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ALASKA MIGRATORY BIRD CO-MANAGEMENT COUNCIL

SPRING MEETING - ZOOM

VOLUME I

April 7, 2022

Members Present:

- Ryan Scott, Alaska Department of Fish and Game
- Eric Taylor, U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service
- Cyrus Harris, Maniilaq
- Karen Linnell, Ahtna Intertribal Resource Commission
- Priscilla Evans, Chugach Regional Resources Commission
- Taqulik Hepa, North Slope Region, Barrow
- Coral Chernoff, Sun'aq Tribe of Kodiak
- Gayla Hoseth, Bristol Bay Native Association
- Peter Devine, Aleutian/Pribilof Island Association
- Randy Mayo, Tanana Chiefs

Executive Director, Patty Schwalenberg

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P R O C E E D I N G S

(ZOOM - 4/7/2021)

(On record)

MADAME CHAIR HOSETH: We'll call the AMBCC meeting to order at 8:43 a.m. on April 7th. We're going to start off this morning with a moment of silence. I believe we have three people that we were wanting to recognize here today. We have Angie Larson, Don Honea, Sr., and Ralph Anderson. I guess we could all stand and have like 30 seconds of a moment of silence to remember. I was going to turn it over to you, Eric. I didn't know if you had anything that you wanted to say about Angie before we have a moment of silence.

MR. TAYLOR: Thanks, Gayla. Patty, could you share your screen.

MS. SCHWALENBERG: Working on it. Hold on.

MR. TAYLOR: All right.

MS. SCHWALENBERG: There we go. Can you see that?

MR. TAYLOR: Yes. Thank you, Gayla. Thank you, Patty. Angie Larson was a budget analyst with the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service in my program for three years in 2013 to 2017. Many of you on the Council have worked with Angie. She was a tireless supporter of the Service and particularly the Alaska Migratory Bird Co-Management Council.

What made Angie special was (cut out) and contagious sense of humor and goodness and optimism no matter what the problem. She was an instant friend to anyone, whether you met her in the hallway or met her -- whether she (cut out) a stranger at a conference or a meeting like this one. And a colleague friend of mine said a couple winters ago at a cross country ski event in a parking lot Angie saw him and stuck her head out the window and waved and yelled across the parking lot hello. That was the kind of person Angie was.

A personal story. See Angie's glasses

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1 there. They were never like that. They were always
2 about halfway down her nose. Angie's office is right
3 outside mine. She'd come wandering in on winter
4 mornings bundled up with about four layers of clothes,
5 carrying one of those carts, you know, that you see
6 airline attendants or pilots have at the airport. The
7 bottom one would be her computer and then there would
8 be a big box of file folders. She always took work
9 home to work in the evening. Then maybe her lunch.
10 Well, she'd make the corner and I'd here this kerfuffle
11 and about half the stuff would fall off the cart. I'd
12 walk out and help her. You know the first thing she'd
13 say? She'd say, Eric, how are you doing today or how
14 is my daughter Madeline doing and we'd pick up her
15 stuff and put it in her office.

16

17 Angie was a true friend and a true
18 colleague and will be missed by all. So I'd now like
19 to take the opportunity to have other Council members
20 recognize others that we have lost too soon. Randy,
21 would you like to go ahead? You might be on mute,
22 Randy.

23

24 MR. MAYO: Yeah, I'd like to recognize
25 Don Honea, Sr. from the TCC region who was our
26 traditional chief in the Interior from Ruby along the
27 Yukon River. I got to know him later on, but he lived
28 to a good age and, you know, spent most of his life
29 providing leadership to better the peoples. Not only
30 his home community, but in the region and state, but
31 better the peoples standards of living and looking out
32 for people.

33

34 At one conference he did mention that
35 one of his greatest accomplishments, and this was not
36 very long ago, was to see his great grandchildren start
37 arriving. So, to me, you know, that passing on all
38 that he and others have provided to this new generation
39 I'll always remember that.

40

41 Thank you.

42

43 MR. TAYLOR: Thank you, Randy. Others.
44 Anyone else would like to speak up?

45

46 MADAME CHAIR HOSETH: Yeah, I want to
47 recognize Ralph Anderson. Many of you worked alongside
48 Ralph Anderson in the formation of the AMBCC. He was
49 there from the beginning. I think Peter is our last
50

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1 standing Council member that served with Ralph from the
2 beginning. Ralph is from one of the villages here in
3 the Bristol Bay region of Clarks Point.

4
5 He spent about 20 years and worked in
6 Barrow and then he came back down here to Dillingham to
7 be closer with his mom and his family. Was a natural
8 resources director and moved into the position of our
9 president and CEO of Bristol Bay Native Association.
10 He was a leader and recognized throughout the state
11 and, of course, nation and worked on a lot of hard
12 issues out here for Bristol Bay and the state of
13 Alaska.

14
15 So he's greatly missed here. A lot of
16 leadership and the mentoring he has given to me and
17 others, those words and the comments that he has done
18 resonate in my mind a lot. So, as we move forward from
19 people that pass on we just remember those times.

20
21 MR. TAYLOR: Thank you, Gayla.

22
23 MS. STICKWAN: Good morning. This is
24 Gloria.

25
26 MR. TAYLOR: Go ahead, Gloria.

27
28 MS. STICKWAN: I just wanted to
29 recognize we lost two council members this year because
30 of Covid. Dorothy Shinn. She served on various
31 boards, on a board, village council board and other
32 boards. She served on Tazlina Village Council from day
33 one. She was one of the original members and she
34 continued until her passing.

35
36 The other one is Linda Goodlawta. She
37 also served on the Tazlina Village Council for several
38 years and she passed as well. Ray Neely is another
39 leader of Ahtna that was a subsistence representative
40 for Ahtna and served on Ahtna board, Gulkana board and
41 other boards as well.

42
43 Then there's a lady from -- elder from
44 our village that always attended our meetings and
45 didn't serve on any boards, but was always there for
46 us. I just wanted to mention them.

47
48 MR. TAYLOR: Thank you, Gloria. Anyone
49 else that would like to speak up.
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1 (No comments)

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MR. TAYLOR: Thank you. Let's take a moment to honor Don, Ralph, Dorothy and Ray and others.

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MS. SCHWALENBERG: Eric.

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MR. TAYLOR: Yes.

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MS. SCHWALENBERG: Sorry. Taqulik had one more she wanted to add.

13

14

MR. TAYLOR: All right.

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MS. HEPA: Hi. Good morning, Eric. Thank you. I was on mute. I wanted to recognize two people and the first one I want to recognize is Roy Nageak. Roy Nageak passed away this last year. He was a fierce leader for our community across the North Slope and across the state. He served in various leadership positions on the North Slope Borough Assembly for many years with our tribal government. He also worked for BLM as their local advocate and our connection to the agency.

26

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Roy was a whaling captain. A successful whaling captain, and he also was a very active subsistence hunter that took the time to share his knowledge with not just his family and children, but with children from across the North Slope. The importance and the proper ways to subsistence and to provide for all of our communities.

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So I just want to honor Roy. I know that he cared a lot about the relationships between our people and the various different agencies that we worked for. He was very passionate about the Inupiaq people and the native people from across Alaska. So I want to recognize Roy.

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The other person I want to recognize is Margaret Opie, my mother. She passed away and she was one of the first women co-captains in the North Slope. She was very instrumental in supporting the North Slope. She was a public servant for many years. She worked for various mayors. Was basically their boss. She was very active.

She was the oldest of 12 siblings and

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1 she was a very active subsistence hunter. She did wolf
2 and wolverine hunting, fishing, migratory bird hunting
3 and raised all of us kids whaling. Not afraid to get
4 in the boat with her brothers and uncles and her
5 father.

6
7 She also cared about the community.
8 She was very active in community events. Organizing
9 our all our Eskimo games, International ICC-related
10 meetings. So very much so at the root of our
11 community. She will be greatly missed. I'm just
12 honored to be one of her daughters and hope that I --
13 and I know that I hold some of her qualities in me.

14
15 So I just wanted to recognize Roy and
16 my mother Margaret.

17
18 MR. TAYLOR: Thanks, Taqulik. You
19 indeed had a very special mother and thank you for
20 sharing.

21
22 MR. DEVINE: Madame Chair.

23
24 MR. TAYLOR: Go ahead.

25
26 MR. DEVINE: This is Peter. I'd like
27 to recognize my mom and Christine Nelson. She was one
28 of the founding members of our tribe and she was one
29 that got me involved with the tribe, you know, like
30 20-some years ago. At that time when the tribe was
31 formed there was a lot of nepotism and, you know,
32 family members. You had mom and dad and daughter all
33 on the same board. When she encouraged me to run for
34 the board, I wouldn't until she stepped down.

35
36 She was, like I said, one of our
37 founding members of our tribe, you know, an original
38 board member. She was involved with the gaming program
39 with the Agate Pull Tabs. She named that and got that
40 up and running for our tribe. When she passed she was
41 a dispatcher. She could barely speak, you know. She
42 was having a hard time and she was still doing her job
43 up until the day she was medivac'd. I lost her on the
44 14th of last month.

45
46 I'm trying to grip reality, but just
47 burying myself in work. Thank you.

48
49 MR. TAYLOR: Thank you, Peter. Thank
50

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1 you for sharing. Anyone else that would like to speak
2 up.

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(No comments)

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you for sharing. Anyone else that would like to speak up.

(No comments)

MR. TAYLOR: Let's take a moment to honor those that we have talked about today. Think about elders, friends, colleagues, youngsters that we have lost too soon, but also think about those that are still here with us.

Gayla and I were talking yesterday and we had about a 30-minute conversation and all of a sudden Gayla said, Eric, I gotta go. I've got a nephew receiving an award for hockey at some gymnasium. Gayla made the right decision. Gayla put friends and family before work. Take the time to sit down with a cup of coffee, go visit a friend or a colleague while they're still here.

So with that please take 30 seconds and remember those we have lost and those that are still here that we can still enjoy.

MADAME CHAIR HOSETH: I'm going to stand. I don't know if anybody wants to stand.

(Moment of silence)

MR. TAYLOR: Thank you. Madame Chair.

MADAME CHAIR HOSETH: Thank you, Eric, and thank you everybody for sharing from our hearts and remembering those who have passed on. It's good to see everybody.

So if we could do roll call, Patty.

MS. SCHWALENBERG: Certainly. U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service.

MR. TAYLOR: Here.

MS. SCHWALENBERG: Alaska Department of Fish and Game.

MR. SCOTT: Good morning, everybody. I'm present.

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1 MS. SCHWALENBERG: Aleutian Pribilof
2 Islands.

3
4 MR. DEVINE: Aleutian Pribilof is here.
5

6 MS. SCHWALENBERG: Association of
7 Village Council Presidents is absent. They let me know
8 that they got called to another meeting. Bristol Bay.

9
10 MADAME CHAIR HOSETH: Here.
11

12 MS. SCHWALENBERG: Chugach Region.
13

14 MS. EVANS: Here.
15

16 MS. SCHWALENBERG: Ahtna Intertribal
17 Resource Commission.
18

19 MS. LINNELL: Here.
20

21 MS. SCHWALENBERG: Kawerak is not here
22 unless Jack is on the phone. Jack, are you on the
23 line?

24
25 (No response)
26

27 MS. SCHWALENBERG: Jack was planning on
28 calling in, Madame Chair, but apparently not yet. So
29 they are not here. Cyrus Harris with Maniilaq.

30
31 MR. HARRIS: Good morning.
32

33 MS. SCHWALENBERG: Good morning. North
34 Slope Borough.
35

36 MS. HEPA: Uvlaalluataq. I'm here.
37

38 MS. SCHWALENBERG: Sun'aq Tribe of
39 Kodiak.
40

41 MS. CHERNOFF: Here.
42

43 MS. SCHWALENBERG: Hi, Coral. And
44 Tanana Chiefs Conference.
45

46 MR. MAYO: Here.
47

48 MS. SCHWALENBERG: Madame Chair, we
49 have a quorum.
50

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1 MADAME CHAIR HOSETH: Right. Thank
2 you. Thank you, everybody. Now is the time for
3 introductions. So we have Council member staff and
4 Pacific Flyway Council representatives. I could go
5 first and we can kind of go around the room.

6
7 Gayla Hoseth. I'm representing Bristol
8 Bay Native Association. I'm the Director of Natural
9 Resources.

10
11 Eric.

12
13 MR. TAYLOR: Good morning. I'm Eric
14 Taylor. I'm with the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service,
15 Division of Migratory Bird Management.

16
17 MADAME CHAIR HOSETH: Ryan.

18
19 MR. SCOTT: Good morning, everybody.
20 My name is Ryan Scott and I'm representing the Alaska
21 Department of Fish and Game out of Juneau.

22
23 MADAME CHAIR HOSETH: Patty. You're on
24 mute.

25
26 MS. SCHWALENBERG: (In Native). Patty
27 Schwalenberg, Alaska Migratory Bird Co-Management
28 Council.

29
30 MADAME CHAIR HOSETH: Okay. I'm just
31 going to kind of go around the room here as I see you
32 on the screen. Dave Safine.

33
34 MR. SAFINE: Sorry. I was having
35 trouble unmuting. Dave Safine, U.S. Fish and Wildlife
36 Service, Migratory Bird Management in Anchorage,
37 Alaska.

38
39 MADAME CHAIR HOSETH: Jason.

40
41 MR. SCHAMBER: Good morning. Jason
42 Schamber, Statewide Waterfowl Program Coordinator with
43 the Alaska Department of Fish and Game based in
44 Anchorage.

45
46 MADAME CHAIR HOSETH: I have a G.G.
47 Sheffield on the screen.

48
49 MS. SHEFFIELD: Good morning. Gay

50

0010

1 Sheffield with UAF Alaska Sea Grant in Nome.

2

3 MADAME CHAIR HOSETH: Thank you.

4

Priscilla.

5

6 MS. EVANS: Priscilla Evans. Me are
7 you talking to?

8

9 MADAME CHAIR HOSETH: Yeah.

10

11 MS. EVANS: Okay. Nanwalek IRA
12 Council, Second Chief and CRRC board member.

13

14 MADAME CHAIR HOSETH: Okay. Thank you.

15

16 MS. EVANS: That's regional.

17

18 MADAME CHAIR HOSETH: If we were around
19 the table, we would go with the Council and then who's
20 in the room, but I'm just going to go with who we have
21 on Zoom here. So, thank you, and sorry if everything
22 is kind of a little bit mixed between people, but we're
23 all here together. Julian.

24

25 MR. FISCHER: Good morning. My name is
26 Julian Fischer. I work for Fish and Wildlife Service,
27 Migratory Bird Management Program, based here in
28 Anchorage.

29

30 MADAME CHAIR HOSETH: Bob.

31

32 MR. KALER: Hi. Good morning. Robb
33 Kaler, U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, Migratory Bird
34 Management, based in Anchorage. I'm a seabird
35 specialist. Thanks.

36

37 MADAME CHAIR HOSETH: I have a phone
38 number ending in 0350.

39

40 MS. HEPA: Good morning. This is
41 Taqulik Hepa, North Slope Borough, Department of
42 Wildlife Management, member of the AMBCC.

43

44 MADAME CHAIR HOSETH: Thank you for
45 clarifying. I guess if you're an AMBCC Council member
46 if you wanted to say that. Thank you, Taqulik, because
47 there's quite a few of us on here.

48

49 Gloria.

50

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1 MS. STICKWAN: Good morning. Gloria
2 Stickwan, Ahtna Intertribal Resource Commission.

3
4 MADAME CHAIR HOSETH: Heidi.

5
6 MS. KRITZ: Good morning, everybody.
7 Heidi Kritz from Aleknagik and Togiak. I'm the BBNA
8 alternate rep on the AMBCC board. I work for BBNA
9 natural resources.

10
11 MADAME CHAIR HOSETH: Thank you. Sara.

12
13 UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER: Is that me?

14
15 MADAME CHAIR HOSETH: Sara.

16
17 UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER: Oh, Sara.
18 Sorry.

19
20 MS. BOARIO: Is that me, Gayla?

21
22 MADAME CHAIR HOSETH: Yes.

23
24 MS. BOARIO: Good morning, everyone.
25 My name is Sara Boario and I apologize. I'm losing my
26 voice. I'm the new Regional Director for the U.S. Fish
27 and Wildlife Service here in Alaska.

28
29 MADAME CHAIR HOSETH: Thank you. Is
30 that Erik -- is it E-O-S-N-A-S?

31
32 MR. OSNAS: Yeah, thanks. I haven't
33 figured out how to change my name on Zoom yet. I'm
34 Erik Osnas with U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service,
35 Migratory Bird Management. I'm on the Emperor Goose
36 Committee.

37
38 MADAME CHAIR HOSETH: Cyrus.

39
40 MR. HARRIS: Uvlaalluataq. Thank you,
41 Gayla. Good morning. My name is Cyrus Harris. I'm
42 representing the Northwest Arctic Region. Also
43 representing Maniilaq. Just to let you know that I'm
44 not going to be here full time and I'm not going to be
45 here tomorrow. We have some big events going on. I
46 did request for personal leave, so I don't even have an
47 agenda. I thought I'd call in to at least make a
48 quorum and go from there.

49
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0012

1 Thank you.

2

3 MADAME CHAIR HOSETH: Thank you for
4 joining us today, Cyrus, for all you can.

5

6 Will.

7

8 MR. LACEY: Good morning. Will Lacey,
9 U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service based here in Anchorage.

10

11 MADAME CHAIR HOSETH: Jim Johnson.

12

13 MR. JOHNSON: Good morning. I'm Jim
14 Johnson with the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service,
15 Migratory Bird Program, and I'm joining you from
16 Anchorage.

17

18 MADAME CHAIR HOSETH: Thank you.

19 Travis.

20

21 MR. BOOMS: Yes. Good morning,
22 everyone. I'm Travis Booms. I'm a research wildlife
23 biologist with the Alaska Department of Fish and Game
24 based in Fairbanks and I'm also representing the
25 Pacific Flyway Council Non-Game Technical Committee on
26 this call. Good to see everyone.

27

28 MADAME CHAIR HOSETH: Jim Simon. We
29 can't hear you for some reason.

30

31 MR. SIMON: How about now?

32

33 MADAME CHAIR HOSETH: Yeah.

34

35 MR. SIMON: Okay, great. Sorry about
36 that. My name is Jim Simon. I'm a consultant with the
37 regional management bodies of the Ahtna Intertribal
38 Resource Commission and Tanana Chiefs Conference. I'm
39 here in Glennallen with Karen Linnell.

40

41 MS. LINNELL: Good morning. Karen
42 Linnell, Ahtna.....

43

44 MADAME CHAIR HOSETH: Good morning,
45 Karen and Jim. Sorry, go ahead.

46

47 MS. LINNELL:executive director.
48 It's good to see you all.

49

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0013

1 MADAME CHAIR HOSETH: Todd.

2

3 MR. SFORMO: Hey. Todd Sformo,
4 biologist, North Slope Borough, Wildlife Department.

5

6 MADAME CHAIR HOSETH: Bryan Daniels.

7

8 MR. DANIELS: Good morning. My name is
9 Bryan. I work for U.S. Fish and Wildlife. I'm the
10 waterfowl biologist at Yukon Delta National Wildlife
11 Refuge on Yup'ik and Cup'ik lands in Bethel, Alaska.

12

13 MADAME CHAIR HOSETH: Coral.

14

15 MS. CHERNOFF: Good morning. My name
16 is Coral Chernoff and I'm here in Kodiak. I'm the
17 representative for Sugpiaq tribes here in Kodiak and
18 the harvesters around the island.

19

20 MADAME CHAIR HOSETH: Renee.

21

22 MS. ROQUE: Hi. Good morning. I'm
23 Renee Roque. I'm from Koliganek and from Dillingham.
24 I'm the subsistence outreach coordinating specialist
25 for the Natural Resources Department at BBNA.

26

27 MADAME CHAIR HOSETH: Thank you.
28 Angela.

29

30 MS. MATZ: Good morning, everybody.
31 I'm Angela Matz. I work for U.S. Fish and Wildlife
32 Service on spill response and contaminants and I'm
33 based here in Anchorage. Thank you.

34

35 MADAME CHAIR HOSETH: Thank you. Liz.

36

37 MS. LABUNSKI: Good morning. My name
38 is Liz Labunski. I'm a seabird biologist for the U.S.
39 Fish and Wildlife Service, Migratory Birds, and I'm
40 based here in Anchorage.

41

42 MADAME CHAIR HOSETH: Okay. John

43

44 MR. PEARCE: Hello, everyone. John
45 Pearce, USGS Alaska Science Center in Anchorage. I'm a
46 research manager for our ecosystems program. Great to
47 see you all.

48

49 MADAME CHAIR HOSETH: Robert.

50

0014

1 DR. GERLACH: Yeah, this is Bob
2 Gerlach. You can call me Bob. I'm the State
3 veterinarian for DEC and I work here in Anchorage.
4 Thank you for inviting me to the meeting.

5
6 MADAME CHAIR HOSETH: Things got a
7 little mixed up on my screen. Kevin.

8
9 MR. BLAKELY: Yeah, good morning, Chair
10 Hoseth, everyone. I'm Kevin Blakely. I'm with the
11 Oregon Department of Fish and Wildlife and I'm the
12 Pacific Flyway Council representative.

13
14 MADAME CHAIR HOSETH: Thank you.
15 Emmet.

16
17 MR. NICORI: Hi. Good morning. My
18 name is Emmitt Nicori. I work with U.S. Fish and
19 Wildlife. I'm a Refuge Information Technician in the
20 Yukon Delta.

21
22 MADAME CHAIR HOSETH: Thank you.
23 Rachel.

24
25 MS. LEKANOFF: Good morning. My name
26 is Rachel Lekanoff. I work as the environmental health
27 coordinator at Aleutian Pribilof Islands Association.
28 I live here in Anchorage.

29
30 MADAME CHAIR HOSETH: Okay. Dennis.

31
32 MR. MARKS: Good morning. I'm Dennis
33 Marks, U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service here in Anchorage
34 with Waterfowl. Thank you.

35
36 MADAME CHAIR HOSETH: Thank you. Todd
37 Sanders.

38
39 MR. SANDERS: Good morning. Todd
40 Sanders, U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service out of
41 headquarters. I'm the Pacific Flyway representative.

42
43 MADAME CHAIR HOSETH: Good to see you.
44 We have Debra.

45
46 MS. LYNN: Hello. Good morning. This
47 is Debra Lynn. I provide support for the Tanana Chiefs
48 Conference Migratory Bird Council.

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1 MADAME CHAIR HOSETH: Is Karen still
2 on? Karen.

3
4 (No response)

5
6 MADAME CHAIR HOSETH: Carla.

7
8 MS. KAYOTUK: Hi. This is Carla Sims
9 Kayotuk with North Slope Borough Wildlife Department,
10 Subsistence Research Coordinator based in Kaktovik.

11
12 MADAME CHAIR HOSETH: Okay. Cell phone
13 ending in 6190.

14
15 MR. DEVINE: Good morning. Peter
16 Devine, Jr. representing Qagan Tayagungin Tribe, Sand
17 Point. ACC rep for the Aleutian Pribilof Island
18 Association.

19
20 MADAME CHAIR HOSETH: Thank you, Peter.
21 I don't know if you could rename him -- rename the cell
22 phones, Patty. Oh, you did. Awesome. Somebody did.
23 So now we see you as Peter on your cell phone. Cell
24 phone ending in 2309.

25
26 MS. OLSON: Good morning, Madame Chair.
27 Members of the Council. This is Lisa Olson with State
28 Subsistence at Fish and Game.

29
30 MADAME CHAIR HOSETH: Okay. Hi, Lisa.
31 And cell phone ending in 3267.

32
33 MR. THERCHIK: Good morning. This is
34 David Therchik from Toksook Bay, Refuge Information
35 Technician, Yukon Delta Refuge, Fish and Wildlife.

36
37 MADAME CHAIR HOSETH: Thank you. Is
38 there anybody that I did not call out to introduce
39 themselves because my screen started changing a little
40 bit. Is there anybody else who we haven't recognized
41 here today?

42
43 MR. MAYO: Yeah, Gayla. Randy Mayo
44 here representing the Tanana Chiefs region.

45
46 MADAME CHAIR HOSETH: Okay. Thank you,
47 Randy. I think you were to the left of my screen and I
48 started to the right. So thank you. I didn't mean to
49 forget you. Anybody else?

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1 (No comments)

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(No comments)

MADAME CHAIR HOSETH: All right. Well, thank you for all of the introductions. I think with that it also went along with guests and members of the public. So thank you for attending our meeting here today.

MR. TAYLOR: Madame Chair.

MADAME CHAIR HOSETH: Yes?

MR. TAYLOR: I know that our new Regional Director Sara Boario could not stay with us for the entire meeting and I think Sara wanted to say a few words. I think she's been on the job all of 30 days and is pretty excited to be supportive of the Alaska Migratory Bird Co-Management Council. So is it okay if Sara just gives a few words?

MADAME CHAIR HOSETH: Sure.

MR. TAYLOR: All right. Sara, go ahead.

MS. BOARIO: Thank you, Eric. Thank you, Madame Chair, Gayla, Patty, members of the Council and partners with the State and all of my colleagues at Fish and Wildlife Service here today. I apologize for interrupting the flow of the meeting. I only have a few minutes and my voice probably won't hold up much longer than that anyway, but I'm happy to be here with you today. Not even at 30 days yet, Eric, but getting close as the new Regional Director for the Fish and Wildlife Service in Alaska.

For those of you I have not yet had the chance to meet, my name is Sara Boario and I'm the daughter of Liz and Tony Boario who, when I was one year old, moved my sister and I to Yakutat, Alaska from Pennsylvania. Forever grateful to the people of Yakutat and the communities that followed, Wrangell, Sand Point and Fairbanks, who welcomed us into their lives and traditions.

Because of that, for as long as I can remember, I grew up with duck, goose, fish, moose, crab on the table. I grew up with a strong sense of

0017

1 responsibility to community. Even though my own
2 grandparents were all the way on the other side of the
3 country, growing up with people who so deeply respected
4 their own made me more curious and closer to my
5 grandparents.

6
7 So as I step into this job I bring a
8 strong sense of accountability and responsibility to
9 the people and this place and the land. My
10 professional journey has been varied, but it began 20
11 years ago when I served as Chief of Staff for Alaska
12 State Senator Georgianna Lincoln, who was instrumental
13 in guiding my career and a very important mentor in my
14 life. I worked for the U.S. Forest Service for nearly
15 nine years working across Southcentral Alaska, Dena'ina
16 lands and Prince William Sound.

17
18 Most recently I was the Assistant
19 Regional director for External Affairs for the Fish and
20 Wildlife Service here where I worked alongside Ciisquq,
21 Crystal Leonetti, and closely with Patty too on a range
22 of indigenous and tribal work. Patty, thank you, not
23 only for your work as executive director, for all the
24 help you have given across the years with our Alaska
25 Native Relations training, our Native American Policy,
26 the Alaska Native Affairs Policy that's in development
27 now.

28
29 I know I have much to continue to learn
30 along the way. I'm looking forward to doing that
31 humbly, working alongside you as shared stewards and
32 through the Co-management Council and continuing on a
33 path to build open and honest relationship and
34 communication. Thank you again, Madame Chair and
35 members of the Council for allowing me a moment to
36 introduce myself. I wish you the best with the meeting
37 today.

38
39 MADAME CHAIR HOSETH: Thank you for
40 joining us today. You'll get to know a lot of us at
41 this meeting and I'm sure in different areas with your
42 new position. Congratulations on your new position and
43 look forward to having conversations with you. Thank
44 you for joining us today.

45
46 Thank you for that, Eric. Is there
47 anybody else for introductions that we may have missed?

48
49 (No comments)
50

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1 Okay. We're going to move to our next
2 agenda item, which is review and adoption of agenda.
3 Can we have a motion.

4
5 MR. DEVINE: Motion to adopt the agenda
6 as presented.

7
8 MADAME CHAIR HOSETH: Okay. Is there a
9 second?

10
11 MR. MAYO: I'll second that.

12
13 MADAME CHAIR HOSETH: Okay. It's been
14 moved by Peter and seconded by Randy. For discussion,
15 we were wanting to have the -- while we have some
16 people on the phone here. Eric is -- Bob was on the --
17 Bob was here. He introduced himself. So if it's okay
18 with everybody we're going to have -- move the agenda
19 or some new business right to the beginning while we
20 have Bob Gerlach with us here this morning for the
21 presentation on avian influenza. So we're going to
22 move that at the beginning and hopefully -- would
23 everybody be okay with an open agenda?

24
25 MR. TAYLOR: Yes, I am. Thank you, Mr.
26 Chair. This is Eric.

27
28 MR. SCOTT: Yes, ma'am.

29
30 MADAME CHAIR HOSETH: And you're okay
31 with that, Randy, as the seconder?

32
33 MR. MAYO: Yes.

34
35 MADAME CHAIR HOSETH: Okay. Any
36 further discussions or additions to the agenda.

37
38 (No comments)

39
40 MADAME CHAIR HOSETH: Do you have a
41 question?

42
43 MR. TAYLOR: Madame Chair, if I could
44 just interrupt for a second. Could I ask folks on the
45 call today to please mute your microphone if you're not
46 speaking. Thank you very much.

47
48 MADAME CHAIR HOSETH: Okay. Patty
49 might be able to have control as the host if people are
50

0019

1 unable to mute their phones. Do we have a question on
2 the motion?

3

4 MS. HEPA: Call for question.

5

6 MADAME CHAIR HOSETH: Thank you. All
7 those in -- I guess what we could do since we're on
8 this Zoom, anybody opposed to the open agenda?

9

10 (No comments)

11

12 MADAME CHAIR HOSETH: Motion carries
13 then. Next on our agenda then we have invitation for
14 public comments. Would anybody from the public like to
15 address the Council?

16

17 (No comments)

18

19 MADAME CHAIR HOSETH: I spotted Frank
20 Woods to say hi to everybody. He's down the hall.
21 Maybe he'll come in later. Next on the agenda we have
22 the Executive Director narrative report. Patty.

23

24 MS. SCHWALENBERG: Okay. Kind of a
25 short report this time. As most of you know, my mom
26 has been sick. She's 91. Although she's getting
27 better believe it or not. So I was gone for two months
28 out of this quarter and two months out of the last
29 quarter.

30

31 I did attend an avian influenza webinar
32 after I got back, which was really, really informative.
33 I learned a lot and we're going to be learning more
34 about avian influenza today. So my report, which is on
35 the first tab, talks about that.

36

37 Tamara Zeller and I met. Tamara is
38 with Fish and Wildlife Service. We talked about the
39 outreach for Emperor Geese. I did get approval from
40 the Chugach Regional Resources Commission Executive
41 Director Willow Hetrick to use some of our unrestricted
42 funds for outreach materials.

43

44 We're planning on getting maybe some a
45 little bit more expensive items to hand out. We're not
46 sure exactly. Everything that we're thinking about
47 were maybe some dry bags and maybe some reusable
48 shopping bags. If anybody has any ideas, let me know.
49 We have about \$500 that we can spend on other items for
50

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1 outreach.

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We did receive one proposal in September for our regulation process and it was actually from Southeast Alaska requesting to allow to hunt geese. Due to my absence we weren't able to get a meeting together in time with the proposer, but those connections have been made.

One of the CRRC biologists is going to be working with this individual as well as representatives from the Fish and Wildlife Service and Alaska Department of Fish and Game to take a look at the proposal and see if it can be put into a format, but it can be adopted by the Council next spring. So hopefully work will be done on -- or hopefully we'll be able to submit this proposal in the next deadline period between November 1 -- or submission period between November 1 and December 15.

The proposal we submitted to the Alaska Board of Game did not pass and that was, to refresh your memory, that was the proposal to not have any non-resident permits. We kind of expected that, but I know the Council was submitting that for conservation purposes.

One other proposal -- well, there were a lot of proposals that wanted to allocate more permits to non-resident hunters, so those ones -- they denied one and then didn't take action on the rest.

I attended six or so regional management body meetings after I got back. At the end of my report I just gave a little summary on the Alaska Native Relations training that we've been conducting on behalf of the service.

So that's it for my report, Mr. Chair -- or Madame Chair, sorry.

MADAME CHAIR HOSETH: It's okay. Thank you for your report, Patty. Does anyone have any questions for Patty.

(No comments)

MADAME CHAIR HOSETH: I did have one thing and I know that it was probably after this report

0021

1 and maybe later on in the agenda or somewhere in the
2 agenda we could have Jason talk about the -- at the
3 recent Board of Game meeting there in Fairbanks in
4 March -- and I just discovered it yesterday when I was
5 at our Nushagak AC meeting that the Board of Game
6 modified the definition of edible meat for swans, geese
7 and cranes on the State side and it was, I believe, for
8 human use and human consumption.

9
10 So I don't know if maybe when we do our
11 readout -- when we do our reports if that's something
12 that, Ryan, you wanted to cover, to go over that so we
13 know what that definition change is.

14
15 MR. SCOTT: Certainly. Yeah, no
16 problem. I'm having some video issues and I'm trying
17 to get it fixed, but, yeah, no problem.

18
19 MADAME CHAIR HOSETH: Okay. Does
20 anybody else have any questions or any comments on
21 Patty's report?

22
23 MS. CHERNOFF: Yes, Madame Chair. This
24 is Coral.

25
26 MADAME CHAIR HOSETH: Go ahead, Coral.

27
28 MS. CHERNOFF: Yeah, Patty, I was just
29 wondering -- you had mentioned doing -- it's not on my
30 screen, so I don't know what you called it, Native
31 Relations Training?

32
33 MS. SCHWALENBERG: Yeah.

34
35 MS. CHERNOFF: Could you let us know a
36 little bit about what that consists of. How long it is
37 and kind of what that consists of.

38
39 MS. SCHWALENBERG: Yeah.

40
41 MS. CHERNOFF: And do we have access to
42 what's in there?

43
44 MS. SCHWALENBERG: Okay. The U.S. Fish
45 and Wildlife Service back -- and maybe, Sara, you know
46 -- gosh, it must have been 2010 or 2011 started putting
47 on trainings for their employees to work more
48 effectively with the tribes that they work with
49 individually. In 2014 they contracted with Chugach
50

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1 Regional Resources Commission to facilitate that
2 training. So what it is is -- well, initially, and
3 what we're going to be going back to is an in-person
4 training, so I'll describe that first.

5
6 So the in-person training is a one full
7 week training for up to 45 Fish and Wildlife Service
8 employees that we have 30 -- I think it's 32 or 36
9 hours of contact time with the employees and we bring
10 in five elders from each of the -- from across the
11 state from each of the major culture groups that sit
12 amongst the students all week long as resources.

13
14 We provide training on cross-cultural
15 communications, all the laws that affect Alaska
16 Natives, have a session on subsistence, on indigenous
17 knowledge, on what is an elder. We have a practical
18 session on what happens when I go to a village. You
19 know, what if somebody asks me to eat something I don't
20 know what it is. You know, those types of things.
21 What should I bring. Those kind of questions are
22 answered in that session. We have a session on the
23 Native American policy, tribal consultation.

24
25 Then in the middle of the week there's
26 a mock potlatch and we bring in either storytellers or
27 dancers or some type of cultural activity. During the
28 week we also have -- we teach the students after class
29 beadwork, so they can do beadwork throughout the class
30 as they're listening to the lectures. And then we have
31 a big talk and circle at the end.

32
33 There's more to it, but that's
34 basically what it is. So then when the pandemic
35 started we had to transfer all those classes to online.
36 So it went from 45 students up to about 100 students
37 and it expanded from Fish and Wildlife Service to all
38 Department of Interior agencies, to all Federal
39 agencies. We've reached out and we've had people in
40 our class from the Alaska Native Tribal Health
41 Consortium. Also talking to the school district and
42 other areas where people could benefit from this
43 training.

44
45 We've recently been contacted by NASA
46 to do a specific training for them. Last year the
47 National Weather Service asked us to do a training for
48 them. So there's interest in people wanting to engage
49 with the tribes and with Alaska Natives in general with
50

0023

1 respect and making sure that they're not doing anything
2 that would be offensive.

3

4

5 So when we have the next round of
6 classes we're hoping to have them in person, but if
7 they are on via Zoom again, I'll make sure the Council
8 members get the login information because anyone can
9 login and attend them. We also have the classes
10 recorded. So if there's any classes you wanted to
11 watch from previous times, we have those available.
12 Links to those as well.

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Thanks.

MADAME CHAIR HOSETH: Thank you for
that overview. Coral, did you have anything else?

MS. CHERNOFF: No, I'm good, Madame
Chair. Thank you, Patty.

MS. SCHWALENBERG: Uh-huh. I also
might add all the instructors, except the guest
speakers, are Native employees of the Fish and Wildlife
Service. So that's kind of cool also.

MS. STICKWAN: Madame, I have a
question.

MADAME CHAIR HOSETH: Go ahead, Gloria.

MS. STICKWAN: I was wondering -- I saw
in your report that it said that being asked to do
ethnobotany. Could you explain more about that.

MS. SCHWALENBERG: Was that directed to
me? Sorry.

MADAME CHAIR HOSETH: Yes.

MS. STICKWAN: It was in your report.

MS. SCHWALENBERG: Yeah. I really
don't have much more to say. We were talking about
what other classes they would be interested in and that
was one of the classes that they mentioned, so that's
going to be our next class that we're going to be
putting together. I haven't even really delved into it
yet. So if you have any contact people, that would be
good to help me.

0024

1 MS. STICKWAN: For the Ahtna Region I
2 know somebody who is very knowledgeable that gives
3 presentations and she might be willing to.

4
5 MS. SCHWALENBERG: Oh, good. Who is
6 that?

7
8 MS. STICKWAN: (Indiscernible). I
9 could ask her.

10
11 MS. SCHWALENBERG: Okay. Thank you.

12
13 MADAME CHAIR HOSETH: Yeah, thank you.
14 I did have a question I guess. Is that Alaska Native
15 Relations Training mandatory? I know that started off
16 in U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service and now it's expanded
17 to other Federal agencies, but is that a mandatory
18 training within U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service?

19
20 MS. SCHWALENBERG: It was under the
21 previous Regional Director. Sara, can you answer that?

22
23
24 MADAME CHAIR HOSETH: I don't think
25 she's on anymore.

26
27 MS. SCHWALENBERG: I guess I'd have to
28 find out. It was mandatory under previous
29 administration. I'm not sure what it is now.

30
31 MADAME CHAIR HOSETH: Oh, Eric had his
32 hand up.

33
34 MR. TAYLOR: Madame Chair, thank you.
35 Yes, I just wanted to clarify that. It is still
36 mandatory training for U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service
37 employees.

38
39 MADAME CHAIR HOSETH: Okay. Thank you.
40 You know, I think that's really -- I'm glad to see that
41 that training has expanded to all -- you know, a lot of
42 Federal agencies. I know that we have a revolving door
43 of people that are coming in in these positions and
44 Alaska is different than a lot of places in the Lower
45 48 and especially with ANILCA.

46
47 We've run into a lot of different
48 issues on different levels with Federal governments and
49 having this training I think is very beneficial.

50

0025

1 Hopefully, the thing that I see as we go through this
2 for many years is that we're all still here and new
3 people are coming and we're having to explain how our
4 traditional ways of life are, how it is to live out
5 here.

6
7 I'm glad to hear the training. I would
8 love to participate in it on one of these years and I'm
9 sure some of us on this Council would also like to
10 attend. I think that we would be able to provide some
11 really good input to people coming here with AMBCC,
12 traditional bird hunting, and then everything is
13 connected, so it's all -- our way of life basically,
14 explaining how things are different here.

15
16 So thank you for doing that, Patty.
17 Does anybody else have any questions for Patty on her
18 report?

19
20 (No comments)

21
22 MADAME CHAIR HOSETH: Do we need a
23 motion to accept Patty's report?

24
25 MS. SCHWALENBERG: You generally do.

26
27 MADAME CHAIR HOSETH: Yeah. Can I ask
28 for a motion.

29
30 MR. TAYLOR: Madame Chair, this is Eric
31 Taylor. I move that we accept the Executive Director's
32 report.

33
34 MADAME CHAIR HOSETH: We have a motion.
35 Do we have a second.

36
37 MR. SCOTT: Second.

38
39 MADAME CHAIR HOSETH: Thank you, Ryan.
40 It's been moved and seconded. Is there any discussion.

41
42 (No comments)

43
44 MADAME CHAIR HOSETH: Hearing no
45 discussion. How do we want to do this. All those in
46 favor signify by saying aye.

47
48 IN UNISON: Aye.

49
50

0026

1 MADAME CHAIR HOSETH: Those opposed
2 same sign.

3
4 (No opposing votes)

5
6 MADAME CHAIR HOSETH: Motion carries.
7 Thank you, Patty. Next we have adoption of Council
8 action items, September '21 to '22.

9
10 MS. SCHWALENBERG: I guess that would
11 be me, Madame Chair. These are the action items from
12 the fall meeting. We had trouble with the Zoom at the
13 last meeting on the first day, so the first half of the
14 first day was not recorded. So the motions and some of
15 the notes of the action items came from my notes. So
16 if anybody sees any changes or whatever, you can let me
17 know and we can make those changes.

18
19 We made a motion to approve the agenda.
20 We accepted the Executive Director's report. Then, as
21 you recall, we spent quite some time going through
22 committee assignments and the different committees. So
23 that's reflected here. We accepted the committee
24 membership list.

25
26 We also -- we meaning the Council --
27 voted to support the Harvest Survey Committee's
28 recommendation to not have a survey in 2021. There was
29 a question as to whether there was a legal requirement
30 to have a survey and I don't know if that's been
31 answered yet.

32
33 We made a motion to establish a Seabird
34 Die-off Committee and members were identified for that
35 and then the meeting was adjourned.

36
37 Other key items that were discussed.
38 We recognized Randy Mayo for receiving the U.S. Fish
39 and Wildlife Service Regional Director's Alaska Native
40 Leader Elder Conservation Hero Award.

41
42 There was a request to have a member of
43 the AMBCC present testimony at the North Pacific
44 Fishery Management Council.

45
46 Request Tamara to send the Emperor
47 goose video to all the regions to allow posting on
48 their websites and in their classrooms.

49
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0027

1 The Council requested Julian Fischer
2 and Dave Safine follow up with Jennifer Hooper on the
3 Cackling geese proposal or proposed regulation changes
4 down south. Request by Jennifer Hooper to keep
5 apprised of the Pacific Flyway and SRC meetings, so
6 she's been placed on that mailing list.

7

8 Request by Robb Kaler and Cathy Coolitz
9 to meet with Jack Fagerstrom and Brandon Ahmasuk to
10 better understand the seabird colonies on Sledge and
11 Buff Islands.

12

13 Request to convene a Budget Committee.

14

15 There was a moment of silence honoring
16 Billy Trigg from Kawerak and Ron Nageak from North
17 Slope Borough -- or Roy that's supposed to be. Sorry.

18

19 Will Lacey provided the budget report
20 during that meeting as well.

21

22 That's it for the action items. Madame
23 Chair, we will need a motion to approve.

24

25 MADAME CHAIR HOSETH: Okay. Thank you.
26 Did anybody have any additions to the action items?
27 Due to technical difficulties I think Patty captured
28 almost everything from the meeting. Is there anything
29 else that needs to be added?

30

31 MR. KALER: Madame Chair. Robb Kaler,
32 Migratory Birds.

33

34 MADAME CHAIR HOSETH: Go ahead.

35

36 MR. KALER: Perhaps as a clarification
37 for two of the things that Patty mentioned. I don't
38 think it was a seabird die-off so much as a seabird --
39 we all are concerned about seabird populations. The
40 subcommittee would have been more broadly interested in
41 reproductive success, survival, population trends,
42 status.

43

44 And then the second comment with Jack
45 and Brandon. Bluff is not an island, it's actually on
46 the mainland, but Sledge Island is. Just two points of
47 clarification. And thank you, Patty, for summarizing
48 all of that.

49

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1 MS. SCHWALENBERG: Thank you.
2 Appreciate that.

3
4 MADAME CHAIR HOSETH: Thank you, Robb.
5 Any other additions, corrections.

6
7 (No comments)

8
9 MADAME CHAIR HOSETH: Hearing none. Do
10 we have a motion to approve our action items from
11 September 21-22, 2021?

12
13 UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER: I'll make a
14 motion.

15
16 MADAME CHAIR HOSETH: Who was that?

17
18 MS. SCHWALENBERG: I don't know. It
19 might have been at my house.

20
21 (Laughter)

22
23 MR. TAYLOR: Madame Chair, this is Eric
24 Taylor with Fish and Wildlife Service. I move that we
25 accept the action items from the -- let's see, it would
26 be what meeting?

27
28 MADAME CHAIR HOSETH: September 21-22,
29 2021.

30
31 MR. TAYLOR: Thank you.

32
33 MADAME CHAIR HOSETH: With the
34 corrected changes?

35
36 MR. TAYLOR: With the corrected changes
37 as noted.

38
39 MADAME CHAIR HOSETH: Okay. Thank you.
40 Do we have a second.

41
42 MR. HARRIS: Second.

43
44 MADAME CHAIR HOSETH: Thank you, Cyrus.
45 So it's been moved and seconded. Any further
46 discussion.

47
48 (No comments)

49
50

0029

1 MADAME CHAIR HOSETH: Hearing none.
2 All those in favor signify by saying aye.

3
4 IN UNISON: Aye.

5
6 MADAME CHAIR HOSETH: Those opposed
7 same sign.

8
9 MS. EVANS: Aye.

10
11
12 MADAME CHAIR HOSETH: Are you
13 abstaining or approving?

14
15 MS. EVANS: Approving. Sorry.

16
17 (No opposing votes)

18
19 MADAME CHAIR HOSETH: Okay. Thank you,
20 Priscilla. That concludes that portion of our agenda.
21 We're going to go ahead and move into Bob's
22 presentation, an update on highly pathogenic avian
23 influenza. Are you ready, Bob?

24
25 DR. GERLACH: Yeah, I sure am. Let me
26 go ahead and share my screen.

27
28 MADAME CHAIR HOSETH: Thank you for
29 being flexible with us and moving to the top of our
30 meeting here this morning. Thank you for that.

31
32 DR. GERLACH: Oh, no. I appreciate the
33 time and the invitation to the meeting. Can you see my
34 presentation now?

35
36 MADAME CHAIR HOSETH: Yes.

37
38 DR. GERLACH: Okay. Let me just put it
39 in. Here we go. There's just a lot in the news almost
40 on a daily basis with respect to avian influenza and
41 the impact on commercial birds as well as wild birds
42 down in the Lower 48. I really appreciate to be able
43 to go ahead and give you some updates on that. I've
44 got a lot of slides, but we'll go through them pretty
45 rapidly.

46
47 So the virus -- and this is just a
48 depiction of it. When you think about it, it looks
49 almost like the Covid virus that we've been dealing
50

0030

1 with for the last two years. The avian influenza virus
2 is divided into two main categories. There's highly
3 pathogenic, which is really strong impacts and a lot of
4 mortality in birds, especially poultry, and then a low
5 pathogenic strain. The low pathogenic strains are all
6 over in many bird populations and they generally cause
7 no sign of illness.

8
9 The avian influenza viruses are
10 generally named according to the surface proteins that
11 are on there. The H and N. So the one that we're
12 concerned about now is this H1N5 -- or H5N1. I'm
13 sorry. H5N1 virus. Like I said, most of the strains
14 that we see are low pathogenic strains and don't cause
15 any problem.

16
17 Avian influenza and influenza A viruses
18 can affect many different species. This is just a
19 demonstration of that. What we're going to do is try
20 to focus mostly on poultry and wild birds and the
21 possible implication with infection of people because
22 there have been in past circumstances in Asia and
23 Europe and the United States a change in the virus
24 where it has impacted and caused illness in people.

25
26 Currently, this strain that we're
27 seeing, this H5N1, has a very, very low risk for any
28 type of risk to people. That's one thing that we
29 really want to stress is that this seems to be mostly a
30 virus that's affecting a population of birds. We're
31 seeing an increased number of these avian influenza
32 outbreaks throughout the last 10 to 20 years.

33
34 You can ask why is that. So I just
35 wanted to go ahead and put up this map and it shows the
36 Asia and the dark brown you see is the population of
37 poultry in that area. So when you figure the
38 population in China alone is about 2 billion people and
39 the population of birds that they have in China is
40 about 5 billion.

41
42 There's this really intensification of
43 agriculture to try to feed people and that's one of the
44 things that we have this interaction with a lot of
45 poultry and then interaction with wild birds as well as
46 China is the leader in production in swine. They have
47 over half the world population in swine in the country.
48 So this is a prime area for this interaction to occur
49 and these viruses to go ahead and break in and cause a
50

0031

1 problem.

2

3

4 The last major outbreak that we had in
5 the United States was in 2014 and '15. So when you
6 look at this slide, it was in the summer of 2014 and
7 '15 we saw -- or 2014 we saw a lot of outbreaks in
8 China and Asia countries and then that slowly
9 progressed and moved over into Europe.

9

10 What was paramount and really important
11 about this outbreak is that there were outbreaks in
12 wild birds detected up in the northern Russia area.
13 What really concerned the USDA last year was the
14 outbreak that was occurring in 2000 and 2001 was
15 showing the same type of distribution.

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42 There's also the ingestion of infected
43 food and that's what we're seeing now with a lot of
44 raptors in the Lower 48. The bald eagles, we're seeing
45 owls and hawks and unfortunately even some falconers
46 that are hunting with their birds have had infections.
47 These birds, these raptors are catching infected birds
48 or getting exposed to infected birds, eating it and
49 then getting infected themselves.

0032

1 What we really stress is that the avian
2 influenza -- there's a natural reservoir in the wild
3 waterfowl. That's just a part of the ecology of this
4 virus. It seems to be especially in Dabbling ducks and
5 that's why the USDA Wildlife Services focuses most of
6 their surveillance on Dabbling duck populations to try
7 to go ahead and determine the progression and spread of
8 the virus.

9
10 So this goes over -- just repeats kind
11 of what that last slide said so that you can end up
12 having direct contact between bird shedding virus and
13 then the thing about this indirect contact -- we can
14 all go ahead and spread this with -- and it's
15 especially more important with respect to poultry -- on
16 your shoes or on your boots and on clothing,
17 contaminated equipment. So we want to make sure that
18 we're taking the proper sanitation procedures to go
19 ahead and try to stop the spread of the virus.

20
21 The one thing that I do want to stress
22 is that -- and USGS and U.S. Fish and Wildlife has
23 performed a lot of experiments up here, studies up
24 here, to show there's long viral persistence of this
25 virus in the environment. In the aquatic environment.
26 So it's not -- just doesn't come and infect an area and
27 then goes away. It oftentimes stays for quite a while.
28 What these studies with USGS did show and U.S. Fish and
29 Wildlife did show that it does survive through the
30 winter in the freezing conditions.

31
32 So when we look at the clinical signs
33 that we're seeing in wild birds, there's varied
34 presentations. There's some species that don't seem to
35 have very many signs at all and there's some species
36 that are seeing sudden death. In Europe there were a
37 number -- in Europe and Asia there were a number of
38 mass mortalities.

39
40 There was an outbreak in the U.K. where
41 thousands of wild birds had died as well as in Israel
42 where a number of birds had died. So the other birds
43 have -- wild birds have shown respiratory illness where
44 they've seen discharge and coughing. A discharge from
45 the eyes and the nasal area.

46
47 What was really unusual was in some of
48 the shorebirds they were seeing neurologic signs where
49 the birds were having tremors, unable to fly or falling
50

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1 over and acting like they were ataxic. They would put
2 their head over their back or have it twisted and
3 turned to the side. So there were some unusual
4 presentations in those species.

5
6 Then the other thing that we really
7 want to stress is that there are some wild birds that
8 will go ahead and have the virus but have no signs of
9 illness at all. So there's quite a bit of variation
10 there. In domestic poultry it's a different story.
11 Generally what we do is see very high mortality,
12 decreased egg production, lack of appetite, depression.

13
14
15 When I talk about high mortality, some
16 of these commercial operations in the Lower 48 and
17 these backyard operations that have been infected,
18 backyard poultry farms or operations, have had
19 mortality up to 90 to 100 percent of the bird have
20 died. The death rate has been within 24 to 48 hours.
21 You can see the entire flock of birds sick and die.

22
23 So when you look up close you can see
24 with the poultry the swelling around the eyes and the
25 head, especially the waddles and the comb, discharge
26 from the nose and the mouth and oftentimes
27 discoloration in the waddles or even on the legs.

28
29 So what the USDA is trying to put out
30 is as much information as possible about what people
31 that do have backyard poultry or have run a chicken
32 farm or an egg-laying farm is to go ahead and be very
33 aware, increasing biosecurity to go ahead and prevent
34 the introduction of the virus.

35
36 Like I said, the introduction can be
37 direct from wild birds to the poultry. It can be from
38 somebody who has gone out to a local pond that they
39 have on their property, walked through contaminated mud
40 and then walked back into their chicken coop or their
41 barn.

42
43 So there's been a really big outreach
44 to try to go ahead and have people understand what
45 signs to look for. Like the sick bird, the swollen or
46 discolored legs or feet on the birds, the swollen head
47 and discharge, and even misshapen eggs.

48
49 So what we've done for a number of
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1 years ago when I first became State Veterinarian we
2 developed an Alaskan Response Plan. When we look at our
3 small office and a large state, we really rely on the
4 collaboration with our other Federal and State partners
5 to go ahead and develop a good plan so that we are
6 prepared as a state.

7
8 So we have surveillance that we do in
9 our office in domestic poultry. We go around -- we do
10 offer free testing here at the lab and we also do
11 necropsies here for people that have animals that are
12 sick or ill. They can ship samples here. We also
13 distribute sample kits out to different areas of the
14 state to agricultural folks as well as to our Federal
15 and State partners for sampling of wild birds. We do
16 have sample kits out to zoos and wild bird rehab
17 centers.

18
19 Like I said, most of the surveillance
20 that's being done by the USDA wildlife services is on
21 Dabbling ducks and they are doing environmental samples
22 as well. The other important part of the response plan
23 is that we really rely on the public. So the rural
24 communities, subsistence hunters, to go ahead and
25 report morbidity and mortality events.

26
27 So if there are bird populations that
28 people have seen dead birds or birds that aren't acting
29 normal, then they can go ahead and report that to the
30 appropriate agency. Right away that report -- say if
31 it goes into U.S. Fish and Wildlife hotline or USGS
32 offices or Fish and Game offices, it's distributed to
33 everybody that's part of the response plan so that we
34 all can take action together and support each other.

35
36 We've done outreach to a number of
37 different areas and from our office we look at the 4-H
38 operations and the cultural state fairs and the
39 backyard poultry owners. Fish and Game and our Federal
40 partners are really doing a lot of outreach to hunters
41 and subsistence communities so that you can understand
42 what the outbreak is going through in the country and
43 what to expect and what to go ahead and report up here.

44
45 In the past we've done a lot of
46 training trying to go ahead and have people aware of
47 the proper way to collect samples or if a dead bird is
48 found and how to handle it to avoid contamination and
49 spread of the virus as well as to go ahead and have the
50

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1 good samples taken and submitted for testing.

2

3

4 So if we go back and look at what
5 happened in just December of last year was the first
6 detection that we had of this European strain avian
7 influenza that was brought over by wild birds and up in
8 Nova Scotia. So that was -- the designation of the
9 bird lineage or the viral lineage was this H5 subtype
10 and this is what they called it.

10

11

12 It's very similar to how we look at
13 Covid. Covid came over and they kept naming the
14 different strains as it changed and evolved in
15 populations. That's the same thing this virus is doing
16 and that's going to be important as we understand how
17 it spread and detection of why it was spread through
18 the country.

18

19

20 The USDA has a very good site open and
21 this map is to go ahead and show the individual states
22 that have had outbreaks. When you look up at the top
23 there's 24 affected states and this was -- actually
24 this map was just from April 4th and that number of
25 affected states has actually increased.

25

26

27 If you look at the total number of
28 birds affected and the birds affected are ones that
29 have been found with the virus and have been euthanized
30 to go ahead and stop the spread, 22 million birds
31 already, domestic birds. You can go to the USDA
32 website that's listed below to go ahead and look for
33 daily updates.

33

34

35 When we look at detections in the wild
36 birds, this map shows in both USDA, APHIS has this map
37 on their site, USGS has another map showing the
38 distribution. But each one of these is the number of
39 detections within each of the states.

39

40

41 When we go ahead and look at the -- you
42 know, this was a couple days ago. So far in wild birds
43 there have been over 490 detections of the virus in
44 wild bird in about 34 species and across 35 states. So
45 this is a rapidly spreading and spreading mostly
46 through the wild bird population as we expected because
47 it does with other strains of the avian influenza
48 virus.

48

49

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This is the map that is on the USGS

0036

1 site and shows the individual location of the outbreaks
2 for -- commercial poultry is in red, backyard
3 operations in yellow and the wild birds in green. It
4 just shows that the spread of the virus is going very
5 rapidly across the state and as we look there was one
6 eagle that was reported with avian influenza up in the
7 Vancouver/Lower British Columbia area. So the virus is
8 probably more widespread than our local surveillance
9 has detected.

10

11 Once we go ahead and look at these
12 detections across the Lower 48 I always have to go back
13 and look at all those detections in one state and look
14 how big our state is in comparison, which is really
15 important that we need to work together to go ahead and
16 be able to understand when this virus comes into the
17 state and what impact it may have on both our wild
18 birds and our domestic birds.

19

20 This is just a depiction of the flyways
21 so that we can see the bird migration routes coming up
22 into the north and impacting the -- that will impact
23 the wild bird populations up here. Obviously there is
24 the wild bird migration on the other side globally that
25 comes across from northern Russia.

26

27 So this is a slide that Andy Ramey had
28 lent me and it just shows where the outbreaks are
29 occurring in the Lower 48 in the migration routes. So
30 we are expecting this. It's not something that we're
31 thinking, oh, we probably won't see it because it's in
32 the Lower 48 and it will stay down there. No, it's
33 going to come up to the state of Alaska.

34

35 One of the nice sites that's out there
36 is this BirdCast and it's sponsored by Cornell
37 University and it gives you a day-to-day depiction of
38 wild bird migrations across the Lower 48. Just a
39 couple days ago this is what the forecast was with
40 respect to bird movement. So as you can see most of
41 the arrows are pointing north.

42

43 So the one thing that we really want to
44 do is go ahead and make sure that people have the
45 information that you can go ahead and there's a lot out
46 there for you to go ahead and look at. Andy Ramey and
47 USGS developed this slide with really great
48 presentations. A paper that they had sponsored and
49 information about influenza. The USDA site. And then
50

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1 there's some guidance that can be about reporting dead
2 birds as part of our disease investigations because
3 without people across the state reporting this we may
4 not have any idea of the spread and the impact there
5 may be on the wild bird population.

6
7 So I think it's really critical that we
8 look at how we can all work together to understand how
9 this virus is going to move in the state and look at
10 the impact that we'll see. One of the things that --
11 let me just go back to the one slide here that we had
12 on the distribution of the outbreak. The one thing
13 that the USDA has done is that they're doing the same
14 type of genetic testing on this virus that we did with
15 Covid to look at different strains.

16
17 What we're seeing is that most of the
18 outbreaks that we saw in these commercial poultry
19 operations are not linked one to another. So this
20 outbreak that occurred here did not spread to another
21 commercial operation by movement of commercial birds.
22 All of these -- a majority of these are independent
23 introductions of the virus from wild birds to the
24 commercial population.

25
26 So it's really important with respect
27 to if you did have backyard birds and chickens or
28 pheasants or turkeys that you're taking care of that
29 you go ahead and try to create a separation and monitor
30 them very well.

31
32 The other good news -- preliminary good
33 news anyway -- from this genetic evaluation is that
34 they're seeing that the virus that came over, this
35 Eurasian virus, is intermixing with the North American
36 virus that we have here normally that doesn't cause
37 much of a problem for poultry and doesn't cause much of
38 a -- causing clinical illness in our wild birds.

39
40 As that virus mixes with North American
41 strains, we're seeing the newer detections in our
42 commercial and even in the wild bird population an
43 increased mixing. They're seeing a decrease in the
44 virulence of the pathogenicity of the strain. So
45 they're seeing less of a death rate. So mortality
46 rates in domestic poultry early on in the outbreak had
47 very very high mortality rates. We're not seeing as
48 high mortality rate on the commercial birds that we're
49 seeing.

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1 In a way we're seeing natural movement
2 and change of the virus that can go ahead and maybe not
3 have as strong an impact on both the domestic and the
4 wild bird populations.

5
6 The other references that we have
7 listed here are recommendations for protecting yourself
8 from bird flu when you're cleaning harvested birds or
9 -- and the USDA and CDC has recommendations for
10 backyard operators. So you can go ahead and decrease
11 the chance of any type of spread of the virus.

12
13 The last thing I wanted to put up was
14 the contacts. Again, thank Andy for creating this
15 slide that made my presentation a little bit easier.
16 With respect to listing where to report dead or dying
17 birds, in the contacts with U.S. Fish and Wildlife
18 Service, with Andy at USGS and our office here.

19
20 So the thing that we really want to
21 stress in part of this is that you're a very important
22 part of our monitoring and surveillance for this virus
23 in the state and we really want to go ahead and
24 encourage you to go ahead and use these contacts to go
25 ahead and report any abnormal findings.

26
27 I think the last thing I have to say is
28 that I really want to thank the partners that work with
29 me and help educate me. Our partners in U.S. Fish and
30 Wildlife and USGS as well as Fish and Game that helped
31 me understand the bird migration and wild bird health.

32
33 So it's really been very good for me to
34 go ahead and work with all these great people. I
35 really want to thank all the public members, the
36 hunters and the community members for helping with
37 support of this and getting reports to us so that we
38 can go ahead and do investigations to see because not
39 every mortality event is going to be avian influenza.
40 It may be some other problem and we need to know about
41 these other issues and problems, whether it's through
42 starvation or other disease agents that are affecting
43 our wild bird populations.

44
45 So thank you so much.

46
47 MADAME CHAIR HOSETH: Thank you, Bob,
48 for that really good overview. I learned a lot on
49 there and I do have some questions, but I want to open
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1 it up for the floor if anybody else has any questions.

2

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Ryan.

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MR. SCOTT: Thank you, Madame Chair.

6

Thanks, Bob, for being here. I'm just curious. What

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are the surveillance plans or testing plans for Alaska

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starting essentially now and who all will be doing

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that? That may be somebody else on here. I'm just

10

kind of curious where you're about to be to sample

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birds.

12

13

DR. GERLACH: Yeah, I think the USDA

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Wildlife Services has their set surveillance program

15

and they're following what they did last year and what

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they're doing is kind of what we all are doing is

17

waiting to see the first introduction of these -- or

18

the first movement of migratory birds up here. So as

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soon as that happens they'll start more active

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surveillance efforts.

21

22

For our office we're trying to get

23

ahead a little bit with distributing sample kits and

24

we've done to, like I say, a lot of the rehab centers,

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the zoos and exhibits, as well as to other partners

26

that are doing surveillance in the field.

27

28

Just as you know, you'd think, well,

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surveillance, it's not going to be too hard. It's not

30

too much expense for the supplies and the kits. What

31

the expense is is to go ahead and have somebody go out

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there to collect them. If we can have partners help us

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collect them and work together with respect to that, we

34

can go ahead and effectively and practically manage

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something and very more economically manage than trying

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to do one thing on our own.

37

38

MR. SCOTT: Thank you, sir.

39

40

MADAME CHAIR HOSETH: Thank you, Ryan.

41

Gay.

42

43

MS. SHEFFIELD: Hi. Thank you, Bob,

44

for your presentation and thank you to the AMBCC for

45

having this meeting. I have a couple questions. I

46

really appreciate the presentation.

47

48

For the Bering Strait Region where

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seabirds are such a big subsistence item as well as

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1 waterfowl and all the other birds, a couple things were
2 striking to me. For the last couple of years Kawerak
3 and -- and I know Kawerak is not on here, but Kawerak,
4 myself and others have been sort of joining together
5 with Fish and Wildlife to ask people to send in dead
6 seabirds so we were able to get a handle on what was
7 the cause of the five-year multi-species seabird
8 die-off from the Bering Strait Region.

9
10 Do we tell people not to send in dead
11 birds now or do we tell people to send in dead birds?
12 That's one question. I've got one about the eggs and
13 -- so maybe that's an offline talk.

14
15 DR. GERLACH: No, I think it's a good
16 question and I think what we do is if someone sees a
17 morbidity/mortality event, report it to the local
18 authorities or the local contact and then they can give
19 specific direction on what to do and how to handle it.
20 Because if there's somebody locally in the area, maybe
21 they're going to go ahead and send out a wildlife
22 biologist to collect, but if there's not, they may be
23 able to go ahead and give the proper technique for
24 collecting the birds in other areas.

25
26 I don't want to speak for my Federal
27 partners or State Fish and Game in this regard, but in
28 the past there have been recommendations if you go out,
29 to go ahead and wear appropriate clothing. So to wear
30 rubber boots that can be cleaned, wear rubber gloves.
31 If you see dead birds, you can pick them up with a
32 plastic bag so you're not handling the bird and then
33 double bag those.

34
35 But you need to go ahead and be aware
36 or be able to go ahead and have somebody that will go
37 ahead and accept those birds and help move them out.
38 So before you start to go ahead and collect make sure
39 you make those contacts so that we can go ahead and not
40 have somebody go through all the work and say, yeah, we
41 got these birds and they're just laying here and
42 nobody's doing anything. So we really want to make
43 sure all the pieces are in line so we can go ahead and
44 give you the information once we can find what's going
45 on.

46
47 MS. SHEFFIELD: Okay. I appreciate
48 that. Brandon Ahmasuk with Kawerak and myself are the
49 contacts. So maybe I need to be more in contact with
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1 others for that.

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And I guess my understanding is there's probably not going to be as much surveillance. Will it be sort of equally -- the State will be equally -- even though it can't be well-done surveillance because we're so big, is there going to be an effort in each region so that seabirds will get there or is it focused more on other parts of the state surveillance where they go out and test people's (indiscernible).

DR. GERLACH: Yeah. So USDA Wildlife Services has their surveillance locations already set up and they're working with Alaska Fish and Game to go ahead and collect samples. Ryan can maybe even address that more. They already have areas where they're set up. These are areas that they have the highest probability of finding Dabbling ducks and the highest probability of their past years surveillance of detecting positives and detecting virus. So that's where they have it.

But that doesn't mean because it's a high probability it's always going to be at this one lake or marsh or wetland area that we might not see mortality in other areas. That's when we really rely on folks in the field to go ahead and let us know so that if we can get folks to that area or if we need to go ahead and have samples collected and maybe brought to a local Fish and Game office or to a local USGS or U.S. Fish and Wildlife office to go ahead and be able to go ahead and get some answers on determining the cause, the mortality event.

MS. SHEFFIELD: Okay. And the last question, and I'll stop for everybody, is the eggs. I'd never seen -- I'm glad you put the behaviors up there and that there's no behavior sometimes, but the eggs, wrinkly eggs. So eggs are a huge subsistence boon, benefit to this region seasonally. If people see eggs in that shape, I mean can you eat them? Should you touch them? Should you report those? Those are the kinds of questions I saw looking at those ugly eggs.

DR. GERLACH: Those ugly eggs were from poultry and I'm not an expert on wild birds if the virus would do the same thing. I would assume it would, but poultry are laying -- domestic poultry

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1 they're laying one egg a day and then they skip every
2 eighth or ninth day. So their overall production may
3 be a lot higher with respect to the wild bird
4 population, so I don't know.

5
6 I would go back to the recommendations
7 that the Fish and Game and U.S. Fish and Wildlife put
8 out. If a harvester is out and sees a sick bird acting
9 abnormally or sees eggs that don't look right or
10 abnormal, then don't harvest them and don't collect the
11 because it may not be avian influenza. It may be
12 something else that may be a risk for public health
13 issues.

14
15 MS. SHEFFIELD: All right. Thank you,
16 Bob, and thank you everybody for your patience. Thank
17 you.

18
19 MADAME CHAIR HOSETH: Thank you for
20 your good questions. Robb.

21
22 MR. KALER: Thank you, Madame Chair.
23 Thank you, Bob. And thank you Gay for those questions.
24 I just thought while we were talking about this from a
25 Fish and Wildlife Service seabird die-off and there
26 will be a presentation. Liz and I will give that a
27 little bit later.

28
29 But I just wanted to quickly touch on
30 every carcass that we've gotten, particularly -- you
31 know, for example, the Bering Strait region with Gay
32 and Brandon. We sent those to the USGS National
33 Wildlife Health Center in Madison. Every carcass,
34 whether they decide to examine that more thoroughly or
35 not, does get swabbed, meaning the mouth and the
36 cloacal area, and tested for avian influenza. They're
37 doing a quick test. It's a PCR test for either an H5
38 or an H7 strain.

39
40 Again, emphasizing what Bob said, these
41 are highly pathogenic to poultry. So that's kind of
42 the USDA, Department of Agriculture's focus. So all of
43 these birds that we're getting from Gay or Brandon, for
44 example, are getting swab tested. If they come up
45 initially positive for H5 or H7, then they will
46 coordinate with the USDA, with the National Veterinary
47 Services lab and do a more thorough examination. So
48 those are the results if it's identified as highly
49 pathogenic and then it kicks up to the next step. So
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1 just wanted to share that really quickly with the
2 Council. Thank you.

3
4 DR. GERLACH: I'll just make one
5 comment to that. In the past when there have been a
6 large mortality event like that, oftentimes the
7 wildlife biologist will contact our office and will
8 work with the Wildlife Health Center and the biologist
9 to say do we want to go ahead and split these samples
10 and maybe have some come to the State so we can go
11 ahead and do a necropsy here and do testing and
12 sampling here as well as at the Wildlife Health Center.
13 So we try and coordinate and help each other as best we
14 can so we can get the answers as fast as we can back to
15 the biologist and the people who've reported it.

16
17 MR. KALER: Sorry to add one more
18 thing. So for an example we had a positive from an
19 eider that the vigilant folks at Nome -- so an eider
20 was being attacked by ravens. It was unusual that it
21 was in the port of Nome in the first place. We were
22 able to get that to the National Wildlife Health
23 Center. I'm looking at the results from the testing.
24 That was an H11N9 avian influenza which was low
25 virulence for viruses. Anyway, just kind of a shout
26 out to reporting when you see something odd or strange
27 and then kicking that up to the next level so that we
28 can adequately respond to that.

29
30 Thanks.

31
32 MADAME CHAIR HOSETH: Thank you. Does
33 anybody else have any questions.

34
35 MR. DEVINE: Madame Chair.

36
37 MADAME CHAIR HOSETH: Go ahead, Peter,
38 and then Taqulik after.

39
40 MR. DEVINE: Yeah, just listening to
41 that talk it brought something to my memory. In Sand
42 Point we get seagull eggs. They're the glaucous gulls.
43 Probably for the last 10, 15 years every once in a
44 while in a batch of seagull eggs we'll find a pink one.
45 We've had them tested or we sent them out, but we never
46 have got any reports back that they were bad or
47 anything.
48 With the gulls and stuff, they eat different foods and
49 we don't know if they're getting into shrimp or
50

0044

1 something, you know, during that time period. It's
2 just an observation that every once in a while we do
3 find a sea gull egg that's kind of a pink pigment to it
4 instead of the green.

5

6 DR. GERLACH: Well, I would pass that
7 off to the wild bird experts. My knowledge is very
8 limited with respect. I do know that the diet that we
9 give poultry can go ahead and change the color of the
10 yolk and sometimes color the shell, but it's generally
11 -- I don't really know much about that impact in wild
12 waterfowl or in wild birds.

13

14 MADAME CHAIR HOSETH: Thank you for
15 that, Peter. Do you know how long ago you guys sent in
16 those to get those eggs tested and who you could follow
17 up with or does anybody know who Peter could follow up
18 with to find out the results of those tests?

19

20 MR. DEVINE: Yeah, I'm not sure if we
21 sent them to Aleutian
22 Pribilofs or not, but I could touch base with Karen and
23 see. But I do believe that we sent some out one time.
24 I will try and track that information down.

25

26 MADAME CHAIR HOSETH: Okay. Thank you,
27 Peter, for your question. Taqulik.

28

29 MS. HEPA: Hi. Good morning. Thank
30 you, Madame Chair. I just very briefly want to say
31 that because people are very connected to birds and
32 depend on them for our subsistence and food security
33 needs. I just want to encourage that there is a
34 statewide effort to coordinate one strategy because I
35 have a feeling that we are -- from each of our regions
36 we're going to get a lot of phone calls and questions.
37 What do we do about protocols, outreach and reporting.

38

39

40 There really needs to be one
41 coordinated strategy interagency connecting with the
42 local rural areas where people are going to be
43 interacting and have questions and concerns about the
44 bird. Is there efforts to do that at the statewide
45 level so we have one collaborative or collective plan?

46

47 DR. GERLACH: We do have -- with our
48 Avian Influenza Outbreak Plan we do have a set protocol
49 with respect to doing our reporting among agencies to

50

0045

1 go ahead and then working together to go ahead and get
2 a uniform message out to the residents in the state.
3 So Fish and Game and U.S. Fish and Wildlife and USGS
4 are working together with respect to getting uniform
5 language out and recommendations in regard to proper
6 reporting and proper handling of birds and eggs for
7 consumption and for reporting.

8
9 And then our office works with and does
10 help with that effort. Most of our efforts are focused
11 on domestic poultry and birds that way. We do all
12 coordinate with the Public Health Office so that we can
13 go ahead and have consistent messages with respect to
14 food safety and sanitation issues.

15
16 MS. HEPA: And then my follow up
17 comment is that because we have received communications
18 from local people about the concern already, I think
19 that for the regional managers, you know, we're listed
20 in the Migratory Bird booklet and people are going to
21 be calling our various offices or individuals about
22 information. So we need this information now instead
23 of later down the line.

24
25 So thank you and that discussion will
26 happen more throughout the day.

27
28 DR. GERLACH: I think you're right and
29 I know Eric Taylor was working with a number of folks
30 to go ahead and have a handout to distribute with the
31 most up to date information for everyone.

32
33 MS. HEPA: Great. Thank you.

34
35 MADAME CHAIR HOSETH: Thank you for
36 bringing that up, Taqulik. We do have an Education
37 Outreach Committee within AMBCC and I think that we
38 should probably have a meeting. I'm not sure who is
39 all on that Education Outreach Committee. Like Taqulik
40 said, we are going to probably be the ones to be
41 contacted and we need to also know the protocol of
42 what's going to happen throughout the state of Alaska.

43
44 I was just sitting here thinking that
45 we should maybe -- if we did have an outreach flyer, we
46 could share that information if you guys were planning
47 on doing any kind of radio public service announcement
48 that could play on the local radios. We could get the
49 outreach out that way. The birds are going to start
50

0046

1 showing up within the next week, two, three weeks here
2 as they migrate up to the Y-K Delta. So I mean if we
3 could get together for a meeting or how we could
4 provide input on the education outreach I think that
5 would be beneficial.

6
7 Also I know that people are looking for
8 testers. I think it was about three or four years ago,
9 Eric, you were wanting people to sign up to be -- to
10 know how to properly gather a bird or to retrieve a
11 bird, a dead carcass, and go through the training of
12 that in the different regions. I know that things
13 happen and I don't think that that took place or I
14 don't know if anybody in my specific region
15 participated. Is there going to be any training at all
16 for retrieving birds?

17
18 MR. TAYLOR: Thanks, Madame Chair. At
19 this point, no, there's no formal training being
20 planned. I did want to bring up the flyer that Dr.
21 Gerlach mentioned. Patty, if you could share your
22 screen perhaps, is there a way you could bring it up so
23 folks could take a look at it. It addresses the
24 question that Taqulik brought up. If we could, we
25 could take a look at that. The flyer is part of your
26 packet and will be distributed to all regions.

27
28 I strongly encourage Council members to
29 post it on your website and print copies if you can.
30 This flyer that you're looking at -- thank you, Patty
31 -- went through a pretty extensive review process
32 including Bob's office with the State Veterinarian
33 Office as well as USGS National Wildlife Health Center.
34 The Alaska Science Center, John Pierce's group, and
35 Andy Ramey as well as many folks from the Alaska
36 Department of Fish and Game and several folks from the
37 Alaska Native Caucus.

38
39 This is something that we hope can be
40 widely distributed and posted on your websites. It
41 goes through a bit of history about highly pathogenic
42 avian influenza. This flyer is geared really toward
43 rural residents and rural subsistence users. Something
44 that Gay has raised in this discussion. It talks about
45 the risk to poultry as well as wild birds and some
46 caution and to reduce your risk for Alaska hunters.

47
48 As Taqulik mentioned, who can someone
49 call if you see a bird that's acting abnormal, if you
50

0047

1 see an injured bird, if you see a mortality event, dead
2 birds, we have listed our 1-866 number, the toll free
3 number, as well as the Alaska Department of Fish and
4 Game's email, the State veterinarian, and then the
5 Local Environmental Observer Network, the LEON network.
6

7 And then finally we have posted five
8 links that, as Bob has mentioned, provide great
9 information in terms of the spread of this virus across
10 North America and migration as well as proper
11 techniques for individuals to use in handling birds.
12

13 Again, I encourage you -- this went
14 through a great amount of review from Alaska Native
15 Health Tribal Center, USGS, ADF&G, Fish and Wildlife
16 Service and others, so I think the information is
17 pretty accurate. I think it's relevant. So that
18 should be part of your packet. If you would like me to
19 send it to you individually, just let me know.
20

21 MADAME CHAIR HOSETH: I think that
22 would be great. Maybe we could just copy this and put
23 it in the chat. We could just download it from our
24 computers for those of us that are on.
25

26 As we go through this spring/summer
27 season, if we could be informed if there's any cases
28 that do come out as a council in other regions, but
29 specifically in our own regions, but then across the
30 state of Alaska so that we're aware of that as well. I
31 think that would be very important.
32

33 And then especially like with the eagle
34 that we talked about yesterday that got sent from
35 Dillingham, it would be good to know the results of
36 that once results do come back just so that we're aware
37 of that within our own specific areas.
38

39 What a great presentation, Bob. Thank
40 you for bringing this to our attention. We'll keep it
41 on our radar. I got some really neat websites that I
42 didn't know exist about the BirdCast info that we could
43 actually track the bird migration patterns. So that's
44 going to be a handy document to review.
45

46 Does anybody else have any questions
47 for Bob?
48

49 MS. STICKWAN: I just had a question.
50

0048

1 MADAME CHAIR HOSETH: Go ahead, Gloria.

2

3 MS. STICKWAN: I was wondering. They
4 said it's mostly in Dabbling ducks. Do you know any
5 other birds that migrate to Alaska? Has there been any
6 other virus in other birds you know of?

7

8 DR. GERLACH: Yeah. The reason they
9 have focused on Dabbling ducks is because in the past
10 that was the most successful population of birds to go
11 ahead and find the virus in. But we've had reports of
12 mortalities in the United States on Ross's geese, Snow
13 geese, Canadian geese and then raptor species, as well
14 as some swans. That's in the Lower 48. But there have
15 been other detections in Dabbling ducks like Mallards,
16 Mergansers, Widgeons, Teals and Scaup.

17

18 The virus can be in a lot of different
19 birds and even some songbirds oftentimes can be
20 carriers of the virus even though some of those species
21 may get sick, most of them don't. They're just
22 carriers. So it mostly seems to be in fact and affect
23 the shorebirds, the raptors and the waterfowl.

24

25 MADAME CHAIR HOSETH: Does that answer
26 your question, Gloria?

27

28 MS. STICKWAN: Yes. Thank you.

29

30 MADAME CHAIR HOSETH: Okay. I just had
31 one question that popped up. Do we need to be careful
32 feeding our bird feeders?

33

34 DR. GERLACH: Yeah, I think that's a
35 really good question for what we're telling people that
36 if you have backyard poultry, not to have a bird feeder
37 out because that's going to attract wild birds to the
38 area that could be a risk to your poultry and your
39 backyard operations. So with respect to that we try to
40 go ahead and if people say, well, I'm going to have a
41 bird feeder out, then we tell them to go ahead and put
42 it far away from an area that may have impact on other
43 birds.

44

45 I think Fish and Game and U.S. Fish and
46 Wildlife have had other recommendations of when not to
47 use bird feeders. Like we've had outbreaks of certain
48 bacterial diseases like salmonella and some others that
49 can go ahead and impact wild birds. So when we've seen

50

0049

1 those, they have good recommendations on maybe
2 restricting feed at certain time periods or making sure
3 your bird feeders are clean and you maintain them very
4 well.

5
6 With respect to the avian influenza
7 virus, like I said, most of those small songbirds may
8 be carriers, but they generally don't get sick. The
9 one thing I have to go back and qualify with that is
10 that this virus is very different than others. In the
11 past most are avian influenza outbreaks that we've seen
12 in North America. Wild birds have not been affected at
13 all.

14
15 This virus seems to be extremely
16 different with respect to the large number of wild
17 birds that were affected, infected and died in Europe
18 and we are seeing the mortalities here. There have
19 been anecdotal reports from the Lower 48 upwards of 50
20 Snow geese found dead in a field but that's -- those
21 are anecdotal reports and haven't been recorded and
22 substantiated, but we are seeing mortalities and
23 there's no doubt. We generally have not seen that as
24 much in the past.

25
26 So this is a new and unique virus.
27 Like I said, there's a lot of correlations that we see
28 with this virus coming through now and Covid with
29 respect to its -- as much as we think we know about
30 some of these viruses there's still a lot we need to
31 learn.

32
33 MADAME CHAIR HOSETH: Thank you. Eric.

34
35 MR. TAYLOR: I just wanted to follow up
36 on Gloria's question. You know, Gloria, as Bob has
37 mentioned, we really don't know in terms of what
38 species, groups that highly pathogenic avian influenza
39 could affect.

40
41 Right now, as Bob mentioned, it's
42 waterfowl, gulls, shorebirds and eagles. As Gayla
43 mentioned, we had an eagle that was acting lethargic,
44 was acting not normal, not scared of humans and the
45 bird eventually died and was shipped in by the Refuge
46 manager overnight. We picked it up and delivered it to
47 Dr. Gerlach's office where he performed the necropsy
48 and we're awaiting tests. Gayla, yes, we will fire the
49 results back to you right away.

50

0050

1 The important point is that we're
2 really dependant upon everyone on the call today for
3 your observations in the field to let us know what
4 you're seeing. As Bob mentioned, then we will help
5 take the appropriate action. You're the first
6 individuals that will see behaviors or mortality events
7 as opposed to me sitting in my Anchorage office. So we
8 really appreciate everyone's collaboration in this
9 effort.

10

11 MADAME CHAIR HOSETH: Thank you. Any
12 other questions.

13

14 (No comments)

15

16 MADAME CHAIR HOSETH: Thank you, Bob,
17 for that really good overview presentation and we look
18 forward to having you come back to us and present to us
19 again. Thank you for your info.

20

21 DR. GERLACH: No, I really appreciate
22 the invitation to the meeting, so thank you.

23

24 MADAME CHAIR HOSETH: Okay. Thank you.
25 Now we're going to take a break. Does 10 minutes sound
26 good for everybody? Okay. We'll come back at -- it's
27 10:36, so we'll say 10:46 and probably start at 10:50.
28 So 10-minute break. Thank you.

29

30 (Off record)

31

32 (On record)

33

34 MADAME CHAIR HOSETH: Hi, everybody.
35 Is everybody back? It's 10:47. Nice break. My dad is
36 one of the senior managers here, so I had to go get a
37 recap of meetings I missed yesterday here at BBNA.

38

39 So next on our agenda we have Liliana
40 and Laura, but I didn't see them on. Are they here at
41 the meeting? I don't know if Lili.....

42

43 MS. SCHWALENBERG: I don't see them
44 either. I'll reach out to them, Madame Chair, and see
45 if I can get a hold of one or the other.

46

47 MADAME CHAIR HOSETH: Okay. We'll just
48 move on down the agenda and hopefully they'll be able
49 to join us.

50

0051

1 MR. SCOTT: Madame Chair.

2

3 MADAME CHAIR HOSETH: Yes.

4

5 MR. SCOTT: Sorry to interrupt. Lili
6 did reach out I believe yesterday and I thought it went
7 to several people. She's only going to be available
8 part of today and Laura was not available at all. I'll
9 see if I can find that email and I'll relay that
10 information.

11

12 MADAME CHAIR HOSETH: Okay. We're
13 flexible on our agenda since we do have an open agenda
14 that when she becomes available we can see where we're
15 at and she could give her presentation then.

16

17 MR. SCOTT: Sounds good. Thank you.

18

19 MADAME CHAIR HOSETH: Okay. So we're
20 going to move into Council Committee reports. We have
21 the Regulations Booklet Committee. Eric.

22

23 MR. TAYLOR: Thank you, Madame Chair.
24 The Council Regulations Committee did not meet. I
25 apologize. That was my responsibility. I will say
26 that several people in the Migratory Bird Program,
27 Julian Fischer, Tamara Zeller, Michael Swaim and David
28 Safine were to update the book in terms of providing a
29 bit more accurate maps and some formatting changes that
30 hopefully will make it a bit clearer. We are getting
31 some comments already. Todd Sformo called Julian and
32 had some good recommendations that we will implement
33 next year.

34

35 Despite Coral asking me to change her
36 phone number, I failed to do that, so that's another
37 correction. I will let everybody know the booklets
38 should be in your offices. I mailed out about 1,600
39 copies last week. I think they went to all Council
40 representatives, to your rural regions. I sent several
41 hundred to Alaska Department of Fish and Game stations
42 and then several hundred to U.S. Fish and Wildlife
43 Service field stations, refuges. Then we also sent two
44 copies each to 237 Alaska Native tribal offices too.

45

46 I've gotten some reports that sometimes
47 the boxes don't show up or perhaps they're not --
48 there's better ways to distribute. So I would really
49 like to hear from Council representatives to hear your
50

0052

1 recommendations. Could we do a better job in terms of
2 distributing the booklets or I could just give folks a
3 call here.

4
5 I hate to put people on the spot, but
6 I'd like to hear from Cyrus and Gayla, Gloria and
7 others in terms of are you able to get the booklets out
8 to people that need them or is there a better way that
9 we should think about it.

10
11 Anyone want to take a stab? Gayla,
12 I'll put you on the spot first.

13
14 MADAME CHAIR HOSETH: Okay. That's
15 fine. You know, we used to get them in the mailbox and
16 I know that people wouldn't necessarily put them in the
17 garbage and then they would just be stacked in the post
18 office. I just know that -- you know, I have my box
19 here that I was going to distribute to village
20 councils. And then you stated that you sent them to
21 tribes as well.

22
23 So I was just wanting to know what is
24 the best way for mainly the hunters, you know, the
25 actual people who are hunting to make sure that we have
26 the books. If there's no major changes, then I think
27 that with the spring and summer hunt being customary
28 and traditional I think that people know that here, but
29 I was just trying to -- so we're not doing the mail,
30 the P.O. boxes anymore, the general boxes.

31
32 MR. TAYLOR: You know, that's correct,
33 Gayla, and that was the report which you mentioned that
34 many of them ended up in the garbage or being used to
35 light fires and woodstoves. So that's the last thing
36 we want to happen. We want to get them out to people
37 that will definitely use them. So we abandoned that
38 method and ended up relying on the regional
39 representatives to try to distribute them to their
40 villages or other communities.
41 So that's the current method and I'm not for sure if
42 that's working or not.

43
44 Cyrus or Taqulik.....

45
46 MADAME CHAIR HOSETH: I did have one
47 more thing, Eric. You know, one thing with all of our
48 phones and having everything so accessible on our
49 phones, you know, that might be something to where -- I
50

0053

1 know this is in a PDF format that we could also include
2 the PDF format on our website for AMBCC and then our
3 individual websites that we could just download the
4 regulation booklet onto our cell phones.

5
6 MR. TAYLOR: Good point. It is posted
7 on the website. We're struggling right now in terms of
8 getting the best quality maps right now. In fact, I
9 just got a note from Tamara. The file size is kind of
10 prohibitive right now with at least the Fish and
11 Wildlife Service, so we're trying to get around that in
12 terms of still getting high-quality maps up. Right now
13 it is posted. Gayla, I think that's a really good
14 point.

15
16 MADAME CHAIR HOSETH: I could share
17 that within our region here. Go ahead, Taqulik has
18 something.

19
20 MS. HEPA: I was just going to add I
21 agree with Gayla on the whole post office thing. In
22 most cases on the North Slope people actually call or
23 we share information when we're at our regional
24 meetings or other avenues for us to give the
25 information to people. So I'm glad that we had them
26 available here in our office to share with hunters who
27 may come by and just using it as a reference when
28 people call to ask about the regulations.

29
30 MR. TAYLOR: Thank you, Taqulik. I
31 still have about 1,000 left in my office. So if you're
32 running low or if you think you're going to run low,
33 please don't hesitate to send me an email or a chat or
34 text or call or whatever and I will get additional
35 copies sent out to you right away. I don't want copies
36 sitting in my office when people could be using them.

37
38 Go ahead, Taqulik.

39
40 MS. HEPA: I was just going to add too.
41 So we have people hired in the villages in each of our
42 communities and we do distribute a handful to each of
43 the communities. Carla Sims Kayotuk from Kaktovik is
44 our coordinator for the village staff and once we get
45 them we mail them out to our staff to have them on
46 hand.

47
48 MR. TAYLOR: Great, Taqulik. Cyrus, so
49 I think I shipped I don't know how many off to your
50

0054

1 office in Kotzebue, but are you able to get them out to
2 other villages or is there a better way that I should
3 do it for the Northwest Arctic Region?

4

5 (No comment)

6

7 MR. TAYLOR: Cyrus might have stepped
8 away. Anyone else? Jim, I know you've had some good
9 comments on the booklet in the past. In your opinion
10 do you think we're getting effective in the Ahtna
11 region and the TCC region?

12

13 You might be on mute, Jim.

14

15 MR. SIMON: Can you hear me now?

16

17 MR. TAYLOR: Yes.

18

19 MR. SIMON: Sorry. I'm trying to mute
20 the AITRC meeting and I'm a technological idiot. I
21 would defer to Randy regarding whether or not the
22 booklets are effectively getting distributed to TCC
23 member tribes. It's such a large region that may be
24 complicated. The Ahtna Intertribal Resource Commission
25 has the booklets available in the front reception area
26 of the office. With such a small region and a lot of
27 traffic in and out of the AITRC office I think that
28 that's probably pretty effective, but I would defer to
29 Randy.

30

31 Thank you.

32

33 MR. TAYLOR: Thanks, Jim. Randy, how
34 is it set up for the TCC region?

35

36 MR. MAYO: Thanks, Jim. Yeah,
37 I haven't heard any complaints or anything from across
38 the region. In our recent regional meeting it was
39 mentioned and gave our subregional representatives a
40 heads up that the booklets will start coming out. I
41 haven't heard any complaints or issues from our region
42 so far, so they must be getting out to where they need
43 to be.

44

45 MR. TAYLOR: Randy, does your office
46 distribute them to other villages from Fairbanks? I
47 know I sent them to you, about a 100 or so. Is there a
48 better way? Should I mail those directly to -- as Jim
49 mentioned, I know you have a huge region, but I didn't
50

0055

1 know if people were stopping by the Fairbanks office to
2 pick them up or if I should do direct mailings at this
3 point.

4
5 MR. MAYO: I think maybe -- well, I saw
6 your notification and you sent like 50 to TCC, but also
7 it looked like you sent them out to a lot of
8 communities too, right?

9
10 MR. TAYLOR: The tribal, yeah. I sent
11 them to 230-some tribes as well. So many in your
12 region as well, I'm sure.

13
14 MR. MAYO: Okay. Well, I guess we can
15 distribute the ones that you sent to the main office in
16 Fairbanks.

17
18 MR. TAYLOR: Okay. Sounds good. Just
19 let me know if you need additional or if there's any
20 requests. I'm happy to send them out.

21
22 MR. MAYO: Yeah, just like what's
23 already been mentioned I know in the past that a lot of
24 them just got wasted and I hate to see that, you know,
25 expense go to waste when it doesn't really have to, you
26 know. But make sure the hunters do have the
27 information.

28
29 MR. TAYLOR: Thank you. That's exactly
30 what I'm trying to get at. I'm trying to make sure
31 that they actually get out and they don't sit on a
32 shelf somewhere. Just to make sure people -- there is
33 a lot of effort that we put into these and we're trying
34 to make them as user friendly and relevant as possible.

35
36 Jim, did you have any comments?

37
38 MR. SIMON: Yeah, thank you. As a
39 follow up to what Randy was saying, I'll work with
40 other staff at the Tribal Resource Stewardship Program
41 at Tanana Chiefs Conference to make the regulation
42 booklet PDF available on the website. That is pretty
43 recent in being able to provide that information. I'm
44 not sure how many Interior hunters are aware of the
45 information that's now being made available on the
46 website, but I really appreciate Gayla's suggestion of
47 trying to do it electronically also.

48
49 Thank you.

50

0056

1 MR. TAYLOR: Yeah, thank you. We
2 should be able to provide you a PDF. It's a very large
3 file primarily because of the maps that are in the
4 document, but we'll see if we can figure out a way to
5 do that to get it to regions so that everyone can post
6 it on their website.

7
8 I do encourage everyone to take a look
9 at the booklet and jot down corrections or questions,
10 something that you think is not clear that could be
11 improved upon and I promise to hold a Regulations
12 Booklet Committee meeting probably -- I'd like to do it
13 in the next two months so that the booklet is still in
14 everyone's fresh memory and we can make the corrections
15 needed. So I appreciate everyone taking a few minutes
16 to take a look at it for your region and see if it
17 could be made better.

18
19 Everyone is familiar with the
20 Department of Fish and Game's hunting regulation
21 booklet where they have pictures of youth with their
22 harvest, which I think is a terrific idea. That's
23 something that we have tossed around to include in the
24 AMBCC Regulations Booklet to have pictures of youth
25 harvesting birds during the spring and summer.
26 Something to make it more useable, more friendly, more
27 relevant and enjoyable. So those are the sorts of
28 discussions I'd like to have. If you have ideas,
29 please fire them off.

30
31 MADAME CHAIR HOSETH: Yeah, I think
32 that looks good. I think the layout of the book is a
33 little bit better when we turn to the different
34 regions. It's changed. So I think it looks nice.

35
36 Anybody have any questions about the
37 booklet?

38
39 (No comments)

40
41
42 MADAME CHAIR HOSETH: Okay. Thank you,
43 Eric, for all that work and for your team putting that
44 together.

45
46 MR. TAYLOR: Thank you.

47
48 MADAME CHAIR HOSETH: Moving on we'll
49 go to Outreach and Communications Committee on Emperor
50

0057

1 Geese with Tamara. I didn't see Tamara on either. Is
2 she on?

3

4

(No comment)

5

6

7

MR. TAYLOR: Madame Chair, I don't see
Tamara on. I know she has some conflict, but I suggest
you move down the agenda. Thank you.

8

9

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MADAME CHAIR HOSETH: I do know that we
did receive -- for part of the outreach and education
we have magnets and stickers. I think that those would
be good to pass out when we do have our booklets. So
these are actually really nice to bring awareness for
the outreach. So they're nice stickers and magnets.

Emperor Goose Management Committee and
update on Emperor Goose Management Plan. Dave Safine.

MR. SAFINE: Thank you, Madame Chair.
Just give me one second here to share my screen. Okay.
Is that one coming through for you guys?

MADAME CHAIR HOSETH: Yes.

MR. TAYLOR: Thanks, Dave.

MR. SAFINE: Excellent. Okay. Thank
you, Madame Chair and the AMBCC and all the partners
today for providing some time on the agenda to talk
about the Emperor Goose Management Plan revision
update.

My name is David Safine. I work for
the Fish and Wildlife Service Migratory Bird Management
Program here in Anchorage. I'm currently -- the reason
I'm giving this presentation is I'm currently the chair
of both the AMBCC and Pacific Flyway Council Emperor
Goose Committees. So I'll be reporting on a few
updates on Emperor geese and then the revision process
that we're currently undertaking.

There are several others from the
Emperor Goose Committee on this call today. Also from
our working group. In particular Erik Osnas, the
supervisory biometrician from our office, is also on
the line today. So I may refer to Erik if there are
more detailed or technical questions on the plan
revision today.

0058

1 So I'll move through this talk and
2 there will be some opportunities here for some
3 discussion as we get down the line, but if you have
4 questions as we go, please reach out and if I can't see
5 you raise your hand or something, perhaps Gayla will be
6 able to identify questions for me.

7
8 Okay. So the purpose of today's talk
9 is threefold. I want to start off by talking about
10 where we are now with Emperor goose management. To do
11 that I'll talk about the current management plans that
12 were signed in the fall of 2016. I'll talk about what
13 we're doing right now for monitoring Emperor geese for
14 the population level and then what our current harvest
15 strategy is.

16
17 Next I'll move into sort of what we're
18 doing right now and where we're going. So I'll talk
19 about the revision of the management plan that's
20 currently underway. I'll talk about why we're doing
21 that, how we're doing it and I'll talk about the
22 timeline and goals for this process. So where we hope
23 to get to.

24
25 Then the last piece is there are a few
26 areas that I'm going to be talking about today where we
27 look to get feedback from folks that we haven't heard
28 from yet that are part of the AMBCC or partner groups.
29 So we would love to get feedback on some of the areas
30 we're going to cover related to objectives and
31 different management alternatives for Emperor geese and
32 any general ideas for improving how we're managing
33 Emperor geese.

34
35 So I'll start off talking about -- I'm
36 getting a little bit of feedback here. I'm not sure if
37 others are hearing that. So I'll start off by talking
38 about the management plan that we have right now, and
39 there are two of them, and what is our current harvest
40 strategy.

41
42 Back in 2016 two plans were signed in
43 the fall of 2016. So on the left here you'll see one
44 plan which was signed by the Pacific Flyway Council and
45 that is for the fall/winter hunt. So the outside dates
46 for the fall/winter hunt would range between September
47 1st and March 10th. So the hunting must occur between
48 those outside dates.

49
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1 The Federal regulations for this hunt
2 are found in 50 CFR 20 and then there are State
3 regulations issues by the Alaska Department of Fish and
4 Game for this hunt. This is what that regulations
5 booklet looks like. Typically in Alaska this hunt
6 would occur between September 1st and January 22nd. So
7 here's the management plan and the regulations booklet
8 for that hunt.

9
10 Secondly, we have the spring/summer
11 hunt and that's primarily what we're focused on here
12 today. The outside dates for that hunt must be between
13 March 11th and August 31st. Regulations for that hunt
14 are in 50 CFR 92, so it's a different part of the Code
15 of Federal Regulations.

16
17 That management plan was signed by the
18 AMBCC at the same time as the Pacific Flyway Council
19 Plan and the regulations for this hunt for Emperor
20 geese are found in this booklet here, which is produced
21 by the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service and we were just
22 obviously speaking about this booklet that just
23 recently came to people's mailboxes and showed up on
24 our website for the hunt that opens most areas of the
25 state April 2nd and goes through the end of August.

26
27 So what exactly -- this is just as a
28 reminder for folks, but what are the components of a
29 typical management plan. For people that don't look at
30 these as frequently as I do, let's just talk a little
31 bit about what's traditionally in a management plan.
32 So one of the primary things that's in a management
33 plan is it's going to lay out how we're intending to
34 monitor the population.

35
36 Typically for a lot of populations
37 we'll monitor them using aerial surveys. However,
38 there are examples where we monitor using aerial
39 surveys and other methods, including things like
40 banding, nest searching, et cetera. So there are
41 different ways that we can monitor populations. That
42 is clearly spelled out in the management plan as to
43 what the index would be for the population.

44
45 Secondly, we would focus in on the
46 objectives that we have for the population. So how
47 many birds do we want to see in this population and
48 what kind of harvest are we looking for in the
49 different hunts whether it be a fall/winter or
50

0060

1 spring/summer hunt.

2

3

4 Then the next piece is the harvest
5 strategy, so it's going to incorporate both pieces of
6 that. The monitoring tool and then the harvest piece
7 in some different regulatory options. So when the
8 population hits different threshold marks, either goes
9 above or below different thresholds, what is our action
10 plan. What are we going to enact when we change from
11 one threshold to another. So that's the harvest
12 strategy component of the plan. I'll talk a little bit
13 later about what is the current harvest strategy for
14 Emperor geese.

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Then lastly a lot of management plans will make sure to list important action items for things like research topics, outreach, habitat management, et cetera. Things that we intend to do, high priority actions, for that species. So that's just a quick reminder of what's in a management plan and all these components are within our current management plan for Emperor geese.

Okay. Then another reminder for folks is what is our current monitoring strategy for Emperor geese. So how are we monitoring Emperor geese. Currently we are using an aerial survey called the Yukon-Kuskokwim Delta Coastal Zone Aerial Survey. This is conducted on the outer coast of the Yukon-Kuskokwim Delta. We are using an annual index in this case, so it's not an average index like we use for some other species. It's an annual index of the total indicated birds from that survey.

Now this is a shift from the index we were using in the past, so we're currently using an index from the breeding grounds. The reason we're doing this is because that survey is very well designed and very statistically robust compared to some other types of survey methods.

So it allows us to have an estimate of the bird population size, i.e. that management index, also an estimate of the precision of the variation around that estimate. What you see here is an estimate plus the variability around that estimate. So that's an important component.

The other reason is that we think that

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1 the vast majority of the breeding population of Emperor
2 geese are breeding on the Yukon-Kuskokwim Delta and if
3 we time the survey adequately, we can very efficiently
4 survey a very large proportion of the population
5 safely. So that's why generally we are doing the
6 survey on the Yukon-Kuskokwim Delta.

7
8 I just wanted to provide a little more
9 information. So it's a common question that comes up
10 in our committee meetings and at other times we discuss
11 what was the previous management index, what is the
12 current management index and then again why are we
13 using that index.

14
15 One of the things we've been talking
16 about is during this revision process we are going to
17 have more discussions about the current management
18 index, the pros and cons of it, so we'll go into some
19 detail about what maybe we can improve on in this
20 survey method and what are the strengths of it. But I
21 just wanted to show briefly in a visual way an example
22 of why we're doing the survey in this area and how the
23 timing is important.

24
25 So what I'm going to provide here is
26 some data that you can find on the USGS website. I've
27 got the citation listed here. So this is freely
28 available on the web. What this data comes from is
29 birds that were marked on the Yukon Delta. So they're
30 not marked at all the different breeding areas, but
31 they're marked with where we think the vast majority of
32 Emperor geese breed.

33
34 It's 53 birds, so it's not hundreds and
35 hundreds of birds, but it is a sample of birds and at
36 this point it's about 20 years old, but currently it's
37 the best data out there to look at this question of,
38 generally speaking, where are birds moving when and why
39 we might be surveying on the Yukon Delta.

40
41 So what I want to do is just play this
42 animation here that shows these particular marked birds
43 and how they move throughout the annual cycle just to
44 illustrate the point of why we're currently surveying
45 on the Yukon Delta. Again, like I said, we will be
46 talking about this in more detail as we go through the
47 management process here.

48
49 So I'm going to try to play this
50

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1 animation here. If you look on the top, it begins at
2 the beginning of the calendar year and it's going to
3 move on through the year and I'm going to let it play
4 and then kind of talk about what the birds are doing.
5 But basically when it starts out birds are in wintering
6 areas that you'll see here.

7

8 Okay. So we're now in mid March so
9 birds are still in the wintering areas, but they're
10 going to very quickly start moving up the Alaska
11 Peninsula and from the south side of the Peninsula to
12 the north side of the Peninsula. You'll notice Kodiak
13 Island is not on this map. These particular birds did
14 not winter there, but we know a lot do. In fact now we
15 know more winter there, but just focus on these general
16 patterns.

17

18 So now you're seeing a lot of movement
19 as we get into early April, which is essentially right
20 now. You're seeing birds that are coming from the
21 Western Aleutians moving up the Alaska Peninsula from
22 the south side to the north, so that's basically what's
23 happening right now on the landscape.

24

25 At this point then by late April most
26 of the birds are along the Alaska Peninsula. They've
27 moved in from the Aleutians. Now what you're seeing
28 here as we get into early May is large movements from
29 those staging areas and wintering areas on the Alaska
30 Peninsula. They're now moving up through Bristol Bay
31 and into the Yukon Delta Region. So that gets us into
32 mid May.

33

34 Mid May, as you'll note, birds are
35 still spread between some of these staging areas in
36 Yukon Delta. So this would be a bit too early to do the
37 survey. This blue outlined area is essentially where
38 we fly that aerial survey. That's why it's outlined in
39 blue.

40

41 Okay. So now what you're seeing here
42 -- so this is May 22nd. As we get into late May, which
43 is getting close to the time that we actually fly the
44 aerial survey. So basically from the last part of May
45 into the first few days of June is typically when we
46 fly this aerial survey. The reason is because most of
47 these birds have concentrated here on the Yukon Delta.
48 So it's a window in time when we think we have the
49 highest availability of these birds.

50

0063

1 So by June 1 you see pretty much
2 everybody is up on the Delta. They have left the
3 staging areas. Again that's just the birds in this
4 sample, but it's an illustration. As we get beyond
5 that, you'll start to see birds then moving on --
6 particularly failed breeders will move on to the north.

7
8 So as you get into mid June all of a
9 sudden birds -- some of these birds are going to stay
10 in the Yukon Delta, but others are going to move up to
11 the Chukotka area for molting during the summer. So
12 I'm just illustrating the point as to why we do the
13 survey at that period of time is because we have a
14 potential to have a high concentration of birds in an
15 area that we can survey really well.

16
17 Anyway, just wanted to bring that out.
18 Like I said, we'll talk about this in more detail
19 later, but it's a common question that comes up during
20 our meetings.

21
22 MADAME CHAIR HOSETH: If I could pause
23 there for a minute.

24
25 MR. SAFINE: Yes. Absolutely.

26
27 MADAME CHAIR HOSETH: Excellent.
28 Excellent visual. Thank you. I think that's been
29 really helpful. So thank you.

30
31 MR. SAFINE: Thanks, Gayla. Yeah, I
32 think because that question is so common I just thought
33 it would be worth showing this data. When I was
34 looking around on the web I was very happy to see the
35 folks in John Pearce's office have done a fantastic job
36 of getting this stuff out there. So it's just a real
37 nice visual how the birds move.

38
39 Okay. So I want to talk a little bit
40 about the current harvest strategy for Emperor geese.
41 So what are we doing now in these 2016 plans. Julian
42 is going to talk about this a little bit more in his
43 talk as well.

44
45 We have three zones in our current
46 harvest strategy. So we have what we call the green
47 zone here, which is bordered on the bottom at the index
48 level of 28,000 birds. So when we're above 28,000 the
49 spring/summer hunt is open with no restrictions. The
50

0064

1 fall/winter hunt has a harvest quota of 1,000 birds.

2

3

4 When we're in the yellow zone, which is
5 where we currently are here in the yellow zone, we call
6 that the hunts would be open with the consideration of
7 restrictions. Currently, for the spring/summer hunt,
8 the restriction that is enacted is a closed egg harvest
9 statewide. In the fall/winter hunt we have a 500 bird
10 quota. So that's where we currently are.

11

12

13 Then the red zone, which is below
14 23,000 bird index, both hunts, both fall/winter and
15 spring/summer, will be closed. I'll just point out
16 that currently at 24,300 we are about 1,300 birds in
17 the index above that closure threshold. So we're
18 relatively close.

19

20

21 Coming up in 2022 there is potential
22 that we would be in the closure zone. There's also
23 very likely to remain in the conservation measure zone,
24 but we will find out more about that after we fly the
25 aerial survey in late May, early June.

26

27

28 I want to talk a little bit about with
29 this current harvest strategy what that means for us on
30 the committee and the AMBCC about what we actually need
31 to do this summer. So for the 2022 regulatory cycle,
32 so that would be this process of data collection,
33 moving onto eventually the SRC meeting this fall.

34

35

36 Here is generally what's going to
37 happen. We will fly that aerial survey. Our office,
38 the Migratory Bird Management Office, will produce a
39 memo that will likely be released in July -- likely
40 early to mid July -- with the updated status. The 2022
41 status of Emperor geese. So that would be distributed
42 to all the partners.

43

44

45 Once that occurs we will draw together
46 a meeting of the Emperor Goose Management Committee
47 ideally in late July. At this meeting we would discuss
48 what is the current status of Emperor geese. At that
49 time the committee would decide if they're going to
50 recommend any regulatory changes for Emperor geese and
those changes would be enacted in the 2023 hunting
season.

51

52

53 From there that recommendation from the
54 Emperor Goose Committee would be forwarded on to the

55

56

0065

1 AMBCC Executive Committee to take action on. The
2 Executive Committee would then review and vote on that
3 recommendation. Depending on that recommendation, if
4 it's a recommendation for change, that would then be
5 forwarded to the Pacific Flyway Council to review and
6 endorse at their fall meeting in the third week of
7 August this year. From the Pacific Flyway Council that
8 will move on to the SRC.

9
10 So I'm just laying out that in the
11 current harvest strategy there are many steps that need
12 to occur in a very short timeframe between July and
13 September of this year. So that's one of the reasons
14 during this revision process I think we're hoping to
15 address this timeline and make sure that we have the
16 time that we need to have those discussions if we do
17 need to make regulatory changes.

18
19 Okay. So now I'm going to switch gears
20 and talk about what we're doing right now. So I've
21 just talked about what the current management plan and
22 now I'm going to talk about this revision process going
23 forward.

24
25 The 2016 management plans. Again I'm
26 focused here on why are we undertaking this revision
27 process. The reason that we're undertaking this
28 revision process is that the term of this management
29 plan that was laid out in the 2016 plan is from 2017 to
30 2021.

31
32 In that plan we specified that the
33 AMBCC will agree to evaluate the Emperor goose
34 population response during the first three years of the
35 hunt and then the subcommittee, which we now call the
36 committee, will reevaluate the population objective,
37 the population assessment methods and the harvest
38 strategy.

39
40 So basically we told ourselves back in
41 the fall of 2016 that now is the time that the period
42 of this initial plan is over in 2021 that we will now
43 look back into the plan, into those three main
44 components -- the population objective, the assessment
45 method, so that's that index, and then the harvest
46 strategy. And we also indicated in both the AMBCC and
47 the Pacific Flyway Council plans the same timelines.
48 So we're going to revise both plans at the same time.

49
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0066

1 The other reasons that we are
2 undertaking this revision process is that we now have
3 some new data both on population levels since the hunt
4 was open in 2017 and, secondly, we have new data on the
5 harvest levels in both the spring/summer and
6 fall/winter hunts during the first several years of the
7 hunt. So we have some new data out there. With that
8 new data we can then update the population models that
9 were run back in 2015 and 2016 and then we can evaluate
10 that current harvest strategy.

11
12 Then lastly we now, because we're
13 undertaking this revision process, we have the
14 opportunity to try to do better, to improve our current
15 management of Emperor geese. So one of the things
16 we've identified is that when the 2016 plan was signed
17 we were not envisioning an upcoming pandemic and one of
18 the results of the pandemic was that we had a missing
19 data point in 2020. Because of that the plan did not
20 specify what to do when we have missing data. So
21 that's one of the things we're going to ensure in the
22 new plan is that it does specify what to do when data
23 is missing.

24
25 Other things that were discussed in the
26 previous plan but were not implemented in the harvest
27 strategy were things like regulatory stability. We
28 know that for many of the agency and partners and
29 subsistence hunters we prefer some level of stability
30 in regulations.

31
32 We don't want to move from closed to
33 open seasons every year and constantly be working to
34 get that message out and to make sure that people know
35 what the regulations are for that year. So things like
36 regulatory stability we'd like to be able to
37 incorporate those into the revision.

38
39 Okay. I want to talk a little bit
40 about the revision process that we're following. There
41 are five steps of this. The first step that we're
42 undertaking is basically what it is that we're trying
43 to actually decide. What is this group trying to do.
44 To get at this question we have written what's called a
45 decision context document that's in draft form.

46
47 The question we're trying to answer is
48 how can we best revise this harvest strategy to meet
49 our objectives. Is there a better way of doing
50

0067

1 business for Emperor geese. So that's the first step
2 in the process. Secondly, we want to clearly define
3 what are our objectives for managing Emperor geese.
4 What do we want to achieve and what do we care about
5 with respect to Emperor goose management.

6
7 Examples of that is we have objectives
8 for things like sustainable populations. We have
9 objectives for a certain amount of harvest in both of
10 these hunts, the fall/winter and the spring/summer
11 hunt. And then other objectives, many other
12 objectives, that I will talk about in more detail
13 later.

14
15 So once we lay out what are our
16 objectives we then want to talk about what are some of
17 the management alternatives that can address these
18 objectives. When I talk about management alternatives,
19 I mean what are some different regulatory options that
20 may allow us to get at these things we care about like
21 a certain amount of harvest and sustainable
22 populations.

23
24 So examples of management alternatives
25 would be things like in our current plan we have a
26 closed season, we have an open season with few
27 restrictions and we have a season in the middle where
28 it's open with some restrictions. So those are
29 examples of management alternatives.

30
31 Once we identify these alternatives the
32 next step is understanding the effects of these
33 alternatives on those objectives we identified. So if
34 we identify an objective for population viability, that
35 means we need to know how many Emperor geese are on the
36 landscape and how many are on there into the future.
37 So the question is how does certain management
38 alternatives affect those objectives.

39
40 So that process requires us to do some
41 modeling when we have data. In many areas we have less
42 data to run scientific models. Then we're going to
43 reach out to our species experts and solicit
44 traditional ecological knowledge to help answer those
45 questions. Again, we're just focused in on the
46 consequences of those alternatives.

47
48 Then lastly, once we've gone through
49 that step, all the partners together, the three parties
50

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1 of the AMBCC will work together to select the best
2 alternatives that would then form our new harvest
3 strategy for Emperor geese. We may decide that what
4 we're doing right now is the best harvest strategy and,
5 if so, that's what we'll decide, but if we decide
6 something different, then we'll go down that route.

7

8 So to do this process what we've been
9 doing is the Emperor Goose Management Committee has
10 been meeting monthly this past winter. So we've been
11 meeting on the second Monday of the month and we have
12 both the Emperor Goose Management Committee and then we
13 have a small what we called Revision Working Group
14 that's working behind the scenes in between these
15 committee meetings to make sure that our committee
16 meetings are moving forward as best as possible.

17

18 I want to thank the folks on that
19 working group, Gayla Hoseth, Karen Pletnikoff, Jason
20 Schamber and Erik Osnas, for all the work they were
21 doing behind the scenes and all the extra time they
22 were taking editing documents, planning out meetings,
23 et cetera. So it's been a lot of work and I want to
24 thank those folks.

25

26 We will continue to meet into the
27 spring, so we have a meeting coming up on this Monday,
28 the 11th of April. An Emperor Goose Committee meeting.
29 We'll meet again in May and then we'll be taking a
30 little bit of a break over the summer and then probably
31 resume our Emperor goose meetings when we have that
32 meeting to talk about the status of Emperor geese.
33 Again, sometime late July this summer.

34

35 So our overall timeline for this
36 process is one to two years to go from where we began
37 this past winter to a finalized and signed both AMBCC
38 and Pacific Flyway Council Management Plans. What
39 we're hoping to get when we provide an update again to
40 the AMBCC at the fall meeting we're hoping to have
41 worked through the alternatives phase and maybe
42 beginning work on the consequences phase.

43

44 Currently, like I said, we are working
45 on finishing up the objectives phase and the meeting
46 that we have coming up on Monday we're just going to be
47 beginning talking about management alternatives.

48

49 So what I want to do is review some of

50

0069

1 the information we've collected so far from both the
2 Emperor Goose Management Committee and also any input
3 from regions. We also met with the Kodiak Archipelago
4 region and got some viable input from them. I'll give
5 you guys our current draft list. I just want to
6 emphasize it is a draft working list of feedback we've
7 received at meetings.

8

9 What you're going to see is a lot of
10 objectives and we acknowledge that many of these
11 objectives are not listed here by their relative
12 importance or weight. We know many of these objectives
13 may conflict with one another, but the important thing
14 to note is we want all the objectives on the table
15 right now and it is later in this process that we will
16 put value and weighting on these different objectives.

17

18

19 So just emphasizing this is a working
20 list. I would like to provide this list here today and
21 then see if there's any feedback on things we may have
22 missed and any other feedback folks have on this
23 objectives list today.

24

25 Okay. So I'm going to go through these
26 objectives and then I'll stop and let you guys ask
27 questions here. So Objective A is promoting
28 co-management. So we want to be able to incorporate
29 the input from subsistence harvesters into the
30 management planning in regulatory decision-making
31 process. So that's an important objective here.

32

33 Secondly, maximizing the priority of
34 rural subsistence users over other users. So, as we
35 think about how to tier these priorities, currently
36 we're thinking about kind of three groups of users. So
37 there's subsistence eligible rural residents as one
38 group. We want to prioritize them over any Alaska
39 resident. So whether you're rural or nonrural and then
40 that over non-residents of the state of Alaska.

41

42 The reason we want to prioritize
43 subsistence uses is because I want to maximize food
44 security. Another way to get at this objective is
45 minimizing the conflict and competition for harvest in
46 particular when abundance is lower. So when the
47 abundance of Emperor geese is higher, we're less
48 concerned about competition.

49

50

0070

1 We want to maximize opportunity for
2 customary and traditional harvest for subsistence
3 hunters. We would like to do this in regions where
4 geese are present during the fall and winter period as
5 well as in regions where geese are present during the
6 spring and summer period. So maximizing that
7 opportunity for customary and traditional harvest.

8
9 We also want to maximize harvest
10 opportunity for non-subsistence users. So those would
11 be any users that would be participating in the --
12 generally we think of those in the fall/winter hunt.

13
14 The last one on this page is maximizing
15 population viability. So that is -- when we think
16 about population viability, we think about how many
17 Emperor geese are on the landscape in the future. We
18 want to maintain a viable or sustainable population of
19 Emperor geese. One way to address that is maximizing
20 environmental or habitat quality and minimizing
21 disturbance on breeding, wintering and staging areas.

22
23 So that's the first page here and I'm
24 going to stop for a second. I have one more page of
25 objectives, but it's a lot of information so I just
26 want to let that soak in for a minute and see if
27 anybody has comments right now or if you prefer I
28 continue.

29
30 MADAME CHAIR HOSETH: Dave, this is
31 Gayla. I know that we've talked about Emperor Goose
32 Management Plan for quite some time and I think one of
33 the really good draft objectives that we do have is,
34 you know, with those dates there for being able to
35 harvest geese when the geese are present. I think that
36 that would be a really big -- a big change and a good
37 change for the people in the Aleutian Pribilof Islands
38 and Kodiak where they're able to harvest the birds in
39 their spring and summer -- during our spring and summer
40 harvest.

41
42 MR. SAFINE: Thank you, Gayla. I know
43 that's something we have been talking about is
44 increasing opportunity for birds in regions where those
45 birds are not present for most of the spring/summer
46 harvest. So by opening the season earlier within the
47 allowable window that would address that objective.

48
49 Gayla, do you prefer if I continue on
50

0071

1 here and maybe -- or do other folks have questions at
2 the moment?

3

4 MADAME CHAIR HOSETH: Yeah, if anybody
5 doesn't have any questions, we can move on.

6

7 MR. SAFINE: Okay. I'll share the next
8 page here and then I'll see if there's additional
9 comments. So the second page of objectives we're
10 starting off with maximizing the breeding and wintering
11 distribution of geese. So we want to be able to
12 maximize regional harvest and viewing opportunities, so
13 the ability for folks in different parts of the state
14 to both see birds and harvest birds as desired
15 throughout breeding staging and wintering areas.

16

17 Part of the reason we want to do this
18 is because we want to minimize any potential effect of
19 harvest on bird distribution. So if there's harvest
20 occurring in one particular area or an action occurring
21 that's preventing individuals from harvesting birds in
22 another area, that's something we want to keep in mind.

23

24 And then overall minimizing the
25 administrative and communication burden associated with
26 Emperor goose management. So things like minimizing
27 regulatory change, so changes between open and closed
28 season, also changes within an open season.

29

30 Any time we make regulatory changes
31 there's a regulatory burden on both the Federal and
32 State government and also a burden on the harvesters
33 out there to stay current with the most recent
34 regulations and make sure they're not violating
35 regulations as things are changing. So the least change
36 that occurs on the landscape the better for most of our
37 partners.

38

39 Related to this burden, this need to
40 change regulations, communicate is also the component
41 of all these meetings that we have. So one of the
42 things I mentioned earlier is that timeline is really
43 tight in between when data becomes available and when
44 we need to make regulatory decisions. So that need for
45 complex decision making in cross-regional coordination,
46 as we found out last summer, we just didn't have enough
47 time to do what we wanted to do in that short window.

48

49 And then overall just minimizing time

50

0072

1 by agency staff, partner staff and everybody related to
2 Emperor goose management. Minimizing the number of
3 annual meetings for decision making and planning. In
4 order to address this, we think that maximizing the
5 detail that's in the Management Plan will help address
6 minimizing personnel time.

7
8 If more details are spelled out in
9 these plans, that will decrease the amount of
10 subjectivity in the plans and decrease the amount of
11 staff time relative to additional meetings required to
12 make these decisions.

13
14 Lastly on this list is maximizing
15 ability for regulatory compliance by harvesters. So we
16 want to make sure we're not setting up harvesters to
17 fail essentially. We want to minimize the regulatory
18 burden for harvesters and the complexity of the
19 regulations to the extent that we can. Hopefully by
20 doing these things we will minimize any illegal harvest
21 that's occurring.

22
23 So that's our current list of
24 objectives. I know that's a lot of information. For
25 those on the Emperor Goose Management Committee I just
26 sent out a draft list yesterday for people to look at
27 in advance of our meeting on Monday. So there will
28 continue to be opportunities to provide input.

29
30 I just want to see if any other folks
31 have input on these objectives. I know we heard some
32 input from Gayla about increasing opportunity early in
33 the spring/summer season. Any other comments.

34
35 MS. PLETNIKOFF: Yeah, this is Karen
36 with the -- Karen Pletnikoff with the Aleutian Pribilof
37 Islands Association. Madam Chair.

38
39 MADAME CHAIR HOSETH: Go ahead, Karen.

40
41 MS. PLETNIKOFF: It's been a real
42 pleasure to work with you guys on the subcommittee
43 that's working on the language and the objectives. I
44 just wanted to bring a couple of things forward for the
45 group's consideration and understanding as we're going
46 through this process. That was a really thorough and
47 good presentation, David, and I appreciated the idea of
48 getting the Aleutians and Kodiak a valid subsistence
49 hunt by starting earlier in March for this work plan.

50

0073

1 I think that's a great way for us to
2 re-establish our appropriate subsistence hunt for our
3 regions as opposed to being just stuck with a sport
4 hunt due to some problems with the regulations as
5 opposed to a lack of our actual need and traditional
6 and customary hunting timeframes for Emperor geese.

7
8 So some of the priorities I think we
9 want to keep in mind for that concept of egging as
10 being in the Management Plan and needing to be a
11 long-term goal before increasing sport take for
12 instance for prioritizing the steps that we can take
13 before ending the subsistence hunt altogether and for
14 our population goals.

15
16 Because I think all of these things do
17 have implications and impacts to the modeling and
18 management that we use for that and that's one area
19 where I don't have a personal expertise, but I think
20 that there's a lot of lack of transparency or ambiguity
21 or maybe it's just a fundamental lack of understanding
22 about how those modeling changes that are potentially
23 coming up, how the next survey is going to impact
24 potential modeling changes and how all of that will end
25 up impacting the subsistence harvest.

26
27 That concept of closed and open is just
28 so important to this discussion. You know, those
29 triggers and that number, wherever we set that number,
30 and how it's going to impact all of our subsistence
31 users going forward after having been conserving this
32 species to wait for the time for an allowable
33 subsistence hunt. An allowable subsistence hunt that
34 came in partnership with opening it back up to sport
35 hunting.

36
37 We can see in the paper today that
38 caribou and moose are going to be closed for the next
39 two years to preserve the subsistence hunt and to
40 protect the population. So I think that a non-resident
41 closure idea needs to be explicit and needs to be in
42 this Management Plan for us to really have all the
43 steps we possibly can to have the subsistence hunt stay
44 open as is appropriate if there's not only a
45 conservation issue for the Emperor geese.

46
47 And I think it's important that this
48 body recognize that there was a lot of push for
49 increasing the sport take for fall and winter, but that
50

0074

1 currently the permits aren't all used. So the
2 justification that's going to have to be developed to
3 say, you know, we might be closing the subsistence hunt
4 just any day now, but we want to increase the sport
5 hunt when the current permitting system isn't being
6 maximized is a real -- you know, you've got to contort
7 yourself to figure out how that's making sense from a
8 conservation perspective.

9
10 So I just wanted to share with the
11 group some of the things that I've noticed going
12 forward in this very complex, very challenging issue
13 that our partners have been doing a really commendable
14 job of trying to capture everything and help us have
15 all the options on the table to preserve our customary
16 and traditional subsistence harvest.

17
18 Thanks, guys. If you have anything
19 about what I've said, I'm here.

20
21 MADAME CHAIR HOSETH: Thank you, Karen.
22 I know that we had the proposal in front of Board of
23 Game and I still need to listen to the -- I just
24 haven't had time to listen to the discussions that took
25 place for a proposal that we put in, but from what I
26 recall it was a pretty close vote for the non-resident
27 -- for closing down the non-resident hunt. We'll keep
28 monitoring that, but I think there was good discussion
29 there at the Board of Game meeting.

30
31 MR. SAFINE: I believe it was 3-4, so
32 lots of discussion.

33
34 MADAME CHAIR HOSETH: Ryan, did you
35 have your hand up earlier or did you put it down?

36
37 MR. SCOTT: I did, but I pulled it
38 down. I think I got an answer to what I was after. I
39 guess though just real quick. Dave, you're going to
40 send this objectives out to us or can I get a copy of
41 this?

42
43 MR. SAFINE: Yeah, this particular
44 presentation is in the meeting packet in a PDF format
45 and then I sent a slightly more detailed version of it
46 to the members of the Emperor Goose Committee. So
47 Jason Schamber has a copy of that. I'd be happy to
48 provide it to the Council as well.

49
50

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1 MR. SCOTT: Yeah, I think we'd all be
2 interested, but certainly I -- you know, the objectives
3 are -- that's a big onion. There's lots going on
4 there. So a little bit more time to kind of consider
5 that is what I'm getting at.

6
7 Thank you.

8
9 MR. DEVINE: Madame Chair.

10
11 MADAME CHAIR HOSETH: Go ahead, Peter.

12
13 MR. DEVINE: I'd just like to say that
14 thanks to GCI I got dropped off on the end of that
15 presentation, but I'm back on. I'm very pleased to
16 hear the wording that came out of that. My heart is
17 smiling. It's taken us a long while, but we're getting
18 there.

19
20 MADAME CHAIR HOSETH: Thank you, Peter.
21 Yeah, it's been challenging and like Ryan said that our
22 objectives is multiple layers of onions. We have hours
23 on Emperor goose conversations and hopefully this will
24 be something that will work for everybody and
25 specifically where you're at.

26
27 Does anybody have anything else?

28
29 (No comments)

30
31 MADAME CHAIR HOSETH: Thank you, Dave,
32 and look forward to meeting with you on the committee
33 and working groups. Thank you for everybody who's been
34 involved in this process and all those members that are
35 on the working group on Emperor geese. So thank you.

36
37 MR. SAFINE: Madame Chair, I just want
38 to note I do have a few more slides here if that's
39 okay.

40
41 MADAME CHAIR HOSETH: Oh, I thought you
42 were done. Sorry. Go ahead and continue.

43
44 MR. SAFINE: Thank you. I appreciate
45 that. I'm close and I can be done if you guys need me
46 to be done. I just want to note on Ryan's comment. I
47 appreciate that, yes, this is complicated and you guys
48 are seeing this for the first time. So there will be
49 plenty of time to continue to add anything that we feel
50

0076

1 like is missing. Even as we go further down the
2 process we may identify --as we create alternatives, we
3 may realize that certain objectives are missing or as
4 we're evaluating the consequences.

5
6 So it's a working document and there
7 will be plenty of opportunities to continue to provide
8 input. This list is in the meeting packet and so as
9 folks have other thoughts on that, please send them to
10 your representatives on the Emperor Goose Committee and
11 we can discuss those either at our meeting next week or
12 the meeting in May there.

13
14 So I'll just move on here. The only
15 other area I was going to ask for feedback is, and some
16 of the things that Gayla and Karen were talking about,
17 alternatives. So like I said at our meeting on Monday
18 we're going to start talking about alternatives and by
19 that I mean new ways and new opportunities for managing
20 Emperor geese. One of the ones we've been talking
21 about the most is the idea of opening up the
22 spring/summer hunt in some regions earlier to provide
23 additional opportunity for areas where birds are
24 generally only present in the fall and winter. So that
25 is one of the alternatives we've been talking about.

26
27 At our working group meeting Karen made
28 an excellent point that if we had a chance today while
29 everybody was on the line to get additional feedback
30 from folks on other alternatives, other things we
31 should be thinking about to do a better job of managing
32 Emperor geese, managing harvest opportunity, et cetera,
33 whether in the fall/winter or spring/summer hunt.

34
35 This would be a good opportunity to
36 gather additional information. So I guess I'm asking
37 now if there are other things people have been thinking
38 about as potential new options for either the
39 fall/winter or spring/summer hunt.

40
41 So I will be quiet now and see if
42 there's any feedback on that.

43
44 MR. SCOTT: Madame Chair.

45
46 MADAME CHAIR HOSETH: Go ahead, Ryan.

47
48 MR. SCOTT: Thank you, ma'am. Dave, I
49 guess my mind immediately goes to the population
50

0077

1 indexes and the various zones that we're operating in.
2 For me, additional alternatives will certainly come to
3 mind once we know what we're dealing with. Once you
4 guys have gotten the survey out of the way in July and
5 then moving into, you know, working over the population
6 models.

7
8 I mean I have no doubt that what was
9 decided in 2016 is great. I'm interested to see though
10 how the population has changed and what else we've got
11 for inputs to see if those thresholds are appropriate
12 still. And then I think for myself, working around
13 those thresholds or where we think things might be,
14 that would be a time that I think I could be more
15 helpful here.

16
17 MR. SAFINE: Okay. So, Ryan, to
18 summarize that one, you're thinking about getting one
19 more data point and then maybe rerunning the models to
20 look again at those thresholds and are they still
21 optimized?

22
23 MR. SCOTT: Yeah, exactly. I mean I
24 think, A, I feel very strongly we need that data point
25 in July. We're just running so close. Then the next
26 question is are we really that close, you know, and do
27 we need to be that conservative or can we make
28 adjustments to where we're not -- you know, I guess I'm
29 hoping we might be able to move those thresholds now so
30 that we're not getting into a situation where we're
31 trying to minimize complexity of things and decision
32 making and all this different stuff.

33
34 If we really know enough about the
35 birds or we have enough birds, then I think if we could
36 move those down that keeps us away from the threshold
37 and it keeps us out of areas that we may not have to
38 spend a whole bunch of time figuring out what to do.
39 That's just where my mind is.

40
41 MR. SAFINE: That's great feedback and
42 I think that's exactly what we planned to do is use
43 this updated time series on the index over time with
44 the hunt open and then use our updated harvest
45 estimates and then again, exactly as you said, revisit
46 those thresholds and have that discussion again with
47 our partners about risk tolerance and how moving those
48 thresholds or different ways to -- you know, like I
49 said, we currently have an annual index, but there are
50

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1 other ways to look at something like that that may
2 buffer annual changes, like some sort of averaged or
3 modeled estimates, et cetera. So appreciate that
4 feedback.

5

6 MADAME CHAIR HOSETH: Anyone have
7 anything else?

8

9 (No comments)

10

11 MADAME CHAIR HOSETH: Was that your
12 last slide, Dave, or you had more?

13

14 MR. SAFINE: I think I have just one
15 more, so I'll get that done and then I don't have to
16 drag this on. The last slide here is kind of where
17 we're going next. We're going to have that meeting on
18 Monday where it probably will be our last step toward
19 gathering objectives and from there we will just be
20 continuing to look at this list, doing a better job of
21 organizing it, making the objectives list more concise,
22 then thinking about how to measure all these
23 objectives.

24

25 So for something like population
26 viability, we're thinking about what is that population
27 of Emperor geese in the future. That's a measurable
28 way. When we think about harvest opportunity, we think
29 about harvest. What is the harvest of birds at
30 different periods of time, et cetera.

31

32 So we were going to work on that a
33 little bit more. Like I said, we're starting to work
34 on the alternatives phase, so all these different ideas
35 out there of new alternatives. We're going to be
36 working on that next.

37

38 Then once we feel like we have a good
39 list of alternatives, from there again we move into the
40 consequences stage. That's I think where Ryan was
41 going is then from these alternatives revisiting the
42 effects of these alternatives on our objectives. So
43 that's the modeling component that we were just talking
44 about.

45

46 So we hope to come back to the AMBCC
47 this fall, provide an update, let people know where
48 we're at and next steps and we hope to be through the
49 alternatives stage by then and perhaps working on

50

0079

1 modeling consequences. Stay tuned for the Emperor
2 Goose Committee for thinking about times we can meet
3 this summer to go over that 2022 data point.

4
5 That is my last slide, so I appreciate
6 everybody's attention today. If there's time, if there
7 are any additional questions, Madame Chair. I'll turn
8 it back to you.

9
10 MADAME CHAIR HOSETH: Thank you. Thank
11 you for the good overview and report out. Anybody have
12 any questions?

13
14 (No comments)

15
16 MADAME CHAIR HOSETH: Thank you. I
17 look forward to continue working. Thanks again to
18 everybody who's on the committee. It is noon. How
19 about we break for lunch and coming back on at 1:15.
20 Would that work for everybody? Okay. Have a good
21 lunch everybody. See you guys at 1:15. Bye.

22
23 (Off record)

24
25 (On record)

26
27 (Appears to be missing audio)

28
29 MR. TAYLOR:the meeting?

30
31 MS. SCHWALENBERG: Oh, thank you. I
32 had it paused during the lunch hour. Appreciate that.

33
34 MR. TAYLOR: Yep, thanks.

35
36 MADAME CHAIR HOSETH: Thank you. Your
37 speaker is a little bit muffled, Eric, so I don't know
38 how come you got muffled since lunchtime, but that
39 could be why. But, yeah, we just wanted to make sure
40 the meeting was recorded.

41
42 Peter, thank you for your report. Does
43 anybody have any questions for Peter?

44
45 (No comments)

46
47 MADAME CHAIR HOSETH: Thank you, Peter.
48 We can move to the Bristol Bay Region. That's our
49 region. We weren't able to have our spring Yaquillrit
50

0080

1 Kelutisti Council and probably just due to scheduling
2 and time. Covid restrictions just lifted in our area
3 as well and also mask mandates. I think all of us have
4 been in the same situation. We are meeting in person
5 now and we are traveling again. So hopefully we'll be
6 able to have a really good early fall meeting next year
7 and bring people together.

8
9 One of the things that I could really
10 see within our region, and I'm not sure it's across
11 other regions, is getting participation for people to
12 participate in the Regional Council meetings. That
13 could be something that we do talk about of possibly
14 offering stipends to participants, that we put that in
15 our grants. So it could help bring people to the
16 table.

17
18 It's a lot of information that they're
19 sharing with traditional ecological knowledge on the
20 history of the migration patterns, traditional ways of
21 living, traditional hunting. I think it's really
22 important that we look at that in terms of all of our
23 councils to have at least a small stipend for business
24 travel.

25
26 Of course traveling expenses are really
27 high for traveling. For us to even go to Anchorage
28 from Dillingham to Anchorage and back is about \$700
29 round trip. Village travel is also high and expensive
30 and fuel prices are going on.

31
32 With that being said, with everything
33 going up, it's really important that, you know, we do
34 have access to harvest subsistence foods and I think
35 that people will probably be collaborating together and
36 looking at ways to combine resources with the price of
37 high fuel costs, ammunition. There's a lot of sharing
38 that happens within the region. Not only within the
39 region, but with friends and family who are close and
40 dear to our hearts. So we do a lot of sharing within
41 the communities here.

42
43 We've had record snowfalls this winter.
44 We're all tired of winter. Our snowfall has been a lot
45 of snow this year. We still have quite a bit of snow.
46 So I'm just curious of what that's going to do with the
47 birds migrating through. I know those are a lot of
48 different conditions that we talk about at these
49 meetings about snow and ice breakup and things like
50

0081

1 that.

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10 That's what I have for the Bristol Bay
11 Region. Any questions for me?

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So that's pretty much everything I could possibly bring to the table to communicate with you guys. We're working on getting our membership up for our regional council and we'll be working on that and on our grants. Trying to get back to business as normal like we used to.

That's what I have for the Bristol Bay Region. Any questions for me?

(No comments)

MADAME CHAIR HOSETH: Hearing no questions for me I will -- oh, Ryan.

MR. SCOTT: Gayla, thank you for the report. I'm just curious. Have you been able to meet our new area biologist that we actually have out there now?

MADAME CHAIR HOSETH: No, I have not, but I did bump into Eunice at the grocery store yesterday and I asked if there -- I guess we have two. We have an assistant and a regional.

MR. SCOTT: Yes, ma'am.

MADAME CHAIR HOSETH: They were out doing some surveys, some flying surveys, so I plan on popping in there either next week or the week after when I come back from a trip. Yeah, I'm looking forward to meeting them, so thank you.

MR. SCOTT: Yes, ma'am. I hope they're going to stick and I think they will.

MADAME CHAIR HOSETH: Good. I sure hope so. It's well needed.

MR. SCOTT: Yeah.

MADAME CHAIR HOSETH: Thank you. We don't have Yukon-Kuskokwim Delta unless somebody -- I know that Jennifer wasn't on. Is Jennifer on yet?

MS. SCHWALENBERG: No, they're not able to join this time.

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1 MADAME CHAIR HOSETH: Okay. Gulf of
2 Alaska, Cook Inlet Region.

3
4 MS. SCHWALENBERG: I'll be giving that
5 report on behalf of Priscilla. Her internet has not
6 been the best.

7
8 MADAME CHAIR HOSETH: Okay.

9
10 MS. SCHWALENBERG: I'll start by saying
11 that she put a note in the chat that Nanwalek had
12 sightings of gray whales there in the Dog Fish Bay
13 area. So they're showing up down there too.

14
15 The Chugach Region held their 20th
16 annual subsistence memorial gathering. They had over
17 150 participants. It was held via Zoom. They also had
18 many gatherings in Cordova, Seward and Valdez, so they
19 actually had traditional food celebrations there in
20 each of those communities. CRRC sent staff to the
21 communities to join in the celebrations with the
22 community members.

23
24 We have a contractor analyzing the
25 ethnographic data from the -- in the ANCSA oral history
26 tapes and other resources regarding historic bird use
27 in the Chugach region. They've been holding monthly
28 subsistence meetings and they submitted a proposal to
29 the Board of Game to increase the moose population in
30 Game Unit 15C.

31
32 They received money from the Exxon
33 Valdez Oil Spill Trustee Council to work on kelp
34 mariculture and outreach and education. Then I wanted
35 to share my screen on a couple of products that were
36 produced as a result of our Wisdom Keeper series. Let
37 me see if I can pull that up.

38
39 This first one is about going egging,
40 so it just has people in the region that have shared
41 their traditional knowledge about egging and how to
42 prepare and what you can do with eggs and those types
43 of things. These are for outreach to the communities.
44 Then we have one on hunting ducks and geese. Finally,
45 one on transferring knowledge from the elders to the
46 younger generation.

47
48 So they'll be using these in the region
49 to help pass on those traditional practices of hunting
50

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1 birds. So we were really happy with the information
2 that the community members were willing to share and
3 these are products as a result of that effort.

4
5 That's it for the Chugach Region.
6 Thank you, Madame Chair.

7
8 MADAME CHAIR HOSETH: Thank you for
9 that. That booklet looks really neat. Do you guys
10 have that on your website at all?

11
12 MS. SCHWALENBERG: I'll have to check
13 with Willow. She's been handling that kind of stuff.
14 I also see Priscilla said her grandson caught his first
15 trout of the year in Nanwalek three days ago.

16
17 MADAME CHAIR HOSETH: That book looks
18 cute. I've got to read just a little bit where it says
19 we only had three .22 shells, so you've got to be a
20 good shot. That's cute. I'd be happy to flip through
21 the book.

22
23 MS. SCHWALENBERG: I can share that
24 with the Council members after the meeting.

25
26 MADAME CHAIR HOSETH: Okay. That would
27 be nice. Any questions for Patty?

28
29 (No comments)

30
31 MADAME CHAIR HOSETH: Okay. Thank you,
32 Patty. Upper Copper River Region. Gloria.

33
34 MS. STICKWAN: Yeah, we had our Copper
35 River Basin Migratory Birds meeting on March 31st. All
36 the members were there in person. We talked about the
37 invitation to hunt that was explained to us. Karen
38 went over that to let tribes know that's in regulations
39 that we can invite people. Immediate family from other
40 communities to hunt now.

41
42 We formed a committee to work on
43 migratory birds camp on the Denali Highway Mile 7,
44 which will be held on August 18 through the 20th. We
45 really have a hard -- we can't hold a migratory birds
46 camp during hunting season because the lakes are
47 usually frozen. So we have to hold it in August or
48 fall months. It's hard to get out there when the lakes
49 are frozen to hold migratory birds camp during that
50

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1 time.

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We also had a deep snow here this winter. It's melting slowly, but there's still a lot of snow out there. It was cold this winter. It was like 60 below at my place in January for about two or three days. It was very cold. I haven't seen that kind of weather in a long time that cold.

That's about it.

MADAME CHAIR HOSETH: Okay. Thank you, Gloria. Does anybody have any questions for Gloria.

(No comments)

MADAME CHAIR HOSETH: Thank you, Gloria. Now we're going to go to the Northwest Arctic Region. Is Cyrus still on with us? Testing my regions to make sure I have the right region and the name.

MR. HARRIS: Thank you, Mr. Chair. Am I on? Hello?

MADAME CHAIR HOSETH: Yes, you are.

MR. HARRIS: Okay. Thank you. The Northwest Arctic Region didn't have a spring meeting all for the same reason. Covid related restrictions and of course lack of technology except for their personal cell phone that they've got to use up their own data for. So many reasons behind it. Cost of living in our area just like you described. We definitely will or have high hopes of a fall meeting, person-to-person meeting.

Covid restrictions are slowly lifting up this way. We are still having our -- a majority of our meetings are still through Zoom just like this here or telephonically. They're slowly -- the restrictions are slowly lifting up there.

So, with that said, I couldn't really speak for the Northwest Arctic, but just from my personal experience from after the last fall's meeting we did have some fairly cold weather compared to the mild winters we've been having for three or four years ago. It seems like we're back to normal this past couple of years. This morning we're at -15, the

0085

1 coldest in the state. As I went to work it warmed up
2 to -1, which is a good thing.

3
4 It's good for our travel. We'll be
5 traveling for a while. It's good for the ice
6 conditions. It's good for the oceans. It's good for
7 the sea mammals. It's pretty much good for everything
8 all around that need to survive out there. It's good
9 for the environment as far as global warming goes once
10 we have the ice cover. So we have a fair amount of
11 good ice cover out there.

12
13 I'd just pretty much like to thank the
14 folks this morning that did their presentations on the
15 avian influenza, giving us information on that. Of
16 course I'd really like to get a hold of that post and
17 at least share that within our community about the
18 details behind that influenza that's going on or that
19 was presented this morning.

20
21 Great information on the Emperor goose
22 updates. I'll definitely dial in on the 11th. Other
23 than that I don't have too much more to share this
24 morning. I'm going to be signing off about 2:30 and
25 I'm going to be gone all afternoon from the office and
26 all day tomorrow. I'm glad that I was able to
27 participate this far and at least share what we've got
28 from up this way.

29
30 Thank you. Any questions?

31
32 (No comments)

33
34 MR. HARRIS: Oh, I'd like to thank our
35 chief that we did get them in the mail. Chief
36 (laughing) as I see.

37
38 MADAME CHAIR HOSETH: Thank you, Cyrus,
39 for your report and it's good to see you. I'm looking
40 forward to seeing everybody in person. Glad to hear
41 that you guys have the cold weather and the ice
42 coverage especially with the climate change impacts
43 that we've been hearing about too. I'm glad to hear
44 that you guys have the ice. I'm happy to hear you're
45 happy for the colder weather. We're ready for spring
46 down here. So I'm happy to hear the positiveness with
47 the weather.

48
49 Thank you for your report, Cyrus.

50

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1 MR. HARRIS: You're welcome.

2

3 MADAME CHAIR HOSETH: Next we have
4 Bering Strait Norton Sound Region. I don't know if
5 Jack was able to get on. I don't think he's called in.
6 If he joins us, we could always have him give his
7 report.

8

9 North Slope Region, Taqulik.

10

11 MS. HEPA: Thank you, Madame Chair. I
12 guess spring has begun up here. We're still a bit
13 cold. Whaling crews are out actively hunting. Point
14 Hope landed their first whale yesterday. We have people
15 on our coastal communities breaking trail to get to the
16 open lead.

17

18 I did hear from some of the whalers out
19 there breaking trail that a few eiders have been seen.
20 Lots of guillemots. We had our first report of a snow
21 bird in Utqiagvik on Sunday. I believe that was the
22 first one. In the other communities I've seen at least
23 on social media of snow birds arriving. So it's good
24 to have them. That's a sign that the whales are coming
25 and that spring is upon us.

26

27 U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service did have
28 an open house. Unfortunately I did not attend, but we
29 had some staff that did attend. We had a spring
30 festival Nalukataq and I was busy with other things,
31 but I'm glad that they did send staff up in law
32 enforcement to share information with our residents of
33 Utqiagvik.

34

35 As for the ice and the open leads, ice
36 hunting was very successful in the later part of winter
37 in most of our communities, so we are very grateful for
38 that. It's been very cold too. During the dead of the
39 winter we were getting some really cold temperatures
40 and listening to the hunters that they were very
41 pleased for the cold weather.

42

43 I might have Todd -- Todd, if you're
44 available, maybe you can give a brief update on the
45 30-day closure. What our plans are for that for the
46 North Slope.

47

48 MR. SFORMO: Sure. Can you hear me?
49 So last year was very successful. The North Slope

50

0087

1 Borough met with each of the representatives we have in
2 the villages and so we had kind of a little tag team of
3 information going around. Individuals would call us,
4 myself, Taqulik and others in our department and we
5 would funnel that information also to Ernest Nageak in
6 Barrow with Fish and Wildlife but also Julian in Fish
7 and Wildlife.

8

9 So I think we had a pretty good flow of
10 information going so that when we -- when the local
11 hunters here suggested an extension for one of the
12 units everybody was ready to kind of look at that and
13 very quickly made a decision to extend it a few days.
14 I think it was really appreciated in the communities
15 for that.

16

17 So we're planning on doing that same
18 exact setup this year. In fact we'll be having our
19 first call on Monday just to make sure everybody's
20 ready to go and just review things like that. Anything
21 else? No, I don't think so. I think Jennifer Hooper
22 really also helped us out with that kind of a model the
23 way she's done things. So she needs to get a little
24 credit too because she's helped us and she's taken a
25 number of phone calls to make sure that they're doing
26 well.

27

28 That's all I have.

29

30 MS. HEPA: Thank you, Todd. Just the
31 last thing I see is Carla reported too that they are
32 seeing snowbirds in Kaktovik, at least a few. That's
33 all I have for my report. Any questions?

34

35 MADAME CHAIR HOSETH: Yeah, it looks
36 like -- thank you, Taqulik. It looks like Julian has a
37 question for you.

38

39 MR. FISCHER: Yeah, I just wanted to
40 follow up with Todd with a question on the timing. Can
41 you give me your best estimate right now of when that
42 information might be coming in that would effect a
43 change in the standard 30-day closure?

44

45 MR. SFORMO: Well, no. I mean it's
46 still, you know, pretty much winter here. There's
47 really no melting going on on the tundra, you know, so
48 I don't think -- is that the kind of thing you're
49 looking for right now? Like a date or conditions?

50

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1 MR. FISCHER: No, I'm not asking for
2 what the dates would be. I'm asking when you might be
3 able to -- when you expect to contact Fish and Wildlife
4 Service with any proposed changes so we're ready and
5 can get that on the website.

6
7 MR. SFORMO: I think what we'll do is
8 just like last year. As soon as we start to get some
9 of that information we'll definitely call Ernest, call
10 you and I know you'll have other information coming in
11 from Nissa and her group up here. So I think we'll
12 just -- we don't have a day set to give you
13 information, but as soon as we get it I think that's
14 when we'll start to contact you and others to make sure
15 everybody is up to date.

16
17 That's what we did last year. Was that
18 all right last year?

19
20 MR. FISCHER: Yeah. Yeah, that worked
21 well. Thank you.

22
23 MR. SFORMO: Thank you.

24
25 MADAME CHAIR HOSETH: Thank you. Any
26 other questions.

27
28 (No comments)

29
30 MADAME CHAIR HOSETH: Thank you,
31 Taqulik and Todd for your report. Thanks. Kodiak.
32 Coral.

33
34 MS. CHERNOFF: Thank you, Gayla. Good
35 afternoon, everyone. I don't have too much to report
36 this year. We're going into our second permitted
37 season for the roaded area. Last year I think -- I
38 don't have my information in front of me, but Lili will
39 give us the information in her report. I think we had
40 39 or 40 permits issued last year. We received, I
41 think, 36 or 37 of them back, were returned. So we
42 have some good information and Lili will be sharing
43 that in her report tomorrow.

44
45 We just opened our -- we made a few
46 changes in our report so that we're going to work
47 harder at getting 100 percent of our reports returned,
48 the harvest reports. So we made a few changes that made
49 the process simpler and more clear. So hopefully that
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1 will go a little bit better this year.

2

3

4 So far Kelly has received -- sorry.
5 She has 37 permits that have been requested. Sorry.
6 My brain is not working today. So she's already issued
7 37 permits for this year. It is quite early, but I
8 think last year too a lot of our -- within two weeks
9 most of our, if not all of our, permits were issued.
10 So I wouldn't expect that there would be a whole lot
11 more issued permits.

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During our regional reports nobody reported any unusual activity, no unusual birds, no dead birds, no new birds I don't think. And then I was just on the phone. My friend right now is at a Safari Club meeting in -- or Safari Club -- she went to a Safari Club show in Minnesota and there was a guy in a booth there that had a taxidermied Emperor goose.

There was quite a lot of attention around that Emperor goose. It was quite beautiful. I guess the one comment mainly that the guys had is there was discussion about how there's only like a 1 percent chance getting drawn for a permit. So that was kind of their concern from a hunter's side.

For me, after I hung up, I find it interesting -- just to make note that we talk so much about populations and I guess coming from an indigenous culture when we're talking about having concerns with populations, I don't find it to be an acceptable practice to have a sport hunt open that's mainly for novelty.

You know, we hear from a lot of hunters, well, we haven't been able to hunt these and this goose is special because no one's hunted it, so they want to be like the first to hunt it or they haven't been able to add it to their collection of taxidermied birds. So all their hunting is novelty and taxidermy. That kind of strikes me as -- we sit in these meetings and talk about our concern for the populations.

So I'll just stand on that note.
That's all I have to my report. Thank you.

MADAME CHAIR HOSETH: Thank you, Coral.
It looks like Ryan has a question for you.

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1 MR. SCOTT: Thank you, Madame Chair.
2 Coral, just curious. Did you hear any negative
3 comments or concerns, complaints, blah, blah, blah,
4 about the Kodiak Road System hunt?

5
6 MS. CHERNOFF: No. I think I was
7 talking to Kelly and she hadn't received anything or
8 heard anything. I honestly haven't heard anything and
9 nobody reported anything at the meeting.

10
11 Previous to this I think every year I
12 hear reports of there's a particularly -- a couple of
13 Audubon bird watchers that have interfered in people's
14 hunts that I know of, but we didn't hear any of those
15 reports this year or I hadn't.

16
17 MR. SCOTT: Good. All right. Thank
18 you.

19
20 MS. CHERNOFF: Have you heard any
21 reports about our roaded system hunt?

22
23 MR. SCOTT: Maybe a few. No, I'm just
24 kidding. I reached out to a couple folks, the area
25 biologist out there and then I also reached out to
26 Larry Van Daele. You know, I was just curious how it
27 was going. Nothing negative at all, which I think is
28 great.

29
30 MADAME CHAIR HOSETH: Thank you. Does
31 anybody have any more questions for Coral?

32
33 (No comments)

34
35 MADAME CHAIR HOSETH: Thank you, Coral.
36 Interior Region, Randy. Randy, are you back? You're
37 on mute.

38
39 MR. MAYO: Can you hear me?

40
41 MADAME CHAIR HOSETH: Yes, we can.

42
43 MR. MAYO: Okay. Well, for the TCC
44 region March 29th we had our spring meeting. We had a
45 full board. For a while we didn't have representation
46 from two of our six regions, so those subregions
47 selected delegates that were in attendance, so we're
48 happy to get full participation across the region.

49
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1 One of the highlights of our meeting is
2 we approved our strategic plan. One year, five year,
3 ten year plan with some amendments. We had a lot of
4 good discussion. The plan was to really get really
5 more active in the migratory bird situation. Some of
6 the reason then was the salmon collapses on the Yukon
7 River and just all around hunting pressure and whatnot.
8 People are seeing a real need to participate in the
9 AMBCC to provide for fresh food in the springtime.

10

11 That strategic plan is going to address
12 more outreach and education and encourage more
13 participation by getting information out to our region.
14 Also to pull in youth and have elder participation
15 also. We're looking towards the next generation of
16 leadership to start mentoring them along now so they
17 can take over here in the near future.

18

19 One of the other things that was
20 highlighted in the strategic plan amendment discussion
21 was the need for mentoring some youth, kids that aren't
22 lucky enough to have somebody take them out on the land
23 and learn our traditional way of living out there. We
24 had a lot of good discussion on that. Especially some
25 of the kids that live in Fairbanks they still have
26 strong ties to their traditional home community.

27

28 Also part of that discussion also -- it
29 wasn't really -- it was a discussion around what we put
30 in the strategic plan, but being on the Invitation to
31 Hunt Committee along with Jim Simon, the chair of the
32 committee, we had a good discussion on some of the
33 current language in the Invitation to Hunt language
34 that we thought that language needs to be worked on
35 where it's narrowed down to immediate family for
36 someone to go home to hunt. So there was a lot of
37 concern around that issue. So we'll be more proactive
38 in that committee as I am a member of it.

39

40 Some of the strategic plan also called
41 for having a gathering around the spring hunt. You
42 know, also to recognize the history and if anybody is
43 still around that participated in that history of how
44 we got here today.

45

46 Other than that, it's still winter here
47 like everywhere else. It's finally getting a little
48 above freezing. A lot of snow. It's supposed to get
49 back below zero again here this weekend, which is good.

50

0092

1 It may push the arrival of the birds back a little bit,
2 but when they do get here they'll be beneficial for our
3 hunters so they can go cross country while it's still
4 frozen to get to some of the more productive geese
5 hunting grounds.

6
7 That had been a problem not only in my
8 home community, but across the region was access to the
9 birds due to really warm weather and everything would
10 melt too soon and people couldn't -- had a hard time
11 getting to the prime hunting grounds. I'm glad it's
12 kind of back to normal.

13
14 That's pretty much about it for the TCC
15 region. We're working on our outreach and
16 communication across our wide region too. People are
17 really kept up to date on what's going on out there
18 with regulation.

19
20 I don't know if Jim has anything else
21 to add to it. He was there with us as our consultant.
22 Jim?

23
24 MR. SIMON: Thank you, Randy. No, I
25 don't have anything to add except to follow up on the
26 point you made regarding the Invitation to Hunt
27 Committee. I did speak with Patty and we're hoping to
28 convene now that some of the Covid restrictions are
29 being lifted. We're hoping to have a face-to-face
30 Invitation to Hunt Committee meeting sometime -- I
31 think Patty suggested maybe this summer.

32
33 I know it's not on the agenda for this
34 meeting, but I was hoping that Madame Chair that might
35 be something that we consider while we're all here of
36 when might be a good time to get together and meet and
37 discuss the development of a proposal to submit for
38 this next cycle to try to address this long-standing
39 issue with the circumscription of the invitation to
40 hunt process.

41
42 Thank you.

43
44 MADAME CHAIR HOSETH: Thank you. I
45 think that would be good. Patty, when we get to the
46 spring gathering update we could check our schedules,
47 those of us who are on that committee. I think I'm on
48 there, Jim's on there. I'm not sure who else is on
49 there. Maybe we could see which committees need to
50

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1 meet because I think that there's some other issues
2 that we were wanting to address as well.

3

4 MS. SCHWALENBERG: Okay.

5

6 MADAME CHAIR HOSETH: Thank you. Any
7 questions for Randy.

8

9 (No comments)

10

11 MADAME CHAIR HOSETH: Thank you, Randy.
12 Then we have Southeast Region. I know they're not
13 present at our table and it would be really good if --
14 I've been trying to do communications to let people
15 know that we do have a seat for Southeast on this
16 Council and see if there's any interest for them coming
17 back.

18

19 I'm glad that we were able to do
20 regional reports. It's good to hear what's happening
21 in everybody's regions. I hope you guys were able to
22 get out there and be safe in your traveling with all of
23 the break-up time as we're going out there.

24

25 Ryan.

26

27 MR. SCOTT: Thank you, Madame Chair. I
28 realize I'm not one of the regional councils, but I do
29 live in Southeast and I can tell you that spring has
30 sprung. We had a heavy-duty winter all the way through
31 the fall and through December, January. We've had some
32 significant rain events and things like that.

33

34 Most of our fauna has done pretty well.
35 If we had been talking about deer or moose or goats
36 three or four months ago, I would have told you that
37 I'm really concerned about how that's going to go, but
38 right now it looks pretty good.

39

40 In addition to that, things are
41 starting to bud out in the wild and that's great. I
42 also have noticed lots of birds moving through the
43 Juneau area. We have the Mendenhall Wetlands State
44 Game Refuge here in town and shorebirds are coming
45 through, headed north. The other day I saw a flock of
46 Snow geese, which is not all that normal for us. I
47 recently heard about some cranes going by. So things
48 are happening. Southeast is -- it's almost 50 degrees
49 here today and that's about as high as it's been for
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1 months. So we're moving forward.

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Herring spawn has happened in a lot of the big fisheries out in Sitka. Things are happening out in Prince of Wales and things like that. Lots of subsistence opportunities are occurring as spring comes along. I just thought I'd add that since we don't have somebody from Southeast.

MADAME CHAIR HOSETH: Thank you for adding that. While you're talking and since we are kind of doing like our regional reports, I know that we don't have a spot on there for either you or Eric, but would you be able to at this time address that Board of Game proposal that passed with the edible meat definition for State, please.

MR. SCOTT: Sure. I can certainly do that. So there were a couple different proposals to make those changes. I think the one that you're asking about is Proposal 231 and that was proposed by the Alaska Waterfowl Association. What this would do was change the definition of edible meat to be salvaged for cranes, geese and swans to exclude the meat of the back and the lower wings, the radius and ulna.

Ultimately the Department was neutral on this. You know, we didn't see a huge biological concern and it did carry. It was carried as human use, which is kind of interesting because we haven't defined human use yet. It really is intended to be a broad application of what you can do with things that you harvest. So now you can use -- you know, human use covers things like human consumption, trapping bait, you know, things like that.

We heard a lot of testimony. That's really great to hear. Most people -- and I think it was a little bit difficult for people to understand what was happening. A lot of people were like, gosh, why would you eat those things. Why wouldn't you take care of the meat. That wasn't lost on the Board I don't believe. They thought that if there are parts to be salvaged, they should be salvaged for human consumption. In addition to that, if you have stuff left over, why not be able to use it. That was the ultimate decision with that.

MADAME CHAIR HOSETH: Okay. Thank you.

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1 So they have to be used, the back and the.....

2

3 MR. SCOTT: Exactly.

4 MADAME CHAIR HOSETH: Okay.

5

6 MR. SCOTT: And very similar to -- the
7 Department actually put forth a proposal to salvage for
8 human use for Snowshoe hares and there was no salvage
9 requirement prior to this year in many parts of the
10 state. Actually all the state for Snowshoes. The
11 intent is that, frankly -- and I don't think anybody
12 here would disagree. I might be wrong. We didn't want
13 people shooting Snowshoe hares and leaving them lay.
14 We wanted them used for something. So that's pretty
15 similar.

16

17 MADAME CHAIR HOSETH: Okay. Thank you
18 for that report out because it came in one of our
19 Advisory Committee meetings. It wasn't on my radar.
20 Different proposals were on my radar. Thank you for
21 that report. Does anybody have any questions about
22 that for Ryan?

23

24 MR. SCOTT: I actually have several
25 things, Madame Chair, that I could do quickly. Eric's
26 got his hand up.

27

28 MADAME CHAIR HOSETH: Did you have a
29 question for him or did you have something else that
30 you wanted to talk about, Eric?

31

32 MR. TAYLOR: Just something else.
33 Ryan, you can go ahead and finish if you'd like.

34

35 MR. SCOTT: Okay. Thank you. I'll be
36 very brief and hopefully I'll create some questions.
37 We talked about the Board of Game meeting. There were
38 several things that happened there. I want to comment
39 on the Emperor goose proposals. I believe we had 87
40 Emperor goose proposals. We had Proposal 32 from the
41 AMBCC and then I believe Proposal 33 through 57 or
42 something like that was the exact opposite of what the
43 AMBCC was seeking.

44

45 I was going into the meeting. I was
46 frankly very concerned how that would go. However, I
47 think we got the best deal we could. Nothing changed
48 and we still have the 25 birds. I know that's not
49 optimum for a lot of people, but we don't have 100

50

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1 birds going to non-residents. We don't have 500 birds
2 going to non-residents. So I feel like we actually did
3 okay there.

4
5 The other thing that I would mention
6 and Gayla mentioned it earlier, the vote was very
7 close. I didn't have a chance to double check and
8 Jason could potentially remind me what it was, but I
9 think it was 3-4. It almost carried to be honest with
10 you.

11
12 While it didn't, and I realize that
13 might be disappointing, what that signifies is people
14 really heard us and heard everybody on this call. I'm
15 very pleased about that. Especially as we go into the
16 management plan revision and consideration of what's
17 coming, I was very pleased that the Board heard
18 everything and frankly voted the way they did. That
19 was good.

20
21 Let's see. If you're not aware and I'm
22 not sure that the information got out across the Board
23 as well as it should, there is a Senate Bill right now
24 going through the Legislature called SB-204 and this is
25 a change to the Governor's auction tags, raffle tags.
26 Emperor geese have been included in that. They've been
27 included up to four permits. These would be separate
28 from anything else that happens. Resident permits,
29 non-resident permits, things like that. These are
30 essentially trophy permits and tags.

31
32 I would encourage you to take a look at
33 what's going on and make comments as appropriate to
34 your legislative representation. The good news is that
35 myself and Jason we have the opportunity to not make
36 those available. Right now that is the game plan. Any
37 time these tags come up the area biologist or the
38 person responsible for the program can -- you know, we
39 can say no. We shouldn't do it. That's where I stand
40 right now and I made that very clear. But you need to
41 know that those permits are out there and I don't want
42 that to go underneath the radar.

43
44 Again, SB-204. I encourage you to take
45 a look at it and make sure you get a hold of whoever
46 you need to to make comments along those lines. Any
47 questions about that? I can't believe there won't be.

48
49 MADAME CHAIR HOSETH: Any questions?
50

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1 (No comments)

2

3 MADAME CHAIR HOSETH: Maybe we'll need
4 to look at it and read it.

5

6 MR. SCOTT: Yeah. Get ahold of me if
7 you have questions.

8

9 MADAME CHAIR HOSETH: Thank you.

10

11 MR. SCOTT: Yeah, I'm happy to talk
12 about it. The next thing is -- two, real quick. The
13 Pacific Flyway Council will be meeting in Juneau in
14 August.. We're having a little bit of struggles with
15 securing a venue. We have rooms. We have the actual
16 Council rooms reserved. I'm trying to get the Non-Game
17 Technical Committee secured and the Study Committee.

18

19 One of the things the Council has asked
20 for is actually a half day or a day of discussion about
21 the AMBCC. We're very different than many of the Lower
22 48 states. I think what happens is we bring our
23 regulations and consent agenda to those guys and they
24 sign off on it because they don't really understand it.

25

26 Kevin Blakely is on here, which I'm
27 very appreciative of. He's from the state of Oregon
28 and the Council representative to the AMBCC.

29

30 So keep in mind we're looking at August
31 22 through 26 in Juneau and I would like to have at
32 least a day or half day of August 25th dedicated to
33 AMBCC. I don't know what that looks like. We need to
34 figure that out.

35

36 Patty reached out to me and offered to
37 help out, which is great, but, frankly, we're going to
38 need some folks here and not just -- no offense, Eric.
39 We don't just need the Fish and Wildlife Service. We
40 need the folks who live out in the boonies, you know,
41 that live in those rural areas to talk about the
42 importance of this and why do we do this and how do we
43 do this.

44

45 So I'd appreciate you putting some
46 thought into that. As Jason and I and Travis Booms put
47 that all together, we'll just keep you in lockstep.
48 You know, we'll make sure the information is flowing at
49 this point and folks can figure out how to make that

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1 happen.

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 Finally, I just want to let you know that in the next seven months we will have a wholesale replacement of the leadership of the Division of Wildlife Conservation and it has started. We'll lose two very prominent staff members this month and then we will continue to lose people through the summer and into the fall and winter.

 I'm not going anywhere, but what it means is I'm going to be the last guy standing. I'm not sure how that's going to play out, but I'll be around. I just want you to know that folks like Beth Lenart out in Northeast Alaska, she's going to retire. Dave Crowley out on the Alaska Peninsula is going. Gino Del Frate, the Regional Supervisor for Region 4, which is Central Southwest Alaska, he's retiring.

 We've got another big Interior retirement coming on. The Department of Fish and Game is going to look pretty different in the next six or seven months. But I'm not going anywhere and I'll be -- you know, if you need to talk somebody, I encourage you to reach out to me.

 I think that's it.

MADAME CHAIR HOSETH: Thank you, Ryan. Eric, you had your hand up. Did you have any -- first, did you have any questions for Ryan?

MR. TAYLOR: No, I do not, but I think Jim might have, so I'll go after Jim if that's okay.

MADAME CHAIR HOSETH: That's fine. Go ahead, Jim.

MR. SIMON: Thank you. Ryan had mentioned this upcoming meeting in Juneau of the Pacific Flyway. While I haven't been able to speak specifically with Randy Mayo about the possibility of him attending, I have spoken with Karen Linnell at Ahtna Intertribal Resource Commission and they do want to send at least a representative or two to that meeting to help the larger AMBCC educate the Pacific Flyway about what we do. Thanks.

MR. SCOTT: No, that's great, Jim.

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1 That's wonderful news. I think we also need -- we just
2 have to look at the map, right. Kodiak up through
3 Bristol Bay and the Alaska Peninsula, all the way up
4 the west coast. Just so the Flyway understands the
5 differences in the regions. So I would hope that --
6 frankly, I'll try to find travel money for that for
7 people so it's not a big burden. As many folks as we
8 can.

9

10 Right now the Council meeting, the half
11 day or day for AMBCC as well as the normally scheduled
12 Council meeting is going to occur in the Juneau State
13 Museum. I've reserved the lecture hall. It's great.
14 We're also trying not work on meeting places in the
15 Elizabeth Peratrovich Hall for the Technical Committee
16 meetings. I'll keep you posted.

17

18 MADAME CHAIR HOSETH: Thank you. With
19 the Pacific Flyway Council coming up and that's pretty
20 close to when we would have a fall meeting and it's
21 been years since we did a regional AMBCC meeting in
22 anybody's region. That might be something for us to
23 consider that we maybe have our AMBCC meeting in
24 Juneau. That might be something that might be a good
25 idea.

26

27 I know that we have some travel. We
28 have some grant funds that need to be spent. I don't
29 know about how your guys's budget looks, but we haven't
30 had any travel out of any of our budgets. It might be
31 something to look into to have our fall AMBCC meeting
32 there. Then we could all be there for part of that
33 day.

34

35 When was the last time and where was
36 the last place that we had a regional meeting? It's
37 always been in Anchorage for the last, jeez, 10 years
38 since I've been here.

39

40 MS. STICKWAN: Madame Chair, I have a
41 question.

42

43 MADAME CHAIR HOSETH: Go ahead, Gloria.

44

45 MS. STICKWAN: I was wondering will
46 there be rooms available? Is that tourist season or
47 anything? Will there be hotel rooms available during
48 that time?

49

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1 MADAME CHAIR HOSETH: Maybe that would
2 be a good question for Ryan. He lives in that area.
3 I'm not sure how you guys's.....
4

5 MR. SCOTT: Yeah, it's going to be
6 busy. We do have a block of rooms reserved here in
7 Juneau. I imagine we could extend that block. We
8 could certainly work on it. It has been interesting
9 that through the pandemic many places have shut down
10 and they're just now starting to reopen. Jason and I
11 and Travis Booms we've been trying to talk to people
12 like left and right. But we do have a block of rooms
13 available and I could certainly extend that if needed.
14

15 MADAME CHAIR HOSETH: Well, that might
16 be -- do we have date and time? Yeah, we do have date
17 and place of next meeting. So that could be just
18 something that we can think about as we move through
19 our meeting here, but I think that that would be a
20 really good thing for us to get together and attend
21 that meeting. Also see a different area and maybe we
22 could recruit somebody from your region, Ryan, to come
23 back to AMBCC.
24

25 MR. SCOTT: Yeah, we are definitely
26 working on that as well. I would love to see you all
27 in Juneau. Southeast is different than -- many people
28 argue about where the best place in Alaska is, but I'm
29 from here so it's the best.
30

31 (Laughter)
32

33 MADAME CHAIR HOSETH: Yeah. There's a
34 comment in there from Todd: Besides having individuals
35 at the meeting I wonder if you might get permission to
36 provide a draft of the paper on AMBCC that is to be
37 published in October and a book on tribal wildlife
38 management. Just a thought.
39

40 MR. DEVINE: Madame Chair.
41

42 MADAME CHAIR HOSETH: Go ahead, Peter.
43

44 MR. DEVINE: Yeah, I just thought after
45 listening to everybody talk about the ice I just had
46 something to add to my report.
47

48 MADAME CHAIR HOSETH: Okay.
49
50

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1 MR. DEVINE: I was at that Board of
2 Fish meeting on March 25th. An interesting picture
3 came over Facebook. It was a baby walrus in Cold Bay,
4 Alaska. The last time that we've seen the walrus on
5 the south side was back in 1972. I was fishing out of
6 False Pass. I was nine years old and there was a bunch
7 of walrus came through.

8
9 This year's icepack is causing quite a
10 disturbance up there in the Bering Sea. I was on the
11 plane Monday and the guys from home that are up there
12 trying to catch the opilio crab and tanner crab can't
13 get to them. They don't expect to get into them until
14 at least May and usually they're done a month ago.

15
16 So with that icepack breaking loose I
17 think we're going to see a lot of walrus come to the
18 south side this year. I just wanted to add that.

19
20 Thank you.

21
22 MADAME CHAIR HOSETH: Yeah, thank you,
23 Peter. That's really interesting. I know that they
24 were -- let us know up here if they -- me and Heidi up
25 here if you guys see anymore because that's something
26 that we follow as well.

27
28 Any questions for what Ryan reported
29 out?

30
31 (No comments)

32
33 MADAME CHAIR HOSETH: Thank you for the
34 good overview, Ryan. Eric.

35
36 MR. TAYLOR: Thanks, Gayla. Just two
37 quick comments on the regional reports. Gloria, thank
38 you for the acknowledgment of your youth camp on I
39 think August 18th to the 20th. I just wanted to offer
40 if you need materials, anything like coloring books or
41 any other bird guides, anything that might be helpful
42 to your effort in that, please let me know. I'd be
43 happy to work with Tamara and get you some materials
44 that might be of interest.

45
46 Finally, I just want to alert the
47 group. I think Julian on the chat, if you go up your
48 chat, he posted the highly pathogenic avian influenza
49 one-page flyer that Cyrus mentioned. So you should be
50

0102

1 able to download it, but I will also send that to all
2 of you by email so that you do have access to it. The
3 important point is put it to good use.

4

5 Thank you.

6

7 MADAME CHAIR HOSETH: Thank you, Eric.
8 How are we doing on time? Did you want to go ahead and
9 go now then, Todd? Todd Sanders with U.S. Fish and
10 Wildlife Headquarters briefing.

11

12 MR. SANDERS: Yes. This is Todd. I'm
13 ready. Thank you, Madame Chair and members of the
14 Council. My name is Todd Sanders and I'm going to
15 provide an overview of what's going on in the U.S. Fish
16 and Wildlife Service, the headquarters. Headquarters
17 we focus on national and flyway level issues, but of
18 course we work very closely with the regions, so you're
19 going to hear a lot of overlap on some items that have
20 been presented today.

21

22 Can you hear me okay and see my
23 presentation?

24

25 MADAME CHAIR HOSETH: Yes, we hear you.
26 We hear you good.

27

28 MR. SANDERS: Thank you. First of all,
29 congratulations to Sara Boario who has been appointed
30 as the new Regional Director for Alaska. We did hear
31 from Sara earlier at this meeting. Sara was appointed
32 middle of last month, March. We also at the same time
33 have a new director of the U.S. Fish and Wildlife
34 Service at headquarters.

35

36 Martha Williams has been confirmed by
37 the Senate as the Director of the U.S. Fish and
38 Wildlife Service. Previously Martha was the Principal
39 Deputy Director of the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service,
40 so effectively she was acting as the Director of the
41 Fish and Wildlife Service, but she has been confirmed
42 by the Senate now and sworn in.

43

44 I want to brief the Council on some
45 regulations that we're working on. First of all this
46 is an update on the regulations related to incidental
47 take. We've been working on regulations to authorize
48 incidental take not only for eagles, but also under the
49 Migratory Bird Treaty Act regarding eagles. This rule

50

0103

1 would expedite and simplify the permitting process for
2 incidental take of eagles. For the Migratory Bird
3 Treaty Act it would define the scope of the Migratory
4 Bird Treaty Act, but it would also provide a process to
5 authorize incidental take.

6

7 We did publish a notice of our intent
8 to propose regulations. We did this in October and
9 September, both for eagles and the Migratory Bird
10 Treaty Act. This was about the time of the AMBCC
11 meeting or just after. At that time we did invite
12 comments, so we did receive a number of public
13 comments. So we are working through those comments
14 now.

15

16 The next step would be to publish a
17 proposed regulation or proposed rule regarding
18 incidental take for eagles and the Migratory Bird
19 Treaty Act. There will be an open public comment
20 period, typically 60 days. So when that is published
21 we'll get that proposed rule distributed and AMBCC and
22 others will have an opportunity to provide public
23 comment.

24

25 Another regulation that we're working
26 on is an update to the list of migratory birds
27 protected under the Migratory Bird Treaty Act. We
28 update this list about every three to five years.
29 Essentially what we do is we incorporate taxonomic
30 information as it develops, but also other changes. So
31 we do this about every three to five years, so our list
32 is current.

33

34 We do expect the proposed rule out
35 about this spring, so very soon. We expect the list to
36 grow to 1,099 birds protected under the Migratory Bird
37 Treaty Act. This is an increase of about six species.
38 One of those species being added to the list is the
39 Mexican duck. The Mexican duck has been identified as
40 a separate species from the Mallard. This has been
41 identified by taxonomists.

42

43 You can see the range map below there.
44 The Mexican duck primarily occurs in Mexico and only
45 just to a very small extent in some of the southern
46 U.S. states, which would be California, but mostly
47 Arizona, New Mexico and part of Texas. Previously
48 those birds in that area were considered a hybrid of
49 Mallards, so those birds were protected under the
50

50

0104

1 Migratory Bird Treaty Act as Mallards, but now, given
2 the taxonomic information that we have and new science
3 it appears that these birds are recognized as Mexican
4 duck species. So we're proposing to add these to the
5 list.

6
7 This has some implications for the
8 Flyway Councils. Not so much for AMBCC given the range
9 of these birds, but we have consulted with the Flyway
10 Council to see if there were any initial concerns.
11 None have been raised so far, so we will move forward
12 with that proposed regulation. Of course here also
13 there will be an opportunity for public comment.
14 Typically 30 to 60 days. We'll make sure you're aware
15 of that proposed rule when it is available.

16
17 I just mentioned that the Mexican duck
18 looked very similar to the Mallard, particularly the
19 female Mallard. This is the male Mexican duck here in
20 this picture. You can see that it looks like a female
21 Mallard except for the bill, which is more like a male
22 Mallard.

23
24 I want to mention our hunting
25 regulations, particularly Service Regulations
26 Committee. This committee receives recommendations
27 from the AMBCC, but also from the Flyway Councils.
28 After considering those proposals, they then forward a
29 recommendation to the Service Director and also to the
30 Secretary of Interior.

31
32 So in review, regulations going into
33 effect for this hunting season. First of all the
34 Service Regulation Committee concurred with all the
35 recommendations from the AMBCC, but also the Flyway
36 Council. There weren't very many proposals for change
37 from the AMBCC. There were three clarifications for
38 spring/summer hunting and from the Flyway Council there
39 were just a few changes related to Canada Cackling
40 geese. Basically bag limits and there were some other
41 minor changes.

42
43 So we have published those proposed
44 rule for fall/winter hunting that was published on
45 February 2nd and for subsistence hunting that was
46 published on March 14th. So that comment period is
47 still open. It closes soon, April 13th, but I assume
48 you're all aware of that proposed rule.

49
50

0105

1 Looking forward then to the 2023
2 hunting season and the current process that we're in.
3 I just want to make you aware that the SRC's first
4 meeting of this year in this cycle is coming up this
5 month. It's April 19th. That will be a virtual
6 meeting. The second meeting generally occurs in about
7 September. Those dates have not yet been established.
8 we'll let you know as soon as they are.

9
10 The first meeting is just to tee up the
11 issues for the year. The second one in September is to
12 make a decision on the regulatory proposals, both from
13 the AMBCC, but also the Flyway Councils. Typically
14 there's a representative from the AMBCC at least at the
15 September meeting, so again we'll keep you posted on
16 those days.

17
18 I just want to make you aware that the
19 Pacific Flyway Council representatives to the SRC are
20 your very own Ryan Scott, who is currently the chair of
21 the Pacific Flyway Council, but also Mike Scott and
22 he's from Nevada. Those two will help carry your
23 recommendations forward to the SRC.

24
25 MR. SCOTT: No relation.

26
27 MR. SANDERS: Yes. Thank you. Ryan
28 has already mentioned that the Pacific Flyway Council
29 is planning to meet in Juneau this August, so there's
30 certainly an opportunity to participate in that meeting
31 and appreciate all the arrangements that Ryan is
32 proposing to make that a very successful event.

33
34 Then also Ryan did mention Kevin
35 Blakely from Oregon. He is the new representative from
36 the Council to the AMBCC. I know Kevin is on the call
37 today, so welcome Kevin. I just want to highlight that
38 Kevin will help carry issues and concerns back and
39 forth between the AMBCC and the Council. So feel free
40 to reach out to Kevin not only today but as we move
41 forward.

42
43 I want to follow up on one of those
44 regulation changes for this hunting season. This is in
45 2022. Basically you have a bag limit change for
46 Cackling Canada geese. In Alaska there's a reduction
47 from six geese down to four and in Oregon and
48 Washington there's a reduction from four geese down to
49 three. The reason for this reduction is to try to keep
50

0106

1 this population at its objective level.

2

3 So what you see on this graph is the
4 annual estimates, the circles, and the whiskers are our
5 confidence around that annual estimate. Then the solid
6 line that goes through those points is the three-year
7 average.

8

9 So back in 1984 the season was closed.
10 There was concern about this population. The idea was
11 to grow this population back up, which we did
12 successfully. Once it was back at population
13 objective, about 250,000 birds, plus or minus 10
14 percent, then the regulations have varied to try and
15 keep those birds at that level. So you can see it's
16 bounced around over time.

17

18 When the population increases, then
19 regulations can be more liberal to try and bring it
20 back down to objective. Or if that population goes
21 below the objective, then regulations can be more
22 restricted to try and get that back in that ideal
23 range.

24

25 So you can see for the most part since
26 the season has reopened that that population has
27 roughly been around that population objective of
28 250,000 birds. Most recently, if you look at the last
29 three years, the population abundance has been below
30 that objective range. So that's why we have
31 restrictions. Those restrictions are going into effect
32 this year.

33

34 When we monitor, we'll have another
35 data point, but that's under the more liberal
36 regulations of the past, so it's going to take a few
37 years to figure out what the population response is to
38 these new regulations going into effect this year.

39

40 With that I want to mention that like
41 any migratory bird cooperative management of the
42 stakeholders across the Flyway is utmost importance.
43 This is a perfect example. Remember in 1984 the Hooper
44 Bay Agreement, which later turned into the Y-K Delta
45 Goose Management Plan. This was a management plan for
46 Arctic nesting geese.

47

48 Back then there was concern for
49 Cackling geese and others. There was a season closure

50

0107

1 on Cackling geese to try and grow that population. So
2 over time I mentioned there was a closure from 1984 to
3 1993. Since then bag limits have ranged from one to
4 four in Oregon and Washington. I think it's been up to
5 six in Alaska.

6 Then we've also seen some of the
7 restrictions for subsistence harvest go away. For
8 example, egging was allowed in 2017. So very much so
9 cooperative management for fall/winter and
10 spring/summer hunting.

11
12 There was some concern by farmers and
13 the Oregon Farm Bureau about the number of geese and
14 concerns about impact to their farm and agricultural
15 products. So there was a stakeholder meeting. We
16 brought all the stakeholders together in 2016 and there
17 was discussion about what the appropriate objective
18 would be considering all stakeholders.

19
20 At that time this included the AVCP but
21 also the Yukon Delta National Wildlife Refuge among
22 other stakeholders. Basically the agreement was that
23 the population should remain at about 250,000 plus or
24 minus 10 percent. So that's where we are today. We
25 continue at that level.

26
27 I just want to point out that there's a
28 continuing need to monitor and for shared cooperative
29 agreement. As I mentioned, we'll get another data
30 point this year, but that's still reflective of the
31 more liberal regulations. Now if these restrictions go
32 in place, we'll need a few years to monitor and see,
33 but I assume that this population will respond
34 positively and bounce back up to the objective of the
35 Council.

36
37 I wanted to mention our national
38 monitoring plans. Ryan, do you have a question? I
39 thought I saw your hand. Sorry. I wanted to mention
40 our -- go ahead, Ryan.

41
42 MR. SCOTT: At the end I'd actually
43 just like Kevin to have a chance to introduce himself
44 and talk about his longevity with the Council.

45
46 MR. SANDERS: Absolutely. Thank you.
47 I just wanted to mention our national monitoring plans.
48 I think you're all aware that there's been some
49 interruptions to our plans because of the Corona virus.
50

0108

1 We were not able to travel and we were not able to
2 conduct many of our surveys in Canada, so we've missed
3 two years of monitoring there and some parts of the
4 state.

5
6 We were able to get back to our
7 monitoring programs in place in Alaska last year, so we
8 only missed one year in Alaska but two years in some
9 other places, particularly in Canada. So I just wanted
10 to share the good news that we are planning to go back
11 and conduct those surveys as planned in Canada and
12 elsewhere.

13
14 Because of the Corona virus we also
15 were not able to go to Canada to band ducks and other
16 waterfowl, so we focused our efforts on banding in the
17 U.S., but this year we are planning to go back to
18 Canada. I do want to mention that there is some
19 concern about highly pathogenic avian influenza.
20 There's concern about transmission to humans, but also
21 increased transmission from bird to bird from
22 concentrating these birds with use of bait.

23
24 You saw these graphics this morning,
25 but I just wanted to mention that highly pathogenic
26 avian influenza was first detected in the U.S. in
27 December of 2014. That was in the Pacific Flyway in
28 Oregon and Washington. So it's been here for a while.
29 You saw these maps that show recent detections this
30 winter and this spring. The graphic with the numbers
31 in the state shows the number of detections in wild
32 birds since winter and then on the other graphic the
33 green dots are the locations of those wild birds.

34
35 You can see that most of these
36 encounters or these detections are on the eastern part
37 of the U.S., not necessarily the west, but there is the
38 one encounter or one detection there in British
39 Columbia. That was an eagle.

40
41 So there's continued concern about
42 highly pathogenic avian influenza because this strain
43 is slightly different and it appears that there's
44 increased mortality among some birds, particularly
45 waterfowl and some eagles and shorebirds, but
46 particularly waterfowl.

47
48 So we've seen a number of die-offs in
49 Snow geese and other waterfowl species. Numbers that
50

0109

1 range from one or a few numbers of birds up to maybe
2 100 or more Snow geese for example. So there is
3 increased concern about the impacts of highly
4 pathogenic avian influenza.

5
6 This is a developing story, a
7 developing issue. It's too early to say what the
8 implications may be for wild bird populations. It's
9 too early to say what the management implications might
10 be for conservation, but also for our hunting
11 regulations. But I can tell you that there is concern
12 about making sure we protect people that are working
13 with these birds and that we don't increase rates of
14 transmission among birds by banding.

15
16 So the Canadian Wildlife Service did
17 prohibit use of bait for banding during the winter, but
18 they are revisiting that decision and of course could
19 change that at any time. We also receive guidance from
20 the Bird Banding Office both in Canada and the U.S.
21 about use of bait and it was generally suggested that
22 we don't use bait to trap birds. So this is an issue
23 because we depend on this banding information to
24 monitor the status of waterfowl but also to monitor
25 surveillance of highly pathogenic avian influenza.

26
27 So I think the next available
28 information will be at the April 19th SRC meeting. Of
29 course we have plans to start banding in August. So
30 this, as I said, is a very much developing story. Stay
31 tuned. We are planning to band. We're going to do
32 everything we can to make sure that people are
33 protected and that we don't increase transmission rates
34 among birds. We do know that the risk to humans is
35 very low, but nevertheless we want to use all
36 precautions, of course.

37
38 I want to mention the Fish and Wildlife
39 Service's role in avian influenza. Our role is
40 primarily surveillance of wild bird populations for the
41 earliest possible detection of highly pathogenic avian
42 influenza. Of course we do this by sampling sick
43 birds, dead birds, but also live birds. So for live
44 birds the way we do that is by trapping the birds by
45 use of bait when we band. So obviously if we're unable
46 to band, this has implications for not only our goal to
47 monitor the status of birds, but also to monitor the
48 surveillance of avian influenza.

49
50

0110

1 We work very closely with our partners.
2 These are State, Tribal and Federal partners. Of
3 course USDA, USGS, Center for Disease Control, Canadian
4 Wildlife Service. So our role is surveillance. Other
5 agencies have a lead role in responding to avian
6 influenza. So there's substantial information on their
7 websites about avian influenza, so I'd encourage anyone
8 that wants more information to go to those sites.

9
10 Of course the Fish and Wildlife Service
11 does provide public service announcements. We have
12 fact sheets. We have safety guidance for hunters. We
13 have safety guidance for preventing spread. Also we
14 have information for reporting procedures. So those
15 fact sheets do exist. They are on our website. You
16 could do a Google search and find those.

17
18 If you need any help finding those,
19 please let me know and I'd be happy to provide those.
20 The point is there is guidance that's available. I
21 understand that's being updated by Region 7. Eric is
22 going to make that available if he hasn't already. Of
23 course there's a lot of information on other agency
24 websites that have a primary responsibility for
25 responding to avian influenza.

26
27 Finally I wanted to mention that we
28 have been able to monitor the status of Wrangel Island
29 Snow geese because of a strong partnership. Wrangel
30 Island Snow geese nest in Russia on Wrangel Island, but
31 then they migrate south to Alaska down into the
32 southern states.

33
34 This has been possible first of all by
35 an agreement with Russia back in early 1970s and this
36 is before the Migratory Bird Treaty with Russia. We've
37 also been able to do this through a strong partnership.
38 We have contacts in both the Federal level, Federal
39 agencies, but also a Snow goose researcher Evgeny and
40 Reserve manager and then also through the Pacific
41 Flyway Council.

42
43 So I just want to let everybody know
44 that there are new challenges. Unfortunately Evgeny
45 Syroechkovskiy, our contact from the Russian Ministry
46 here in the middle with the red tie, did pass away
47 early this winter, so we do have challenges in
48 restoring the contact with the Russian Ministry. Also
49 Evgeny was a key in the non-profit organization for the
50

0111

1 study of geese. So this is a substantial loss, but
2 also because of the Russian invasion of Ukraine the
3 State Department has frozen our contract with the
4 Pacific Flyway Council to monitor these birds.

5

6 So as of right now we're no longer able
7 to get information. I just want to report that there
8 are other ways to monitor the status of these birds.

9 We do know they're over objective. At least at
10 objective, so there's very little concern about
11 abundance right now. But we do have other ways to
12 monitor, which is winter counts in the states but also
13 through banding assuming that we can continue to band.

14

15 So that concludes my report. If
16 there's any questions I'd be happy to take them. If
17 there are no questions, I'd like to give Kevin an
18 opportunity to address the Council.

19

20 MADAME CHAIR HOSETH: Okay. Thank you,
21 Todd, for your presentation. We can have Kevin
22 introduce himself and then we could open up for
23 questions when we're done.

24

25 MR. BLAKELY: Thank you, Chair Hoseth.
26 As I talked about at the beginning, I'm Kevin Blakely.
27 I'm the Deputy Administrator with Oregon Department of
28 Fish and Wildlife. I'm here at the headquarter office
29 in Salem and like all the country and all the parts of
30 the state in Oregon it's Indian country, particularly
31 here it's the Siletz and the Grand Ronde tribes.
32 Throughout my career I've worked in Indian country with
33 Columbia River tribes as well as a lot of Interior
34 tribes and with adjacent states as well.

35

36 As a Pacific Flyway Council member I've
37 been on the Council since 2016. I've had the
38 opportunity to rotate through chairmanship in both the
39 Council and Species Regulations Committee with U.S.
40 Fish and Wildlife Service as a Council representative.
41 I can remember even from my first opportunity to be on
42 the Council just striking up a friendship and a
43 colleague relationship with Patty. That's been real
44 beneficial for what we do here in Oregon, how we
45 communicate the impacts of hunting and where that
46 resource goes both in breeding grounds as well as the
47 wintering grounds here.

48

49 So just an opportunity to introduce

50

0112

1 myself, Chair. As Todd mentioned and Ryan as well,
2 don't hesitate to reach out and I look forward to more
3 opportunities to interact.

4
5 MADAME CHAIR HOSETH: Thank you, Kevin.
6 Does anybody have any questions for Todd for his
7 presentation or with Kevin?

8
9 I see Eric, your hand is up.

10
11 MR. TAYLOR: Thank you, Gayla. I just
12 wanted to highlight something that Todd mentioned
13 relative to Cackling Canada goose management. Todd
14 mentioned a meeting back I guess six years ago in
15 mid-February where there were many stakeholders brought
16 together in Oregon. The Oregon Farm Bureau, the Oregon
17 Farmers Association, Oregon Department of Fish and
18 Wildlife, the Washington Department of Fish and
19 Wildlife as well as the Alaska Department of Fish and
20 Game and Fish and Wildlife Service.

21
22 The proposal -- as all of you know,
23 Cackling Canada geese winter primarily in Oregon and
24 they graze on farmers' fields. therefore presenting
25 somewhat of a challenge to seed production. At that
26 time we had a pretty substantive number of Cackling
27 Canada geese and the Oregon Farm Bureau actually
28 recommended cutting the objective -- the population
29 objective by half. So going from 250,000 to 125,000.

30
31 So this was a meeting, as Todd
32 mentioned, where we brought all the stakeholders
33 together to discuss the farmers' concerns, the Oregon
34 Farm Bureau concerns, but also the importance of
35 Cackling Canada geese to subsistence hunters,
36 particularly on the Y-K Delta.

37
38 Myron Naneng came down to represent the
39 Association of Village Council Presidents and the
40 Waterfowl Conservation Committee. Myron gave a very
41 effective presentation on the importance of Cackling
42 Canada geese to spring/summer subsistence hunters. As
43 a result of a long discussion, we all came to an
44 agreement, as Todd mentioned, to retain that population
45 objective of 250,000.

46
47 The point I want to make -- you just
48 heard Ryan say it's really important for this group to
49 attend the Pacific Flyway Council meeting in August and
50

0113

1 that's a good example of why. They think Myron was
2 very effective. The Farm Bureau and Oregon Farmers
3 Association said as much so. They said they did not
4 understand the importance. They did not understand
5 that fresh food was not available until geese showed up
6 on the Y-K Delta during the spring.

7

8 As a result of Myron's presentation
9 they understood the importance of keeping the
10 population objective at 250,000. So communication is
11 really important by this group to both Kevin and Ryan
12 and the rest of the Pacific Flyway Council.

13

14 Thank you.

15

16 MADAME CHAIR HOSETH: Thank you for
17 that, Eric. Gay.

18

19 MS. SHEFFIELD: Yeah, thank you and
20 thank you for the nice presentation. Is it possible --
21 we have a lot of concerns in the Bering Strait Region
22 in the marine side of the world, both environmentally,
23 ecologically, militarily this year. Is it possible if
24 we drop our email in the chat -- is that a way you can
25 email us the information?

26

27 This is for Mr. Sanders. Can he email
28 me his avian influenza information that he was listing
29 off? I'm trying to gather a lot of that for us. It
30 sounds like that is coming and we're adding that to our
31 to-do list for the summer as someone who responds to
32 these kinds of concerns. Is that something I can leave
33 my email address or anybody could leave their email
34 address in there?

35

36 MR. SANDERS: Yeah, absolutely. Please
37 do. I'll coordinate with the region, Eric, to make
38 sure that we pull together the information that would
39 be helpful. Absolutely. I have the fact sheet that I
40 can send, but I want to just coordinate with Eric to
41 make sure we give you everything that you need. We'll
42 send it to you directly and make it available to
43 everyone here at the AMBCC.

44

45 MS. SHEFFIELD: Awesome. Thank you so
46 much. I'll leave my -- I'll put it in the chat box.
47 Thank you very much.

48

49 MADAME CHAIR HOSETH: Thank you. Any

50

0114

1 more questions for Todd.

2

3 (No comments)

4

5 MADAME CHAIR HOSETH: Thanks for your
6 good presentation, Todd. Good to see you.

7

8 MR. SANDERS: Thank you. It's just
9 absolutely amazing how much difficulty a virus can
10 cause. First of all, several years of interruptions to
11 our abundance monitoring and now potentially
12 interruptions to banding. It's quite interesting how
13 much time viruses have consumed here recently.

14

15 MADAME CHAIR HOSETH: Yeah. Looking
16 forward to when we don't have viruses getting in the
17 way of things. Okay. Thank you for your presentation
18 again. I see that Tamara is back. Tamara, are you
19 ready to go over the Outreach and Communications
20 Committee on Emperor Geese?

21

22 MS. ZELLER: Sure. I have a short
23 presentation. I'm literally going to show you guys the
24 same stuff that's in your packet under -- what tab is
25 that? Let me see. Tab 7. If you can pull those up.
26 I don't have a PowerPoint. I'm just going to show you
27 the PDF. So I will attempt to do this, share my
28 screen. Okay. What are you guys seeing?

29

30 MR. TAYLOR: We're seeing the outreach
31 update spring 2022. It's a graph, Tamara.

32

33 MS. ZELLER: Okay. All right. So it's
34 literally following what's in your packet under Tab 7.
35 I apologize for just getting here. Good to see
36 everybody. I hope the meeting is going well. I just
37 want to provide a brief update on what the Emperor
38 Goose Outreach Committee has been doing and acknowledge
39 that several of the members are on this call and I
40 appreciate all their input and help while we continue
41 this effort.

42

43 So just for a little background for
44 those who may not be as familiar with this effort.
45 We've covered this in the past for several years.
46 Emperor goose numbers have continued to decline over
47 the last several years. In 2020 the AMBCC wanted to
48 increase the outreach and education efforts around
49 Emperor geese to address the decline and included not
50

0115

1 only the increased outreach and education but also the
2 closure of egg harvest.

3

4

5 So you can see from this graph the
6 green represents the zone when Emperor geese are open
7 to customary and traditional harvest and the yellow
8 zone, which is where we are at, is sort of a chance to
9 look at possible conservation measures to consider
10 them. Then in the red zone Emperors will be closed.
11 This was all decided upon in the Emperor Goose
12 Management Plans, both in the AMBCC Emperor Goose
13 Management Plan.

13

14

15 So like I mentioned, in 2020 the
16 decision was to increase outreach and education efforts
17 and to close egg harvest statewide. So I was just
18 going to give you a little bit -- a briefing on what
19 we've been up to. First of all we don't know exactly
20 why the Emperors are declining. It's probably a
21 combination of different things. Slow growth rate and
22 some human-caused factors including climate change,
23 harvest and oil pollution.

23

24

25 Emperors are different than other
26 arctic nesting geese, which is why it makes them more
27 vulnerable and their numbers don't grow as fast. They
28 have a low reproductive rate. They don't mate until
29 they're three. They have low juvenile survival. Only
30 one out of ten goslings survive the first year and they
31 have low recruitment, which means fewer juveniles
32 survive to become breeders. It takes them a longer
33 time. They don't necessarily breed every year, so they
34 can have an off year.

34

35

36 So those are things that make them
37 unique and not like other geese that you see out in
38 Alaska like cacklers or White-fronts. In addition,
39 they spend most of their lives in Alaska, which can be
40 really hard. They have to survive harsh winters, they
41 have to scrounge around for food when it's limited. So
42 they're challenged in a lot of different ways.

42

43

44 So it's more important than ever that
45 we keep working together to protect Emperors. There's
46 a few things that folks can do to help them out.
47 Unfortunately there's a lot of things that we can't
48 control. There's a lot of policy stuff with climate
49 change. So really the only thing we can do
50 collectively is to reduce numbers for hunting. So

50

0116

1 we're asking folks to just take what they need and try
2 to help ensure that these opportunities remain
3 available for customary and traditional hunting.

4
5 So it's going to take all of us to
6 ensure Emperor geese for the future. Like I kind of
7 just mentioned, this is what you can do to help. A
8 reminder that egging is closed statewide, so don't take
9 any Emperor goose eggs. That was decided by the
10 Council. You can consider harvesting other species of
11 waterfowl that are more abundant. Don't shoot entire
12 family groups and try to target a single bird to
13 potentially reduce injuries to others.

14
15 If you can, if you're in an area where
16 young birds arrive in the fall, it's better to take a
17 young bird out of the population because you're not
18 taking a breeder yet. So look for those gray heads and
19 if you can harvest those instead.

20
21 Most importantly tell others. Tell
22 your community members that there is concern over
23 Emperors and they really need help from us to keep the
24 population growing and keep these hunting opportunities
25 available.

26
27 The next thing I wanted to do was just
28 give you an overview of some of the products that the
29 Committee has developed for outreach, especially new
30 things that you might not have seen yet, for those who
31 have been on these calls for many years, especially the
32 last three or four.

33
34 So we have a variety of flyers,
35 infographics, posters. Stickers and magnets are new.
36 I'll go into that in a little bit. There's videos,
37 there's radio PSAs, digital ads and social media posts.
38 A lot of these -- I spent a lot of time last year, I
39 think, going over these, so I didn't want to take up a
40 lot of time on this meeting, but these are available on
41 our website as well as I can send these to you.

42
43 Anybody can use them. They're public
44 domain. The digital ads is basically a way to
45 advertise, getting people to read more about Emperors.
46 When you go on a website a little ad will flash up and
47 it's to encourage people to click on it and it will
48 take you to the Emperor goose website.

49
50

0117

1 So I did send out posters and
2 infographics to all the AMBCC members and all the Fish
3 and Wildlife Service Refuges at the end of 2021. You
4 all have several sets of those. They have one big
5 laminated poster made. You all should have gotten
6 that. So these are for you to do what you wish with.
7 Giving them out to communities that you think would be
8 useful. I can always send you more.

9
10 One new thing, let me scroll up here,
11 that I want to draw your attention to, is I did have a
12 nice Emperor goose range map made because there's been
13 several iterations that are just kind of -- we've been
14 using over the years and it just lacked a little bit of
15 luster, I guess. So this is a new product. It doesn't
16 come with a little flashy thing down at the bottom. It
17 can be used with or without that logo at the time, the
18 Emperor goose sort of branding with the purple.

19
20 So I can send any of these maps to
21 anybody who wants to use them again. These are all for
22 public use. So I worked really hard with -- I want to
23 give Dave Safine and Julian a shout-out for really
24 helping refine this. So this should give you an idea
25 of where Emperors are at during what time in Alaska.
26 So that's available. That's a new thing.

27
28 Then drawing your attention to this. I
29 don't know if you can see my little hand. But in the
30 upper right corner there's a circle that's purple and
31 pink and it has an Emperor head. That was designed by
32 the company I've been working with with some input from
33 the Outreach Committee. That is meant to serve as sort
34 of a branding or a logo of this effort.

35
36 I had stickers and magnets made of
37 those and I did send several out to all the AMBCC
38 members as well as the refuges in Emperor goose range
39 to hand out to communities or events. Whatever you
40 guys deem the most useful. It's just another way of
41 emphasizing that we're all -- you know, it's going to
42 take all of us to keep the population thriving and open
43 for harvest. Just something you can stick on a water
44 bottle and maybe somebody will say, hey, what's that
45 about. It's your opportunity to share the message.

46
47 So those were two new things that have
48 happened since the end of last year that I wanted to
49 just highlight. These are all in your packets. You've
50

0118

1 seen these before. This is like the composite of all
2 the infographics. You should have gotten a laminated
3 poster of this. Individual infographics are available
4 as well. These have not changed from the last time I
5 presented.

6
7 One is about natural history. It sort
8 of has a similar arranged map and the breeding cycle.
9 The newer map should -- you know, if that's a specific
10 talking point you want to bring up, that should be more
11 helpful. Threats. I know I'm going through this fast,
12 guys. I apologize. And then action. It's just to
13 say, hey, we're right at the edge of possible closure
14 because based on the harvest strategy we agreed on and
15 what can we do. So that's meant to draw attention to
16 that.

17
18 That is all I had. I know I talked
19 really, really fast, but I know we have a lot to get
20 through as well. So if you guys have any questions.
21 Sorry. That's probably like making folks sick.
22 Apologies. But it's all in your folder, in your tab,
23 this exact presentation. So I figured it was more
24 useful to go through what you have in your folder.

25
26 MADAME CHAIR HOSETH: Thank you,
27 Tamara, for the good overview and for all the work that
28 you did on doing outreach. I have my sticker here.
29 They look really nice. Thanks for all the hard work.
30 Does anybody have any questions for Tamara.

31
32 (No comments)

33
34 MADAME CHAIR HOSETH: We're happy to
35 have you here. Dave gave a good overview of the
36 Emperor Goose Management Plans too.

37
38 MS. ZELLER: Oh, good.

39
40 MADAME CHAIR HOSETH: It's really good.
41 So thank you very much.

42
43 MS. ZELLER: Yeah, thank you.

44
45 MADAME CHAIR HOSETH: So it's 3:05.
46 Let's take a 10-minute break and then we will come back
47 in 10 minutes at 3:15. Did Jack join us, Patty?

48
49 MS. SCHWALENBERG: No, he has not.

50

0119

1 MADAME CHAIR HOSETH: Okay.

2

3 MS. SCHWALENBERG: I will follow up
4 with him during the break.

5

6 MADAME CHAIR HOSETH: Okay. Well, take
7 a break. Thanks.

8

9 (Off record)

10

11 (On record)

12

13 MADAME CHAIR HOSETH: Wow, we're all on
14 time. It's good to have a break. Next we have Julian
15 Fischer with the conservation status of Emperor geese,
16 Cackling Canada geese and Pacific Black brant. Julian.

17

18 MR. FISCHER: Thank you, Madame Chair.
19 I'll share my screen here. Here we go. Many of the
20 presentations that came earlier today covered some of
21 the material I'm going to talk about, so I'll try to be
22 brief with this. Here we go.

23

24 MADAME CHAIR HOSETH: We don't see
25 anything yet. There we go.

26

27 MR. FISCHER: Okay. Is it still there?

28

29 MADAME CHAIR HOSETH: Yes.

30

31 MR. FISCHER: Can you hear me?

32

33 MADAME CHAIR HOSETH: Yes.

34

35 MR. FISCHER: Okay, good. Thank you,
36 Madame Chair and members of the Council. My name is
37 Julian Fischer and I supervise the waterfowl section of
38 Migratory Bird Management in the Alaska Region. I'm
39 going to limit my presentation today to updates on just
40 three species; Cackling geese, Emperor geese and Brant.

41

42

43 In the fall meeting I went over the
44 full suite of species that we monitor. Since you've
45 just heard that and there's not much new information
46 since then, I'm just going to limit the talk today to
47 these three species because there's either been a
48 recent regulatory change or on the verge of one
49 potentially or there's some new information.

50

0120

1 Before I start with that though I've
2 got a couple introductory slides. The first -- I just
3 want to take this opportunity to describe the five
4 general objectives of our Migratory Bird Program in
5 Alaska since I have a captive audience here.

6
7 Of the five main objectives the first
8 is to gather information on the population status of
9 waterfowl species that are important for hunters.
10 These data are used to inform management bodies like
11 the AMBCC in order to help guide changes like harvest
12 management.

13
14 An example of this is the Emperor Goose
15 Management Plan where the abundance thresholds are
16 defined that indicate whether a harvest should be
17 opened or closed. So that's just one example.

18
19 A second objective that we have in the
20 program is called site protection. So we collect data
21 that determines areas of high importance to migratory
22 birds. The way we use this information is to recommend
23 alternatives for proposed developments that will limit
24 impacts to habitats that are important for migratory
25 birds. Also when there's an oil spill or some other
26 sort of disturbance we can offer information about
27 areas of highest concern.

28
29 A third objective we have is to track
30 the status and trends of populations that are currently
31 listed under the Endangered Species Act such as
32 Spectacled or Steller's eiders.

33
34 A fourth objective we have is to
35 conduct threat research. This just means scientists
36 trying to understand the causes of declining or
37 depressed population sizes in order to recommend
38 solutions for conservation.

39
40 Then the last main objective in our
41 program is to plan ways for outreach. We want to share
42 results of the work we do in venues like this and at
43 the regional AMBCC meetings and other Partner meetings,
44 at professional conferences, at workshops and school
45 groups, through social media and then articles in peer
46 reviewed publications.

47
48 Another form of outreach is also by
49 sharing data with others. So we've been making
50

0121

1 considerable progress in our program overhauling the
2 data management services to make our data discoverable
3 and downloadable for all the interested parties.

4
5 I also want to just reintroduce you to
6 the personnel in the Waterfowl, the Outreach and the
7 Quantitative Ecology Sections of Migratory Bird
8 Management in Alaska, all of whom have a role in the
9 collection and analysis of the aerial population survey
10 data here. So the individuals in the top row are those
11 within the Waterfowl Section, so myself, Heather
12 Wilson, Dennis Marks, Michael Swaim and David Safine.

13
14 Among many other responsibilities they
15 also operate survey aircraft. At least one of them
16 does currently. Collecting and managing population
17 data, communicating results and reports and then oral
18 presentations, coordinating our activities with others.

19
20 Outside of the Waterfowl Section we're
21 supported by Tamara Zeller, who serves as an aerial
22 observer on several projects. Many of you know Tamara
23 through her outreach activities.

24
25 Then in the Quantitative Ecology
26 Section, Erik Osnas, Chuck Frost and Tammy Patterson
27 all provide excellent support in designing surveys,
28 analyzing and archiving and sharing survey data. So
29 you may know some of these folks from their roles in
30 leading or participating in various AMBCC committees.

31
32 Then of course there's other employees
33 in Migratory Bird Management that support the AMBCC
34 with updates on other bird species and issues. Jim
35 Johnson, Robb Kaler and Kate Martin are others that are
36 going to be participating in this meeting today or
37 tomorrow. So you'll be hearing from them.

38
39 Anyway, just with those introductions I
40 just wanted to take advantage of the time that we had
41 to mention those people and those objectives in our
42 program.

43
44 So the three species that I wanted to
45 talk about today. Todd just did a great job describing
46 some changes in Cackling goose management. So this was
47 the first species I wanted to mention. The Minima
48 Cackling goose population we just generally call
49 Cacklers. These are the birds that nest exclusively on
50

0122

1 the coast of the Yukon-Kuskokwim Delta. In winter they
2 head down south to principally the southwestern portion
3 of Washington state and the northwestern portion of
4 Oregon. From there they really take advantage of the
5 agricultural lands. They gorge themselves on various
6 seeds that are grown there. Pretty soon, in the next
7 couple of weeks, we'll be seeing these birds show back
8 up in Southcentral Alaska where they're going to stage
9 for a bit and then they'll be heading up to the Yukon
10 Delta to breed soon thereafter.

11

12 So the figure on the left shows the
13 degree to which Cacklers declined between the 1960s and
14 the 1980s. Also here is shown the White-fronted goose
15 population during that time. So this was 1960s to the
16 1980s. This was a major change in this time period. As
17 Todd mentioned, this led to the development of the
18 Hooper Bay Agreement and the Yukon Delta Goose
19 Management Plan.

20

21 Those activities, those plans that were
22 cooperative between Native organizations on the Yukon
23 Delta, Fish and Wildlife Service, and then State
24 agencies in Alaska, Oregon, Washington and California
25 they identified an aerial survey that would be used as
26 a monitoring tool to measure recovery of those goose
27 populations. Also be used as a guide to determine when
28 hunting should start and stop. So those plans paved
29 the way for the Pacific Flyway Management Plan for
30 Cacklers. That plan used the same thresholds for
31 management.

32

33 So, as Todd mentioned, that approach
34 was successful and the population grew through the
35 1990s and then soon reached a population objective of
36 250,000 geese and that was the goal. So that was
37 successful. However, during that time the farming
38 industry in Oregon and Washington began experiencing
39 some significant crop losses due to this recent goose
40 population.

41

42 So it wasn't long before there was a
43 lot of lobbying to have the Pacific Flyway reduce that
44 population objective in order to clear the way for
45 greater harvest in the southern states -- south of
46 here. Northwestern states. Of course that would
47 potentially have impact on subsistence hunting in
48 Alaska.

49

50

0123

1 So that conflict between hunters
2 desires to maintain a population objective of 250,000
3 Cacklers and farmers desires to reduce the population
4 in half were resolved after concerted effort to bring
5 all the interested parties that were -- that both Eric
6 and Todd mentioned earlier together to the table and
7 come up with a new plan potentially.

8
9 They went through a structured
10 decision-making process not all that different from
11 what Dave Safine described earlier for the Emperor
12 Goose Plan. In this case though the population
13 objective was maintained at \$250,000 Cacklers.

14
15 What changed though was there was put
16 in place a plan to limit substantial further growth but
17 also limits to reduce the possibility of dropping too
18 far below that objective. So specifically if the
19 population went 10 percent above or below that
20 objective, then changes would be made to the
21 fall/winter hunting regulations in Oregon and
22 Washington.

23
24 Okay. So the figure on the left is
25 what I showed earlier. That substantial drop between
26 the '60s and the '80s and then after the Hooper Bay
27 Agreement and the Yukon Delta Goose Management Plan
28 that put in place some hunting restrictions this rapid
29 growth period in the Cackling goose population,
30 followed by generally increases and decreases, but
31 hovering around that population objective of 250,000.

32
33 Again, that goal is to keep the
34 population in that green zone, between 225,000-275,000
35 birds. The way that's been maintained has generally
36 been through bag limits in Oregon and Washington. So
37 in 2015, when the population is very high, there was an
38 increase in bag limits in Oregon and Washington. Soon
39 thereafter that was a much higher reported harvest in
40 that area and the population went down. Now, over the
41 last three survey years we've been below that
42 threshold.

43
44 So in response the states of Oregon and
45 Washington have followed the guidance of that
46 management plan and lowered their bag limits, which
47 will go into effect this fall. Similarly the state of
48 Alaska proposed a change for the fall/winter hunt from
49 six birds to four per day. So we expect over the next
50

0124

1 few years this will result in an increase in the
2 population size and we're hoping that will work.

3
4 Now this plan doesn't affect the
5 spring/summer harvest regulations. If there are
6 continued declines, the AMBCC may eventually consider
7 proposing a regulation that would help Cacklers. So,
8 for example, not too long ago there was a closure of
9 egg harvest of Cacklers on the Yukon Delta and there
10 was also an extended period during the nesting period
11 that hunting was closed. Those were removed a couple
12 years ago, but those are the types of things that the
13 Council could consider in the future if it sought to
14 increase numbers of Cacklers.

15
16 Moving on here. The next population I
17 was going to mention is Emperor geese. Now we've
18 talked about Emperors a lot today, so I'm going to
19 probably skim over some of this. Many of you are now
20 experts in Emperor goose biology and management so you
21 don't need to be reminded that the main nesting area is
22 on the Yukon Delta, but Emperor geese are harvested
23 throughout their range when they are present. So
24 that's through the Aleutians, Kodiak Island, western
25 Alaska and also up into the northeastern portion of the
26 Chukotka Peninsula for many Emperor geese that fail to
27 nest go to molt.

28
29 Okay. I'm not going to dwell on that.
30 We talked about the two different management plans in
31 detail, so I'm going to jump past that too. Now we've
32 seen this figure probably five or six times today so
33 you know about the different thresholds that are in the
34 Emperor Goose Management Plans. We're currently in the
35 yellow zone. When the population dropped down into the
36 yellow zone, we initially increased outreach and
37 education.

38
39 When the population survey was
40 cancelled in 2020, we had no information about what the
41 population was doing, so there was a proposal to close
42 egg harvest at that time. So that's in place as well
43 as a conservation measure. During the fall/winter
44 period the quota of permit hunt Emperor geese was
45 reduced from 1,000 to 500 during that time period as
46 well.

47
48 Let's see. The most recent count is in
49 the yellow, but I just want to highlight again we're
50

0125

1 just above the threshold that the Plan defines as
2 closure. So it's important for everyone to be aware of
3 that, how close we are to that threshold. Our survey
4 crew is preparing now to go out and do the survey in
5 late May into the first week of June. We will report
6 those results to the Council as soon as the estimate is
7 calculated and checked.

8

9 Jason is probably on the call here, but
10 he provided this slide and the following one to me and
11 if you have any questions that I can't answer, then
12 I'll hand it off to Jason or Ryan. This is a brief
13 summary of the fall/winter hunt that is by permit.
14 There's a statewide quota of 500 birds. This was
15 lowered from 1,000 to 500 when the population dropped
16 below the 28,000 threshold.

17

18 That quota is allocated among different
19 regions in the state as shown by the numbers on the
20 map. The highest quotas are in the Kodiak, Bristol Bay
21 and Aleutian units. Permit holders are required to
22 report their harvest. If the quota for a given area is
23 reached within the season, then the hunt is closed by
24 emergency order.

25

26 This is a summary of the results of the
27 fall/winter hunt in terms of the numbers of hunters,
28 the numbers of permits issued and then the total
29 numbers of birds taken. So the top shows the results
30 of the most recent hunt year. Looking at this, just as
31 an example, Kodiak on the top row here, there's a
32 harvest quota of 150 birds. 214 permits were issued
33 and then of those issued 65 people reported actually
34 hunting. Of those, 36 were successful in harvesting an
35 Emperor goose. All these were residents. No
36 non-residents reported an Emperor goose in that region
37 this year.

38

39 So in this final column here it shows
40 the relationship between residents and non-residents.
41 So you'll see two numbers. The first one is residents
42 and the second one is non-residents. So statewide
43 there were 176 Emperor geese reported taken in the
44 fall/winter period by residents and 19 by
45 non-residents.

46

47 The bottom table is a similar summary,
48 but it's broken down by year. So it provides an
49 opportunity to look at how the numbers have changed

50

0126

1 over the previous three years. These numbers are very
2 small probably on your screen, but they are in the
3 packet that Patty prepared, so you'll find this
4 information in there as well.

5

6 What else do I want to say about this.

7 Oh, yeah. So if the 2022 population survey does drop
8 below 23,000, then the Plan calls for the hunt to be
9 closed in the fall of 2023 unless Alaska Department of
10 Fish and Game closes the fall hunt in 2022 by emergency
11 order.

12

13 There's one other thing I want to
14 mention about this slide. So you can see that the
15 number of Emperor geese harvested is below the quota,
16 the statewide quota of 500. So this is reported
17 harvest through the permit system. Also in the
18 information provided in the meeting handouts is some
19 information of a study that Liliana Naves and others at
20 ADF&G conducted on a specific harvest survey related to
21 Emperor geese.

22

23 In that report it indicates that the
24 number of birds harvested or reported harvested in that
25 survey is higher than the number of permits reported.
26 So that suggests that in some regions there may be
27 higher take in the fall/winter period than is reported
28 in these tables here. There may be under participation
29 in the permit system is the conclusion of that study in
30 some regions.

31

32 Okay. I'm going to move on now. The
33 third species that I'm going to describe today and
34 that's on Pacific brant. These geese breed in western
35 and northern Alaska and they also are breeding in high
36 arctic of Canada and in portions of northeastern
37 Russian. In winter they all funnel down through the
38 Izembek region of the Alaska Peninsula where they take
39 advantage of the eelgrass habitats there and then they
40 disperse down through the Pacific Coast. Many of them
41 ending up in Mexico and many remaining in Alaska for
42 the winter.

43

44 So there's a cooperative range wide
45 winter survey that's conducted by a number of partners
46 in Alaska, British Columbia, Washington, Oregon and
47 Mexico. It's conducted in bays and estuaries where
48 that goose is found. So the midwinter survey results
49 are used to determine the fall/winter harvest

50

0127

1 regulations.

2

3

4 So this is similar to other goose
5 management plans in that there's population count
6 thresholds that would guide managers to take actions to
7 adjust harvest when the population size changes.

8 So while the majority of the brant harvest occurs in
9 spring and summer in Alaska, this management plan does
10 not actually implement the spring harvest here in
11 Alaska.

11

12

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The survey shows the numbers jump around from year to year, but there's generally no clear trend up or down through time. We just completed the midwinter survey for 2022. The numbers were similar to the prior year. We're very close to the overall population objective of 162,000 brant.

There is a closure of egg gathering in place on the Yukon Delta and the North Slope apparently.

One thing I do want to mention that's ever-changing and very interesting that I think a lot of people here on the call can relate to is that there's been a big change in the distribution of brant through time. So while we're not seeing an overall change in the population according to the midwinter survey, we are seeing a change in where these birds are overwintering.

So specifically whereas in the 1980s just four percent of brant stayed at the Izembek Lagoon region in Alaska through the winter months, now 40 percent of all the Pacific brant are remaining there throughout the winter. So this increase is apparent in the figure on the left where you see numbers. These are the counts at Izembek Lagoon in mid winter from the 1980s till present. And then now numbers are going up quite a bit. You can see this with this very steep increase.

The figure on the right shows the change in the number of brant overwintering in Mexico shown here in red. Relative to the numbers of birds that are overwintering in Alaska that are increasing. So now roughly 40 percent of all mid-winter brant are still in Alaska. We believe this has a lot to do with the warming climate. The photo in the background here

0128

1 -- this is Izembek Lagoon last month. Actually in
2 February, mid late February period. It's entirely void
3 of ice.

4
5 This is important because under the
6 water there there's very rich eelgrass habitats that
7 provide great quality forage for brant. In the past
8 when that lagoon froze over, it would push the brant
9 out and it was just not a good place to spend winter
10 because they couldn't access that high quality eelgrass
11 beds, so they would migrate to the south to other areas
12 along the Pacific Coast where eelgrass beds could be
13 found. But now with the lagoon remaining ice free most
14 of the winter many brant are choosing to remain local
15 rather than migrating.

16
17 Now this might be good in years where
18 it's totally ice free year round or throughout the
19 winter, but it could be an ecological for these brants
20 if a long cold snap results in the lagoon freezing over
21 and staying frozen over for a long period of time.
22 There are some sites where brant can seek temporary
23 refuge on the south side of the Alaska Peninsula, but
24 really the preferred and highest quality habitat is at
25 Izembek Lagoon.

26
27 So whether the eelgrass at Izembek
28 continue to support a growing population of
29 overwintering brant in the long term is unknown and
30 also the quality of the nearby habitats that can serve
31 as temporary refuge for overwintering brant during hard
32 freezes is also unknown. Understanding answers to
33 those questions will be increasing important in the
34 years to come in order to understand the relative
35 importance that the habitat surrounding Izembek Lagoon
36 have.

37
38 So our plans for this upcoming summer
39 we're going to be around the state in various locations
40 starting in early May in the Copper River Delta where
41 we'll be doing our Dusky Canada goose survey.

42
43 At that same time we'll be starting the
44 North American Waterfowl Breeding Population Survey or
45 a portion of it in the Alaska area. This is the survey
46 that happens throughout North America.

47
48 That will be followed briefly by the
49 Yukon-Kuskokwim Delta Coastal Zone Survey. This is
50

0129

1 what we do to monitor Cackling geese, White-fronted
2 geese, Emperor geese and Spectacled eiders.

3
4 We'll be returning to the Arctic
5 Coastal Plain for our breeding survey there in mid
6 June. This was cancelled the last two years due to
7 Covid as was our molting goose survey at Teshekpuk Lake
8 and we'll be returning there again.

9
10 Finally we'll be doing our aerial
11 photographic brant survey in the fall at the Izembek
12 Lagoon. That's a project that I've described in
13 previous presentations.

14
15 So at the end of the summer we'll have
16 many survey results and I will be describing the
17 results of those at our fall meeting, but if you want
18 to see the results of regional or continental
19 monitoring efforts in the meantime, the results are
20 posted at the Migratory Bird website and it's shown
21 here.

22
23 Again, this presentation is available
24 in your meeting notes, so you'll be able to reference
25 that website. I'd be happy to share my 2021 fall
26 presentation with anyone. If they would like to see
27 that, just let me know.

28
29 So thank you, Madame Chair and members
30 of the Council. I'm happy to answer any questions if
31 you have some at this point.

32
33 MS. STICKWAN: Madame Chair.

34
35 MADAME CHAIR HOSETH: Yes, go ahead,
36 Gloria.

37
38 MS. STICKWAN: I have a question. I'm
39 not sure how to ask this. These brant that are
40 overwintering in Alaska, I'm just wondering how would
41 changing their body -- if you're studying how -- you
42 know, because they have to have strength to fly to
43 south and if they're not flying to south, they're
44 changing their whole way of -- you know, migratory
45 patterns. I'm sure it's affecting their body, their
46 strength, you know. Are you guys studying that?

47
48 MR. FISCHER: Yeah, so thanks for the
49 question. Brant have been studied quite a bit. In the
50

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1 past when they would migrate to Mexico primarily they
2 were -- it was found that they were losing about
3 one-third of their body weight in a very brief
4 migration period. In just a couple weeks that it would
5 take for them to get there. A major physiological feat
6 to migrate that distance and it was very costly.

7
8 Now you can understand why if they
9 could remain in Alaska, they would do so. They would
10 not have to be subjected to that long flight down
11 there. But the cost of staying is to stay warm and
12 that requires food. So eelgrass beds in Izembek are
13 amazingly rich, so they're able to sustain their body
14 weight by staying in place.

15
16 Like I mentioned, there's costs and
17 benefits to everything a bird decides to do. If they
18 get pushed out because of icing conditions, then they
19 have to temporarily move to another place where they
20 might have lower quality forage, but they can at least
21 access that food.

22
23 I think Bryan Daniels had his hand up
24 and he's studied brant extensively, so he might be able
25 to add something to that question. Bryan, did you have
26 something to contribute there?

27
28 MR. DANIELS: Yeah, I did. So I
29 actually conducted my master's thesis very much on that
30 exact question at Izembek Lagoon. So Julian covered it
31 really well. Just the other part of kind of the
32 ecological trap of them staying during the winter time
33 is the tide cycles are such that there's not very much
34 daylight in the wintertime in Alaska as we know and so
35 most of the tide cycles where that food is available is
36 at low tide.....

37
38 (Recording ends abruptly)

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40
41 (PROCEEDINGS TO BE CONTINUED)

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