 getting the grants processed, these amendments to the  
3 grants.

4  
5 That concludes my briefing.

6  
7 I'm willing to answer any questions.

8  
9 And I do want to address one of the  
10 questions that was asked. Someone had asked, hey, for  
11 reminders of what their next steps are, when they went  
12 to grant solutions they did a lot of standardizing  
13 terms in the grants so that they apply to all regions.  
14 So when -- the question was say, do we need to do  
15 anything to sort of indicate that we want additional  
16 funding, I will check with the grants office, I will  
17 get back with Eric, I don't believe any action is  
18 required but I'll get back with you.

19  
20 Also it was asked for Eric to send out  
21 an email saying that the funds that are on Slide 1 are  
22 available and are carried over, again, of course, he's  
23 my boss, he can go ahead and do that but if you look at  
24 the terms -- I just want to reiterate, if you look at  
25 the terms of the agreement, you will see that this  
26 funding is available through 2022. So if you needed a  
27 document that said that, you already have it in  
28 possession.

29  
30 With that, I can take any questions.

31  
32 CHAIRMAN SCOTT: Thank you, Will. Any  
33 questions from the Council for Will or Eric on budget  
34 items.

35  
36 (No comments)

37  
38 CHAIRMAN SCOTT: Okay. Well, you must  
39 have been very clear, thank you.

40  
41 MR. LACY: Let me see if I can get out  
42 of this screen now.

43  
44 CHAIRMAN SCOTT: And I'm super happy  
45 you guys handle all that budget stuff, thank you.

46  
47 MR. LACY: Yeah, let's see, stop  
48 sharing. You're welcome.

49  
50

1 CHAIRMAN SCOTT: Okay. I don't know if  
2 we -- I'm going to imagine there's probably no concern  
3 from the Council as far as having John speak here for a  
4 few minutes. One thing I would note, given the time  
5 and we're starting to push up on stuff, when we get to  
6 the update membership on AMBCC committees, Patty and I  
7 talked a little bit about it and if you can, it would  
8 probably be just as easy if you can email Patty these  
9 updated rosters or any changes that happened and then  
10 we'll take that -- essentially we'll skip over Item No.  
11 14 today, but we'll take it up in the spring, or Eric  
12 can decide if he wants to do that in the spring. But  
13 that'll save us a little bit of time. I think the last  
14 few items are going to -- you know it's good to spend  
15 some time just chatting and, yeah, understanding where  
16 we're all at.

17  
18 So John Pearce, are you with us.

19  
20 MR. PEARCE: I am, can you hear me  
21 okay?

22  
23 CHAIRMAN SCOTT: Yes, sir, go ahead,  
24 you have the floor.

25  
26 MR. PEARCE: All right, thanks very  
27 much for letting me just give a quick update at the end  
28 of the meeting here. Yeah, I've been here for most of  
29 the day and I really appreciate all the updates and all  
30 the good work that you all are doing so congratulations  
31 and thanks for that and thanks for letting me just give  
32 a quick update.

33  
34 So, yeah, I'm John Pearce. I'm a  
35 program manager for our Ecosystem Research Program in  
36 Alaska with U.S. Geological Survey, Alaska Science  
37 Center, which is based in Anchorage. And just a quick  
38 reminder about what USGS is. We're a Federal research  
39 agency within the Department of the Interior. We're  
40 not regulatory at all and so our mission is just to  
41 provide science information for decisionmakers and the  
42 public and so we do that all over the state for a wide  
43 variety of species and habitats, and of course we also  
44 have people that work on geology and volcanos and water  
45 issues as well.

46  
47 So I just wanted to talk about some of  
48 the migratory bird research that we have going on.  
49 Unfortunately most of the field work for that work got  
50

1 cancelled this year for obvious reasons but I'll just  
2 give you a quick list of some of that work that didn't  
3 happen this year.

4  
5 We had planned to start a two year  
6 project on the Yukon Delta, kind of doing a  
7 reassessment of the status of spectacled eiders nesting  
8 on the Delta, so that work has been pushed out to --  
9 hopefully we can start next year on that.

10  
11 We had planned to be on the North Slope  
12 of Alaska to do our standard banding operations on the  
13 Colville River Delta for Black brant, snow geese and  
14 also some white-fronted geese and then also we were  
15 going to start a project on potential disturbance of  
16 molting Black brant in the Teshekpuk Lake special area  
17 from helicopters. It's just something that we see  
18 potentially happening in the future with expanded oil  
19 and gas exploration and development there, that there  
20 might be more helicopter traffic. So we're curious  
21 about the possible reactions of molting Black brant to  
22 that disturbance. So that works also put on hold.

23  
24 We were also planning to start some new  
25 work on red-throated loons near Prudhoe Bay. It seems  
26 the population of red-throated loons on the North Slope  
27 might be distinct and declining and so we're trying to  
28 get some more information about possible factors  
29 involved in some of that evidence for decline on the  
30 North Slope of Alaska. So that work has not yet fully  
31 started.

32  
33 We continue to work with Fish and  
34 Wildlife Service and others on the topic of harmful  
35 algae blooms, especially in relation to the seabird  
36 mortality events that were discussed earlier today so  
37 we've been helping out with testing tissue samples from  
38 birds, also from fish and from water samples in our lab  
39 here in Anchorage and also courting that with our  
40 National Wildlife Health Center lab in Madison. So a  
41 lot of that work is also on hold.

42  
43 And we had planned to start a captive  
44 trial at the Alaska Sealife Center this summer on  
45 affects of algae toxins in captive common murres to  
46 help us understand sort of what's happening out in the  
47 wilds, and that work has also been put on hold.

48  
49 We have a number of reports coming out  
50

1 on eelgrass in Alaska that -- work that was conducted  
2 earlier by USGS employee David Ward, who's recently  
3 retired and those are all unpublished reports from work  
4 we did for Fish and Wildlife Service throughout  
5 different parts of Coastal Alaska and the Western part  
6 of the state and so we're converting those into USGS  
7 open file reports to get that information out to the  
8 public, along with all the data. So that's information  
9 that should be out in the next six months. There's  
10 about six of those reports that will coming out on  
11 eelgrass assessments. And there was some discussion  
12 earlier about Safety Sound, that is not an area that we  
13 looked at in the past but it's something that we could  
14 potentially look at in the near future.

15  
16 We continue to do Avian Influenza  
17 screening and research at Izembek National Wildlife  
18 Refuge every fall. Most likely -- well, that's  
19 happening through coordination with hunters this year  
20 since we're not out there. And that's been the best  
21 place for us to do that annual surveillance for Avian  
22 Flu just because of the cooperation with hunters there  
23 and the participation with the Refuge there. So we  
24 appreciate that help, and we'll continue to do that  
25 screening into the future as well.

26  
27 We do a lot of seabird work, and  
28 there's a few publications in the works on response of  
29 seabirds and other animals to the Pacific marine heat  
30 wave from 2014/2016, both in Prince William Sound and  
31 in Lower Cook Inlet, and so that's a progress -- or a  
32 report that's on its way out and I can keep this group  
33 informed of that.

34  
35 And then -- oh, I failed to mention  
36 that we also have a number of publications about  
37 Emperor geese on the Yukon Delta that was based on  
38 long-term data collected by Joel Schmutz at Minukok  
39 (ph) River Field Camp. Joel recently retired from the  
40 USGS but those publications are still in the works so  
41 we'll keep you informed of that but they should be out  
42 relatively soon.

43  
44 And then lastly we just recently have  
45 been funded by the Bureau of Ocean Energy Management to  
46 do a study on migration of Black brant down along the  
47 Coastal part of the Pacific U.S., especially  
48 California. There's some potential lease areas off the  
49 coast of California that are of concern for migrating  
50

1 Black brant and so we have planned to mark some birds  
2 with satellite transmitters and other types of  
3 transmitters either on the North Slope or at the  
4 Izembek National Wildlife Refuge and then better  
5 understand their movements as they get closer to the  
6 coast of California during their fall migration. And  
7 folks in California with USGS already have some  
8 existing data from greater white-fronted geese that  
9 we're using as kind of a pilot study to better  
10 understand how we can estimate elevation of birds as  
11 they move through these potential lease areas off the  
12 coast of California where they might develop wind  
13 energy developments. So just trying to apply that  
14 information for brant.

15  
16 So that's about all I had. I'd be  
17 happy to take any questions on that. And I'm sorry I  
18 don't have a handout for you but I really appreciate  
19 being invited to give just a quick update.

20  
21 Thank you.

22  
23 CHAIRMAN SCOTT: Thanks, John. Yeah,  
24 everybody's in the same boat, lots of stuff curtailed  
25 this year for sure. Well, any -- I actually see a hand  
26 up. Robb, do you have a question for John.

27  
28 MR. KAYLOR: I was clapping.

29  
30 CHAIRMAN SCOTT: Oh, okay. Well, then  
31 I guess I saw two hands up.

32  
33 MR. KAYLOR: I thought I was clapping,  
34 sorry. Thanks, John.

35  
36 MR. PEARCE: Yeah, sure thing Robb.

37  
38 CHAIRMAN SCOTT: Any other questions  
39 from the Council.

40  
41 Eric.

42  
43 MR. TAYLOR: Thanks, Mr. Chair. John,  
44 I was wondering if you had any information on -- I know  
45 you folks have been monitoring snow geese on the Arctic  
46 Coastal Plain and are in communication with other folks  
47 that are monitoring, but I was wondering if you had any  
48 additional information that Julian provided in terms of  
49 snow geese on the Arctic Coastal Plain?

50

1 MR. PEARCE: Yeah, so there was a  
2 recent report by ABR here in Alaska that seemed to  
3 demonstrate a really significant increase in the number  
4 of adults and broods on the Colville River Delta  
5 between 2018 and 2019 and it's a report that I'm not  
6 quite sure if it can be released so I'm trying to  
7 figure out the status of that report and those  
8 information because I think this group would be very  
9 interested in that, the increase in numbers, so we can  
10 have a discussion about that. So I will keep you  
11 posted but, yeah, it does appear that there's a  
12 significant increase in the number of adults in  
13 goslings on the Colville River Delta and likely  
14 elsewhere on the North Slope. And I think the North  
15 Slope Borough is aware of that as well, so it's likely  
16 not only a result of local production, you know, really  
17 conditions for birds up there but also immigration from  
18 other parts, particularly likely Canada, birds coming  
19 in and establish breeding on the North Slope. So  
20 something we should probably all pay attention to and  
21 discuss about more in the future.

22  
23 MR. TAYLOR: All right, thank you.

24  
25 CHAIRMAN SCOTT: Other questions or  
26 comments.

27  
28 MR. PEARCE: And if I can, I'll just  
29 say I really miss seeing everyone in the communities,  
30 in Bethel and Utqiagvik, and, yeah, it's been really  
31 hard to not be there to have these meetings face to  
32 face so hopefully we can do that soon.

33  
34 CHAIRMAN SCOTT: Yeah. No, I agree.  
35 Thank you, John. Thanks for your patience with us and  
36 for joining.

37  
38 Okay.

39  
40 I mentioned that we probably will skip  
41 over the discussion on updating memberships for the  
42 AMBCC committees, however, Patty has asked that we take  
43 up a motion to that effect. And, Patty, do you want it  
44 to be detailed, as in like have all the partners work  
45 on their membership rosters and then email them to you,  
46 or is it a just a motion to table that discussion for  
47 this meeting.

48  
49 MS. SCHWALENBERG: I think just a  
50

1 motion to table will be fine, Mr. Chair.

2

3 CHAIRMAN SCOTT: Okay. So I would  
4 entertain a motion to table Item No. 14 on the agenda,  
5 14A, update membership on AMBCC committees.

6

7 UNIDENTIFIED VOICE: So moved.

8

9 CHAIRMAN SCOTT: Okay. Can I get a  
10 second.

11

12 MS. HEPA: Yeah, this is Taqulik, I'll  
13 second.

14

15 CHAIRMAN SCOTT: Thank you, ma'am,  
16 appreciate it.

17

18 Okay, a motion's been moved and  
19 seconded, any discussion.

20

21 (No comments)

22

23 CHAIRMAN SCOTT: Okay. All those in  
24 favor say aye.

25

26 IN UNISON: Aye.

27

28 CHAIRMAN SCOTT: Okay. I'm going to  
29 assume we got everybody, thank you very much.

30

31 Moving down to No. 15, invitation for  
32 -- this is our comment period, invitation for public  
33 comments and then we'll go to Council members and Staff  
34 members. Is there any members of the public or guests  
35 that would like to make a comment.

36

37 (No comments)

38

39 CHAIRMAN SCOTT: Okay. We've had a lot  
40 of great presentations from folks, the COSST folks,  
41 USGS, others and I very much appreciate that. It's  
42 always -- it's very informative and enjoyable,  
43 actually, to hear those at these meetings.

44

45 Council members. I think I'll just  
46 open it up to Council members to make their closing  
47 comments, if you will.

48

49 MS. HEPA: I think I'll go first. This

50

1 is Taquulik. I just want to thank you, as the Chair,  
2 for conducting a fine meeting. Getting us through the  
3 agenda in a timely manner, very good. Good  
4 presentations. I agree. And thanks to Patty and her  
5 team for pulling everything together, very impressed.

6  
7 Thank you.

8  
9 CHAIRMAN SCOTT: Yeah, all the  
10 accolades go to Patty. She put it together and did  
11 great.

12  
13 MR. DEVINE: I'll go next. First of  
14 all I'd like to thank Jim Fall for his many years of  
15 service. It's always been a pleasure working with him,  
16 and have fun in whatever you're going to do next. And  
17 hopefully the next meeting we'll all get together once  
18 we're -- and once we get that shot that the President  
19 says is on the way, we'll be able to resume business.

20  
21 CHAIRMAN SCOTT: Thank you, yep.

22  
23 Others.

24  
25 MR. MAYO: Mr. Chair.

26  
27 CHAIRMAN SCOTT: Yes, sir, go ahead,  
28 Randy.

29  
30 MR. MAYO: Yeah, I just want to say  
31 thanks to everybody that got this meeting together and  
32 it's good to hear everybody although obviously we're  
33 not face to face but I thought it was pretty productive  
34 and look forward to more participation here with this.  
35 So thanks everybody.

36  
37 MR. TAYLOR: This is Eric, I'll jump in  
38 here. As you mentioned, I do want to say thanks to  
39 Will, Jason, Todd, Tamara, as well as the seabird  
40 group, and Julia Parrish for taking time to join in.  
41 Also like Peter said, congratulations again to Jim  
42 Fall. It's been a great pleasure to work with him.

43  
44 Finally, I want to mention that, Coral,  
45 I'll give you a call relative to that harbor project  
46 that you mentioned, and same thing with Brandon,  
47 relative to Safety Sound, I'll give you a call as well  
48 to let you know where the Service is on that.

49  
50



1                   And, finally, thanks to Ryan, you've  
2 done a great job in the last two meetings, it's been a  
3 challenge to transition to go from a personal face to  
4 face meeting to a Zoom meeting, but you've done very  
5 well so thanks.  
6

7                   And, again, thanks to everyone for  
8 participating, I really enjoyed the regional reports,  
9 they're always some of the best parts of the meeting,  
10 so thank you.  
11

12                   CHAIRMAN SCOTT: Thank you, Eric.  
13

14                   MR. HARRIS: Thank you, Mr. Chairman.  
15 Thanks for chairing such a great meeting today. Again,  
16 like everybody else I'd like to congratulate Jim, it's  
17 been great working with him and having him involved.  
18

19                   Yeah, that's pretty much it for today,  
20 thank you.  
21

22                   CHAIRMAN SCOTT: Thanks, Cyrus.  
23

24                   Other Council member comments.  
25

26                   MS. KRITZ: This is Heidi. I would  
27 like to thank you guys for putting on this great  
28 meeting. I enjoyed the presentations and hearing from  
29 everyone around the state. I wanted to thank Jim for  
30 all his hard work throughout the years. I got to meet  
31 him a couple times. Gayla would also like to extend  
32 her heartfelt, Qu yana, for all of the awesome work that  
33 you've done throughout the years and it was an honor  
34 for.....  
35

36                   (Break in recording)  
37

38                   MS. KRITZ: Thank you guys.  
39

40                   CHAIRMAN SCOTT: Thank you, Heidi.  
41

42                   MR. AHMASUK: Mr. Chair, this is  
43 Brandon.  
44

45                   CHAIRMAN SCOTT: Yes, sir, you have the  
46 floor.  
47

48                   MR. AHMASUK: Yeah, just like everybody  
49 else, a big thank you to everybody for putting on the  
50

1 meeting. Unfortunately it wasn't face to face but  
2 trying times, we got to do what we got to do.

3

4 Also like to say a big thank you to Jim  
5 Fall, all of his hard work, enjoy your retirement, you  
6 know, it's -- I forget how I worded it last time --  
7 it's not the end, it's just another chapter in life.

8

9 But thanks again everybody.

10

11 Thanks.

12

13 CHAIRMAN SCOTT: Thank you, Brandon.

14

15 MS. HOOPER: Hey, Ryan, this is  
16 Jennifer.

17

18 CHAIRMAN SCOTT: Yes, ma'am.

19

20 MS. HOOPER: Did I cut somebody off,  
21 sorry. Just real quickly like to echo sentiments, you  
22 know, shared by everyone, definitely congratulations to  
23 Jim on this huge milestone. Like everyone has said,  
24 it's been an extreme pleasure to work with you, not a  
25 whole lot lately for myself, but I know early on when I  
26 started at AVCP you became a very familiar name and  
27 really appreciate all your efforts and go relax and  
28 enjoy this time.

29

30 I did want to kind of -- I guess sort  
31 of a friendly reminder to Patty, I think it was Robb  
32 who mentioned he was on Page 200 -- or Slide 256 or  
33 something and so I'm not quite sure how large the slide  
34 packet was, obviously she knows it didn't come through  
35 to many of us who have, you know, size limitations on  
36 emails that we can receive. But a friendly reminder,  
37 that a lot of the materials didn't get through, so if  
38 there's some way to get those out.

39

40 And just thank you to everyone for your  
41 presentations and the updates. And it's good to at  
42 least hear everyone's voices and see some of you  
43 virtually.

44

45 Thank you.

46

47 CHAIRMAN SCOTT: Thank you, Jennifer.

48

49 MS. STICKWAN: Mr. Chair, this is

50

1 Gloria.

2

3

CHAIRMAN SCOTT: Yes, ma'am, go ahead,

4

Gloria.

5

6

7

MS. STICKWAN: I want to say thank you for a good meeting (indiscernible - fades out). And thank you to Jim Fall, I heard you say about volunteering Jim, you're not retired yet. We heard you say that.

10

11

12

And lastly to Patty, for getting this meeting together.

13

14

15

CHAIRMAN SCOTT: Great, thank you,

16

Gloria.

17

18

Any Staff members like to make a comment, Fish and Game or Service.

19

20

21

MR. FALL: Ryan, this is Jim Fall. I'd just like to thank everybody once again for your very kind words and good wishes and best of luck to everybody and I'm sure I'll be crossing paths with most of you in the future.

22

23

24

25

26

27

Thanks, again.

28

29

CHAIRMAN SCOTT: It sounds like you'll be getting a call from Gloria.

30

31

32

MR. FALL: It won't be the first time.

33

34

CHAIRMAN SCOTT: Well, I'll just say a couple things and certainly, you know, if somebody didn't get an opportunity to comment, please, let us know and we'll get you in there.

35

36

37

38

39

You know the last two meetings have been different for us but I will guarantee you that today went way better than the first one and certainly I imagine that's been all of our experience, adjusting to this new virtual world that we find ourselves in. As a comparison, I think back to the regional reports and presentations we heard and it just really underlines to me how important this Co-Management is, it -- you know, I think there's some obvious things that are we are in this together, you know, that's a term that lots of people have heard. But sharing these

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1 experiences and observations and data, I think, really  
2 is imperative that that happens and so I commend all  
3 the Co-Management Council members, Staff members,  
4 everybody who's involved today to be able to take the  
5 time and you've continued to do what you do and that  
6 really says a lot about you and being able to forge  
7 ahead in a very different world than we were in six  
8 months ago, frankly.

9  
10 It's been a pleasure to hear everybody  
11 and see most folks and I echo everything that has  
12 already been mentioned, I certainly wish we were in the  
13 same room for a couple days and I very much look  
14 forward to that in the future. So I appreciate  
15 everybody's time.

16  
17 Thank you.

18  
19 Jim, did you have something.

20  
21 MR. SIMON: Yeah, thank you, Ryan.  
22 Thank you for running a great meeting and it's really  
23 an impressive group of people who have been  
24 participating in these efforts, and I just want to  
25 share my personal comments about how much I appreciated  
26 and enjoyed being part of this group.

27  
28 And, Jim Fall, I know you've tried to  
29 retire in the past and have been talked out of it, I'm  
30 very pleased to have learned so much from you during my  
31 career and thank you very much. And I look forward to  
32 running into you and hearing about your post-retirement  
33 adventures.

34  
35 Thank you.

36  
37 CHAIRMAN SCOTT: Thank you, Jim.

38  
39 Final comments. Council members.  
40 Staff. Guests.

41  
42 (No comments)

43  
44 CHAIRMAN SCOTT: Okay, hearing none,  
45 thank you again everybody for speaking up and providing  
46 your input. This is an important time of our meetings  
47 and I look forward to it every time.

48  
49 Now, if I recall correctly, I've got to

50

1 click back to the other screen, I get to give Eric the  
2 gavel, virtually. I should have made one like out of  
3 cardboard or something to hand off to him. So I don't  
4 know how this works, I don't remember, but I think  
5 you're up Mr. Taylor.

6  
7 CHAIRMAN TAYLOR: All right, thank you,  
8 Mr. Chair. I think my only responsibility for the day  
9 is to identify a meeting date for the spring meeting.  
10 So if folks could pull up -- if you've got your  
11 computer handy, your calendar in your right hand side  
12 or if you have a paper calendar or if you've got your  
13 phone, we typically have our spring meeting in April so  
14 I'd be happy to hear proposed dates that people feel  
15 most comfortable with, early April, mid- or late April;  
16 what's the desire of the group. Anyone want to take a  
17 stab.

18  
19 MS. SCHWALENBERG: We generally have it  
20 during the first week of April, Eric, so maybe we can  
21 consider it sometime during that week, the first week  
22 in April.

23  
24 CHAIRMAN TAYLOR: All right, so that --  
25 thanks, Patty. That looks like that would be April 5th  
26 through April 9th, Monday being the 5th, Friday being  
27 the 9th, so typically we kind of have it in the middle  
28 part of the week. How does that sound for folks, do we  
29 want to go for a Tuesday the 6th.

30  
31 MS. HEPA: I usually have an assembly  
32 meeting on the first Tuesday of the month so Wednesday  
33 would be much better.

34  
35 CHAIRMAN TAYLOR: All right.

36  
37 MR. MAYO: Yeah, Eric.

38  
39 CHAIRMAN TAYLOR: Yeah, go ahead,  
40 Randy.

41  
42 MR. MAYO: Yeah, for me a Monday or  
43 Tuesday would be more preferable.

44  
45 CHAIRMAN TAYLOR: Okay. All right. So  
46 Tuesday's out for Taqulik, so either Monday the 5th or  
47 Wednesday the 7th. Monday the 5th, it's a bit of a  
48 scramble, we just have to make sure everybody gets  
49 their materials -- meeting materials, et cetera, on

50

1 Friday the 2nd, it gives you the weekend to study up.  
2 Anyone have concerns on Monday the 5th?

3

4 MR. DEVINE: Well, in honor of Herman  
5 Squartsoff, couldn't we have it on April Fools. I  
6 remember that meeting, that was pretty good.

7

8 (Laughter)

9

10 CHAIRMAN TAYLOR: I don't remember  
11 that, but I do remember Herman and, yeah, a great  
12 Council member.

13

14 MR. DEVINE: Yeah, well, Native Caucus  
15 had to gavel and we were trying, you know, it was the  
16 first -- trying to get proposals to go through and  
17 nothing was going for us so we went into Native Caucus,  
18 come out, next proposal got blown right out and Herman  
19 said, meeting adjourned and everybody stood up started  
20 slapping their books and binders together and all Fish  
21 and Wildlife was standing there with their jaws open  
22 and you could hear all the gasps in the room, when, and  
23 someone turned to someone else and said, can they do  
24 that, and we got to the door and we said April Fools.

25

26 (Laughter)

27

28 CHAIRMAN TAYLOR: And Doug Alcorn was  
29 there, I'm sure Doug probably had cardiac arrest when  
30 that happened, so, yeah, thanks for that.

31

32 So anyway.....

33

34 MR. DEVINE: But, no, any day is good  
35 for me, whatever you guys decide.

36

37 CHAIRMAN TAYLOR: All right. Monday  
38 the 5th or Wednesday the 7th. I know Randy you really  
39 didn't like later in the week but I'm a little  
40 concerned with having it on Monday just because people  
41 may not read their computers, and they shouldn't be  
42 reading their computers over the weekend, so I'm kind  
43 of leaning towards Wednesday the 7th.

44

45 Does anyone have any conflicts on that  
46 one, Randy, can you make it?

47

48 MR. MAYO: I may. I can't say for sure  
49 but if I can't we'll have representation though.

50

1 CHAIRMAN TAYLOR: Okay.

2

3 MS. HEPA: This is Taqulik. I'll go  
4 ahead and work with the -- if we meet on a Tuesday,  
5 that'll be just fine, I can call in in the morning and  
6 then if there's a meeting on Wednesday, I could fly in.

7

8 CHAIRMAN TAYLOR: Okay.

9

10 MS. HEPA: My assembly meetings are in  
11 the afternoon on Tuesday.

12

13 CHAIRMAN TAYLOR: All right, thanks,  
14 Taqulik. So we're back to Tuesday the 6th. Any  
15 objections on that one.

16

17 MS. HOOPER: Hey, Eric, this is  
18 Jennifer. I just wanted to make sure we're all kind of  
19 hoping that things sort of get back to normal and that  
20 we are able to have a face to face or are we -- I mean  
21 obviously we'll have both options, but.....

22

23 CHAIRMAN TAYLOR: Good point, Jennifer.  
24 But my guess, if I was a betting person, they're not  
25 going to be back to normal by April. Just in my  
26 understanding, I think, of course, normal is defined  
27 different ways but my guess normal won't probably be  
28 appearing until fall or winter of 2021. So my guess is  
29 we'll still be doing a Zoom meeting next spring so -- I  
30 wish otherwise but I think that's reality.

31

32 So Tuesday, April 6th, is that okay  
33 with everyone.

34

35 MR. MAYO: Yeah, that's fine with me.

36

37 MR. SCOTT: Yep, good here too.

38

39 CHAIRMAN TAYLOR: All right, perfect.  
40 If there's something that crops up, and is a crises,  
41 please give me a shout and we'll go back to the drawing  
42 board. So okay with that I just -- I failed to thank  
43 Patty again for all of her work. And I know it's been  
44 a big challenge with trying to get meeting materials  
45 together, Jennifer, you didn't receive them. Part of  
46 that fault lies with me. Cheryl Graves has been out on  
47 sick leave for the past several months and so Patty  
48 didn't have the assistance that she normally has and  
49 had to do much of the background work by herself, so

50

1 that's a bit of the problem in terms of you getting  
2 your materials late. So anyway we'll improve on that  
3 for the spring meeting for sure.

4  
5 Any other final comments before we sign  
6 off.

7  
8 MS. SCHWALENBERG: You just need a  
9 motion to adjourn, Mr. Chair.

10  
11 CHAIRMAN TAYLOR: Thanks, Patty, for  
12 keeping us on Robert's Rules of Order. Do I have a  
13 motion to adjourn for the day.

14  
15 MR. HARRIS: So moved, Mr. Chairman.

16  
17 CHAIRMAN TAYLOR: Thank you, Cyrus.

18  
19 Is there a second.

20  
21 MR. SCOTT: Second.

22  
23 CHAIRMAN TAYLOR: Thank you, Ryan. If  
24 no discussion, all in favor say aye.

25  
26 IN UNISON: Aye.

27  
28 CHAIRMAN TAYLOR: All right, thanks  
29 everyone. Thanks again for joining, please be careful  
30 and safe and we will talk again in April.

31  
32 (Off record)

33  
34 (END OF RECORDING)

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C E R T I F I C A T E

UNITED STATES OF AMERICA)  
 )ss.  
 STATE OF ALASKA )

I, Salena A. Hile, Notary Public in and for the state of Alaska and reporter for Computer Matrix Court Reporters, LLC, do hereby certify:

THAT the foregoing pages numbered 02 through \_\_\_\_ contain a full, true and correct Transcript of the ALASKA MIGRATORY BIRD CO-MANAGEMENT COUNCIL MEETING recorded via Zoom;

THAT the transcript is a true and correct transcript requested to be transcribed and thereafter transcribed by under my direction and reduced to print to the best of our knowledge and ability;

THAT I am not an employee, attorney, or party interested in any way in this action.

DATED at Anchorage, Alaska, this 22nd da of January 2021.

\_\_\_\_\_  
 Salena A. Hile  
 Notary Public, State of Alaska  
 My Commission Expires:9/16/2022