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VOLUME I

ALASKA MIGRATORY BIRD CO-MANAGEMENT COUNCIL

SPRING MEETING

ANCHORAGE, ALASKA

APRIL 3, 2013

Members Present:

- Dale Rabe, Alaska Department of Fish and Game
- Pete Probasco, U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service
- Jim Ujioka, Chugach Regional Resources Commission
- Frank Woods, Bristol Bay Native Association
- Mike Pederson, North Slope
- Joeneal Hicks, Copper River Native Association
- Myron Naneng, Association of Village Presidents
- Joel Saccheus, Kawerak
- Rick Rowland, Sun'aq Tribal

Executive Director, Patty Brown-Schwalenberg

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P R O C E E D I N G S

(Anchorage, Alaska - 4/03/2013)

(On record)

CHAIRMAN NANENG: We'll go ahead and call the meeting to order of the Alaska Migratory Bird Co-Management Council. I know that we have a few representatives from the Native caucus that have not shown up yet, but we'll go ahead and stand up for a moment of silence.

(Moment of silence)

CHAIRMAN NANENG: Thanks, everyone, for keeping those that have come before us and that are coming after us in mind as we deal with some of the issues that we've been dealing with for the last 100 years it seems like.

Let's go ahead with the roll call.
Patty.

MS. SCHWALENBERG: AVCP.

CHAIRMAN NANENG: Here.

MS. SCHWALENBERG: Bristol Bay Native Association.

MR. WOODS: Here.

MS. SCHWALENBERG: Chugach Regional Resources Commission.

MR. UJIOKA: Here.

MS. SCHWALENBERG: Copper River Native Association.

MR. HICKS: Here.

MS. SCHWALENBERG: Kawerak.

MR. SACCHEUS: Here.

CHAIRMAN NANENG: Aleutian/Pribilof Islands Associations.

1 (No response)
2
3 MS. SCHWALENBERG: Not here yet.
4 Sun'aq Tribe of Kodiak.
5
6 MR. ROWLAND: Here.
7
8 MS. SCHWALENBERG: Maniilaq
9 Association.
10
11 (No response)
12
13 MS. SCHWALENBERG: Not here. North
14 Slope Borough.
15
16 MR. PEDERSON: Here.
17
18 MS. SCHWALENBERG: Tanana Chiefs
19 Conference.
20
21 (No response)
22
23 MS. SCHWALENBERG: Is absent. U.S.
24 Fish and Wildlife Service.
25
26 MR. DOYLE: Present.
27
28 MS. SCHWALENBERG: Alaska Department of
29 Fish and Game.
30
31 MR. RABE: Here.
32
33 MS. SCHWALENBERG: Mr. Chairman, we
34 have a quorum.
35
36 CHAIRMAN NANENG: Okay. Thank you. Is
37 there anyone that's an alternate for their region?
38
39 (No comments)
40
41 CHAIRMAN NANENG: Okay. We'll go ahead
42 and make a motion to seat you as alternates for the
43 meeting today.
44
45 MR. HICKS: So moved.
46
47 CHAIRMAN NANENG: Motion by Joeneal.
48 Is there a second.
49
50 MR. WOODS: Second.

1 CHAIRMAN NANENG: Second by Frank. All
2 in favor say aye.

3
4 IN UNISON: Aye.

5
6 CHAIRMAN NANENG: Those opposed say no.

7
8 (No opposing votes)

9
10 CHAIRMAN NANENG: We'll go ahead and go
11 around the room introducing ourselves, starting with
12 Frank.

13
14 MR. WOODS: I'm Frank Woods, Bristol
15 Bay Native Association subsistence coordinator
16 representing Bristol Bay.

17
18 MR. ROWLAND: Rick Rowland, natural
19 resource director for Sun'aq Tribe of Kodiak
20 representing all the community around Kodiak
21 Archipelago.

22
23 MR. DOYLE: I'm Terry Doyle. I'm the
24 U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service council coordinator.

25
26 MR. PROBASCO: Good morning. I'm Pete
27 Probasco, the assistant regional director for Migratory
28 Birds and State programs.

29
30 CHAIRMAN NANENG: Myron Naneng,
31 chairman of Waterfowl Conservation Committee out in
32 AVCP region.

33
34 MR. RABE: Good morning. I'm Dale
35 Rabe, deputy director of Division of Wildlife
36 Conservation, State of Alaska.

37
38 MS. SCHWALENBERG: Patty Schwalenberg,
39 Alaska Migratory Bird Co-Management Council.

40
41 MR. HICKS: Joeneal Hicks. I represent
42 the Copper River region.

43
44 MR. PEDERSON: Mike Pederson, North
45 Slope Borough, Department of Wildlife Management. I'm
46 the alternate for Taqulik Hepa.

47
48 MR. SACCHEUS: Joel Saccheus, Kawerak.

49
50 MR. UJIOKA: Jim Ujioka, Chugach

1 Regional Resources Commission.

2

3 (Microphone off for a few audience
4 introductions)

5

6 MR. GINNIS: Steve Ginnis, executive
7 director of Fairbanks Native Association.

8

9 MS. ZELLER: Hi, I'm Tamara Zeller,
10 Migratory Birds, U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service.

11

12 MS. NAVES: Liliana Naves. I work for
13 Division of Subsistence of Fish and Game.

14

15 MR. WILLIAMS: Perry Williams. I'm a
16 graduate student at Colorado State University.

17

18 MR. SCHMUTZ: I'm Joel Schmutz. I'm a
19 research scientist at the U.S.G.S. and I'm here today
20 mostly to learn from you all, but it's -- the principal
21 motivation for why I'm here and Perry are here is to
22 think about how we might help out with management of
23 Cackling Geese on the Yukon Delta and on the wintering
24 areas and learn more about the concerns of this group.

25

26 MR. STEVENS: Jay Stevens, Chugach
27 Regional Resource Commission.

28

29 MR. MATHEWS: I'm Vince Mathews,
30 subsistence coordinator, Yukon Flats, Kanuti and
31 Arctic.

32

33 MR. SFORMO: Todd Sformo, biologist for
34 the North Slope Borough.

35

36 MR. AHMASUK: Brandon Ahmasuk,
37 subsistence director, Kawerak.

38

39 MS. BROWN: Good morning. Carol Brown,
40 tribal advocate and AVCP.

41

42 CHAIRMAN NANENG: And last, but not
43 least, our reporting secretary.

44

45 REPORTER: Meredith Downing, Computer
46 Matrix.

47

48 CHAIRMAN NANENG: If you have your
49 phone on, put it on mute or turn it off, please. Can
50 we also have those people that are online introduce

1 themselves too as well.

2

3 MS. WOODS: Good morning. Gayla Woods
4 with BBNA.

5

6 CHAIRMAN NANENG: Anybody else online?

7

8 MS. STICKWAN: Gloria Stickwan with
9 AHTNA.

10

11 CHAIRMAN NANENG: Gloria, welcome.
12 Since our last meeting we've had some -- according to
13 Fish and Wildlife Service there's been a lot of
14 retirements and one of the people that's now sitting up
15 here at the front desk retired from OSM to Migratory
16 Bird Division and that's Pete Probasco, so I'd like to
17 welcome Pete for joining us on the AMBCC.

18

19 MR. PROBASCO: Thank you, Myron.

20

21 CHAIRMAN NANENG: Fortunately or
22 unfortunately Pete and I were teammates at the
23 University of Alaska Fairbanks hockey team.

24

25 (Laughter)

26

27 CHAIRMAN NANENG: So we go back a long
28 time. Let's go ahead and review the agenda. Patty.

29

30 MS. SCHWALENBERG: Are there any
31 changes to the agenda that anybody wants to see? I
32 don't have any changes. Some of the issues that are
33 going to be brought up will be brought up under the
34 regional reports that people have discussed yesterday.

35

36 MR. PEDERSON: Does my Yellow-Billed
37 Loon report go under the regional or a consent agenda
38 or.....

39

40 MS. SCHWALENBERG: Under your report.

41

42 MR. PEDERSON: Okay. Thank you.

43

44 CHAIRMAN NANENG: Anybody else.

45

46 (No comments)

47

48 CHAIRMAN NANENG: Okay. I think we'll
49 go ahead and move with the agenda as is.

50

1 MR. HICKS: I so move, Mr. Chairman.
2
3 CHAIRMAN NANENG: Moved by Joe. Is
4 there a second.
5
6 MR. WOODS: Second.
7
8 CHAIRMAN NANENG: Second by Frank. All
9 in favor say aye.
10
11 IN UNISON: Aye.
12
13 CHAIRMAN NANENG: Those opposed say no.
14
15 (No opposing votes)
16
17 CHAIRMAN NANENG: Okay. We're on the
18 agenda where we have invitation for public comments.
19 Anybody wants to make a comment, it's now open. I'll
20 recognize Steve Ginnis from Fairbanks Native
21 Association.
22
23 MR. GINNIS: Thank you, Mr. Chairman.
24 I come before you again regarding the Fairbanks Native
25 Association's proposal before this council. I'm hoping
26 to hear some good news on it. The last time I came
27 before all of you the members of the board, Native
28 people that represents Native people on this board
29 here, all supported my proposal with the exception of
30 the US Fish and Wildlife Service. So I'm hoping to get
31 some clarification as to why they have an issue with
32 the proposal. You can't work out a solution to a
33 problem if you don't understand what the objection is.
34 So I'm hoping to learn something here today about that
35 so that I can work on whatever the objection is.
36
37 My proposal, as you recall, Mr.
38 Chairman, is very simple. It's that currently, as I
39 understand it, I come from Fort Yukon. I currently live
40 in Fairbanks. I'm discriminated against. I can't go
41 back out in my own homeland in waterfowl hunt because
42 I'm not from that area as far as the regulation is
43 concerned. However, it allows that my village council,
44 my tribal council to approve the hunt. My heartburn
45 with that is that I think you're just creating a
46 bureaucracy that's not necessary.
47
48 So my proposal simply just states that
49 as long as you're a registered tribal member from that
50 particular village or anywhere where there's a hunt in

1 the law that you be allowed to harvest waterfowl. It's
2 a pretty simple proposal. So I'm hoping to get
3 something resolved here because Fairbanks Native
4 Association represents a lot of Native folks throughout
5 the state of Alaska. They come from the north, they
6 come from the south. We've got some folks from the
7 Lower 48, so on and so on. My board felt that this was
8 important enough to bring forth as a proposal and,
9 therefore, I'm here and they directed me to follow
10 through on their directives. So I'm hoping to find out
11 what's going on here.

12
13 When I left here the last go around, I
14 was under the impression that somebody was going to
15 communicate with me on this proposal and I haven't
16 received anything from anybody. So I think you also
17 have a communication problem here.

18
19 So, with that, I thank you, Mr.
20 Chairman.

21
22 CHAIRMAN NANENG: Thank you, Steve.

23
24 Tim.

25
26 MR. ANDREW: Good morning. Thank you,
27 Mr. Chairman. My name is Timothy Andrew. I'm the
28 director of natural resources. I'm also the alternate
29 for Myron at this body as well. What I'm here to talk
30 to you about is the utilization of migratory bird
31 feathers for indigenous arts and crafts. There's been
32 a lot of press lately about the utilization of
33 migratory birds and law enforcement action that had
34 been taken upon our Native artists all across the state
35 of Alaska. In fact, there's one that was done here in
36 Anchorage where the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service law
37 enforcement came into the Alaska Native Arts and Crafts
38 Cooperative and confiscated a lot of the arts and
39 crafts that were made with migratory bird feathers.

40
41 I'd just like to remind everybody that
42 we've been here since time immemorial. We've been here
43 before the formation of the United States, before the
44 Russians supposedly discovered Alaska and all the other
45 people that have tried to establish colonial Alaska.
46 It is my personal opinion that these actions that are
47 being taken upon our tribal artists is a form of
48 censorship. You can't use this, you can't use that.
49 You can't do this because it has migratory bird
50 feathers.

1 Some of our artists in the region are
2 reduced to using turkey feathers for traditional arts
3 and crafts to make sure that they can sell their
4 traditional arts and crafts. When you use turkey
5 feathers to do a traditional artwork, it diminishes its
6 cultural value because you're not out there gathering
7 the feathers, you're not out there hunting the birds
8 and you're not fulfilling that tradition that has gone
9 on for the past generations.

10

11 I feel very strongly that not only
12 migratory birds but sea mammals as well, sea otters
13 have been coming under fire for the definition of
14 significantly altered and this has really gone too far.
15 Some even feel so far that it infringes upon their
16 religious right because some of these arts and crafts
17 have religious value to them.

18

19 So, Mr. Chairman, members of the
20 Migratory Bird Co-Management Council, I would support
21 the proposal that intends to make it legal to utilize
22 migratory bird feathers for our traditional arts and
23 crafts.

24

25 Thank you, Mr. Chair.

26

27 CHAIRMAN NANENG: Quyana, Tim. Any
28 other person.

29

30 Steve.

31

32 MR. GINNIS: Mr. Chairman. I forgot to
33 mention that one of our constituents wanted to find out
34 if there's such a thing as a cultural permit for
35 waterfowl hunting. The reason why that was raised was
36 that, as you know, the AFN is going to be meeting in
37 Anchorage -- or in Fairbanks in October and one of the
38 things that the Native community wanted to do is honor
39 the folks that come to the convention with a potlatch.

40

41

42 So spring is upon us and there was a
43 question raised about whether or not we can -- there's
44 such a thing as a cultural permit. You know, we do
45 that for potlatches and stuff with moose through the
46 state of Alaska. If there's no such thing, I would
47 appreciate it if you would consider a discussion on
48 that matter.

49

50 Thank you.

1 CHAIRMAN NANENG: Quyana, Steve.
2 Anybody else for public comments.

3
4 (No comments)

5
6 CHAIRMAN NANENG: On the question -- I
7 know the committee discussed the inclusion request
8 yesterday. As we go through the agenda, we will be
9 making -- they will be making a report on what they
10 decided or what the recommendation is on the feathers
11 for sale. There was a hearing yesterday in Bethel, a
12 listening session by Senator Murkowski and some of
13 these same concerns were raised at the listening
14 session. We're going to be working with the senator's
15 staff and others to try and find ways where some of
16 these rules and regulations that are becoming very much
17 more and more restrictive to the people that utilize
18 these for food are alleviated in such a way where our
19 people are allowed to hunt for their nutritional and
20 subsistence use and other uses that they have. So I'll
21 report on that on my regional report.

22
23 Frank.

24
25 MR. WOODS: Just a quick comment. I'd
26 like to thank Tim and Steve for their public comments.
27 You know, you hit on kind of a touchy subject for
28 tribal rights and being able to hunt and subsist. What
29 we heard yesterday at our work session that, you know,
30 there's a spiritual aspect to this hunt. It's almost a
31 religious right. And when Columbus first hit Plymouth
32 Rock we've been dealing with it ever since.

33
34 I'm going to be a little bit facetious
35 here. Europeans left Europe because of too many
36 regulations and too much laws that they could not abide
37 by. We're under the same -- how long did it take from
38 -- when Columbus hit Plymouth Rock, he didn't discover
39 America. How long did it take until 1776 for the
40 Constitution to be written. I think it's time for each
41 -- as AFN meets, that every tribe and village, be it a
42 universal AFN constitution, a universal codified
43 regulations for subsistence because I believe -- when I
44 go to subsistence meetings as a subsistence user, it's
45 all connected.

46
47 Rick hit it yesterday right on the
48 money. People, when you remove the spiritual aspect of
49 something, you remove that person's ability to feel
50 alive. It's like removing the villages -- all the

1 churches within America and not being able to practice
2 what you preach. That's how important this stuff is.
3 That's why I believe a lot of our issues and problems
4 arise. When we're sitting there out -- and, as a
5 subsistence user, I'm trying to relate my own personal
6 experience on how this -- all these regulations add up.
7 You know, you're right. You need to go home -- and
8 it's universal. This is not just a Native issue, this
9 is not just a tribal issue. You know, the people that,
10 you know, move to the urban areas they feel left out in
11 every arena and that's what the State really has a
12 fight with different -- and this huge issue is not just
13 here.

14
15 You know, we live here. I love to sit
16 right alongside Pete and shoot as many geese and ducks
17 as I want to or Dale and allow them people that go out
18 and harvest and subsist off the lifestyle that we live
19 without all these restrictions. Because as soon as you
20 start putting your thumb on people, there's a huge --
21 you know, we talked about our people spiritually dying.
22 It is. That's what's happening one little piece at a
23 time.

24
25 People are actually getting stymied.
26 When I'm out there and I get a plane circling around me
27 and I've got a snowmachine come up and ask me 20
28 different questions and have to show my duck stamp
29 State side, Federal side and my registration permit,
30 whether I'm in season or not, whether August 31st or
31 September 1, whether I've got -- September 4th I only
32 got four possession or six today. I mean it becomes as
33 complicated a thing to go out and subsist nowadays.

34
35 I'll tell you how important that is.
36 When I bought my duck stamp last September, I didn't
37 know it was good until June 30th, so I'm still good. I
38 was going to go buy a duck stamp again this spring. I
39 read the bottom and it says good until June 31st, 2013.
40 There's an overlap in that duck stamp issue.

41
42 You know, when people go out and they
43 get -- you know, they have to abide by all -- they call
44 me the expert. They call me all the time. I'm far
45 from the expert. It's frustrating for me in the
46 position -- each one of our positions are important.
47 That's how I believe that we have a big charge here.
48 You know, whether it's to rewrite the rules and I
49 really appreciate the Staff and the Board in both
50 arenas, State and Feds, to try to help us continue

1 this. We're not asking for anything more. We are not
2 asking for anything more. We just want to continue the
3 lifestyle that we live.

4
5 So thank you, guys, for bringing that
6 up.

7
8 CHAIRMAN NANENG: Quyana, Frank. That
9 concludes the -- if there's no other person that's
10 going to be coming up to make any public comments, that
11 concludes our public comment for this time and we'll
12 move on the agenda. We have the adoption of Council
13 action items of October 10th and 11th of our meeting
14 last fall. Patty, I'll turn to you.

15
16 MS. SCHWALENBERG: Thank you, Mr.
17 Chairman. The draft actions of the AMBCC fall meeting
18 October 10th and 11th, 2012 are under tab 1. If
19 everyone wants to take the time to look over them, we
20 would need a motion to approve.

21
22 MR. WOODS: Move to approve the action
23 items of AMBCC October 10 and 11, Mr. Chair.

24
25 CHAIRMAN NANENG: Frank has made a
26 motion. Is there a second?

27
28 MR. RABE: Second.

29
30 CHAIRMAN NANENG: Seconded by Dale.
31 Any further discussion.

32
33 (No comments)

34
35 CHAIRMAN NANENG: If there's no
36 discussion, we'll go ahead and vote on the motion. All
37 in favor say aye.

38
39 IN UNISON: Aye.

40
41 CHAIRMAN NANENG: Those opposed say no.

42
43 (No opposing votes)

44
45 CHAIRMAN NANENG: Motion carried.
46 We'll go on to the Staff report on action items. Is
47 there any Staff that wants to report on.....

48
49 MS. SCHWALENBERG: That would be me.

50

1 CHAIRMAN NANENG: Okay, go ahead.

2

3 MS. SCHWALENBERG: Thank you, Mr.
4 Chairman. The action items that we are responsible
5 for, the third action was a motion to inquire how to
6 solicit more of an Alaska Native representative voice
7 in the Service Regulations Committee process. I
8 discussed this issue with Jerome Ford last summer and I
9 am going to be meeting with him at the end of April.
10 They indicated that they may be able to work something
11 out.

12

13 For example, the Native representatives
14 attending the Service Regulations Committee may be able
15 to sit in on the deliberations of the Service
16 Regulations Committee for their proposals only, not for
17 the entire deliberation period. However, they would
18 not be able to speak on behalf of their proposal unless
19 asked by one of the Fish and Wildlife Service Staff.
20 They're still trying to work that out so we don't have
21 a definite answer on that, but that's where that is at
22 right now.

23

24 The other action item was a motion to
25 draft a final list of needed research priorities for
26 the AMBCC by committee and have it ready for the spring
27 2013 AMBCC workshop and meeting for approval. This was
28 to -- to refresh people's memory, this was a list of
29 research priorities that was put together by Crystal
30 Leonetti when she was the acting AMBCC executive
31 director for the Alaska Federation of Natives for them
32 to take back to Washington, D.C. and to other places to
33 try and find additional funding for AMBCC.

34

35 When she drew up the list, she sent it
36 to the regional management body as well as the State
37 and Federal representatives. The AMBCC felt we didn't
38 get enough input from the Native caucus, so we have
39 been working on that, but I'm still trying to gather
40 additional information from the regional management
41 body, so that is not complete, but it is ongoing.

42

43 That's it.

44

45 Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

46

47 CHAIRMAN NANENG: Any questions for
48 Patty. Go ahead, Frank. I knew you'd come up with a
49 question.

50

1 MR. WOODS: How are you liking your
2 position? Now that we've moved it into a -- your
3 position into an ANO. Being a little more -- I noticed
4 that since it's a little more, I don't know how you
5 want to say it, less restrictive, there's a lot of
6 things that -- I think the position Fred had had
7 different duties assigned from putting out fires in
8 different areas, you know, attached to a position that
9 was under U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service. I appreciate
10 all the efforts of this board and previous members on
11 moving that position to a non-kind-of-restrictive
12 position.

13
14 You know, Pete, U.S. Fish and Wildlife
15 has its own kind of a work agenda and a schedule and I
16 really appreciate that effort and Geoff Haskett's
17 effort in pulling it into our arena where we really
18 need the direct contact for this program to be
19 connected to the people. Not to say that the Federal
20 program isn't, but the layers of bureaucracy sometimes
21 stymie that in different layers of positions. It might
22 be just a simple job description or a different charge
23 in a line item in a budget, but that's been real
24 important as far as I'm concerned.

25
26 Thanks.

27
28 MS. SCHWALENBERG: Do you want me to
29 respond?

30
31 MR. WOODS: Yeah.

32
33 MS. SCHWALENBERG: Thank you. I agree.
34 I feel like we have more leeway when the position is
35 outside of the Fish and Wildlife Service to do some of
36 the things that need to be done and I think I've had
37 the opportunity to develop a closer working
38 relationship with the Native caucus, which I've really
39 enjoyed. Having my counterpart, Terry, here at the
40 Fish and Wildlife Service putting his position in place
41 has been a big help too because between him and Donna I
42 can find out what's going on over here and when I need
43 to be here for meetings or other things that I may need
44 to be aware of. I almost feel like I'm sort of like
45 the culture broker between the Native caucus and the
46 Federal and State partners which, to me, it seems to be
47 working.

48
49 MR. WOODS: Thanks, Patty.
50

1 CHAIRMAN NANENG: Any more questions
2 for Patty.

3
4 (No comments)

5
6 CHAIRMAN NANENG: If there's no more
7 questions, we'll go ahead and move on the agenda.
8 Regional representative reports. We'll start with
9 Peter over there if you have any regional report.

10
11 MR. DEVINE: Due to the late finish of
12 the cod season, we did not have a spring meeting for
13 our region.

14
15 CHAIRMAN NANENG: Thank you, Peter.

16
17 Next, Jim.

18
19 MR. UJIOKA: Thank you, Mr. Chair. I'm
20 going to defer to Patty for this report.

21
22 MS. SCHWALENBERG: Thank you, Jim. The
23 Chugach Regional Resources Commission had a meeting in
24 December where the proposals were presented and there
25 was an issue with the Eyak proposal at the time and so
26 no action was taken and we met again in February. We
27 did act on the proposals and discussed the handicraft
28 issue and some of the other issues that the Native
29 caucus is facing right now as far as indigenous
30 inhabitant and the fall/winter subsistence harvest
31 season and some of those other issues. We also had
32 CRRC representation at the Native caucus meeting that
33 was held in January.

34
35 That's it for now.

36
37 Thank you.

38
39 CHAIRMAN NANENG: Quyana, Patty. Joel.

40
41 MR. SACCHEUS: Thank you, Mr. Chair. I
42 have a proposal from Kawerak area and it's for 2015. I
43 have the copies here and it's about they want to hunt
44 Emperor Geese in Norton Sound area. We had our spring
45 meeting not too long ago up in Nome. The first time
46 for almost a year and some of our representatives at
47 the meeting were interested and lots of them were subs
48 and they were new to the meeting. But this Gambell
49 representative, he sure talked at our meetings about
50 they wanted to hunt those Emperor Geese and it's

1 important to their diet.

2

3 I think it was Little Diomedede or
4 Gambell asked the Russians how their Emperor Geese and
5 the other ducks and geese are doing, like what they
6 asked yesterday, did you ever ask the Russians how the
7 population is doing on ducks and geese. That came up
8 at our meeting in Nome.

9

10 There's lots of white geese up in
11 Stebbins and St. Michael and up in Shishmaref and up in
12 that area. The birds and geese are showing up already
13 in the spring. One of them asked about (indiscernible)
14 at our meetings. He was sitting by me and I told him
15 the budget was stopping us from having the meeting up
16 there in Nome. I think I asked the same question when
17 I first got on the AMBCC RAC when I started. I think
18 I'm on for six years I've been AMBCC rep for Elim.
19 That's all I have.

20

21 Off the record I remember a couple
22 years ago or so Myron talk about those ptarmigans
23 traveling up north. That one time in -- I always tell
24 him maybe they'll show up in Elim in the fall time
25 because they always come from the ocean after freeze
26 up.

27

28 Thank you, Mr. Chair.

29

30 CHAIRMAN NANENG: Quyana, Joel.

31

32 Mike.

33

34 MR. PEDERSON: Good morning. Last week
35 people were stopping some of our staff members and
36 calling us saying that they're starting to hear snow
37 birds up there, but they haven't seen them yet. We
38 still have some snow. Then on Monday, the other day,
39 people were coming into the office and calling us again
40 saying that they saw the first snow bunting of the
41 season, so spring has come up north already kind of
42 early. We haven't seen any major flocks of birds
43 coming by yet, but we're hoping to see them shortly.

44

45 We have a lot of open water now. The
46 Beaufort Sea ice has broken up over the winter and
47 there's NASA and National Ice and Snow Data Center has
48 videos of that online showing the breakup of the
49 Beaufort Sea and it's quite interesting. When we took
50 off Monday night we could see a lot of open water, so

1 people are getting ready for whaling. Right after that
2 we should be heading into our spring harvest of
3 migratory birds.

4
5 Back in Barrow we had our fourth annual
6 migratory bird fair in cooperation with the Fish and
7 Wildlife Service. We served doughnuts and duck and
8 geese soup. We had a duck and geese counting contest,
9 which is real popular. The kids had face painting and
10 made up puzzles. We sold duck stamps. The Fish and
11 Wildlife Service was there with a bunch of activities.
12 I don't see Stan here, but Mack from the Fairbanks
13 field office was there and he was a bit hit with the
14 door prizes that the Service sponsored. So this is
15 part of our outreach and we try to do it each year.
16 This year we decided to do it before whaling activities
17 got under way.

18
19 We are planning an Atqasuk migratory
20 bird fair on Thursday, April 18th. They've been
21 requesting that we go to their village and do the bird
22 fair. It's surprising that when we make announcements
23 for the Barrow bird fare the residents of Atqasuk were
24 the only ones that requested to have one in their
25 community, so we've been working on that and hopefully
26 we'll get a few people from the Service to help us
27 outreach in Atqasuk in the next two weeks, so we're
28 looking forward to that.

29
30 Other than that, the only other thing I
31 want to report on is our 2012 inadvertent harvest of
32 Yellow-Billed Loons on the North Slope. I believe you
33 have copies that Patty passed out and I put a bunch of
34 other copies on the back table. For 2012 we had 118
35 surveys conducted with only four non-responses. Our
36 response rate was 97 percent. Sixteen Yellow-Billed
37 Loons were caught on the North Slope with 15 of those
38 in Barrow. Now Loons were caught in Atqasuk and one
39 was caught in Nuiqsut. Six Yellow-Billed Loons were
40 released alive from gillnets in Barrow. Four entangled
41 Loons were kept for traditional and ceremonial purposes
42 all from Barrow.

43
44 Again, the sampling universe is
45 composed of all gillnet fishers and cabin owners
46 residing in the communities of Barrow, Atqasuk and
47 Nuiqsut who may have fished in lagoons or rivers near
48 the communities or traditional use fish camps. When we
49 were developing our protocols and methodologies we
50 worked with Eric Taylor and Russ Oates with the U.S.

1 Fish and Wildlife Service. All Yellow-Billed Loons on
2 the North Slope were caught in fishing nets between
3 June 25 and September 21.

4
5 The estimated total number of Yellow-
6 Billed Loons entangled was 17 with a standard error of
7 3.7 and estimated total number of kept Yellow-Billed
8 Loons was 16.2 with a standard error of .9. The total
9 number of entangled and dead birds from this
10 scientifically defensible survey was approximately 17.
11 Only four of the birds were kept. In 2012, the
12 entangled percentage was 0.3 percent of the Yellow-
13 Billed Loon population and the dead Yellow-Billed Loons
14 in 2012 was only 0.1 percent of the population.

15
16 I'm not sure, Mr. Chair, if I may ask
17 if our technical person, Todd, if he has anything to
18 add.

19
20 MR. SFORMO: No.

21
22 MR. PEDERSON: And then I'm just
23 curious if Eric Taylor had any questions about our
24 Yellow-Billed Loon report for 2012.

25
26 MR. TAYLOR: I'm Eric Taylor. I'm with
27 the Migratory Bird Division with the the U.S. Fish and
28 Wildlife Service. Mike, I had a chance to review the
29 report. I do want to go on record and apologize not
30 having an opportunity. I had the report for two weeks
31 and finally had a chance to read through it.
32 Everything he reported was accurate. I certainly
33 appreciate the North Slope Borough's efforts to conduct
34 the survey for the second year. The other report was
35 well written. Thanks.

36
37 MR. PEDERSON: Mr. Chair, one final
38 thing. Overnight I was thinking about our conversation
39 we had at the work session yesterday and in line with
40 what people said in the opening comments this morning I
41 was reminded, you know, how people at the front of the
42 table keep talking about what their charge is at the
43 AMBCC level. A couple years ago in 2008 we had a
44 community meeting with our hunters when we were talking
45 about an unfortunate incident with Steller's Eiders and
46 the North Slope Borough Department of Wildlife took the
47 onus of that and worked with our hunters.

48
49 One of the things that was told to both
50 me and Taqulik from our hunters was when you go to the

1 AMBCC meetings one of the things that we were charged
2 with was our hunters wanted to make sure that they had
3 every opportunity -- that they wanted every opportunity
4 to be able to put food on the tables to feed the
5 communities, especially in our culture. The whaling
6 captains and whaling crews really depend on the
7 migratory birds to feed us at the community events and
8 feasts at Christmas, Thanksgiving and nalukataq.

9

10 So I just want to state that I take the
11 work of us very seriously to feed our communities and
12 families. Although I might be quiet on some of the
13 issues that we discuss, I just want the other members
14 to know that I agree with some of their statements even
15 though I might not say it publicly.

16

17 Thank you, Mr. Chair.

18

19 CHAIRMAN NANENG: Quyana for making
20 those comments publicly. We'll go on to Joeneal from
21 Copper River.

22

23 Thanks, Mike.

24

25 MR. HICKS: Thank you, Mr. Chair.

26

27 CHAIRMAN NANENG: Before we go on Pete
28 has a question.

29

30 MR. PROBASCO: Mike, very good report.
31 I read it and I was sort of curious in your report you
32 also identified that it looks like people in your area,
33 the number of fishers are declining. Is there a reason
34 for that? Are fish numbers down?

35

36 MR. PEDERSON: In the report, I think
37 on the second page you'll read that over this last
38 summer we've had real high winds from a certain
39 direction that caused a lot of the fishing nets to get
40 full of junk, logs. Just junk that normally washes
41 ashore, so some people were not fishing. We had a
42 couple of fishermen from Barrow who actually moved to
43 Anchorage. So it's just a variety of reasons that
44 happened. When we were first beginning our surveys we
45 looked at our household list and like we verified
46 things, you know, and stuff like that and tried to
47 contact the same hunters, additional hunters and some
48 hunters just didn't feel like it was good during some
49 of the season. It was just bad weather with the winds
50 and the nets getting full of crap.

1 CHAIRMAN NANENG: Any other questions.

2

3 (No comments)

4

5 CHAIRMAN NANENG: We'll move on to Joe.

6

7 MR. HICKS: Thank you, Mr. Chair. The
8 Copper River region has not had a meeting since October
9 1st of last year. I had scheduled a meeting for the
10 first week of March to go over the issues that we have
11 been talking about since January of last year. I
12 wanted to gain a lot of feedback from my region
13 regarding the issues that we face here. You know,
14 we've been talking about coal management and how we can
15 better ourselves, how we can better work together. I
16 again had wanted to try to get some feedback in that
17 regard.

18

19 I also wanted to get some feedback in
20 regards to the proposals, specifically the one that
21 relates to the Fairbanks Native Association, as I am
22 also directly affected with that particular fact. I
23 know Steve may know my sister Alice, who lives in town.
24 I mean she is there for medical purposes and that's not
25 her fault she has to live there in Fairbanks and she
26 has a home in Mentasta. She comes there every summer
27 to live and do what she always does. So I understand
28 what he feels. That's not just my sister Alice. It's
29 also several other, like Francis, my auntie, my aunties
30 that live in town. So I had wanted to get feedback
31 from my original council on issues such as that, but my
32 meeting did not happen due to the fact that the grant
33 that's supposed to be issued has never surfaced and
34 still has not done so today.

35

36 Whatever reasons that my administrating
37 agency has, I mean before in the past they have sent me
38 to here without questioning whether or not the money
39 was available. Just being reimbursed when they got the
40 grant. Now that has changed and I don't know what the
41 reason or reasons are. For instance I'm here on my
42 own. But that's my particular report. It's just that
43 I'm kind of frustrated with what's going on and why
44 there is no grant in place.

45

46 Thank you.

47

48 CHAIRMAN NANENG: Quyana, Joe. Any
49 questions for Joe. Pete, you've got a comment.

50

1 MR. PROBASCO: Thank you, Mr. Chair.
2 Joe, your comment, I hear it loud and clear and if I
3 was in your place I would share that frustration. My
4 Staff has been working. Many of you identified the
5 bureaucracy of Federal government. What I can say, the
6 grants are not in place with the exception of two, but
7 they're close. We're going to do much better in the
8 years to come, but right now your point is very valid
9 and we're going to rectify it.

10
11 CHAIRMAN NANENG: Guyana, Pete.
12 Anymore comments, Joe.

13
14 MR. HICKS: No.

15
16 CHAIRMAN NANENG: Okay. Quyana. Who
17 is going to do the Chugach report?

18
19 MS. SCHWALENBERG: We did that already.

20
21 CHAIRMAN NANENG: Oh, you did already.
22 Rick, let's go ahead and continue with your regional
23 report.

24
25 MR. ROWLAND: Good morning. The report
26 for Kodiak area is -- we haven't had a meeting yet. We
27 intend to have one within the month or so. Generally
28 it's around the end of May, first of April, is when we
29 have that meeting. It's an important topic because a
30 lot of people use migratory birds as food in the area.
31 Recently I was invited as the Alaska migratory bird rep
32 to go and make a presentation and communicate in a
33 discussion with the Kodiak/Aleutians Regional Advisory
34 Council related to Emperor Geese not only in our area
35 but out in the Aleutians as well. It was related to
36 their proposal and they were wondering what the change
37 was in the migratory birds group's decision to not
38 present the proposal.

39
40 So, after explaining to them about all
41 the issues that are related to Emperor Geese in
42 creating something that will work, they made no mention
43 of whether or not they were going to pull their
44 proposal or not, but I asked them if they could give us
45 a letter of support to do a number of different things,
46 which they line out in their letter. One of them is to
47 expand their aerial survey. So we have that letter
48 from them as well as a couple other things.

49
50 Additionally, last spring -- no, when

1 we had the summit with Geoff Haskett, it was really
2 encouraging to hear him say, yeah, let's find a way to
3 get to yes. So later this winter it prompted us to put
4 the proposals back in that were removed and then
5 hopefully we could find a way to work out those two
6 situations, one about the feather uses for traditional
7 handicrafts and hunting areas and times within a
8 certain area.

9

10 Also the Sun'aq Tribe of Kodiak has
11 been awarded the Alaska Migratory Bird Co-Management
12 Council grant again and we've signed an agreement for a
13 five-year management of that grant. We look forward to
14 continuing to be responsible stewards of the
15 traditional foods in the lands, air and water in our
16 area.

17

18 Thank you.

19

20 CHAIRMAN NANENG: Any questions for
21 Rick from anybody.

22

23 (No comments)

24

25 CHAIRMAN NANENG: If not, we'll go with
26 Frank's report.

27

28 MR. WOODS: Thank you, Mr. Chair. Our
29 migratory bird (in Yup'ik), the equivalent, the
30 caretakers of the birds. Almost?

31

32 CHAIRMAN NANENG: Close enough.

33

34 MR. WOODS: Close enough.

35

36 CHAIRMAN NANENG: (In Yup'ik).

37

38 MR. WOODS: The first word I can't get.
39 (In Yup'ik) I can understand. Okay. We met on March
40 28th. Our number one agenda item was reviewing the
41 draft subsistence report. Our board reviewed it and
42 the questions they had were pertinent to previous
43 boards or previous meetings.

44

45 The short version, 82-page short
46 version of that report was scrutinized and then they
47 questioned the dynamics of how the statistician comes
48 up with those figures. That's fine. That's simple
49 layman's terms. It's just questioning how we got from
50 the 82-page report to this. I understand that as a

1 subsistence user this is a lot easier to read. A
2 little more summarized without all the math involved.

3
4 The second thing that came out of that
5 was when is Bristol Bay going to be up on the -- we're
6 still on the chopping block for surveys. Molly's
7 letter September 20th, 2011 to AMBCC -- actually it was
8 a proposal for the Harvest Assessment Program, I think
9 U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service. And then we went into
10 regional reports and our questionnaire. We actually
11 gave our board some homework. Molly did a real good
12 job of outlining kind of what's happening within each
13 region from weather, physical environment, what's
14 happening with the migratory birds, any other changes
15 that would be pertinent to subsistence use in the
16 region.

17
18 You know, there's a lot of things going
19 on in physical environment. Things are changing,
20 they're shorter and weather changing patterns are
21 getting condensed. There's more frequent storms, not
22 only in the spring but in the fall. Change in the
23 flyways, kind of a timing of everything. There's a lot
24 of stuff going on in the physical environment. Like
25 last year we had record snowfalls, record cold
26 temperatures, and then we had a real fast breakup. You
27 know, just everything is condensed.

28
29 We noticed that our region reports a
30 lot more snow geese in the area. We had five in
31 attendance basically from six different regions. I
32 apologize for not having a written report, but I
33 couldn't download my thumb drive this morning. It
34 worked about an hour. I'll just summarize it.

35
36 What they came up with is they had
37 problems with the duck stamps. When we buy one in the
38 spring, it's only good until June 30th for the -- I
39 don't think it's even -- no. I brought my duck stamps
40 or I believe I did. The problem that we had overlap in
41 seasons. Like when you buy one in the fall, it's good
42 until next spring June and then when you buy one in the
43 -- you know, people don't understand it. If they were
44 buying them annually -- if you buy one in the spring,
45 is it only good till June? So if you buy one in the
46 fall, it's good till next June. There are people, I
47 think, overlapping and that overlapping process
48 confusion of seasons.

49
50 In our attendance, we had John Dyasuk,

1 Togiak Refuge RIT. His charge is to push the duck
2 stamps. We comply, but we don't agree. We push
3 compliance at BBNA because we don't want people to
4 become cited or breaking the law. For that reason we
5 don't agree with the duck stamp issue. We will comply
6 with disagreement. So he sat there for about an hour
7 and a half giving us the spiel about the where the duck
8 stamp came from and how it affected the wetland down
9 below. We sat there and listened in respect of his
10 position and then we asked for compliance from the
11 board that until this issue gets resolved we will
12 comply.

13

14 The second thing that came up, like
15 Steve, we don't have a cultural and/or ceremonial or
16 educational permit system for migratory birds. So I
17 Googled -- we got State of Alaska Cultural Education
18 Permit Program and then they actually got to issue
19 permits and guidelines under U.S. Fish and Wildlife
20 Service. I think the designated hunter forms are the
21 closest thing I could ever come up with that for
22 migratory birds. So they asked us to put in a
23 proposal, but I didn't know where to start. We started
24 with the proposal form online and thanks to Donna she
25 actually got us to format it into Word so we could
26 actually type on it and became user friendly.

27

28 The version online, if your computer
29 isn't compatible with Adobe or you don't convert it
30 into Word correctly and then you can't type on the
31 form, so I'd maybe push to maybe getting that word
32 format a little more user friendly.

33

34 The second thing was we asked for a
35 season to Unit 9E, which is the lower Bristol Bay for
36 Emperor Goose. It's funny that we all kind of --
37 without even contacting other regions we have the same
38 issues. The same issues keep coming up without even --
39 Steve, you hit it right on the money and, Tim, the
40 spiritual aspect of this whole hunt has got to be
41 honored.

42

43 That kind of concludes our report. We
44 had a really good spring meeting. That's the time when
45 we could actually get together. People are really
46 excited about sharing that information, what happened
47 in the fall, how to do it. I asked the chairman --
48 without his knowledge of this board and his work out in
49 Bristol Bay, I'm going to start including our chairman,
50 our regional rep board into these meetings. To get him

1 at least once a year or maybe every couple years to get
2 him up here to see what we do and how their reports
3 affect what we do here and the process of things. You
4 know, just to share that information. Maybe we'd have
5 a meeting somewhere in the region, like Bethel or -- I
6 know we had it in Nome before. That might be another
7 option to get the message out to different regions.
8 But, yeah, I was really excited about our board meeting
9 and we finally got a meeting.

10

11 With that I'll end my report.

12

13 CHAIRMAN NANENG: Any questions for
14 Frank.

15

16 (No comments)

17

18 CHAIRMAN NANENG: The only comment I'll
19 make, it seems like the RIT from Bristol Bay is
20 providing different information than the RITs that work
21 in the Y-K Delta. The RITs in our region are the ones
22 that provide information regarding what birds are
23 closed to hunting and what birds are allowable, but
24 we've asked them not to say that the duck stamps are a
25 requirement. So I know that that's a different
26 direction that's given by each of the regional Refuge
27 managers. People from Fish and Wildlife Service as
28 well as State of Alaska might say that I'm not
29 complying with the law. I've never had a duck stamp. I
30 never will have a duck stamp. I'll still go out
31 hunting for birds and I don't think that duck stamp was
32 ever agreed to by the negotiating team nor the
33 Migratory Bird Co-Management Council. Therefore, I'll
34 state again, I've stated before, I'll never get a duck
35 stamp.

36

37 So I just wanted to repeat my position
38 and people might say but it's the law, but sometimes
39 the laws don't necessarily agree with the way that we
40 live out in rural Alaska. Many people in our villages
41 can't afford to buy a duck stamp. But I will make a
42 report on the duck stamp when I get to my report after
43 Frank's comments.

44

45 MR. WOODS: Thank you, Myron. He
46 actually brought to the meeting a Federal waterfowl
47 stamp. Did you know that the Federal waterfowl stamp
48 and a Alaska hunting license are required to harvest
49 migratory birds? While the focus of law enforcement
50 efforts will continue to be closed species, it says,

1 you know, that regulations -- he's fully pushing the
2 duck stamp issue. He had a full-blown presentation.
3 My hat is off to him. He did a lot of homework, he's
4 well versed in that arena. Like I said, we sat there
5 and disagreed with him, that that's not -- we don't
6 agree with the concept, but we will ask for compliance
7 to keep our people from getting harassed basically. In
8 a lot of villages, like Togiak, bigger villages are
9 high harvesters. They really get excited. Like spring
10 time, it's time to start harvest. So, thanks. I
11 agree, Myron.

12
13 CHAIRMAN NANENG: Quyana, Frank. Any
14 questions for Frank.

15
16 (No comments)

17
18 CHAIRMAN NANENG: Well, I'll go on with
19 the report from AVCP and the AVCP Waterfowl
20 Conservation Committee. Before we had the Waterfowl
21 Conservation Committee I met with Senator Begich on
22 March 26th here in Anchorage and he told me the duck
23 stamp legislation is going to be reintroduced this
24 year. The last time the reason why it did not pass
25 they felt that the increase of the duck stamp from \$15
26 to \$25 was taxation without representation according to
27 the senator from Alabama sessions and then they brought
28 it up again. They thought they worked it out, but the
29 California Senator said that if you're banning lead
30 shots, you ought to bad use of lead weights as well for
31 fishing. That's why the legislation did not pass back
32 then in November when we thought that it was going to
33 pass. So it's going to be reintroduced.

34
35 I think the sportsman's bill is going
36 to come up again and those concerns will be addressed
37 whenever that legislation is passed, but there was no
38 objection whatsoever on the duck stamp part of the
39 legislation where the Secretary would have discretion
40 on who would be allowed to hunt without duck stamps.
41 So that's coming up.

42
43 On our March 28th Waterfowl
44 Conservation Committee meeting that we haven't had for
45 about a year and a half we had representatives from the
46 State of Alaska, Fish and Wildlife Service, Oregon
47 Department of Fish and Wildlife, Wilderness Society and
48 Patty was there representing the Alaska Migratory Bird
49 Co-Management Council. We discussed issues that we're
50 talking about today. Also yesterday there was a listen

1 session with Senator Murkowski that we brought this
2 issue up that affects our people all over the State of
3 Alaska.

4
5 At the time that the Protocol Amendment
6 was ratified, the elderly Murkowski, meaning Frank
7 Murkowski, added the language that indigenous meant all
8 those people that live in rural Alaska. At the time
9 that we negotiated the Migratory Bird Treaty everyone
10 was looking at the 3 percent harvest by the Native
11 community. The harvest by non-local or non-Native
12 residents that live now today in rural Alaska that are
13 starting to compete with many of the local people in
14 villages is becoming prevalent.

15
16 So that is starting to create some
17 issues between our people who live in the villages and
18 those that are coming around from outside the areas
19 that go out to villages to teach and end up using their
20 good monies to buy the high expensive gas and fuel to
21 be able to go out hunting as well as shells that they
22 can buy because they make better money than those
23 people that are living in the villages. So it's
24 creating an issue now.

25
26 So we're requesting Senator Murkowski
27 and his staff to consider changing the definition of
28 indigenous inhabitants to traditional tribal hunters
29 and users of the migratory birds. That's the only way
30 that we can really have true co-management as far as we
31 can see between Fish and Wildlife Service and the State
32 of Alaska on resource. Not only the migratory birds
33 but other resources that our people hunt and fish to
34 survive and put food on the table.

35
36 The other thing that came up was the
37 reintroduction of Steller Eiders. I met with Geoff
38 Haskett last week and he said that he's giving
39 direction to Fish and Wildlife Service to reintroduce
40 Steller Eiders out in the Yukon-Kuskokwim Delta and
41 it's going to be done only on Federal lands because our
42 people in the villages feel that if they put it on
43 Native lands, they're going to come up with
44 restrictions, restrictions to prevent our people from
45 being able to hunt.

46
47 It's going to impact our people because
48 introduction of muskox on the Yukon-Kuskokwim Delta,
49 whenever people shot a muskox that just happened to be
50 there and maybe the only food source available during

1 the spring or during the middle of the winter, not long
2 after that animal is shot law enforcement comes around
3 and issues citation to the people and in some instances
4 have confiscated their rifles because they shot a
5 muskox, an introduced animal to the region.

6
7 One of the comments that was made was
8 we're introducing this animal so that in the future
9 your people will be able to hunt whenever they're
10 around an increase in numbers. That was done like
11 about 30 years ago and still has not happened today.
12 Only for a few permit hunts that go on down in Mekoryuk
13 as well as Nelson Island. But the muskoxen have
14 scattered throughout the Y-K Delta and nobody else has
15 been able to hunt them.

16
17 So our people are concerned about the
18 reintroduction of Steller Eiders and they don't want
19 any more restrictions to be imposed upon us when we go
20 hunting for migratory birds that we've hunted over the
21 years.

22
23 We talked about the Yukon-Kuskokwim
24 Delta Goose Management Plan. We talked about the four
25 species of geese, Emperor Geese. We know that the
26 numbers have not increased since about 1986. Looking
27 at where these Steller Eiders winter as well as where
28 the Emperor Geese winter down in the Aleutian Chain,
29 Aleutian Islands, introduction of poison to eradicate
30 the rats. How long does it take before those other
31 bird species are affected by the poison that was
32 introduced back in 1980s or late '70s, sometime in that
33 time period that affects the population that's now
34 causing our people to really start going into a
35 conservation mode to try and get these birds to
36 increase. Today Steller Eiders are on the threatened
37 species list. So we've asked Eric and his group to
38 take a look at how that may have impacted the
39 population.

40
41 Also our Waterfowl Conservation
42 Committee approved a resolution to check into a sports
43 hunting camp that's going on in Russia. If they can
44 put a sports hunting camp in Russia, what prevents our
45 people from being able to hunt these Emperor Geese that
46 we're now seeing requests like this where we want a
47 limit of two. But Emperor Geese fly throughout western
48 Alaska along the coast from the Aleutians all the way
49 up to North Slope, I guess. If everybody along the
50 route have two per limit the population estimates that

1 they're talking about will probably substantially
2 plummet down to the point of threatened species status.
3 That's one of the things that we're trying to avoid.

4
5 We also talked about the Oregon farm
6 depredation. On our Goose Management Plan we have
7 250,000. That's the population level for the Cackling
8 Canada Geese. The Oregon farmers would like to see at
9 least 100,000. Cacklers have been increasing in
10 numbers from about 25,000 back in 1984 to over 150,000
11 today and it's because of the conservation efforts that
12 our people in the Y-K Delta and pretty much every area
13 that has Cacklers was affected by the Yukon-Kuskokwim
14 Delta Goose Management Plan. At that time called the
15 Hooper Bay Agreement. They were closed for a while.

16
17 So we all felt the effects of it and
18 today the numbers are increasing, but we're once again
19 being asked to kill more Cackling Canada Geese so that
20 the farmers down in Oregon can have more economy coming
21 back to them by the plants that they have. The one
22 proposal that they came up with is if we shoot the
23 Cackling Canada Goose up to 500 of them down in Oregon
24 would like to leave them out in the field and not take
25 them. Not pick them up and bring them to our house to
26 cook and eat. They said that by doing that they may be
27 able to drive the other birds away from coming onto our
28 fields and might bring in other predators that may help
29 in keeping these birds off the farm fields.

30
31 So that was one proposal that we're
32 still working through and that's been an ongoing
33 discussion for the last six years or more with Oregon
34 farmers.

35
36 We had the Wilderness Society there.
37 We know that the Izembek Road has been a hot topic with
38 Congress as well as down in King Cove, as well as out
39 in the Yukon-Kuskokwim Delta because Black Brant staged
40 there before they migrate south and nowadays it seems
41 like with the change in climate, just like all other
42 migratory birds, the Cacklers are starting to winter
43 there too as well. According to the report, and I'm
44 sure Eric will elaborate more on this, the migratory
45 birds that used to nest in California are moving up
46 north. That's why we're having issues of Cacklers in
47 California -- or in Oregon with farm depredation. So
48 those are things that we have to work through.

49
50 The issues of need of use of the

1 feathers for arts and crafts was raised. It seems like
2 it's okay to make a what do you call it, a fly hook out
3 of bird feathers, but it's a crime to use your bird
4 feathers for art. Isn't making fly hooks an art too?
5 What's the difference? You have different colors that
6 look colorful, just like artwork, yet one is being
7 criminalized while the other one is being allowed to
8 happen. There does not seem to be a balance.

9
10 It always seems like every time we come
11 to our traditional hunting and customary and
12 traditional use of resources it's what it comes down
13 to. What we've used as a traditional and customary use
14 of resources ends up being a crime when probably the
15 big lobbies that go to Washington or even to the State
16 end up buying their way to make whatever they can do to
17 be lawful. If you take a look at all the resource
18 issues that we have within the State of Alaska, that's
19 what it seems to be coming down to.

20
21 So on the change of indigenous in
22 habitant we'd like to see tribal rather than what they
23 call indigenous inhabitant, including everybody else in
24 the whole state of Alaska, because I think that will
25 open the door for some of these people from urban areas
26 that have moved because of health or other reasons or
27 for jobs to be able to come out to their areas and not
28 necessarily get permission from the tribes to be able
29 to hunt for migratory birds like they have -- like
30 they're allowed to. Like they should be allowed to.

31
32 You know, I have a son up at Fairbanks
33 now that's going to Fairbanks and because he's
34 attending school up there does it make him a criminal
35 to come back to my home village to hunt for birds? Or
36 is it okay for anyone that may have moved up here to
37 Alaska to go back to wherever state that they're from
38 and it's okay for them to hunt as long as they're
39 buying hunting license or whatnot from that respective
40 state and it's legal. You know, all these analogies
41 that we have to take a look at to see how fair it can
42 be to our people that are trying to live off these
43 resources.

44
45 I know the primary purpose is for
46 conservation of these resources, but at the same time
47 who has, in essence, conserved these resources over the
48 years so that our people can live off them. We were
49 the first -- what we call the first people to live off
50 these resources. As one elder and one young person

1 both observed, many birds come to the Yukon-Kuskokwim
2 Delta to nest. Many birds leave the Yukon-Kuskokwim
3 Delta during the fall time after -- you know, when they
4 return for the season. Yet it seems like with all our
5 efforts to rebuild these migratory birds numbers,
6 whenever rules and regulations come up we end up being
7 the ones that have to bear the burden of conservation
8 more than anybody else and that was their observation
9 based on number of birds that are increasing.

10

11 The other species that I know that Eric
12 will touch upon is the White-Fronted Geese. Our
13 success in some cases is our own failure. Just like
14 the example that I gave regarding the Oregon farmers.
15 They're now trying to put the pressure upon us to
16 harvest more, which is fine as far as I'm concerned,
17 but some of the other practices that we have done over
18 the years that we have given up, like making bird
19 drives while they're flightless, is still not allowed.

20

21

22 I remember those days when we used to
23 drive birds in the village of Hooper Bay sometimes
24 joining with the village of Chevak and it never seemed
25 to have affected the number of birds in population. If
26 you don't harvest them, then they seem to decrease and
27 decrease in numbers. So we get stuck between a rock
28 and a hard place with conservation measures. Are we
29 allowing some of these birds to further decline when
30 they can be increased?

31

32 So those are some of the issues that
33 have been brought up by many of our elders on the
34 Waterfowl Conservation Committee as well as some of the
35 issues raised by children who have been seeing the
36 numbers, yet, with rules and regulations, there seem to
37 be more restrictions.

38

39 So I appreciate some of the comments
40 that the other members have made regarding their areas,
41 but I think the Yukon-Kuskokwim Delta also has issues
42 regarding habitat protection too and we're working with
43 many of the villages to try and prevent impacts of
44 habitat of migratory birds by ATVs or snowmachines.
45 One thing I never appreciated that I've seen the
46 reports by Fish and Wildlife Service is that a
47 footprint by an individual seems to have more of an
48 impact than all-terrain vehicles. That's not true.
49 I've left many footprints at Kokechik Bay which is one
50 of the number one nesting areas for Continental USA and

1 I don't think my footprints have ever really affected
2 the population of waterfowl there at Kokechik Bay,
3 which I know that is being coveted by Fish and Wildlife
4 Service as number one nesting areas in the nation.

5
6 So, you know, I think I'm pretty much
7 preaching to the choir of the members of the AMBCC, but
8 I think that we need to inform our counterparts both at
9 the State and the Federal level that we need to work
10 together but not always be subjected to rules and
11 regulations that seem to be unfair to our people.

12
13 So that's the extent of my report if
14 anyone has any questions.

15
16 MR. ROWLAND: Thanks, Myron. I
17 appreciate everything you said about that. It made me
18 recall about what you said about Murkowski changing
19 what indigenous meant. And then I appreciate you
20 stating the definition of it, but there's a little bit
21 at the end there that you left out and I just wanted to
22 say that it's of any race. They changed it from
23 indigenous to anybody living in a rural community of
24 any race. So that completely stripped the Alaska
25 Natives of their past. So it's important to point out
26 that that happened like in '96, '97. So now, we as
27 Alaska Natives, had the word switched on us and because
28 the word was switched on us again we're in the same
29 fight we are about what the hell is subsistence. So we
30 argue about the word, but we still have the lifestyle
31 that's always been there.

32
33 So I wanted to make sure that -- well,
34 the stuff that Myron is saying is very important
35 because it changes a lot of things on how we have to,
36 as a group, communicate with the outside as they change
37 the rules.

38
39 One other things that's important to
40 note is that in the United Nations there was a
41 declaration of indigenous peoples in nations and under
42 that declaration there were four nations that did not
43 support that declaration, but I believe it has since
44 been changed by the United States, but there was
45 England, Australia, Canada and the United States that
46 didn't support that.

47
48 If there's some way that we could get
49 this straightened out, we too have been communicating
50 with people in Washington, D.C. about getting that

1 adjusted and we'll continue to work to clarify what
2 indigenous is and find a way to help us out not only
3 with our migratory birds but with all customary and
4 traditional foods as well. So thanks for mentioning
5 that and doing those things, Myron.

6
7 CHAIRMAN NANENG: Quyana. Any other
8 questions.

9
10 MR. WOODS: I have a quick comment.
11 Thanks, Myron. Our area thought that subsistence was
12 misrepresented. The word subsistence is more of a
13 traditional and customary. They wanted to redefine how
14 it's being utilized in a lot of different arenas and
15 that indigenous inhabitant term I think is really
16 important. They felt that -- there was a couple
17 members that really pushed our South Peninsula
18 representative and our Western representative said that
19 subsistence isn't a -- it's used too loosely. You
20 know, it just not just a set of activities harvesting.
21 There's a whole list of things that go along with
22 subsistence. So they wanted to redefine it and I'm
23 trying to figure out the verbiage, if that's the word.
24 Thanks.

25
26 CHAIRMAN NANENG: Quyana. Anybody else
27 any questions, comments.

28
29 I'll recognize Steve Ginnis.

30
31 MR. GINNIS: Thank you, Mr. Chairman.
32 I just want to comment on your organization's
33 legislative effort to change that wording in the Treaty
34 Act. I think it's vitally important that, yeah, it
35 reflects tribal wording in it.

36
37 I guess the only thing I was curious
38 about is whether or not you have the support of this
39 council through some sort of motion. I just think that
40 that would strengthen it. I don't know who else is
41 supporting your proposal. I don't know if AFN or other
42 non-profits in the state. The more support you have
43 behind someone like that I think it really indicates a
44 need for the change. So I was just wondering if you
45 have that kind of support for it.

46
47 CHAIRMAN NANENG: Also sitting on the
48 AFN board we've had a lot of discussions about this
49 indigenous inhabitant definition and it's getting more
50 and more support from other regions, especially from

1 AFN, to try and move forward to changing that
2 definition to not necessarily be all inclusive, but
3 something to move forward towards tribal. Tribal,
4 traditional use and harvest and customary uses. So
5 that's what we're working on.

6

7 I happen to sit on the Legislative and
8 Litigation Committee as the chairman, so it's my
9 prerogative to raise that as something to talk about
10 whenever we meet as a Legislative Committee.

11

12 Any other questions, comments. Joel.

13

14 MR. SACCHEUS: Thank you, Mr. Chair. A
15 few things I never brought up earlier from our meeting
16 up in Nome area. One is when we had a break that
17 Gambell representative say the loon population is doing
18 good there. They kind of think when they go do the
19 loon survey there, it's too late in the year. They say
20 they'd always be out in the ocean by the time they do
21 that, the one Gambell representative.

22

23 Just one thing about bringing the ducks
24 and geese to like Anchorage or Fairbanks. It was
25 brought up at our meeting and I forgot to mention it.
26 This lady from Teller, she asked me so I can't bring
27 ducks or geese to Anchorage or somewhere and I told her
28 you could as long as they don't come up with a law you
29 can't. I tell her I do it. I'll do it all the way
30 until they make laws for that. One thing about that is
31 I know you had to have a wing or head on there to
32 identify the bird. I think it was the Gambell
33 representative say there was more foxes out there in
34 Gambell.

35

36 Also this past last while in Nome area
37 they were talking about there was lots of foxes there
38 and it made me think about the seagulls and ducks that
39 lay eggs along the coast. Some of the older people
40 that trap or hunt these foxes there, they don't hunt no
41 more and the population got lots in Nome and our area.

42

43 This past winter, like a month or so
44 ago, I got this survey about Sandhill Cranes from the
45 U.S. Fish and Wildlife in Maryland, I think, and they
46 were just asking about Sandhill Cranes, what I caught.
47 There was lots of cranes in our area. It was just my
48 job that kept me from hunting lots. That's one thing I
49 put on the comments. But that's not the first time I
50 got the survey from U.S. Fish and Wildlife in Maryland.

1 That's the second time. The first time was all the
2 ducks, but I thought I'd bring it up.

3

4 Thank you, Mr. Chair.

5

6 CHAIRMAN NANENG: Quyana, Joel.
7 Any more comments or questions by anyone.

8

9 (No comments)

10

11 CHAIRMAN NANENG: Well, if there's no
12 questions or comments, let's take a 10-minute break.

13

14 (Off record)

15

16 (On record)

17

18 CHAIRMAN NANENG: Let's get back into
19 session. I think we're pretty much done with the
20 regional reports. We'll go down to item 10, old
21 business. The adoption of the 2011 harvest survey.
22 Liliana.

23

24 Before she comes on I just wanted to
25 explain what I stated to her last week. You know, out
26 in the Yukon-Kuskokwim Delta there's many villages that
27 we go to to attend meetings and as a young person I
28 went to one village and I was speaking in Yup'ik, which
29 I know is a common language within our villages. An
30 elderly man raised his hand. I thought he was going to
31 ask a question. His question was can you please get a
32 translator to explain to us what you're saying. So I
33 hope -- and I had to explain to Liliana that sometimes
34 I have a hard time understanding her, so maybe at times
35 I'm going to have to ask to have a translator.

36

37 (Laughter)

38

39 CHAIRMAN NANENG: So, Liliana.

40

41 MS. NAVES: Liliana Naves. I work for
42 the Division of Subsistence. I would like to talk
43 about the agenda item about adoption of the 2011 draft
44 report, so it's part of the regular AMBCC business to
45 have the draft report released at the fall meeting and
46 it was released in October last year. All the
47 partners, the Native partners and also the agency staff
48 are welcome to submit comments and the questions during
49 the six-month period and as scheduled this item appears
50 at the spring meeting to act on an option of the

1 report.

2

3

4 There's some comments that were
5 presented in this period, so there was a request that
6 the AMBCC meeting to present specific totals breaking
7 down migratory and non-migratory birds. Some
8 modifications were made to the table. This was the
9 comment that I received and it was addressed. So I
10 think it's up to the council now to act on the agenda
11 item.

11

12 CHAIRMAN NANENG: I think today we're
13 asked to approve the Bristol Bay and Yukon-Kuskokwim
14 Delta survey reports.

15

16 MS. NAVES: Yeah, those are the two
17 regions that was in the 2011 report.

18

19 CHAIRMAN NANENG: Okay. Anybody has
20 any questions for Liliana. Frank.

21

22 MR. WOODS: In your Bristol Bay report,
23 can we just -- like our region just approved the
24 Bristol Bay draft report, but we just wanted to
25 approve, like I said, just our section. Yeah, I
26 appreciate you separating the species. It was
27 understandable, but it was tedious to go through. So,
28 next fall can we get a condensed version similar to
29 this, even just a one-pager. Kind of just a species
30 page and then maybe a sub-regional summary.

31

32 MS. NAVES: You understand, Frank, that
33 there is a bunch of species that are harvested and your
34 region has three sub-regions, so it's really difficult
35 to squeeze information for all the species in two
36 pages. We can discuss later how.....

37

38 MR. WOODS: Yeah, we'll discuss it
39 later. Thanks though, Liliana. Good report.

40

41 CHAIRMAN NANENG: For the Yukon-
42 Kuskokwim Delta I think you have like about three or
43 four sub-regions.

44

45 MS. NAVES: Oh, you have more. You
46 have seven.

47

48 CHAIRMAN NANENG: Oh, seven sub-regions
49 and one of the questions I always raise at our WCC
50 meeting was if we would approve it with review of the

1 northern regions' numbers. We haven't had the
2 opportunity since our WCC meeting to even take a look
3 at that report and contact the villages to see if
4 there's anything -- if that report is pretty close to
5 being accurate. For the Yukon-Kuskokwim Delta, I think
6 we'll withhold for now until such time that we contact
7 the villages to see if their report is close to
8 accurate. This morning I heard a discussion about
9 statistics. You said 1,250 plus 5 or 250 minus 5. I'm
10 just throwing out the comment made by someone who
11 wanted to know numbers. So we'll withhold Yukon-
12 Kuskokwim Delta report until such time that we've had
13 an opportunity to contact the villages.

14
15 MS. NAVES: I'd like to request, Myron,
16 that you put a timeline for the review process for your
17 region because we already several years ago agreed upon
18 a timeline for the review of the data and at that point
19 I think it was a clear understanding that everyone
20 agreed on that timeline, that at the spring meeting
21 would be the moment to work on adopting the report. If
22 we're asking extra time to review the report, I'd like
23 to ask that we have a timeline on that.

24
25 CHAIRMAN NANENG: Would the end of the
26 month, end of April be sufficient enough to be able to
27 review it and make some comments back?

28
29 MS. NAVES: Good. That sounds fine.
30 So how would be the process? Patty, would you have a
31 suggestion on how could we organize to have the
32 adoption of the Yukon-Kuskokwim Delta?

33
34 MS. SCHWALENBERG: When we were
35 discussing this earlier, we thought that maybe it would
36 work -- I don't know who knows the rules or whatever,
37 but maybe just have a poll vote between the Native,
38 Tribal and State representatives on adopting the
39 harvest survey report after the Yukon Delta has time to
40 review their data.

41
42 MS. NAVES: Sounds fine.

43
44 CHAIRMAN NANENG: Yes, I think that
45 will be fine if there's no objections from the other
46 members.

47
48 (No comments)

49
50 CHAIRMAN NANENG: So we'll go ahead and

1 go with that process. I will make a concerted effort
2 to contact those villages in the northern area of our
3 region to try and get some feedback from those
4 communities to see if your report or estimates are
5 close enough. So we'll do that before the end of the
6 month if we can.

7

8 MS. NAVES: Thank you.

9

10 CHAIRMAN NANENG: Any other questions
11 regarding the surveys.

12

13 (No comments)

14

15 CHAIRMAN NANENG: I think for now we've
16 got to make a motion to adopt the Bristol Bay survey
17 report.

18

19 MR. WOODS: I move to adopt the Bristol
20 Bay 2011 survey, Mr. Chair.

21

22 CHAIRMAN NANENG: A motion has been
23 made. Is there a second.

24

25 MR. UJIOKA: I second.

26

27 CHAIRMAN NANENG: Seconded by Jim. Any
28 further discussion. You have a question.

29

30 MR. PROBASCO: Yeah, Myron. Based on
31 recommendations from Patty could we add an amendment to
32 it where we'd also approve your Yukon-Kuskokwim Delta
33 regional report after comments are received from your
34 northern coast. In concept, we're approving everything
35 up to that point and then once you get concurrence then
36 it goes forward.

37

38 CHAIRMAN NANENG: I think we just got
39 done discussing how we're going to go through the
40 process. We're going to ask our natural resource
41 department to contact the northern sections and then we
42 can do a poll vote after they've contacted us.

43

44 MR. PROBASCO: Okay. Thank you.

45

46 CHAIRMAN NANENG: Okay. A motion has
47 been made and seconded. Anymore discussion regarding
48 Bristol Bay's survey approval.

49

50 (No comments)

1 CHAIRMAN NANENG: If not, all in favor
2 say aye.
3
4 IN UNISON: Aye.
5
6 CHAIRMAN NANENG: Those opposed say no.
7
8 (No opposing votes)
9
10 CHAIRMAN NANENG: Motion carried.
11 Okay. We've got item B, proposal for discussion, that
12 data release at village level. Liliana.
13
14 MS. NAVES: This proposal was
15 introduced at the last committee meeting in January and
16 it's a proposal for discussion only to assess concerns
17 and the process of how we could work in the future on
18 releasing the data to the village level. We don't
19 expect an action of the council today. The main
20 motivators for this proposal was to have a stronger
21 data review process and also to be able to use the --
22 to incorporate all the bird harvest data collected by
23 other research bodies such as Native organizations and
24 universities and the refuges and so forth to use this
25 larger body of the data on birds harvest, especially
26 now as we're going to a much reduced effort of data
27 collection in AMBCC. This other data will help fill in
28 the gap until we all agree on the process on how to
29 collect the data in the future. So those are the two
30 main motivators for this proposal.
31
32 CHAIRMAN NANENG: Any questions to
33 Liliana regarding this agenda item.
34
35 MR. PEDERSON: Can you repeat the
36 second motivator.
37
38 MS. NAVES: Most other harvest surveys
39 in Alaska, if not all of them, release data to the
40 village level, so it's really difficult to integrate
41 AMBCC data with that of other harvest surveys that also
42 collect data at the village level. So if we're all
43 reporting in the same currency, we can easily
44 incorporate a large body of data that's out there, but
45 right now it's very difficult to work with this other
46 information. This could help us fill in the gap, at
47 least partly, until we have another system to collect
48 data.
49
50 CHAIRMAN NANENG: Rick.

1 MR. ROWLAND: Okay, thank you. Where
2 it says old business, that's talking about data release
3 at village level. So if we're making a change, it
4 shouldn't be old business, it should be up in the other
5 part of the agenda to where we could use it as an
6 action item because it seems as if something that is
7 old business that is changing and incorporating new
8 ideas it should be up higher on the agenda instead of
9 having us talk about it as old business and saying this
10 is what we're doing.

11
12 Then also yesterday we had a discussion
13 about this topic as well and there was a comment that,
14 oh, there's a lot of data that comes to the council,
15 but then now we're doing things different and I don't
16 have that data or the new paperwork. So just now we're
17 moving forward with this under an old business deal,
18 not making an action on it without the information
19 about other than what might have been said yesterday
20 relating to universities and stuff.

21
22 So I think it should be set in a way on
23 an agenda where -- I was looking at -- for example, we
24 have a proposal process of how things process and if
25 things like this come to the council for our advice on
26 how they happen, we should have that process too where
27 if something new comes up we should filter it as new
28 instead of attaching it to old business.

29
30 CHAIRMAN NANENG: Thanks, Rick. Any
31 comments anybody.

32
33 (No comments)

34
35 CHAIRMAN NANENG: The question that I
36 have, if this proposal to bring the information to a
37 village level, the data to be released, I think under
38 the Yukon-Kuskokwim Delta Goose Management Plan one of
39 the things that they tried to do was to try and provide
40 that number of birds that are harvested per species to
41 the village level and it was the RITs that provided
42 that because the villages wanted to know how these
43 migratory birds that are on the list were being
44 impacted by harvest. It wasn't necessarily done every
45 year, but that information was provided to each and
46 every village on an annual basis.

47
48 If you look back at the history of
49 Yukon-Kuskokwim Delta, I think year after year there's
50 harvest surveys that were done before it was

1 transferred to the State of Alaska and after the
2 transfer we have not seen much other than reports being
3 made at AMBCC and none of that information is now going
4 out to the villages like it had been before.

5
6 MS. NAVES: Data collection in the
7 Yukon-Kuskokwim Delta is still done since the RITs are
8 the main body in coordinating and overseeing the survey
9 there. So this part didn't change any. I work closely
10 with the RITs. I don't know what changed on their
11 process of communicating with the villages.

12
13 CHAIRMAN NANENG: Any idea what process
14 changed from the Fish and Wildlife Service? I know it
15 was left primarily with the Refuge offices to provide
16 that information.

17
18 MS. NAVES: Maybe it's something to be
19 talked or discussed with the Refuge in Bethel because
20 here we don't know what's the situation in the Refuge.

21
22 CHAIRMAN NANENG: I know that it will
23 come from the Refuge, however it will have to be
24 approved by the regional director before this is done.

25
26 Todd, do you have a comment.

27
28 MR. SFORMO: Todd Sformo, North Slope
29 Borough. Since this is just a proposal for discussion,
30 one thing you mentioned was the proposal seeks options
31 and processes to alleviate concerns. I was wondering
32 has there been any discussion on the release of
33 information at the village level in the event of some
34 kind of emergency or an oil spill. I mean would
35 something like the National Resource Damage Assessment
36 could they subpoena records that you would have at the
37 village level in order to use that for damage
38 assessment. Has that been discussed or not?

39
40 MS. NAVES: I'm not familiar with this
41 part of how it was said before. Maybe someone else
42 here have information on that if this was every
43 discussed.

44
45 MR. SFORMO: Yeah, I don't know.
46 That's why I thought.....

47
48 MS. NAVES: No, I think it's a really
49 good point. This is one of the -- I just went to the
50 motivators off of this proposal, but in the letter that

1 was distributed at the committee meetings there is
2 outlined also why data at the village level is more
3 useful. I think you bring a good point there about why
4 data at the village level is more useful for a number
5 of stakeholders.

6

7 MR. SFORMO: Well, I think it could be
8 useful to stakeholders or it could be used against
9 stakeholders. I don't have one opinion or the other.
10 I just wanted to know if that was part of the
11 discussion, could these records be subpoenaed and then
12 used either for or against damage assessment for a
13 Native community.

14

15 So it was just a comment.

16

17 MS. NAVES: Thank you.

18

19 CHAIRMAN NANENG: Any other questions
20 or comments. Go ahead, Peter.

21

22 MR. DEVINE: Thank you, Mr. Chair. Are
23 we speaking on this paper that we were handed
24 yesterday?

25

26 MR. PROBASCO: Under Tab 2.

27

28 MR. DEVINE: Okay. Well, it says
29 proposals for discussion, but I don't see it under our
30 proposals. We're asked to act on this and we have a
31 time frame of one month. A few of us here we represent
32 226 tribes, so you're asking us to approve information
33 that we haven't even taken back to our people, so I
34 don't know. I'm confused.

35

36 CHAIRMAN NANENG: Thanks, Peter. Go
37 ahead, Liliana.

38

39 MS. NAVES: Hey, Peter. As I explained
40 it when I first came here to talk about this today,
41 we're not expecting any action on this today. This is
42 being presented for discussion and it was first
43 introduced at the committees meeting and the idea is
44 that we start hearing concerns and how we could address
45 those concerns and clarify questions and also discuss a
46 process of how to go about this, but we don't expect
47 any action on this today. I think the discussion is
48 fairly recent at this group and we don't expect an
49 action today.

50

1 CHAIRMAN NANENG: Does that explain
2 your question or concern?

3
4 MR. DEVINE: No, because yesterday in
5 our workshop it was told to us that they wanted a
6 response back. You know, if it's a proposal for the
7 future, it should show, you know, for 2014 or whatever.
8 As this stands right now, it looks like trying to pull
9 a Native trick and slip something in under the rug.

10
11 CHAIRMAN NANENG: Okay. Thanks, Peter.
12 Frank. And then I'll recognize that guy after Frank.

13
14 MR. WOODS: Yeah, Liliana, I thought
15 the same thing Pete did when you sent us the PDF for
16 the proposal for discussion. I thought you were
17 submitting a proposal, so I got ready to charge my
18 board with having to review the whole proposal and I'm
19 like, man. Then Pete -- it's not a proposal. I guess
20 can you eliminate the proposal for discussion.

21
22 MS. NAVES: We can name it topic for
23 discussion.

24
25 MR. WOODS: There you go. When you
26 term it proposal, it sets off alarms that we have to
27 review, fully vet, pros and cons, bring it on the
28 agenda, yea or nay it, and then bring it before this
29 board. So, you're right, Pete. That's my first
30 response is exactly what you did. I was like holy cow.
31 My response was -- you haven't had your regional
32 meeting yet, huh?

33
34 MR. DEVINE: No.

35
36 MR. WOODS: Just hand this out as a --
37 what I did with my board, I said it's up to each
38 village and each region if they want information
39 disseminated at a village level and there's three
40 topics here. Like Todd said, it can be used against
41 you or it can be used for you. The information is
42 helpful on a regional level, but on a village level
43 it's almost discriminatory when you've got 60 people
44 and there's 70 Emperors getting caught in the same
45 village. Holy cow, you're going to have full attention
46 to the -- I guarantee you somebody is going to be
47 visiting with some questions. That's one of the
48 issues. I didn't want to go there, but I'll leave it
49 up to my board to disseminate it, review it and what
50 basically their villages want to do.

1 MS. NAVES: Peter, are you referring to
2 that other item on the agenda that is about the survey
3 review process that.....

4
5 MR. DEVINE: Yeah, that was.....

6
7 MS. NAVES: Okay. So I think that's a
8 different talk.

9
10 MR. DEVINE: That's where the confusion
11 is.

12
13 MS. NAVES: Yeah, uh-huh. That was
14 about the contracting -- the tag stuff and the
15 contracting paperwork to go with the survey review that
16 Terry handed out yesterday. Sounds clear now?

17
18 MR. DEVINE: Yeah. Thank you.

19
20 CHAIRMAN NANENG: Brandon, go ahead.

21
22 MR. AHMASUK: Thank you, Mr. Chair.
23 Brandon Ahmasuk, subsistence director. We had our
24 Bering Straits/Norton Sound meeting a few weeks ago and
25 on behalf of Kawerak we do not support -- we had a
26 chance to review the village data release and Kawerak
27 does not support village data release at the village
28 level for fear of prosecution.

29
30 For instance, the Yellow-Billed Loon
31 harvest survey, somehow word got out that St. Lawrence
32 Island was overharvesting them, so Gambell and Savoonga
33 took it upon themselves to have a harvest survey at the
34 village level to prove that it was not them that was
35 overharvesting them.

36
37 At our meeting, I asked the question
38 and I forget who was on the phone, Liliana, you did a
39 survey out there, but have you done surveys any place
40 else, Japan, Russia, and pretty much there was no
41 answer to that. And the word got out to Gambell and
42 Savoonga. Start issuing citations. Make an example out
43 of them. Start sending them to jail. That was the
44 word. So Gambell and Savoonga, they were scared.
45 These are villages that have nothing, I mean money-
46 wise, but yet they're the richest people that I know,
47 you know.

48
49 They're proud to be there.

50

1 Thank you.

2

3 CHAIRMAN NANENG: Quyana. Tim.

4

5 MR. ANDREW: Thank you, Mr. Chair.
6 Timothy Andrew for the record, AVCP natural resources.
7 We took this up at the WCC meeting in which Myron was
8 chairing the meeting. One of the concerns that I had
9 about this village level data release is the directed
10 law enforcement efforts that occurred several years ago
11 upon several of our communities. They stayed in those
12 communities throughout the duration of the spring
13 migratory bird hunt. They brought in snowmachines, law
14 enforcement from outside the region to try and deter
15 people from hunting perhaps some prohibited species
16 that were reported on the harvest survey.

17

18 The other issue that it brings up is
19 some of the trust factors that would possibly be
20 affected if village data were to be released per
21 village. People would be less voluntary to release
22 this information accurately to the harvest survey
23 people out in those communities. So we'd prefer not
24 that the data be released on a village level.

25

26 Thank you, Mr. Chair.

27

28 CHAIRMAN NANENG: Quyana. I just want
29 to clarify this. Are you requesting that we do the
30 surveys per village, naming the village as a village
31 that's being surveyed? Because that used to be done in
32 the past and that's what Tim is talking about. Are you
33 just going to follow what we have on the maps within
34 our books, the sections and areas that are going to be
35 surveyed like within the AVCP region, the seven areas,
36 not naming each individual village.

37

38 I think in some instances some of the
39 villages want to see this information for themselves to
40 see what's going on in the other parts of the region or
41 other parts of the state for that matter. I know what
42 Tim is talking about where some of those villages got
43 more visits than others by the Refuge office or Refuge
44 law enforcement people or even Refuge personnel to
45 check on what they were harvesting based on previous
46 harvest reports that were done in villages. So I want
47 that clarified.

48

49 Thank you.

50

1 MS. NAVES: Well, the idea for the
2 survey I think since the very beginning was to have a
3 statewide estimate and we have not been able to do that
4 yet. So I think there is interest on still keeping
5 releasing at the sub-regional and regional level with
6 the intent of having statewide estimates in the past.
7 One option is additionally do the current reporting
8 standards. It's also to be able to release data at the
9 village level. As you know, some villages want to see
10 their data at the village level. When you bring the
11 data to review by the councils, if we are showing the
12 data at the level that they understand better, that
13 they are better familiar with, you can get better info.
14 So this is part of the thing that -- it will be another
15 way of releasing the data.

16
17 CHAIRMAN NANENG: Okay, Jim.

18
19 MR. FALL: I'm Jim Fall with Division
20 of Subsistence. I have two comments, Mr. Chair. First
21 of all, as I think you've already pointed out, what
22 this topic for discussion brings up is not new or
23 unprecedented. Release of species level information at
24 a village level is pretty much standard for most
25 programs no matter who runs it, whether it's a Native
26 organization. The North Slope Borough for example
27 reports information at a village level, the Fish and
28 Wildlife Service and other researchers.

29
30 The Division of Subsistence has the
31 Community Subsistence Information System, which is an
32 online data source on subsistence harvests in the
33 state. That has about 450 datasets which report at the
34 village level, all of which have been approved by
35 tribal governments for release, which is a key point to
36 this. None of this will be released without tribal
37 government review. So it's certainly not unprecedented
38 to do it this way for all the reasons that we've
39 discussed.

40
41 Getting back to Todd's question about
42 subpoenas and court orders, I have a little bit of
43 experience with that connected to the Exxon Valdez oil
44 spill where the Division had worked with tribes prior
45 to the spill and released information that they had
46 reviewed at a village level, which was used by the
47 Native class to build its case against Exxon. Exxon
48 sought to obtain household level information in order
49 to check our work and a court order was issued denying
50 them access to that information because the information

1 is confidential, was confidential. Certain information
2 was then made available so that the reliability of the
3 findings could be assessed. We had no problem with
4 that.

5
6 I think that's the strongest example
7 that I know of where the protection of individuals and
8 the information that they provided was very firmly
9 established by the court.

10
11 Thank you, Mr. Chair.

12
13 CHAIRMAN NANENG: Thank you. Any other
14 comments.

15
16 Frank.

17
18 MR. WOODS: What is the mission
19 statement of the Division of Subsistence, document
20 traditional?

21
22 MR. FALL: I don't have it memorized.
23 What an embarrassing moment for me.

24
25 (Laughter)

26
27 MR. FALL: It's something like to
28 scientifically investigate and report all aspects of
29 customary and traditional uses of wild resources in
30 Alaska. It's something like that, Frank.

31
32 MR. WOODS: The reason I ask is I was
33 asked that from -- because we work really closely with
34 Subsistence Division in Dillingham. They document
35 personal use and harvests in the state of Alaska. So
36 we're doing our job on our end. We're capturing and
37 killing everything in sight. Your job is to document
38 that, right?

39
40 (Laughter)

41
42 MR. WOODS: You said you don't have an
43 accurate statewide count? Can we guesstimate or at
44 least estimate?

45
46 MS. NAVES: You can estimate that.
47 Part of the difficulty of having a statewide estimate
48 is have a bunch of gaps because the survey doesn't
49 cover all the regions all the years, so it has a bunch
50 of gaps. Another thing that makes it difficult is that

1 by nature the subsistence harvest is really variable,
2 so it has lots of variation from one year to another,
3 so it's difficult to fill in those gaps in a way that
4 appropriately account for this yearly variation. So
5 sure you can come up with numbers, but we are still in
6 the process of gathering data to fill in the gaps. For
7 some regions we have very little data collection. In
8 Northwest Arctic, for instance, we never had a complete
9 survey there. So this is one of the difficulties.

10

11 MR. WOODS: The second question is --
12 and thank God you guys are on the Harvest Committee me
13 and Mike are on. This process has to be refined.
14 That's why I think there's got to be a little more
15 effective way of doing this. Dale, your charge is to
16 find some way to do it now. So we're doing our part.
17 Jim's got his mission statement memorized now. He's
18 doing his part.

19

20 (Laughter)

21

22 MR. WOODS: I'll move on. We just
23 wanted to help Dale in this process. The release of
24 information would be a specific request from each
25 village. I don't want to make that call. I would hate
26 to have -- as a regional representative, I wouldn't
27 want to make that call at all. I'll let the village on
28 a village-based level do it for me. So thanks.

29

30 MS. NAVES: I'd like to make one last
31 comment to hopefully truncate a little bit Joel and
32 Brandon about the Yellow-Billed Loon situation in the
33 Bering Straits. We worked really close with the
34 villages and have a really transparent process in
35 discussion on how to release the data. Since the
36 listing of the Yellow-Billed Loon there was never law
37 enforcement involved in any part of the process.

38

39 We worked on doing really strong
40 harvest surveys and had a really strong process to
41 communicate with the villages and to let them know that
42 this is a species of conservation concern to spread the
43 word, but law enforcement never got involved in this
44 issue. There is no plan at all for that. So the
45 villages, rest assured that they are fine. There is
46 nothing to get worried about there.

47

48 I think that what Stan Pruszenski said
49 yesterday very much goes in the same lines that it's
50 not the harvest surveys that define the priorities for

1 the law enforcement action. They basically know where
2 the birds occur and they go where they know the birds
3 are. It's not related to the harvest survey. So I
4 think that there is no reason at all for Gambell and
5 Savoonga to have any concern about that for any of the
6 previous years and any time in the future. Law
7 enforcement was not part of the efforts to solve the
8 question about Yellow-Billed Loon.

9

10 CHAIRMAN NANENG: Okay. I saw Eric
11 raise his hand before Rick and Frank, so I'll recognize
12 Eric.

13

14 MR. TAYLOR: Thank you, Mr. Chair.
15 Eric Taylor with Fish and Wildlife Service, migratory
16 birds. I just want to try to add some additional
17 detail or information to Mr. Ahmasuk's comments.
18 Indeed, in 2007, the harvest survey showed a very high
19 unsubstantiated number of Yellow-Billed Loons that were
20 harvested at St. Lawrence Island. I'm estimating the
21 number was around 1,100. Certainly it caused concern
22 to all agencies, certainly residents.

23

24 The Fish and Wildlife Service
25 immediately took action in terms of outreach and
26 education and then we, as Liliana said, we worked with
27 the Department of Fish and Game and developed a
28 specific survey with Gambell and Savoonga. We had
29 great cooperation and support by both of those villages
30 in terms of trying to make sure we got the best
31 information as possible. Part of it certainly was an
32 identification problem. I think part of it was an
33 expansion problem in terms of limited amount of data
34 that was expanded over a region, but these specific
35 surveys did demonstrate in 2011 and '12 that very small
36 numbers of loons are taken by those residents.

37

38 I do want to second something that
39 Liliana said. Mr. Ahmasuk, I'm unaware of the comment
40 relative to -- that we want to use as an example or
41 issue citations. Certainly the Fish and Wildlife
42 Service law enforcement was not -- did not take that
43 action or opinion. The first thing that we thought in
44 terms of Migratory Bird Division and law enforcement is
45 that there's something astray with the numbers that
46 were collected in terms of either expansion or
47 identification. Indeed, I think both of those factors
48 -- I think Liliana is certainly the expert in this as
49 opposed to me, but both of those factors had a play in
50 certainly what was an outlier in the estimate of

1 Yellow-Billed Loons as well as common loons that don't
2 occur there in terms of both of those estimates.

3
4 So I just want to make a point that the
5 Fish and Wildlife Service has taken, I think, very
6 positive steps to working with both of those villages
7 to try to get the most accurate information. Indeed we
8 have, I think, demonstrated that subsistence harvest is
9 not a threat to Yellow-Billed Loons in those regions.

10
11 Tamara Zeller is here and Tamara has
12 worked closely with Liliana in terms of implementing
13 those village-specific surveys. So, Tamara, I don't
14 know if you have any additional comments or not.

15
16 MS. ZELLER: I don't.

17
18 CHAIRMAN NANENG: A couple of people
19 raised their hands, so I'll recognize Eric first -- I
20 mean not Eric, Randy. Randy, go ahead.

21
22 MR. ROWLAND: Rick.

23
24 CHAIRMAN NANENG: Rick.

25
26 MR. ROWLAND: Okay. So I have a
27 question for State of Alaska. My question was is that
28 we didn't have this discussion yet because we haven't
29 had a meeting because we just got our funding, but the
30 question is, on your info, which is a topic for
31 discussion instead of proposal, on number 4 there it
32 says about halfway through that paragraph it says Whale
33 Pass there. Now I'm wondering -- you're saying you
34 talked to some tribes but then you're talking about
35 communities there, but you throw in Whale Pass. So how
36 many Whale Passes are there in Alaska? If there's just
37 one, which one is that? If it's the one that I'm
38 thinking about, and you said you talked to the tribes,
39 did you already talk to the tribes at that area where
40 the Whale Pass is at?

41
42 MR. FALL: Mr. Chair. Jim Fall again.
43 Whale Pass is a community, I believe, on Prince of
44 Wales island in Southeast Alaska. The Division of
45 Subsistence, of course, works with tribes and it also
46 works with non-tribal residents of all Alaska
47 communities. I don't know whether there's a Whale Pass
48 tribe or not, but if there was they would have been
49 consulted and we would have gotten approval from them
50 before we did the work there. But the work has been

1 completed in Whale Pass according to our procedures and
2 the ethics procedures that we follow. But it's Whale
3 Pass and I'm pretty sure it's Prince of Whales Island.

4

5 MR. ROWLAND: Okay. Thanks.

6

7 MR. WOODS: I'd like to add to Brandon
8 comments and put it in maybe a scenario of -- when I
9 read the -- and it's not -- maybe a choice of better
10 words maybe, Jim and then Liliana. Not just proposal
11 but in the section that includes the Yellow-Billed Loon
12 issue, it's a misidentification of birds that gets
13 disseminated. From Dillingham and Bristol Bay, this
14 document is almost worthless because Dillingham
15 specific gets its own survey. Do you understand how
16 that works?

17

18 MS. NAVES: It helps on an individual
19 level.

20

21 MR. WOODS: On a village level it can
22 be utilized and disseminated any which way possible as
23 long as the village requests it and that's great. Put
24 it in perspective. If I go out and I'm out hunting and
25 subsisting, there's not just that regulation and
26 technical and the analytical and the regulatory
27 proposal for time area and seasons and limits and
28 number. There's also that spiritual aspect. It's like
29 going to church and the Pope shows up and starts
30 demanding the 10 percent tides and offering that you
31 don't have, literally. And then he sends the bishop
32 the next Sunday and says, well, you're not doing your
33 job, let's start fining you and we'll cut back your
34 budget because you're not doing specifically what you
35 say you're going to do.

36

37 In that arena -- and that's how I think
38 -- I believe the big cultural is a shared group of
39 activities and a set of group practices that we, as a
40 community, have a hard time not imposing the regulation
41 and having to swallow the hardship of having to
42 regulate and follow the Federal bureaucracy. But when
43 you impose that onto a subsistence user, that almost is
44 -- it's an invasion of privacy, it's an invasion of
45 personal space. It becomes almost a spiritual
46 violation. I've experienced this before.

47

48 If the heavy hand of the law comes down
49 upon one individual for trying to do what he thinks is
50 the best he can do and that person going to church

1 might only have 50 cents that day or a dollar for the
2 10 percent tides and offerings and the bishop is up
3 there screaming at them, then he asks the Pope to come
4 in and say you're not doing your job according to the
5 word of God. That's what I'm talking about. That's
6 how important this stuff is. There's an actual
7 spiritual aspect of it. Nothing against the
8 Solicitor's Office, but can you add good orderly
9 direction to that solicitation? I don't think so.
10 That's why it says in the Constitution that everybody
11 has a right to religious practice and beliefs. That's
12 how deep this stuff goes.

13

14 Did that make sense to everybody? I'm
15 just trying to update because it becomes this level --
16 I sympathize with you, Brandon, because you are right.
17 Them people are proud people and it's a spiritual
18 aspect of this portion that I'm talking about. Trying
19 to connect that to a Western way of thinking is hard to
20 explain, correct? That the people out in Gambell and
21 Savoonga heavily depend on that resource, but also
22 there's a common sharing of that resource.

23

24 So when people come to this table and
25 say with a proposal like this it's hard to -- like you,
26 automatically the back of my ears start ringing because
27 it's serious stuff. When you put proposal, we're
28 heavily regulated in every aspect of our life from the
29 time we get up and go subsisting until the time we shut
30 down. It's dawn till dusk in the migratory bird world.

31

32 When you put things like -- we already
33 had the Yellow-Billed Loon issue come up. It becomes
34 really personal. Maybe a better choice of terminology.
35 Maybe a better scenario. Maybe a better -- I don't
36 know how you want to put it. Maybe a less detailed
37 report. A one-pager would work just fine. I know you
38 guys are analytic, you guys live and breathe this stuff
39 every day. The average person -- when I get home --
40 they don't want to read this. Our regional RAC they
41 have a simple one-page document that they want a
42 questionnaire for.

43

44 Here's our -- if you could outline it
45 in one page. Native people are visual, not analytical
46 and not literal in a literacy version of this whole --
47 I got so much information going across my desk on an
48 average day that people don't even know what the hell
49 I'm talking about. When I sit down and have a
50 conversation, people would look at me like -- you know,

1 your terminology isn't the same. I've changed since I
2 started getting involved in this process. The hard
3 part is sitting there trying to understand and trying
4 to disseminate it all to village average common folk
5 sitting out in the village.

6

7 Brandon, my hat is off, a young person,
8 people coming in here and educating themselves. We
9 need 20 even in this room just to disseminate the
10 existing regulations and protocols and the treaties and
11 everything that's involved.

12

13 So, with that I'll shut up. I think
14 this is a real important issue for the State and the
15 Feds to listen to, is that we have to keep it simple.
16 Simple as possible. Our charge is go out and harvest.
17 Your charge is document and what is it there, Jim?

18

19 MR. FALL: All aspects of customary and
20 traditional uses.

21

22 MR. WOODS: Yep. And the Feds
23 government is what now, budgets and -- tides and
24 offerings. There you go.

25

26 (Laughter)

27

28 CHAIRMAN NANENG: Quyana, Frank. I
29 just want to make this comment. You know, at the time
30 we negotiated the Migratory Bird Treaty, and many of
31 you have heard me before, we talked -- the people that
32 were on the other side of the table talked about we've
33 got to try and keep their harvest at 3 percent of the
34 total harvest. Is the survey trying to make sure that
35 we keep that number to 3 percent of the total harvest.
36 I know that people will say no, no, no, that's not the
37 purpose. But when we added the indigenous inhabitant
38 definition, it did not include that 3 percent. That
39 was not there before.

40

41 You guys understand what I'm talking
42 about? That 3 percent does not include all of the
43 rural inhabitants that now live in rural Alaska to be
44 allowed to harvest these birds. It's the subsistence
45 harvest done primarily with the Native -- you know,
46 with the tribal people within the villages. That
47 raises a question, what number are we trying to really
48 attain to by the information that we're gathering?

49

50 I know one of the points that's been

1 made in the past with the surveys is we're trying to
2 recognize that the number that you've harvested in the
3 past with the surveys that number that you will
4 continually get in the future, that's the objective,
5 but with today's world are these numbers going to be
6 used against us in some point to legislative process or
7 even by regulation that will allow our people not to be
8 able to harvest migratory birds in the future.

9
10 I know that's not the plan, but it can
11 be because right now we're dealing with what Steve
12 Ginnis brought up earlier regarding exclusion of some
13 of these people that live in urban areas. You know, at
14 the time we did not have any exclusion language, but
15 somebody brought up the exclusion language and then we
16 had to try and find a way to be inclusive by allowing
17 the tribes to be able to invite these people to come
18 back and hunt in their respective villages. So it
19 seems like it gets more and more complicated.

20
21 I know that in rural Alaska we're the
22 most researched people in the world. Everything from
23 health to, I don't know, maybe speaking in Yup'ik and
24 English for that matter. Speaking our own language.
25 So we just raised the question that ultimately what
26 does this information being gathered for. Is it at
27 some point in the future to be able to set up rules and
28 regulations that would prevent our people from being
29 able to hunt and fish in the future because I've seen
30 that happen with other resources within the state.

31
32 You know, more pressure is going to be
33 put on these migratory birds in the Yukon-Kuskokwim
34 Delta. Yukon River at the mouth is on a moratorium by
35 regulation by the State of Alaska and they're not going
36 to be allowed to fish for chinook salmon at the same
37 time while they're closed for chinook salmon they're
38 not going to be able to fish for chum salmon. What
39 other food resource are they going to have? What other
40 food resource are they going to be able to harvest?
41 You know, these are things that are becoming reality
42 today. We're going to have to find a way to deal with
43 this.

44
45 The State of Alaska saying by its Board
46 of Fish system is that by regulation we're going to
47 have to try and conserve these salmon that our people
48 have survived on for many years, from time immemorial.
49 But today, because of that regulation, we're in a
50 moratorium status. Yet everybody else in the rest of

1 the world seems to be able to harvest these resource.
2 It's getting to the point that are the amounts needed
3 for subsistence in the future going to be met because
4 right now the numbers that they're now looking at for
5 amounts needed for subsistence for salmon is lower in
6 number and are they going to use that number in the
7 future as being that's what you get. You're not going
8 to get anywhere beyond that number.

9
10 So I hope that everybody thinks about
11 this and approaches cautiously, but I know that in many
12 of the villages they would instead of providing the
13 numbers directly from their own communities they'd like
14 to see what the number of birds or other resource are
15 being harvested by people in the rest of the world.
16 Back in 1994 when we first started talking about
17 putting the Yukon-Kuskokwim Delta Goose Management
18 Plan, the only numbers that they were talking about was
19 the harvest by the Native community. They didn't
20 report that California was harvesting 174,000 White
21 Fronts. They did not report that Cackling Canada Geese
22 that was wintering in California that they were getting
23 over 70,000 or more.

24
25 The only pictures that showed up as
26 reasons for the decline of the birds back then was a
27 lady with a basket or a bucket full of eggs. A guy
28 from one of the villages with a few birds laying next
29 to him when he was out hunting. But we never really
30 got a full report of how much was really being
31 harvested in the wintering grounds of these birds, but
32 we know today by the fact that we've been working with
33 the Yukon-Kuskokwim Delta Goose Management Plan there's
34 substantially less people that are harvesting birds in
35 the wintering grounds than they ever did before.

36
37 I hope that everybody keeps this in
38 mind and work through the process but at the same time
39 I kind of at times kind of question what are we
40 gathering this information for. This coming spring
41 during the springtime when the birds arrive there's
42 going to be more pressure put on the migratory birds as
43 well as other marine mammals by our people because
44 moose is closed now, but chinook salmon or even chum
45 salmon that our people rely on for fresh food during
46 the springtime or summertime is going to be closed from
47 the last week of May through the end of June.

48
49 So it's going to have a big pressure on
50 our people. So if you see a spike in numbers of bird

1 harvest, that will be the reason of why a spike in
2 harvest might happen. We're kind of anticipating that.
3 That's why we want to take a look at the northern,
4 which is going to be the most impacted within our
5 region if the numbers are right.

6
7 So all these things have a cause and
8 effect. That's just my comments regarding this survey
9 and this request to provide village-based information.
10 I know you had a question, that lady in the back that
11 works -- did you have.....

12
13 UNIDENTIFIED VOICE: No.

14
15 CHAIRMAN NANENG: Okay. I thought you
16 said you had a question. Joel and then -- oh, okay.
17 You want to give Peter an opportunity to say something?
18 Okay, Peter.

19
20 MR. PROBASCO: Somebody is online.

21
22 CHAIRMAN NANENG: Is someone online
23 that wants to make a comment. Hello.

24
25 (No comments)

26
27 CHAIRMAN NANENG: Okay. Joel.

28
29 MR. SACCHEUS: Thank you, Mr. Chair.
30 On this data release at village level, when we had a
31 meeting a couple weeks ago the White Mountain
32 representative, Peter Buck, and the Stebbins
33 representative were sure against this data release
34 thing here. They really commented about it, about it
35 leading to more surveys and more things to be released
36 and used against them.

37
38 I just wanted to bring that up.

39
40 Thank you.

41
42 CHAIRMAN NANENG: Quyana, Joel. Tim
43 and then Steve. Maybe after these two people if
44 there's no other we can cut off the discussion. I
45 think we've discussed it at length. Tim.

46
47 MR. ANDREW: Thank you, Mr. Chair. If
48 I heard it correctly, the village level data is already
49 there within the Alaska Division of Subsistence
50 database management system. What really scares me is

1 that people in the villages, people in tribal councils
2 freely provide us information to the State of Alaska or
3 perhaps maybe the Federal survey systems, but what
4 really scared me is the accessibility of the data by
5 other departments and whatnot.

6
7 Whenever I get a hunting license,
8 there's always a statement that this information will
9 be provided to Department of Public Safety, Department
10 of Administration, Department of Labor and the
11 governor, the governor's office, whatnot, the Alaska
12 State Legislature. I kind of fear for the people in
13 our villages that really provide this information in
14 good faith and honesty that this information would be
15 kept confidential at their household level.

16
17 In the manner of releasing the
18 information it is my opinion that if they are going to
19 be releasing information to whatever or whoever
20 governing source that they obtain the permission of the
21 village first to release that information on the
22 village level. Like, for example -- I'm sorry to pick
23 on law enforcement, but law enforcement is one of the
24 biggest people that would probably likely ask for that
25 information. That they get the villages or the tribal
26 council's permission to release that information to law
27 enforcement and for what purpose.

28
29 I would also like to see that not only
30 the tribes be consulted at this level but also the
31 regional organizations as well, like AVCP, Tanana
32 Chiefs and Kawerak and others, just so that we have the
33 opportunity to tell the villages that this is their
34 option, they're well within their right that they can
35 either provide that information or give an okay to
36 release that information or to deny the information for
37 whatever purpose and provide our human resources to
38 that village.

39
40 Because, you know, I share the same
41 fears that you have, Mr. Chairman, that perhaps at some
42 future -- at some point in the future that they're
43 going to look at the data and if we are beyond that 2
44 percent or 3 percent threshold, that the Alaska Native
45 subsistence harvest of -- or the Alaska indigenous
46 inhabitant harvest of migratory birds is no longer and
47 this management body be dissolved and we revert to only
48 the fall hunt.

49
50 It's an incredible sacrifice to even

1 fathom, to even think about as we go about collecting
2 this data, releasing this data to whoever it may be.
3 Like we've always told our villages is that data is a
4 double-edge sword. Damned if you do and damned if you
5 don't. As far as I can see, there's more damns in
6 damned if you do than damned if you don't. Pretty
7 scary.

8

9 Thank you, Mr. Chair.

10

11 CHAIRMAN NANENG: Quyana. Steve.

12

13 MR. GINNIS: I just wanted to echo your
14 statements you made, Mr. Chairman. As a former chief
15 of my village, we've been -- on numerous occasions have
16 been asked to participate in research, studies and so
17 forth and so on. Just like the statements that have
18 been made, we don't know what becomes of the
19 information after it's provided. I think historically,
20 as Native people, we're suspect. We're suspect to any
21 State or Federal studies or anything of that nature
22 because we don't know where the information is going.
23 We don't know how that information is going to be
24 utilized.

25

26 In our tribe, before I left to become
27 the president of Tanana Chiefs, we put a protocol in
28 place whereby if any studies are to be made the first
29 thing we want to know is what's the purpose and who are
30 you going to be studying and where is this information
31 going to go. Also the protocol calls for approval from
32 the tribe before it's shared with anybody so at least
33 we can know where that information is going and we can
34 respond to any issues or concerns that are raised to
35 those that that information is being provided to.

36

37 One of the things over the years I've
38 experienced is incomplete reports, incomplete studies.
39 It's the worst thing you can put out there because it's
40 not a true reflection of what it is that you're trying
41 to access information on. So it's not a good thing to
42 put something out there that's incomplete because it
43 doesn't really show a true reflection.

44

45 These type of things really does
46 concern me even today because I've seen incidents where
47 people thinking that they're doing the right thing and
48 providing information at some point in time was used
49 against them in the form of regulation. Some
50 regulation is adopted because there might be some

1 overharvesting going on or something like this. I've
2 seen that happen.

3
4 It's a good thing to provide
5 information to know what's going on within a specific
6 area, but how that information is used is another
7 matter. I believe in doing studies. I believe in
8 doing harvest information and stuff like this so we can
9 get a better handle on managing that resource, but when
10 it goes outside of that it begins to impose stricter
11 regulations on our way of life, that's a different
12 issue for me.

13
14 So, with that, thank you, Mr. Chairman.

15
16 CHAIRMAN NANENG: Quyana, Steve. One
17 last comment. I saw Rick -- Randy -- Rick raise his
18 hand.

19
20 MR. ROWLAND: Thank you. This one is
21 to State of Alaska. It's about a couple things that
22 Mr. Ginnis mentioned. We're being asked to disclose
23 this information and then from the past history things
24 have happened where it's turned around against us, but
25 one is -- you know, we've talked about, okay, we're
26 being surveyed. Is there intent by the State to gain
27 information from international uses and then
28 incorporate those into this information and how is this
29 information going to be used and are you going to make
30 a presentation about us in a picture, like in a graph
31 or something to where it would be simply understood
32 when it comes time to finding out if this is going to
33 be on the action items. That's it.

34
35 MR. FALL: Rick, are you specifically
36 asking about the migratory bird work?

37
38 MR. ROWLAND: About this process.

39
40 MR. FALL: Yeah. Well, I think in
41 terms of reporting, the reporting and review procedures
42 will be the same. The information will be reported in
43 a report that would be released for review by the
44 Council in September and hopefully approved in the
45 spring meeting. So this wouldn't change any of that.
46 We, as an organization, think it would actually improve
47 that process by -- in a lot of ways that are laid out
48 in the paper.

49
50 In terms of summarizing the information

1 in a way that's accessible, that's something that we
2 try to do all the time. There have been in the past
3 overviews of the Bristol Bay findings provided.....

4

5 MR. ROWLAND: Yep.

6

7 MR. FALL:and that's something
8 we'll continue to do. That's pretty much standard
9 operating procedure for our work. In terms of data
10 collection and a scope beyond the State, that's not
11 really within the division of subsistence purview per
12 se. Harvest information is available through the U.S.
13 Fish and Wildlife Service and other entities that can
14 be used because it's a good point that any subsistence
15 harvest information needs to be seen in context. I
16 think everybody in this room totally agrees with that
17 and those sources should be tapped and should be made
18 available. I think that's responds to the questions.

19

20 MR. ROWLAND: Jim, another connected
21 thing was that, of course, you guys are State of Alaska
22 and then I saw that under the mission statement of the
23 State of Alaska it excludes Fish and Game under
24 Division of Natural Resources. So the development of
25 the natural resources is for all of the public and the
26 information related to it. So in connection to
27 migratory birds, does the migratory birds fall under
28 the Division of Natural Resources and are they -- how
29 would we say it -- the Department of Natural Resource's
30 mission is to responsibly develop Alaska's resources by
31 making them available for maximum use and benefit
32 consistent with the public interest.

33

34 So, with that State of Alaska, Division
35 of Natural Resource's mission, is it possible that
36 Natives in the villages could give this information out
37 and it could turn around and then be used against them
38 in another way by commercial development through public
39 information of duck hunting guides taking people into
40 the places that they found the information from.

41

42 Further on in here it says that -- it
43 talks about -- well, it's getting into that. I'm just
44 wondering if the migratory birds does not fall under
45 that mission.

46

47 CHAIRMAN NANENG: Dale.

48

49 MR. RABE: Thank you, Mr. Chairman.
50 All of the management of the wild birds, mammals, are

1 under the Alaska Fish and Game and not under DNR.

2

3 MR. ROWLAND: Okay.

4

5 CHAIRMAN NANENG: Quyana. One more
6 comment and then we'll break for lunch.

7

8 MR. WOODS: One more comment. As a
9 board member, I'd like to see maybe in the packet next
10 time, Patty, is our outline for timelines we talked
11 about. Timelines for adequately approving the harvest
12 reports that we, as a board -- remember we went through
13 this organizational that not only we have the charge to
14 annually record harvests, but then like these reports
15 are two years out now. It's going to be three years if
16 we don't pass it this year, right?

17

18 So there's an order here. Not only do
19 we have -- maybe just a short briefing maybe, Pete or
20 Donna, that we can follow a timeline according to a
21 harvest report because it's two years out. As a board
22 member, in my mind, that's why I said what I said. Our
23 charge is to get this as efficiently as possible
24 without any ramifications on either end.

25

26 CHAIRMAN NANENG: If there's -- I said
27 one more comment and looking at the time it's
28 lunchtime, so how about coming back here like about
29 1:30. 1:30 back here and we'll continue on with the
30 agenda, which would be the -- I don't think we need to
31 take any action on this last item. 1:30.

32

33 (Off record)

34

35 (On record)

36

37 CHAIRMAN NANENG: We'll go ahead and
38 call the meeting back to order. On the agenda we have
39 item C, update on '12 and '13 harvest surveys. Do you
40 have any updates regarding that, Liliana?

41

42 MS. NAVES: No.

43

44 CHAIRMAN NANENG: Okay. Thanks. We're
45 done with that agenda item. And then update on harvest
46 survey report review process.

47

48 MR. DOYLE: Yes.

49

50 CHAIRMAN NANENG: Okay, Terry.

1 MR. DOYLE: There's a handout in your
2 folder, but it doesn't have page numbers in it, so I
3 printed out a new one with page numbers so it will make
4 it a little bit easier for people to refer to if they
5 have questions, so I'm going to pass these out.
6

7 So what this is is a cooperative
8 agreement, which is the mechanism that we're going to
9 use to fund the subsistence harvest review. So I'll
10 kind of go through it a little bit because it's a big
11 document and some of it is more important in terms of
12 your feedback than others. On the first page,
13 basically this first section kind of gives an overview
14 of what this project is about.
15

16 We're using a cooperative agreement
17 because that allows us to have a lot of interaction
18 which whoever gets awarded this work to do we'll be
19 working with them very closely. We're advertising this
20 through what's called a Cooperative Ecosystem Studies
21 Unit. That is a program that's across the United
22 States. There's 17 different units that are geographic
23 based in terms of kind of their structure. Each of
24 them are housed at a university, but they're composed
25 of universities, of Federal/State agencies, tribes,
26 non-profit organizations. Basically organizations that
27 are focused on natural resource issues.
28

29 As I said, there's 17 of these across
30 the country, so this is going out broadly to the
31 Cooperative Ecosystem Studies Unit itself and any one
32 of those entities. There's, I think, 325 different
33 partners in that system could apply for this work.
34

35 So that's kind of basically this first
36 page. In the first paragraph, it gives an overview of
37 the process, the last part there, in terms of basically
38 looking at the existing survey and data as it exists
39 now, evaluating alternatives to this survey and then
40 making recommendations for improvements.
41

42 A little bit farther down in the second
43 paragraph it kind of gives an overview of the purposes
44 or the objectives. Actually the objectives of the
45 harvest survey. Some of the objectives that had been
46 stated in terms of maintaining traditional levels of
47 bird harvest relative to population sizes, which is in
48 the law. Providing data that can be used for harvest
49 modeling, adaptive harvest strategies and then for
50 conservation needs. As this process goes on, other

1 objectives may well be identified.

2

3 On the second page, I guess into a
4 little bit more detail of the goals and objectives for
5 the project. I've kind of given the overview on this
6 already. We want to look at the current data, how it's
7 been used, how it should be used, identify concerns
8 with the current design and data, identify what are our
9 objectives in using these data and the survey in
10 general. Then, again, develop alternatives, evaluate
11 those alternatives and select an alternative design or
12 it could be the same design. I mean that will be
13 probably one of the alternatives. Select alternatives
14 and evaluate them and then, in the end, choose one.

15

16 The next section is details of the
17 award information. That goes through each year. This
18 is laid out for four years starting in 2013. For the
19 first year we're proposing \$100,000 to hire somebody to
20 do the following activities and products. Basically
21 this is the overall summary of the current condition.
22 Forming a technical group that will be used to review
23 the information and to set objectives. Again, how the
24 current survey data are used is one of the activities,
25 looking at the objectives of the survey and the
26 expectations of it, conduct a review on page 3,
27 activity 5, conduct a review of the current system. So
28 the first year is basically a review of the current
29 situation and producing a report on that and some
30 alternatives.

31

32 The next year is if, as a result of the
33 first year, is decide if a different type of a design
34 is needed. The second year is to select that design
35 and implement it on a one-year trial basis and to
36 evaluate that.

37

38 So in the second year, 2014, there's
39 \$200,000 available. One is to hire the person doing
40 this work and the other is to implement the survey. So
41 the second year is to field test an alternative survey
42 and evaluate it. As is the next year. If, at the end
43 of the second year, for instance, that's still not the
44 right survey or still not meeting the objectives that
45 are determined, then another test will be conducted and
46 that's the third year. The fourth year is basically a
47 wrap up of summarizing everything.

48

49 So it's possible this project may only
50 go one year. It could go as many as four years

1 depending on the results of the previous surveys.

2

3 Then on page 5 we lay out basically the
4 requirements of the person to do this work. It's laid
5 out in terms of what their educational, professional
6 experiences are, what their background in survey
7 designs are, what their background and understanding of
8 subsistence hunting and wildlife management
9 specifically in Alaska, what their background is in
10 that, and their knowledge or experience in working in
11 rural Alaska. Also in that paragraph it lays out that,
12 you know, this is a person that's coordinating this
13 effort and through this technical committee, which
14 we'll have representation from the members of the
15 AMBCC.

16

17 After that is a lot of administrative
18 information that's needed in order to advertise this as
19 a cooperative agreements, things that whoever applies
20 for this needs to know. The following information
21 after page 5 it doesn't really have anything to do with
22 the proposal itself but more the process of how a
23 person applies for this and how they're selected. So
24 the bulk of the information in terms of feedback that
25 we're looking for is in the first five pages.

26

27 What we're asking at this point is that
28 the council review this and we would like to have, if
29 possible, comments back. I guess we were talking about
30 yesterday early May if possible so that we can move
31 this forward.

32

33 CHAIRMAN NANENG: Does anybody have any
34 questions. Rick.

35

36 MR. ROWLAND: Yes. I'm looking at this
37 page 5 here and on your Roman numeral III, basic
38 eligibility requirements, your first sentence says all
39 qualified members of the Cooperative Ecosystem Studies
40 and it shows the website are eligible to apply. Then it
41 says in addition is expected to have this other stuff.
42 So where is your list of what a qualified member is and
43 the list of the Cooperative Ecosystem Studies Unit.

44

45 MR. DOYLE: Right. So a qualified
46 member of a Ecosystem Studies Unit is one that's
47 applied for one of the units and has been accepted for
48 a unit. There's about 325 members scattered amongst 17
49 different units. So the first criteria is they
50 basically have to be a member of a Cooperative

1 Ecosystem Studies Unit, but we don't want just anybody
2 because that includes, you know, like physical
3 scientists of different backgrounds. So then we lay
4 out specifically which of those members with these
5 specific areas of expertise.

6

7 MR. ROWLAND: I don't know if I must
8 have mis-asked it, but if we're going to review this
9 and say our opinion on it, it would be helpful to have
10 like an explanation that we could review about what the
11 qualified members are instead of just having an
12 explanation.

13

14 MR. DOYLE: That's why I just gave that
15 website. There's a whole list. Like I said, there's
16 325 of them. We don't know who's going to apply at
17 this point. It could be any of the 325 that apply.
18 This is a request for a proposal.

19

20 CHAIRMAN NANENG: Anybody else have any
21 questions regarding this. Go ahead, Patty.

22

23 MS. SCHWALENBERG: Yeah, Terry, in that
24 same paragraph on number 4, Roman numeral IV, knowledge
25 and/or experience working in rural Alaska and with
26 Native people or comparable experience from a similar
27 geographic region and then in Roman numeral III it says
28 knowledge and understanding of subsistence hunting, et
29 cetera, et cetera, or a similar -- in Alaska or a
30 similar geographic region. Can you give us an example
31 of what you would qualify or what you would consider a
32 similar geographic region or a comparable experience
33 from a similar geographic region that would be like
34 working with Alaska Native people in Alaska.

35

36 Thank you.

37

38 MR. DOYLE: I guess what comes to mind
39 if somebody did work in northern Canada, for instance.
40 I'm not sure what other examples would be more
41 appropriate.

42

43 CHAIRMAN NANENG: Any other questions
44 from anyone. Go ahead, Frank.

45

46 MR. WOODS: Once you put out the RFP
47 and then you solicit applications, who's going to be --
48 what department basically reviews the grant. Is it a
49 grant board that reviews an RFP?

50

1 MR. DOYLE: Yeah, it will be not our
2 financial people, it will be us that reviews them.
3 Somebody will apply. We, Fish and Wildlife Service,
4 the AMBCC, will review the applicants and select the
5 applicant based on these criteria.

6
7 MR. WOODS: You answered my question.
8 That makes it more perfectly engaged at that time.
9 Awesome.

10
11 CHAIRMAN NANENG: Anybody else has any
12 questions regarding this.

13
14 MR. DOYLE: I just wanted to add one
15 more thing. Looking at these criteria, the selection
16 criteria, is important at this point because that's
17 what we're going to use to base the decision upon. So
18 if there's things that are missing from that, it would
19 be good to include those now.

20
21 CHAIRMAN NANENG: Go ahead, Frank.

22
23 MR. WOODS: So what you're saying is
24 look in the first five pages of eligibility
25 requirements -- I mean the first five pages outline the
26 project and then you just reference the next six -- no,
27 eight. So after Article III, basic eligibility
28 requirements, that's just formality for the Federal
29 system to manage.

30
31 MR. DOYLE: Right. That's part of our
32 financial system in terms of awarding cooperative
33 agreements and things. They have to have all these
34 different sections included in them. I don't know that
35 there's anything in that latter part that really
36 pertains directly to -- you know, most of it is
37 boilerplate.

38
39 MR. WOODS: Yeah. As a member -- like
40 Mike mentioned, that we want to be part of the process.
41 Once we get a part of the -- I want to fully thoroughly
42 understand the process because I thought maybe this RFP
43 would go out and then you'd have a review committee and
44 then now we are the committee, right?

45
46 MR. DOYLE: We haven't set up a formal
47 review committee yet, but that's the intent to do that.

48
49 MR. WOODS: Okay. I'm just walking
50 through the steps in my mind so I don't get lost in the

1 process.

2

3 MR. PROBASCO: If I may, Mr. Chair.

4

5 CHAIRMAN NANENG: Go ahead.

6

7 MR. PROBASCO: To add to what Terry is
8 saying, we're at a step right now that we have this as
9 a draft and we want to get -- we took a shot at the
10 draft. Now we want AMBCC to take a look at this. Is
11 there anything missing, how can we strengthen it. We
12 want to make sure that the researchers that we get to
13 do this work are very knowledgeable of Alaska and
14 subsistence and et cetera, so that's why you have that
15 section that really narrows it down on who's going to
16 apply. Once we get all that information back and we
17 get the comments and we send it out, then we're going
18 to get the proposals that come back. We're still
19 involved in that process. Who's going to do that, if
20 all of you want to be a part of it, yes, or we can do a
21 subset.

22

23 MR. WOODS: Can AMBCC do it?

24

25 MR. PROBASCO: I think to make it the
26 most expedient we need to do it collectively within the
27 procurement regulations of U.S. Fish and Wildlife
28 Service. That's where the money is coming from.

29

30 MR. WOODS: I know.

31

32 MR. PROBASCO: You were just giving me
33 a hard time again, Frank. Okay.

34

35 (Laughter)

36

37 CHAIRMAN NANENG: Peter.

38

39 MR. DEVINE: Yes. I would just like to
40 make comment that I hope when the selection process
41 goes through -- I know, being a Federal grant, it has
42 to go out through everywhere, but in other arenas like
43 fisheries, National Marine Fisheries hires observers
44 and if the person is not acclimated to the area -- we
45 had boats with a new system this year go out and once
46 you called in, you had three days to go out and fish
47 and that was your window, but until you went and
48 reported you were done with that trip, you were still
49 on that trip, but a lot of guys got cut short because
50 the person who was sent to observe got seasick so they

1 had to bring that person home and they couldn't
2 participate again until like 72 hours later. I would
3 like to see somebody from Alaska or Washington get the
4 position versus somebody from Pittsburgh.

5
6 CHAIRMAN NANENG: Any other comments.

7
8 (No comments)

9
10 CHAIRMAN NANENG: The only question
11 that I have is that a couple years ago we had concerns
12 raised regarding the survey process that was raised
13 before this committee or this council and there were
14 some objections to it. Is this the follow up to the
15 issues raised that we're looking into changing the
16 survey process? Correct me if I'm wrong. Because we
17 did raise concerns about potential changes in the way
18 that they were doing this survey and I think the
19 directive came from the regional director that it was
20 going to be done a certain way and then the members of
21 the Alaska Migratory Bird Co-Management Council
22 objected, so I'm wondering if this is the same process
23 that's being reintroduced in a different way. Do you
24 guys remember that? It's just being reintroduced in a
25 different method than what we had raised concerns about
26 a couple years ago.

27
28 Anyone has any answer to that. Eric,
29 respond to that question.

30
31 MR. TAYLOR: Thank you, Mr. Chair.
32 Eric Taylor with Fish and Wildlife Service. The
33 concern that the Fish and Wildlife Service expressed
34 about the subsistence harvest survey, and it's been
35 several years unfortunately, this process has moved at
36 a glacial pace for various reasons, but nonetheless
37 it's moved too slow until we finally have a point now
38 that we have a request for proposals and we're trying
39 to move forward in 2013.

40
41 The original concern came up in part
42 because of the Yellow-Billed Loon estimate back in 2007
43 or '08. Then we also looked at the data in other
44 regions for other species. Then indeed the regional
45 director expressed concern that between concerns about
46 the data, concerns that perhaps the data were not being
47 used by management agencies either in the subsistence
48 process or the regulatory process for the fall hunt,
49 that it was appropriate for the Service to recommend
50 initiating a review process to make sure that the

1 harvest survey was the most effective and efficient and
2 met the needs both of subsistence users as well as
3 people in the regulatory process for the fall hunt. So
4 that was brought forward.

5
6 I think there were concerns initially
7 that the survey was going to be designed specifically
8 to look at endangered species, for example, Spectacled
9 Eiders or Steller's Eiders because the current survey
10 design, and Liliana or Jim Fall can correct me, but the
11 original survey was not specifically designed to
12 measure rare species or species that are rarely taken
13 by subsistence users. So there was concern obviously
14 that when a Yellow-Billed Loon estimate came up from
15 the St. Lawrence Island region that the survey perhaps
16 was not the best instrument to estimate that
17 subsistence harvest level.

18
19 So, indeed, we started the process.
20 There was some concern and angst among I think all
21 partners and this is an attempt that you can actually
22 see something on paper, take a look at the objectives.
23 I think if you look at the objectives I think you will
24 see that indeed all three partners of AMBCC those
25 concerns and interests are being addressed.

26
27 So what I would ask you is take a look
28 at the proposal. As Pete mentioned, this is an
29 opportunity to weigh in. If we have misstated
30 something, if you have some concerns about the way it's
31 written, I think we would certainly incorporate your
32 recommendations to make sure it seems fit.

33
34 The most important thing is we want
35 this survey to meet everyone's needs. There's no smoke
36 and mirrors approach about this thing. There's no law
37 enforcement background associated with this. As Myron
38 said, there are benefits and potential cost of any sort
39 of data collection. Indeed, any sort of data
40 collection on subsistence users or rural residents is a
41 burden upon yourself to have somebody come to your door
42 and ask you to supply information. You might jump
43 right to the end and say what is this going to be used
44 for and could it be used against me. What we're trying
45 to do here is try to make it very clear of how the
46 information will be used and certainly to the benefit
47 of conservation of migratory birds, which I think all
48 of us have our interest in. I hope that helps.

49
50 MR. RABE: Thanks for that, Eric. You

1 made one statement that your goal would be to have it
2 meet the needs of everybody. Realistically, you know,
3 research projects or even survey projects have primary
4 goals and secondary goals and that's because there is
5 no one perfect solution that really is going to meet
6 everybody's needs and I think that's really the core of
7 the question that's being asked, is what is that
8 primary goal. That's what the debate as I recall
9 focused around. The relative priority of enumerating
10 relatively rare elements or occurrences of harvest
11 versus having a strong estimate of the overall harvest,
12 which in that latter one was always promoted as the
13 expectation to comply with the Treaty Amendment about
14 the spring/summer season not having any additive
15 impacts.

16
17 To cut right down to it, I think that
18 that's out there and if I read through these quickly, I
19 don't see anything in the proposal that talks
20 about.....

21
22 (Interruption by overhead speaker)

23
24 MR. RABE: I haven't read it in detail,
25 but if it's in here I haven't caught it where it
26 actually talks about that level of priority for the
27 focus of the project.

28
29 MR. DOYLE: That's a good point, Dale.
30 No survey instrument can do everything. The Fish and
31 wildlife Service doesn't have a budget sufficient
32 enough to do a survey or surveys to address all the
33 species that are currently legal to be hunted and do it
34 in such a manner that we have defensible data. Nor do
35 we have the sufficient budget to do the entire state of
36 Alaska.

37
38 When you read the proposal you'll see
39 the very first thing is how has the current data been
40 used. Have they been used to either address
41 subsistence uses or subsistence questions or questions
42 relative to the fall hunt. The next part of the
43 proposal is to do exactly what you have referenced and
44 that is what should the data be used for. What are the
45 priorities of the AMBCC, the Department of Fish and
46 Game and of the Fish and Wildlife Service in terms of
47 if you have a certain limit of dollars and I can assure
48 you Pete will tell you we have a certain limit of
49 dollars that we can invest toward this. What are the
50 highest priority needs that need to be addressed.

1 That is what I think the group will
2 look at and help the contractor and decide, so those
3 will be the priorities, but, indeed, we're not going to
4 address everything. For example, for rare or hardly
5 limited -- rarely limited species it would take a very
6 detailed proposal, which I'm sure that we're not going
7 to have sufficient dollars to do that.

8
9 Indeed, if the question is should we
10 monitor the most important species, Pacific Greater
11 White-Fronted Geese on the Yukon-Kuskokwim Delta,
12 Cackling Canada Geese on the Yukon-Kuskokwim Delta,
13 Scoters in the Interior, then perhaps we design a
14 survey to assess those trends over time that give us an
15 indication that, jeez, maybe there's something wrong
16 with Scoters on the Interior because the harvest rate
17 has gone down and that matches our aerial survey
18 program that shows Scoters are going down, should
19 somebody start to look at Scoters in the Interior.

20
21 Those sorts of questions and decisions
22 are at the very beginning of that process.

23
24 CHAIRMAN NANENG: Any other questions
25 or comments regarding this presentation. Steve.

26
27 MR. GINNIS: Mr. Chairman. I just
28 wanted to make one comment and I think it's been
29 expressed here. This is fine and good, but you're only
30 studying one group of people in this study. As we all
31 know, these birds migrate internationally and I think
32 there's some way some how this thing ought to be
33 expanded. It's like the International Whaling
34 Commission. Those people on the North Slope
35 established an International Whaling Commission because
36 the whale travels internationally. So they all sit
37 down around the table and discuss harvest levels. What
38 I'm afraid of here is that if we're studying just our
39 population in the state of Alaska and there's other
40 impacts going on outside of our reach here that that
41 can really have an impact on our harvest levels.

42
43 So I'm hoping that somewhere there's a
44 little further reach out there and looking at how these
45 other folks harvest levels may impact what's going on
46 up here.

47
48 This is just basically a one-sided
49 study from my view.

50

1 Thank you.

2

3 CHAIRMAN NANENG: Quyana, Steve. Eric
4 first and then -- I know you're name is not Randy.

5

6 (Laughter)

7

8 CHAIRMAN NANENG: Frank.

9

10 MR. TAYLOR: Thank you, Mr. Chair.
11 Eric Taylor again. Mr. Ginnis raises a very good
12 point. We did consider that concern in the proposal.
13 In fact, when you look at the proposal you will see
14 that as part of this process we're asking the principal
15 investigator to look at how the Fish and Wildlife
16 Service data, HIP data, Harvest Information Program,
17 the program that surveys and estimates harvest of all
18 hunters throughout the United States, how that
19 information is collected and how it's used. So,
20 indeed, we are trying to look at how information is
21 collected throughout the flyway.

22

23 Mr. Ginnis is absolutely correct.
24 Subsistence harvest is one aspect of regulatory process
25 and harvest regulations and population management in
26 waterfowl. Myron earlier today raised a good point
27 that back in 1984 when the Goose Management Plan was
28 developed in cooperation with eight signatories that
29 harvest perhaps was portrayed inaccurately that
30 subsistence harvest had greater impacts on populations
31 and he's correct in the sense that sport harvest, fall
32 harvest of Canada Geese, White-Fronted Geese and Brant
33 in the Lower 48 likely had as big if not a larger
34 impact on those populations.

35

36 So those two things go together in the
37 sense that subsistence harvest is part of the harvest
38 pressure on a regulatory or on a migratory bird species
39 and that's why we're looking at how sport harvest
40 affects it as well.

41

42 Relative to your interest in
43 international harvest, for example on Emperor Geese,
44 that's a tougher nut to crack. We do not have good
45 estimates of the numbers of birds that are being taken
46 for example in Russia for Emperors or For Steller's
47 Eiders. I think that concern is being raised at our
48 headquarters level. It's a topic, I think that Patty
49 has cited that she's going to speak with Brad Bortner,
50 the chief of Migratory Birds with Fish and Wildlife

1 Service, and Jerome Ford, the assistant director of the
2 Migratory Bird Program, about relative to a meeting
3 between Russia, United States and other international
4 meetings that are coming up this year.

5
6 Again, I don't have that information.
7 I don't think it's in the umbrella of this proposal to
8 do an international type of assessment. I think it's a
9 valid concern, but I think at this point we're going to
10 try to address Alaska as well as bring in the
11 information on the fall harvest program.

12
13 CHAIRMAN NANENG: Quyana, Eric. Frank.

14
15 MR. WOODS: Thanks, Eric. I think this
16 brings up a -- Terry, we need to meet on this, but I
17 think it should go before the Native caucus. There's a
18 lot of issues that come up. If we're just focusing on
19 a spring and a summer Migratory Bird Treaty we have
20 with Pacific Flyway, Russia and, whatever, Japan, that
21 you bring up a good point that if we're having to
22 provide the burden of proof on our end, and it's the
23 subsistence user, Native people that have to provide
24 the burden of proof that we're not overharvesting and
25 we get double whammied. Not only have to provide the
26 burden of proof, but then in a conservation mode we
27 have to provide the conservation efforts and it's more
28 impacting for people that have to depend on it more for
29 living than it is for recreational sports use.

30
31 I think we have a lot of work in this
32 arena because if we can disseminate this to spring and
33 the summer hunts for subsistence -- because fall season
34 is a totally different animal. It's under sports
35 regulation. And then, when you get to the point where
36 there's non -- there's a lot of people that capitalize
37 on the spring hunt that really wasn't intended to.

38
39 Susan Savage out of the Becharof Refuge
40 pointed it out that -- and I've experienced it myself,
41 is that there's State and Federal employees that just
42 moved in, they've got a year residency and they get to
43 go out and harvest unlimited harvesting in the spring
44 and summer for migratory birds. I witnessed it. This
45 young gentleman that came in as a State sports
46 biologist came in right in my back door every day he'd
47 bring 20 to 30 birds of different species and take it
48 -- he'd give a bunch of them out, but he would just
49 breast the animal. That's kind of a -- it's almost
50 sacrilegious. As a Native user, we use the whole bird

1 and it's kind of a no-no for us.

2

3 In that regard, Susan Savage brought up
4 a good point that there's a whole host of stuff that
5 happens that we don't intend -- we didn't intend on or
6 this group and the body and the Federal government and
7 State government didn't intent on all these results of
8 not having the fine detailed point of -- if it was just
9 for a spring hunt for Native people and traditional and
10 cultural activities that would be pinned down, then
11 that would probably -- we wouldn't have to worry about
12 it. We're not impacting the birds -- you know, like
13 Myron says, we're not -- there's a real fine line on
14 where we go with this because I think we have a lot of
15 work. Maybe, Patty, you can answer my question. When
16 is a Native caucus meeting going to happen.

17

18 CHAIRMAN NANENG: Go ahead, Patty.

19

20 MS. SCHWALENBERG: We are planning on
21 having a Native caucus after the adjournment of the
22 AMBCC and we may caucus during the AMBCC meeting.

23

24 CHAIRMAN NANENG: Rick.

25

26 MR. ROWLAND: Thanks. I have one more
27 question because this qualification really gets at me
28 because I don't have much qualification. It always
29 seems to cut me out or cut out some Native from my
30 village. In your selection process of Cooperative
31 Ecosystem Study Unit, which I just found out is a
32 national network that has quite a few different groups,
33 what other networks did you guys classify to fit into
34 this slot? Like did you have five or six different
35 networks that you looked at to say, okay, this network,
36 this other network, let's go with this network or is
37 this just the one that you guys decided on?

38

39 MR. DOYLE: I can't really answer that.
40 That decision was made before I started working on
41 this. Thinking about it, this is one system that is
42 national in coverage, involves hundreds of
43 organizations. I've used them before in a different
44 location. There's a lot of expertise within this. I
45 can't think of anything comparable that has the broad
46 range of expertise and things like that to draw on, but
47 there are certainly other avenues for funding and
48 putting out requests for proposals, but I think this is
49 a good one.

50

1 CHAIRMAN NANENG: Anymore questions on
2 this. I think I'd take Frank's recommendation that the
3 Native caucus is going to have to take a look at this
4 and discuss this a little bit more before we adopt it
5 as Alaska Migratory Bird Co-Management Council. So
6 we'll leave it at that and bring it back up again after
7 we have our Native caucus.

8

9 Yes, Pete.

10

11 MR. PROBASCO: Myron, I think that's a
12 good idea. Also, when you have your Native caucus, if
13 you have the opportunity, Patty, identify those areas
14 of concern that we can strengthen in this document.

15

16 CHAIRMAN NANENG: Okay. Quyana.
17 Anybody else wants to comment on this agenda item.

18

19 (No comments)

20

21 CHAIRMAN NANENG: Okay. If there's no
22 more discussion, then we'll bring it to the Native
23 caucus to talk about it a little bit more. I know that
24 we may not necessarily come up with a unified position,
25 but we'll discuss the issues as we see them and bring
26 it back on the floor before the end of the meeting.

27

28 For now, the next item is the committee
29 council reports. If there's no objections from the
30 rest of the group, what I'd like to do before we get
31 into the committee reports and the proposals that we'll
32 act upon I think it would be appropriate to have Eric
33 and Ted Swem to do their bird report for information
34 for the Co-Management Council. Then we'll go to the
35 committee reports because there's some items that we'd
36 like to consider while we're working through the
37 committee and I think that before we go through all of
38 the committee reports, right after the budget report,
39 I'd like to have a Native caucus.

40

41 So if there's no objections, I'd like
42 to ask Eric to give a report on status and trends of
43 the migratory bird populations. I heard it last week.
44 I saw it last week, so I have to go turn off my vehicle
45 because I ran out of battery power during lunch hour.
46 I'll turn the floor over to him.

47

48 MR. TAYLOR: Thank you, Mr. Chair.
49 It's a little bit different, so don't just dash out.
50 Not that you would do that.

1 (Laughter)

2

3 MR. TAYLOR: I see that Frank has a
4 large container of green tea, so he must have known I
5 was about ready to give my presentation. I will
6 recommend to the committee if you have eyesight as bad
7 as mine you might want to scoot your chairs toward the
8 screen. I apologize that the Fish and Wildlife
9 Service, despite my office only being 20 feet away from
10 this, I failed to realize that we changed the screen,
11 so my font size is a bit compromised, a bit small, and
12 certainly members of the audience I think if you would
13 like to see the information I'm presenting I would
14 recommend that you get cozy with your neighbors and
15 scoot up as close as you can.

16

17 I think it will take me just a couple
18 minutes to get this fired up. Not to warn you that
19 this is a boring presentation, but if you want to grab
20 a beverage now is the time to do so.

21

22 (Pause)

23

24 MR. TAYLOR: Thank you. I appreciate
25 the opportunity to provide the committee with an update
26 on our most current information on abundance and trends
27 on waterfowl in Alaska. I always try to balance your
28 time, which is sensitive with the amount of information
29 and questions that all of you have.

30

31 So, to that extent I offer the option
32 of the Fish and Wildlife Service trying to do regional
33 presentations, particularly for regions that you have
34 specific questions about your birds. For example,
35 Brandon Ahmasuk asked me to address Kawerak region and
36 I was unable to do so due to a conflict. I was able to
37 go, as Myron mentioned, up to Bethel to meet with the
38 AVCP and I think the meeting was very productive and
39 certainly informative for me in terms of the
40 information that was provided.

41

42 The objective today I'll talk about the
43 distribution, abundance and population trends as well
44 as provide you at least some information on our current
45 survey design and areas that we survey to assess.
46 First off, four species that are certainly important to
47 subsistence users, Pacific Black Brant, Greater
48 White-Fronted Geese, Midcontinent Greater White-Fronted
49 Geese and Cackling Canada Geese, and also provide you
50 some information on species that are closed to harvest,

1 Emperor Geese, Spectacled and Steller's Eiders and
2 Yellow-Billed Loons.

3

4 First off, the information I'm going to
5 present today has been collected by a very talented
6 suite of professionals that I have the pleasure to work
7 with. Ed Mallek and Heather Wilson are two pilot
8 biologists, we have two quantitative biologists that
9 are largely responsible for the figures and the graphs
10 and the maps that you'll see today. In fact, I think
11 both individuals are in the room, Bob Stehn and Bob
12 Platte, could both you guys stand up. Bob Stehn in the
13 front, Bob Platte in the back.

14

15 We have numbers of biologist observers,
16 Karen Bollinger in Fairbanks, Dennis Marks here, Debbie
17 Groves in Juneau, Chris Dau, and I think many of you
18 probably know Chris. He's been with the migratory bird
19 and refuge program for a long period of time. Had an
20 extended stint at the Yukon-Kuskokwim Delta and Izembek
21 Refuge. Chris, are you here? Will you stand up. I'm
22 putting all these guys on the spot.

23

24 I'm going to really get yelled at later
25 about this.

26

27 Thank you.

28

29 Two field supervisors, Ed Mallek in
30 Fairbanks, Julian Fischer here in Anchorage. Then we
31 have a sea duck joint venture coordinator Tim Bowman,
32 who is actually working on Goldeneyes in Kachemak Bay
33 this very week.

34

35 These are some of the individuals that
36 are here. There's a picture of Chris Dau on the Yukon-
37 Kuskokwim Delta up in the upper left-hand side.
38 Heather Wilson, one of our pilot biologists there,
39 upper right with the backpack on. Ed Mallek and Debbie
40 Groves in the lower left. Jason to the Turbine Beaver
41 that we have flown for decades that is no longer in the
42 fleet, has been retired. Then people in the lower
43 right, Jack Hodges, who is a retired pilot biologist
44 from the Juneau office, Bob Platte, who is the in the
45 back of the room, and Karen Bollinger on the right-hand
46 side.

47

48 The first species I'll talk about are
49 Pacific Brant. About 80 percent of Black Brant nest on
50 the Yukon-Kuskokwim Delta. They migrate along the

1 coast and stage in the fall at Izembek National
2 Wildlife Refuge. Essentially the world's population
3 stages there for several months to fatten up on
4 eelgrass before they do a non-stop transoceanic
5 migration all the way across the ocean down primarily
6 to Mexico, both Baja and the peninsula of Mexico. We
7 have additional birds though that winter in California,
8 Washington and Oregon.

9
10 This is a figure that you will see
11 repeatedly throughout this presentation and I'll try to
12 go through it. Again, if you can't see the numbers or
13 the text don't worry about scooting your chair forward.
14 On the left-hand side is the population estimate or
15 index for Brant. You can see that goes from zero and
16 the population objective, that top line, is 150,000.
17 The other lines are what are considered harvest
18 thresholds that have been set by the Pacific Flyway
19 Management Plan and the Goose Management Plan from the
20 Yukon-Kuskokwim Delta. In this case, the population
21 objective as I said is 150,000. Again, the vertical
22 axis goes from 0 to 180,000.

23
24 The horizontal axis or the axis that
25 goes from left to right are the numbers of years that
26 we have conducted the survey. In this case, from 1960
27 through 2012, so this is the most current information
28 on the right-hand side. So each one of those white
29 bars is the population index or estimate of the
30 species.

31
32 The upper box with 149,656, that black
33 squiggly line, is what's termed the three-year average.
34 Any one year a population estimate or an index can
35 vary. It can vary because climatic conditions differ.
36 The weather is not as good as it should be. Some birds
37 may be there or may not be. They have migrated out of
38 the area or haven't migrated into the area.

39
40 So the management plan and the Council
41 uses what's called a three-year average to try to
42 ameliorate or eliminate those sorts of variances. So
43 in this case you can see that the current three-year
44 average is about 150,000 or 149,000 right below the
45 population objective.

46
47 In terms of growth rate for this
48 population, I tried to standardize it this year with
49 the help of Bob Stehn to try to make things at least a
50 little bit easier to digest. We looked at the last

1 seven years data. In this case, if you look at Brant,
2 for the last seven years that is from 2006 to 2012, the
3 population is growing at about 2 percent per year.

4
5 So just in summary, the population
6 objective is 150,000. We're basically right at that
7 population objective. The exciting thing is for this
8 year we did complete the midwinter aerial survey
9 including Mexico. We have not been able to do the
10 Mexico survey where Brant overwinter in three of the
11 last four years due to safety concerns of our survey
12 crew. That data are currently being analyzed. The
13 average population growth for the last six years 2.4
14 percent per year.

15
16 One thing is that we have seen a
17 decline in the five historic colonies on the Yukon-
18 Kuskokwim Delta. The population is growing at a
19 relatively slow rate, but yet we're seeing a decline in
20 those five historic colonies.

21
22 The other big thing is a shift in the
23 winter distribution. More Brant do not migrate south
24 but stay along the Alaska Peninsula. This is something
25 that Chris Dau has looked at over the years and has
26 published a paper on. Just recently, a few days ago,
27 Chris came back from looking at the numbers of Brant at
28 Izembek where they counted 41,000 birds. So 41,000
29 birds decided to stay in the Alaska Peninsula and brave
30 the cold and ice and wind as opposed to wintering in
31 Mexico.

32
33 Similarly, we had two people from
34 Mexico at the Flyway Council give presentations and
35 they have observed more Brant wintering in northern
36 Mexico than south Mexico. So Brant have shifted their
37 wintering grounds further north.

38
39 The next species I'll talk about
40 Pacific Greater White-Fronted Geese. They nest on the
41 Yukon-Kuskokwim Delta essentially 95 percent of the
42 population. They winter in the Sacramento Valley of
43 California. We assess this population via survey
44 that's called the Yukon Delta Coastal Zone Breeding
45 Survey. That survey is conducted every year about in
46 the first week to two weeks of June. Those lines that
47 run east to west are survey lines of our aircraft that
48 conducts the survey. We have two or three observers in
49 the aircraft counting out the left and right-hand side
50 of the aircraft.

1 This is a species that has enjoyed
2 significant population growth since the Goose
3 Management Plan and the Flyway Management Plan were
4 implemented in the mid 1980s. In this case, the
5 population objective is 300,000. The current three-
6 year average is double that, 640,000 birds. Not only
7 that, the population for the last seven years, you can
8 see how the line goes up right there at the end.
9 Population growth rate of about 3 percent per year.

10
11 One concern that was raised by the
12 state of California this year at the Flyway Council is
13 that Pacific Greater White-Fronted Geese finally at
14 this population level are starting to have an impact on
15 agricultural crops and they have made a request to the
16 Fish and Wildlife Service to consider issuing
17 depredation permits to allow farmers to take relatively
18 small numbers of birds, I think less than 500 in total,
19 to try to haze birds off of agricultural crops during
20 that non-hunting period.

21
22 The other population of White-Fronted
23 Geese that I'll talk about are the Midcontinent Greater
24 White-Fronted Geese. These are birds that nest to the
25 east of that white line going through the state of
26 Alaska, so they nest primarily on the Arctic Coastal
27 Plain. The Boreal and Taiga Region of the Interior
28 Alaska as well as the Boreal Region and Taiga Region of
29 Canada there. They winter in Mexico, Louisiana and
30 Texas.

31
32 We survey this population via what's
33 called our Arctic Coastal Plain Breeding Pair Survey
34 that's conducted in June. That occurs from Point Lay
35 all the way to Kaktovik. Again, the density of lines
36 that you see it varies across that Arctic Coastal Plain
37 or north of the Brooks Range varies by densities of
38 birds that we're trying to get estimates on.

39
40 Just like Pacific Greater White-Fronted
41 Geese, Midcontinents are incurring substantive growth.
42 At this point, 10 percent per year is the average
43 growth rate. In other words, if you have 1,000 birds,
44 every year on average you're adding 100 birds to that
45 population. Now this is an index. This is not a total
46 population estimate for this and this is only for the
47 Arctic Coastal Plain. So it's a total bird index for
48 the Arctic Coastal Plain. Right now we've got an
49 estimate of 253,000 birds as a three-year average for
50 2010, '11 and '12.

1 The point is, the birds that Mike and
2 Taqulik are seeing, I know Taqulik reported last time
3 that there were substantive numbers of increases in
4 White-Fronts that she is seeing. Our aerial survey
5 data certainly bore that out.

6
7 So the three-year index around 250,000.
8 That population is growing 10 percent per year on
9 average for the last seven years. When you look at
10 North America as a whole, that population is also over
11 its objective. The objective is 650,000. Right now
12 the three-year average is over 700,000 birds.

13
14 Emperor Geese. In January, I asked Ed
15 Mallek, who is the pilot biologist, to come down, but
16 we have the benefit of having Chris Dau, who has almost
17 a 30-year history of surveying this species on the
18 Alaska Peninsula. Greater than 90 percent of Emperor
19 Geese nest on the Yukon-Kuskokwim Delta. We've got
20 small numbers that nest on the Seward Peninsula and St.
21 Lawrence Island. Again, the Yukon-Kuskokwim Delta is
22 the most important nesting area. Birds winter along
23 the Alaska Peninsula and Kodiak and the Aleutians.

24
25 The population objective as was set by
26 the Yukon-Kuskokwim Delta Goose Management Plan as well
27 as the Pacific Flyway Plan was 150,000. We monitor
28 that survey or this species by the U.S. Fish and
29 Wildlife Service Spring Emperor Goose Survey. It's
30 scheduled to start this year in King Salmon, about
31 three weeks from now, April 25th. The aircraft number
32 that we will be using N36 and it's the Quest Kodiak
33 aircraft. Chris Dau will be the observer and Ed Mallek
34 will be the pilot biologist.

35
36 One point I'll make is that Peter, as
37 well as some others, Rick, have expressed interest in
38 trying to make sure that the survey design that we have
39 estimates the population. So what I'm going to offer
40 is that you get the word out that if people are
41 observing Emperor Geese during that week we would like
42 to hear about it. Indeed, we're interested to make
43 sure that the survey design that we're doing does
44 address the population.

45
46 Hunting in this case for Emperors can
47 be considered when the population has reached greater
48 than 80,000. Right now the three-year average is
49 68,000, just about 69,000.

50

1 MR. ROWLAND: Eric, when can we ask
2 questions?
3
4 MR. TAYLOR: You can interrupt me right
5 now if you like.
6
7 MR. ROWLAND: Can we go back to the
8 Emperor Geese. Right there. So you're saying the
9 breeding is in the northern area in the blue and then
10 the wintering area is in the orange, but when we looked
11 at the survey route, that survey route is right in
12 between those two places. So now is the survey of the
13 breeding area or is it of the wintering area?
14
15 MR. TAYLOR: The survey is during the
16 spring staging period and I'll have a close-up map of
17 that survey area. It's from King Salmon up to Cold Bay
18 and then south along the Alaska Peninsula.
19
20 MR. ROWLAND: I saw that, but from what
21 you're showing us here it -- I mean they jumble up in
22 the breeding time and they jumble up in the wintering
23 time, but then you're doing a survey when it seems to
24 be a spread out time and they're traveling and then
25 you're doing the survey in the spot where it's not
26 showing any breeding or wintering.
27
28 MR. TAYLOR: That's a good point, a
29 valid point. When do we do a survey and where do we do
30 a survey. It was decided in terms of the debate of how
31 best to survey Emperor Geese. Indeed, the spring
32 staging period, the time when birds migrate back and
33 stage up and clump up along the Alaska Peninsula is the
34 best time to get the best population estimate. I'll
35 have a figure of that here in just a minute.
36
37 MR. WOODS: Can we go back to that one.
38 There you go. So a three-year population average, what
39 is it right now? Before you had graphs of how many
40 years you've been doing a survey. Do you have a graph
41 like that for this population? Like going from '70 to
42 '80 to '90?
43
44 MR. TAYLOR: Yes, I do.
45
46 MR. WOODS: Okay. I'll wait then.
47
48 MR. TAYLOR: I'll answer Rick's
49 question first. Rick, the survey is scheduled this
50 year. In talking to Ed just a few minutes ago, he and

1 Chris are going to try to get out of here the 23rd of
2 April. They will fly to King Salmon and overnight and
3 then they'll begin their survey up in the north in Jack
4 Smith Bay and then survey that part of the coast over
5 to King Salmon and then do the northern part of the
6 Alaska Peninsula. They'll spend about a day around
7 Cold Bay and Nelson Lagoon and then spend another day
8 finally on the southern part of the Alaska Peninsula
9 out to Wide Bay here.

10

11 I'll get to Rick's question here. I
12 think, Rick, you wanted to know how long we've been
13 doing the survey. In this case, we've got data from
14 1981 through 2012. Again, the population objective
15 based on our best information that we have back from
16 the 1960s is that 150,000 was an estimated population
17 size of Emperor Geese. As has been cited several
18 times, the population as well as other species, Brant
19 and Greater White-Fronted Geese and Cacklers declined
20 during that time period until the Goose Management Plan
21 and Flyway Management Plans were implemented in 1980s.

22

23

24 This is one species that has not
25 recovered, not like Cacklers or Brant or Greater White-
26 Fronted Geese. It has struggled along. The current
27 population, as I said, is 69,000. That's the three-
28 year average. So, Rick, that's the combined average of
29 2010, 2011 and 2012. The blue line there is the
30 harvest level or population level that would have to be
31 reached if we were to consider subsistence hunting.
32 Does that help?

33

34

MR. ROWLAND: Yes.

35

36

MR. TAYLOR: So, in summary, the
37 overall population objective as was set by those two
38 plans is 150,000. The current three-year average is
39 around 69,000. We can reconsider harvest when the
40 population is greater than or equal to 80,000.
41 Unfortunately, the population is heading in a rate that
42 we don't want. If you look at the last seven years of
43 data, we're declining at about 2 percent per year.
44 Emperor Geese have been closed to the fall hunt since
45 1986. Subsistence hunt since 1987. Still, we're having
46 an annual subsistence harvest of around 3,500 birds per
47 year.

48

49

So the slow population to the best of
50 our information is likely the result of, one, low egg

1 and gosling survival likely due to fox and gull
2 predation and then also we feel that continued
3 subsistence harvest of breeding adult geese during the
4 spring could have an affect on the slow population
5 growth.

6
7 The important point that I would like
8 all members of AMBCC to consider here is that we do
9 have an Emperor Goose Subcommittee. Dan Rosenberg from
10 the Department of Fish and Game has graciously agreed
11 to chair that committee. My suggestion would be for
12 that committee to meet with the Association of Village
13 Council Presidents or a representative from the
14 Waterfowl Conservation Committee as well as the Fish
15 and Wildlife Service and Fish and Game.

16
17 Clearly there is interest in trying to
18 recover this population. Clearly there is interest
19 from Kodiak to Kawerak to have a subsistence hunt for
20 Emperor Geese. In order to do so, I think, as Patty or
21 Myron said, we often raise issues and then a year later
22 don't meet on them and a year passes by and then we
23 have concerns six months or 12 months later. In this
24 case, my recommendation is that we do not do that. I
25 think there are some viable management options that
26 exist.

27
28 Let me see if Joel Schmutz -- Joel,
29 could you stand up. This is Dr. Joel Schmutz from the
30 Alaska Science Center from USGS. Joel has about 20
31 years experience trudging around in hip boots on the
32 Yukon-Kuskokwim Delta studying Emperor Geese. He's
33 currently looking at the disease potential in Emperor
34 Geese. Joel would be a good one to help meet with this
35 committee to hear about potential ideas or factors that
36 are limiting this population.

37
38 I would really like to see the Emperor
39 Goose Subcommittee meet as well as the representatives
40 that are interested in a subsistence harvest season in
41 order to put pressure on to try to implement some
42 management actions, whether it's outreach and education
43 in those areas that continue to take birds during the
44 spring or whether it's asking the Fish and Wildlife
45 Service to consider predator control on the Yukon-
46 Kuskokwim Delta in order to better address this low egg
47 and gosling survival. Indeed, if we sit here and talk
48 and not implement any actions, this population is not
49 going to recover.

50

1 MR. ANDREW: Eric, before you move on,
2 Timothy Andrew with the AVCP Natural Resource. One
3 thing that was brought up a couple years ago and came
4 up in our Waterfowl Conservation Committee meeting was
5 the Emperor sport harvest that is occurring in Russia.
6 We see the blame game going towards the subsistence
7 users and also the low productivity and low survival.
8 If all of our savings by not hunting Emperor Geese and
9 the mortality is occurring in Russia with a sport hunt
10 that people in the United States of America can
11 participate and bring home and we can't hunt them, it's
12 a futile effort for the subsistence hunters to try and
13 build this population and get penalized for trying to
14 feed our families. Once again this is a situation
15 where money interest takes over food interest for the
16 people that depend on them for food.

17
18 MR. TAYLOR: Thanks, Tim. I appreciate
19 your concern and I certainly, as someone that tries to
20 grapple with data in order to make a management
21 recommendation, I'm at a disadvantage here relative to
22 the lack of information I have on that on the sport
23 hunt in Russia. That concern is going to be raised
24 both at the chief of Migratory Birds level and the
25 assistant director level of Fish and Wildlife Service
26 to try and get an idea of what the harvest level is
27 like in Russia and also try to get that information so
28 that we can actually report back to you. We'll
29 hopefully get better information by the time this group
30 meets next.

31
32 MR. DEVINE: Eric.

33
34 MR. TAYLOR: Yeah.

35
36 MR. DEVINE: Peter Devine,
37 Aleutian/Pribilofs. If Rick Rowland didn't point out,
38 I will. One of the groups of Emperors that is not
39 being surveyed is on Semidi Islands. If one of these
40 years we could possibly get a circle around that island
41 and get a count out there, that might help increase the
42 population.

43
44 MR. TAYLOR: All right. Thank you.

45
46 Any other questions.

47
48 MR. AHMASUK: Eric.

49
50 MR. TAYLOR: Yeah.

1 MR. AHMASUK: Brandon Ahmasuk,
2 subsistence director at Kawerak. Also if we get a
3 survey done out at St. Lawrence Island as well. I mean
4 if that will show an increase in the population.

5
6 Thank you.

7
8 MR. ROWLAND: Eric, I guess if
9 everybody is asking, we need to ask too from Kodiak to
10 get a survey done there.

11
12 MR. TAYLOR: Okay. Again, what I would
13 like is -- we are aware and Chris is probably the best
14 person to do this to address these questions as opposed
15 to me, but I'll take a stab at it. We're aware that
16 there are some birds that exist in areas outside of our
17 survey area. However, we feel like the survey area
18 that has been put in place by the Pacific Flyway
19 Council and approved by the agencies is an accurate
20 survey. Again, no survey is going to estimate every
21 bird that's out there, but all of you have valid
22 concerns that we could be missing large numbers of
23 birds. This is the ideal time to try to get your
24 residents, your colleagues and your friends, anyone
25 else to try to get a count on those birds and give me a
26 call. My contact information will be at the end of
27 this presentation.

28
29 I also offer you to call those
30 individuals that have interest to give you an update as
31 well as where Ed and Chris are in their survey so that
32 indeed if you say, hey, we see 5,000 Emperors in Smith
33 Bay, for example, and we don't survey Smith Bay, Ed has
34 told me he will make an effort to do so. I'm just
35 making this up, but clearly we can't fly far offshore
36 with the Kodiak, but we certainly can try to address
37 any areas that we can reach to try to get those
38 estimates for you.

39
40 MR. ROWLAND: Okay. And then I just
41 have to mention that we have a letter that has come
42 from the Kodiak/Aleutians Regional Advisory Council on
43 subsistence about extending past Unimak Pass to as far
44 out on the Aleutians as possible.

45
46 MR. TAYLOR: Okay.

47
48 MR. WOODS: Eric, you mentioned a
49 harvest level, a confidence level and what was your
50 high and low in the confidence level in the subsistence

1 harvest survey, Liliana?
2
3 MS. NAVES: (Indiscernible - away from
4 microphone).
5
6 MR. WOODS: Yeah.
7
8 MS. NAVES: (Indiscernible - away from
9 microphone).
10
11 MR. WOODS: There's a huge confidence
12 level of -- it goes from 400 percent down to 40 percent
13 and then you get 90 percent in between. And then your
14 confidence level in your -- there's a variance since
15 you don't get a full census survey, is there a variant?
16 What percent of variance? I didn't read your report.
17
18 MR. TAYLOR: We're assuming that we're
19 counting all the birds, so it's an index, but when we
20 survey an area, it's an actual estimate of the total
21 numbers of birds. There's no variance associated with
22 that number.
23
24 MR. WOODS: Okay.
25
26 MS. NAVES: (Indiscernible - away from
27 microphone).
28
29 REPORTER: I can't hear you, ma'am.
30
31 MR. WOODS: She said 50 percent for
32 Bristol Bay, a confidence level, and then, what, 20
33 percent for Y.....
34
35 MS. NAVES: Lili Naves, Division of
36 Subsistence. Confidence interval and harvest estimates
37 for Emperor Goose in 2011 for Bristol Bay at the region
38 level was 58 percent and for the Yukon-Kuskokwim Delta
39 25 percent.
40
41 MR. WOODS: So an average of 30 percent
42 we can be -- I mean (turned off microphone) -- and I'll
43 feel comfortable, thanks.
44
45 MS. NAVES: So the estimated harvest
46 for Emperor Goose was 119 birds for all seasons
47 combined?
48
49 MR. WOODS: Yeah.
50

1 MS. NAVES: So 58 percent confidence
2 interval around this means that the harvest could have
3 been somewhere between 50 and 188 birds. The estimate
4 is 119.

5
6 MR. WOODS: Thanks.

7
8 MR. SFORMO: This is Todd, North Slope
9 Borough. You mentioned you were hoping to get the
10 sport hunt number from Russia, but I wasn't sure what
11 you're going to do with that number. How will that
12 figure into any of these statistics that you showed? I
13 think Tim's question kind of implied that maybe this is
14 one of the missing numbers, but will it just be
15 reported or will you be able to incorporate this
16 number?

17
18 MR. TAYLOR: Eric Taylor. Todd, could
19 you clarify what you mean by incorporate.

20
21 MR. SFORMO: I guess I was just curious
22 to see how you were going to use that number. Is it
23 going to add to some of the statistics that you've
24 shown here or is it just going to be a number that's
25 reported and it really won't have any effect on --
26 well, you know, as Tim said kind of the blame game
27 where you mentioned low growth rate and continued
28 subsistence hunt as being the two probable causes for
29 this still declining population. But if you find a
30 number in Russia, will that help clarify things or will
31 it just be presented?

32
33 MR. WOODS: Is there a confidence level
34 in that too, Eric?

35
36 (Laughter)

37
38 MR. WOODS: I'm just kidding you.

39
40 MR. TAYLOR: Okay. The negative growth
41 rate, I'll try and explain this and clarify. So we
42 have a negative growth rate of about 2 percent per year
43 for the last seven years. We had two factors that we
44 feel like could be -- the important word being could be
45 -- contribute because, in fact, we do not have data on
46 the role of gull predation and fox predation. So if
47 you said what percentage of that 2 percent that's
48 declining every year, what's playing a greater role in
49 that. Is it subsistence harvest in Alaska, is it
50 harvest in Russia or is it gull predation or is it fox

1 predation and is it gull predation or fox predation on
2 eggs or gull predation or fox predation on goslings or
3 even if it's winter survival on the Alaska Peninsula.
4 Joel does have some good estimates of survival. Right
5 now I couldn't tell you.

6
7 The long answer to your question is it
8 would be yet another piece of information that we could
9 look at to say is it of concern at all. If it's 10
10 birds, then I think all of us could say it's probably
11 not a concern. If it's 1,000, then, indeed, I think
12 the Fish and Wildlife Service would look at that more
13 carefully and say should we begin negotiations with
14 Russia to say this could be happening, this could be
15 affecting this population and an affect on subsistence
16 users that are having to have a closed season on this
17 bird.

18
19 Does that help?

20
21 MR. WOODS: (Nods affirmatively)

22
23 MR. TAYLOR: Okay. All right. Frank
24 hasn't opened his tea yet, so I must be at least
25 keeping him awake. We'll move on to Cackling Canada
26 Geese because this is another species that I think is
27 of real interest. It's certainly of interest in the
28 Pacific Flyway. It's one of the most important
29 conversations that we have in the Pacific Flyway
30 Council meetings that we have several times a year.

31
32 Essentially all Cackling Canada Geese
33 nest on the Yukon-Kuskokwim Delta. They migrate and
34 they did migrate until the mid 1980s down in to the
35 Central Valley of California. Beginning in about the
36 early 1990s they decided that they would rather shift
37 north and they have shifted their winter distribution
38 to northwest Oregon and southwest Washington where now
39 about 90 percent of Cackling Canada Geese now winter in
40 that area as opposed to Central Valley of California.

41
42 The same population graph that you've
43 seen before. In this case, the population objective
44 for Cackling Canada Geese is 250,000, as was set by the
45 Flyway Management Plan and the Yukon-Kuskokwim Delta
46 Goose Management Plan. The current three-year average
47 there is in the box, 220,000 birds. So we're slightly
48 below the population objective. The population for the
49 past seven years has incurred about a 4 percent
50 decline.

1 As I mentioned, the wintering area and
2 the point of concern in the Flyway Council particularly
3 in the state of Oregon is the shift from California to
4 Oregon has resulted in depredation of agricultural
5 crops. These are primarily grass annual and perennial
6 grass seed, the seeds that's grown for lawns as well as
7 for golf courses. The Oregon Farm Bureau has met with
8 both the WCC, the Fish and Wildlife Service, the
9 Department of Fish and Game as well as has made various
10 presentations. This is one of the few meetings that a
11 representative from the Oregon Department of Fish and
12 Wildlife has not attended, but indeed that agency is
13 interested in lowering the population objective to
14 decrease the population.

15
16 The important point I wanted to stress
17 particularly to residents of the Yukon Delta is that
18 Cackling Canada Geese are the second most important
19 waterfowl species for subsistence hunters. We also
20 know that they provide prey to arctic foxes and gulls
21 and therefore they decrease predation pressure on other
22 species; Black Brant, Emperor Geese, Spectacled Eiders.
23 So, indeed, because they're so prevalent and what I
24 would consider a very important species on the Yukon-
25 Kuskokwim Delta, we also are convinced that they create
26 and maintain grazing lawns or those brood rearing
27 habitats particularly for species like Black Brant.

28
29 In 2011 and 2013, we have begun a
30 project on the Yukon-Kuskokwim Delta to mark Cackling
31 Canada Geese in order to help validate the population
32 index. So there's real concern that has been raised
33 about what is the number of Cackling Canada Geese on
34 the Yukon-Kuskokwim Delta, what it is relative to the
35 population objective and the idea being is that if the
36 birds are considered too abundant that the State of
37 Oregon and the Oregon Farm Bureau would like to see
38 that population decline.

39
40 So this is an example of wintering
41 Cackling Canada Geese in Oregon. As I said, 95 percent
42 of the birds now winter in northwest Oregon. There is
43 insufficient wintering habitat on public lands. So
44 while we have National Wildlife Refuges and State
45 Wetland Management Areas, State Public Lands, there is
46 an insufficient amount of winter habitat that's owned
47 by the public.

48
49 The other thing, as all of you are
50 aware of, the United States has had an economic

1 downturn in terms of the overall economy. This has
2 affected the grass seed industry. There's less luxury
3 homes being built, there are fewer golf courses being
4 built, farmers are no longer able to grow the perennial
5 and annual rye seed and rye grass to supply that. So
6 while this may have been viewed as a thing of beauty or
7 a thing of, well, you just ignore them, now they're
8 considered kind of public enemy number one.

9
10 As a result, the State of Oregon, the
11 Oregon Department of Fish and Wildlife has received
12 increasing landowner complaints about agricultural
13 depredation. Again, this has been probably the most
14 important issue in the Pacific Flyway Council at the
15 present time.

16
17 To complicate this further, the State
18 of Oregon has probably the most rigorous and complex
19 hunting regulations and harvest monitoring anywhere in
20 the United States. There's a hunter certification
21 where hunters have to take tests, there's check
22 stations that are mandatory and there's very
23 complicated regulations relative to counties, borders
24 and roads, where you can hunt, what time, what time of
25 the week you can hunt, all to protect in this case
26 Dusky Canada Geese. That species nests on the Copper
27 River Delta.

28
29 The Pacific Flyway Council did pass a
30 Northwest Oregon Goose Depredation Plan, but it's
31 currently not funded. That plan was passed in 1998 to
32 aid farmers. It was funded for several years, but it's
33 currently not funded.

34
35 In summary, the State of Oregon and the
36 Oregon Farm Bureau does not support the current 250,000
37 population objective. The reason they do not support
38 it is that when it was passed those birds were
39 wintering in central California. Instead now they're
40 wintering in Oregon, so they agreed to this population
41 objective only to find out that the birds have moved
42 north and are now affecting the farming community.

43
44 This slide depicts the importance of
45 the Yukon-Kuskokwim Delta to three primary species.
46 Cackling Canada Geese essentially 100 percent of the
47 population nest there, about 80 percent of Brant,
48 greater than 95 percent Greater White-Fronted Geese.
49 Now, when we look at the importance of these birds to
50 subsistence hunters we see Cackling Canada Geese on

1 average from 2004 to 2009 about 15,000 birds are taking
2 annually by residents on the Yukon-Kuskokwim Delta.
3 When you look at the other two important species, Brant
4 and Greater White-Fronted Geese, you realize that
5 Cacklers are the second most important bird to the
6 subsistence hunter on the Yukon-Kuskokwim Delta.

7

8 Again, if you look at the population
9 over time, you'll see that, indeed, subsistence hunt,
10 the numbers of birds that are taken generally tracks
11 the populations.

12

13 As I mentioned before, we're pretty
14 convinced again but we have very sparse data, if any
15 data, that Cackling goslings provide a prey buffer for
16 other species; Brant, Emperor Geese and Spectacled
17 Eiders. The other issue is that we're convinced that
18 Cacklers provide a role in maintaining brood rearing
19 habitat for Brant.

20

21 So the important point here is that if
22 we consider changing the Cackling Canada Goose
23 population objective, we will change or could change or
24 try to change crop depredation, the amount of birds
25 that are available to subsistence hunt, the amount of
26 birds that are available for the fall hunt and finally,
27 it could be most importantly, the role that Cacklers
28 play on the Yukon-Kuskokwim Delta for all the other
29 species.

30

31 This is a very simplistic table and I
32 warn you this is simple in the most basic of terms.
33 That is if you look at the first row, if we maintain or
34 increase that population of Cacklers, it will have a
35 negative effect on agriculture depredation. The farmer
36 complaints about crops being lost will continue.

37

38 However, it will be viewed, if we have
39 a high population of Cacklers, it will be positive on
40 fall harvest, those people that are harvesting birds in
41 Oregon, it will be a positive effect on subsistence
42 hunters, subsistence hunters will have ample numbers of
43 Cacklers to harvest. Again it's the second most
44 important species. Finally, it will have a continued
45 positive effect on the Yukon-Kuskokwim Delta.

46

47 If we decrease the population, I have a
48 positive there in agriculture depredation, so the idea
49 is you lower the number of the population, you lower
50 the numbers of Cacklers, you should see less

1 agriculture depredation. That may or may not occur,
2 but certainly you will see fewer birds for fall
3 harvest, fewer birds available for subsistence harvest
4 and you could have a negative effect on the Yukon
5 Kuskokwim ecology.

6
7 I'll move on to the two Eider species.
8 Spectacled Eiders were listed as threatened in 1993 and
9 then closed to hunting. It was closed because the
10 Yukon Delta population declined 96 percent from an
11 estimated 50,000 pairs in 1971 to fewer than 2,000
12 pairs in 1992. Spectacled Eiders nest in two regions
13 primarily in Alaska. The first being the Yukon-
14 Kuskokwim Delta and also there's large numbers of birds
15 that nest on the Arctic Coastal Plain.

16
17 We survey the Yukon-Kuskokwim Delta the
18 same way we survey Cackling Canada Geese and Pacific
19 White-Front with our Yukon Delta Coastal Breeding
20 Waterfowl Survey in early June and then we survey the
21 Arctic Coastal Plain with the Arctic Coastal Plain
22 Breeding Pair Survey.

23
24 This figure is a bit complicated. The
25 blue bars represent the Yukon-Kuskokwim Delta Coastal
26 Survey and the blue histogram, so the blue columns and
27 the blue line. The white columns represent the Arctic
28 Coastal Plain of the North Slope Eiders Survey. So the
29 estimated population index for the Yukon-Kuskokwim
30 Delta is around 6,000 birds and it's about 6,500 birds
31 for the Arctic Coastal Plain. That's the three-year
32 average. Again, this is an aerial index, not a total
33 population estimate.

34
35 What's interesting here is that the two
36 regions show different population growth. From the
37 Yukon-Kuskokwim Delta we're seeing a population growth
38 of about 6 percent per year. On the Arctic Coastal
39 Plain, that population is relatively stable and that's
40 about -- in this case we're looking at about 20 years
41 worth of data.

42
43 All of you know that Spectacled Eiders
44 recently -- the wintering population about 10-15 years
45 ago was discovered south of St. Lawrence Island. The
46 birds winter in these open sea areas like are
47 illustrated here.

48
49 Steller's Eider, the other species of
50 sea duck, that's listed as threatened. It was closed

1 and listed in 1997. They are sparsely distributed
2 across the Arctic Coastal Plain. The most important
3 area is the area that Mike Pederson is from and Taqulik
4 near Barrow and we have worked very closely with the
5 North Slope Borough and very successfully in terms of
6 implementing conservation measures to protect that
7 population.

8
9 Our estimate for the breeding
10 population is around 600 birds total. Because we
11 record very few birds we really don't have a good idea
12 of a population trend. So Steller's Eiders again nest
13 primarily on the Arctic Coastal Plain and in particular
14 the area near Barrow. They also nest in Russia and
15 they winter along the Alaska Peninsula and Kodiak as
16 well as Russia.

17
18 So we measure in this case Steller's
19 Eiders on the Arctic Coastal Plain. Again the same
20 survey, the North Slope Eiders Survey and the Arctic
21 Coastal Plain Survey from Wainwright over to Kaktovik.
22 As I mentioned, there are so few birds that our
23 population estimate has a lot of variability as you can
24 see and there's really no way to fit a trend estimate
25 over time. Overall, we feel there's about 600 birds
26 that are nesting on the Arctic Coastal Plain.

27
28 I'll move to Yellow-Billed Loons. This
29 is a picture Ed Mallek took when he was looking in
30 Canada to get an estimate of sea ducks and there
31 happened to be Yellow-Billed Loons on that lake.

32
33 Our best estimate for Yellow-Billed
34 Loons, here the index is around 2,442 birds. That's
35 based on our Arctic Coastal Plain Survey. In the last
36 seven years the good news is the population is
37 increasing about almost 8 percent per year, so between
38 2006 and 2012.

39
40 The distribution from Canning River
41 Delta to Point Lay. They also occur on St. Lawrence
42 Island in the Seward Peninsula. The 3 year population
43 index about 2,400 birds. That population is estimated
44 to be growing almost at 8 percent per year. It's been
45 closed to subsistence harvest in 2003.

46
47 In 2009, the Service determined that
48 Yellow-Billed Loons were warranted but precluded under
49 the Endangered Species Act and in 2014 the Service will
50 make a final recommendation on this species relative to

1 its protection.

2

3 So, with that, thank you for your
4 attention. There's my contact information. I will
5 have hard copies of this presentation available for
6 handout tomorrow. The reason I did not do so is I was
7 trying to incorporate the most current information. Ed
8 Mallek just got back from a survey, so I called him in
9 Fairbanks and Chris just supplied me some numbers today
10 on the numbers of wintering Brant at Izembek. So I
11 will provide you hard copies.

12

13 I'll also be happy to give you an
14 electronic version of this talk as well in case you
15 wanted to show it to others.

16

17 MR. DEVINE: Eric, concerning the
18 Steller's Eiders, remember for years I argued with you
19 I have 600 in my yard? I don't know where they went
20 this year, so maybe you could turn on the radio and see
21 if they're up there in St. Lawrence.

22

23 MR. TAYLOR: Yeah, I'm sure you're
24 referring to wintering birds that occur out in your
25 neck of the woods along the Aleutian Islands. I'm sure
26 birds shift in their distribution each winter depending
27 on the wind conditions or ice conditions or water
28 conditions, so it's probably not unusual that they
29 sometimes occur in bays or may not.

30

31 MR. ROWLAND: Eric, somebody mentioned
32 that one of the planes crashed, is that correct?

33

34 MR. TAYLOR: That's correct. We lost
35 one of our Kodiak Quest aircraft, but luckily the pilot
36 that was flying it escaped without injury, so that's --
37 certainly no one likes to have an aircraft that is
38 either dented or in this case lost, but it's our pilot
39 biologist that we're most worried about and in this
40 case the person escaped without injury.

41

42 MR. ROWLAND: Right. I heard it was at
43 Lake Hood and it was a calm day and something happened,
44 so it twisted up on the beach out here instead of out
45 in the field, I guess. But then that made me realize
46 that you guys got one plane left. Is that going to
47 limit you guys even more? And then what is you guys's
48 plan? Did you get that plane fixed or is your
49 insurance going to get you another one?

50

1 MR. TAYLOR: Good questions, Rick.
2 Things that have kept me up late at night relative to
3 trying to determine how we do the surveys. We're
4 actually down two pilot biologists. We've had people
5 retire or move to other agencies. So instead of having
6 four biologist pilots we only have two right now,
7 Heather Wilson and Ed Mallek. We do have three survey
8 aircraft as well as we have just recently transferred
9 ownership of a 206, so we have three Kodiak aircraft
10 and the 206 that we'll put on amphibians and that will
11 hopefully be ready to start to do our surveys this
12 year.

13
14 We're in the process of asking for a
15 waiver to hire two new biologist pilots. We have a
16 hiring freeze right now throughout the U.S. government.
17 In our case, in the Department of Interior, we have to
18 submit requests for any positions that we have to fill.
19 That request has been submitted to headquarters office.
20 We hope to hear within the next few weeks and get those
21 positions advertised so we get back to a full suite of
22 pilot biologists, but we're scrambling for this summer
23 to make sure we meet all the needs of our surveys.

24
25 MR. ROWLAND: So, yeah, I was wondering
26 about that, is your insurance going to cover getting
27 you a new plane?

28
29 MR. TAYLOR: The way our aircraft is
30 set up with the the Department of Interior is we pay a
31 monthly availability and an hourly rate that goes into
32 an accident reserve fund and a replacement fund. Over
33 the years we've had a near absolute perfect record in
34 terms of accidents or incidents, so we have a
35 sufficient amount of funding available to replace that
36 aircraft.

37
38 CHAIRMAN NANENG: Thank you, Eric.

39
40 Are there anymore questions.

41
42 (No comments)

43
44 CHAIRMAN NANENG: I know Eric kept us
45 awake for the last half hour or so, so we'll take a 10-
46 minute break to wake up.

47
48 (Off record)

49
50 (On record)

1 CHAIRMAN NANENG: You know, there's a
2 joke that's going around about an Indian who got
3 notified about Daylight Savings Time. He asked why
4 would you cut one end of the blanket and put it on the
5 other end and think that it's even longer.

6
7 (Laughter)

8
9 CHAIRMAN NANENG: So, since we're on
10 Daylight Savings Time I think we're going to ask Kate
11 to make her report on reintroduction of Steller's
12 Eiders.

13
14 MS. MARTIN: Thank you for inviting me
15 to present this to you. My name is Kate Martin. I am
16 the Eider recovery coordinator with Fish and Wildlife
17 Service and I'm based out of Fairbanks. Eric Taylor
18 gave a good introduction to Steller's Eiders and their
19 distribution, so I'll probably breeze over that a
20 little bit and get right to the meat of this if I can
21 get this to work.

22
23 For identification purposes, the male
24 Steller's Eider on the left is a very striking bird.
25 The female on the right is a mottled brown color. As
26 Eric said, currently the breeding population in Alaska
27 is in the 500 to 600 individual bird range and they're
28 distributed in the North Slope mostly near Barrow.
29 However, in the past, prior to the '60s and '70s
30 Steller's Eiders were observed as a common breeder on
31 the Yukon-Kuskokwim Delta. They no longer breed there
32 in any numbers. We found a handful of nests since 1970
33 there and none since 2005.

34
35 The Alaska breeding population was
36 listed in 1997 primarily because there was a
37 disappearance of the birds on the Yukon-Kuskokwim Delta
38 and also an observation of the contraction of their
39 range on the North Slope.

40
41 In order for us to consider that
42 population, the Alaska breeding population, to be
43 recovered, we think it's important for a population to
44 be on the Yukon-Kuskokwim Delta breeding there. That
45 population is unlikely to return to the Yukon-Kuskokwim
46 Delta without intervention, without a reintroduction.
47 Therefore, the Service believes it's necessary for the
48 recovery of that species and not only just for recovery
49 under the ESA, but we also feel like it's a missing
50 part of the avian community there on the Yukon-

1 Kuskokwim Delta and we think it's important to have an
2 intact ecosystem there.

3

4 We have been discussing the Service and
5 the Eider Recovery Team, which is a group of experts
6 that have expertise in the species, biology and the
7 management of the species, have discussed and evaluated
8 the biological factors regarding reintroduction for
9 several years. Really concentrating on things like is
10 it feasible, what sorts of methods would be used, how
11 would we select sites, that sort of thing.

12

13 Once we felt like we had gathered quite
14 a bit more information about that and we felt like a
15 decision was upcoming, we felt it was really important
16 to make sure that we got the information that we needed
17 from the folks out in the communities on the Yukon-
18 Kuskokwim Delta because it's unlikely for us to be
19 successful and we won't be successful without their
20 support and involvement in this process.

21

22 So we decided to hold just an initial
23 meeting to start communication with the tribal and city
24 governments and Native corporations from the villages
25 in the area that we thought was probably the most
26 likely area that we might do a reintroduction, which is
27 the central coast of the Yukon-Kuskokwim Delta.

28

29 We invited representatives from Hooper
30 Bay, Chevak, Newtok, Scammon Bay and Paimiut. We had a
31 pretty good participation. Myron was there and several
32 others. We heard a lot of concerns, we heard what
33 people had to say. There were a lot of them, but the
34 main concerns that we heard was whether or not this
35 would affect the subsistence way of life of the local
36 people. At this point, we don't foresee that there
37 would be any additional closures or regulations
38 associated with this action.

39

40 Currently Steller's Eiders, as Eric
41 said, are closed to harvest. We don't see that
42 changing any time in the new future. We don't see the
43 need for any area closures related to this action
44 either. There are also things to keep in mind in terms
45 of where we do this and how we do this to make sure
46 that we aren't impacting anyone's way of life out
47 there.

48

49 We also heard that it's important to
50 make sure that the communities are involved and we're

1 trying to incorporate that into our planning to make
2 sure that there are opportunities for employment of
3 local people. We want to bring -- we've heard that
4 it's important to get the youth involved in collecting
5 data and doing science and we want to make sure that we
6 incorporate that into this planning process.

7
8 We brought this information, both the
9 concerns that we heard from the folks out on the Yukon-
10 Kuskokwim Delta and the information about the
11 biological feasibility to our regional director at the
12 end of January and he feels that this is a really
13 important project and that he wants to move forward
14 with it, but only in cooperation with the people on
15 the Yukon-Kuskokwim Delta. Obviously that's going to
16 be important to our success and we want to make sure
17 that happens.

18
19 So, with that, we've been thinking
20 about how to incorporate all these objectives that
21 we've heard from stakeholders and that we need to
22 achieve in order to reestablish a viable breeding
23 population of Steller's Eiders on the Delta. We also
24 want to make sure to maximize the community benefits.
25 We want to minimize any potential effects to the
26 people's subsistence way of life. We want to minimize
27 impacts to other wildlife and make sure that we are
28 considering all potential effects through goose
29 populations and other wildlife that are important to
30 think about.

31
32 We've been thinking a lot about this
33 last bullet and we want to work with the people out
34 there, with Myron and others, to think about how we can
35 maximize opportunities for larger conservation benefits
36 on the Yukon-Kuskokwim Delta. You are seeing changes
37 based on things that are happening because of climate
38 change and we're going to continue to see those
39 changes. We don't have a plan yet on exactly how we're
40 going to do this, but we want to make sure we think
41 about maybe broader conservation benefits and studies
42 and things we can incorporate into this project.

43
44 Just in terms of what happens next.
45 This was not our regional director's decision or the
46 final decision. This was just a decision to move
47 forward with the planning process. So that's what
48 we're in right now. It could be three to five years
49 until we are prepared and have enough planning and
50 cooperation and interaction to actually release captive

1 bred Steller's Eiders on the Delta.

2

3 We want to make sure that we use all
4 opportunities to engage in government-to-government
5 consultation with the tribes and with the Native
6 corporations and others out there and use the NEPA
7 assessment that will be required to do in order to do
8 that, to maximize our interaction out there. As we're
9 doing that, the group of us will be developing an
10 implementation plan that will lay out more of the
11 details of the actual reintroduction.

12

13 So that's my short presentation on
14 this. I wanted to make sure that you all have my
15 contact information. You can ask me questions or
16 anyone else in my office. With that, I think I'll
17 leave it to questions.

18

19 CHAIRMAN NANENG: Any questions from
20 anyone.

21

22 MR. RABE: Thank you, Kate, for that
23 information. You made mention that the species had
24 bred on the Y-K Delta in the past and they are not now.
25 What do we know about the reasons that they stopped
26 breeding there?

27

28 MS. MARTIN: Sure. They declined and
29 virtually disappeared by the '60s and '70s. So because
30 we weren't out there measuring things at that time,
31 we'll never completely know why they declined. We do
32 have some hypothesis about some of the potential
33 factors that could have impacted that and could still
34 maybe be impacting population growth of other species.
35 Those include things like lead contamination from spent
36 lead shot.

37

38 Perhaps some impacts from -- as we had
39 seen earlier in some of the graphs from Eric, some of
40 the goose populations had declined precipitously in
41 those times too around the '70s and '80s. Perhaps some
42 of that could have also impacted the Steller's Eider
43 population due to changes with wetland productivity or
44 changes in predation rates as Eric had mentioned too.
45 With the larger goose populations, that can sometimes
46 take predation pressure off of other species like
47 Spectacled Eiders and perhaps that was also part of why
48 they declined.

49

50 Again, we're never going to necessarily

1 know because we weren't out there measuring things at
2 the time. We have working hypotheses and we've also
3 worked towards eliminating some of those threats such
4 as the use of lead shot on the Y-K Delta and other
5 places.

6

7 MR. RABE: What is the source of birds
8 that you would be using to introduce?

9

10 MS. MARTIN: We have been working with
11 the Alaska SeaLife Center in Seward since the early
12 2000s on recovery actions for both Spectacled and
13 Steller's Eiders. In 2005, the recovery team
14 recommended to the SeaLife Center to begin developing a
15 captive population program of Steller's Eider. They
16 had gone up to Barrow with our help and collected eggs
17 from different nests in the Barrow area and started a
18 captive population. Right now we have more than 10
19 breeding pairs at the Alaska SeaLife Center that we
20 could use as the beginning, the founder stock for the
21 reintroduced birds. They're an Alaska origin birds.

22

23 MR. RABE: One of the things that bird
24 introduction experience has often found particularly
25 animals that have been reared multiple generations in
26 captivity is a high mortality rate because they're
27 naive. They don't know anything about the natural
28 environment.

29

30 MS. MARTIN: Absolutely. These birds
31 will actually be -- they won't be multiple generations,
32 maybe one or two generations maximum and I think
33 waterfowl act a little bit differently than maybe some
34 of the gallinaceous birds such as grouse or prairie
35 chickens that really do have issues with becoming more
36 naive over time and they haven't seen that as much in
37 waterfowl.

38

39 There are going to be challenges with
40 this. We're going to have to go through a learning
41 process and learn how to work through some of the
42 things that we can't necessarily anticipate or that we
43 can't solve without trying a few things. It's a point
44 well taken. It will be difficult, but we think it's
45 worth the challenge.

46

47 CHAIRMAN NANENG: Jim.

48

49 MR. UJIOKA: I was just curious. I see
50 on the PowerPoint presentation you had the Barrow area

1 for breeding and it was a large coastal area in Russia.
2 Do you have any '60s and '70s numbers to see if any
3 shift in breeding happened there, any numbers to
4 correlate between Alaska and Russia?

5
6 MS. MARTIN: Yes. Are you asking
7 whether or not the Russian breeding population has
8 declined as well since the '60s and '70s or just.....
9

10 MR. UJIOKA: Well, declined or.....

11 MS. MARTIN:shifted distribution?

12 MR. UJIOKA: Yeah, both.

13
14 MS. MARTIN: Okay. We have seen --
15 there have been aerial surveys done by our Migratory
16 Bird Management Program, so Eric Taylor's shop, for
17 many years in Southwest Alaska, along the Alaska
18 Peninsula and both the birds that breed in Russia and
19 the birds that breed in Alaska molt and winter down
20 there, so they have fairly good numbers on the indices
21 on birds in the Alaska Peninsula over time and they
22 have seen that there has been quite a significant
23 decline of the Pacific population.
24

25
26 In summary, they're also seeing a
27 decline of Russian birds, so that entire Pacific
28 population. I'm not sure that I could answer the
29 change in distribution. I'm not sure that we know
30 enough about the Russian population to answer that.
31

32
33 MR. UJIOKA: Yeah, I wasn't expecting
34 an answer. I just didn't know if you had it.
35

36 MS. MARTIN: Okay. Thanks.

37
38 CHAIRMAN NANENG: Rick.
39

40 MR. ROWLAND: Yeah, I've got a couple
41 questions. This is an ongoing -- I mean this hasn't
42 started yet other than you guys grabbed the eggs. So,
43 okay, then back up a little bit. Who asked you to
44 start doing this?
45

46 MS. MARTIN: Who asked us to start
47 thinking about reintroduction? When the bird -- a few
48 years after the bird was listed a recovery plan was
49 written by the Fish and Wildlife Service in conjunction
50 with the recovery team, which is a group of experts

1 that I had mentioned of biologists and managers and
2 includes some representatives from the North Slope
3 Borough and the Alaska State Fish and Game Department
4 and others. In that recovery plan, it lists a task
5 saying evaluate and consider -- and these aren't the
6 exact words -- reestablishing a population on the Y-K
7 Delta. So, from that, we've moved forward in
8 evaluating it and then the recovery team also
9 recommended later on in 2005 that we should start a
10 captive flock and evaluate it further.

11
12 MR. ROWLAND: Okay. You're saying that
13 it's connected to climate change and you're tossing
14 NEPA out there, so how are you connecting climate
15 change and NEPA to putting this back together into
16 reintroduction of Steller's in that area?

17
18 MS. MARTIN: So I mentioned NEPA
19 because we will have to go through a NEPA analysis in
20 order to put birds out on the ground. We want to make
21 sure that we're thinking about all the potential
22 environmental impacts to both the environment and the
23 human environment, so that's why I mentioned NEPA.

24
25 In terms of mentioning climate change,
26 that was more of an example of maybe some auxiliary
27 benefits that we could get from this project. Perhaps
28 we can build in some data collection or other types of
29 projects that we can engage youth in. Measuring some
30 variables, getting out and doing some science and
31 providing internships and things like that. But that
32 was really just an example more than anything.

33
34 MR. ROWLAND: One last thing is that
35 you know they introduced Emperor Geese back in Kodiak
36 and it shut out our area. Eventually they closed it
37 out. Hopefully this isn't something to create a
38 limitation. Like, for example, if there's an Eider
39 flying in there, that area is closed off to where you
40 can't hunt there anymore. But then the other thing too
41 when you're looking in your NEPA, make sure that you
42 take a look at those Cackling Geese and recognize that
43 they might have moved north because it's too hot down
44 south there. So you might be spending taxpayer's
45 dollars on something that might not work anyway.

46
47 MS. MARTIN: Thank you. Just in
48 response to your comment about whether or not it would
49 affect any kind of closures or change or make more
50 regulation, we've definitely heard that concern from

1 Myron and others out there and we want to keep that in
2 mind. We don't foresee any changes because of this
3 project, but it's very important that we keep that in
4 mind.

5

6 CHAIRMAN NANENG: Peter, did you have a
7 question or comment.

8

9 MR. DEVINE: Yes. Actually a couple.
10 What is the life expectancy of these birds? The reason
11 I ask this is because earlier this winter there was a
12 report in the newspaper about a King Eider that was
13 rehabilitated from Exxon Valdez and here 25 years later
14 he finally gets shot out of the sky and I was just
15 wondering do they breed their whole lifetime or is it
16 just during their younger years or how does that work?

17

18 MS. MARTIN: So I believe their life
19 expectancy can be 15 to 20 years towards the maximum
20 end. They most likely won't start breeding until their
21 third year, maybe later, maybe a little earlier. We
22 actually don't know how much their breeding success
23 would decline if they did live 15 to 20 years. In some
24 ways waterfowl, as they become more experienced and
25 attempt to breed more, you would think that they might
26 be more successful as they get older.

27

28 CHAIRMAN NANENG: Anymore questions.
29 Peter.

30

31 MR. DEVINE: Back on the topic that
32 Rick raised and one of the points you made in your
33 presentation about trying to minimize the effect of any
34 of the users of resources in that part of the state,
35 has the Service given consideration to classify this a
36 10-J experimental population so that it would be
37 treated in a way that any impacts would not be held
38 harmful to other activities?

39

40 MS. MARTIN: Because we're at the
41 planning phases of this, we've discussed it and we want
42 to make sure that -- ideally what we'd like to do is
43 work with the local people and work through any of
44 these concerns without having to go through a 10-J
45 process. However, if that is what they would like us
46 to do and we truly think that would change any sort of
47 potential impacts, I think we would be amenable to
48 discussing it.

49

50 It's just so early right now I can't

1 say whether or not we would do that. Because this is
2 most likely going to be done on Refuge lands a 10-J may
3 or may not actually be that beneficial because of some
4 more technical details with the 10-J that I can talk
5 with you about later if you'd like or I can get into
6 now, but it's definitely something that we will be
7 discussing with the potentially affected groups.

8

9 CHAIRMAN NANENG: Anybody else has any
10 questions. Rick, let's give Mike an opportunity to ask
11 a question.

12

13 MR. PEDERSON: We heard about this
14 project because we have staff on the Steller's Eiders
15 recovery team. I have two comments. I'm kind of
16 thinking I'm not sure what you think the success rate
17 of this project will be. Number two, in our region,
18 having to deal with Steller Eider issues in the last
19 few years, we've worked with the Service, then with the
20 school kids doing the Eider journey stuff and looking
21 at the nests and stuff like that of Steller's and
22 Spectacled Eiders up there.

23

24 I'm kind of, I guess, a little
25 disappointed in what you're proposing just because
26 we've had concerns of handling these birds with -- you
27 know, in Barrow there's about 500 to 600 breeding pairs
28 and yet you guys want to go handle these birds. I'm
29 not sure what the result of handling has been in the
30 past, but I just kind of think that if it's something
31 you're proceeding with with a low success rate and how
32 we've had to deal with some of the Steller's Eiders
33 issues on the Slope, I'm just kind of leery about that.

34

35

36 Plus we were always told that -- like
37 when we were in Barrow and driving around where the
38 Steller's and Spectacled Eiders breed, law enforcement
39 has stopped our vehicles from going on that road and
40 asking questions about what's going on. So I think
41 it's kind of -- I don't know how to put it in words,
42 but I feel like being a little disgusted at this
43 project. And then the way that you guys want to
44 reintroduce the birds and then have kids handle them
45 and stuff.

46

47 Thank you, Mr. Chair.

48

49 CHAIRMAN NANENG: Rick.

50

1 MR. ROWLAND: Thank you. One of the
2 things I didn't mention before, I'm wondering still is
3 that you guys are saying you're pretty new in this
4 process, so you're coming to tell us you're doing this.
5 Now do you eventually intend to produce a proposal or
6 are you going to go forward with it, are you going to
7 go to the Flyway Commission and ask them or what are
8 you going to do?

9
10 MS. MARTIN: Over the next year or so
11 we're going to be engaging as much as we can with the
12 people on the Y-K Delta and we're going to be writing
13 an implementation plan that will have more detail about
14 the methods and that sort of thing that we hope to be
15 able to share with folks within a year or so and that
16 should give everyone an opportunity to look at the
17 methods a lot more closely. In terms of presenting it
18 to the Flyway Council, we'll have to think about
19 whether that's appropriate. I don't know that I can
20 answer that one.

21
22 CHAIRMAN NANENG: Okay, Frank.

23
24 MR. WOODS: Hi, thanks for the
25 presentation. When you talked about reintroducing a
26 Native species protocol -- what did you call it, the
27 Steller Eider -- you must mentioned it.

28
29 MR. PEDERSON: The Eider stuff that
30 they do up on the Slope with the kids?

31
32 MR. WOODS: No, the commission.

33
34 MR. PEDERSON: The recovery team.

35
36 MR. WOODS: Yeah, recovery team. In
37 that regard, I'm not too familiar with the Native
38 Species Act and the listing of it and that whole
39 process, but if you would at least maybe -- I'm
40 thinking in my mind how we could impact -- you talked
41 about climate change, you talked about different
42 aspects of breeding and then introducing a population
43 back into the Y-K area. How do you tie that with -- as
44 Alaska Migratory Bird Co-Management Council, I think
45 it's in our best interest that we be fully up to speed
46 on what it gets to take a bird on -- get them listed
47 and when it gets to take a bird de-listed and there's
48 steps and it's real important because there's a lot of
49 different steps in that process. If we hinder any of
50 that process -- I mean we don't want to become our own

1 enemy.

2

3 Number two, you talked about climate
4 change. We ask in our survey process a simple
5 question. In the bottom of the harvest survey we ask
6 -- you know, there's a real fine line between
7 predator/prey ratios and I was reading your summit for
8 migratory bird and there's a correlation between
9 predator/prey, between foxes, lemmings, population of
10 different -- Eric mentioned it, that the goose
11 population has a huge impact -- or the Cackling Goose
12 population has a huge impact on predators. If they're
13 high in numbers, then there's a better chance that
14 there's less impacts on Brant and other species.

15

16 So, in that process, when you do come
17 up with that plan, please share it with us because
18 there's a huge impact on what we -- you know, the
19 Pacific Flyway Commission talked about degradation
20 permits for -- I feel sorry for the agricultural
21 community down in Oregon, but we have our own issues up
22 here and it would be really -- the Pacific Flyway
23 Commission, I don't see them present. Is there a
24 representative present at this meeting? You are. No.

25

26 (Laughter)

27

28 MR. WOODS: Do you understand where I'm
29 going with this? It's all connected for me as a user
30 that there's a lot of different moving targets and I
31 understand the protocol and how to get there. But when
32 we're talking about a real limited number of 600
33 breeding pairs you talked about on the North Slope.

34

35 MS. MARTIN: (Indiscernible - away from
36 microphone).

37

38 MR. WOODS: Individuals?

39

40 MS. MARTIN: Individual birds.

41

42 MR. WOODS: So there's a whole
43 different level of -- yeah, we want to be fully abreast
44 of what happens.

45

46 MS. MARTIN: Okay.

47

48 MR. WOODS: Thanks. But keep in mind
49 that you could, maybe on a universal level, that U.S.
50 Fish and Wildlife Service look at climate change as the

1 next cash cow that we can move in and cash in on that.
2 No, I'm just teasing.

3

4 (Laughter)

5

6 CHAIRMAN NANENG: Okay. Thanks, Frank.
7 I know that we met about this in Bethel last fall. We
8 just had a report from Eric earlier regarding the
9 population status of different species of birds. One
10 of the things that was raised as a possible concern is
11 the presence of human people. We've had this
12 discussion over and over again in the Y-K Delta.
13 Someone from some university has some money to spend.
14 They need to spend it right now. So they ask for
15 permission to go on the lands to do a study of birds
16 and while they're doing a study of birds some of these
17 birds becomes susceptible to predation and that's been
18 raised over and over again by our elders at Waterfowl
19 Conservation Committee meetings since 1984.

20

21 One of the major concerns about this
22 project is how much human presence is going to be there
23 while people are trying to monitor the eggs. Is Kate
24 going to be sitting on top of the eggs until they hatch
25 and then follow them along and be the mother duck until
26 these birds are in flight. I'm sure that she's not
27 going to do it, but that's human presence during the
28 summer at the same time when those birds -- not just
29 the Eiders themselves, but all the other bird species
30 have hatched and are susceptible to predation by other
31 seagulls.

32

33 We've heard reports from some of our
34 elders down around where they do Black Brant studies as
35 well as Cackler studies. I've heard reports from
36 people from our own village corporation lands where
37 biologists have come to do some studies on Emperor
38 Geese. While they're trying to do some banding and
39 doing some tagging what they find is when human people
40 are there at the time when the birds are small, not
41 long after they have hatched, these birds get
42 susceptible to predation by seagulls and others. Then
43 we bring those issues up and people say, oh, that's not
44 true, that's not happening. But it's our people from
45 the villages that are observing that happen.

46

47 If this project is going to create that
48 situation, even though it happens on Fish and Wildlife
49 lands, it's going to affect the other areas within the
50 Y-K Delta on a number of bird populations. Maybe

1 they'll decline more steadily than 6 percent that Eric
2 provided. So it's a major concern for us. It's not
3 necessarily that we're objecting to it. However, it's
4 going to create some issues and problems for the birds,
5 so we are very hesitant for a duck egg to come from
6 SeaLife Center down in Seward, flown all the way to the
7 Y-K Delta, deposited in a nest and maybe Kate sits on
8 top of it until such time it hatches. That's going to
9 the extreme, but that seems to be the scenario that
10 we're looking at. If that's going to happen, how long
11 will it take for Fish and Wildlife Service to see if
12 there's any success and if it's not successful, will
13 they discontinue it.

14
15 MS. MARTIN: I believe we'll have
16 success. We'll have interim success indicators, so
17 things that we may be successful at first at getting
18 birds to the Delta and then released and then whether
19 or not those birds survive would be another indication
20 of success and whether or not they return next year
21 would be another. So we'll be measuring it that way.
22 At least t the beginning as we're learning and trying
23 to figure out how to make this happen and be
24 successful. We'll be reevaluating it along the way
25 too. So if this just is not successful on a number of
26 fronts, then we'll reevaluate that and we could make
27 that decision together at that point. We're going to
28 have to just take it step by step, I think. Does that
29 answer your question?

30
31 CHAIRMAN NANENG: No, it raises more
32 questions, but I'm not going to ask them.

33
34 (Laughter)

35
36 CHAIRMAN NANENG: Rick and then Dale.

37
38 MR. ROWLAND: Yeah, that was raising
39 questions to me too. The one thing is that, man, we
40 had some geese planted down in Kodiak area and those
41 things are too stupid to migrate. They just hang out
42 there and then so now you start putting these Eiders in
43 there, they might be too stupid to migrate, then you've
44 got a predation issue and then it creates more food for
45 predators, so it just snowballs.

46
47 CHAIRMAN NANENG: Dale.

48
49 MR. RABE: Thank you, Mr. Chair. You
50 know, thinking about the Y-K Delta and we don't really

1 know a lot about what caused them to stop, whether they
2 just said, you know, it's not a good neighborhood,
3 we've got a better place to live or whether there were
4 real ecological factors that just didn't make it a
5 habitable place for them to continue to survive in that
6 area. It leaves a lot of potential questions in terms
7 of how long you pump things into that area before you'd
8 conclude it's just not a good area.

9
10 Have you guys thought at all about
11 doing a comparative study and putting a bunch of birds
12 introduced up on the North Slope where you know that at
13 least birds are currently surviving so that you can
14 then compare? Because if they don't survive in either
15 place, well it may be your techniques are broken. But
16 if they survive both places or one only, then there's
17 more information to be gained.

18
19 MS. MARTIN: We have thought about
20 that. We've thought about whether or not starting an
21 experimental program on the North Slope would make the
22 most biological sense. The recovery team has discussed
23 it. There's so many differences between the North
24 Slope and the Y-K Delta that we weren't sure how much
25 we would learn from that experimental approach and
26 getting geared up and making that happen prior to
27 really focusing on what the real objective is, which is
28 to get birds to take on the Y-K Delta.

29
30 The recovery team was also concerned
31 that there is a population on the North Slope and there
32 are things that we're doing already, recovery actions
33 that we're taking near Barrow that we have evidence
34 showing are helping increase production of nesting
35 Steller's Eiders, so we'd like to focus on those
36 actions. One of which is an example is fox control.
37 It's been increasing the nest success of the birds up
38 there and we'd like to focus on those efforts with the
39 existing population and then focus on reintroduction in
40 the area where we don't have a population and where we
41 think it's important to reestablish one. So we have
42 thought about it.

43
44 CHAIRMAN NANENG: Okay.

45
46 MR. PEDERSON: With your statement you
47 just made about the success of nesting, isn't that an
48 up and down thing? One year you may have something. I
49 mean I just wanted to point that out because one year
50 the Service made a public service announcement saying

1 that Steller's Eiders nesting was very successful when
2 they only had one or two nests and then the next year
3 they had way many more, which I thought was more
4 successful than the year before. So I just wanted to
5 clarify your comment.

6
7 CHAIRMAN NANENG: Anymore questions.
8 Peter.

9
10 MR. DEVINE: Yes. Of these 10 pairs of
11 birds, 20 birds in all, in the plan, how many is going
12 to receive radio transmitters to help monitor them or
13 will you guys be using banding method to monitor them?

14
15 MS. MARTIN: Because we are still in
16 the planning phase, we're still working through exactly
17 what monitoring methods we'll use. We haven't
18 completely ruled out any specific method. There may be
19 times when using a VHF radio transmitter is a good way
20 to track a bird for a certain amount of time, but I
21 can't really answer the question yet until we have an
22 implementation plan. Sorry.

23
24 MR. DEVINE: The reason I asked that is
25 because in the past they've come in Sand Point and
26 captured like 10 birds and of the 10 there was 70
27 percent mortality rate trying to put a transmitter and
28 stuff in them, so you guys should keep that factor in
29 mind if you're going to -- unless the technique has
30 become better to where you have better success rate.

31
32 CHAIRMAN NANENG: Frank.

33
34 MR. WOODS: I guess my last question
35 would be how can we help you make this successful?
36 Myron mentioned that seagulls basically might have a
37 huge impact on different areas and different times and
38 different -- so should we open up a seagull season?
39 Seriously. To make the point clear, should we request
40 U.S. Fish and Wildlife to start implementing predator
41 control for nesting goslings and waterfowl in certain
42 areas? Because there are species of concern in
43 certain areas it would be in our best interest to help
44 move it along further.

45
46 So, Myron, I guess to be on the serious
47 side, how do we approach U.S. Fish and Wildlife? With
48 an official letter, a letter of request? Does that
49 work up north? Out of my area, so I'd have to rely on
50 your wishes and expertise.

1 CHAIRMAN NANENG: And we'll also need
2 to know how much money they're going to spend on this
3 project. That's one information that we haven't been
4 provided. All we've been told is that we plan on
5 reintroducing Steller's Eiders, but we haven't heard
6 how much it's going to cost.

7
8 MS. MARTIN: So it will be a long-term
9 effort. We'll have two categories of cost. First
10 we're going to have to spend more money increasing the
11 capacity, making sure that we can produce enough birds
12 by increases in facilities either at the SeaLife Center
13 or potentially somewhere out on the Delta. So that
14 initial cost has been estimated at about \$2.6 million.
15 Annually, the cost has been estimated around a million,
16 1.2.

17
18 We, as Fish and Wildlife Service, do
19 not have that funding. Right now my task and the task
20 of the people that I work with in Fairbanks is to start
21 thinking about a fund-raising plan, how can we
22 incorporate or get folks on board that are from outside
23 of agencies and think about non-profits and foundations
24 and who might be interested in this. Those are
25 estimates. I just want to caution that as we get more
26 into the planning phase we'll have more information
27 about exact costs and that sort of thing.

28
29 MR. WOODS: Is there a tax write-off
30 for somebody who wants to donate to the project?

31
32 MS. MARTIN: I'm not high enough to
33 answer that one.

34
35 MR. WOODS: I know. (Turned off
36 microphone) Thank you for your report. Thank you.

37
38 (Laughter)

39
40 CHAIRMAN NANENG: Anymore questions or
41 comments. Dale.

42
43 MR. RABE: One last question. Thanks,
44 Kate. And I do appreciate the presentation and all the
45 thought you guys have put into this already. From a
46 State perspective, there are scary aspects of what
47 you're proposing to do. We certainly, as an agency,
48 are as anxious as anybody here to have that species
49 recovered. We're completely on board with the goal
50 that you're trying to accomplish, but whether or not

1 this is the best use of money or other things.

2

3 In terms of the timeline, in terms of
4 other people providing input, can you share more
5 information in terms of specifically what next and when
6 other people have a chance to provide input to help
7 develop this, to make it potentially the most
8 successful it can be?

9

10 MS. MARTIN: I wish I could, but I
11 don't have a timeline yet that I can share with anyone,
12 but perhaps that's something that when I do in the next
13 month or two I could share with -- well, I will be
14 sharing with the State, but maybe with this group as
15 well. Yeah, I mean we want to maximize the amount of
16 interaction, but I don't have dates or timelines set at
17 this point.

18

19 CHAIRMAN NANENG: Thank you for the
20 information and presentation. I would hope that there
21 would be more information provided within the Y-K Delta
22 at the village level because we know that whenever some
23 things are introduced our people get kind of leery
24 about more restrictions that will be placed upon them
25 and I've got a commitment from the regional director
26 himself that that is what he's going to try and avoid.

27

28 Last but not least, good luck on the
29 project. If you're successful, we'll call you the
30 Mother Duck.

31

32 (Laughter)

33

34 MS. MARTIN: Thank you, I guess.
35 Thanks for letting me present the information.

36

37 CHAIRMAN NANENG: Thanks, Kate. Moving
38 on the agenda. I was asked that we do a presentation
39 going back to the old business, going to the council
40 committees and they want to make a report on the
41 budget. The initial report is that there's no money.

42

43 (Laughter)

44

45 CHAIRMAN NANENG: I'll turn it over to
46 Patty to give that report.

47

48 MS. SCHWALENBERG: Thank you, Mr.
49 Chair. Later on in the agenda, which will probably be
50 tomorrow, there is a budget and grants update that Pete

1 and Donna will be presenting, but I just wanted to
2 quickly let the committee know that the Budget
3 Committee did meet in January and it kind of met as a
4 whole group because of the number of people that were
5 on numerous committees.

6 Donna presented the 2013 figures. We
7 had some questions and answers and then a discussion on
8 the cost for the Harvest Survey Program and Fish and
9 Game's participation in the harvest survey and how
10 they've been working with cost-saving measures by using
11 other harvest programs to gather the same type of data.
12 The minutes are included in tab 8 and that's the
13 committee report for the Budget Committee.

14

15 Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

16

17 CHAIRMAN NANENG: Any questions for
18 Patty on the budget.

19

20 (No comments)

21

22 CHAIRMAN NANENG: If not, quyana,
23 Patty, for the report. At this time, if it's okay with
24 the committee, we'd like to have a Native caucus and
25 we'll try to see if we can run until about -- depending
26 on which clock we're looking at on the wall, one is
27 ahead of the other. It's just like the Daylight
28 Savings Time where we tried to add a foot of blanket to
29 the other end to make it say that it's just as long.

30

31 With that, we'll have a Native caucus
32 for the next half hour or so.

33

34 MR. RABE: Are you planning on
35 reconvening the whole group?

36

37 CHAIRMAN NANENG: And then after the
38 caucus reconvene tomorrow morning at 9:00 o'clock.

39

40 MR. RABE: Okay.

41

42 CHAIRMAN NANENG: So it's recess for
43 the rest of the group and more work for the Native
44 caucus.

45

46 (Off record)

47

48 (PROCEEDINGS TO BE CONTINUED)

