

VOLUME I

ALASKA MIGRATORY BIRD CO-MANAGEMENT COUNCIL

SPRING MEETING

ANCHORAGE, ALASKA

APRIL 5, 2017

Members Present:

Bruce Dale, Alaska Department of Fish and Game
Pete Probasco, U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service
Jack Fagerstrom, Kawerak
Cyrus Harris, Maniilaq Association, Kotzebue
Mike Pederson, North Slope Region, Barrow
Gloria Stickwan, Copper River Native Association
Melissa Berns, Sun'aq Tribe of Kodiak
Roland White, Association of Village Presidents
Gayla Hoseth, Bristol Bay Native Association
Randy Mayo, Tanana Chiefs representative, Interior
Peter Devine, Aleutian/Pribilofs

Executive Director, Patty Brown-Schwalenberg

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1 P R O C E E D I N G S
2
3 (Anchorage, Alaska - 4/5/2017)
4
5 (On record)
6
7 CHAIRMAN DALE: Good morning, everyone.
8 Welcome. It's nice to have a good crowd. Call this
9 meeting to order today. We had a good work session
10 yesterday. We'll set up a couple additional agenda
11 items that we'll get to later in the day.
12
13 We'll start off with a moment of
14 silence.
15
16 (Moment of silence)
17
18 CHAIRMAN DALE: First up we have
19 seating of alternates.
20
21 MS. SCHWALENBERG: Yes, Mr. Chairman.
22 We have several new council members at this meeting.
23 So the Kodiak regional management body has appointed
24 Melissa Berns from Old Harbor. The Waterfowl
25 Conservation Committee from AVCP has appointed Roland
26 White from Tuntutuliak. Gloria Stickwan is here in
27 place of Roy Ewan who replaced Joeneal from the Copper
28 River/Upper Copper River area.
29
30 I believe that's everyone.
31
32 CHAIRMAN DALE: Well, welcome to the
33 AMBCC new members. Please let us know what we can do
34 to make your presence here appreciated. There are no
35 silly questions as you'll learn as we go along, so
36 please speak up and welcome.
37
38 MS. SCHWALENBERG: We also did replace
39 Chugach Region. Beth Pipkin is now the alternate. The
40 primary for the Chugach Region is Priscilla Evans, but
41 she was unable to attend this meeting.
42
43 That should be everybody.
44
45 CHAIRMAN DALE: I'd ask for a motion to
46 approve the alternates.
47
48 MS. HOSETH: I so move.
49
50

1 MR. HARRIS: Second.
2
3 CHAIRMAN DALE: It's been moved and
4 seconded. Call for the question.
5
6 MS. STICKWAN: Patty, I'm not an
7 alternate. I'm just filling in. We haven't chosen an
8 alternate yet.
9
10 MS. SCHWALENBERG: Oh, okay.
11
12 CHAIRMAN DALE: All in favor say aye.
13
14 IN UNISON: Aye.
15
16 (No opposing votes)
17
18 CHAIRMAN DALE: So moved.
19
20 MS. SCHWALENBERG: For information for
21 everyone, the bathrooms are the hallway to the left and
22 then around the left side. The Wi-Fi code for those of
23 you who are interested is PUBLIC_acce55.
24
25 Thank you.
26
27 CHAIRMAN DALE: Pete.
28
29 MR. PROBASCO: Thank you, Mr. Chair.
30 Peter Devine asked me to let everybody know that he
31 will be here. He's upstairs doing a presentation.
32 He'll be out for a half hour or so.
33
34 CHAIRMAN DALE: Thanks, Pete.
35
36 MS. HOSETH: Mr. Chairman. Mike
37 Peterson will be a little bit late about an hour this
38 morning as well.
39
40 CHAIRMAN DALE: Okay. Thank you. Can
41 we have roll call.
42
43 MS. SCHWALENBERG: Association of
44 Village Council Presidents.
45
46 (No response)
47
48 MS. SCHWALENBERG: He's here. Bristol
49 Bay.
50

1 MS. HOSETH: Here.
2
3 MS. SCHWALENBERG: Chugach Region is
4 absent. Copper River, Upper Copper River.
5
6 MS. STICKWAN: Here.
7
8 MS. SCHWALENBERG: Kawerak.
9
10 MR. FAGERSTROM: Here.
11
12 MS. SCHWALENBERG: Aleutian-Pribilof
13 Islands Association will be a little bit late. Sun'aq
14 Tribe of Kodiak.
15
16 MS. BERNS: Here.
17
18 MS. SCHWALENBERG: Maniilaq.
19
20 MR. HARRIS: Here.
21
22 MS. SCHWALENBERG: North Slope Borough
23 also will be late.
24
25 Tanana Chiefs Conference.
26
27 MR. MAYO: Here.
28
29 MS. SCHWALENBERG: U.S. Fish and
30 Wildlife Service.
31
32 MR. PROBASCO: Here.
33
34 MS. SCHWALENBERG: Alaska Department of
35 Fish and Game.
36
37 MR. DALE: Here.
38
39 MS. SCHWALENBERG: Mr. Chairman, we
40 have a quorum.
41
42 CHAIRMAN DALE: Thank you, Patty. I
43 will start off with introductions now. I'm Bruce Dale.
44 I'm the Director for the Division of Wildlife
45 Conservation for the Alaska Department of Fish and
46 Game. I'm the Chairman for the AMBCC for this year and
47 I look forward to it. I very much look forward to all
48 our meetings. That was one of the reasons I took the
49 Deputy Director job a couple years ago because I was
50

1 interested and it was new. I was a game manager my
2 whole life and researcher for big game and always been
3 an avid waterfowler and upland bird hunter and I wanted
4 to get involved in that and this was the perfect way to
5 do it. I'm very glad to be here.

6
7 We'll go to Gloria and go around the
8 table.

9
10 MS. STICKWAN: Gloria Stickwan (away
11 from microphone).

12
13 MR. WHITE: Roland White from
14 Tuntutuliak. I am an executive board member for AVCP
15 region. I'm pretty new to this, so bear with me.

16
17 MS. BERNS: Melissa Berns. I'm from
18 the village of Old Harbor currently working for the Old
19 Harbor Native Corporation doing project management,
20 land management. I also serve on the Kodiak and
21 Aleutians Federal Subsistence Management Council and
22 the Kodiak Advisory Council for the Alaska Department
23 of Fish and Game.

24
25 I'm glad to be here.

26
27 MS. HOSETH: Good morning, everybody.
28 Gayla Hoseth from Dillingham, Alaska. I represent
29 Bristol Bay Native Association in the Bristol Bay
30 region and also serve as the chair of the Native
31 Caucus.

32
33 MR. PROBASCO: Good morning. I'm Pete
34 Probasco. I'm the Assistant Regional Director, U.S.
35 Fish and Wildlife Service. I oversee the Migratory
36 Bird Program and the State program Wildlife and Sport
37 Fish Restoration. Good morning.

38
39 MS. SCHWALENBERG: Good morning. Patty
40 Schwalenberg, Executive Director of the Alaska
41 Migratory Bird Co-Management Council.

42
43 MR. FAGERSTROM: Good morning. Jack
44 Fagerstrom representing Kawerak. I was born and raised
45 in Golovin.

46
47 MR. HARRIS: Uvlaalluataq. Good
48 morning. Cyrus Harris from Kotzebue, Alaska. I
49 represent the Maniilaq service area. Also an employee
50

1 with Maniilaq.

2

3 MR. MAYO: Good morning. Randy Mayo.
4 Enrolled tribal member of the Stevens Village Tribe and
5 here representing the Tanana Chiefs Region.

6

7 CHAIRMAN DALE: Okay. Now we'll do
8 guests and members of the public. Staff first. Well,
9 they can introduce themselves.

10

11 We'll start with Julian.

12

13 MR. FISCHER: Good morning. Julian
14 Fischer, U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, the Migratory
15 Bird Program based here in Anchorage.

16

17 MS. ZELLER: Tamara Zeller, U.S. Fish
18 and Wildlife Service, Migratory Bird Management Program
19 in Anchorage as well.

20

21 DR. FALL: Jim Fall. I'm with the
22 Division of Subsistence, Alaska Department of Fish and
23 Game.

24

25 MS. NAVES: Liliana Naves. I'm also
26 Division of Subsistence with the State here in
27 Anchorage.

28

29 MR. SCHAMBER: Jason Schamber. I'm
30 with the Waterfowl Program with the Alaska Department
31 of Fish and Game.

32

33 MR. AHMASUK: Brandon Ahmasuk, Kawerak,
34 Nome.

35

36 MR. SFORMO: Todd Sformo, North Slope
37 Borough.

38

39 MR. OSNAS: Eric Osnas, U.S. Fish and
40 Wildlife Service.

41

42 MS. KRUEGER: Kelly Krueger, Sun'aq
43 Tribe of Kodiak.

44

45 MR. BOOMS: Travis Booms, Fish and
46 Game, Division of Wildlife Conservation in Fairbanks.

47

48 MS. MARTIN: Kate Martin with Fish and
49 Wildlife Service, Endangered Species Program.

50

1 MR. DANIELS: Bryan Daniels, waterfowl
2 biologist at Yukon Delta National Wildlife Refuge.
3
4 MS. DEWHURST: Donna Dewhurst, staff to
5 the Council.
6
7 MS. HOOPER: Jennifer Hooper, AVCP,
8 Bethel.
9
10 MR. MATHEWS: Vince Mathews with
11 Arctic, Kanuti and Yukon Flats Refuge in Fairbanks.
12
13 MR. DYASUK: Jon Dyasuk with Togiak
14 Refuge.
15
16 MR. CHARLEY: I'm Donald Charley. I'm
17 First Chief of Nenana Native Village.
18
19 DR. GEORGE: Luke George, Colorado
20 State University.
21
22 MR. GORDY: Paul Gordy, Colorado State
23 University.
24
25 MS. SWEENEY: Uvlaalluataq. I'm
26 Brittany Sweeney (in Inupiaq). I work for Selawik
27 Wildlife Refuge in Kotzebue.
28
29 MR. LORD: Victor Lord, Nenana Native
30 Council, Second Chief, avid hunter and user of
31 waterfowl.
32
33 MR. SAFINE: Dave Safine, U.S. Fish and
34 Wildlife Service, Migratory Bird Management.
35
36 MR. PEARCE: John Pearce, U.S.
37 Geological Survey, Alaska Science Center here in
38 Anchorage.
39
40 MR. FROST: John Frost, also U.S. Fish
41 and Wildlife Service, Migratory Bird Management.
42
43 CHAIRMAN DALE: All right. Thanks
44 everybody. Again, welcome. So now we review and adopt
45 the agenda. A reminder that lunch will be from 12:00
46 to 2:00 today. The Migratory Bird Management Program
47 review. We have that. We didn't have to add that.
48
49 MR. PROBASCO: I did get the questions
50

1 from Brett for that agenda item.

2

3 CHAIRMAN DALE: Okay. Do we have any
4 other additions for the agenda?

5

6 MS. HOSETH: Mr. Chairman, I'd like to
7 make a motion to have an open agenda.

8

9 CHAIRMAN DALE: Any opposed to opening
10 the agenda?

11

12 (No comments)

13

14 CHAIRMAN DALE: So moved.

15

16 MS. BERNS: I'll second that.

17

18 CHAIRMAN DALE: Now it's moved. Thank
19 you. Okay. We'll take public comments at this time.
20 Who would like to give public comments?

21

22 MR. CHARLEY: I'm Donald Charley, First
23 Chief of Nenana Native Village and I've been in that
24 position since 2011. I came here and submitted a
25 proposal to lift one of the regulations for waterfowl
26 hunting, but before I do that I want to give a little
27 example of what are the things that people go through
28 when they're doing this. That regulation is limiting
29 waterfowl hunting with outboard motors.

30

31 Currently the law is that in order to
32 be on the river and hunt the waterfowl you've got to
33 lift your engine completely out of the water where the
34 prop is out of the water. This time of year is the
35 perfect time to be talking about this because now we're
36 experiencing springtime and the ice in Nenana is
37 getting ready to break out. That's also the time when
38 the ducks start flying around and start going on the
39 river.

40

41 The time the river is pretty rough
42 waters. It goes from 7 to 10 miles an hour. The
43 current is pretty strong there. There's a lot of
44 erosion on the banks. Trees falling over creates a lot
45 of sweepers, a lot of danger on that river, not to
46 mention ice flowing down. When the ducks come around,
47 there's a lot of ice going down the river. Probably
48 around the next 30 days there will be a lot of boats
49 sliding off trailers, mine included.

50

1 That's a safety issue. It's pretty
2 hard to be paddling down the river and having control
3 of your boat trying to dodge the ice and dodge the
4 sweepers over the bank while you're down hunting ducks.
5 You see a flock of ducks and you stop to turn off the
6 engine, lift it out so you can shoot the ducks, the
7 ducks are going away from you, you're drifting
8 downstream as well. It's pretty hard to -- it's hard
9 to be hunting ducks. Ducks is one of our staples in
10 the communities, especially springtime, the coming of
11 spring.
12

13 My proposal is to lift that restriction
14 and allow the use of the outboard motors while hunting
15 on rivers and the lakes and the tributaries. Not only
16 on the Tanana River, but in the Interior. A lot of
17 people around the state that practice that tradition.
18

19 CHAIRMAN DALE: Are there any questions
20 for Mr. Charley?
21

22 MR. PROBASCO: Mr. Charley, your
23 understanding of the regulations is you have to have
24 your motor out of the water while you're hunting?
25

26 MR. CHARLEY: It was a regulation, yes.
27

28 MR. PROBASCO: I don't think that's
29 accurate, but we'll check for you. I think the key is
30 that your boat -- just all forward motion has to be
31 stopped, so you don't need to have the motor out of the
32 water.
33

34 MR. CHARLEY: I think the regulation
35 states that you use a boat to retrieve the ducks after
36 you shoot them or for positioning, yeah.
37

38 CHAIRMAN DALE: Gloria.
39

40 MS. STICKWAN: Would it be hard for you
41 to lift the motor out of the water to shoot a duck?
42 Would it be dangerous?
43

44 MR. CHARLEY: Some -- times change.
45 Right now they have trim and tilt and you can just use
46 a button to lift it out, but back in the day you had to
47 physically pull it up and sometimes if you get a 40
48 horse or higher it's pretty hard to do. It takes a lot
49 of physical strength to do that. Some of them are
50

1 still that way.

2

3 CHAIRMAN DALE: Donna, do you have the
4 regulation handy? We'll make sure we're all talking
5 about the same thing.

6

7 MS. DEWHURST: Donna Dewhurst. So the
8 regulation basically says -- there's a couple of
9 different ones that would apply. It's prohibited to
10 use a boat to drive, concentrate, rally or stir up
11 migratory birds; however, boats may be used to position
12 a hunter. Basically that means the engine should be
13 shut off, but it doesn't say anything about lifting the
14 engine out of the water or lifting the prop out of the
15 water, but basically the boat should be shut off, but
16 you can use the boat to position the hunter. You can
17 use the boat to pick up the birds afterwards.

18

19 It's my understanding, and we can
20 confirm that with law enforcement, the engine should
21 not be running while you're shooting. That's the way
22 that the law is written. Actually that's right because
23 I used to be law enforcement and that's what we used to
24 enforce was the engine was supposed to be shut off when
25 you were actually shooting the birds, but you could
26 turn the engine back on and go pick up your birds. You
27 could also use the boat to get in position, like to get
28 up to a sandbar or something and shoot from there.

29

30 CHAIRMAN DALE: Okay, thank you. I'll
31 add that under the State regs for the fall season. The
32 forward motion of the boat has to stop, but there's no
33 requirement to turn off the engine or pull a motor
34 under the State regs. It's just that the forward
35 motion has to cease.

36

37 Randy.

38

39 MR. MAYO: Mr. Chair. Randy Mayo here.
40 Our regional management body and the TCC region we had
41 our meeting and Chief Charley addressed our management
42 council. As he mentioned, it's not only his tribal
43 community that experiences these regulations. You know,
44 it's a safety issue. So our region is wholeheartedly
45 supporting the tribe there in this regulation.

46

47 And I just wanted to also point out too
48 that some of our discussions were it's a -- you know,
49 means and methods of course change over time and

50

1 traditional subsistence hunters adapt and change with
2 different technologies, but the practice of continuing
3 this activity as a cultural and spiritual right, that
4 principal and traditional conservation methods it's
5 unwritten, but it's still abided by. You know, not
6 only the sharing.
7

8 You know, of course, you know, we have
9 opportunity. Well, some people don't really have that
10 opportunity with little cash to buy -- go down to KFC
11 or get a chicken from Fred Meyers, but it also provides
12 a lot of sustenance and sharing amongst families, you
13 know, like all of us sitting around the table. We
14 share our harvest with people that can't hunt or elders
15 that have to reside in the urban area not of their
16 choice but maybe medical reasons.
17

18 Also too I might just want to add in
19 our area too, as with Chief Charley's area, that we
20 have ceremonies. You know, the adopted word is a
21 potlatch, but in our dialect it's a traditional
22 religious ceremony and traditional foods from the land
23 and waters is a key part of that ceremony also. A lot
24 of times the take is -- the harvest is saved for these
25 religious events, so I just wanted to point that out.
26

27 Thank you.
28

29 MR. FAGERSTROM: The regs state, Donna
30 was saying, the motor has to be shut off. Another
31 interpretation was all forward motion has to be. My
32 question is what if he's facing downstream and he shuts
33 his motor off, but he's still going forward, what's the
34 deal there? I would be totally in favor of his
35 proposition the way it is because interpreting that
36 rule, the two rules there is confusing to say the
37 least. His solution would be the simplest, less
38 confusing. That's just the way I look at it.
39

40 CHAIRMAN DALE: Pete.
41

42 MR. PROBASCO: Thanks, Jack. I think
43 that's a fair question. In my experience living in
44 rural Alaska and those situations, both on the State
45 side and the Federal side, enforcement would step up
46 only if the boat was in motion, in other words still on
47 step going downriver or upriver and come around the
48 corner blasting birds. That's when citations were
49 issued.
50

1 Your situation where people are just
2 going downriver looking for moose and they shut the
3 motor off or cease power and it's just drifting with
4 the current of the river and shooting birds as they
5 pass by, my experience that was not enforced, but it
6 was the latter where people were actually on step and
7 shooting from a boat under motion like that.

8
9 MR. FAGERSTROM: I just worry you might
10 get some overzealous fishing/wildlife protection
11 officer.

12
13 MR. CHARLEY: A lot of times you're
14 going downriver -- like I said the Tanana River is
15 about 10 mile an hour -- and floating down the river
16 and you're passing up a -- you're going downriver and
17 you pass up a flock of ducks and you've got to turn
18 around to get them and when you do that, you're going
19 upstream and you're not going to paddle that boat
20 upstream if you turn it off and pass all them ducks,
21 you know.

22
23 So that's a thought as well.

24
25 CHAIRMAN DALE: Peter.

26
27 MR. DEVINE: Thank you, Mr. Chair.
28 Personally I've had an issue with this one, you know,
29 since the beginning because that's how we're taught.
30 That's one of our traditional ways I mean, you know,
31 with a motor. I mean we don't have a -- you know, our
32 bays are pretty big. We'll take a couple hunters,
33 we'll drop them off in strategic locations. Usually
34 when you go drop the hunter off in that location you'll
35 chase the birds out, but you'll put your hunters in
36 strategic spots and then you'll send the skiff over to
37 the other side of the bay where the birds went, you
38 know, to scare them back to the hunter that you dropped
39 off. We've been doing that since we had outboards.
40 But with all these other things that we have on the
41 table, I mean this is just something that hasn't been
42 brought to the table. I mean this is something that's
43 probably going to take five years just to get it
44 switched around.

45
46 Yeah, I haven't been in favor of that
47 regulation or some of these other methods and means. I
48 mean back when we were fur trapping we used to use
49 gillnets. I mean you didn't have to make a shot or
50

1 scare your game out of the region. I mean you were
2 able to put up nets and gather your birds. That is
3 also illegal, I guess, herding and driving or whatever.
4

5 So I just want to say that, yeah, I
6 oppose that regulation too, but we'll have to take it
7 up at a latter date.
8

9 CHAIRMAN DALE: That's correct. It
10 sounds like we'll have a spirited deliberation over
11 this regulation when your regulation does come up at
12 the next meeting. Is that when it comes up?
13

14 MS. SCHWALENBERG: Chief Charley
15 submitted the proposal after the proposal submission
16 deadline, so it will be included with the other
17 proposals that are submitted in the November 1 to
18 December 15 proposal submission period.
19

20 CHAIRMAN DALE: Thank you, Patty. So,
21 with that does anyone else have questions for Mr.
22 Charley?
23

24 MS. HOSETH: Thank you, Mr. Chair.
25 First of all I would like to say thank you to Chief
26 Charley for coming all the way down here and presenting
27 this to us. It's been a real honor to meet you and to
28 visit with you throughout these meetings.
29

30 Just to let everybody know that when we
31 did have our Native Caucus meetings we talked about
32 this in detail. AMBCC Native Caucus is looking at it
33 as -- in all of our regions and we're probably going to
34 be submitting a proposal with AMBCC Native Caucus
35 statewide for the issue that Chief Charley brought
36 forward. So we wanted to thank you for bringing this
37 issue up.
38

39 We did talk about this at our Bristol
40 Bay Regional Council meeting and our Council members
41 there felt that that would be good for the Bristol Bay
42 area as well. And then when we had our Native Caucus,
43 everybody thought that that would work out best in
44 their region. So just to let you guys know that we'll
45 be submitting one for the Native Caucus and working
46 with Chief Charley.
47

48 I really wanted to thank you for coming
49 here. We really enjoy having public comment and you
50

1 representing your tribe and coming here is a great
2 honor to have your presence here. So thank you.

3

4 MR. CHARLEY: Well, thank you. I'm
5 glad you're going on to submit a proposal as well and
6 the honor is mine to come down here. It's the first
7 time I've been down here to a meeting like this. I
8 wholeheartedly enjoyed it, but I have to say that after
9 I'm finished here I'll be leaving. I have a long drive
10 home and I'm praying for the sun.

11

12 Thank you.

13

14 MR. PROBASCO: Thank you, Mr. Chair.
15 And Gayla, thanks for that clarification. When you
16 guys meet with your councils this fall, make sure each
17 of your councils have that action notated in your --
18 that would be important to have that. So make sure we
19 check the box.

20

21 Thanks.

22

23 MS. HOSETH: Thank you. My box is
24 already checked.

25

26 (Laughter)

27

28 CHAIRMAN DALE: Thank you very much,
29 sir. Anyone else for public testimony.

30

31 (No comments)

32

33 CHAIRMAN DALE: Last call. Hearing
34 none. We'll close public testimony and move on the
35 agenda.

36

37 MS. SCHWALENBERG: Mr. Chairman. The
38 next item on the agenda is the adoption of Council
39 action items and the Staff report. So under Tab 3 is a
40 list of the actions that were taken at the last
41 meeting, so we would need a motion to approve those.
42 And the Executive Director report from September
43 through March is included in the same tab, so I don't
44 know if you want that just for information or how you
45 want to deal with it.

46

47 Thank you.

48

49 MR. PROBASCO: Mr. Chair. I make a

50

1 motion that we approve the action items from the August
2 31st-September 1st, 2016 meeting and Patty's executive
3 report.
4

5 MS. BERNS: I'll second that motion.
6

7 CHAIRMAN DALE: We'll call for the
8 question.
9

10 MS. HOSETH: Question.
11

12 CHAIRMAN DALE: Is there any opposition
13 to this?
14

15 (No opposition)
16

17 CHAIRMAN DALE: If so, we'll adopt the
18 action items from the last meeting. Patty, if you
19 would, just give us a brief synopsis of your report.
20

21 MS. SCHWALENBERG: Certainly. This is
22 a very short narrative of six months worth of work, but
23 in the interest of time the AMBCC attended the U.S.
24 Fish and Wildlife Service Regulations Committee in
25 October and presented our regulations. They were passed
26 by the committee.
27

28 So, as you know, they will be able to
29 be implemented at the start of the 2017 season, which
30 was just the other day. This included the approval of
31 the subsistence harvest season for Emperor Geese as
32 well as some date changes for one of the regions, some
33 inclusion of villages in another region. So those were
34 all passed by the council.
35

36 We're still waiting publication of the
37 handicrafts regulation. We don't know when that's going
38 to be. Actually we're hoping for by the end of the
39 summer. Then we worked with Kodiak on their proposals
40 regarding the road closure.
41

42 We attended the Board of Game meeting
43 in Bethel to work on the sport harvest of the Emperor
44 Goose harvest framework. That meeting went very well
45 and we were able to get the Board of Game to approve
46 the suggested allocation for the 1,000 permits for the
47 sport hunt. We worked a lot on the outreach materials
48 for the Emperor Goose harvest should that be published,
49 which it did.
50

1 Then I attended seven -- there's only
2 six listed here, but I attended seven of the regional
3 management body meetings, two of them by
4 teleconference.
5

6 Thank you.
7

8 CHAIRMAN DALE: Thank you, Patty. Any
9 questions for Patty on her report.
10

11 Gayla.
12

13 MS. HOSETH: Thank you, Mr. Chair. I
14 just wanted to thank Patty for all the hard work that
15 she's done and our busy schedules that we do have. So
16 I just wanted to recognize all the work that she does.
17

18 So thank you, Patty.
19

20 CHAIRMAN DALE: I think we'll all
21 second that.
22

23 Okay, we'll start with the regional
24 reports.
25

26 Randy, would you like to kick it off.
27

28 MR. MAYO: Sure. Yeah, we had our
29 regional management body March. Squeezed it in during
30 the annual Tanana Chiefs Conference. Patty came up to
31 Fairbanks and participated and gave us her report and
32 helped us out with the Kodiak area proposals. After
33 much discussion and our board learning the background
34 and the reason for the proposals, our management body
35 motioned to support the three proposals from the Kodiak
36 area.
37

38 Also at that same meeting Chief Charley
39 addressed our regional management body and educated us
40 on his desires through his proposal. We all agreed
41 with him due to some of the things I mentioned earlier,
42 but also too as a safety issue up in my area, the Yukon
43 Flats too, there's a lot of swift water and cut banks
44 and whatnot. You can get into trouble =drifting in to
45 some of these areas.
46

47 So we had a pretty good meeting up
48 there and also discussed these changing times and
49 whatnot where after it became legal to spring hunt, we
50

1 always -- all of us here grew up hunting and being
2 secure within our traditional lands, but now up in our
3 area the area is growing and more and more competition,
4 especially where roads are built into traditional
5 hunting areas and the State offering up homesteading
6 and a lot of our areas potentially will become private
7 properties right in key hunting and traditional hunting
8 and fishing use areas.

9
10 One of the things that was talked about
11 was there's two areas in our region where the State DNR
12 was seeking comment on opening up townships to
13 settlement. So how that eventually will affect us,
14 like I said, with areas becoming private property, but
15 also in the future, if people move out to these areas,
16 you know, non-tribal members or not married into the
17 tribe, securing P.O. boxes in the nearest community,
18 would they become rural residents also. So we're
19 discussing some of these issues that we're facing in
20 our region.

21
22 Also we had some good discussion in the
23 face of these changing times and whatnot. Like I
24 mentioned before, despite the changes in means and
25 methods, the cultural and spiritual principles are
26 still adhered to and afforded in our upcoming
27 generations. You know, teaching them and instilling in
28 them the cultural and spiritual parts of the spring
29 hunt into the future.

30
31 Those are some of the things we also
32 talked about along with, you know, reviving our
33 cultural identity through language and some of these
34 practices where, you know, also teaching the younger
35 kids, especially the ones that hadn't been afforded the
36 luxury of growing up out in the traditional homeland,
37 the traditional names and uses for the different
38 species. These are just things of importance to us.

39
40 Again, I'd reiterate that we support
41 Chief Charley's proposal wholeheartedly and we'll work
42 with the rest of the AMBCC on that proposal and other
43 proposals of that nature.

44
45 Thank you.

46
47 CHAIRMAN DALE: Thank you. Any
48 questions for Randy.

49
50

1 (No comments)

2

3 CHAIRMAN DALE: We'll move on to Cyrus
4 then.

5

6 MR. HARRIS: Good morning. I came
7 unprepared without a written report, but we had our
8 regional management body March 8th and 9th I believe in
9 Kotzebue. We invited AMBCC folks or Patty, Eric and
10 Jason. So we had a pretty good meeting up that way.
11 Along with Brittany from the U.S. Fish and Wildlife
12 Service back there, we all worked together as one group
13 of people to make things work for our community.

14

15 We've also invited the school kids to
16 attend our meetings whenever they can take a break from
17 class and kind of like show up. There were roughly
18 about 20, if I could remember right, that came in
19 throughout the day or day and a half meeting that we
20 had. It was more or less to introduce them to the
21 AMBCC meetings that takes place here, give them an idea
22 what happens. We had some questions from some of the
23 kids, which turned out pretty good. So that was just
24 more to introduce them to what we do. It's going to be
25 sooner or later that they are going to be taking over
26 the seat here.

27

28 There's a whole lot more that took
29 place. I'm looking at Brittany because she's got a lot
30 of good information that took place at the meeting and
31 eventually there will be a report submitted to AMBCC.

32

33 CHAIRMAN DALE: Thanks. I certainly
34 applaud your efforts to get the kids involved. I think
35 that's a real important step. I know everybody does it
36 in different ways, but knowing about the process is
37 going to make them be more effective when they do take
38 your seat. We appreciate that.

39

40 Any questions for Cyrus.

41

42 (No comments)

43

44 CHAIRMAN DALE: Okay. We'll have a
45 chance at the end to follow up on this.

46

47 Jack, would you go next, please.

48

49 MR. FAGERSTROM: Good morning. Thank

50

1 you. We held our meeting on the 27th and 28th. We'd
2 like to thank Patty and Donna for attending.
3 Observations are pretty much the same as last year. I
4 represent people from Stebbins to Wales. This year
5 there were no people from Stebbins, but talking on the
6 phone with other people from there there were a lot
7 more snow geese.

8
9 Unalakleet, Stebbins and St. Mike
10 they're pretty much the same. Their timing is real
11 close. Unalakleet they noticed more white geese, less
12 birds flying south. Shaktoolik the timing was pretty
13 much the same.

14
15 Elim, there's a concern about less
16 terns, less Lapland Longspurs and storm surges. The
17 gentleman who represented Elim came in and said, man,
18 Jack, this is the first time I've seen a seagull
19 building a nest on top of a chunk of ice. We come from
20 an area which is real shallow and we're subject to a
21 lot of storm surges where the ice goes overland
22 scouring nesting places, berry beds and that affects
23 not only the birds, but us.

24
25 Going into the middle of Norton Sound
26 we go from Shaktoolik to Koyuk and their timing is
27 pretty much normal. Again, they're subject to storm
28 surges.

29
30 Elim is next, going to the west.
31 They've noticed a lot more storm surges, ice coming up
32 onto the land destroying nesting areas. The gentleman
33 said, like I said earlier, it was the first time he'd
34 ever seen a seagull building a nest on top of a chunk
35 of ice.

36
37 From Elim we go to Golovin. Our brant
38 numbers are way down. Our swan numbers are way up.
39 That's a perfect example of species changing. We're an
40 important staging area for brant. Unfortunately, the
41 perfect staging area for swan also. They do a lot of
42 damage to our eelgrass beds. It's very apparent during
43 the fall time when we get north winds and the bay
44 empties. Get a lot of low tides there.

45
46 White Mountain is a little ways away.
47 Their observations are pretty much the same as ours and
48 from there we go to Council and Nome. Nome, Brandon
49 can fill that in. He can speak for his area a little
50

1 better than I can.

2

3 Go from there to Teller and Brevig,
4 which are very close. They noticed a marked decline in
5 Arctic Terns. The timing of stuff is pretty similar
6 there.

7

8 Then we go to Shishmaref and Wales and
9 unfortunately our Wales rep wasn't able to make it.
10 Shishmaref people are noticing pretty much the same
11 observations as years before, but again the Arctic
12 Terns are in decline.

13

14 The issues of concern, and they were
15 expressed very strongly, we got a lot of increased
16 shipping up there. Our ocean is getting more and more
17 acidic. We're going to have more and more utilization
18 of our resources, birds.

19

20 The survey is a very important piece of
21 information. I've done surveys in the past. You go
22 knock on somebody's door, open it. Hey, I'm doing a
23 survey, and they say, oh, for what. Oh, it's harvest
24 level. I don't want nobody to know how much I take.
25 They're just going to use that to regulate how much we
26 can take. They're going to tell us when we can do it.

27

28 I said, oh, you've got to look at the
29 other side of it. As our resources get utilized more
30 and more, they're going to limit us. They're going to
31 say limit you to what. I said, well, our documented
32 usage. Because it's up to us to fight for our
33 descendants.

34

35 There was some kind of strong
36 opposition to the makeup of the survey. You look at it
37 and I know the AMBCC passed it, but when our people
38 looked at it, they said, Jack, why are these villages
39 left out. These are the heaviest utilizers of the
40 resources. They said it's like you're playing poker
41 with our children's ability to harvest food and not
42 everybody is getting any cards to get into this game.

43

44 I started thinking and I said, well,
45 you're right. Although it's random, those four
46 villages there probably utilize over half of what's --
47 they probably harvest over half of what's utilized. To
48 us, that wasn't a very good methodology. It was
49 pointed out to me that the body passed the survey, but

50

1 I would be out of place if I didn't bring these
2 concerns to you.

3
4 That is my report unless Brandon has
5 anything to add to it. And he can disagree with me if
6 he wants to.

7
8 MR. AHMASUK: Thank you, Mr. Chair.
9 Thanks, Jack. So first and foremost for our region
10 Emperor Geese finally. Oh, man, that was a long, hard-
11 fought battle. It's open.

12
13 The Nome area the timing was usual.
14 Right outside of Nome we get Murre eggs. I noticed
15 less Murres from previous years. Also talking with our
16 Gambell and St. Lawrence Island reps they also noticed
17 a lot less Murres. I'm just trying to remember. I
18 think they were even saying the eggs were less. This
19 very well may be due to the Murre die-off a couple
20 years ago, so there's a concern there. The Puffin die-
21 off we won't know until this year. That was just
22 recently.

23
24 Testing avian influenza, any diseases,
25 our region wants more testing not only for diseases but
26 for contaminants. I believe the last -- I could be
27 wrong, but the last testing for mercury in the birds or
28 eggs was in 2007. The Nome Eskimo rep, he's originally
29 from Savoonga, but why he was concerned -- so the last
30 egg survey for contaminants like mercury, any of that
31 type of stuff, is just showing eggs, but his concern is
32 we eat basically everything that the ocean has to
33 offer.

34
35 So when you combine eggs and walrus and
36 seal and bowhead and halibut, and anything else, that's
37 our primary diet. So, yes, as long as you're not
38 eating 10 or more Murre eggs a day, but when you
39 combine that with everything else that we're eating.
40 That's the information they would like. I mean, yes,
41 this is the bird council, but how is this all related.

42
43 MR. FAGERSTROM: There was concern
44 about continued testing for contaminants not only in
45 the eggs but also the birds. They were speaking with
46 regards to crane because we get an entire population of
47 cranes that nest during the summer in Russia and come
48 back over. Over the years people wondered why they
49 hadn't been testing the crane when they were testing
50

1 all the other birds.

2

3 Another thing was they wanted the
4 testing to restart up with the realization that the
5 climate is changing, the bird's diet is probably
6 changing and they're going places where they hadn't
7 gone before and getting more contaminated. We read
8 quite a bit about all the bad stuff that go over there
9 and that's where a lot of our birds are at. People
10 just want to know what they're eating.

11

12 Going back to the avian influenza
13 thing, that scared a lot of people. My mother was in
14 the last year of her life and she knew it and she
15 basically ordered everybody, her grandchildren, don't
16 bring me no blankety-blank duck. I don't want to die
17 yet.

18

19 But that was a concern brought forth to
20 us.

21

22 MR. AHMASUK: Just a quick addition.
23 So the Nome area, just like last year, more and more
24 Emperor Geese last spring about a month and a half
25 straight all day, all night Emperor Geese. Flocks 20,
26 30, 50, 60. Again, we're getting more and more Emperor
27 Geese every year. So, again, yay, it's open.

28

29 Thanks to Patty and Donna for coming
30 up. Our Council really appreciated the effort and time
31 that these two ladies put into it.

32

33 Thanks.

34

35 CHAIRMAN DALE: Any questions for Jack
36 or Brandon.

37

38 Pete.

39

40 MR. PROBASCO: Thank you, Mr. Chair.
41 Jack, you said you saw substantial increased numbers of
42 Snow Geese this year compared to prior years?

43

44 MR. FAGERSTROM: Yes.

45

46 MR. PROBASCO: Would you elaborate a
47 little more on that.

48

49 MR. FAGERSTROM: I'm trying to think

50

1 how the gentleman stated it. He said, quote, man,
2 Jack. I said, yeah. He said, there's a lot of Snow
3 Geese at home this year. I said, oh, what do you mean.
4 Man, them kids, all they got to do is go to the side of
5 the airport and go get their white geese.
6

7 I come from Golovin and a majority of
8 our harvest during the spring was brant, which was
9 pretty much our favorite bird, then from that one
10 Speckle-bellies came next and then Canadian Geese. But
11 we're getting more and more white geese also. And
12 Koyuk and Elim have been noticing more.

13
14 CHAIRMAN DALE: Any other questions.

15
16 (No comments)

17
18 CHAIRMAN DALE: So how does the white
19 geese rank in the favorite bird list?

20
21 MR. FAGERSTROM: A lot higher than the
22 swan.

23
24 (Laughter)

25
26 MR. FAGERSTROM: Excuse me. Somebody
27 from an entire different region said, man, that's the
28 bird of last choice. It's like chewing on a ball of
29 rubberbands. I said, really? I've never chewed on
30 rubberbands before.

31
32 (Laughter)

33
34 CHAIRMAN DALE: Any other questions.

35
36 Gayla.

37
38 MS. HOSETH: Thank you, Mr. Chair. The
39 Yaquillrit Kelutisti Council meeting and I don't know
40 if I'm pronouncing that right. I have to work on my
41 Yup'ik pronunciation, but the meaning of it means
42 keeper of the birds and we refer to it as the YKC. So
43 the YKC met on March 24th in Dillingham. Patty and
44 Jason were able to attend by teleconference and Eric
45 Taylor also was able to attend by teleconference for
46 part of our meeting.

47
48 This is my favorite part of the AMBCC
49 meetings as we go around the table and go around the
50

1 room and hear about each regional report. It's really
2 exciting.
3

4 So I'll start with I think we had four
5 out of five of our Council members present, but for the
6 Kvichak Bay the ice was early this year. We had a
7 really great winter this year. We had a lot of snow
8 coverage. The rivers were able to freeze up.
9

10 Just to let you guys know that when we
11 do gather for our migratory bird meetings we don't only
12 talk about birds, we talk about caribou, moose, weather
13 conditions, all different kinds of things that people
14 bring to the table. We talk about mice, squirrels,
15 things that people are seeing. So it's not only the
16 migratory birds that we talk about, but it gives an
17 overall perspective of how things are changing
18 throughout the year.
19

20 So we had a great winter. We haven't
21 had a good winter in about five years. People were
22 able to get out on their snowmachines, cross rivers and
23 go hunting this winter. The ice has been very thick.
24 Things were earlier than normal. And it's also unusual
25 weather, dryer than normal.
26

27 The birds they've seen were seen in
28 abundance, ptarmigan and geese. They've been less the
29 last few years. They don't have ptarmigan like they
30 used to and maybe it might be due to hardly any snow.
31 They haven't seen any geese yet. It's still too early
32 to see. But just to let you know, Jack, the swans were
33 in the Chignik area, so they're on their way up towards
34 you.
35

36 In the old days, they had a normal
37 cycle of spring and summer and fall and winter and now
38 we don't have those seasons. The difference then and
39 now is we have shorter time period due to no snow and
40 having knowledge of the coming hunting grounds in the
41 old days there's a significant difference today than
42 before.
43

44 Moving on to the Nushagak River. You
45 know, it's great because we have a lot of elders that
46 are on our Council, which makes it nice because they
47 bring a perspective of things that they've seen over
48 time. On the Nushagak River last spring was the first
49 time they didn't have snow and the river stayed high
50

1 for two to three weeks. Those are the changes that
2 they did see.
3

4 But on the Nushagak River they noticed
5 that the migration pattern of geese have changed over
6 the years. They aren't flying over the village like
7 they used to at least over the last five years. People
8 should be keeping records to document what's happening
9 with the weather and when they see birds.

10

11 These geese have changed their
12 migration pattern and traveling along the coast and
13 they used to be abundant and they are no longer on the
14 Nushagak River and as abundant as they used to be.
15 They are flying very high and above the clouds. In the
16 '40s and '50s, they used to have hardly any air traffic
17 and now with air traffic and noise it's probably the
18 reason why the birds are avoiding that area.

19

20 They never used to see eagles before
21 and now they are seeing them at about 15 to 20 eagle at
22 a time and they are big. They've never seen them like
23 that before.
24

25

26 Moving on to the Togiak area, there was
27 changes on the ice. Last year they were boating last
28 February. We're not boating this February. Everybody
29 was still on snowmachines. This year, however, it's
30 thick ice and they didn't have any breakups this winter
31 because during the last few winters it would freeze,
32 break up, freeze, break up, so it made it really hard
33 for people to travel.

34

35 This was unusual that it froze up early
36 this year. October is when they start seeing ice.
37 This year they didn't get any strong winds like before.
38 However last year, due to the high winds in the lake
39 region, they were seeing egrets in the Togiak Lake
40 area.

41

42 In 2013, they used to have to scare
43 ptarmigan off the runway. This year there are no
44 ptarmigan and they haven't seen any. They used to have
45 to scare ptarmigan off the runway for our planes to
46 land in the village of Twin Hills. And the ptarmigan
47 that they do see, they are bigger ptarmigan, and the
48 smaller ones stay in the mountains. Little ptarmigan
49 make deep sounds and startle hunters in the village.
50 They actually sound like a bear. They were making the

1 noises of what the ptarmigan sounded like, so it was
2 quite interesting.
3

4 For the migration of the birds, in the
5 spring they go through the Togiak and the fall time
6 they don't go through the Togiak area. They go through
7 the islands or up closer to the lake area and they are
8 traveling at nighttime. They used to be all day every
9 day. Now they only travel at night.
10

11 They are seeing the Emperors in the
12 springtime and not the falltime. Hardly seen any swans
13 the past fall. In Goodnews Bay, the Cacklers were
14 landing in the mountains eating blackberries. The
15 birds were still flying higher and not within shooting
16 range anymore. The geese and the birds when they show
17 up depend on snow and where they can land. If there's
18 more snow up north, they will stay in our area longer.
19 If there's no snow further up north, they won't be here
20 very long and they go to the nesting places. When we
21 have no snow, we hardly see any birds.
22

23 Like I said, we talked about mice and
24 everything. Mice were in abundance in the Togiak area
25 and they're seeing a lot of eagles and also white
26 eagles. When the Emperors do fly through, they go
27 through the islands and they don't go through the
28 Togiak Bay.
29

30 Then we move on to the Iliamna Lake
31 region and that's where they had a lot of Murre last
32 year that we reported on and our chairman actually came
33 down and gave testimony on that. But this year in
34 Iliamna Lake again ice came early and they didn't have
35 ice last year. Last year the birds were flying high
36 and then the birds -- the birds were migrating really
37 high and you have to be really good at calling the
38 birds to call them down.
39

40 They get ready for bird season
41 throughout the year just for the bird season. It's
42 just like a fisherman. They gather and get ready for
43 the bird season. The kids are doing this from
44 generation to generation to live off the land. They
45 don't have to live off the land. It's cheaper for them
46 to go to Costco or to buy food if they wanted to, but
47 they pay to continue to live the subsistence way of
48 life. They go and they get dark faces and white eyes
49 when they go out hunting.
50

1 This year they're really excited
2 because we have snow up in the Iliamna area. I guess
3 the snow is about four feet and the drifts are about 10
4 to 12 feet in places. They probably won't have spring
5 until May.
6

7 You know, since they hardly have any
8 fresh fruits and vegetables in that area, they trade
9 subsistence food for fresh foods. They also noticed
10 that there are no ptarmigan in that area as well. They
11 are looking for them and they are nowhere to be found.
12 A question as to why. Maybe it's snow. Are they
13 getting killed. Last fall there was a lot of mice in
14 the Iliamna area. This year they didn't see as much
15 mice.
16

17 You can see the difference when you see
18 the changes in animals. There are a lot of foxes in
19 the area, a lot of wolverine and the boys are trapping
20 a lot of wolverine. Increase in lynx. When they go to
21 fall fish, they're seeing a lot of eagles in the area.
22 I guess they've even seen a white eagle.
23

24 Our last one that we have is the
25 Nushagak Bay. Last year it was earlier, this year it
26 will be later is what the gentleman stated and the ice
27 last fall started in early October. This year we've
28 had a colder weather and snow for traveling. They're
29 able to go ice fishing this year and in the years past
30 they haven't been able to.
31

32 Last year the birds were early, but
33 mostly they were flying down the coast side by
34 Protection Point and eventually came up towards the
35 Nushagak Bay way. Towards April last year they started
36 seeing the birds. Late August when they started seeing
37 the birds for the fall time. The birds in the fall
38 also followed the coast side.
39

40 In the spring, they used to see quite a
41 bit, but this last year it wasn't in abundance as in
42 the past. The hunters were able though to get ducks
43 and geese throughout the hunting seasons.
44

45 Then we moved on to talk about the
46 Emperor Goose season openings for the spring and summer
47 and fall and winter. We did the handouts of education,
48 outreach, talked about that. The Council is very happy
49 we were able to be a part of the revision of the
50

1 Emperor Goose Management Plan and also happy for a
2 customary and traditional hunt, but also understand the
3 importance of conservation. We want to make sure
4 education outreach is a priority for getting the word
5 out for the harvest seasons.
6

7 We did talk about the three proposals
8 that we're going to be voting on today. For the 2018-
9 01 regarding the road area closure, the comments that
10 our council -- you know, first I didn't want to vote on
11 anything that was out of our regional area, but then I
12 told them that we're going to have to be weighing in on
13 these issues here and I'll be having to vote as
14 representative here at AMBCC.
15

16 One of the things that they wanted to
17 make sure and it was a concern for them was keeping
18 track of the harvest and document what is being taken
19 on the roaded area, I guess. May possibly require a
20 reporting harvest of the birds. Recommended requiring
21 U.S. Fish and Wildlife to fund a survey of the birds
22 and eggs taken on the road system in Kodiak. They were
23 concerned about how the take of the birds and eggs will
24 impact the population of birds bound for Bristol Bay
25 and throughout Alaska. We approved the -- or the
26 council was in support of the proposal, but we have
27 some concerns about it.
28

29 Regarding the Aleutian and Arctic Tern
30 closure, there again Bristol Bay wanted to make sure
31 this does not affect the Arctic Terns being harvested
32 in the Bristol Bay region.
33

34 I also wanted to emphasize education,
35 outreach for the identification of Arctic Tern and
36 Aleutian Tern and their eggs because they are quite
37 similar, but we were in support of that.
38

39 We also were in support of 2018-03 if
40 number 01 passed. Also we talked about Chief Charley's
41 proposal for the outboard motors and our Regional
42 Council was in support of that for next year and also
43 we wanted to submit our own proposal for Bristol Bay.
44 Like I stated earlier on the record it looks like we'll
45 be doing it through the Native Caucus.
46

47 Togiak Wildlife Refuge also attended
48 our meeting and I guess they're doing seabird
49 monitoring at Cape Pierce. The migratory bird surveys
50

1 they did this year for the harvest surveys it went
2 through the Togiak Wildlife Refuge. I guess the
3 villages that were surveyed were Dillingham, Aleknagik,
4 Levelock, Chignik Lagoon and Iliamna. Ten surveys for
5 each village.
6

7 I don't have the correct dollar amount
8 that was received from U.S. Fish and Wildlife to
9 conduct these surveys and I asked Eric Taylor to bring
10 that information to the meeting. I don't know if he
11 gave that information to you, Julian, or if you have
12 the information. It looked like it was an average
13 about \$15,000 that Togiak Wildlife Refuge received for
14 the surveys.
15

16 Our Regional Council like the surveys
17 to be done through BBNA like it was done in the past.
18 We appreciate all the work that Togiak Wildlife Refuge
19 did for the surveys this year and for future surveys
20 the Council would like to see the surveys conducted by
21 BBNA.
22

23 For the Alaska Department of Fish and
24 Game for the call for wildlife proposals, the YKC
25 Council put in a proposal last year to define edible
26 meat and that proposal failed. This year we're going
27 to write a proposal to define edible meat for just
28 focusing on the swan, geese and cranes and we want it
29 to line up with the spring and summer definition for
30 edible meat, which will be meat from the breast, back,
31 thighs, legs, wings, gizzards and heart and also
32 recommend the head, neck, feet and other internal
33 organs are optional.
34

35 So we're going to be submitting that
36 proposal, but then also talking with Native Caucus.
37 Native Caucus will be submitting a proposal to the
38 Board of Game focusing on those three species and maybe
39 we'll get somewhere with that just by focusing on those
40 three birds.
41

42 Finally, to end my report, I don't mean
43 to take up too much time, but we do have a date for our
44 fall meeting. Usually it's at the call of the Chair.
45 It's tentatively scheduled for August 10th. I know for
46 State employees you guys need to turn in your travel
47 documents way in advance. So if we could have
48 participation from U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service and
49 the Alaska Department of Fish and Game, maybe Jason
50

1 could come and Lilliana and Eric or Julian, somebody
2 from U.S. Fish and Wildlife. August 10th is when we
3 scheduled our date and we would be happy to have you in
4 our area.

5

6 Thank you.

7

8 CHAIRMAN DALE: Any questions for
9 Gayla.

10

11 (No comments)

12

13 MR. DYASUK: This is Jon Dyasuk with
14 Togiak Refuge. We reached out to 23 villages -- not 23
15 villages, but we worked with them from the beginning of
16 January. We went down to Chignik Lagoon like Gayla
17 said for the waterfowl survey. That's the first time
18 that I went down there and I find out that they
19 normally hunt only in wintertime, not in the spring or
20 summertime. They never do any egging on that side.
21 They also don't have a store in Chignik Lagoon.
22 There's none. They only do a barge order in the spring
23 and also in the fall.

24

25 I went down there for a couple days and
26 I find a lot of things that I don't normally see in
27 Dillingham or my region in that area. But the thing
28 that I find out also that other places like they do a
29 lot of waterfowl hunting down there only wintertime.
30 But the species that we're talking about, Emperor
31 Geese, they don't hunt it because there's no season for
32 it. They're quite glad there's going to be an opening
33 for it.

34

35 But just recently over the phone, in
36 fact some of the members of Port Heiden are here now
37 for Marine Mammal meeting, I'm hoping to see them
38 sometime today. I was going to bring them over here to
39 talk about their own region because last week when I
40 was talking with them before they came over here I was
41 just kind of going through what the Emperor Geese do
42 down there.

43

44 They normally go to the end of the
45 airport in Port Heiden and the biggest prey is not a
46 human, it's not a person, it's an eagle, Bald Eagle.
47 Traditionally Bald Eagles are used for a broom a long
48 time ago. That's what we did. This is when we were
49 quite poor. We're not poor anymore. We've got a

50

1 regular broom now.

2

3 But some people that were talking about
4 numbers of the Emperor Geese it's still low in their
5 mind. It didn't go up anywhere because other seabird,
6 marine bird hunters in Platinum/Goodnews area they
7 start hunting in February. In February they hunt and
8 they go out about 300, 400 miles out to the sea.
9 That's what we do in that region. They click their
10 take with a picture. I was really surprised that they
11 went on February 3, dead of winter, to go out and hunt
12 walrus because it's not there anymore in wintertime,
13 not close to the shore.

14

15 So Togiak Refuge RITs travel to the
16 villages, all of them, and that's what we normally do.
17 Other side of Togiak Refuge is Y-K Delta villages;
18 Platinum, Goodnews and Quinhagak. Those are the Y-K
19 Delta villages. One of the things that they were also
20 talking about is they don't do any eggging until they're
21 ready and the eggging is really short, like within a
22 week, and they stop eggging right after that. Also it's
23 happening in my region too, Togiak Bay. The eggging
24 happens really short like in a week.

25

26 Last year for Murre, there was only one
27 Murre on Rock Island. There was none. In fact, Pete
28 Abraham and his group are meeting in Togiak right now
29 as we're talking because when I mentioned that I didn't
30 see any public here, the only thing that's back there
31 is staff members and no public organization.

32

33 Here there are board members that
34 hardly ever go to the villages and if this is known
35 what's happening, the villages will probably want to
36 participate through the teleconference, but on the
37 document that I see there's no teleconference number
38 that they can dial in, so that's none here, it's not
39 there. The villages are hoping to see what's happening
40 or listen in what we're talking, but they're not
41 listening to it. See what's happening? It doesn't
42 happen.

43

44 And if Roland goes back, Roland is from
45 my region also, he's from Eek area, right above
46 Quinhagak. He knows what goes on. Hardly any people
47 in his region know what AMBCC is doing because it's not
48 available for them. That's one of the things that I'd
49 like to point out to this organization. If you guys

50

1 want to be heard and give an accurate report, talk with
2 the villages.

3

4 CHAIRMAN DALE: Thank you, Jon. I
5 think that we could always do a better job at outreach.
6 It takes a lot of persistence and we all have to work
7 hard at it and I think that it's very important. So
8 thanks for that observation. Are there any more
9 questions for Gayla.

10

11 MR. DYASUK: I would suggest that you
12 guys use RITs, Refuge Information Technicians. That's
13 my suggestion. I use the RITs. I'm not an RIT. I use
14 the RITs though.

15

16 CHAIRMAN DALE: Thank you, Jon.

17

18 Gayla.

19

20 MS. HOSETH: Thank you, Mr. Chairman.
21 And thank you for the addition for the things that you
22 observed, Jonny. One thing that I did want to state is
23 last week in the village of Port Heiden they are seeing
24 Emperors already up there. They were posting pictures
25 of Emperor Geese in the Port Heiden area, so they're
26 already migrating up.

27

28 One thing with eagles, I mean eagles
29 seems to be a topic in conversation. I know we don't
30 address eagles here, but I just wanted to say that
31 eagles are even predatory on caribou and they are
32 starting to go and pick the back of the heads of the
33 caribou. This was unheard of before, but I just wanted
34 to bring that out. I know there's a lot of biologists
35 and stuff here, but it's interesting that eagles are
36 hunting caribou.

37

38 I just wanted to say that.

39

40 I guess that concludes my report.

41

42 CHAIRMAN DALE: Thank you, Gayla. I
43 think we'll step down for a few minutes and start back
44 at 10:35. Just a little short 10 minutes and then
45 we'll resume with regional reports.

46

47 Thank you.

48

49 (Off record)

50

1 (On record)

2

3 CHAIRMAN DALE: All right. Thanks
4 everybody. We'll continue on with regional reports
5 unless anybody had any questions for Gayla that we
6 missed.

7

8 (No comments)

9

10 CHAIRMAN DALE: We'll continue on with
11 Melissa. Thanks.

12

13 MS. BERNS: Thank you very much. We
14 held our fall and spring regional meetings in Kodiak.
15 We also formed a proposal committee that met several
16 times to refine the proposals that we'll be going over
17 today.

18

19 During our meeting the proposals were
20 taking up a great amount of time, so we wanted to give
21 them the attention they deserved and to bring all the
22 stakeholders to the table to thoroughly go through them
23 so that everyone's needs were met and any issues were
24 addressed.

25

26 We had a lot of people in attendance,
27 tribal representatives, subsistence users, ADF&G, U.S.
28 Fish and Wildlife Service, law enforcement, Audubon
29 Society, concerned citizens and Native corporation land
30 owners. We feel this was really well attended
31 addressing the needs for both subsistence users and for
32 conservation.

33

34 During our spring meeting we really
35 appreciated a presentation by Mike Petrula regarding
36 the Emperor Goose opening and hunting. This answered a
37 lot of questions for us throughout our region and
38 provided information we were able to take back home to
39 our tribes and to our subsistence harvesters.

40

41 I want to thank Kelly Krueger and Tonya
42 Lee with Sun'aq for their work on the informational
43 sheet that we were able to take back home as well.
44 They did a lot of work with the agencies and AMBCC to
45 create our flyer that was really helpful in getting
46 information out to the people as we had discussed.

47

48 We have an opener, but to have a better
49 detailed understanding of the birds and their life

50

1 cycle and how to harvest responsibly so that we can
2 have continued harvesting in the future is really
3 important for us, so we hope through education and
4 continued outreach efforts that we can get this
5 information out to the users within the region.
6

7 I was glad to hear people talking about
8 eagles and talking about ptarmigan because these were
9 also raised within our region. On the west side our
10 representative from the village of Larson Bay she had a
11 lot of concern about the abundance of eagles in and
12 around their community and them attacking deer,
13 attacking foxes. She said one day she went and chased
14 down an eagle that was carrying a fox because she
15 thought it was her cat. They're seeing more and more
16 of them being predators on animals in and around their
17 community.
18

19 Within our culture the eagles were used
20 as a clothing source as well as brooms and I'm the
21 holder of my grandmother's broom, which I pride. My
22 grandmother, who was born in the early 1900s, I still
23 carry her eagle wing broom. So I know that our people
24 had uses for these animals.
25

26 There is a decrease in ptarmigan that
27 is noted throughout our island and more so on the south
28 and southeast side of the island. Harvesters and
29 hunters said that they have to go further to get them.
30 One community member from Akiak says that he used to be
31 able to go up on top of the hillside and when the wind
32 blew a certain way and a certain time of the year they
33 would come and flock in. He said that they don't have
34 that any longer. So that was a big concern for him and
35 his community. So there are changes being made and
36 it's within your region and your region and we're
37 feeling it too within ours.
38

39 The Murre die-off from starvation has
40 been noted throughout the Kodiak Archipelago over the
41 last couple of years and we've seen a lot of seabirds
42 coming closer to shore than normal in search of food.
43 Even coming into our boat harbor, which is really
44 uncommon. We really struggle to understand why this is
45 happening and the impacts it not only has on those
46 birds, but also has on the rest of the environment and
47 the rest of the animals because ultimately they're all
48 connected and then it all comes down to us as the
49 users.
50

1 We want to thank Kelly for all her work
2 with us and we welcome Tonya Lee to come and work as
3 our new coordinator for the Kodiak Region. Tonya
4 worked several years with U.S. Fish and Wildlife
5 Service and she has a great connection with our rural
6 communities and hope that she can continue with the
7 outreach efforts as they pertain to migratory birds in
8 our area.

9
10 I just want to thank everybody that
11 helped in the process. Patty, for all your time with
12 this Emperor Goose opening. This has been a long time
13 in the making. At one of our meetings it was asked how
14 many people in the room had ever tasted an Emperor
15 Goose and I think there were only two or three people
16 that raised their hand out of the whole group.

17
18 So this is something that has been
19 missing from our traditional diets and we're looking
20 forward to partaking in. I just want to thank
21 everybody for making that happen and something that we
22 take very seriously and that we want to ensure its
23 success and the success of the birds and the
24 conservation and also respecting the traditional
25 harvesting.

26
27 I think that's all I have for Kodiak
28 region.

29
30 CHAIRMAN DALE: Any questions.

31
32 Randy.

33
34 MR. MAYO: I just wanted to mention
35 that coming to these meetings you learn about different
36 tribal areas and different customs and ceremonies. I
37 thought it was just kind of interesting regarding
38 eagles. In my particular region, we hold the eagle in
39 high regard, religious, ceremonial, you know, predating
40 Christianity.

41
42 But I thought it was pretty
43 interesting. You know, eagle feathers in our area are
44 held in high regard for ceremonies and spiritual
45 purposes. I would like to see in my area more of them.
46 We have to hunt around for feathers and, again, for
47 ceremonial and religious purposes. We use the feathers
48 and the eagle feather down in some of the ceremonies
49 and whatnot. I just wanted to point that out.

50

1 CHAIRMAN DALE: Any other questions.

2

3 Gayla.

4

5 MS. HOSETH: Thank you, Mr. Chair.

6 Thank you for your report. I just had a question since
7 we had those letters that Donna gave to us yesterday in
8 opposition for Proposal 01. Did you guys have a lot of
9 public attendance at your meeting that you guys held?

10

11 MS. BERNS: We did. Several of the
12 members that -- well, actually looking at the letters,
13 only two of the people that submitted letters actually
14 showed up to our meetings. Our meetings were public,
15 they were posted, they were in the newspaper, they were
16 posted throughout social media and I think on the radio
17 station, so there was plenty of opportunity for public
18 to attend.

19

20 Like I said, we did have several of the
21 stakeholders there at the table and we spent a lot of
22 time going through each one of these proposals and
23 designed it to where it met the needs of the
24 subsistence users, but also took into consideration
25 that there is a large population living and residing
26 off of the road system who do qualify as subsistence
27 users because they are state residents.

28

29 More importantly, there's a lot of
30 tribal members that reside in the Kodiak area who have
31 not been able to harvest traditionally because of this
32 road closure. I think it's very important to them to
33 be able to maintain their traditional diets and we
34 should not be the ones to omit them from allowing to do
35 so by having this road closure.

36

37 The rest of the tribes along the
38 island, yes, we can share, we can harvest animals and
39 we can share with our family members and tribal members
40 within Kodiak, but that takes away the passing on of
41 knowledge from our elders and our hunters to their
42 youth and to their tribal members within that Kodiak
43 area and that's something that's really important to
44 us.

45

46 It's a spiritual component to be able
47 to go out and harvest your own food and provide for
48 yourself and provide for your family and pass on those
49 traditions and pass on that knowledge. It's not just
50

1 harvesting. Like I said, in talking with the gentleman
2 from Akiak about knowing the time of the year when
3 these birds come through, knowing which wind direction
4 brings them to you. That type of passing on a
5 knowledge.
6

7 If we don't allow our Kodiak tribal
8 members to harvest the way that they had been raised to
9 harvest, that knowledge is going to be lost and that
10 traditional knowledge is something that you cannot get
11 back and I really think that is really important when
12 we're looking at these proposals and thinking about
13 those people that live in that area and the importance
14 that this is to them.
15

16 Thank you.
17

18 CHAIRMAN DALE: Randy.
19

20 MR. MAYO: Yeah, when you're speaking
21 of roads and whatnot too, just thinking about my area
22 when infrastructure is built or put in like military
23 bases or whatnot or like the Trans-Alaska Oil Pipeline,
24 we have some of those concerns too where like the
25 pipeline goes through a lot of traditional hunting and
26 fishing grounds, traditional use areas, but with that
27 infrastructure being put in there, land designations
28 and different rules and regulations get put in place
29 that disrupt and impede that traditional hunting area.
30

31 For instance the Trans-Alaska Oil
32 Pipeline utility corridor was established because of
33 that infrastructure. So I just wanted to point that
34 out, you know. When these things are built in our
35 traditional areas that we -- in our area didn't really
36 welcome or want it in the first place, but the result
37 of things being built in our area really affects us,
38 you know, hunting and fishing practices.
39

40 CHAIRMAN DALE: Anyone else.
41

42 (No comments)
43

44 CHAIRMAN DALE: All right. We'll move
45 on to Roland.
46

47 MR. WHITE: Quyana. We hadn't had a
48 meeting since November of 2015 in our region under the
49 management. This past March on the 20th it was our
50

1 first meeting since then. A lot of us who are new to
2 this management group didn't really know what we were
3 talking about and getting ourselves into. So I would
4 like on behalf of them and myself I would like to thank
5 all the Fish and Wildlife, Fish and Game agencies and
6 their branches that came out to give us informative
7 information on all these things that we're discussing.
8

9 On top of that one of the biggest
10 things that we were informed was the State hunting
11 license and Duck Stamp that will be imposed throughout
12 the whole year on our people. Not just that. The
13 price of those two items rose exponentially. Actually
14 doubled in amount. That was one of our biggest
15 concerns especially since most of our people in our
16 region do not work, don't have any kind of income to
17 support themselves in that means. Ammunition prices
18 are extremely high, the fuel prices are extremely high
19 in our region. That was one of the biggest concerns.
20

21 We didn't really get into detail with
22 everything that was thrown at us on the last minute,
23 but we had a few concerns such as the black ducks.
24 They're decreasing in number in our region, so we were
25 hoping that in the future the Fish and Game people
26 would do survey on them somewhere where they're
27 abundant so we could know exactly how they're standing.
28

29 Then our other concern was, like many
30 of you guys, the ptarmigans. It seems to me everywhere
31 in Alaska they're becoming less and less and we don't
32 really know what the cause of that is. Then the
33 nesting, eggging of these birds, we were concerned
34 because there's more foxes in our area where these
35 birds nest and we were wondering what the impacts would
36 be in the future from all these foxes.
37

38 So primarily I don't have much to say
39 just because we're restarting and becoming
40 re-familiarized with this whole process. Qu yana.
41

42 CHAIRMAN DALE: Questions for Roland.
43

44 (No comments)
45

46 CHAIRMAN DALE: While you're thinking
47 I'll speak to the license fee increase. The hunting
48 license did go from \$20 to \$45 and the Duck Stamps
49 doubled when the legislature approved that last year.
50

1 It's the first time the fees have increased since 1992
2 for hunting licenses. The \$5 license, the low income
3 license, did not go up. So people under a certain
4 salary, the nationwide poverty level, which is higher
5 than it used to be, so more people will qualify for the
6 \$5 license as well than previously did. So that's
7 important for folks to know and we need to get the word
8 out on that.

9
10 It reminded me also of something I
11 wanted to add when Gayla mentioned edible salvage
12 requirements for waterfowl is that for Board of Game
13 State of Alaska regulations the proposal deadline is
14 May 1st. I think the last time we discussed Duck
15 Stamps I told this body that I thought it had to be
16 changed in statute and that is not correct.

17
18 The Board of Game has some ability to
19 waive Duck Stamps in certain situations, Duck Stamp
20 requirement, so that is something individual or the
21 Native Caucus could submit a proposal to by May 1st and
22 our staff would be glad to help craft and help you with
23 those proposals like we do everybody that makes a
24 proposal for anything. We're always available for
25 that, so we'd be glad to help you do that.

26
27 MS. SWEENEY: I'm Brittany Sweeney from
28 Selawik Wildlife Refuge. It's my understanding that
29 someone who has a low income hunting license is not
30 required to buy the State Duck Stamp. Is that correct
31 or not correct? I thought it was waived for someone
32 who had a low income license.

33
34 MR. PROBASCO: I think the confusion we
35 have is there is both a Federal and State Duck Stamp.
36 So in Roland's case and many of the residents of the
37 Yukon-Kuskokwim Delta are not required to have a
38 Federal Duck Stamp both spring and fall. The confusion
39 gets with the State and I'm not sure about the low
40 income as far as the State Duck Stamp.

41
42 Jason.

43
44 MR. SCHAMBER: Jason Chamber, Alaska
45 Department of Fish and Game. What Brittany stated is
46 correct. If you do qualify for a low income State
47 hunting license, you do not have the requirement of
48 purchasing an Alaska State Duck Stamp. There are other
49 exceptions as well to having the requirement of buying
50

1 an Alaska State Duck Stamp and that is if you're an
2 Alaska resident that's 60 years or older, you're under
3 the age of 18 or you are a disabled veteran that is
4 eligible for a free license.

5

6 CHAIRMAN DALE: Thanks, Jason.

7

8 Roland.

9

10 MR. WHITE: Going to Jason, this is a
11 question. In one flyer it states if you're under the
12 age of 16 you're exempt, but then you're saying that if
13 you're under the age of 18 is exempt, so what's the
14 real message here?

15

16 MR. SCHAMBER: The age of 16 regulation
17 was just changed and went into effect January 1st of
18 2017, so it is now if you are under age 18.

19

20 MR. WHITE: Looking at Jason it reminds
21 me of one of the other things we were talking about,
22 the surveys done throughout the spring, summer and
23 fall. We were concerned of getting the accurate
24 information just due to the fact that birds nowadays
25 are starting to come up earlier and leaving a little
26 later and nesting a little earlier. The dates that
27 they have set are primarily unchangeable or can those
28 change after the birds start coming up for getting
29 ready to leave so we could get a better accuracy of the
30 bird count.

31

32 MR. SCHAMBER: You're asking related to
33 surveys?

34

35 MR. WHITE: Yes.

36

37 MR. SCHAMBER: I'm going to have to
38 defer to somebody from the Fish and Wildlife Service on
39 that question.

40

41 MR. PROBASCO: Thanks, Jason. If we're
42 talking about harvest surveys, actually those are
43 conducted through a contract with Liliana at the State.
44 If we're talking about aerial surveys, I'll refer to
45 Julian who takes the lead on that.

46

47 MR. WHITE: I think it would be
48 Julian's expertise on this one.

49

50

1 MR. PROBASCO: Come on up, Julian.

2

3 MR. FISCHER: Julian Fischer, Fish and
4 Wildlife Service. So the question was how do we
5 control for the changing timing of birds nesting to
6 time our surveys appropriately. Yeah, that's a great
7 question. We know that timing of surveys is critical
8 to get accurate numbers and unbiased numbers. So what
9 we do is we time those aerial surveys, if they're for a
10 breeding survey, and those are the ones that we'd be
11 conducting in the Yukon Delta region.

12

13 We time those surveys to occur during
14 the early nesting period, generally within the first
15 week of nesting. So on the Yukon Delta, as you know,
16 spring can come early, it can come late. It's somewhat
17 unpredictable until you're right there during the
18 June/May period. So over the years we have used
19 weather information and also satellite imagery of snow
20 melt to determine when we should bring aircraft to
21 Bethel to start the surveys.

22

23 We have had a ground-based nesting
24 study going since 1985 and during that survey crews go
25 out and observe when birds are hatching and when
26 they're building nests. So by taking that long-term
27 dataset and looking at when birds nest compared to when
28 snow melt and temperatures went above a threshold of 32
29 degrees, we can come up with predictions about when
30 birds are going to nest even before they start nesting.

31

32 So we use the information that's
33 available to us to best predict when that's happening.
34 We also rely on the Yukon Delta Refuge to provide any
35 reports from out in the field about what people are
36 seeing out on the coast where we do our surveys.

37

38 MR. WHITE: Thank you. A couple more
39 things I have. Talking about early spring, early melt
40 and whatnot reminds me of what our elders say and used
41 to say about these migratory birds, especially the
42 waterfowl. At times when we would see less of these
43 waterfowl coming into our region, they would say that
44 it all depends on the weather and they would say that
45 they didn't quite make it up to our region due to the
46 fact that they found water as they were coming up. So
47 they stopped to that area and do their nesting instead
48 of in our region. So if you guys can take a look at
49 that with your satellite imagery and whatnot.

50

1 The other concern that we had was the
2 shipping lane on the Bering Straits because there's a
3 lot of algae and whatnot that the seabirds eat out
4 there. We were concerned that the shipping lane area
5 would become less and less abundant in the bird
6 nutrient levels and bird food source levels that would
7 create die-offs like we saw a few years back with the
8 Murre. If you guys could look into that, we would
9 greatly appreciate that.

10

11 MR. FAGERSTROM: I neglected to bring
12 up earlier and I apologize. There were a lot of
13 concerns with shipping in our area also, in particular
14 from the communities of Wales, Shishmaref, Teller,
15 Brevig, Diomede, Savoonga and Gambell. We have
16 endangered birds out there kind of close to the
17 shipping lanes and with information received, you know,
18 with ocean acidification, ocean warming, there were
19 some concerns that more protection should be given to
20 those endangered species.

21

22 At least more consideration because
23 it's going to be a shipping lane and that area up there
24 is very vulnerable. You get a big oil spill and
25 there's realistically no way we can contain it. That's
26 going to go all over the place. That's a concern and
27 it's been brought up before and I have to apologize for
28 not bringing that up in our regional report.

29

30 Another thing is we'd like to have more
31 money for more meetings. We feel that our information,
32 you know, by the time it gets -- our regional reports,
33 by the time we get to you guys, they're old. With the
34 rapid change in our environment we feel that we should
35 have opportunity to have more meetings. One meeting a
36 year I don't think is enough to voice all our concerns
37 with regards to our changing environment.

38

39 Our windows of opportunity to harvest
40 different species are changing and they have changed.
41 There are some species that go up -- shorebirds that go
42 up to the North Slope that have been getting there a
43 month early. Observations from across the state pretty
44 much agree everything is about a month early almost.
45 Anywhere from two to four weeks, sometimes even a
46 little bit earlier.

47

48 Thanks.

49

50

1 CHAIRMAN DALE: Brandon.
2

3 MR. AHMASUK: Thank you, Mr. Chair. I
4 need clarification. So the Federal Duck Stamp was
5 brought up and who is exempt. Maybe I misinterpreted
6 or misunderstood who is exempt. What I thought I heard
7 was residents only from AVCP were exempt from the
8 Federal Duck Stamp. I thought it was statewide both
9 spring/summer and fall/winter exemption for the Federal
10 Duck Stamp.
11

12 MR. PROBASCO: Thanks, Brandon. I was
13 just speaking to Roland's area, but you're correct.
14 It's any of our people that qualify for the rural take
15 of spring waterfowl are exempt from the Federal Duck
16 Stamp, both spring and fall.
17

18 We can get you a Handy Dandy paper too.
19

20 CHAIRMAN DALE: Okay. Any other
21 questions for Roland.
22

23 (No comments)
24

25 CHAIRMAN DALE: Okay. We'll move on to
26 Peter.
27

28 MR. DEVINE: Thank you, Mr. Chair. We
29 haven't had a spring meeting. I'm still trying to
30 identify partners. Now I see the reason why I need new
31 partners. I was upstairs at our big Board meeting and
32 half of them people changed. I went and informed them
33 what we're up to this morning and told them to get back
34 home and start hunting geese.
35

36 Where should I start. Our geese didn't
37 show up this winter. It was kind of strange because
38 they didn't -- well, we didn't have the big freezes on
39 the mainland like we usually do in Zachary Bay and the
40 tidal flats, so they didn't come into our area until
41 they started migrating from the outer islands. I was
42 talking to my buddy in Ivanof Bay. He said two weeks
43 ago there was 10,000 birds in there with probably about
44 6-8,000 of them being Emperor Geese. The other
45 remaining birds were mallards and teals, he said.
46

47 The same with everybody else. For some
48 reason our migratory ptarmigan did not show up this
49 year. I think we saw one batch in October and then
50

1 there was nothing. We didn't have any snow this year.

2

3 I keep hearing people mention surveys.
4 I don't know what survey they did in Chignik Lagoon,
5 but I just participated in one in Sand Point and I know
6 they were in Chignik Bay, but there's also an ongoing
7 survey with Subsistence Division of Migratory Birds.
8 Two years ago we were at a meeting at BIA or somewhere
9 and them folks had all kinds of information for us on
10 what we use, how many berries we eat, how many ounces
11 of crab. I mean they had it all itemized on how many
12 pounds.

13

14 Now the State is doing a survey because
15 I just did it in Sand Point last week with Lisa
16 Scarborough and Brittany. One of the things that
17 concerns me with that survey that they're doing is
18 they're outsourcing or they said it was in partnership
19 with Idaho State University saying that Idaho State
20 University got a grant. Well, who did they get the
21 grant from? Was it the State of Alaska, you know, like
22 we did a couple years ago when we needed to redesign
23 the harvest survey? That was given to an outside
24 group, but the money came from the State of Alaska.

25

26 With universities that we have here, I
27 think we have people in our area, in our state who
28 could do the same thing that we're paying these other
29 universities to do. With all State fundings cut I
30 would like to see them funding dollars state in state.
31 As soon as Trump said the ban on lead was lifted, two
32 days later then the State came up with they were going
33 to do a Stellar Eider study again. The Stellar Eiders
34 have been studied for the last 20 years. What more can
35 we learn. It's kind of like money that don't need to
36 be spent on that study. I mean we know what it does.
37 Lead shot is banned.

38

39 Oh, where else. Oh, the road closures.
40 That's kind of interesting because that's how we hunt
41 our migratory ptarmigan. We drive up to the road,
42 they're eating the rocks and we shoot them. Sometimes
43 we make it a little sporting. We hit them with rocks.
44 You have to practice at a young age to get good.

45

46 (Laughter)

47

48 MR. DEVINE: One of the things that the
49 Fish and Wildlife does in our area is they support our
50

1 culture camp and they give \$14,000 every year. This
2 year we're back up to 10 days again. Last year we tried
3 a week. You can't do a culture camp in a week. By the
4 time you go out and gather your fish and whatnot. We
5 had them in the racks, we had them in the smoker, but
6 ultimately there's only one person gets left with it.
7 That's me. Okay, you started this, now you've got to
8 finish.

9
10 It's a really good partnership. I mean
11 we've been doing our culture camp for 17 years and Fish
12 and Wildlife has been sending people down to teach the
13 kids about the plants. We go out and do tidepooling.
14 It's a really good program.

15
16 I see that they're doing a cultural
17 emersion over at the Native Heritage Center. That
18 thing is a real success. We were just doing surveys in
19 Sand Point and I show up at 10:00 to be ready to go
20 start doing surveys and people go, well, jeez, I
21 haven't showered yet, can I take a shower, and it was
22 like 10:30 we finally take off and it's like, holy cow,
23 this cultural emersion thing is really working good.
24 Now you guys are running on Native time.

25
26 (Laughter)

27
28 MR. DEVINE: I don't know where our
29 Native liaison is. It seemed like he would be here. I
30 run into him out in Dutch Harbor last year in the fall
31 and he told us he was our Native liaison for 18 months.
32 It's like, well, jeez, why aren't you at our meetings.
33 His response was, well, I don't go unless I'm invited.
34 I mean if it's our Native liaison, he should be at not
35 only this meeting, but all of our other meetings that
36 we are attending. Our marine mammal meetings and
37 whatnot.

38
39 Everybody's mentioned the eagles. I
40 mean we need to open that back up. I mean we need to
41 put a bounty on them. I mean we have three nests on
42 the north end of Sand Point on Popof Island. When the
43 drag season comes along, our eagle population increases
44 from 3 to 150. They've taken over a tree in town and
45 two people have been attacked. I mean skull damage.

46
47 They target birds, but not only are
48 they targeting birds, but that is probably the main
49 cause of decline of sea otters in our region. When the
50

1 mother goes down to get feed, you've got that cute
2 little pup that's sitting there just bobbing. I mean
3 the otter's got to dig and get food. By the time they
4 pop back up it's like the baby is gone. They've
5 documented this in Zachary Bay where they got an eagle
6 and it had something like five tags inside of it from
7 sea otters. So it's not only the killer whales that
8 are preying on these things.
9

10 Last week in Sand Point we had -- there
11 was a mortality of eagle. There were five eagles that
12 were found in the boat harbor and they said there were
13 no gunshot wounds that were visible. They sent them
14 out here to have autopsies done. But they are really
15 aggressive. The fishing boats are going in and if they
16 have bait on deck with tarps over them, that's not
17 enough to keep them away. You have to have it in a
18 plastic tub. Even then they're still staying on deck.
19 They're really aggressive. My thoughts is that they
20 were probably poisoned because I don't see any food
21 source that they would have got any contamination from.
22

23 That's all I have to report.

24
25 CHAIRMAN DALE: Any questions for
26 Peter.
27

28 MR. DEVINE: I know I've got more, but
29 I'll think of it later.
30

31 CHAIRMAN DALE: Melissa.
32

33 MS. BERNS: I'm glad that you brought
34 up the issue with university system and the surveys and
35 your concern about having State funding or funding from
36 within our state, whether it comes from the actual
37 State government or whatever partnerships you have to
38 be able to conduct work within the state.
39

40 In my recent experience with a wildlife
41 project was that working with the State of Alaska
42 system they required I believe it was between 40 and 45
43 percent for indirect, which was so high that we were
44 better off going out of state so that those funds can
45 remain going towards the actual project. I think we
46 ended up getting about 10 percent on indirect from
47 working with an out-of-state university.
48

49 So this is something that is seen with
50

1 a lot of projects and something that needs to be
2 addressed. We have a lot of highly qualified
3 biologists and people working within our University of
4 Alaska system. I know that with the budget cuts right
5 now a lot of positions have been cut. A lot of people
6 are forced to take on additional duties and there
7 really -- you know, it's a hard time with the state of
8 our state all the way around. If we want to see funds
9 and utilize our UAA system, something needs to be
10 addressed with this indirect rate so that we can keep
11 funds within our own state and within our system.
12

13 I love to hear about your culture camp.
14 I manage our culture camp out in Old Harbor and I also
15 worked with the culture camp out of St. Paul when I
16 worked for APIA years ago, so I'm glad to see that U.S.
17 Fish and Wildlife Service continues to support your
18 camps. That's something really important to build
19 those partnerships. We utilize them a lot within
20 Kodiak, both ADF&G and U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service
21 to come out and to continue with education with the
22 youth. So I'm glad to hear you comment on that.
23

24 CHAIRMAN DALE: Jim.
25

26 DR. FALL: Jim Fall with Division of
27 Subsistence, Fish and Game. A question came up from
28 Peter about the source of funding for the recent
29 household subsistence surveys being done in Sand Point,
30 King Cove and Cold Bay.
31

32 The Division of Subsistence received
33 funds from the Alaska Sustainable Salmon Fund to do
34 household surveys in those communities. At about the
35 same time the Idaho State University, Kate Reedy, who
36 has done a lot of anthropological research in the
37 Aleutian Islands and the Lower Alaska Peninsula area,
38 applied to the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, Office
39 of Subsistence Management to do comprehensive surveys
40 in those same places. We worked with Kate before.
41

42 So one thing we want to do, of course,
43 is avoid duplication of effort and achieve an economy
44 of scale so to speak, so we teamed up with Kate to
45 combine the survey efforts in those places. Just to
46 clarify, the State of Alaska did not fund the Idaho
47 State portion of that work. It was funded by the
48 Office of Subsistence Management, Fish and Wildlife
49 Service.
50

1 CHAIRMAN DALE: Patty.

2

3 MS. SCHWALENBERG: Thank you, Jim.
4 Were migratory bird questions asked during that survey?

5

6 DR. FALL: Yes. It's a modular survey.
7 We have sections on each kind of resource, fish, land
8 mammals, plants, the whole shebang and there is a
9 section on migratory birds in there that pretty much is
10 the same as the AMBCC does, but for this year, of
11 course, it's a very different sampling strategy. But,
12 yes, we will have information on the full range of
13 migratory birds and eggs for those places.

14

15 MS. SCHWALENBERG: Thank you.

16

17 CHAIRMAN DALE: Peter.

18

19 MR. DEVINE: Yes, thank you, Mr. Chair.
20 I forgot to mention we didn't have our meeting not
21 because I was being lazy. Our community has really
22 been hit hard this winter. We've lost five of our
23 elders and then we lost two people to this opioid
24 problem that's gone around the state. Then we lost six
25 people on that boat that went down out in St. George.
26 It hit us pretty hard. I fished for the same company.
27 I mean I've known Jeff for 30-plus years. I've known
28 three of the other guys for 20 years. The one kid went
29 to school with my step-daughter and it's really hit us
30 pretty hard.

31

32 I don't know. I've been out there on a
33 58-footer and how can a 98-foot boat disappear. The
34 other question is what the heck were they doing so
35 close to shore. But they'll find the boat. They found
36 El Toro. It's turned over to the National
37 Transportation Safety Board, so they'll be sending down
38 rovers and whatnot.

39

40 Thank you.

41

42 CHAIRMAN DALE: Gayla.

43

44 MS. HOSETH: Thank you, Mr. Chair. I
45 guess my question would be for Mr. Fall. The results
46 of that survey, do you know when that survey will be
47 coming out and where we could find the information from
48 it and which villages were surveyed?

49

50

1 DR. FALL: The three communities that
2 are involved are Sand Point, King Cove and Cold Bay.
3 Sand Point was just finished. Cold Bay and King Cove I
4 think are in a few weeks. So we're talking hundreds of
5 surveys, thousands of combined questions. The
6 preliminary results sometime this fall maybe. It does
7 take a while and we don't release the results until
8 there's a community review and so forth. So I don't
9 think we'll see any kind of public review draft for
10 about a year.

11

12 Just sort of the way it goes.

13

14 MR. DEVINE: I'll just add to that. I
15 was part of the survey and I was on the team. It was
16 actually a pretty good survey. I felt comfortable.
17 The people were pretty open. I mean if they were
18 harvesting geese, they said. If they were harvesting
19 crab, king crab, they said. So hopefully this will
20 help us with further regulations and trying to get our
21 subsistence activities increased. Chignik Bay was done
22 too because I know. They had some of my kippered
23 salmon over there.

24

25 (Laughter)

26

27 CHAIRMAN DALE: I'd like to just
28 briefly address our department does occasionally do
29 work with outside universities. In those cases it's
30 either because they waive the overhead and we can do
31 more with the operating money or there's specific
32 expertise needed, but we do do -- by far the majority
33 of the work we do is with the UA system.

34

35 The overhead situation is kind of
36 ongoing. We're in the midst of a WSFR audit right now.
37 In some cases where the University was waiving
38 overhead, we are having to pay the overhead. We have
39 to look at it two ways. If we have the money, paying
40 the overhead it costs to administer these programs, so
41 we recognize that. When we have money, we probably
42 should pay the overhead to keep our university system
43 strong for the benefit of our children.

44

45 Does anyone else have questions for
46 Peter. We'll move on to Gloria.

47

48 MS. STICKWAN: We had a meeting in
49 February and I wasn't present at the meeting, but I

50

1 heard they had elections. Roy S. Ewan was selected as
2 chair, vice-chair was Joeneal Hicks and Ms. Miller was
3 sitting out in the crowd this morning, but she left,
4 she's the secretary and they talked about the
5 educational camp for migratory birds. They're going to
6 move it to Denali and that's all I know about it. I
7 wasn't there at that meeting.

8
9 CHAIRMAN DALE: Any questions for
10 Gloria.

11
12 Gayla.

13
14 MS. HOSETH: Thank you, Mr. Chair. Is
15 Joeneal an alternate then for your region to AMBCC?

16
17 MS. STICKWAN: I haven't heard any
18 discussion about alternates at all. I just heard that
19 he was vice-chair and they called all of the members
20 and Roy said that he wanted me to attend. I don't
21 think they know about alternates. That needs to be
22 brought up at the next meeting.

23
24 MS. HOSETH: Okay. And then just as a
25 follow up if you could extend our appreciation to
26 Joeneal for the years of service that he served on the
27 AMBCC. We welcome Roy to the Council, but just also
28 recognize all the hard work that Joeneal put in on
29 AMBCC.

30
31 MS. STICKWAN: I'll let him know.

32
33 CHAIRMAN DALE: We'll all second that
34 as well.

35
36 MR. PROBASCO: Thank you, Mr. Chair. I
37 knew he couldn't stay away from the meeting. I'd just
38 like to put Dan on the spot. Dan Rosenberg, recently
39 retired, has joined us.

40
41 CHAIRMAN DALE: Welcome, Dan.

42
43 Roland.

44
45 MR. WHITE: Thank you. Earlier I
46 forgot to ask a pressing issue. I know we discussed it
47 during the Native Caucus, but I haven't really
48 understood it. We know that there's a lot of Cacklers
49 nowadays and there's places where they go down and
50

1 disturb all the farming communities that are down there
2 between here and where they usually migrate to. I know
3 in our region we've worked with some of those farmers
4 downstate and saw the damage that these Cacklers have
5 done in the past.

6
7 Recently they've asked to increase the
8 kill for Cacklers down there, but I don't really know
9 where that stands with us. To my understanding we were
10 opposed to that and I was wondering if any other region
11 within AMBCC work with those guys down there as well to
12 address the issue.

13
14 CHAIRMAN DALE: I'm not sure about
15 AMBCC.

16
17 MR. PROBASCO: As far as AMBCC, I don't
18 believe so, but your region has been very active in
19 that process of both developing management plans and
20 the discussions. Both Myron and Tim have traveled
21 there a number of times, so your region was very active
22 in that.

23
24 CHAIRMAN DALE: I should add that Jason
25 is on the Technical Committee. I'm on the Flyway
26 Council and the Flyway Council develops the management
27 plans that the states, Oregon especially, and
28 California and Washington follow. I provide a report
29 twice a year on AMBCC activities to the Pacific Flyway
30 Council. So we are your mechanism for AMBCC to
31 interact with the Flyway Council and the management of
32 birds when they leave the state. We have been very
33 active.

34
35 I guess I should add too that Patty
36 routinely attends. Mike Pederson has been in
37 attendance and testified for the AMBCC regarding -- the
38 Oregon Farm Bureau shows up and testifies and then
39 Patty and others will testify when they attend. In
40 addition, they'll represent you at the National Flyway
41 Council and the Service Regulations Committee that
42 ultimately signs off on the decisions made by this
43 body.

44
45 Does that help?

46
47 MR. WHITE: Yes, it does. Thank you.
48 Like I mentioned earlier, a lot of us in our region
49 we're fairly new and with the transition from Mike and
50

1 Myron and Tim, the paperwork for some of these things
2 have gone missing, misplaced or something. If it is
3 possible, if the National Flyway Council like you
4 mentioned has a great say on these issues, if we can
5 get a copy of the primary issue that I was just talking
6 about would be really helpful to review for our region.
7

8 CHAIRMAN DALE: Sure, we can get those
9 updates, management frameworks and plans for you. That
10 shouldn't be a problem. I guess I should add that in
11 the past a Flyway Council member from Oregon
12 represented the Flyway Council at these meetings. That
13 practice has since stopped. We were going to bring up
14 the Flyway Council member from California this year,
15 but he couldn't make it at the last minute. We'll be
16 discussing that participation by the Flyway Council at
17 your meetings, at the next Flyway Council meeting, and
18 decide whether there's funding for that and an interest
19 to bring it forward.
20

21 It occurs to me that I could do a
22 better job of bringing the results from the Flyway
23 Council meetings that directly or indirectly influence
24 Alaska's migratory birds to this body.
25

26 MS. SCHWALENBERG: That's a good point.
27 It just reminded me that at the Kawerak regional
28 management body meeting the members were talking -- or
29 one of the members asked does the AMBCC review the
30 Pacific Flyway Council's proposals that affect the
31 birds in Alaska and I don't think that we do, so we may
32 have to start looking at some sort of process where
33 that can occur.
34

35 CHAIRMAN DALE: Yeah, I think that's a
36 good idea. We have always -- the State of Alaska is
37 sitting on the Flyway Council. We've always
38 represented the interest of all Alaskans and especially
39 AMBCC at that body.
40

41 Gayla.
42

43 MS. HOSETH: That actually brings up a
44 good point. When is the call for proposals for the
45 Pacific Flyway and when would we review those here at
46 AMBCC?
47

48 MR. SCHAMBER: Jason Schamber, Alaska
49 Department of Fish and Game. Proposals from individual
50

1 states to make regulation changes are generally
2 introduced verbally at the March spring meeting to the
3 Study Committee and then informed Council through an
4 informational note. They are submitted to Council as a
5 written proposal for regulation change sometime in the
6 summer for Council review and then those proposals are
7 voted on at the fall meeting, which this year will
8 occur the third week of August. So sometime I suspect
9 between July and August would be an opportunity for the
10 AMBCC to provide input.

11

12 CHAIRMAN DALE: Pete.

13

14 MR. PROBASCO: So, Jason, I guess
15 between the State and us, the onus would be on us to
16 provide at least copies to Patty, which she could
17 circulate to the respective Councils. Depending upon
18 what those proposals are would determine if we need to
19 teleconference or something like that.

20

21 Okay.

22

23 CHAIRMAN DALE: And we should remark
24 that Todd Sanders from the Fish and Wildlife Service
25 staff to the Flyway Council has been at many of these
26 meetings and frequently attends, so there's that nexus
27 as well.

28

29 Okay. We're going to break for lunch
30 here in a second. I was just going to ask if anybody
31 had anything that they wanted to air and I believe
32 Melissa does.

33

34 MS. BERNS: I would like to ask if we
35 can meet -- the break goes till 2:00. I would like to
36 ask if we can have Native Caucus at 1:30 during that
37 lunch break.

38

39 MS. HOSETH: We can have it here.

40

41 MS. BERNS: In here, okay.

42

43 CHAIRMAN DALE: Okay. Native Caucus
44 will be at 1:30.

45

46 Peter.

47

48 MR. DEVINE: Thank you, Mr. Chair. I
49 forgot to mention in my report that the King Cove Road

50

1 is up for congressional review hopefully they will
2 finally get their one-lane road.

3
4 CHAIRMAN DALE: Anybody else have any
5 comments before we break for lunch. Go ahead, Pete.

6
7 MR. PROBASCO: I'd like Gayla to
8 provide us with what that ptarmigan sound is.

9
10 (Laughter)

11
12 MS. HOSETH: It might scare you.

13
14 CHAIRMAN DALE: All right.

15
16 We'll see you back at 2:00.

17
18 (Off record)

19
20 (On record)

21
22 CHAIRMAN DALE: All right, folks. If
23 you notice on the agenda we have to be done by 4:00.
24 We actually have to be out of the room by 4:30, so
25 we'll probably try to end by 4:00, 4:15 so that we can
26 get everybody out of here as our contract requires.

27
28 Mike is not here, so we're just going
29 to kick it right off to Luke. If you would, Luke.
30 We're going to have an update on the harvest survey
31 review process.

32
33 DR. GEORGE: Thank you, Mr. Chairman.
34 Council Members. My name is Luke George. I'm from
35 Colorado State University. I'm just going to give an
36 overview of the 2016 harvest survey that we did, so
37 this was the first time that we had implemented the new
38 survey design. As most of you might remember, we
39 started coming up here in 2014, reviewed the previous
40 harvest survey design and with the Technical Working
41 Group we came up with a set of objectives for the
42 survey design which were agreed upon in 2015.

43
44 The top priority from the Technical
45 Working Group was the estimate of total harvest of
46 commonly harvested species. So there's 15 species that
47 were identified as commonly harvested throughout the
48 state and the focus was on getting estimates of that
49 combined total of those commonly harvested species with
50

1 a confidence interval percentage of about 50 percent.

2

3 The emphasis changes from kind of
4 trying to get good estimates of harvest within
5 communities and villages to getting estimates at the
6 statewide and regional level. Secondary priority was
7 to get statewide estimates of each of the commonly
8 harvested species. So I'll show you estimates for both
9 of those.

10

11 So in our revised design we had what we
12 call two stages. The first stage was the village, the
13 second the household and I'll show you kind of how that
14 design fell out as I go through here. We reduced the
15 number of strata. Previously there had been regional
16 strata and subregions. We eliminated the subregions
17 because there simply wasn't enough funding to cover
18 both regions and subregions.

19

20 A big decision that the Technical
21 Working Group made was that rather than trying to cover
22 all 10 of the regions that had been included in the
23 sample frame previously, we reduced it to five regions
24 that would be sampled every year. Based on previous
25 surveys in those regions, we estimated that's about 91
26 percent of the total harvest. When I say statewide,
27 I'll be referring to just those regions that are
28 sampled every year now.

29

30 Another thing we did was divided the
31 large villages into parcels. So if they were 300
32 households or more, they were divided into parcels such
33 that each parcel had 300 households or less. Then we
34 chose villages or parcels using a systematic random
35 design and households within the village were chosen
36 randomly.

37

38 We came up with a standard number of
39 households that would be surveyed in each village of 10
40 per village or parcel and I'll give you some background
41 on why we came up with that. Alaska Department of Fish
42 and Game felt that villages with less than 10
43 households were, in many cases, ephemeral. Oftentimes
44 people would come and go, so those were excluded from
45 our sampling.

46

47 Just to briefly review the commonly
48 harvested species. There were 15 of them and I'll give
49 you estimates for each one of these when we get to the
50

1 end. The five regions that were included were the
2 North Slope, Interior, Bristol Bay, Y-K Delta and
3 Bering Strait.
4

5 So here's how the sampling works for
6 the villages. We number all the villages within the
7 region and then use what we call a systematic random
8 design. So in this case I think was every third or
9 fourth village was included in the sample and that will
10 change from year to year. We did this in order to
11 ensure some geographic coverage across the region
12 because we know there are differences in harvest
13 patterns across the regions. We didn't want to have
14 all of them coming from one portion of it.
15

16 So once those villages are chosen, then
17 they need to be contacted. Alaska Department of Fish
18 and Game and Liliana Naves was in charge of all this,
19 so I'll let her talk more about some of those details.
20 Then you get permission to do the survey in the village
21 and then the whole process of getting the surveyors
22 takes over. Once a village is chosen Lili will choose
23 10 households within that village randomly to be
24 surveyed and then we do this for each of the regions.
25 A much simpler design than the previous one.
26

27 So we took data from previous surveys
28 that had been done in each of these regions and then we
29 used estimates of the costs of getting to the villages
30 and the amount that it cost for surveying each
31 household. So you start with the total annual funding
32 for the survey, which the Fish and Wildlife Service
33 felt like about 150,000 was probably what could be
34 reliably provided. Then we had costs associated with
35 the payment to the surveyor for each household that
36 they visited, costs for training and travel of the
37 village surveyors to the regional hub and then there
38 were fixed costs associated with paying time for field
39 coordinators to get trained, travel to Anchorage for
40 training and so on. Those three levels of cost were
41 then combined with the variance of the harvest
42 estimates.
43

44 Again I'll show you an example of what
45 we mean here, but we have what we call between
46 household variation, so how much variation do you see
47 in harvest among households within a village, between
48 village variations, so you estimate how much harvest
49 you think there was within each village based on those
50

1 household visits. Once you've calculated that you can
2 ask how much variation is there among villages. Then
3 once you have those two pieces of information you can
4 roll it up to an estimate for the region. We did this
5 for each of the regions.
6

7 So the new design was more efficient in
8 terms of how the effort was allocated. Again, the
9 emphasis here is to get estimates at the regional and
10 statewide scale. So sampling effort within a village
11 was much lower than the previous design. We used our
12 estimate variation from previous surveys along with the
13 funding numbers to come up with numbers of villages and
14 households sampled that we hoped would meet the
15 precision criteria of a 50 percent confidence interval
16 percentage for commonly harvested species across the
17 state.
18

19 With this design for the first time
20 we'll have annual surveys that are comparable to one
21 another. In the previous design the regions were
22 varied from year to year, often not using any kind of
23 systematic approach, so there was really no way to
24 compare total statewide harvest from one year to the
25 next. So this design will allow that comparison to be
26 made. It's also flexible to changes and sampling
27 effort.
28

29 We feel that because the same regions
30 are going to be sampled each year that there will be
31 gains in efficiency over time as the various people in
32 the region become more familiar with the protocol.
33

34 So here's what the analysis told us
35 would be the most efficient way to sample within each
36 one of these regions. So here in the target column
37 this is what we provided to Alaska Department of Fish
38 and Game as the target for the number of villages and
39 number of households to survey within each region.
40 Number of households is pretty easy because we just
41 stuck with a standard of 10 per village.
42

43 Bristol Bay the target was 4 villages,
44 Y-K Delta 21, Bering Strait, North Slope 5 and then
45 Interior Alaska the target was 10. Here's what number
46 of surveys that were actually completed according to
47 the protocol. So we met our target for Bristol Bay, Y-
48 K Delta and North Slope. Bering Strait we were one
49 short, but that data has come in now. Once those data
50

1 are entered and proofed we'll be able to include that
2 in the analysis. Interior Alaska we were able to get
3 data from seven villages, so a little bit low there.
4

5 So here are the data. Harvest estimate
6 here, number of birds harvested and then this is what
7 we call the confidence interval percentage, so that's a
8 measure of the confidence intervals around that
9 estimate. Remember our target was to try to get our
10 CIP values of 50 percent or below. That's still a
11 pretty big confidence interval.
12

13 What that means is that say if we take
14 this estimate from the Y-K Delta if we round it up to
15 say about 60,000 birds. That means our true value
16 probably falls between 30,000 and 90,000. So take half
17 of that value, subtract half that value and add it, so
18 we're saying that we think there's between 30 and
19 90,000 birds harvested. You can see that for Bristol
20 Bay, Bering Strait and Interior confidence intervals
21 are much larger and that certainly giving us estimates
22 that really don't give us much precision.
23

24 When we look at all regions combined,
25 the confidence interval percentage was 59 percent, so
26 that's pretty close to the target of 50 percent that we
27 were striving for. I think if we got more Interior
28 villages and the other village up in Bering Strait, we
29 probably would have hit that target pretty closely.
30 For statewide estimate of harvest from those five
31 regions we get close to 300,000 birds, which is in the
32 ballpark of what you might expect from past surveys.
33

34 Here are the estimates for each of the
35 commonly harvested species. Again you see for a lot of
36 these species we're getting pretty wide confidence
37 intervals. We did pretty well for Cackling Canada
38 Geese, about 53 percent confidence interval. King
39 Eider did pretty well, 69 percent, but for many of
40 these species we're up close to 100 or even above 100.
41 So not getting very precise estimates on individual
42 species.
43

44 One of the questions I get a lot when
45 talking about this design is why don't we survey more
46 households when we go to a village. We're only
47 surveying 10 remember. This is really the reason.
48 What I've done here is just indicated the percent of
49 the total variation within a region for the estimate
50

1 for a region. That comes from what we call between
2 village variance. In other words, variation in how
3 many birds are harvested among villages versus between
4 household variation. That is variation among
5 households within a village.
6

7 You can see that by far most of the
8 variation and the estimates comes from this variation
9 among villages. When we put it all together, 95
10 percent of the variance is there. In order to get more
11 precise estimates, it really doesn't help much to
12 survey more households because even if you reduce this
13 it's a pretty small number relative to the variance
14 associated with variation among villages. So it's
15 always going to be better to try to get to more
16 villages than to try to sample more households within a
17 village.
18

19 So moving forward we want to have
20 discussions with as many of you as possible here at the
21 meetings and then over the next month we'll be working
22 with Lili at Alaska Department of Fish and Game to
23 finalize the numbers for the 2016 survey. We'll put
24 together a report for the updated or revised Technical
25 Working Group to take a look at. We're hoping we can
26 get a meeting in June.
27

28 We're thinking it would be best at this
29 point to probably just have a very streamlined
30 Technical Working Group so that there's not as much
31 difficulty getting people together to meet. We're
32 really just at this point talking about making tweaks
33 to the design rather than any wholesale changes. At
34 that meeting we could then review the costs and results
35 from the 2016 survey, consider changes to the design or
36 sampling effort and then hopefully be ready for
37 implementing the survey for the following year.
38

39 That's all I've got.
40

41 Lili's got a couple slides on the
42 actual implementation issues.
43

44 Yeah, Mike.
45

46 MR. PEDERSON: Thank you, Luke, for
47 that. So I think to replace the TWG I was thinking
48 that maybe the Harvest Survey Committee itself can do
49 that work. We still have representatives from the
50

1 Service and the State on the Harvest Survey Committee.
2 If it's okay with the members of the AMBCC, I'd like to
3 take that approach instead of having a whole separate
4 group meet and then having to go back to the Harvest
5 Survey Committee.
6

7 CHAIRMAN DALE: Any other questions for
8 Luke here. We'll kind of limit it to questions for
9 Luke on this part of it and then we'll hear from Lilian
10 and then we can open it up to broader topic of surveys.
11

12 Jack.
13

14 MR. FAGERSTROM: Jack Fagerstrom
15 representing Kawerak, Norton Sound. At our meeting
16 this was pretty much passed out to everybody. Looking
17 at it we see a couple villages that are the primary
18 harvesters of Snow Geese, which are Stebbins and
19 St. Michael. Stebbins with 134 households will not be
20 surveyed from 2016 to 2020. St. Michael, which is a
21 neighboring village a little ways away has 96
22 households and they're going to be surveyed once.
23

24 You look down a little further. Koyuk
25 has 89 households and they're not going to be surveyed.
26 Elim, which is the next village to that, has 89
27 households and it will be surveyed once. My village
28 will be surveyed once. Then you go down to Savoonga
29 and Gambell. Gambell, with 164 households, will get
30 surveyed once and you look at Savoonga, 166, they get
31 surveyed once.
32

33 Those two communities are probably the
34 biggest harvesters of eggs and also certain other
35 species of birds that are harvested out there that are
36 only harvested there. To me, if you're not going to
37 include the biggest harvester of Snow Geese and also
38 the biggest harvester of the eggs and certain other
39 species, it just doesn't seem right.
40

41 That's a huge chunk of what's utilized
42 and to exclude those people in order to make
43 regulations in the future and certainly to not document
44 what's been used with regards to the future we're going
45 to be getting regulations based on these surveys in
46 part, it will play a huge part in it.
47

48 I'd like to see those communities
49 surveyed. Also a lot more money into the survey so we
50

1 have more confidence. And to listen to the people who
2 actually harvest those and have their input. You have
3 our input, but these are villages that we have no idea
4 how they live. Well, we do have an idea how they live,
5 but every community is different and harvest different
6 things.

7
8 You look at our region, those people
9 eat birds we don't eat and vice versa. The Snow Geese
10 and our ability to harvest food and everything this is
11 going to play a huge part in it. Looking to the
12 future, our grandchildren's children need the ability
13 to do what we're doing and hopefully not have to really
14 fight about it.

15
16 Sorry for being so long-winded, but I
17 was under direction to bring that up and I apologize.
18 I don't want to slap anybody in the face or anything or
19 be derogatory, but I was under direction to say this.
20 So I apologize if I'm offending anybody.

21
22 CHAIRMAN DALE: Can you respond to how
23 that works?

24
25 DR. GEORGE: Yeah, I mean -- and no
26 offense taken. It's the random numbers fault, not
27 mine. The decision was made to get estimates statewide
28 given the funding that was available, so this was the
29 design that we felt was most efficient to do that. Now
30 if the Harvest Committee wants to change those
31 objectives and decide that identification of harvest
32 patterns in certain subregions within regions is a high
33 priority, then that could be incorporated into the
34 design so that those villages have a higher probability
35 of being sampled for instance.

36
37 This was the design that worked the
38 most efficiently at the statewide level for those
39 estimates. So, yeah, we're open -- we can certainly
40 look at that if that's what the committee decides.

41
42 CHAIRMAN DALE: Gloria.

43
44 MS. STICKWAN: I have a question about
45 the survey. You said it was the same as in past years'
46 harvests. I didn't understand that part.

47
48 DR. GEORGE: Oh, just the overall
49 estimate of number of birds harvested being about
50

1 300,000 was within the range of estimates that you come
2 up with based on surveys of individual regions across
3 years. So there's never been a survey that had covered
4 all of those regions in one year, but if you look at
5 estimates from previous surveys in different years and
6 then add those together, take the averages, you come up
7 with a number pretty close to that.

8
9 MS. STICKWAN: That didn't make sense
10 to me at all. That didn't make sense to me what you
11 just said. I'm sorry.

12
13 DR. GEORGE: Okay. So if you think
14 about trying to estimate the number of people in Alaska
15 and you say, well, we'll go count them in the Y-K
16 region one year and we'll go and count in Anchorage the
17 next year and the North Slope the year after that, you
18 could take all those numbers and put them all together
19 and say this is what we think the estimate was for the
20 total state over this 10-year period, but of course you
21 know that numbers might change from one year to the
22 next, right, so you're making some assumptions when you
23 do that.

24
25 With this approach we're getting
26 estimates from all of those regions in the same year,
27 so we have an estimate that we can say, yes, in this
28 year this is what we think was harvested across those
29 regions.

30
31 CHAIRMAN DALE: Other questions for
32 Luke.

33
34 Julian.

35
36 MR. FISCHER: Julian Fischer, Fish and
37 Wildlife Service. Thank you, Mr. Chair. My question
38 is regarding -- so if I understood correctly in your
39 presentation, these were the estimates that were
40 derived for the most commonly harvested species. Not
41 those that might be less likely, like Emperor Geese for
42 example. The harvest survey has lots of uses. One is
43 to get a general understanding of how many birds are
44 being harvested. Another is to understand how that
45 harvest might be changing through time.

46
47 Did you do any analyses to look at how
48 many years it would take to detect a change in the
49 harvest of even the most commonly harvested species of
50

1 like a 50 percent change in harvest? How long would
2 that take to detect?

3

4 DR. GEORGE: Yeah, good question. No,
5 we haven't done that and that is possible now that
6 we've got some numbers to start with, but, no, we
7 haven't looked at that.

8

9 CHAIRMAN DALE: Roland.

10

11 MR. WHITE: Thank you. Thinking back
12 to the households that will be randomly picked within
13 villages that are being randomly picked, let's say for
14 example they're doing a survey in my village and they
15 randomly pick all houses that don't go subsistence
16 hunting one year and then another year they randomly
17 pick all the best hunters in that community that catch
18 all these birds, how will that properly represent the
19 villages if that's the case?

20

21 DR. GEORGE: Yeah, I guess first off it
22 would probably be highly unlikely that you would get
23 all households of one type or another, but you're
24 right, it could happen with a random draw. But, again,
25 we could get an estimate of zero for a village, but
26 we're not trying to estimate harvest at the village
27 level. We're trying to get a statewide estimate.

28

29 In that case, when you're going to 45
30 villages, you're going to have some that were
31 overestimating, some that were underestimating, but
32 when you roll it all together you'll get a statewide
33 estimate that's better than it would be if you went to
34 say 10 or 20 villages and sampled everybody because
35 then you would miss a lot of that variation from
36 village to village.

37

38 If the objective is statewide, then
39 this is the most efficient way to try to get that
40 information. But you're right, you could get estimates
41 that are way off for a particular village.

42

43 MR. WHITE: A couple more questions.
44 I'm new to this committee and I'm wondering what are
45 the takes for these surveys.

46

47 What are you guys using them for?

48

49 DR. GEORGE: Well, the fundamental

50

1 reason why there's harvest surveys done is because of
2 the amendment to the Migratory Bird Treaty Act which
3 granted permission to take waterfowl during the
4 breeding season in 1997. In that Act that was passed
5 by the U.S. Senate, Canada and Mexico there was a
6 requirement that harvest surveys be conducted with the
7 objective of documenting overall harvest and
8 documenting that there was not an increase in harvest
9 over time. So that was really the only stipulation
10 that was written into the Migratory Bird Treaty Act.
11 At the biggest scale, that's kind of the reason.

12
13 Now whether Fish and Wildlife Service
14 or Migratory Birds may have an interest in getting
15 estimates of harvest for management of a particular
16 species that's a secondary issue. The fundamental
17 reason was the Migratory Bird Treaty Act.

18
19 MR. WHITE: You answered my next
20 question, but I'll just ask it anyway. You mentioned
21 that Mexico and Canada are in the same situation
22 getting harvest numbers, but watching the Discovery
23 Channel and seeing all these sports bird hunters down
24 there just shooting off any kind of duck they're
25 hunting, do you guys do surveys on those sports hunters
26 as well down there?

27
28 DR. GEORGE: Yeah, we don't do it.
29 Fish and Wildlife Service has a whole branch that's
30 called the Harvest Inventory Program, HIP, and they've
31 been monitoring duck and waterfowl harvest for decades
32 now. That's a very different approach. They use a
33 mail-in survey. They base it on hunting licenses. So
34 anyone who has purchased a hunting license will be in
35 their sample pool and then they mail out surveys to
36 those individuals to get their estimates. It was
37 decided early on that that probably wouldn't be a good
38 approach for the survey up here in Alaska and that's
39 why they went with the door to door.

40
41 CHAIRMAN DALE: Gayla.

42
43 MS. HOSETH: Thank you, Mr. Chairman.
44 I guess when they're doing the survey -- I have a few
45 questions. When they're doing the survey, if you go
46 door to door and then they didn't hunt, do you go find
47 another door?

48
49 DR. GEORGE: No. So, again, the idea

50

1 is to try to get a total estimate of harvest across the
2 state, so you want those zeroes. You want to know how
3 many households do not harvest as well as the ones that
4 do harvest, how many they're harvesting. So it's not a
5 study to try to get an estimate of say patterns of
6 harvest and what they're harvesting. It's a survey to
7 try to get a total number of birds harvested. To
8 extrapolate from a sample to the entire population
9 you've got to include the zeroes as well as the
10 households where there is harvest.

11
12 Now if like in the Lower 48 if we knew
13 that only those households that purchased a hunting
14 license were harvesting, then you could shrink it down
15 and say, okay, we're only going to do a survey of those
16 individuals that are essentially telling us that
17 they're harvesting. Up here, since there's not
18 licenses involved, that's not really an option. So in
19 that case you just have to sample everybody randomly
20 because anybody could potentially be a harvester.

21
22 MS. HOSETH: Okay. I just want to
23 follow up. Do you know what the total budget was to do
24 the surveys?

25
26 DR. GEORGE: The total budget that the
27 Fish and Wildlife Service gave us was 150,000.

28
29 MS. HOSETH: Do you know how much it
30 was to conduct the survey?

31
32 DR. GEORGE: To conduct the survey.

33
34 MS. SCHWALENBERG: To do the household
35 -- what you spent to conduct the household surveys was
36 150?

37
38 DR. GEORGE: Yeah. That was the total
39 budget.

40
41 MS. SCHWALENBERG: In five regions.

42
43 DR. GEORGE: Five regions, 150,000.

44
45 MS. HOSETH: Okay. Then I don't
46 understand the CIP. I mean looking at this I'm not --
47 so, let's say let's pick the Cackling Canada Goose and
48 if the reported harvest was 1,220, then you have a
49 calculation of some sort. I'm looking at -- oh, that's

50

1 the Alaska statewide. Then you guys do an estimate of
2 45,000 that were taken.

3
4 DR. GEORGE: Right. So that number
5 under harvest that's our estimate of how many birds
6 were harvested across the state or the five regions and
7 then this is our confidence interval percentage. So
8 what we're saying is that the true harvest was probably
9 between somewhere like 22,000 and 67,000. So what that
10 CIP says is that our confidence interval is about 50
11 percent of that harvest estimate. So if that's, say,
12 22,000, then the true harvest could be anywhere between
13 22,000 and 67,000 say for that species.

14
15 So it's just giving you an idea of how
16 precise that is or how confident you are of that number
17 that's provided. So for something like an American
18 Wigeon with a confidence interval percentage of over
19 100 percent, that means it could be anywhere between
20 zero and 42,000 because confidence interval percentage
21 is over 100 percent.

22
23 MS. HOSETH: It could be zero to what?

24
25 DR. GEORGE: To -- in that case, what,
26 42,000 or something. So very, very big confidence
27 intervals. We're not getting very precise estimates of
28 individual species in this case.

29
30 MS. HOSETH: I guess I'm just having a
31 hard time absorbing how that information then is
32 gathered for population or how many birds were taken.
33 I think we all probably need education on it because
34 I'm trying to figure it all out.

35
36 DR. GEORGE: Right. So if you wanted
37 to know how many cigarettes were smoked by people in
38 Alaska or something and you didn't have any prior
39 information on who was a smoker and who wasn't, you'd
40 go and you'd take a random sample of people. Probably
41 most of them it would be zero, but then some of them
42 might smoke a pack a day or something.

43
44 So you just take that average from all
45 the people that you've sampled and then you'd
46 extrapolate that to the entire population of Alaska and
47 say, well, given what we've found from this sample and
48 we know how many people there are in the state, this is
49 what we estimate the total number of cigarettes smoked

50

1 is per day, whatever.

2

3 If you've got a lot of variation among
4 individuals -- if everybody smoked, you know, 20
5 cigarettes a day, then you'd have a really nice precise
6 estimate and you could say with a great deal of
7 certainty how many were smoked every day, but if you
8 have out of a sample of 100 people, 90 of them don't
9 ever smoke and the other 10 smoke between 20 and 100
10 per day, then that means your estimate of the total
11 number across the state is also going to be extremely
12 wide because there's a lot of variation among
13 individuals in the population.

14

15 MS. SCHWALENBERG: So does that mean
16 the high percentage CIPs -- the number of high
17 percentage CIPs in the species, does that mean that
18 this survey design is not good or what is that telling
19 us?

20

21 DR. GEORGE: It means it's not giving
22 us very precise estimates of harvest of individual
23 species. We do okay when we look at the total harvest
24 of birds across the state, but if you want to know
25 estimates for individual species, you're going to have
26 to sample a lot more intensively and get a bigger
27 sample to get a better estimate.

28

29 MS. SCHWALENBERG: By bigger sample you
30 mean more villages or more.....

31

32 DR. GEORGE: In this case, yes.....

33

34 MS. SCHWALENBERG:regions or
35 more.....

36

37 DR. GEORGE:going to more
38 villages is going to be the best way of reducing your
39 confidence interval.

40

41 CHAIRMAN DALE: I'll just follow up
42 before I get Mike here. I would assume then in terms
43 of cost though the problem is going to villages
44 increases the cost more than adding households.

45

46 DR. GEORGE: Yeah. You know, when you
47 look at the number of households across the whole
48 sample though, like if you decide to go to 20
49 households instead of 10, then that's going to increase

50

1 the cost of your survey by \$500 or something per
2 village. So that might not be much on a per village,
3 but when you start looking at 40 or 50 villages, that
4 adds a fair amount of cost, which then means you can't
5 go to as many.
6

7 The basic premise here is that you've
8 got to go to a lot of villages to get a good estimate.
9 The number of households per village doesn't affect it
10 that much.
11

12 CHAIRMAN DALE: Let me rephrase it.
13 Would it cost more to increase the number of villages
14 than it would to increase the number of households?
15

16 DR. GEORGE: Yes.
17

18 CHAIRMAN DALE: That's the bad news.
19

20 DR. GEORGE: Right.
21

22 CHAIRMAN DALE: Mike.
23

24 MR. PEDERSON: So more of a comment.
25 Mike Pederson, North Slope Borough. More of a comment
26 than a question. When the TWG met in February, we were
27 given some options that looked at the cost of the
28 survey, doing certain amounts and maybe more regions,
29 more households, more villages.
30

31 What ended up happening was the Service
32 told us this is the number we're giving you, this is
33 the budget we're giving you for conducting this new
34 survey. So we went with that and then some of the
35 things we found difficult to deal with is the number of
36 regions with some regions being excluded.
37

38 Like Jack referred to earlier as, you
39 know, some of the villages in his region that harvest
40 only certain species, et cetera, and maybe some
41 villages that harvest a high number of certain species.
42 You know, we kind of didn't get that far into the
43 discussion, but we had to work with what the Service
44 provided us with.
45

46 So we went that route and I think with
47 some of the questions that Gayla asked and Bruce asked
48 about the high CIP numbers I think we need to make more
49 of an effort to get the Service to provide us with a
50

1 bigger chunk of money to get a truer estimate of the
2 subsistence harvest.

3

4 Thank you.

5

6 CHAIRMAN DALE: I actually have a
7 follow-up question for Jack. I was curious as to --
8 you know, you mentioned a couple of villages that
9 weren't sampled or only going to be sampled once that
10 were high users, I think you said, of Snow Geese.

11

12 MR. FAGERSTROM: Yes. That would be
13 Stebbins and they're not going to be surveyed according
14 to this. One of the comments from the rep from
15 Stebbins was -- he said, man, Jack, there's a lot of
16 birds down there and them kids just have to go by the
17 airport.

18

19 Then you've got St. Michael, which is
20 the neighboring village, and surveyed once. Now those
21 two communities I will step out on a limb and say
22 harvest more white geese than all these other villages
23 put together. I think I'm safe in saying that because
24 Stebbins and St. Michael are right on the route. They
25 harvest quite a bit.

26

27 Now they're getting more and more white
28 geese. The people from Koyuk are seeing more and more.
29 Were seeing more and more. I don't know about Brandon
30 and them, but people are seeing more and more white
31 geese and the facts back us up there. Millions of them
32 things.

33

34 And Koyuk is another example. These
35 people gather a lot of eggs. That's right along the
36 migration route of the crane and I don't see it up
37 there. Sandhill Crane. These are important nesting
38 areas also I might add. With our changing environment,
39 you know, ice coming up and covering the flats, that
40 happens.

41

42 We go down to the seabirds. Well,
43 Shishmaref ain't going to be surveyed either and they
44 do a lot of egg gathering, they do a lot of hunting,
45 both spring and fall. And you go to Gambell and
46 Savoonga, those people harvest a lot of eggs. They
47 also harvest their own birds that they like to eat.
48 Savoonga will get sampled once and Gambell will get
49 sampled once.

50

1 To leave those consumers, those
2 harvesters out I think puts -- you know, you're
3 excluding quite a bit. And then you've got to think
4 that everything's shared. It's like you send muktuk to
5 somebody or something. Send them a few birds every
6 once in a while. You might get in trouble, but your
7 relative wants something, it's your duty to provide it.

8
9 CHAIRMAN DALE: Did you have a question
10 for Luke?

11
12 MR. DANIELS: Bryan Daniels, Yukon
13 Delta National Wildlife Refuge. So I was just looking
14 at this list and looking for a species that may be of
15 concern now or into the future and seeing if there's a
16 way of lowering this confidence intervals.

17
18 So, for brant you say you looked at it
19 across the whole state, but to reduce those confidence
20 intervals did you take out all the zeroes from Interior
21 region or the regions where brant aren't harvested or
22 don't -- where there range isn't. So basically North
23 Slope, Y-K Delta, Bristol Bay regions. Is it only for
24 those regions where those confidence intervals are from
25 or the entire state?

26
27 DR. GEORGE: So Bryan was a former
28 student of mine at Humboldt State.

29
30 (Laughter)

31
32 DR. GEORGE: Bryan, I'm going to turn
33 that back on you because -- no. No, if there's zero
34 harvest in those other areas, then the confidence
35 intervals will be zero and it won't contribute.

36
37 CHAIRMAN DALE: All right. I think
38 we'll move on to Lili now and we may ask you to come
39 back up, Luke, when we have more questions after Lili
40 goes.

41
42 Thank you.

43
44 Good presentation.

45
46 MS. NAVES: Lili Naves, Division of
47 Subsistence. I just have a couple slides to tell a
48 little bit about the data collection on how you get to
49 the nuts and bolts of getting to these numbers.

50

1 So the front end of the survey didn't
2 change any before the revision and after the revision.
3 The survey forms look the same. We still work with the
4 local surveyors. So the changes are only on the
5 distribution of the sampling effort. So the front end
6 is very similar.

7
8 In 2016 we did five regions. In the
9 past several years we were surveying only Y-K Delta or
10 Y-K Delta and other places. So in 2016 was huge team
11 effort. I put together the names that I couldn't
12 remember on this day there and I came up with a total
13 of 50 people that worked on the data collection.

14
15 The goal of 51, survey total of 41
16 communities and they're a little short of the total
17 communities that you wanted to survey there. In fact,
18 you had to work with 56 communities because things fall
19 apart for different reasons in a village or another and
20 then you have to move on and try other places. So this
21 is something that we considered when going for that
22 collection, how to plan for this. You had to go to
23 more villages than the ones that you're planning to go
24 and it's not by a small amount.

25
26 We surveyed about 400 households,
27 worked with seven National Wildlife Refuges, two Alaska
28 Native regional organizations, it involved six field
29 coordinators. That's where people in the Native
30 organizations are in the Refuges. And the third one,
31 local surveyors. Field surveyors did more than one
32 village. Six people worked on data entry. That may
33 seem a little high, but the things that you have the
34 standard for data entry that you do double data entry
35 so that data is entered twice and cross checked and
36 verified.

37
38 We need independent people to enter the
39 data. Two people work in data analysis independently,
40 so Dave Otis did the analysis on his side and I did
41 here in Alaska and we went back and forth until our
42 numbers matched exactly. So that was part of the
43 challenge too because on my side I was dealing with the
44 new statistics. On Dave's side he was dealing with
45 brand-new dataset, so we both had challenges on our
46 sides.

47
48 Also there are other people at the
49 financial and administrative side because we have to
50

1 distribute funds over a bunch of organizations. So it
2 was a huge team effort. There were folks that attended
3 one of the trainings. There were four sessions of
4 trainings across the state, so this is the only one
5 training that happened in Fairbanks. I wish I had a
6 picture of everyone that worked on the survey, but I'm
7 not sure that that's possible.

8
9 We had challenges as we have every
10 year. There are difficulties that happen for the most
11 varied reasons. For instance, Interior Alaska this
12 year there was stretches of very cold weather that
13 people could not travel around at all, so we were
14 hanging out on that.

15
16 So that was our timetable there and we
17 started with the black axis there for the month and at
18 the end on the right side of the months there we
19 carried a three-month delay on data collection due to
20 delays on setting contracts on community consent.
21 That's always a time-consuming process and at different
22 points. So at the very end there Dave and I got
23 squeezed very much in time to make the estimates
24 available at the meeting here and that also compromised
25 accessibility of the other analysis that they planned
26 to do for this meeting. That was not possible because
27 of those delays.

28
29 I think it was a huge team effort and
30 just the ability of getting all these people working
31 together to collect data. It's a very good
32 accomplishment and also highlighted some difficulties
33 that are not new difficulties. This is not the new
34 survey. We were doing the survey since many years and
35 these difficulties have been there in the past. It
36 really raises the question on whether we really can do
37 multiple household visits.

38
39 This is something that's still to be
40 discussed in the next step here as we move forward
41 because there was always this ideal of doing in-season
42 data collection to try to minimize recall bias. So we
43 have data collection at the end of summer, at the end
44 of spring, at the end of summer and end of fall. You
45 find all those difficulties to do only one data, one
46 household visit at the end of the year.

47
48 So this is a discussion that carried
49 over from the first survey review and now I think we
50

1 need to take a serious look and see what our ability
2 given the resources of doing multiple household visits
3 are just kind of shooting too high there.
4

5 One advantage of now doing the surveys
6 in the same regions every year -- because before the
7 regions rotated and then it was more difficult to get
8 the partners at the regions engaged. Now doing the
9 survey all the years at the same regions the idea is to
10 work with the same partners every year and you get the
11 wheels better greased and people get in the routine and
12 know exactly how to do that. So I think that over time
13 that should help in addressing those challenges.
14

15 Another thing that we could take a look
16 to is the process to review and adopt the harvest
17 estimates. Now we have estimates survey wide that lump
18 all the regions together and only at the regions and
19 how to incorporate local review on that, but how the
20 regional bird councils would be able to look at the
21 statewide and region wide estimates and be able to
22 relate that to what happened in their community. There
23 was a geographic lag there that we can discuss if
24 there's a way to help move forward with the data review
25 process.
26

27 So I think that those are some topics
28 that we can start advancing for this meeting that we're
29 hoping to get in summer this year that we'll discuss
30 those adjustments for how to move forward with the
31 standard methods that will be carried on after that.
32

33 Thank you.
34

35 CHAIRMAN DALE: Questions for Lili or
36 Luke on surveys.
37

38 Gayla.
39

40 MS. HOSETH: Thank you, Mr. Chairman.
41 It would be great if we could see a sample of the
42 survey to see what questions you guys are asking
43 because it's not in our book. I don't know what
44 questions you guys are asking or what does the survey
45 look like.
46

47 MS. NAVES: The survey form didn't
48 change from previous years. It has black and white
49 pictures of birds and a space to write the numbers of
50

1 birds and the numbers of eggs. One page for spring,
2 one page for summer and one page for fall. Together
3 with that we'll work with a bird identification guide
4 that looks very much as the survey but has color
5 drawings of birds. The forms are in all annual
6 reports. It didn't change. So any of the previous
7 reports that you get the survey form is there.
8

9 MS. HOSETH: Okay. If we could just
10 have them in our packet for next time when we do review
11 harvest survey because we have new people who are here
12 too so that it would be a good reference that we could
13 look at it in our book to see here at our meeting.
14

15 MS. NAVES: There is a pile of reports
16 on the back table, so they're here. In the meeting
17 folder, the tables for 2016, the harvest estimates for
18 this year, so there's all is behind Tab 4 and it has
19 all the estimates for the survey wide and also for
20 other regions and there are tables for birds and for
21 eggs. These are just the preliminary numbers.
22

23 The final report or the draft report
24 that's usually brought at the fall meeting has all the
25 methods included in there, including the hairy formulas
26 to come up with the numbers. Over the years AMBCC had
27 decided that was too much information at this point in
28 time, so for the review of the preliminary estimates it
29 had been asked that just a summary set of tables, so
30 that's what is provided here today.
31

32 MS. HOSETH: I guess for our region,
33 the Bristol Bay region, BBNA wasn't a part of the
34 survey process as we were in the past years when the
35 surveys were previously conducted. This year they were
36 conducted by the Togiak Wildlife Refuge. So we really
37 didn't have any idea of which villages were being
38 surveyed, but I guess if the Council here would be
39 informed as to which villages are going to be surveyed
40 or which villages are randomly selected for the harvest
41 surveys so that we know.
42

43 I was trying to get clarification as to
44 -- I don't even know which villages were actually
45 surveyed for Bristol Bay and if you're doing different
46 species, not all the species -- we have coastal
47 villages and inland villages. Different birds fly
48 through. I'm not a part of the Harvest Committee, but
49 maybe I'll join that committee so I can be more of the
50

1 process. It's just frustrating on our end that we
2 don't even know which villages are surveyed in our
3 area.
4

5 MR. PEDERSON: Mike Pederson, North
6 Slope Borough. I did talk with Liliana on this
7 particular issue regarding communication along with
8 Randy yesterday in a little side meeting to try and
9 develop a better coordinated communication process in
10 dealing with the new survey design and the villages and
11 stuff like that. Even when we decided to do the five
12 region survey based on the amount of money the Service
13 was providing at that time in February, we didn't know
14 how the survey was going to look out due to the random
15 selection process of the villages in the regions and
16 the households.
17

18 But I welcome your participation in the
19 Harvest Survey Committee and I'm willing to turn the
20 chairmanship over to you.
21

22 (Laughter)
23

24 CHAIRMAN DALE: Peter.
25

26 MR. DEVINE: Yes, thank you, Mr. Chair.
27 I guess the only concern I have with surveys is I see
28 the migratory ptarmigan are still included and that is
29 not a migratory bird. It's more of an inland bird that
30 does not leave. I see them numbers are still in here
31 and driving it up. When I raised this question before,
32 we were in agreement that a footnote would be added
33 saying they weren't migratory.
34

35 MS. NAVES: Inclusion of ptarmigan and
36 grouse on the harvest survey comes from the
37 understanding that those are important subsistence
38 resources, so there was an interest on the commenting
39 all resources that are important for subsistence users
40 even if they're not migratory.
41

42 So the arrangement that was made to
43 accommodate this, and this is reflected in the tables
44 that you have in your binders today, is that there is a
45 total for migratory birds and after that line there is
46 a line for grouse and ptarmigan and then there is a
47 total for resident birds and then after that there is a
48 line for total birds together. So migratory and
49 resident birds have separate totals and both of them
50

1 are presented in the table.

2

3 MR. DEVINE: I guess the only concern I
4 have is seeing these numbers here with X amount of
5 households being surveyed and we heard from just about
6 everybody in here this morning saying that there are no
7 ptarmigans this year. That's just a concern.

8

9 But I do like the numbers, Lili. I
10 mean the numbers are down. I mean we had some really
11 astronomical numbers before, but now they're more
12 reflective of what the actual take is.

13

14 Thank you.

15

16 CHAIRMAN DALE: Okay. Thank you.

17

18 Kate.

19

20 MR. PEDERSON: She wasn't done.

21

22 MS. NAVES: There's another agenda
23 item.

24

25 CHAIRMAN DALE: You can go ahead and
26 load up. Did you have slides for that? Oh. I
27 apologize, Lili. Why did you leave actually?

28

29 (Laughter)

30

31 CHAIRMAN DALE: That's what threw me
32 off.

33

34 MS. NAVES: The other item that refers
35 to the Harvest Assessment Program in the agenda refers
36 to other activities of the Harvest Assessment Program.
37 There is a page that summarized this and it's also
38 behind Tab 4.

39

40 The Harvest Assessment Program has the
41 regular annual harvest surveys, but also there's other
42 work that's done by the program. It does involve work
43 that happens along with different years. So I will be
44 following the items on this page that looks like that,
45 this one page.

46

47 This morning I thought that maybe some
48 visual would help with going along with this, so I put
49 together quickly some slides just to show some images

50

1 about this. So I usually divide the updates on the
2 Harvest Assessment Program in work recently completed
3 and ongoing and upcoming work. I start there with the
4 work recently completed and this includes work that was
5 done since the fall AMBCC meeting.
6

7 Everything we talked so far was about
8 the 2016 survey, so since the last fall meeting we
9 completed the 2015 harvest report and it was
10 distributed and there are some extra copies on the
11 table there. So during fall we worked with a bunch of
12 dictates that had to do with the transition into the
13 revised sampling method, including updates to the
14 database, trainings, data collection and such.
15

16 So on Item C there, moving along, this
17 is about the Cordova hunt and the Division of
18 Subsistence work on the household permit for that hunt
19 and with the mail-out survey that follows the harvest
20 season. Up to 2016 Cordova was the only community that
21 was included in this hunt, but starting 2017 it also
22 includes the Tatitlek and Chenega.
23

24 So I worked there with the Forest
25 Service in Cordova and the Eyak Tribe. They are the
26 local vendors for the permits. Now the tribal councils
27 of Tatitlek and Chenega for those two villages this is
28 just how the household permit for that hunt looks like
29 and I provide the materials for the local partners.
30 They issue the registration and they send back to me
31 later the information about the registrations and we
32 issue the mail-out survey based on that and analyze the
33 results.
34

35 So in the set of tables for the 2016
36 survey also has results for the 2016 survey in Cordova
37 besides the five regions that are included in the
38 regular annual survey.
39

40 Moving along, I attended the AVCP WCC
41 meeting and make presentations on the program and a
42 review of bird harvest across the state.
43

44 Another work that was recently
45 completed was the special study sorting out bird and
46 egg conversion factors to be able to calculate food
47 production out of the numbers that are generated by the
48 harvest survey. So the harvest surveys produce numbers
49 of birds but how much food that equals to. So I
50

1 started doing some analysis with the AMBCC data in
2 terms of food production.

3
4 It got really complicated because of
5 the conversion factors for birds and eggs kind of was a
6 bit of a mess and that led to this special project to
7 straighten that up. So we're in a position where we
8 can actually calculate food production for all the
9 categories of birds and eggs reported on this survey.
10 So that was a need for clear standard conversion
11 factors. That involved compiling live mass of birds
12 and eggs for all the species likely harvested and
13 that's 90 species.

14
15 Also involved addressing species
16 categories in harvest surveys because we don't ask at
17 the species level for many cases. We lump, for
18 instance, Goldeneyes. We lump both kinds of Goldeneyes
19 under one category and there are other categories that
20 involve more species of birds, so we have to deal with
21 this mixed categories too.

22
23 It also involved a survey that gathered
24 information on how birds are processed and harvested by
25 subsistence users and many folks in this room here
26 participated and provided information on that. Then I
27 weighted processed wild birds to have birds in a way
28 that they usually processed by subsistence users
29 including use of gizzard and heart and the whole bird.
30 That is 65 percent of the live weight of bird.

31
32 So things that you can do with this.
33 For instance there is the average annual harvest of
34 birds for Quinhagak. We have a recent data release
35 agreement for that community that we will allow to
36 include the harvest estimates at the community level in
37 an upcoming report of the AMBCC for a total of about
38 6,000 birds per year that equals to almost 15,000
39 pounds of food per year.

40
41 Despite efforts along with the study, I
42 didn't improve my average time per bird. It still
43 takes me about two hours to pluck and cut a bird, so I
44 think I'm stuck with it there.

45
46 (Laughter)

47
48 MS. NAVES: The next item there, F,
49 talks about the number of presentations that I did
50

1 across the state on an overview of subsistence harvest
2 of birds and eggs. There's no slide for that. That I
3 started with the presentations at first focused on the
4 migratory bird centennial, but then that included a
5 good overview of the general character of subsistence
6 harvest of birds and eggs and I kept getting
7 invitations to do this across the state. So far I have
8 done seven of these presentations. It's not over yet.
9 I'm still going to do one in the Yakutat Heron Festival
10 in June.

11
12 About ongoing and upcoming work. I'm
13 still finishing up work on the seabird harvest
14 estimates, so I presented results of this analysis in
15 the fall 2015 AMBCC meeting and I'm preparing this as a
16 peer reviewed article and these things takes lots of
17 time to get through, so I'm still working on that.
18 This is an ongoing project.

19
20 Another project that is ongoing is
21 local and traditional knowledge about shorebirds and a
22 compilation of harvest data. So this study involves no
23 new data collection, just a summary of all data that
24 exists both at the AMBCC database and the community
25 subsistence information system. I completed interviews
26 in Quinhagak and I think I'm heading to Toksook Bay
27 sometime soon here.

28
29 So these interviews they don't ask
30 about numbers of birds, but they ask about taxonomy and
31 the different dialects. There's lot of confusion with
32 the species identification issues for shorebirds.
33 There's a bunch of species. They all look alike. The
34 interviews also ask about harvest methods, uses,
35 culture importance, stories, songs and place names that
36 may refer to shorebirds, about the change in abundance
37 and ecological relationships, local concerns because
38 local people are the eyes and ears on the ground.

39
40 For instance we started hearing lots
41 about concerns about reductions in numbers of red
42 phalaropes, that is the bird on the left side there,
43 and that has led to a push in biological research to
44 see what's going on with those birds. Maybe at the end
45 of this we can together figure out ways to help
46 shorebirds at the local, regional and flyway levels.

47
48 So moving along there, the last item is
49 another paper that was accepted for publication and now
50

1 this is about the studies that was done to clarify
2 harvest levels of Yellow-billed Loons during the
3 listing process. This now starts to kind of be old
4 story for us at the AMBCC. This is work that was done
5 in 2011 and 2012, but again it just takes so long to
6 get those papers out to the peer review process. It's
7 accepted now. It's available online early and it
8 should be out on June, so we'll bring it to the fall
9 AMBCC meeting.

10

11 Thank you.

12

13 CHAIRMAN DALE: Any questions for Lili
14 on future work and past work.

15

16 (No comments)

17

18 CHAIRMAN DALE: Congratulations on that
19 publication. I look forward to reading that. Now
20 you're up, Kate. Gayla.

21

22 MS. HOSETH: I just wanted to say thank
23 you, Liliana and Jim Fall. I read the abstract or that
24 peer paper that you guys did. That was really good.
25 Really good information. Thank you for doing that.
26 That was a fun project. I'm sure that the information
27 that is in here will be useful for use in the future,
28 but I really enjoyed reading it.

29

30 So I just wanted to say thank you.

31

32 CHAIRMAN DALE: Roland.

33

34 MR. WHITE: I know we're crunching for
35 time, but could I ask for a five-minute break if that's
36 possible.

37

38 CHAIRMAN DALE: If people need to step
39 out for a minute, that's fine, we understand, but we're
40 going to have to keep moving here.

41

42 MS. MARTIN: Thank you. My name is
43 Kate Martin. I work for the Fish and Wildlife Service
44 Endangered Species Program. I think there's some new
45 faces here, but many of you are familiar with this
46 project Steller's Eider reintroduction. I know Neesha
47 Stellrecht has been here the last couple years at your
48 meetings giving updates on the project.

49

50

1 In the interest of time, I'm not going
2 to go over too many details of the project itself, but
3 I'll give a little bit of background. The Alaska
4 breeding population was listed as threatened in 1997.
5 There are two breeding populations in Alaska. There's
6 one on the North Slope and the Arctic Coastal Plain
7 mostly around Kavik and on the Yukon-Kuskokwim Delta
8 where now they're essentially non-existent or have a
9 very low population size.

10
11 I passed around the slides. Hopefully
12 everyone has them. In order to meet the recovery
13 criteria that are set in the recovery plan under the
14 Endangered Species Act requires a stable or increasing
15 population of both of those areas. Because of that we
16 tried to find ways to bring back a population on the Y-
17 K Delta. The only technique that we've identified was
18 possibly reintroducing the birds.

19
20 Once the recovery plan was written
21 there were several years of analyses by the recovery
22 team and also the Fish and Wildlife Service and the
23 Alaska SeaLife Center to think about the feasibility of
24 this project. The SeaLife Center also started a
25 captive population there and spent many years figuring
26 out how to propagate the species.

27
28 We also did a lot of outreach and
29 gathered stakeholder input including at the AMBCC
30 meetings and going out to local villages and the areas
31 where this might occur. Then in 2014 we obtained some
32 funding for our headquarters office to do two years of
33 experimental work to look at whether or not this is
34 feasible and to test the methods.

35
36 We worked closely with Migratory Bird
37 Management and the Yukon Delta Wildlife Refuge as well
38 as Alaska SeaLife Center on those two years of field
39 work. I know Neesha has come and given you updates on
40 both of those.

41
42 At this point our experimental work is
43 finished. I'm going to give you just a little update
44 on that. But we're at a decision point about whether
45 we should continue this project. We've been taking
46 time the last few months and evaluating the project.

47
48 Moving on, just to give you a brief
49 overview of the last two years. In 2015, we tested
50

1 some methods to see if we could even rear ducklings
2 from eggs out on the Y-K Delta. So a captive rearing
3 facility to hatch and rear ducklings out there. We
4 learned a lot about logistical feasibility on that. I
5 mean it's a big project trying to set up a field camp
6 and bringing eggs from the SeaLife Center out to the
7 field and get them hatched.

8
9 What we tried here was using Pintails
10 as a surrogate because we weren't quite ready to bring
11 Steller's Eiders out yet. The results were that we
12 were able to hatch Pintail eggs at this captive
13 facility out on the Y-K Delta. We came back later
14 after the ducklings were released and 8 of the 12
15 ducklings were observed still alive. Even one of those
16 ducklings successfully migrated and we had a band
17 recovery in California from one of those birds.

18
19 So moderate success there. We were
20 able to test the methods. Lessons learned. We made
21 some progress, but it was expensive, it was
22 challenging, it was extremely labor intensive. We found
23 that artificial incubation using an incubator to hatch
24 eggs is doable but we had some challenges there too
25 just maintaining power sources out in the middle of a
26 remote area, things like that that we worked through.

27
28 We also noticed through observations
29 that ducklings without a hen with them had some
30 different behaviors and maybe needed to learn some
31 things from a hen and didn't have that opportunity.
32 The other thing is that they depleted a food source in
33 that small captive rearing facility very quickly.

34
35 So after that field season we met with
36 experts and talked about different ways of testing new
37 methods thinking that this might be maybe not the way
38 to go. That maybe there's more successful methods.
39 One of the things we wanted to test is whether
40 ducklings with a hen would be more successful. So we
41 actually talked about using a surrogate duck species,
42 three different species to hatch and raise Steller's
43 Eiders from eggs that were laid by the captive flock at
44 the SeaLife Center in Seward.

45
46 We chose a field site at Kigigak Island
47 near Newtok and chose three different species of wild
48 birds nesting out there that we thought had different
49 behaviors and nesting locations that could possibly
50

1 make them good surrogates. So we brought eggs from the
2 SeaLife Center and replaced the clutches of those three
3 species with Steller's Eider eggs and then monitored
4 their success.

5
6 We ended up flying 86 Steller's Eider
7 eggs out to Kigigak Island and placed 48 eggs in nine
8 surrogate nests. Eight out of those nests -- or eight
9 out of those surrogate hens returned and incubated, so
10 we were successful there. They didn't have a problem
11 with the swap itself. Two of the Scaup actually
12 hatched out Steller's Eider eggs.

13
14 So we ended up with four ducklings out
15 of one clutch and six out of another. We actually did
16 get one picture of our four ducklings there on the left
17 and went back to the nests and confirmed that the eggs
18 hatched. Unfortunately though those ducklings didn't
19 last past three days. We think they were probably
20 taken by a predator.

21
22 Lessons learned in that season was that
23 we had some challenges matching the timing of egg
24 laying at Seward at the captive facility and that of
25 the birds out on the Y-K Delta. It was an early year
26 and it can be hard to match the right incubation stage
27 with the wild birds. Logistics were challenging.
28 Again, I mean it's a big project. It takes a lot of
29 effort.

30
31 Another lesson that we learned -- well,
32 let me go to the next slide actually. So overall
33 neither of those methods in and of themselves appear
34 likely to be successful at a large scale, but it
35 doesn't mean that a combination of methods wouldn't
36 work if we had enough years and enough time to test
37 this stuff out.

38
39 We were very successful at building
40 community support in Chevak and in Newtok, the two
41 closest villages to our field sites. The people that
42 provided a lot of logistical support and transportation
43 and help there. I think that was a big success.

44
45 So now we're faced with the decision
46 should we continue with this project. It's a good time
47 to reevaluate where we are. So our office summarized
48 the results of those two years of field study and
49 there's actually a report back on the back table if
50

1 anyone wants to see the details of those projects. I
2 think we also emailed it to Patty, so you guys have an
3 electronic version.
4

5 Then our office took some time and
6 evaluated the costs and benefits of the project. We
7 presented that information to the Eider Recovery Team
8 in February. Talked through what we thought the costs
9 were and the value of the project. We also got some
10 input from other Fish and Wildlife Service programs and
11 then presented that to the Regional Director last week.
12

13 Our evaluation looked at the costs and
14 the prospects for procuring funding over the long term
15 and then we also looked at that prognosis of success.
16 Is this even possible. Can we make this happen. So we
17 thought about the state of the methods that we've
18 developed and also did a little bit of population
19 modeling, which I'll talk about in a minute. Then also
20 thought about what information we do have about the
21 wild population and the species' current status to help
22 us think about the prognosis of success.
23

24 So for this picture of project costs it
25 is expensive to keep a captive flock at what we call
26 biosecurity level that we think is appropriate. One of
27 the biggest risk factors to this project was the idea
28 that diseases could be brought out to the wild
29 populations. If there was any risk of that, it was a
30 no-go. So we had to keep this at a very secure level.
31

32 Program management is expensive. It
33 takes a lot of people and time to undergo these field
34 efforts and then the actual field project itself and
35 the monitoring they estimate costs between \$300-400,000
36 a year. So the total yearly cost of this project is
37 high. So we thought about are there prospects for
38 funding this for the long term. Honestly, it's
39 difficult. It's hard to piecemeal together funding
40 every year for a project like this and it would have to
41 go on for many years. For Federal funding you never
42 know year to year what we're going to have.
43

44 We thought about non-Federal funding
45 and for this species in particular it's a very
46 interesting species, but not many people know about it.
47 Not very many people are connected to it. It's in a
48 remote area. It's not necessarily important to
49 subsistence harvest or sport harvest. So it would be
50

1 hard to procure non-Federal funding or funding from
2 NGOs.
3

4 We thought about the methods develops I
5 said earlier. Truly, instead of going through the
6 details here, I think the idea here is if we had many
7 years and lots of funding, I think we could maybe crack
8 the code and end up in a place where we have a good
9 method where we could release eggs and ducklings and
10 possibly be successful there.
11

12 A post-release monitoring is very
13 difficult. We don't necessarily have the technology to
14 monitor an individual over a long period of time. So
15 to be able to estimate whether they return, to be able
16 to estimate the reproductive rates and their survival
17 rates is really difficult. So not only would we not
18 understand that information, but we wouldn't know
19 whether or not we were successful if we can't monitor,
20 which is a problem.
21

22 We had two different Fish and Wildlife
23 Service scientists build population models using vital
24 rates from field studies from expert opinion when we
25 didn't have reproductive and survival rates for the
26 species. And then also looking at surrogate species
27 vital rates.
28

29 Essentially for this exercise the key
30 assumptions meant that the results would be a best case
31 scenario. It assumed that all birds hatched there
32 would return, which is maybe not the best assumption to
33 make in this case. Assumed the population was closed.
34 And it assumed that the released eggs and ducklings in
35 the population model had rates that were comparable to
36 wild birds. We just don't know whether captive reared
37 or released birds would have the same vital rates as
38 wild birds.
39

40 The models indicated that we possibly
41 could end up with tens of birds returning to breed over
42 many years of releases, but probably not hundreds. It
43 also showed that the population growth rates using the
44 vital rates that we had generally indicated that
45 population growth was less than one. We talked a
46 little bit about the assumptions.
47

48 The ultimate question is if we're
49 successfully going to reestablish Steller's Eider to
50

1 the Y-K Delta, if we were able to do that, would the
2 population remain viable after we stopped putting birds
3 out. What would happen to the birds once we stopped.
4

5 Essentially we can't necessarily answer
6 that question. We don't know why they declined in the
7 first place on the Y-K Delta, so we don't know if
8 threats remain. We don't know if the habitat there is
9 capable of supporting Steller's Eiders now or if it
10 will be in the future given changes that are likely to
11 occur there. We also thought about whether we could
12 predict that based on what other species are doing in
13 the Y-K Delta. Really, this question can only be
14 answered if we actually go out and reestablish a
15 population and observe I think is what it comes down
16 to.
17

18 So our evaluation from our office is
19 the cost obviously is high. The prospects for funding
20 aren't obvious or there's no obvious source of funding
21 for this for the long term. The methods maybe doable,
22 but again it's going to take many years of funding and
23 monitoring to understand and get to a place where we
24 have it dialed in.
25

26 The population models we have suggest
27 that we maybe could reestablish Steller's Eiders if the
28 vital rates are similar to wild birds and they return
29 to breed, which are questionable assumptions. The
30 prognosis for positive population growth once we
31 stopped releases is actually unknown. We don't know.
32

33 So we brought this information to the
34 recovery team which recommended that we discontinue
35 reintroduction for the foreseeable future. We talked a
36 lot about Steller's Eider recovery. The team also
37 recommended that we develop a new like an updated
38 recovery strategy for Steller's Eiders and we
39 reevaluate the recovery criteria that are currently in
40 the recovery plan and that we also at this time assess
41 the value of maintaining a captive flock at the SeaLife
42 Center.
43

44 We gathered input from other Fish and
45 Wildlife Service programs and then we talked with the
46 Regional Director last week and the Regional Director
47 team and his decision was to discontinue. I mean I
48 think it was fairly unanimous that that was where the
49 signs were pointing, that it was time to say that we've
50

1 tried and move on.

2

3 So that's sort of hot off the press.
4 We are now trying to share that decision with our
5 stakeholders and partners that we've been working with.
6 We need a little bit of time to do that. Neesha
7 Stellrecht is planning non going out to Newtok and
8 Chevak possibly next week. We're working with the
9 SeaLife Center on distribute that information to their
10 staff. So I'm kind of asking everyone here to keep it
11 close maybe for a week or two while we talk with
12 everybody about it. It's nice to be able to tell
13 people firsthand rather than hear it secondhand.

14

15 Our next steps are to develop a process
16 to update that recovery strategy as the recovery team
17 suggested we do. We have scheduled what we call a
18 five-year status review for this species starting next
19 fiscal year, so starting in September. That
20 essentially means that we review where the population
21 is relative to the current criteria and possibly update
22 the recovery plan. It's going to take a little bit of
23 time to think through that.

24

25 At this time we'll continue focusing on
26 the North Slope population and continue the same
27 projects that we've been doing up there to try to
28 protect those birds. I believe that is all I have in
29 the interest of time. Does anyone have any questions
30 for me on that? You can also find me later if needed.

31

32 Mike.

33

34 MR. PEDERSON: Mike Pederson, North
35 Slope Borough. I guess my question is -- thank you for
36 that update, but will the recovery team be ready for
37 next year's review with updating the plan and all that
38 stuff and then the review will begin? Is that how I
39 understood you stating that?

40

41 MS. MARTIN: Yeah, we are still working
42 through what that process will look like. As you
43 probably know, you can go through a planning process
44 and it can take a really long time or you can try to
45 make it as efficient as possible. We're not exactly
46 sure what it will look like, but we're trying to figure
47 that out now. We'd like to be able to come back and
48 give you all updates on that as we work through it if
49 possible.

50

1 CHAIRMAN DALE: Patty.

2

3 MS. SCHWALENBERG: I just wanted to
4 thank Kate and Neesha for working with us over the past
5 three years and coming to every meeting that we've
6 requested their presence. As some of you may recall,
7 the Native Caucus did write a letter not supporting the
8 project, but it did not mean we weren't interested.
9 Some of the reasons we weren't supportive is we, being
10 the Native Caucus, is because of the uncertainty about
11 the program and the cost of the program. So it wasn't
12 necessarily opposition to bring back -- you know, bring
13 the population of Steller's Eiders up, so I hope you
14 understand that, but I do want to thank you and your
15 staff for continuing to keep the AMBCC updated on this
16 project.

17

18 MS. MARTIN: You're welcome. And we do
19 understand that. Thank you.

20

21 CHAIRMAN DALE: Any other questions for
22 Kate.

23

24 (No comments)

25

26 CHAIRMAN DALE: All right. Thank you
27 very much. Good presentation. So let's go ahead and
28 start in on Technical Committee with Jim Fall.

29

30 DR. FALL: Thanks, Mr. Chair. Jim
31 Fall, Division of Subsistence, Fish and Game. A
32 question though. The Technical Committee report
33 consists entirely of comments on the three regulatory
34 proposals before the Council and further down on the
35 agenda each of those are listed. I think in that
36 process the Technical Committee also provides comments.
37 So, in the interest of time I could just wait and give
38 you the comments when you actually have the proposals
39 on the floor. It's up to you though.

40

41 CHAIRMAN DALE: That sounds great.

42

43 DR. FALL: Okay.

44

45 CHAIRMAN DALE: Thanks, Jim, Dr. Fall.
46 We'll move on to -- Lili, can you come back up for
47 outreach and communications. And Tamara.

48

49 MS. ZELLER: Tamara Zeller, U.S. Fish

50

1 and Wildlife Service, Migratory Birds. I'm going to go
2 first. So I am part of the AMBCC Outreach Committee,
3 but I'm going to speak to the Emperor Goose Outreach
4 Subcommittee and what we've been doing for that. There
5 was a meeting for the AMBCC Outreach Committee in
6 December of 2016 and it was decided that it would
7 benefit folks if we created a subcommittee to talk
8 specifically about Emperor Geese. So that was formed.
9

10 It was also then decided that we would
11 form -- hold a stakeholder meeting and that was in
12 January 2017 with a purpose of trying to come up with a
13 unified approach and messages and prioritize products
14 as the hunt is moving forward in 2017. So that
15 occurred, like I mentioned, in January. Many of you in
16 this room were there, so it was great.
17

18 As a result, what came out of that
19 meeting -- I'm going to direct you guys to Tab 7 in
20 your books behind these service regulations. We
21 created an outreach plan and that was a compilation of
22 the discussions that we had at the meeting. In the
23 outreach plan itself we went through a process of
24 identifying again messages and what we thought were
25 priorities for the season.
26

27 Correct me if I get this wrong, folks
28 that were there, but we thought the most important
29 thing for 2017 was just to get the word out the
30 Emperors were indeed open and celebrate the success of
31 the fact that they were open and all the sacrifices
32 that went into the 30 years of no hunting and
33 management.
34

35 We wanted also to make sure that folks
36 had the correct information on what the hunting
37 regulations were if there were such that the spring and
38 summer hunt was customary and traditional, but the fall
39 hunt did involve a lot of specific regulations that
40 folks needed to know about.
41

42 At the time in February and March there
43 were two things going on. There were the all the
44 Regional Council meetings and I think Patty and Fish
45 and Game staff as well as Fish and Wildlife staff went
46 to several of these and provided information on Emperor
47 Geese and the hunt, answered questions relative to what
48 that would mean. Also we produced a fact sheet to try
49 to help people get a broad brush of sort of the
50

1 messages.

2

3 While I was on vacation for a while it
4 was really great some of the regions developed their
5 own fact sheets to make it very specific and this is
6 what really needs to happen. I'm going to invite other
7 regions to comment on what the impetus was, but my
8 understanding is that there are so many questions about
9 the fall/winter hunt that they decided to create a fact
10 sheet that combined the two. That happened in Kodiak
11 and the Northwest Arctic, but it is currently happening
12 in other regions as well is my understanding.

13

14 For future goals we met yesterday at
15 the work session and we are going to currently be
16 working on making sure as many websites are up to date
17 with both the plan and the flyers and other thing. Then
18 regionally folks are working on newsletters and radio
19 PSAs and other ways of communication that really worked
20 for their region.

21

22 So I'm going to leave it at that and
23 answer questions, but I also would like to invite
24 anybody up who is on the subcommittee and who works for
25 the regions to talk about what they've done
26 specifically if they would like that.

27

28 CHAIRMAN DALE: Any questions from the
29 Council first.

30

31 Gayla.

32

33 MS. HOSETH: Thank you, Mr. Chairman.
34 I think one of the things out of that Outreach and
35 Communication Committees is we're going to come up with
36 a communication plan and we're going to start working
37 on that. I know communication could improve. I didn't
38 hear you mention it, but I just wanted to put on the
39 record about the communication plan that we're going to
40 be working on.

41

42 That was all I had to offer.

43

44 CHAIRMAN DALE: Others.

45

46 MR. DANIELS: Bryan Daniels, Yukon
47 Delta. I wasn't able to attend the meeting yesterday
48 and the phone system wasn't working, so I wasn't able
49 to give my update. Over the next two weeks we plan on
50

1 going to six of the coastal villages that will be
2 having a lot of the Emperor Goose harvest on the Yukon
3 Delta and provided more hands-on outreach to the
4 villages.

5
6 As well as we, as a Refuge, are trying
7 to conduct a biological survey and somewhat of a
8 harvest survey of Emperor Geese in these villages as
9 well and I'm presenting this here instead of new
10 business because I'm not going to be here tomorrow. I
11 had a presentation, but in the interest of time I'm
12 going to skip it and if anyone wants to see that
13 harvest survey and biological survey I can send it to
14 you.

15
16 Basically we're going to be asking for
17 birds to be brought to hired technicians to be weighed
18 and measured for three measurements to get at the
19 health of the birds prior to nesting and based on the
20 number of birds brought to us we'll be able to get a
21 little bit of harvest record of what people are
22 harvesting in those villages.

23
24 So that's what we're doing in Yukon
25 Delta.

26
27 CHAIRMAN DALE: Thank you. Any other
28 questions.

29
30 Cyrus.

31
32 MR. HARRIS: Cyrus Harris. There was a
33 lot of confusion the past couple of days after
34 reviewing this Emperor Goose hunting information 2017
35 under limit and it's something that I've mentioned that
36 I didn't quite read word for word, but the confusion is
37 the recommended take on one bird or what you need
38 versus the fall and sport. That particular part of it
39 confused the customary no limit traditional customary
40 hunt.

41
42 You mentioned that part yesterday,
43 Gayla. Will you explain more in detail.

44
45 MS. HOSETH: Sure. I guess that's how
46 we got to the communication plan so that communication
47 could be on -- it is a co-management. What happened in
48 our area in the Bristol Bay area -- and I know that it
49 was good intentions by everybody that was involved, so
50

1 I don't want to put anybody on the spot.

2

3 I know that Kodiak developed their
4 education outreach pamphlet, which was great and it
5 kind of defines the spring and summer and fall and
6 winter because it is confusing and people are getting
7 confused about the hunt. Then I know the form was then
8 sent to Maniilaq area and then the form was sent to me
9 because we had RITs that were going out in the Togiak
10 Wildlife Refuge area to give education on Emperor Geese
11 and I think I got it on a Wednesday or a Thursday and
12 says, here, I need your comment. You look it over
13 because they're going out next week and we want input
14 on the form.

15

16 So I was a little disgruntled because
17 my name was put on the form with a different logo, so I
18 contacted Eric Taylor at U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service
19 and told him when we have forms that are going out and
20 you're putting my name on it or anybody's name on it
21 from any Native organization or any organization to
22 make sure that we're involved with it right at the
23 beginning and that forms aren't just given to us to
24 approve and hand out. So that's how we came up with
25 the communication effort to make sure that
26 communication happens.

27

28 One of the things that we really wanted
29 to make sure that the information was being brought out
30 correctly was the recommended take is not one bird.
31 The recommended take is customary and traditional and
32 take what you need. So in our region -- and it is in
33 the tab we put on there we changed it to say take only
34 what you need so that there isn't any confusion because
35 that's something that we really fought long and hard
36 for here at the Native Caucus at AMBCC and we spent
37 hours and hours on discussing this. So whatever the
38 regulations state we know we want that reflected in the
39 handouts.

40

41 One of the things during our
42 discussions during the meeting yesterday was doing like
43 a one-page flyer that we could post around that Donna
44 created last year when it was Emperor Goose hunt is
45 closed for 2016 and we were wanting to maybe -- Brandon
46 brought that up for a one-page poster that we could
47 post around that defines the spring and summer regs on
48 one side and maybe the fall and winter on the other
49 side that we could post around our communities.

50

1 So that was where the communication
2 breakdown was, but it was a learning experience for
3 everybody and everybody get on the same page. So those
4 are the facts and I just wanted to say that. Thank you
5 for bringing that up, Cyrus.

6
7 CHAIRMAN DALE: Okay. Any further
8 questions.

9
10 (No comments)

11
12 CHAIRMAN DALE: Okay. Thanks, Tamara.
13 These outreach forms are really great, I think. Lili,
14 are we going to be able to squeeze this in? We've got
15 10 minutes.

16
17 MS. NAVES: This is the report of
18 activities of the Outreach and Communication Committee.
19 This committee was inactive for a period of time and it
20 was reactivated at the last fall AMBCC meeting and
21 since then we met five other times.

22
23 We have identified some priorities that
24 some things I think you can work on. There's so much
25 that needs and can be done in terms of outreach and
26 communication. It's just a matter of keeping it real
27 and what can be done in the short term.

28
29 There are the obvious outreach needs
30 related to the handicrafts and the Emperor Goose new
31 regulations. The Emperor Goose outreach has been
32 handled through the subcommittee led by Tamara. The
33 outreach related to handicrafts was put on the back
34 burner until the regulations are published related to
35 that topic.

36
37 There are other things that we worked
38 to support participation and some sort of communication
39 about AMBCC and the AFN as part of that effort we
40 designed and handicraft did hundreds of fridge magnets
41 with the AMBCC logo and there's another design and you
42 work with AMBCC logo conservation for co-management and
43 also we work with a logo that's birds for today and
44 tomorrow that we can reuse it in future campaigns.

45
46 Another thing that was completed is
47 that we worked with Todd Sanders to include materials
48 about the AMBCC and the Pacific Flyway Council and I
49 would like to thank Todd for his willingness and his
50

1 partnership on that effort and it's great that the
2 AMBCC is featured there with a full page and a bunch of
3 useful information about the subsistence way of life
4 and everything that goes together with the AMBCC. So
5 thank you very much for the people that worked on that
6 too.

7
8 Another topic that we have been working
9 and this was among the priorities identified at that
10 very first meeting in the fall last year is to support
11 and maybe expand activities related to migratory bird
12 fairs or festivals in the state, especially those in
13 subsistence communities. We have worked and kind of
14 learning better about the festivals going on and how
15 they can use help and how they can maybe be connected
16 with other festivals that occur along with the flyway.

17
18 So I have been in contact with Leslie
19 Pearce on the North Slope Borough. She is the outreach
20 coordinator for the Borough. In fact, they're having
21 their festival Friday and maybe Mike can talk more
22 about that. But at this point we are mostly learning
23 how those festivals operate and what kind of help they
24 can use.

25
26 The other festival that we're working
27 is the Yakutat Heron Festival. It's in a subsistence
28 community, but the Forest Service is continually
29 interested in getting more engagement of the
30 subsistence users, so they are one of the folks that's
31 invited for the presentation on subsistence harvest of
32 migratory birds. We're learning better how to interact
33 and how to support.

34 The idea is that maybe you could have a festival or
35 something like that in the Y-K Delta which is such a
36 permanent area for birds, so that is something that's
37 on the wish list.

38
39 One other idea that had been proposed
40 at the first meeting is to translate the AMBCC logo in
41 all Native languages and dialects if there's a
42 significant difference in dialect and this could be
43 something that could be used, for instance, on the
44 welcome page at the AMBCC. We wanted to discuss this
45 at the Outreach Committee meeting yesterday, but we
46 were too busy with Emperor Goose talk.

47
48 So I popped this here without
49 previously talking with the committee members, but I
50

1 didn't want to miss the opportunity of having all the
2 AMBCC partners here. So there is a page that is asking
3 help about translating the logo to all Native languages
4 and I encourage you to take home and help translate
5 that. There is an address to return it to. Also for
6 people in the audience. I think this is a little bit
7 more the scope of work that we can afford ourselves the
8 luxury of doing and I think that will help identity
9 kind of our identify and what are our goals and how we
10 move forward and how we work together. There are more
11 copies at the back table there.

12

13 Thank you.

14

15 CHAIRMAN DALE: Thank you very much.

16 That's a great idea.

17

18 Pete.

19

20 MR. PROBASCO: Lili, how many languages
21 are there?

22

23 DR. FALL: Twenty.

24

25 MS. NAVES: Thanks, Jim. Twenty. And
26 the significantly different dialects.

27

28 DR. FALL: Twenty languages.

29

30 MR. PROBASCO: Twenty? Thanks.

31

32 MR. PEDERSON: Lili, thank you for that
33 report. I was standing in the back listening. I just
34 want to let you know that I do have an outreach
35 coordinator on my staff and she's willing to work with
36 the Outreach Committee on outreach materials. Just let
37 us know. Send us an email and we'll be happy to share
38 her with you.

39

40 MS. NAVES: There are a couple of
41 people that you have been asked to include in the
42 Outreach Committee and we'll talk about that when you
43 do the updates for the committees. One of them is
44 Leslie and I think she already got the heads up about
45 that. The other person is Jennifer Hooper from the
46 AVCP area. When you do the updates of the committees,
47 you can include them.

48

49 Thank you.

50

1 CHAIRMAN DALE: Okay. With that we'll
2 stand down. I'll remind you that everybody's got to be
3 out of the room by 4:30.
4

5 MR. PROBASCO: What time do we start?
6

7 CHAIRMAN DALE: We start tomorrow at
8 9:00 a.m. tomorrow.
9

10 (Off record)
11

12 (PROCEEDINGS TO BE CONTINUED)
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