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ALASKA MIGRATORY BIRD CO-MANAGEMENT COUNCIL

FALL MEETING - ZOOM

VOLUME I

October 5, 2022

Members Present:

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

Executive Director, Patty Schwalenberg

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

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3 (ZOOM - 10/5/2022)

4

5 (On record)

6

7 MADAME CHAIR HOSETH: The time is 9:05.

8 I call the meeting to order at 9:05 this morning. If

9 we could go into a moment of silence.

10

11 (Moment of silence)

12

13 (Interruption)

14

15 MADAME CHAIR HOSETH: Patty, do you

16 have controls over the computer for muting people?

17

18 MS. SCHWALENBERG: Yes.

19

20 MADAME CHAIR HOSETH: The public is

21 coming back.

22

23 UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER: Hi.

24

25 MADAME CHAIR HOSETH: Hi. Good

26 morning. You're not on mute just to let you know.

27

28 UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER: Okay. Good

29 morning.

30

31 MADAME CHAIR HOSETH: We'll just go for

32 maybe -- we'll have a moment of silence for just a few

33 seconds here and remember those who have -- we have a

34 lot of people who passed away in this last year who

35 served on a lot of our Regional Councils. So if we

36 could just have a moment of silence for everybody.

37

38 (Moment of silence)

39

40 MADAME CHAIR HOSETH: Okay. Moving on.

41 We will do seating of alternates. Patty, do you know

42 who we need to seat as alternates today?

43

44 MS. SCHWALENBERG: I'm not sure how you

45 want to handle our new member Wendy Loya. I'm still

46 waiting an official letter, but maybe we can recognize

47 her as an alternate for now.

48

49 MS. LOYA: Good morning. I'm Wendy

50

0003

1 Loya. I introduced myself maybe a year and a half ago.  
2 I'm the Assistant Regional Director at the U.S. Fish  
3 and Wildlife Service for the Migratory Birds Program.  
4 So I've been working with Eric Taylor as his supervisor  
5 and I think as Eric has announced he'll be leaving the  
6 Fish and Wildlife Service to join BOEM, the Bureau of  
7 Ocean Energy Management. So I'm stepping in to take  
8 the representation for the Fish and Wildlife Service.  
9 We will send a letter to Patty to make that official.

10

11 MADAME CHAIR HOSETH: Okay, thank you.  
12 Thank you, Wendy, for joining us. We're happy to have  
13 you here. For procedural sake, if we have to have a  
14 letter to serve -- representing the communities that we  
15 serve in the regions that we serve, for formality do we  
16 need to have that with our agencies as well?

17

18 MS. SCHWALENBERG: When a member steps  
19 down and a new member takes their place, we do need an  
20 official letter from the regional management body.  
21 We've already accepted the alternates for Aleutian  
22 Pribilofs and the Kawerak region up there so Brandon  
23 and Karen, if you're sitting in for Peter until he can  
24 call in, you're set to go too.

25

26 MADAME CHAIR HOSETH: Peter is on the  
27 line.

28

29 MS. SCHWALENBERG: Oh, he is on the  
30 line.

31

32 MADAME CHAIR HOSETH: Yeah, Peter is  
33 on. I was just wanting to make sure that -- well, I  
34 guess we don't have any action items, that we're  
35 taking, you know, major action items today for voting,  
36 but for procedures I know that we have to have a letter  
37 before we can serve on the Council and vote. So I just  
38 wanted to note that.

39

40 I guess then do we need a motion then  
41 to seat Wendy?

42

43 MS. SCHWALENBERG: Yes.

44

45 MADAME CHAIR HOSETH: Okay. So anybody  
46 like to entertain a motion.

47

48 MR. AHMASUK: This is Brandon. I move.

49

50

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1 MADAME CHAIR HOSETH: Brandon made a  
2 motion. Anybody seconds?

3  
4 MR. DEVINE: This is Peter. I second.

5  
6 MADAME CHAIR HOSETH: Peter second.  
7 Any discussion.

8  
9 (No comments)

10  
11 MADAME CHAIR HOSETH: All those in  
12 favor of seating Wendy Loya as U.S. Fish and Wildlife  
13 representative signify by saying aye.

14  
15 IN UNISON: Aye.

16  
17 MADAME CHAIR HOSETH: Those opposed  
18 same sign.

19  
20 (No opposing votes)

21  
22 MADAME CHAIR HOSETH: Motion carries.  
23 Welcome, Wendy.

24  
25 MS. LOYA: Thank you very much.

26  
27 MADAME CHAIR HOSETH: If we could have  
28 roll call, Patty.

29  
30 MS. SCHWALENBERG: U.S. Fish and  
31 Wildlife Service.

32  
33 MS. LOYA: Here. Thank you.

34  
35 MS. SCHWALENBERG: Alaska Department of  
36 Fish and Game.

37  
38 MR. SCOTT: Ryan Scott is here. Thank  
39 you.

40  
41 MS. SCHWALENBERG: Aleutian Pribilof  
42 Islands Association.

43  
44 MR. DEVINE: Peter Devine here.

45  
46 MS. SCHWALENBERG: Association of  
47 Village Council Presidents. Is Jennifer online?

48  
49 MS. HOOPER: Good morning, Patty.  
50

0005

1 Jennifer is here. Martin may be in and out. We've got  
2 a tribal consultation this afternoon, so I'm not sure  
3 when he'll be able to join.

4  
5 MS. SCHWALENBERG: Okay, great.  
6 Thanks. Bristol Bay.

7  
8 MADAME CHAIR HOSETH: Here.

9  
10 MS. SCHWALENBERG: Chugach Region. Is  
11 Priscilla on?

12  
13 (No response)

14  
15 MS. SCHWALENBERG: Kawerak.

16  
17 MR. AHMASUK: Brandon is here.

18  
19 MS. SCHWALENBERG: Maniilaq. Cyrus.

20  
21 MR. HARRIS: Here.

22  
23 MS. SCHWALENBERG: North Slope Borough.

24  
25 MS. HEPA: Taqulik is here. Good  
26 morning.

27  
28 MS. SCHWALENBERG: Morning. Sun'aq  
29 Tribe of Kodiak.

30  
31 MS. CHERNOFF: This is Coral. Good  
32 morning.

33  
34 MS. SCHWALENBERG: Hi, Coral. And  
35 Tanana Chiefs Conference. Randy.

36  
37 MR. MAYO: Here.

38  
39 MS. SCHWALENBERG: Good morning.  
40 Madame Chair, we have a quorum.

41  
42 MADAME CHAIR HOSETH: Thank you, Patty.  
43 Did we have anybody here from Ahtna?

44  
45 MS. SCHWALENBERG: Oh, how did I miss  
46 that one. I'm sorry. Is Gloria online?

47  
48 (No response)

49  
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0006

1 MS. SCHWALENBERG: Not yet, but she did  
2 report to me that she's retiring from Ahtna but she  
3 will still retain her seat on the Alaska Migratory Bird  
4 Co-management Council.

5  
6 MADAME CHAIR HOSETH: Okay. All right.  
7 Thank you, Patty. Next we'll go to introductions. I  
8 can start with myself. My name is Gayla Hoseth. I'm  
9 the director of Natural Resources here at Bristol Bay  
10 Native Association located in Dillingham, Alaska. I'm  
11 also the second chief of the Curyung Tribal Council  
12 here.

13  
14 I've been working with AMBCC for 10  
15 years now and happy to see all the issues that we've  
16 been working on move forward. This is one of my  
17 favorite councils that I serve on and I'm just thankful  
18 for this time and thankful for the relationships that  
19 we've built over the years.

20  
21 I'll turn it over to Ryan.

22  
23 MR. SCOTT: Good morning, everyone. My  
24 name is Ryan Scott. I'm the Assistant Director with  
25 the Division of Wildlife Conservation, Alaska  
26 Department of Fish and Game, down here in Juneau. It's  
27 interesting that Gayla would mention 10 years. I'm no  
28 where near that, but just this morning I was out  
29 walking around thinking this is my fourth year with  
30 AMBCC. I totally concur that I've enjoyed it a lot.

31  
32 I'll take this opportunity to actually  
33 recognize Gayla and Coral and Randy. If you weren't  
34 aware of it, last August we had a Pacific Flyway  
35 Meeting here in Juneau and those three individually  
36 along with Patty and Lili as well did a wonderful job  
37 of talking about the AMBCC and traditional use of  
38 migratory birds in Alaska for the Flyway Council and I  
39 can tell you it's been amazingly received. It's been  
40 asked for copies of the video and a number of  
41 accolades.

42  
43 Anyway, I'm glad to be here, but I  
44 wanted to thank all those people who are really doing a  
45 great job last August.

46  
47 Thank you.

48  
49 MADAME CHAIR HOSETH: Thank you, Ryan.  
50

0007

1 Wendy.

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MR. LOYA: Good morning, again. Yes, I'm Wendy Loya. I'm based in the Fish and Wildlife Service Regional Office and I'm obviously very new to this although I recognize a few names from past involvement in some of the North Slope and Western Arctic Caribou Herd Working Group. So glad to see some familiar faces. I'm looking forward to meeting everyone.

Given that I am new to this know that I have the backing of a phenomenal staff in the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service. Many that are on the call to help make sure we can work through all the ideas and issues that show up here. So thanks for welcoming me. I'm looking forward to this.

MADAME CHAIR HOSETH: All right. Thank you. We'll go with Peter.

MR. DEVINE: Good morning, everyone. Peter Devine here in Sand Point representing the Qagan Tayagungin Tribe in the Aleutian Pribilof region. Been here since 2003.

MADAME CHAIR HOSETH: Thank you, Peter. I just want to point out that I think Peter is our longest standing original AMBCC member. So thank you for being with us this long, Peter. Jennifer.

MS. HOOPER: Good morning. Jennifer Hooper with Association of Village Council Presidents, Waterfowl Conservation Committee and the Natural Resources Program Manager for AVCP.

MADAME CHAIR HOSETH: Good morning. Cyrus.

MR. HARRIS: Uvlaalluataq. Cyrus, Kotzebue, Alaska. Work for Maniilaq Association. I represent well Maniilaq Association in the Maniilaq service area.

Thank you.

MADAME CHAIR HOSETH: Thanks, Cyrus. Brandon.

0008

1 MR. AHMASUK: Good morning, folks.  
2 Brandon Ahmasuk. I'm the VP of Natural Resources here  
3 at Kawerak in Nome, Alaska. I'm also the Acting  
4 Subsistence Resources Program Director, Acting Reindeer  
5 Herders Association Director. Just like Gayla  
6 mentioned, this Bird Council it is one of my more  
7 favorite councils to be participating in. My other one  
8 is probably the Ice Seal Committee.

9  
10 I think both Gay and I started about  
11 the same time, about 10 year ago. I think a few  
12 meetings ago I did mention I'm trying to step down from  
13 this just because I'm the VP of Natural Resources now  
14 and I'm spread extremely thin, but here I am still  
15 attending, so you haven't got rid of me yet. Yeah,  
16 thank you.

17  
18 MADAME CHAIR HOSETH: Thank you,  
19 Brandon. Taqulik.

20  
21 MS. HEPA: Hi. Good morning. My  
22 camera is not working for some reason. I'll figure it  
23 out. Uvlaalluataq. Taqulik Hepa and I'm from  
24 Utqiagvik. I work for the North Slope Borough,  
25 Department of Wildlife Management. I'm representing  
26 the North Slope Regional Management body. I really  
27 enjoy serving on this commission as well or  
28 co-management group. I look forward to the discussions  
29 and continuing our dialogue into the future.

30  
31 Good morning.

32  
33 MADAME CHAIR HOSETH: Good morning.  
34 Coral.

35  
36 MS. CHERNOFF: Good morning, everyone.  
37 This is Coral and I am a representative from Kodiak  
38 Island area representing about I think 10 tribes in the  
39 area. It's great to be here.

40  
41 Thank you.

42  
43 MADAME CHAIR HOSETH: Good morning.  
44 Randy.

45  
46 MR. MAYO: Hello, everybody. Randy  
47 Mayo here, Tanana Chiefs Region in the Interior. I'm  
48 an enrolled member of the Stevens Village Tribe. I sit  
49 on the TCC Regional Management Board representing the  
50



0009

1 13 tribes in my subregion and work with six other  
2 subregional board members and have been in this  
3 capacity as chairman for maybe nine years or so.

4  
5 So it's pretty enjoyable work. I  
6 really like the team effort and reporting back to our  
7 region on all that goes on with migratory birds. So  
8 thank you.

9  
10 MADAME CHAIR HOSETH: Thank you, Randy.  
11 Patty.

12  
13 MS. SCHWALENBERG: Good morning. I'd  
14 show my picture, but it's weird. I don't know what's  
15 going on with my face. I'm missing in action. (In  
16 Native) This is Patty Schwalenberg. I'm an enrolled  
17 member of the Lac du Flambeau Band of Lake Superior  
18 Chippewa Indians from Northern Wisconsin. My mom and  
19 dad are Leonard and Jeannie Brown. My grandparents are  
20 Sadie and Marie and George and Paul.

21  
22 I'm happy to be here today and I'm glad  
23 everyone is able to make it. I'm looking forward to  
24 our next meeting, which I'm pretty sure should be in  
25 person. For those of you that don't know, I'm the  
26 Executive Director of the AMBCC. Welcome to the  
27 meeting.

28  
29 MADAME CHAIR HOSETH: Thank you, Patty.  
30 What I'm going to do at this time is, Ryan, if you  
31 wanted to go ahead and call on your team that you have  
32 on. I don't know everybody who is a part of which with  
33 the State and with U.S. Fish and Wildlife. So, Ryan,  
34 would you please call on your staff.

35  
36 MR. SCOTT: Certainly. I can't see  
37 everybody, so if I miss somebody let me know. First  
38 I'd like to introduce Jason Schamber. He's our  
39 Waterfowl Program Leader out of Anchorage. Also I'll  
40 introduce Lili Naves. She's with the Division of  
41 Subsistence Department. Is anybody else on there? I  
42 can't quite see all the names.

43  
44 (No response)

45  
46 MR. SCOTT: I guess not. That's our  
47 group today.

48  
49 MADAME CHAIR HOSETH: Thank you, Ryan.  
50

0010

1 Wendy, if you want to call on your staff to introduce  
2 themselves, please.

3

4 MS. LOYA: Yeah, thanks. We have quite  
5 a number. I'll start with Angela Matz.

6

7 MS. MATZ: Good morning, everybody. My  
8 name is Angela Matz. I'm the regional spill response  
9 and contaminants coordinator for the U.S. Fish and  
10 Wildlife Service here in Alaska. I am based in  
11 Anchorage on the traditional homelands of the Dena'ina  
12 people. I grew up in Colorado. I am going to talk to  
13 you later today about avian influenza and Mike Brooke  
14 from the ANTHC will be joining me for that. He's not  
15 online right now.

16

17 Thank you.

18

19 MS. LOYA: And Crystal.

20

21 MS. LEONETTI: Waqaa. Good morning,  
22 everybody. (In Yup'ik) My Yup'ik name is Ciisquq and  
23 I also go by Crystal Leonetti. I'm the Alaska Native  
24 Affairs Specialist for U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service  
25 based on Dena'ina homelands in Anchorage, Alaska.

26

27 I've been in this position for about 11  
28 years. So I'm right there with Gayla and Brandon at  
29 the 10, 11 year mark on attending AMBCC meetings. Of  
30 course I love hearing everybody's voices and seeing you  
31 all. Hopefully next one will be in person.

32

33 MS. LOYA: It is. So that's great.  
34 How about Chuck Frost.

35

36 MR. FROST: Hi, everyone. I'm Chuck  
37 Frost. I'm a biometrician with the Waterfowl Program  
38 here in Anchorage with U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service.  
39 Look forward to the meeting as always.

40

41 MS. LOYA: Thank you. And Dave Safine.

42

43 MR. SAFINE: Good morning, everybody.  
44 My name is Dave Safine. I'm a waterfowl biologist in  
45 the Migratory Bird Management Program here in  
46 Anchorage. Good to see everybody.

47

48 MS. LOYA: And Heather.

49

50

0011

1 MS. WILSON: Hi. Can you hear me? I'm  
2 Heather Wilson. I'm a pilot biologist with Migratory  
3 Bird Management. I'm with Tamara Zeller and we are  
4 flying brant surveys in Cold Bay, but we're down on  
5 weather, so we're listening in today. Thanks for  
6 having us.

7  
8 MS. LOYA: Great. So is Tamara with  
9 you?

10  
11 MS. WILSON: She is, yes.

12  
13 MS. LOYA: Can she go ahead?

14  
15 MS. ZELLER: Hi, everybody. I'm Tamara  
16 Zeller with Migratory Birds. I'm an outreach  
17 biologist. Yeah, I'm out here with Heather doing brant  
18 surveys. We have a really long delay, so it makes a  
19 billable awkward.

20  
21 MS. LOYA: Glad you guys could join us  
22 for a little while and welcome. Also on our Migratory  
23 Birds Waterfowl Team Julian Fischer.

24  
25 MR. FISCHER: Good morning, everyone.  
26 This is Julian Fischer. I'm calling from my home in  
27 Anchorage. I work with all these folks that have just  
28 been introduced within the Migratory Bird Program. I  
29 supervise the Aerial Waterfowl Survey Program.

30  
31 Good morning and I look forward to this  
32 meeting. Thanks.

33  
34 MS. LOYA: How about Robb?

35  
36 MR. KALER: Good morning. Robb Kaler,  
37 Migratory Birds. I'm a seabird specialist working with  
38 all these other great staff at Migratory Bird. I will  
39 be presenting an update on seabirds for the group as I  
40 have the last couple meetings.

41  
42 Good to see everybody and look forward  
43 to sharing some information on seabirds. Thanks.

44  
45 MS. LOYA: Thanks, Robb. How about  
46 Will?

47  
48 MR. LACY: Good morning. I'm Will  
49 Lacy. I'm the Migratory Bird Budget Analyst. I work  
50

0012

1 together with all the regions in doing their grants and  
2 answering any financial support type questions. I'm  
3 glad to be here this morning.

4

5 Thank you.

6

7 MS. LOYA: Thanks for joining us, Will.  
8 Bobbie Jo Skibo.

9

10 MS. SKIBO: Good morning. There's not  
11 a lot of familiar names, so this is exciting small  
12 state small community. I'm Bobby Jo. I'm actually in  
13 Palmer, Alaska. Just moved from Juneau and have taken  
14 on a position with the Fish and Wildlife Service.  
15 Actually it's almost a year on the 10th. So I'm pretty  
16 new to the Service. Don't know much about migratory  
17 bird management, but I'm a planner and I am actually  
18 the coastal plane coordinator right now. I'm leading  
19 the supplemental EIS for the Oil and Gas Program.

20

21 But my role here is to listen in, learn  
22 from all of you. I am hiring our first indigenous  
23 knowledge liaison and hopefully you've heard about it  
24 or you know candidates that have applied. So I always  
25 keep an ear towards the indigenous knowledge  
26 integration into these types of efforts and I'm really  
27 excited to see how that kind of plays out here or, if  
28 it doesn't, how we can have that play out into the  
29 future.

30

31 So thank you. I will be cutting in and  
32 out due to other needs today, but I'm going to try to  
33 join as much as I can. Thanks.

34

35 MS. LOYA: Fantastic. Thanks for  
36 joining us, Bobbie Jo. I think that's it for Fish and  
37 Wildlife Service. Am I missing anyone?

38

39 MR. FISCHER: I think there's a couple  
40 Refuge employees on from Yukon Delta.

41

42 MS. LOYA: Okay, great. Can you help  
43 me call them out. Oh, I see Bryan Daniels, okay.

44

45 MR. FISCHER: Yeah, and Chris Tulik is  
46 on as well.

47

48 MS. LOYA: Okay, great. Thank you.

49 Sorry.

50

0013

1 MR. DANIELS: My name is Bryan Daniels.  
2 Can you hear me? Hello?

3  
4 MS. LOYA: We can. Go ahead, Bryan.

5  
6 MR. DANIELS: Hi, my name is Bryan  
7 Daniels. I'm the waterfowl biologist at Yukon Delta  
8 National Wildlife Refuge. I have been here for six  
9 years and attending the meeting for six years and  
10 always enjoy all the information I get and listen to  
11 everyone. So thanks for having me. I plan on just  
12 being a fly on the wall today unless I'm needed.

13  
14 I'll go ahead and introduce other  
15 people from our refuge. We have a couple Refuge  
16 Information Technicians on. We'll have Chris Tulik go  
17 first.

18  
19 MR. TULIK: Good morning. My name is  
20 Christopher Tulik. I'm a Lead Refuge Information  
21 Technician for the refuge here in Bethel. I came back  
22 to work for the Service in 2014 and I've been here  
23 since then. We also have two other RITs who are also  
24 listening on this meeting and I'll have them introduce  
25 themselves. We have one who should be joining us here  
26 later on. Quyana everyone.

27  
28 Emmet.

29  
30 MR. DANIELS: The next would be Emmet.

31  
32 (No response)

33  
34 MR. TULIK: Oh, sorry about that,  
35 folks. I have Emmet Nikorai here and they don't have a  
36 microphone in their office. Go ahead.

37  
38 MR. NIKORAI: Hi, my name is Emmet  
39 Nikorai and I'm a Refuge Information Technician here in  
40 the Yukon Delta. It's my first year. I've been  
41 enjoying the meetings in the previous past year.

42  
43 MR. THERCHIK: Hello. This is David  
44 Therchik, Refuge Information Technician from Toksook  
45 Bay.

46  
47 MR. TULIK: That's all of us. Quyana.

48  
49 MS. LOYA: Thank you. I think that's  
50

0014

1 it for Fish and Wildlife Service.

2

3 MADAME CHAIR HOSETH: Thank you, Wendy,  
4 and welcome. I also see that we have Todd on the line.  
5 Todd, would you like to introduce yourself.

6

7 MR. SFORMO: Sure. This is Todd  
8 Sformo, wildlife biologist, North Slope Borough.

9

10 MADAME CHAIR HOSETH: And we have John  
11 Pearce.

12

13 MR. PEARCE: Good morning, everyone.  
14 Waqaa. Lalotuq. Good to see everyone. Thanks so much  
15 for the invite to give an update this morning or  
16 tomorrow, whatever it ends up being, but it's just  
17 great to be here. It's always nice to hear updates  
18 from everyone. So thanks again for the invite and I'll  
19 see you for the next couple days.

20

21 MADAME CHAIR HOSETH: Nice. Thanks for  
22 joining us. Do we have anybody else from any other  
23 agency or any affiliation on the line?

24

25 MS. SCHWALENBERG: I think we have  
26 Michael Opheim and I don't know if Karen Pletnikoff  
27 introduced herself.

28

29 MADAME CHAIR HOSETH: Oh, okay.

30

31 MR. OPHEIM: Mike Opheim, the  
32 Intertribal Liaison for CIRC.

33

34 MADAME CHAIR HOSETH: Hi. Good  
35 morning, Michael. Karen.

36

37 MS. PLETNIKOFF: Hi, I'm Karen  
38 Pletnikoff with the Aleutian Pribilof Islands  
39 Association.

40

41 MADAME CHAIR HOSETH: Good morning,  
42 everybody. I think we have everybody. And we have  
43 Tony McKee. He's online. He's one of our public  
44 attendees today. Anybody else from the public?

45

46 MS. SIMS KAYOTUK: Carla Sims Kayotuk  
47 with the North Slope Borough Subsistence Research  
48 Coordinator sitting in.

49

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0015

1 MADAME CHAIR HOSETH: Welcome, Carla.

2

3 MS. SIMS KAYOTUK: Thank you.

4

5 MADAME CHAIR HOSETH: Okay. I think  
6 that we have everybody. I know that people will  
7 probably be coming and going in and out of the meeting  
8 and we welcome you to join us at any time throughout  
9 our meeting today and tomorrow. Do we have Sara Boario  
10 on with us, Patty?

11

12 MS. SCHWALENBERG: No. She did let me  
13 know that she's traveling to Bethel with the Assistant  
14 Secretary today, but she's going to be joining us  
15 tomorrow. So I would like to hold that item off until  
16 tomorrow.

17

18 MADAME CHAIR HOSETH: Okay. We could  
19 have her introduce herself. It looks like I did get  
20 some members of the public already. So I'll move on  
21 down to review and adoption of agenda. We could have a  
22 motion for the agenda and then we could add things.

23

24 MS. HEPA: Madame Chair. This is  
25 Taqulik. I'd like to make a motion to approve the  
26 agenda for today, October 5, and tomorrow, October 6,  
27 2022.

28

29 MADAME CHAIR HOSETH: Okay. Do we have  
30 a second.

31

32 MS. LOYA: Wendy Loya. I'm happy to  
33 second.

34

35 MADAME CHAIR HOSETH: Okay. Discussion  
36 items. I know that we wanted to add discussions of  
37 meeting and I guess that would probably be date and  
38 place of next meeting, but maybe formalities of  
39 in-person meetings versus virtual meetings and when our  
40 meeting schedule will be. We can talk about that under  
41 date and place of next meeting. I think that would be  
42 appropriate. I know a lot of people wanted to be in  
43 person for this meeting and we will have it on the  
44 agenda to talk about that.

45

46 Is there any other additions to the  
47 meeting agenda?

48

49 (No comments)

50

0016

1 MADAME CHAIR HOSETH: Hearing none. I  
2 guess what I also wanted to add too is so we're not  
3 running too late in the day and we have a lot to  
4 discuss, are you guys all okay with ending at 2:00  
5 today and reconvening tomorrow at 9:00?  
6

7 MR. HARRIS: Thank you, Gayla. I  
8 mentioned earlier I am going to have to get off  
9 tomorrow at about 2:30 at the latest for jumping in on  
10 another meeting, but it shouldn't hold you back from  
11 taking care of business, I guess. Another hat that I'm  
12 wearing.  
13

14 MADAME CHAIR HOSETH: Yeah, we all have  
15 many hats. Any other discussions or additions to the  
16 agenda.  
17

18 (No comments)  
19

20 MADAME CHAIR HOSETH: All those in  
21 favor of the agenda signify by saying aye.  
22

23 IN UNISON: Aye.  
24

25 MADAME CHAIR HOSETH: Those opposed  
26 same sign.  
27

28 (No opposing votes)  
29

30 MADAME CHAIR HOSETH: Motion carries.  
31 Do we have any public comment today?  
32

33 (No comments)  
34

35 MADAME CHAIR HOSETH: Hearing none.  
36 We'll move on to adoption of Council action items.  
37 April 7th to the 8th, 2022. Patty, did you want to go  
38 over that?  
39

40 MS. SCHWALENBERG: I'm looking for that  
41 document right now. I just received that from Fish and  
42 Wildlife Service with the transition of Eric some of  
43 the things kind of fell through the cracks. We had  
44 last minute doing action items. So let me find them  
45 and I will pull them up. Sorry.  
46

47 MS. LOYA: Thanks, Patty. That was my  
48 failure to get that in to her until today.  
49  
50



0017

1 MS. SCHWALENBERG: Well, no. You  
2 didn't even really know all the responsibilities. A  
3 lot that goes into being a partner. I got it now.

4  
5 MS. LOYA: Thank you.

6  
7 MS. SCHWALENBERG: Oops. That's  
8 supposed to be spring meeting, but yeah.

9  
10 MS. LOYA: I'm sorry. I copy and  
11 pasted. Did you want me to talk to this, Patty?

12  
13 MS. SCHWALENBERG: Yeah, I guess that's  
14 what the Council usually does, so yeah.

15  
16 MS. LOYA: Okay. Great. Thank you.  
17 So I guess scroll down to the motions. The meeting was  
18 called to order. We approved the Executive Director  
19 report provided. Also the action item report from the  
20 previous fall meeting. The other action item was to  
21 approve the Cordova bird and egg subsistence harvest  
22 estimates that I believe Liliana Naves had presented.  
23 And then finally the meeting was adjourned.

24  
25 Other key items that happened at the  
26 spring meeting is remembrances for a number of people  
27 that have passed and left us, so we had some really  
28 nice, kind words around the contributions and meeting  
29 participants. We had an update from Dr. Bob Gerlach on  
30 highly pathogenic avian influenza and the importance of  
31 the Council members in communities in monitoring and  
32 surveilling for this virus. I'd say that really was a  
33 great message. We had a lot of input this summer.

34  
35 It looks like I have a typo right  
36 there. The U.S. Fish and Wildlife -- oh, I failed to  
37 return. We also shared a flier on highly pathogenic  
38 avian influenza. That went out and was posted and seen  
39 in many of the communities so that people knew what to  
40 do if they -- to recognize sick birds and what to do  
41 when they found them.

42  
43 The next part of the discussion was the  
44 discussion of their regulations booklet and how to make  
45 it more accessible. A good amount of the conversation  
46 happened around supporting having a PDF available  
47 through the AMBCC website as well as the regional  
48 website so that hunters could download it to their  
49 phones and have it in the field.

50

0018

1                   There were regional reports provided by  
2 those members present and we had a number of detailed  
3 committee reports from the Technical Committee and the  
4 Outreach and Communications Subcommittee on Emperor  
5 Geese. Dave Safine with the Service presented on the  
6 need and process for revising the 2016-2021 Emperor  
7 Goose Management Plan. So that was a more detailed  
8 presentation as well. Then other important special  
9 reports that were listed in the agenda were presented  
10 by the Service, the Alaska Department of Fish and Game  
11 and the USGS.

12

13                   MADAME CHAIR HOSETH: Thank you, Wendy,  
14 for going over that. We will take a motion to approve  
15 the adoption of the Council action items. Entertain a  
16 motion.

17

18                   MR. HARRIS: So move, Madame Chair.

19

20                   MADAME CHAIR HOSETH: Thank you, Cyrus.

21

22                   MS. HEPA: If I could second it. This  
23 is Taqulik.

24

25                   MADAME CHAIR HOSETH: It's been moved  
26 and seconded. Any discussion.

27

28                   (No comments)

29

30                   MR. HARRIS: Question.

31

32                   MADAME CHAIR HOSETH: The question's  
33 been called. All those in favor signify by saying aye.

34

35                   IN UNISON: Aye.

36

37                   MADAME CHAIR HOSETH: Those opposed  
38 same sign.

39

40                   (No opposing votes)

41

42                   MADAME CHAIR HOSETH: Motion carries.  
43 Moving on to Staff Report. Patty.

44

45                   MS. SCHWALENBERG: I forgot to take  
46 myself off of mute. Let me go back to the meeting  
47 packet. Hold on. First, we just found out like a  
48 little over a week ago, maybe two weeks, that Eric  
49 Taylor is going to be retiring from the U.S. Fish and  
50

0019

1 Wildlife Service and he's accepted a position with  
2 BOEM. So I just wanted to take a moment -- we didn't  
3 really have time to put anything together, but I did  
4 want to take a moment to thank him and ask the Chair if  
5 you would like to say a few words of thanks for Eric.  
6

7 MADAME CHAIR HOSETH: Thank you, Patty.  
8 Too bad Eric wasn't here online with us today. I know  
9 that we've worked with Eric -- I've worked with Eric  
10 since I've been serving here on AMBCC. Wendy, if you  
11 could please -- if you have contact with him, please  
12 extend our gratitude for his years of service that he's  
13 brought to AMBCC and we appreciate all of our  
14 conversations that we have had over the years. It was  
15 an honor to serve with him on the executive team of  
16 AMBCC as well.  
17

18 I think that all of us with all the  
19 issues that we've had over the years, you know, we've  
20 formed friendships and bonds with everybody. We might  
21 not always see eye to eye on some issues, but at the  
22 end of the day things are -- we're all here for the  
23 same purpose. So if you could please extend our  
24 gratitude to Eric.  
25

26 MS. LOYA: Thank you. I will. I know  
27 that he has really appreciated this engagement and  
28 opportunity to work with you all and unfortunately was  
29 not available to join us today. Thanks so much.  
30

31 MS. SCHWALENBERG: Thank you. So in  
32 the interest of time I'm just going to give the  
33 highlights of my report. It's written and in the  
34 packet that I sent out. So we did have meetings of the  
35 Emperor Goose Management Committee and the Emperor  
36 Goose Management Outreach and Education Committee. So  
37 those reports are there and I'll be giving a more  
38 detailed report on the outreach in a few minutes.  
39

40 Our proposal submission period, as you  
41 know, is coming up November 1st through December 15th.  
42 One proposal that we've been kind of working on with a  
43 gentleman from Southeast Alaska who wants to open up a  
44 goose hunt in the Yakutat area, so we're working with  
45 him and encouraging him to submit his proposal through  
46 the Yakutat Tribe. So we're kind of facilitating that  
47 right now. Hopefully it will be ready to go during the  
48 submission period.  
49  
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0020

1                   A list of the Regional Management body  
2 meetings that were held is included in my report and  
3 then I also -- as Ryan mentioned earlier, we attended  
4 the Pacific Flyway Council meeting in August and we put  
5 on a workshop for the AMBCC for the Pacific Flyway  
6 state representatives and their study committee and  
7 non-game technical committee members. There was about  
8 25 people there. We gave information about the harvest  
9 survey, about the AMBCC history, some of the regulatory  
10 process, some of the initiatives we've been working on,  
11 subsistence in general, Alaska Native cultures and a  
12 little bit about co-management.

13  
14                   So I think it was very well accepted  
15 and I was really pleased that Gayla and Coral were able  
16 to join us and Randy on the line. I felt like it was  
17 really important for the Flyway Council members to be  
18 able to engage personally with the Native Caucus  
19 members because it really does a lot to help them  
20 understand the importance of birds to Alaska Natives  
21 and subsistence users. Also just to help build that  
22 partnership. So I felt that it was very, very valuable  
23 for those Native Caucus members to attend and I really  
24 appreciate it.

25  
26                   The only other thing I wanted to report  
27 briefly is there was some time we spent towards the end  
28 of the fiscal year working on the statewide management  
29 contract with the Fish and Wildlife Service. They were  
30 going to put it out for bid, but what ended up  
31 happening is they extended it for three more years.  
32 There's been many changes to the budget due to the  
33 budget cuts, so I'm sure Will Lacy will be discussing  
34 those later on in the meeting as well.

35  
36                   That's it for my report, Madame Chair.

37  
38                   MADAME CHAIR HOSETH: Thank you, Patty.  
39 Any questions or discussion on what Patty just reported  
40 on?

41  
42                   (No comments)

43  
44                   MS. SCHWALENBERG: Oh, I do have one  
45 thing to add. The gathering. The U.S. Fish and  
46 Wildlife Service was generous enough to supply \$100,000  
47 to put together a three-day gathering. Right now we are  
48 working with all the partners to identify a date. So  
49 we've set November 30th as the deadline for when we  
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0021

1 will have a hard date for the meeting.

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The end of December we will have a venue and facilitator and we will be working with each of the regions to develop several award agreements for the travel. So that's all going to be done -- Michael Opheim and Willow are kind of heading up that initiative. Then we'll be working with all the partners to craft the agenda.

That's it. Thanks.

MADAME CHAIR HOSETH: Thank you, Patty. Thank you for adding the gathering. I think the gathering is going to be a really nice opportunity for us to gather across the state with all of our regions and bringing some of our Council members into that meeting. So that's going to be really beneficial and healing and we'll get some really good information out of that gathering. It's well needed.

I just wanted to say at that Pacific Flyway Council meeting that we had in Juneau I have to extend gratitude and thanks to everybody who was there as well. Patty, Coral, Randy, Ryan, Eric and Jason was there. Dave, were you there? Yeah, Dave was there. I'm going to try to think of who I recognize around the room.

So I also want to extend gratitude for that meeting and I think that it was really well received. We had conversations with people after that meeting and I hope that continues especially to give -- we do hunt differently up here in Alaska and it has a different meeting. I think for us to bring that education and our experiences to that meeting I think it was beneficial. So thank you to everybody who was involved.

Any other questions or discussions on Patty's report.

(No comments)

MADAME CHAIR HOSETH: Patty, do we need to approve this report for our minutes?

MS. SCHWALENBERG: Yes, please.

0022

1 MADAME CHAIR HOSETH: Okay. Someone  
2 make a motion to approve Patty's report.

3  
4 MS. LOYA: This is Wendy Loya. I'll  
5 make a motion to approve the Executive Director report.

6  
7 MR. SCOTT: Second.

8  
9 MADAME CHAIR HOSETH: It's been moved  
10 and seconded. Any discussion.

11  
12 (No comments)

13  
14 MADAME CHAIR HOSETH: Hearing none.  
15 All those in favor signify by saying aye.

16  
17 IN UNISON: Aye.

18  
19 MADAME CHAIR HOSETH: Those opposed  
20 same sign.

21  
22 (No opposing votes)

23  
24 MADAME CHAIR HOSETH: Motion carries.  
25 We'll go down to regional representative reports. I  
26 just want to be mindful of our time. We will be taking  
27 breaks throughout this meeting. I know sometimes we  
28 could go on and on. We'll get through a couple  
29 regional reports and take a break here in just a little  
30 bit. We could start with Peter.

31  
32 MR. DEVINE: Yes. Thank you, Madame  
33 Chair. Regional reports. We had our spring meeting  
34 this year and our fall meeting. Our fall meeting was  
35 on September 27th. Nobody had any concerns. We had  
36 five of our 11 communities call in. We had St. Paul,  
37 Yakutat, Sanak, False Pass, Sand Point. Arlene  
38 Gunderson was out on Sanak Island and said there was  
39 snow. They do surveys on the island out there. There  
40 was no bird die off this year. No dead birds washed up  
41 like in previous years.

42  
43 Cold Bay has no birds yet. That was  
44 two weeks ago. Nelson Lagoon had Emperors up there in  
45 August. Had a really good berry season, so birds  
46 should be fat and happy. That's all I have.

47  
48 MADAME CHAIR HOSETH: Thank you, Peter.  
49 Does anybody have any questions or comments for Peter?

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1 (No comments)

2

3 MADAME CHAIR HOSETH: Thank you, Peter.

4 Jennifer.

5

6 MS. HOOPER: Good morning. For the  
7 AVCP region our Waterfowl Conservation Committee met on  
8 August 9th here in Bethel. There's been so many things  
9 happening the last several months personally and with  
10 work. I'm trying to recall through my notes everything  
11 that was discussed. The big thing was the Emperor  
12 goose conversation and the WCP agreement that there  
13 should still be some conservation measures taken  
14 including continuing the egg harvest restriction.

15

16 We did meet in person and had a few  
17 partners participate in person, so that was nice. I  
18 have not heard since then any issues regarding birds  
19 and hunting. I've seen a lot of pictures that people  
20 have posted as you keep heading south in really large  
21 numbers. We've had a very wet, cool summer into fall.

22

23

24 I was just kind of commenting yesterday  
25 that it's August 4th and now 5th and this is like  
26 September 4th, 5th weather. So we seem to be, at least  
27 from my experience, about a month behind, I guess,  
28 weather-wise. There's still a lot of rain up in the  
29 mountains. I guess sort of local knowledge it was  
30 shared with me that it's probably not going to cool off  
31 for a while because there's been so much rain.

32

33 Like I mentioned, we're having a tribal  
34 consultation this afternoon, so I will be out for that.  
35 Martin Andrew, our chairman, is also going to be  
36 attending that, so I don't think he'll be on at all  
37 today. I do have the packet printed for him.  
38 Hopefully he'll be able to join tomorrow.

39

40 I think that's it. Thank you.

41

42 MADAME CHAIR HOSETH: Thank you,  
43 Jennifer. Does anybody have any questions or comments  
44 for Jennifer?

45

46 (No comments)

47

48 MADAME CHAIR HOSETH: Thank you,  
49 Jennifer. I'm glad you guys were able to meet in

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1 person there in Bethel and get together.

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I guess I'm next for Bristol Bay. We weren't able to have a spring or fall meeting. We were going to have a fall meeting and I wasn't able to establish a quorum for our meeting because I think a third of our council have passed away. We had some long-standing council members from the beginning and when we went to go try and call a meeting I didn't have a quorum.

So we're in the process of putting out representatives from the village councils in the Bristol Bay region from all of our 31 tribes to get our subregional reps and start having our meeting. So I'm thinking that we'll probably have this done before the proposal deadline on December 15th and have a meeting and I will definitely let ADF&G and U.S. Fish and Wildlife know when we are going to have that meeting to see if you guys would be able to attend our meeting in person or via Zoom or Teams.

I've been trying to spend down some of our funds that we have, but just not meeting in person has really took a toll on not spending any of our money. I don't really have much more for Bristol Bay Native Association. People did participate in bird hunting this spring. It's usually a fast season for us as the birds migrate through Dillingham.

For weather reports I could give -- you know, we had a heck of a winter last year. We had a lot of snow. We had record amounts of snow. I heard that we're going to have a lot of snow again this winter. I didn't hear of anything impacting any of the bird migration patterns when they were flying through this spring. I did have some conversations with people.

That's all I could think of off the top of my head for Bristol Bay. Does anybody have any questions or comments?

(No comments)

MADAME CHAIR HOSETH: Then we'll move on to -- did anybody join us from Chugach Regional yet, Patty?



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1 MS. SCHWALENBERG: I don't see anyone.

2

3 MADAME CHAIR HOSETH: Okay. We could  
4 always come back if they join later. Gloria is not on  
5 yet I don't think.

6

7 MS. SCHWALENBERG: Yeah, I haven't seen  
8 her yet either.

9

10 MADAME CHAIR HOSETH: Okay. Brandon.

11

12 MR. AHMASUK: Good morning, folks.  
13 Where do I begin. So we did not have a spring meeting  
14 either due to travel restrictions in region and at the  
15 local community level due to Covid.

16

17 The spring migration that seemed to  
18 happen around normal. My apologies. I didn't attend  
19 last spring's statewide meeting. It was my  
20 understanding that avian influenza information was  
21 handed out, but the flyer that was sent out was  
22 confusing, at least on our end. Within our region not  
23 only did we have the seabird die-off, we also had  
24 waterfowl die-off.

25

26 To the best of our ability we're trying  
27 to make the reports as best we can. On the flyer the  
28 confusion part was don't touch the birds, leave them  
29 alone. You know, absolutely necessary for health  
30 issues concerns. However we had waterfowl that were  
31 dropping dead out of the sky in communities. You know,  
32 children were curious, picking them up. Dogs running  
33 around, picking them up, eating them, whatnot.  
34 According to the flyer, don't touch them.

35

36 We did ask if we could send these birds  
37 out to be tested. And I think early on or even the  
38 whole summer normally we don't have -- we're not  
39 testing for this or whatever the reason was. But it  
40 took a while and I think finally Gay Sheffield got a  
41 few birds sent out and they did test positive for avian  
42 influenza.

43

44 The call in number for the avian  
45 influenza hotline -- I'm just going to say it -- it was  
46 poorly staffed. So, yes, thank you to Eric Taylor. He  
47 was answering it, but at the same time he was in the  
48 Lower 48 somewhere I believe at the same time trying to  
49 take care of a sick family member and he was the only

50

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1 one answering this phone line. It should have been  
2 better staffed.

3

4

5 In our region again we had numerous  
6 bird die-offs, both seabird and waterfowl. So much to  
7 the point that we had airline pilots calling in to Gay  
8 Sheffield. The local, smaller commercial airline  
9 pilots calling Gay Sheffield. Oh, man, we've seen  
10 several dead swans in this pond or in that pond, dead  
11 geese, dead ducks here and there.

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So the avian influenza -- I mean, yes, thank you for the flyer, thank you for the information, but this is our food, this is our resources out here. When the concerns started piling in, it wasn't handled very well. The last how many years in our region we've been reporting seabird die-off, seabird die-off, seabird die-off. Whereas, you know, what's causing this still I don't think there's a definite answer other than that they're starving, but why are they starving. Some of the birds are testing positive for, my understanding, the harmful algal bloom, the toxins in the ocean, but they don't know at what extent, I guess.

This last spring, at least here in the Nome area, we did go out to Sledge Island just west of Nome here. Just my guess, and we did report it, I'm forgetting to who at the moment. It might have been Robb Kaler or somebody else. Just my guess there was about 80, 90 percent of the murrees were gone. It was so evident that they were gone. The cliffs looked like it was all seagulls when normally it's a mix of seagulls, murrees, cormorants, auklets and whatnot. Again, wondering what's going on here.

Other communities they seem to fare a little bit better than the Nome area. I didn't hear any bad reports from St. Lawrence Island or Diomedes about being able to harvest seabirds and their eggs. Maybe we're on the turnaround, but it still seems to be an issue here in the Nome area. Others I talked to, at least going to Sledge Island, hadn't harvested any eggs either.

The bird harvest more or less it seemed to be okay. Again, I didn't hear any bad reports. Nobody was not able to harvest any waterfowl and/or seabirds. Another area of concern I mentioned the

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1 harmful algal blooms. Prior just marine mammals were  
2 testing positive for the harmful algal blooms, but now  
3 I'm forgetting the research vessel that was out in the  
4 ocean out here. They were taking water samples and now  
5 our waters are testing positive for harmful algal  
6 blooms. I believe the nearest one to the Nome area I  
7 think was just outside of Shishmaref that tested  
8 positive.

9

10 So I mean it's another concern. Again,  
11 these are our food resources. This is what we rely  
12 upon out here. Quite often when I have agencies come  
13 to Nome talking about food security, our food  
14 resources, you know, I ask them when you're out and  
15 about, even here in Nome or if they happen to go to any  
16 one of our communities, when you come back tell me  
17 where the Costco is. Tell me where the Kentucky Fried  
18 Chicken is or any of the major fast food places or  
19 major food grocery stores. We don't have that out  
20 here.

21

22 We're on the verge of a complete  
23 ecosystem crash. I don't know how else to say that.  
24 You just have to say it for what it is. Once one  
25 resource starts falling we have to start pulling from  
26 another resource. Even the fish, the salmon, we've had  
27 a multi-regional salmon crash, but that's going to  
28 force us to start harvesting more birds, but the birds  
29 aren't there. Then we're going to have to start  
30 harvesting more moose, more caribou, whatever it is, to  
31 put food on our table.

32

33 Again, we didn't have a spring regional  
34 meeting. I apologize I didn't attend the statewide  
35 meeting back in April in our region. We're still  
36 having Covid issues. I'm trying to think if there's  
37 anything else. Maybe on the last one -- well, I did  
38 mention just how all the resources are tied together,  
39 but here we are stuck in the middle trying to make ends  
40 meet, trying to make sense of everything that's going  
41 on.

42

43 Maybe the last thing I want to mention  
44 several years ago I did mention a proposal, I think a  
45 statewide, but for the fall/winter swan hunt to either  
46 get rid of the quota of three or expand it to like 10  
47 or something. Especially with the concern of all of  
48 our other resources crashing. At the time the swan  
49 population there was no concern. If I remember from  
50

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1 Julian or Eric, the statewide swan population was like  
2 almost 100,000.

3

4 Hold on. In the comments, I guess Jack  
5 Fagerstrom reported about the number of pink salmon  
6 being released by the hatcheries affecting the health  
7 of birds. I'm not entirely sure about the comment  
8 itself. Anyway, the swan population -- there was no  
9 swan population concern, but it was asked several years  
10 ago if there's no concern, why have a -- at least from  
11 the subsistence viewpoint, you know, again trying to  
12 make ends meet, put food on the table, the quota of  
13 three it seems to be excessive.

14

15 Anyway, that was just I guess food for  
16 thought for future discussion. The swan proposal to  
17 either get rid of the quota or extend it to a higher  
18 number. If you have any questions, I'll be happy to  
19 try and answer them.

20

21 MADAME CHAIR HOSETH: Thank you,  
22 Brandon. There's a lot going on up there and  
23 especially with these storms that are coming your way.  
24 I was curious of how that's impacting your wildlife and  
25 the birds. I seen some wash up of -- I'm not sure.  
26 There was a big wash up on the beaches up there of the  
27 krill. Was that in your area of the wash up of the --  
28 I seen some pictures of that.

29

30 MR. AHMASUK: So I was forwarded a  
31 picture. I think it was just outside of Shishmaref.  
32 I'm just guessing, but millions upon millions of krill.  
33 It was after the storm, not during the storm. I think  
34 when I talked to Gay Sheffield -- she's the UAF MAP  
35 agent here in Nome, the Marine Advisory Program. I  
36 think some samples were sent to her. They were going  
37 to get them tested for harmful algal blooms.

38

39 MADAME CHAIR HOSETH: Make sure  
40 everyone's phones are muted, please.

41

42 MR. AHMASUK: Again, to me, that ties  
43 back to that question of all of our resources are tied  
44 together. What affects one is going to affect the  
45 other. You know, krill, they are a very important food  
46 resources. Not just for bowheads or any of the baleen  
47 whales, but also our seabirds, you know, and so on and  
48 so on up the food chain.

49

50

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1                   Maybe with that I strongly encourage  
2 the agencies, Fish and Wildlife Service, Fish and Game,  
3 to really start information sharing within the  
4 agencies. It does seem quite often that Fish and  
5 Wildlife Service here is this information being shared  
6 with the Polar Bear Division or the Walrus Division.  
7 Fish and Game, is this information being shared with  
8 Commercial Fish, Sport Fish, Subsistence Fish Division,  
9 so on and so on.

10

11                   It does seem like when I attend these  
12 meetings information isn't being shared within the  
13 agency. I'm just going to say it. When they can open  
14 the door and be like, hey, Bill, did you hear about  
15 this. Maybe it's not quite that easy, but that's my  
16 suggestion is that the information needs to start being  
17 shared now rather than later. Again, to try to get a  
18 hold on everything that's going on with the resources.

19

20                   I don't know if that -- maybe I blabbed  
21 too much there, Gayla. But, yeah, it's -- we have  
22 another storm coming. Hopefully it's not as bad as the  
23 last one. We'll have to wait and see what comes up.  
24 From the last storm I haven't heard any reports from  
25 St. Lawrence Island of thousands upon thousands of  
26 seabirds washing up, so hopefully they faired good  
27 during the last storm, which it was a pretty bad one.  
28 Again, we just have to wait and see.

29

30                   MADAME CHAIR HOSETH: Okay. With all  
31 the die-offs and looking at our agenda, I see that  
32 Angela Matz is going to be on to give us an update.  
33 Would it be okay if we address those concerns with the  
34 die-offs during her report? Because I'm sure there's  
35 going to be a lot of questions for that. Definitely we  
36 could address that and, Angela, if you could take note  
37 of what Brandon was reporting on and then we'll circle  
38 back around that when we get to the avian flu and the  
39 bird die-offs.

40

41                   Is there any questions or comments that  
42 anybody has for Brandon?

43

44                   MS. SCHWALENBERG: Yeah, this is Patty.  
45 I just wanted to clarify Jack's comment. He called  
46 this morning and then he called again last week. His  
47 report was that he was reading in a Popular Mechanics  
48 magazine of all things that there's a study about the  
49 number of hatchery pink salmon that are released from  
50

0030

1 hatcheries from the United States and other countries,  
2 but how they are preying on other species and food in  
3 the ocean leaving less food for the birds and that may  
4 be having an impact on the die-offs.

5

6 So I emailed that to Fish and Wildlife  
7 Service and Fish and Game last week or the week before,  
8 so it's been noted, but I just wanted to share that as  
9 well because it speaks to Brandon's point about how  
10 everything is connected.

11

12 Thanks.

13

14 MR. AHMASUK: Madame Chair. I did have  
15 the one more thing I wanted to bring up. At least in  
16 the Nome area what always seems to happen is that we're  
17 under constant attack by the mining community. So  
18 thank you to the Fish and Wildlife Service for opposing  
19 the mining operation by IPOP that was going to happen  
20 just east of Nome. Thanks to other agencies for  
21 opposing that operation.

22

23 Maybe the suggestion I'd like to come  
24 about from that and remind me because there was -- I  
25 think it's -- I'm not quite sure what agency it is, but  
26 I think it's USGS. What I'd like to see out there,  
27 especially for our estuaries, like Safety Sound, Imuruk  
28 Basin, is an eelgrass study. My understanding for the  
29 Safety Sound, Bonanza Channel area, there has never  
30 been an eelgrass study conducted, but yet the high  
31 importance of eelgrass not just for migratory birds but  
32 for the ecosystem itself.

33

34 So fortunately again that mining  
35 operation, IPOP, their permit was denied, but it was  
36 also my understanding that the Fish and Wildlife  
37 Service or maybe it was Army Corps of Engineers didn't  
38 have background information necessarily to prove  
39 eelgrass was or wasn't in the area. But it's very well  
40 known in the Nome area, the Safety Sound, Bonanza  
41 Channel area that eelgrass is everywhere. How that  
42 resource ties everything together.

43

44 Anyway, suggestion for eelgrass study  
45 for all of our estuaries, not just in the Kawerak  
46 region but all of our regions. Aquatic plants, the  
47 importance of how that is a trickle effect to all of  
48 our other resources.

49

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0031

1 Thank you.

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Thank you.

MADAME CHAIR HOSETH: Thank you, Brandon. Patty, if you could note for that swan proposal that would be probably statewide Board of Game and that would be in a couple of years since we just had statewide. So that would be something that we could work on for a good proposal if it comes from AMBCC or Native Caucus. Just so that we tag that and put that in a parking lot so we could bring that back and have time to work on that proposal, but I think that would be really good to address that situation in your area. Then the information sharing is the key point.

Then also the eelgrass study. I know that there's a lot of grant opportunities out there and I think that that would be something if we did a statewide eelgrass study as well. So, Patty, if you could just keep note of that as kind of an ongoing thing as we go through the discussion.

MS. SCHWALENBERG: Yep, I've got it.

MADAME CHAIR HOSETH: Okay. Thank you. Any other feedback or comments for Brandon.

(No comments)

MADAME CHAIR HOSETH: Thank you so much, Brandon. We'll talk about the avian die-offs and the avian flu later on in the agenda.

If it's okay with everybody, let's take a 10-minute break and we'll come back in 10 minutes.

(Off record)

(On record)

MADAME CHAIR HOSETH: Okay. Is everybody back?

MR. SCOTT: Yes, ma'am. I'm here anyway.

MR. AHMASUK: I'm here, Brandon.

MADAME CHAIR HOSETH: Okay. We had

0032

1 some people join us since we did introductions and I'll  
2 just kind of circle back. We have Priscilla Evans  
3 that's joined us. Priscilla, did you want to introduce  
4 yourself. Right now we're doing regional reports and  
5 if you could give your regional report for Chugach.

6  
7 (No response)

8  
9 MADAME CHAIR HOSETH: She was on. I  
10 don't see her name anymore.

11  
12 MS. SCHWALENBERG: Maybe she's not back  
13 from the break.

14  
15 MADAME CHAIR HOSETH: Okay. And then  
16 we have Debra from TCC. Are you on the line?

17  
18 MS. LYNNE: Yes. Can you hear me?

19  
20 MADAME CHAIR HOSETH: Yes.

21  
22 MS. LYNNE: I'm listening in for Tanana  
23 Chiefs, taking some notes. These are really important  
24 information for even the Interior hearing what's going  
25 on on the coast. I think it is continuing to show that  
26 it is all connected and it's very important. So I'm  
27 just listening in and going to provide notes back to  
28 Tanana Chiefs.

29  
30 MADAME CHAIR HOSETH: Okay. Great to  
31 hear your voice. I was just kind of going through  
32 housekeeping to make sure to recognize everybody who's  
33 on the phone.

34  
35 With that being said, we'll come back  
36 to Priscilla if she joins on, Patty, for that report.  
37 We will move to Maniilaq, Cyrus.

38  
39 MR. HARRIS: Thank you, Madame Chair.  
40 Just like the Bering Straits we didn't have a spring  
41 meeting due to the high rise of Covid during that time,  
42 but the greatest thing is we did have a face-to-face  
43 meeting in August. I don't have a written report, but  
44 I do got my minutes. Eventually I'll get this into my  
45 annual report.

46  
47 So August 12 we did have a face-to-face  
48 meeting here in Kotzebue. All the regional  
49 representatives were present including we had in  
50



0033

1 attendance Eric Taylor with the U.S. Fish and Wildlife  
2 Service, we had Brittany Sweeney from the U.S. Fish and  
3 Wildlife Service, and a PHAP student that works under  
4 my program, Joanna Barton, was involved with the  
5 meeting. Patty called in virtually to the meeting.

6  
7 So there was a lot discussed. It was  
8 good to be able to have a face-to-face meeting after a  
9 good number of years. Some of the interesting parts of  
10 the whole agenda was the AMBCC reports from Patty and  
11 updates from Eric. A lot of discussions, a lot of  
12 topics.

13  
14 The AMBCC report. The U.S. Fish and  
15 Wildlife Service bird report. Lots of talk about the  
16 avian flu. Then going into some of Brandon's questions  
17 about not touching them. At the time we did -- there  
18 were some sightings of some unusual birds around our  
19 area that's really questionable being out in the field.  
20 Don't have any rubber gloves or anything to deal with  
21 them. You know, wonder what the heck is wrong with  
22 them type of thing.

23  
24 I did call Eric on several incidents.  
25 Well, I called him on the hotline number and Eric did  
26 answer. The main purpose we had not touching them is  
27 there was really not much known about the avian  
28 influenza and how it would affect people just by  
29 touching them. So I did run into several unusual  
30 sightings of birds and got a couple of them out of  
31 their misery and then just buried them. There was  
32 really nothing much I could do about it. I couldn't  
33 confirm it was avian, but it was unusual bird behavior.

34  
35  
36  
37 We had some reports from the Selawik  
38 National Wildlife Refuge and some updates on what  
39 happens here in Kotzebue within our area and some  
40 information that they were able to talk about birds,  
41 but this will eventually get broken down to a regional  
42 report, a summary.

43  
44 A lot of discussions most interesting  
45 with the Northwest Arctic Region being together. We  
46 did have a very successful field report. So this field  
47 report just pretty much explains what happens within  
48 each village. A lot of discussions were about the  
49 physical environment and freeze-up, break-up, timing  
50

0034

1 compared to previous years. So there was a lot of  
2 discussion behind that. Winds and storm, a lot of  
3 discussions behind that. Rain, snow and water levels.  
4 Any unusual weather or other noteworthy items.

5  
6 Of course a lot of discussions were on  
7 birds and the community's first sightings of birds,  
8 when were birds present in their area compared to other  
9 years. And a lot of discussion behind that. There was  
10 also another bullet point of noticing or hear reports  
11 of more or less different species of birds. So there  
12 was a lot of discussion from that from our regional  
13 folks. This will be cut down to a summary report. And  
14 discussions on unusual sightings. Pretty interesting  
15 reports on that. Of course other comments.

16  
17 Yeah, I didn't have time to put this  
18 into a short summary to go word by word just to cut it  
19 short. Eventually it will happen. It will be a part of  
20 my regional report that I will submit for my annual  
21 report. I believe we have a grace period. I just so  
22 happened to be jumping out of two different meetings to  
23 jump into this one here to get caught up from where we  
24 last left off.

25  
26 So if I needed to go word for word on  
27 the field report, there's a lot of interesting stuff  
28 that happens. A lot of it is based on climate change  
29 and what we're experiencing with climate change. One  
30 thing that usually gets me is during these high tide  
31 surges. Oh, part of my report too is we did have a  
32 couple of storms in July, which is very unusual.

33  
34 The first one we had a high tide surge  
35 along with it. It wasn't even reported at the weather  
36 station where they announce the weather. It even got  
37 them by surprise. So they were telling everybody put  
38 their stuff on low-lying areas. That was after the  
39 fact. So that kind of got us by surprise and it was a  
40 pretty good sized one for July. Several days later  
41 there was another one, but not as big as the first one.  
42 Of course, you know, we've all heard about one that  
43 happened about three weeks ago.

44  
45 A lot of that's got to do with climate  
46 change. A lot of other meetings that I attend have a  
47 lot of discussions on climate change and the effects  
48 that's taking place. We hear earlier about krill  
49 wash-up and over here in our area there was a lot of  
50

0035

1 little fish, like herring and blue cod, tom cod, that  
2 did get washed up. But it happens during the time we  
3 have these high tide surge storms. I mean just the  
4 pressure of the water and the swells running up into  
5 the shores kind of push a lot of those birds. This is  
6 my first time I see that. I did see that on Facebook  
7 from the Shishmaref side about that large amount of  
8 krill that did get washed up.

9  
10 I often wonder how does it -- in a  
11 situation like that how -- you know, that's a big loss  
12 for a lot of other fish and other sea mammals and  
13 what's going to be the effect of that going on more  
14 frequently than before. Anyway, that's my report for  
15 the Northwest Arctic Region.

16  
17 Thank you.

18  
19 MADAME CHAIR HOSETH: Thank you, Cyrus.  
20 We'll address the avian flu stuff later on as well.  
21 Does anybody have any questions or comments for Cyrus's  
22 report?

23  
24 Brandon.

25  
26 MR. AHMASUK: Thank you, Madame Chair.  
27 Not necessarily a question, just an add to what Cyrus  
28 said. He mentioned lots of little fish washing up.  
29 One of our communities also had the same thing. I'm  
30 just trying to review the picture I received. Again,  
31 just a guess. Hundreds of thousands if not millions of  
32 little fish that had washed up, but I believe that  
33 again was also after the storm.

34  
35 Thank you.

36  
37 MADAME CHAIR HOSETH: Thank you.  
38 Anybody else have anything.

39  
40 (No comments)

41  
42 MADAME CHAIR HOSETH: Thank you, Cyrus.  
43 I'm glad you guys were able to meet in person. I'll  
44 probably bump into a lot of you guys at AFN. If nobody  
45 has anything for Cyrus, we will move on to Taqulik,  
46 North Slope Borough.

47  
48 MS. HEPA: Thank you. Still I can't  
49 get my video to work. Let me try one more time. Nope.

50

0036

1 Just very quickly. Thank you for the reports before.  
2 Very good and informational. We did have our regional  
3 management body meeting in June and it was just a basic  
4 information, a few updates that were presented, so it  
5 was good to have a face to face.

6  
7 We are planning to have our more  
8 in-depth meeting in Kaktovik in September, but the cost  
9 to get us all to Kaktovik was beyond our amount that we  
10 would receive from the grant to host the meeting. So  
11 we postponed the meeting and I'm glad the grant could  
12 be spent throughout the fall.

13  
14 Our next meeting that we will have for  
15 our regional management body meeting is going to be  
16 scheduled the last week of November or the first week  
17 of December. So we hope to get invites to various  
18 presenters to give us updates on migratory bird related  
19 issues.

20  
21 I just wanted to mention very quickly  
22 that we did take advantage of the 30-day closure at the  
23 discretion of our hunters and the conditions in the  
24 spring. So we did request for an extension for about  
25 10 days for the closure. Early in the spring we had a  
26 fairly warm spring and we thought things were going to  
27 be on track, but as spring was moving on it got really  
28 cold. So birds were not laying eggs as they would  
29 normally do on a regular spring season. So it was good  
30 to go through that experience again in setting the  
31 30-day closure. This was just for everything but the  
32 eiders.

33  
34 I wanted to also mention that for avian  
35 influenza we had a couple of positives. The first one  
36 was a Snowy owl that was found dead on the tundra. We  
37 sent it out and it did test positive. So that was one  
38 based out of Utqiagvik. We also got information that  
39 there was four ravens out of Deadhorse.

40  
41 Other than that the harvest throughout  
42 the spring from our communities we heard that birds  
43 were very healthy. They were abundant during the  
44 spring and summertime. I want to note that this year,  
45 just traveling to some of our communities, that there  
46 was a notable abundance of snow geese here in Utqiagvik  
47 all the way to Kaktovik. Lots of snow geese were very  
48 notable and we did hear that from hunters from our  
49 communities.

50

0037

1                   For black brant and white-fronted goose  
2 I didn't see as many as we have on the fall return. On  
3 the fall migration return passing through Utqiagvik I  
4 didn't see as many as we have seen in the past. They  
5 did come and stage within our community. A lot of snow  
6 buntings were present and being very active.

7  
8                   That's all that I have.

9  
10                  Thank you.

11  
12                  MADAME CHAIR HOSETH: Thank you,  
13 Taqulik. Does anybody have any questions or comments  
14 for Taqulik.

15  
16                  (No comments)

17  
18                  MADAME CHAIR HOSETH: Thank you for  
19 your report and I'm glad that everybody was able to  
20 have at least one in-person meeting this year. I'm  
21 glad people are getting together. Moving on our  
22 agenda. Kodiak, Coral.

23  
24                  MS. CHERNOFF: Good morning. This is  
25 Coral. So we had a spring meeting in March. We didn't  
26 talk about anything unusual. We did launch into our  
27 second year of the spring road hunt. So that has just  
28 ended. That season has just ended. We've not had any  
29 reports in those two years. I know there was a concern  
30 that there would be conflicts with other users like  
31 photographers or bird watchers. We've received no  
32 reports of conflicts at all.

33  
34                  Currently I think that only half of the  
35 permit harvest reports have been returned and I think  
36 in the middle of October, beginning October, Liliana  
37 will be sending out mailings for people to return those  
38 reports.

39  
40                  I think right now the flocks of geese  
41 and ducks are returning to Kodiak for the winter.  
42 There seem to be some -- it seems to be pretty normal.  
43 There's a lot of Emperor geese on the local beach on  
44 the road system. I would say a couple times I drove  
45 out there I probably see 400 at a time, which is pretty  
46 normal. So the Emperors seem good. I've seen flocks  
47 of other sea ducks coming in.

48  
49                  This spring when I was out gathering  
50

0038

1 eggs there seemed to be a pretty healthy population of  
2 seagull and kittiwake, which are mostly what I gather.  
3 Sometimes I go looking for ducks, but I did not go  
4 looking or duck eggs this year.

5  
6 While I was kayaking around this summer  
7 I saw less puffins than I've seen in the past, so I  
8 don't know if there are less puffins or if they're just  
9 moving around. One of the places where I go called  
10 Puffin Island usually kayaking has been taken over by  
11 terns. I don't know if they're Aleutian or Arctic  
12 terns. So maybe they have kept the puffins away. I  
13 don't know how that works, but I have seen a lot less  
14 puffins.

15  
16 Then as far as the terns go, I don't  
17 know if this is unusual because I'm not familiar really  
18 with terns, but I was out on the beach July 27th and  
19 that seemed rather late, but there was eggs all over  
20 the beach, there was eggs with -- or there was nests  
21 with eggs and then there was new little hatchlings. So  
22 I don't know if that's a usual time for terns to hatch,  
23 but July 27th seemed pretty late. So I don't know if  
24 anybody knows anything about that. Let us know.

25  
26 And then I was just out in Cold Bay for  
27 a subsistence regional advisory committee meeting and  
28 we took the Izembek bus and got a tour. I forget the  
29 end of the road where you can look out into Izembek  
30 Lagoon. I've been out there two other times for  
31 meetings and this time I would say I was kind of  
32 shocked with how few birds that I saw. I would  
33 probably say that I saw about a quarter or a third of  
34 the birds that I've seen in my last two visits.

35  
36 The locals there -- I probably spoke to  
37 three or four people locally have said that -- they  
38 said to them it seemed like there was about half the  
39 amount of birds for this time of year. They did report  
40 that they had dead birds in the spring out there and  
41 they did send two in for testing and they tested  
42 positive for avian flu. I believe there's someone from  
43 USGS monitoring out there right now.

44  
45 I guess speaking on how everything  
46 works together, while our birds around here things seem  
47 to be happening fairly normally, we haven't seen  
48 die-offs or dead birds, we did see some big changes in  
49 fishing. We had a closure in our stream close to town  
50

0039

1 where people get their subsistence red salmon and  
2 silvers. There was a closure during the red salmon  
3 season.

4  
5 I had gone up one time and looked at  
6 the weir and normally where there's a couple hundred  
7 going by the weir at a time there was like zero. So we  
8 did have a closure on the Buskin River for red salmon  
9 and then all of a sudden a bunch of fish poured in, so  
10 they opened it again, but I still think we haven't  
11 quite reached the numbers that they'd like to see go up  
12 the river.

13  
14 Then in the fall here it was closed for  
15 silver salmon. They switch over and manage for  
16 silvers. I don't know what the date is for that.  
17 Maybe August. There was a closure for silver salmon.  
18 I don't know. I never watch the weir numbers for the  
19 silvers, so I don't know those numbers, but I do know  
20 it was closed for subsistence and sport.

21  
22 The salmon season commercially also  
23 closed down fairly early for silver salmon. Into  
24 September I think it was open like once a week or  
25 something because there was so little silvers and then  
26 they wanted to, of course, not have those trickle in at  
27 the cannery working every day, so they just processed  
28 once a week.

29  
30 Right now I have a friend's son is  
31 fishing pollock and they have not been very successful.  
32 They have almost caught nothing. He said their last  
33 three-day trip and they're getting ready to just kind  
34 of hang that season up because it's much more costly to  
35 run the boat and they're not catching any pollock.

36  
37 So around here we're seeing big changes  
38 in the fish that are out there. Like you said  
39 everything is connected and worthy of reporting for  
40 sure. That's all I have.

41  
42 MADAME CHAIR HOSETH: Thank you, Coral.  
43 I see Brandon has his hand up. Go ahead, Brandon.

44  
45 MR. AHMASUK: Thank you, Madame Chair.  
46 Not a question for Coral, but a comment. It reminded  
47 me when she was talking about seabird die-off and  
48 fishing. I truly believe the Fish and Wildlife Service  
49 needs to start looking into bycatch of seabirds. It is  
50

0040

1 my understanding the large scale bottom trawling in  
2 particular -- I'm forgetting where I saw the numbers.  
3 It was years ago.

4  
5 At least for murrelets they're caught as  
6 bycatch in the millions, but with our seabird die-off  
7 going on, reports from several different regions, less  
8 and less seabirds at nesting sites, seabird  
9 communities, it's -- I guess where I'm going with this  
10 is that I foresee if this continues and it becomes like  
11 an ESA concern, an endangered species, there's going to  
12 be restrictions imposed upon us as the subsistence  
13 user, yet we don't harvest anywhere near what  
14 commercial industry does as bycatch.

15  
16 My understanding all those that are  
17 caught as bycatch they're tossed overboard. They're  
18 wasted. You know, they're not kept. So I think it's  
19 past time that the Fish and Wildlife Service needs to  
20 step up and look into this more, bycatch of our  
21 seabirds.

22  
23 Thank you.

24  
25 MADAME CHAIR HOSETH: Thank you for  
26 bringing that up, Brandon. I guess that question will  
27 go to you, Wendy. Do you know if U.S. Fish and  
28 Wildlife is involved with the North Pacific Fisheries  
29 Management Council on issues in regards to seabirds?

30  
31 MS. LOYA: Thank you, Madame Chair, and  
32 Brandon for that comment. Robb Kaler, are you  
33 available to help me with this?

34  
35 MR. KALER: You bet. Yeah. So  
36 depending on the fishery, the offshore fishery that's  
37 managed by NOAA, so NOAA is monitoring the bycatch.  
38 Nearshore is managed by the State and that's the  
39 gillnet fishery for salmon. So that's something that  
40 -- there's a meeting later this month on the 24th.  
41 AFDF and kind of the -- it's the Marine Sustainable  
42 (Stewardship) Council, which justifies -- rather  
43 certifies a fishery.

44  
45 There's been a complaint put forward by  
46 Bird Life International with regard to take of  
47 murrelets, kittlitzes marbled in the gillnet fishery,  
48 which is again managed by the State. Then in terms of  
49 the offshore fishery, the trawl, that is managed by  
50



0041

1 NOAA. Fish and Wildlife Service advises on that, but  
2 that's really in the hands of the NOAA folks. We do  
3 continue to interact with those people.

4

5 Liz Labunski, my counterpart here at  
6 Mig Bird for the Seabird Program, is more involved in  
7 that process. A lot of the take is mostly concerned  
8 about short-tailed albatross, but I think we're -- you  
9 know, from a seabird perspective we're concerned about  
10 all of it.

11

12 I do appreciate that comment, Brandon.  
13 I'm happy to follow up. I mean there's a lot going on,  
14 of course, but I think that's a great point. Again,  
15 yeah, NOAA is actually the managing agency on bycatch  
16 in the offshore fishery. Hopefully that helps, but  
17 happy to answer any questions or follow up during the  
18 seabird update that I'll provide later.

19

20 MS. LOYA: Madame Chair, you're on  
21 mute.

22

23 MADAME CHAIR HOSETH: Thank you. So I  
24 guess that would be -- is there a report that we could  
25 have access to maybe at our next meeting of what is  
26 bycatch for seabirds and any other birds within NOAA or  
27 Fish and Game for bycatch reports?

28

29 MR. KALER: Yeah, the current governor  
30 stepped up a -- I even had it pulled up from -- I was  
31 listening to NPR last night, but Alaska Bycatch Review  
32 Task Force. So Governor Dunleavy created an Alaska  
33 Bycatch Task Force. I think that's mostly focused on  
34 bycatch in the fishery of non-targeted fish. I'm a  
35 little confused by it myself.

36

37 Yeah, let's make that an action item  
38 that Fish and Wildlife Service can better coordinate  
39 with our NOAA partners. Shannon Fitzgerald, he's based  
40 in Seattle, but he's been our counterpart for Fish and  
41 Wildlife Service. What we have often -- they have fish  
42 observers on board and we try working with them,  
43 document bycatch of seabirds in that fishery. Again  
44 that's -- there's several different fisheries.

45

46 The trawl net fishery I think is kind  
47 of a big one and then setting out Toray lines or  
48 essentially lines that go off -- if they're doing hook  
49 and line fishery and that's kind of been shifting to  
50

0042

1 pot fishing, which of course kind of -- it's very  
2 expensive. You need a much bigger vessel. A lot of  
3 challenges, but -- yeah, make that an action item and  
4 we'll be sure to follow up with the AMBCC on that.

5

6 Thanks.

7

8 MADAME CHAIR HOSETH: Okay. Thank you.  
9 Brandon. Is your hand up from last time or you have  
10 more to add?

11

12 MR. AHMASUK: No, I had my hand up  
13 again. Thank you, Madame Chair. Maybe I'm confusing  
14 what was said. I'm not fully understanding NOAA,  
15 National Marine Fishery Service. You know, they're the  
16 agency in charge of fish, but did I understand it that  
17 the Fish and Wildlife Service -- I'm trying to think  
18 how to word this. They don't really have authority to  
19 protect resources under their jurisdiction or under  
20 their authority.

21

22 It's my understanding that the Fish and  
23 Wildlife Service is the go to authority on migratory  
24 birds and there should be measures put in place to  
25 protect the resource, not leave it to a different  
26 agency that is just there to waste hundreds upon  
27 thousands, maybe even millions of migratory birds as  
28 bycatch and wasted.

29

30 I'm just going to say it here. It's  
31 like the issue we have in the Bering Strait Region as  
32 well as other regions. It's a huge topic of concern,  
33 different views, whatnot, but yet in our region in  
34 times of closure -- and we're coming upon that here  
35 very soon just like other regions -- we've got our  
36 salmon crash, NOAA, the National Marine Fishery  
37 Service, they're in charge of bycatch of salmon. This  
38 last season there was a bycatch of, I believe, over  
39 500,000 chum salmon. All wasted. Yet me, as a  
40 subsistence user, I cannot catch one.

41

42 So again maybe -- forgive me if I  
43 misinterpreted that, but it's my understanding that the  
44 Fish and Wildlife Service has the duty, the authority  
45 to protect the resources under its wing so to speak,  
46 and not just let another agency dictate and do what  
47 they want.

48

49 Thank you.

50

0043

1 MR. KALER: Madame Chair. I can try to  
2 respond to that. I appreciate your frustration,  
3 Brandon, with that and I think that's a valid point.  
4 Of course the North Pacific Fisheries Management  
5 Council that's one other entity. I know our recent  
6 Congresswoman is advocating for more involvement on the  
7 North Pacific Fisheries Management Council and will  
8 hopefully raise that. I certainly don't mean to just  
9 be a bureaucrat passing it to the other agency. We do  
10 try to work very closely, but I appreciate your  
11 comment, Brandon. Absolutely, I think that's something  
12 we need to elevate.

13  
14 Thanks.

15  
16 MADAME CHAIR HOSETH: Thank you for the  
17 follow up on that. I think this would be a good agenda  
18 item that we talk about because it is an issue across  
19 the state with bycatch. Maybe Wendy and is it Robert,  
20 right?

21  
22 MR. KALER: Yeah, Robb. Yeah, Robert,  
23 Robb. I answer to both. Just don't call me late to  
24 dinner.

25  
26 MADAME CHAIR HOSETH: Okay. These are  
27 big issues when we're facing our subsistence resources  
28 and it seems like the subsistence users are always the  
29 first ones, like Brandon stated, the first ones to have  
30 reductions or restrictions on us for us to even harvest  
31 some of the species that we live off of out here in  
32 rural Alaska. So if we can maybe have that as an  
33 agenda item.

34  
35 I know, Wendy, you're new here to this  
36 group and then just kind of like these are some major  
37 concerns that we do have. I did see Lili's hand up.  
38 Lili, did you have anything more to add or did you have  
39 a question?

40  
41 MS. NAVES: Thanks, Chair. It's a  
42 question. We hear more about the bycatch of seabirds,  
43 but my question is about vessel strikes, what's another  
44 issue with seabirds too. I don't know to which extent  
45 that is understood or happens here in Alaska. Would  
46 you have something about that, Robb, or someone else?

47  
48 MR. KALER: I'll just quickly follow up  
49 that they -- yes. With a lot of tanker traffic, liquid  
50

0044

1 natural gas. Unfortunately most of that traffic is on  
2 the other side of our EEZ, the exclusive economic zone,  
3 so we don't have a lot. Our Fisheries Ecological  
4 Services they have come up with some guidance in terms  
5 of how particularly research vessels might use their  
6 lights and of course during the -- as we get towards  
7 the later season where we don't have 24 hours of light  
8 during the winter -- or, sorry, during the summer.  
9 Definitely something.

10

11 And I'm part of the East  
12 Asian-Australasian Flyway Partnership. We of course  
13 are sharing our bird resources with that flyway. The  
14 World Seabird Day is coming up and World Migratory Bird  
15 Day. A topic is light pollution, so that's something  
16 that's actively going on and being discussed.  
17 Definitely in terms of vessel lighting a big concern  
18 for us as well.

19

20 While I don't have anything to  
21 contribute right now, that is something that our  
22 ecological services branch is trying to address, but  
23 not sure we'll be able to inform much across the Bering  
24 Strait and the other side with our vessel strikes and  
25 lighting with these really large liquid natural gas  
26 transports going on. Thanks for the question, Lili.

27

28 MADAME CHAIR HOSETH: Thank you.

29 Karen.

30

31 MS. PLETNIKOFF: Thank you, Madame  
32 Chair. I just wanted to note for the body that the  
33 folks at AMBCC represents have just as much right to  
34 non-consumptive uses of these birds and their  
35 ecological services and their abundance, inherent  
36 abundance for subsistence, for handicrafts, for just  
37 being stewards of our land. So we don't have to only  
38 focus on the crisis of denying subsistence access when  
39 there are these other takes of these resources. We can  
40 call for it earlier like I'm hearing here. So I just  
41 wanted to say that for everyone.

42

43 Thanks.

44

45 MADAME CHAIR HOSETH: Thank you, Karen,  
46 for that input. Any other questions or comments on  
47 Coral's report from Kodiak.

48

49 (No comments)

50

0045

1                   MADAME CHAIR HOSETH: Thank you, Coral,  
2 for bringing the information. We had good discussion  
3 with some of the issues that you raised and some  
4 follow-up items that we'll bring up at our next  
5 meeting.

6  
7                   I'm going to circle back to Randy, TCC.

8  
9                   MR. MAYO: Hello. How is everybody  
10 doing? For the TCC region this past year we had a  
11 spring regional meeting just before the statewide  
12 meeting in April. We had our late summer/early fall  
13 meeting in August, but in between then during the  
14 summer months I participated in some of the committee  
15 meetings, harvest survey and also the Invitation to  
16 Hunt Committee meetings. Also participated in the  
17 statewide meeting and the special meeting discussion.  
18 So we'll be participating in the upcoming statewide  
19 meeting. Besides just myself bring in more of my  
20 council.

21  
22                   Also too during the past regional  
23 meetings aside from giving their reports from the  
24 statewide meeting, Eric did participate in our spring  
25 and fall meeting and other agency folks. So there was  
26 good interaction and information sharing. One of the  
27 highlights of our regional management body work was to  
28 start incorporating and bringing in the youth to pass  
29 things on along to the upcoming generations to continue  
30 this work and also guidance of our elders.

31  
32                   One of the things that came out of our  
33 fall meeting was to further the work in this region of  
34 the traditional native names for the different  
35 migratory birds in our region. As our region is very  
36 wide and large, there's a great many different dialects  
37 and different tribes here. So not only just to  
38 identify the birds and try to incorporate as many of  
39 the dialects as possible, but then the discussion went  
40 on further that this would lead up to resurrecting our  
41 -- mostly for the younger generation, our traditional  
42 belief system.

43  
44                   We have to do it now. As like in all  
45 regions, a lot of the traditional knowledge keepers,  
46 the elders, the ones that have the real high knowledge  
47 are passing on. We need to capture that right now. So  
48 this will be good, reinstating our spiritual, our  
49 whole way of being, and it will go back to the creation  
50

0046

1 stories. Once you resurrect and bring back the  
2 language components, then the ceremonies will naturally  
3 follow, will wake up here, get back to our traditional  
4 way, which has been dormant for recent years here.

5  
6 So we had a follow-up meeting with our  
7 regional elder councils, their chiefs and then some of  
8 our language instructors that know how to write the  
9 words down and put it on the paper. There was a lot of  
10 excitement. We're going to continue that work. It all  
11 started with birds. Like the discussion here by the  
12 different membership that everything is connected, you  
13 can't just put things in little boxes because  
14 everything depends on everything else.

15  
16 One of the main reasons is that this  
17 knowledge, this cultural knowledge will give the future  
18 generations a better -- this is the reality that is  
19 going to make this work here with regulations, make  
20 sense to our people and give us validity. So it will  
21 be a good work project here.

22  
23 Up in our region one of the things is  
24 that it's a big, wide region that covers a lot of  
25 territory. We've got a lot of tribes. There's six of  
26 us that represent the whole region. One of the things  
27 we want to work on is to try to bring the region a  
28 little more closer so we could know what's going on  
29 with migratory birds and the environmental conditions  
30 and seasons and weather that affect the birds so we  
31 know what's going on across the region.

32  
33 I get reports by word of mouth when I  
34 run into people or at other meetings and I get  
35 different reports on the conditions, the arrival of the  
36 birds and the departure. All I can see is right around  
37 my immediate traditional hunting grounds that the geese  
38 were slow to come in, but later on this fall there was  
39 quite a few.

40  
41 I didn't really see them gathering up  
42 in August like they usually do. So right now the lakes  
43 are freezing and the black ducks they're coming out of  
44 the lakes onto the main Yukon. They're the last to  
45 leave. Once they go all the birds will be gone for the  
46 season. That's one of our big concerns.

47  
48 Also too, just listening to the other  
49 reports, like the bird bycatch issues along with salmon  
50

0047

1 bycatch. In our region we're looking more and more at  
2 what's being said here, that everything is connected.  
3 The agency response or regulation on all of these  
4 activities there's a lot of regulatory agencies  
5 involved and some of them they're not -- we don't even  
6 know about some of them. We just know some of the  
7 local ones like Fish and Wildlife Service and the State  
8 Fish and Game.

9  
10 It's an issue because one hand doesn't  
11 know what the other one is doing. Like one agency  
12 might not have authority or another one does. So  
13 everything is like in little boxes. That's not how  
14 people living off the land -- that's not our way. We  
15 look at the whole big picture. But it's a big issue  
16 that -- and it's alarming what's going on with big  
17 industrial, commercial activity out in the seas.

18  
19 You know, people can't continue to just  
20 take, take, take, then as the people living on the land  
21 we're denied being given something to eat, but big  
22 commercial and industrial they're allowed to just take  
23 until there's going to be nothing left, not even for  
24 them. It's wrong and something has to -- you know, we  
25 need to raise that voice more and more.

26  
27 There's going to be I understood in our  
28 area a consultation going on. I might not be able to  
29 make it. It's very concerning. What's going to be the  
30 result there's not going to be nothing left for us to  
31 eat or we're going to be regulated out of existence  
32 while the rape and pillage of the lands and seas is  
33 allowed to continue just for the money.

34  
35 So I am in real agreement with the  
36 other board members here on that concern even though  
37 we're way in the Interior. What goes on in other areas  
38 it affects us too. I'm pretty thankful for the other  
39 board members to raise this. We'll go back to our  
40 regional management body so we can continue to work on  
41 these areas of alarm and concern jointly.

42  
43 In our region we're -- some of the  
44 reports I'm getting that due to change in times and  
45 patterns that, you know, those are of concern too.  
46 People are going to have to -- are relying more on  
47 birds because of the salmon crash issues. Also too  
48 that moose hunting just wrapped up recently and I  
49 wasn't successful. I know a lot of people I talked to  
50

0048

1 they weren't successful either. We all know last  
2 winter statewide it was a pretty harsh winter. That  
3 also affects everything we live off of including  
4 migratory birds.

5  
6 That concludes my verbal regional  
7 report.

8  
9 MADAME CHAIR HOSETH: Thank you, Randy.  
10 Good information. There's a lot of work that is being  
11 done. You know, this is a good example. Those of us  
12 that have been serving on this Council for a long time  
13 are the same people who are on here as tribal  
14 representatives, as the Native Caucus, and we have a  
15 revolving door within the Federal agencies that we work  
16 with, State and Federal agencies that we work with that  
17 we're always educating our traditional ways of life,  
18 customary and traditional practices and it's something  
19 that we're going to have to continue to do.

20  
21 I'm glad that youth are being involved  
22 within your guys's bird councils up there because we do  
23 need to educate the up and coming younger generation to  
24 replace us on this Council and all the other boards  
25 that we are a part of.

26  
27 A lot of us here on this Council work  
28 together in different areas; Board of Fish, Board of  
29 Game, Federal Subsistence Board. I'm not heavily  
30 involved with North Pacific Fisheries Management  
31 Council, but we probably need to be more involved in  
32 that area as well. This is an issue that we see and we  
33 talk about it all the time. Just kind of the stories.

34  
35  
36 As we share around the table here, it's  
37 just hitting me that a lot of our things don't change  
38 and we have all these different impacts that are facing  
39 us from all these different directions. I hear the  
40 frustration that everybody has. We're trying to  
41 advocate to continue to live our subsistence way of  
42 life. The increase of food, meat, chicken, pork, all  
43 that stuff is so expensive. Everybody relies on moose,  
44 fish, caribou, birds, berries, plants. We do live off  
45 of the land.

46  
47 I think it's also good for people new  
48 joining this Council to hear -- you know, this is one  
49 of the best parts of the AMBCC is our regional reports.  
50



0049

1 Finding out what's happening throughout the state of  
2 Alaska. Through this is how we can make good, positive  
3 change as issues are brought forward and then we move  
4 forward to try to address these issues one by one.  
5 Some of them take years. Some of them don't take very  
6 long. I am taking notes and so is Patty.

7

8 Does anybody have any questions or  
9 comments for Randy?

10

11 (No comments)

12

13 MADAME CHAIR HOSETH: Hearing none.  
14 Thank you, Randy. I also see that Gloria has joined  
15 us. Gloria, did you want to introduce yourself and  
16 give a report from Ahtna.

17

18 MS. STICKWAN: Good morning. Gloria.  
19 Sorry I'm late. We did not have a meeting yet this  
20 fall. We're meeting later on. Our scheduled migratory  
21 bird camp that we were planning to hold did not take  
22 place because other projects (indiscernible). Other  
23 than that fishing was okay this year for us. We'll  
24 have a meeting soon and that's about it.

25

26 Thank you.

27

28 MADAME CHAIR HOSETH: Thank you,  
29 Gloria. I'm glad you're able to join us here today.  
30 Does anybody have any questions or comments for Gloria.

31

32 (No comments)

33

34 MADAME CHAIR HOSETH: Hearing none.  
35 Did Priscilla make it back on?

36

37 MS. EVANS: Yes. I was going to ask  
38 Patty Schwalenberg to give the report for the Chugach  
39 Region if that's okay.

40

41 MADAME CHAIR HOSETH: Thank you,  
42 Priscilla. Patty, did you have a report to give for  
43 Chugach?

44

45 MS. SCHWALENBERG: Yeah. Pretty short.  
46 As I reported during my Executive Director report,  
47 Michael Opheim and Willow have been working on the  
48 gathering I mentioned earlier. The grant with the  
49 three-day meeting together for next year. So that's

50

0050

1 been taking up some of their time.

2

3

4 We did have a fall meeting September  
5 29th, which went very well. Much of the time spent  
6 this last quarter was spent on grant work modifications  
7 and the budget modifications that we had to do and then  
8 there was a little bit of discussion about the  
9 statewide management of the AMBCC, whether they're  
10 going to put it out for bid or not. Eventually decided  
11 to do a three year instead of a five year with CRRC and  
12 so that's in the works right now.

12

13

14 Then I just wanted to mention a little  
15 bit about the book chapter that we had been talking  
16 about the past year or so. All that information, as I  
17 reported in the spring, has been submitted to the  
18 editors and the publishers and they're looking at a  
19 publish date of spring 2023. So hopefully it will come  
20 out before the meeting and, if so, we can provide  
21 copies to all the members.

21

22

23 Then if Priscilla has any information  
24 to share about the hunting season or any observations,  
25 I'd ask her if she could do that now. I know there's  
26 an issue about speckled-bellies they were talking about  
27 earlier. Priscilla, can you add anything else that you  
28 feel is relevant?

28

29

30 MS. EVANS: Well, I know a lot of the  
31 hunters around Nanwalek were saying that the elders  
32 were afraid of the bird flu, so they kind of stopped  
33 hunting. I haven't heard of any of the  
34 speckled-bellies coming back here. So they're still  
35 leery about the bird flu in Nanwalek. They're just  
36 going by what the elders are saying to the hunters.  
37 Hopefully they get more than just grouse this fall.

37

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That's all I have for here.

MS. SCHWALENBERG: That's it, Madame  
Chair. Thank you.

MADAME CHAIR HOSETH: Thank you, Patty  
and Priscilla. Does anybody have any questions or  
comments for Patty or Priscilla.

(No comments)

MADAME CHAIR HOSETH: Hearing none. I

0051

1 just wanted to say I'm glad for Patty, you serving as  
2 our Executive Director since the formation or being a  
3 part of AMBCC from the beginning. I'm glad to hear  
4 that the proposal is going to CRRC and that you're able  
5 to fill that role. It caught us by surprise within the  
6 AMBCC for the proposal process for managing AMBCC.

7  
8 So I just wanted to put that on the  
9 record because you've been doing an excellent job and  
10 we really appreciate the work and dedication and the  
11 history and the knowledge that you have within AMBCC  
12 and being an advocate for AMBCC on a statewide level,  
13 at the Pacific Flyway Council meetings and across the  
14 nation there and with SRC and bringing these issues  
15 forward. The expertise that you have is recognized by  
16 Native Caucus and we want to thank you for your time  
17 and dedication that you've had to AMBCC. So thank you.

18  
19 MS. SCHWALENBERG: Thank you. That's  
20 very much appreciated. Thanks.

21  
22 MADAME CHAIR HOSETH: Yes. I think  
23 that would be something that we want to talk about too  
24 of maybe a future agenda item for the funding. We  
25 definitely do need to talk about funding of the AMBCC  
26 and how things are laid out. I don't see -- oh, we do  
27 have a budget update, so maybe we could address some of  
28 those concerns under the budget update. We do have  
29 some concerns with the budget. How things are handled,  
30 how things have been done and some surprises that came  
31 along the way this year. So I just wanted to bring  
32 that forward.

33  
34 Thank you very much, Patty.

35  
36 We appreciate you.

37  
38 MS. SCHWALENBERG: No problem.

39  
40 MADAME CHAIR HOSETH: I think we have  
41 circled and we hit every regional representative  
42 report. We'll move on to old business. We have  
43 Council committee reports. Emperor Goose Management  
44 Committee, Dave.

45  
46 MR. SAFINE: Thank you, Madame Chair.  
47 I appreciate the opportunity from the Council to  
48 provide you guys with an update. Give me one second  
49 here. I'm going to try -- Patty, is it okay if I share  
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0052

1 my screen? I've got a PowerPoint presentation.

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MS. SCHWALENBERG: There are two documents I included in the packet that are yours, Dave, as well, FYI.

MR. SAFINE: Thank you for including those, Patty. I will allude to those documents during my presentation. Just give me one second to pull my screen up here and hopefully I grab the right one. Can you guys see that screen okay?

IN UNISON: Yes.

MR. SAFINE: Okay. Thank you, guys. I never know if I grabbed the right one. Like I said, I appreciate the time on the agenda here. What I want to do today is provide you guys with an update on what the Emperor Goose Management Committee has been doing over the past six months to nine months time period here.

Later on you're going to hear a lot more about general waterfowl status from Julian Fischer's presentation. I'm just going to touch briefly here on Emperor geese and the information we had available to us this past summer as we were required to make regulatory decisions for the upcoming regulatory year.

So for Emperor geese the survey was done on the Yukon Delta back in late May and early June. If folks can see here, the last data point we had for 2022 came in just above the yellow threshold into the green threshold or the open zone at 28,864. That was the index value for 2022. So that index number is consistent with an open season. So that was the information we had available to us.

So what I want to do is kind of go through the process that the Emperor Goose Committee went through to make regulatory decisions. Both for the spring/summer hunt, so that was the AMBCC committee and then I'll briefly talk about what the Pacific Flyway Subcommittee did as well.

The committee met on July 18th to discuss that index number that I just presented and we made some additional initial recommendations. The initial recommendations that we made were to generally

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1 follow the advice of the management plan and that was  
2 for 2023 to have an open hunt with no restrictions.  
3 That is what the management plan prescribes.

4  
5 So that was our initial recommendation,  
6 but we noted that we did not have feedback from some  
7 partners at that meeting and we were really very  
8 curious about the thoughts about the Yukon-Kuskokwim  
9 Delta Region and wanted to get feedback from those  
10 folks. So we knew they were going to meet on August  
11 9th.

12  
13 So I went out to Bethel and met with  
14 the WCC at their meeting and gave a short presentation  
15 hoping to get feedback. The WCC was -- you know,  
16 thought about the information that we presented and  
17 their input was that the best course of action was to  
18 be a little bit more conservative than the management  
19 plan prescribed. So to maintain the current harvest  
20 restrictions like we were still in the yellow zone.

21  
22 So currently the egg harvest is closed  
23 statewide and the Yukon-Kuskokwim Delta Region felt  
24 like the best course of action would be to maintain  
25 that harvest restriction. So that was the input we  
26 received.

27  
28 After that the full subcommittee or the  
29 full committee met on August 10th, the next day, and we  
30 decided that we would incorporate that feedback into  
31 our recommendation from the committee to the AMBCC's  
32 Executive Committee. So we wrote up a formal  
33 recommendation to the Executive Council and distributed  
34 that on August 17th. In that document we put forth a  
35 recommendation for no change.

36  
37 We heard back on the 19th of August  
38 that the AMBCC's Executive Committee was in favor of  
39 that recommendation for no change to the regulations.  
40 The three parties at that time, Eric Taylor, Ryan Scott  
41 and Gayla Hoseth, approved that proposal.

42  
43 So we then brought that forward to the  
44 Pacific Flyway Council as the Subsistence Season  
45 Framework. That's what it's called when it goes  
46 through the Flyway Council and at the end of August the  
47 Flyway Council endorsed a recommendation for no change.  
48 Then the final step in that process is that that  
49 recommendation will go forward to the Service  
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1 Regulations Committee, which will meet next week.

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So that's what we did and that's kind of the timeline of the events that have to happen between when we get that information in in early July on the status of Emperor geese to the series of events that happen after that so we can set those regulations for the next regulatory year. Again, we voted to continue the recurrent regulatory restriction of no egg harvest statewide.

Similarly, there's a process to set the regulations for the fall/winter season. That is set by the Pacific Flyway Council's Emperor Goose Subcommittee. That Subcommittee met on August 22nd. The official members of that Subcommittee are myself and Jason Schamber at the Alaska Department of Fish and Game, but also present at that meeting were the other member states on the Study Committee Patty Schwalenberg and Coral Chernoff were there as well in person. We had that subcommittee meeting.

That subcommittee recommended also no change to the Alaska season framework for the 2023 season. They voted to also maintain the current regulations, which were for a restrictive season and a 500 bird quota. So that's what we currently have. That was approved by the Council on the 26th of August and again that recommendation will go forward to the SRC for review next week.

So for both the spring/summer and the fall/winter hunts both the AMBCC's committee and the Pacific Flyway Council's subcommittee recommended no change to the current regulations. So that's where we're at for regulatory actions for next year, so 2023 spring/summer and 2023-24 fall/winter.

Are there any questions on that, the process we went through to set those regulations?

(No comments)

MADAME CHAIR HOSETH: Looks like there's no questions, Dave.

MR. SAFINE: Okay. Thank you, Madame Chair. I will continue on. My next slide here is just kind of a reminder of where we are with the current

0055

1 hunts. So this is sort of a transition period that we  
2 went through about a month ago. So the 2022  
3 spring/summer hunt, the last day for that season was  
4 August 31st and then beginning September 1st is the  
5 first day of the fall/winter hunt. So that's when we  
6 change which hunt individuals are going to be hunting  
7 under.

8  
9 So the fall/winter hunt opened on  
10 September 1st in some areas and then in other parts of  
11 the state in three of the seven hunt areas it doesn't  
12 open until sometime in October depending on where you  
13 are. So I'm just noting that depending on where you  
14 are your opening dates are going to be variable.  
15 You're still under the 500 bird quota for this year.  
16 Like I said, we will continue to be under that quota  
17 for next year.

18  
19 Registration permits are available  
20 through three different -- you have three different  
21 ways to get them. One is they're available online.  
22 They're also available at the Department of Fish and  
23 Game's offices and then they're available in rural  
24 coastal villages where Emperor geese are hunted. So  
25 there's three ways to get those permits.

26  
27 I just want to note that the permits  
28 are important, both getting and reporting your harvest  
29 on those permits are important. Particularly what I'm  
30 going to talk about later as we revise the management  
31 plan because it's our only way to evaluate the harvest  
32 during the fall/winter hunt. So we just want to make  
33 sure folks are getting those permits and reporting  
34 their harvest so we can better evaluate the use of that  
35 resource.

36  
37 I just want to note that and make sure  
38 people know how to get those permits. Follow-up  
39 questions on that. Obviously Jason Schamber is the one  
40 that very carefully manages that hunt and periodically  
41 reports harvest to the group. So any questions you  
42 could likely follow up with Jason on that.

43  
44 Any question on sort of that transition  
45 from spring/summer to fall/winter hunting?

46  
47 (No comments)

48  
49 MR. SAFINE: All right. Not hearing

50

0056

1 any. So then I'll move on to the last part of my  
2 presentation, which is an update to the Council and  
3 other interested folks on what we've been doing in the  
4 Management Committee with respect to revising these two  
5 management plans.

6  
7 So as folks know there's a Pacific  
8 Flyway Council, an Alaska Migratory Bird Co-management  
9 Council Management Plan. So there's two plans. Both  
10 of them had the same terms when they were signed back  
11 in the fall of 2016. So they were originally set up  
12 with the term of 2017 to 2021. So those terms have  
13 ended. That doesn't mean the plans are no longer  
14 valid. The plans are still valid and will still be  
15 used until we have new plans signed. What it does tell  
16 us is it's time to do our best to try to revise these  
17 plans if needed. We may determine we don't need  
18 significant changes or maybe just minor changes, but  
19 that's generally why we're in the process of revising  
20 these plans.

21  
22 Another reason that we're trying to  
23 revise the plans is that they were originally developed  
24 without data on harvest during an open season. We  
25 hadn't had an open season in 30 years, so we didn't  
26 really know what to expect for harvest when we did open  
27 the hunt and then how the population would respond to  
28 that. So now we have data that we can use from 2017 to  
29 2022 to update the original modeling that was done by  
30 Erik Osnas and others, so that's another good reason to  
31 try to update the plan.

32  
33 Then lastly, because we've now had this  
34 hunt open for five, six years, we can use some of the  
35 information we've learned during that time period to  
36 help potentially do a better job of managing Emperor  
37 goose harvest. We have an opportunity now to consider  
38 objectives that were not incorporated into the harvest  
39 strategy the first time.

40  
41 One example of that would be what we  
42 call regulatory stability. So the idea that in the  
43 current management plan we sent regulations based on an  
44 annual index and it may be that in one year we're below  
45 a line and the next we're above and then we're back  
46 below.

47  
48 So that creates a situation where we're  
49 potentially changing regulations annually and that's a  
50



0057

1 hard process for all the individuals involved whether  
2 you're a hunter or whether you're a management agency.  
3 Changing regulations frequently doesn't necessarily  
4 benefit any of us. So that's something we do want to  
5 try to incorporate into this revision process.

6  
7 So a few different reasons of why we're  
8 going about revising these plans. Again, we are  
9 revising both plans simultaneously because in the past  
10 iteration that's how we did it. We worked on both  
11 plans together.

12  
13 So I just want to talk a little bit  
14 about the process we're going through to do this and  
15 where we are in that process. So right now we're using  
16 this process here where we start out by framing our  
17 problem. We then move into gathering objectives from  
18 all the stakeholders. Next developing alternatives, so  
19 these are different options we could move for.  
20 Different types of harvest strategies to manage Emperor  
21 geese.

22  
23 Then we do something called evaluate  
24 consequences. So that's us, in this case generally,  
25 doing some type of statistical modeling to evaluate if  
26 we try this approach what happens to the population,  
27 what happens to harvest, what happens to that stability  
28 I was talking about, the frequency of going from open  
29 to closed season. So all those things that we care  
30 about that we identified as objectives. How do these  
31 different options we identify how are they affected.

32  
33 Once we get through that process we  
34 have alternatives. We understand there are  
35 consequences and the trade-offs we can then select a  
36 preferred alternative and then move forward to  
37 implementing the action, which in this case would be  
38 formalizing a new management plan and signing that  
39 plan. So both councils would then sign the plan.

40  
41 The green color indicates that we have  
42 gone through those steps and are generally done. We're  
43 currently in the process of evaluating consequences.  
44 I'm going to note that there's little -- so there's  
45 dark arrows going one way and there's little arrows  
46 going back, meaning that just because we sort of move  
47 through a step doesn't mean we're never going to go  
48 back to that. In fact, we are likely to return to  
49 steps. We may evaluate consequences and realize that  
50

0058

1 we're missing something. We may develop new  
2 alternatives. So it's kind of a process where we're  
3 going to move back and forth during this whole phase.

4  
5 We did start meeting as a committee  
6 back in January 2022 to formally start this process.  
7 There are two groups that are working on this together.  
8 One is what we call the Emperor Goose Management Plan  
9 Revision Working Group. So that's a small group that  
10 works behind the scenes to strategize the process and  
11 think about the best ways to move forward. That group  
12 consists of myself, Erik Osnas, so we're both Fish and  
13 Wildlife Service, Jason Schamber, Alaska Department of  
14 Fish and Game, Gayla and Karen Pletnikoff are also in  
15 that group representing the Native Caucus.

16  
17 So we have representation from the  
18 three components of the AMBCC. It's been a great group  
19 to work with because we can all bring our unique  
20 perspectives and do our best to make sure that when we  
21 bring the full committee in to meet that we've done our  
22 homework in the background to make sure that's as  
23 efficient as possible.

24  
25 I want to take this time to acknowledge  
26 the working group and the support we've received and I  
27 really appreciate everything that's gone on in that  
28 group. Thanks, Gayla, Karen and Jason for all your  
29 help there.

30  
31 MADAME CHAIR HOSETH: Dave, it looks  
32 like Brandon has a question.

33  
34 MR. SAFINE: Oh, I'm sorry. I didn't  
35 see that. Go ahead, Brandon.

36  
37 MADAME CHAIR HOSETH: That's okay.

38  
39 MR. AHMASUK: Dave, I wasn't sure if  
40 you were done. I can wait until you're done with your  
41 presentation. I just had a quick question.

42  
43 MR. SAFINE: Go ahead now. If it fits  
44 in with this, I'd say go ahead. Otherwise I can take  
45 it at the end.

46  
47 MR. AHMASUK: It was more at the  
48 beginning. My understanding in the past they tried to  
49 do the survey at the beginning or towards the start of  
50

0059

1 the migration. I'm just curious. I mean so the prior  
2 years, prior to this one, you know, it looked like the  
3 population was going down and maybe even at one point  
4 it might have been in the red or we might have had to  
5 start considering closing it possibly.

6  
7 I'm just wondering if this year's  
8 survey if it was, how do you say, conducted more in  
9 direct line with when the migration is actually  
10 happening as opposed to, you know, like two, three  
11 weeks before, two, three weeks after, you know, when  
12 stuff really starts slowing down or just picking up.

13  
14 I mean I guess where I'm going with  
15 this is, you know, quite often I get asked the question  
16 out here, you know, like marine mammals or even birds,  
17 when does this hunt happen, and my only -- the easiest  
18 answer I can give them is springtime. Well, what dates  
19 does it happen. Well, springtime. No, no, no. We  
20 need a specific date when this happens.

21  
22 There is no specific date. The further  
23 you get away from south Alaska, I guess -- I mean  
24 further north -- I'm just going to use the Bering  
25 Strait as an example. We could have a spring that  
26 could happen as early as beginning of April or more  
27 what I'm accustomed to when I was little, you know, end  
28 of June into July.

29  
30 Anyway, my question is was there any  
31 indication that this year's survey happened right at  
32 the beginning, I guess the heart of the Emperor goose  
33 migration?

34  
35 Thank you.

36  
37 MR. SAFINE: Okay, Brandon. Good  
38 question. Appreciate that. So this survey --  
39 basically when this management plan was signed in 2016  
40 we made the change from the previous survey that was  
41 used for Emperor geese, which was the spring survey,  
42 and then we moved to the current survey, which is the  
43 Yukon Delta. So it's been the same survey since 2017  
44 used for management purposes here.

45  
46 As far as timing this year versus other  
47 years, I would say this survey is controlled for timing  
48 to the extent that we can. The crews are very careful  
49 about watching weather, snow melt, getting observations  
50

0060

1 from folks like Bryan Daniels and others on the Yukon  
2 Delta to understand how things are progressing in the  
3 spring.

4  
5 So I think the timing with respect to  
6 differences in spring chronology is as good as we can  
7 do. So I don't think timing was off this year. As far  
8 as the data that we saw of that component -- so you're  
9 right. The numbers had been -- 2016 was like a record  
10 high and then since then we had a few years that were  
11 decreasing and then this year went back up a little  
12 bit.

13  
14 One of the things I noted in looking at  
15 that was that there was a higher component of flocked  
16 birds this year. So the actual number of what we call  
17 breeding birds, so those would be single or paired  
18 birds, was a little bit higher than the previous year,  
19 but not much different, but the component of flocked  
20 birds was quite a bit higher. That can happen for a  
21 bunch of different reasons, but this year there were  
22 more birds out there in larger groups.

23  
24 So that was one of the reasons the  
25 count was higher. Again, that could be due to  
26 differences in the number of birds that were breeding  
27 this year. Could be due to the previous year's  
28 production being pretty good, so there could have been  
29 a lot of juveniles that were not nesting but present.  
30 It could be related to issues caused by avian influenza  
31 and things like that.

32  
33 Good questions, but to the best of our  
34 ability the timing is as consistent as it can be. It  
35 differs every year as we do our best to adjust for  
36 that. So those are some of the factors that could have  
37 been why that count was a little bit higher.

38  
39 But, importantly, you know, I think  
40 that the Yukon Delta Region they looked at that data  
41 and their input was that, yes, it was in the green  
42 zone, but not very high into the green zone and they  
43 didn't feel comfortable lifting that restriction with  
44 where it was. Even though the management plan said we  
45 could, they felt like it made sense to be a little more  
46 conservative. So, anyway, that's my comment on that.

47  
48 Brandon, does that answer your  
49 question?

50

0061

1 MR. AHMASUK: Yes. Thank you.

2

3 MR. SAFINE: I see Karen has a  
4 question. I'm sorry.

5

6 MADAME CHAIR HOSETH: That's okay,  
7 David. We'll call on Karen. I just wanted to --  
8 before we call on her if we wanted to break for lunch  
9 at noon and do a half an hour lunch from 12:00 to 12:30  
10 if that works with everybody. Then we'll call on Karen  
11 and then we'll come back and come back to your Emperor  
12 goose presentation. Would that work?

13

14 MR. SAFINE: I do have an appointment  
15 at 12:30 for about a half an hour. So I would be happy  
16 to entertain questions after lunch, but I won't -- I  
17 think I can come back about 12:50 or something.

18

19 MADAME CHAIR HOSETH: Okay. We can  
20 call on Karen. I know that some of us need to take  
21 lunch at 12:00 and I don't want people to get angry.

22

23 MR. SAFINE: I'm happy to break  
24 whenever. Perhaps we could move on to another topic  
25 and then when I get back online, I can be available for  
26 questions.

27

28 MADAME CHAIR HOSETH: Okay. That  
29 sounds good. Go ahead, Karen.

30

31 MS. PLETNIKOFF: Thanks. I wanted to  
32 note that I'm part of that smaller subcommittee that's  
33 working on the Management Plan rewrite and that I've  
34 specifically asked for more transparency, a better  
35 understanding of the models that are being used for  
36 this Management Plan. Especially in the context of  
37 understanding what level of climate change impacts and  
38 swiftly changing conditions, like primary production,  
39 have on the species and on our Management Plan and on  
40 where that number falls.

41

42 With the population hovering right  
43 around that number, obviously this is an important  
44 thing to understand and we all want regulatory  
45 stability. But I think we -- especially when we thank  
46 and acknowledge the continuing (audio drop-out) in the  
47 Delta and further north who are (audio drop-out) are  
48 making sacrifices, so what are the appropriate levels  
49 of proactive conservation that we can do for  
50

0062

1 understanding swiftly changing climate and changing  
2 baseline production?

3

4 I haven't really many response from the  
5 Wildlife Service and from the subcommittee members on  
6 this, what I think is a fairly important aspect of this  
7 Management Plan. It keeps getting pushed to the end  
8 farther and farther down the line and I think that we  
9 will get to a place very much like the first time this  
10 Management Plan was approved where in the room there  
11 was aggressive and dismissive responses from folks on  
12 serious questions about how the model works and what  
13 are the assumptions in the model that are important  
14 aspects than functions and what outputs it gives.

15

16 And I think it's really important that  
17 this body knows that that's been an ongoing issue with  
18 this group and I hope to see it resolved in the next  
19 meeting, but without some real concerted effort on the  
20 parts of our managers I'm not feeling really  
21 optimistic.

22

23 MR. SAFINE: Gayla, did you want me to  
24 try to address that comment now or did you want to take  
25 a break now?

26

27 MADAME CHAIR HOSETH: Thanks for  
28 bringing that up, Karen. I know that we've had -- you  
29 know, we've been working on these Emperor Goose  
30 Management Plans, the models, the hunt for a number of  
31 years now and it could get pretty contentious at times  
32 when we're talking about things.

33

34 The model is a question I think that we  
35 should circle back and kind of go over the model. I  
36 know that when we did have that discussion there was  
37 the State model and then there was the U.S. Fish and  
38 Wildlife model. If I could recall, I think that  
39 something changed in the interim of which model we were  
40 going to use.

41

42 We're happy the Native Caucus is a part  
43 of this working group now or on this level where it's  
44 not just the State's and the Fed's and that we have  
45 Native Caucus on board. That's where Karen and I come  
46 in. As decisions are being made, to make sure that  
47 we're making co-management decisions with all three  
48 parties involved.

49

50

0063

1 I think that we should bring back, when  
2 we do go over this, the model. Does that help answer  
3 your question, Karen, or the issue that you're bringing  
4 up? Because I know that it is an issue.

5  
6 MS. PLETNIKOFF: Yeah, thanks, Gayla.  
7 I mostly just want everybody to understand that it is  
8 an issue and that we do need some thought put towards  
9 it. I'm not trying to suggest that I know what the  
10 answer should be, but if we can't explain it and share  
11 it and be really transparent with it, are we doing our  
12 best for this species.

13  
14 MADAME CHAIR HOSETH: I understand and  
15 I think that we definitely need to bring that up  
16 because I remember a model being selected when we were  
17 in that meeting room at your office, Karen and your  
18 guys's boardroom, and through that transition a  
19 different model was used. That's where those of us who  
20 have been on here for a long time can remember that  
21 history as we try to move forward. I think that we  
22 should definitely bring that back and look at that. So  
23 thank you for bringing it back.

24  
25 MR. SAFINE: Madame Chair. I'll just  
26 add that -- I was going to talk about this later. My  
27 plan is to get together our working group hopefully in  
28 November to kind of talk about exactly what you guys  
29 were just talking about, the modeling and sort of the  
30 plan for the models, the key assumptions on certainties  
31 and some of the things Karen identified. So we would  
32 be talking about those with Erik Osnas, who is the one  
33 who is actually doing the modeling effort.

34  
35 Then our goal would be to get the full  
36 committee together in December or January to review the  
37 results. Erik is hoping to have some results available  
38 on the initial modeling efforts by about mid December.

39  
40  
41 Like I said, it's an iterative process  
42 and so we may determine that our first round of  
43 whatever we're working on we miss some key  
44 uncertainties or made assumptions perhaps we shouldn't  
45 have and we're always open to revising things if there  
46 are better ways to running it.

47  
48 Yeah, we are absolutely open to having  
49 the modeling efforts and any of the work we're doing as  
50

0064

1 transparent as possible. I think we're really working  
2 hard this time to be transparent in all steps.  
3 Everything we've done so far has been circulated to all  
4 the members of the committee.

5

6 I was going to mention we have a  
7 decision context document, objectives and all these  
8 things we're all working on together just to make sure  
9 everybody is on the same page and has the same  
10 information available.

11

12 MADAME CHAIR HOSETH: That sounds good.  
13 We could take advantage when we do scheduling and  
14 stuff. I know that Karen is in Anchorage, you're in  
15 Anchorage and so is Erik. Maybe we could get together  
16 for some in-person meetings to have some discussions if  
17 our schedule allows, if people are open to that.

18

19 With the time, if you don't mind, Dave,  
20 we're going to break for lunch and come back at 12:30.  
21 If you have an appointment, we could bounce on down our  
22 agenda to outreach and communications and then we could  
23 come back to your presentation. Would that work for  
24 everybody?

25

26 MR. SAFINE: That sounds great to me.  
27 As soon as I get back on, I'll just pop my screen on  
28 and you'll know I'm here. So I appreciate that.

29

30 MADAME CHAIR HOSETH: Okay. That  
31 sounds good. Let's take a half an hour lunch break  
32 everybody and see you guys back in a half an hour.

33

34 Thank you.

35

36 (Off record)

37

38 (On record)

39

40 MADAME CHAIR HOSETH: We can get  
41 started back on track and I believe Dave is going to  
42 join us in 20 minutes. Patty, did you want to do  
43 Outreach and Communication Committee while we wait for  
44 Dave to come back?

45

46 MS. SCHWALENBERG: Yeah. So I put two  
47 attachments in the meeting packet. The first one, Tab  
48 6, was the PowerPoint that Tamara provided to the  
49 committee as to what the meeting was going to be about

50



0065

1 and the type of things we were going to cover and some  
2 of the history. So you can read that when you have  
3 time. The next document under Tab 7 are the actual  
4 minutes from the meeting or notes I should say. I just  
5 want to kind of run through that real quickly.

6  
7 So we did meet on September 15th and  
8 looked at the results of the survey. We reviewed the  
9 regulations for 2023. We reviewed the updates from the  
10 harvest strategy revision and then we looked at some of  
11 the outreach efforts that have been done so far. We  
12 did a little roundtable where everyone shared the  
13 outreach efforts that they've been doing in their  
14 areas. We talked about revisioning, revising the  
15 outreach efforts. No decision was made on that  
16 actually. Then create a task and timeline list, which  
17 I don't think we got to that.

18  
19 We did look at the current outreach  
20 plan and suggested revisions to that. So one of the  
21 questions was whether or not their plans to reflect the  
22 annual variation of the Yukon-Kuskokwim Delta Survey  
23 that determines the harvest strategy or whether they  
24 should just be more constant due to the concern over  
25 the interpretation and annual variation of the survey  
26 numbers. We didn't want to confuse people. The  
27 committee did not really come to an agreement on that  
28 -- or not an agreement, but a decision was not made.  
29 It wasn't that people didn't agree. Just there was no  
30 decision made on that.

31  
32 We talked about improving the outreach  
33 efforts to recognize the sacrifices of rural Alaskan  
34 hunters. We waited 30 years to open harvest. Harvest  
35 was opened and then the population numbers went down  
36 and so we did more outreach and the numbers went back  
37 up. So the committee thought it was important to  
38 recognize the subsistence hunters for their  
39 conservation efforts so that the population numbers  
40 would be more in the positive area.

41  
42 Then we asked the community members to  
43 draft a message or a story about this so that it can be  
44 posted on the website or on the regional newspapers  
45 recognizing the sacrifice that people made so that this  
46 could happen.

47  
48 Then we talked about the level of  
49 outreach that we can do given the amount of budget  
50

0066

1 funding and the amount of time. So we all agreed that  
2 some level of outreach needs to continue while the  
3 Emperor goose is still open for harvest.

4  
5 This next page is just a reiteration of  
6 what Dave has been talking about, the population index,  
7 and then the SRC meeting and the revision to the  
8 management plans. So the main message that the  
9 Outreach Committee has developed for the Emperor goose  
10 is that the Emperor goose is Alaska's goose and it's  
11 different from other arctic nesting geese. They have a  
12 slow population growth rate and then there's some  
13 biological information that we share on some of the  
14 materials.

15  
16 The second one is Emperor geese are an  
17 important subsistence food and part of the Alaska  
18 Native culture. This hunt provides a special  
19 opportunity for a special food and that eggging is  
20 closed statewide. This is where we are recognizing the  
21 past sacrifices that were made.

22  
23 Then the third main message is that if  
24 you hunt Emperor geese, there are specific things you  
25 can do to help the population and then we list them  
26 there, like taking other arctic nesting geese, avoid  
27 taking family groups, harvesting the juveniles in the  
28 fall instead of adults and reminding others that eggging  
29 is closed statewide.

30  
31 So the materials were developed in '21  
32 and '22. We developed a logo and we used that to print  
33 on stickers and magnets. We updated the info-graphic  
34 on action and the range map with and without the logo.  
35 So those are the materials that were developed.

36  
37 Some of this -- I don't know if it was  
38 all, but it was through a grant from the National Fish  
39 and Wildlife Foundation, which required a match. So  
40 I'd like to thank the Chugach Regional Resources  
41 Commission for providing -- I believe it was up to a  
42 \$5,000 match by purchasing additional outreach  
43 materials and staff time and working on this project.

44  
45 The delivery methods. We went around  
46 and asked what people did. Yukon-Kuskokwim Delta  
47 distributed the stickers and magnets through the  
48 Waterfowl Conservation Committee. Bryan Daniels  
49 outlined what they did for the Refuge; radio shows,  
50

0067

1 Facebook post, waterfowl, WCC meetings, newspaper  
2 articles and ads. Then distribution of stickers and  
3 magnets and placement of posters at the library and  
4 community centers.

5  
6 In Kodiak, Coral and Kelly coordinated  
7 their meetings, the start of the subsistence  
8 committees, with three tribes. The placement of the  
9 posters, info-graphics and distribution of stickers and  
10 magnets.

11  
12 Then I did mention that Chugach  
13 Regional Resources Commission ordered floating  
14 keychains, notebooks and dry bags with the Emperor  
15 goose logo and they'll be distributed to AMBCC members  
16 and regional management bodies once they get delivered.

17  
18 The Alaska Department of Fish and Game,  
19 Tasha DiMarzio and Jason Schamber, also distributed  
20 stickers and magnets.

21  
22 The next thing that we talked about was  
23 the effectiveness of the outreach efforts. Tamara went  
24 through this information at a previous meeting, so I  
25 guess you can take the time on Page 8 to read all the  
26 information that were put into the Outreach Plan.  
27 There was a lot of work that went into it.

28  
29 We did some on social media. We did  
30 some podcasts and putting ads on web pages so they  
31 would pop up. Yeah, pop-up ads. Those were I guess  
32 really effective and one of the most effective things  
33 that we did. We had feedback better than any other  
34 client that GCI had that helped us with that. So we  
35 got pretty good results from our outreach efforts.

36  
37 That is the end of the outreach report,  
38 Madame Chair.

39  
40 Thank you.

41  
42 MADAME CHAIR HOSETH: Thank you, Patty.

43  
44 MS. SCHWALENBERG: If there's any  
45 questions, I'm happy to answer them.

46  
47 MADAME CHAIR HOSETH: Thank you, Patty.  
48 Does anybody have any questions or comments for Patty?

49  
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1 (No comments)

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(No comments)

MADAME CHAIR HOSETH: I think that the stickers and magnets are awesome and they look really nice and we've been distributing that information or that stuff here within the Bristol Bay region. I just had a question. If we have leftover funds from our grants, would we be able to allocate some of our funds to do outreach and to go towards some of this stuff? It looks like there was some things that were wanting to be purchased. Would we be able to add some of that or transfer funds to the outreach efforts?

MS. SCHWALENBERG: I think that is a good question for Will Lacy. Is he on this afternoon?

MR. LACY: Hello. This is Will. Just for clarity can you repeat the question.

MADAME CHAIR HOSETH: Hi, Will. I just had a question as to -- you know, with a lot of our grants we're in a position where we're not able to spend down the money that we wrote in for travel because we haven't had any in-person meetings. I was wanting to know is there a way that we could transfer some money or purchase some things towards the education/outreach portion of AMBCC.

MR. LACY: You can do that. You would need to do that this month. You can't hold any meetings with these funds that you may have on your books.

MADAME CHAIR HOSETH: Okay. If I wanted to say \$2,000 to go for more education outreach material for AMBCC or we could purchase some things before our grants end in October?

MR. LACY: Yes.

MADAME CHAIR HOSETH: T-shirts we're wanting, swag, bringing awareness.

MR. LACY: Yes, you can go ahead and purchase items. I'm sort of getting ahead of my briefing tomorrow, but I think it's relevant that I mention this now. The extension to the grant was for the sole purpose of attending this meeting. That's what the extension was for. Whereas if you were to

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1 hold a meeting, that's out of the scope of the grant  
2 because all meetings were supposed to be held before  
3 the statewide. But if you're purchasing items, your  
4 advertisement things, that's going to be okay because  
5 that's still within the scope of the award that you  
6 have. Just in case somebody is wondering why I'm  
7 saying it's okay to buy things but not use the funds  
8 for a meeting, that's why.

9  
10 MADAME CHAIR HOSETH: Okay. Thank you.  
11 That's helpful. We would have traveled in person with  
12 these funds and I guess we'll bring that up when we're  
13 at the date and time and place of next meeting. I  
14 would have loved for us to be in person. But we can  
15 use some of our leftover funds to help with  
16 education/outreach. I think just bringing awareness to  
17 AMBCC as a group would be good too with hats, coffee  
18 cups. We had magnets before. Things like that. So  
19 thank you.

20  
21 Ryan, did you have your hand up  
22 earlier?

23  
24 MR. SCOTT: I did. I was just going to  
25 say thank you to the committee for all the work and the  
26 products that went out and the scope of the outreach.  
27 It's impressive and very much appreciated.

28  
29 MADAME CHAIR HOSETH: I agree. Any  
30 other questions or comments for Patty for the Outreach  
31 and Education Committee.

32  
33 (No comments)

34  
35 MADAME CHAIR HOSETH: Hearing none.  
36 We'll hop back over to you, Dave, if you want to pick  
37 up where you left off.

38  
39 MR. SAFINE: Thank you very much,  
40 Madame Chair. Just give me a second to get my screen  
41 back up here. Hopefully that is pulling itself back  
42 up. So where we left off was we were talking about the  
43 revision process that we went through beginning  
44 approximately last January and I was just updating  
45 folks on the progress we'd made and some of the  
46 products that came out of those different steps and  
47 just reminding people that these steps are iterative to  
48 the extent that we may be going back and forth and  
49 redoing some things as we determine needs for them.

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1                   So from the first component of the  
2 process here, the problem framing, we wrote something  
3 called a decision context document. It started in the  
4 working group and then it went to the full committee  
5 for review. So we incorporated comments from a variety  
6 of different folks and I think we have a really good  
7 document right now.

8  
9                   Patty did include that in the packet,  
10 so I appreciate that, Patty. Folks are free to review  
11 that. If you have additional comments, please email  
12 them to me at any time. This is a living document and  
13 can be changed. Basically it just lays out what we're  
14 doing and why and some of the factors that are  
15 affecting the decision we need to make.

16  
17                   One of the next things we did is work  
18 on defining a list of objectives. So we do have a list  
19 of objectives. We're continuing to work on that and  
20 refine it. We're trying to make sure the objectives  
21 are measurable so when we talk about harvest what  
22 exactly are we talking about. Annual harvest,  
23 multi-year harvest, et cetera. So we have a list of  
24 objectives and then how we would measure those  
25 objectives. That is also available. I think it's in  
26 pretty good shape, but we'll continue to revise that as  
27 needed.

28  
29                   The step that we were on in the spring,  
30 which was developing alternatives, currently, for the  
31 sake of simplicity and just getting a start on this  
32 modeling process, we're going to evaluate the  
33 consequences of two different alternatives or options.  
34 I'll talk about that on the next slide here. Like I  
35 said, of these two alternatives, the next step is doing  
36 the modeling to evaluate the consequences of those.

37  
38                   So that's kind of what we've done,  
39 where we are and some of the products we've delivered  
40 from those different stages.

41  
42                   Okay. So this slide kind of talks a  
43 little bit more about those alternatives or options if  
44 you will. Right now we're just going to compare two  
45 very simple options. One being this Option A, which is  
46 what we're currently doing. Our current harvest  
47 strategy has three different tiers. We have a closed  
48 zone, we have an open zone and we have this  
49 conservation measure zone. So that's what we're  
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1 currently using.

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Later down the road if we like this model we can further refine that to have additional areas within a conservation zone, but the concept is that there's an open, closed and something in the middle. Again, the details of that can be refined later, comparing that with an option that is just open and close.

So we're going to start off by evaluating these two very simple models and what we're going to do is we spend a lot of time talking about conservation measures and different things and I think we realize that probably the best way to go about this process instead of trying to figure out what conservation measures are and things like that, the first thing we should do is just put in an assumed level of harvest for these different regions.

And this is a level of harvest that to the best extent we can is based on data that we have and then look at how these two potential harvest strategies would perform with respect to the population and then decide which one we like better. If we like the one better with the yellow zone if you will, then we can talk about what that means. What are we going to do in the yellow zone. What are the conservation measures that we would take.

If we don't like what that does to our objectives, then we can stick with this one and we're not really talking about conservation measures anymore. So we want to start off at the broad scale just thinking about do we want a harvest strategy with conservation measures in it. Then, and if so, then we will focus on that discussion.

So to do that for the green zone we do have data for three years when the harvest was open from 2017-19, so we have an average harvest. It's a little bit under 6,000. So we would be able to use that information for estimating harvest in that zone. We have quite a bit of data on harvest during the closed period, so all the data from prior to 2017 and that was a little over 3,000 approximately. In the middle we're just going to set that harvest level to something in between. So say approximately 4,500 birds.

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1                   Just for the purposes of the modeling  
2 effort to say if we were able to have a conservation  
3 measure that would cut the harvest to the intermediate  
4 level between the open and closed season and then see  
5 how that affects our objectives. So things like  
6 harvest, you know. One year's harvest, multi-year  
7 harvest, how many open seasons do we have in a block of  
8 10 years or something like that, how does it affect the  
9 future population size and then how does it affect the  
10 frequency of regulatory change between open and closed  
11 seasons.

12  
13                   So we would look at these two potential  
14 options and see how that affects these objectives here.  
15 And again from that if we determine that we like the  
16 model that includes a conservation zone, if that seems  
17 to be a better fit for what we want, then we'll spend  
18 some time figuring out what those conservation measures  
19 are. The trick there will be finding conservation  
20 measures that will get us to that harvest level of  
21 approximately 4,500 or whatever we determine is a good  
22 intermediate level.

23  
24                   So that's kind of the approach that  
25 we're going to take right now and that is the modeling  
26 that Erik Osnas will be working on this fall and we're  
27 hoping he will have results available to share in  
28 approximately December or January. So that's kind of  
29 what we're doing right now.

30  
31                   Do people have questions on that  
32 process and the general approach to the modeling that  
33 we're taking?

34  
35                   (No comments)

36  
37                   Okay. Not hearing any, I'll move on.

38  
39                   MR. SCOTT: Hey, Dave, I do.

40  
41                   MR. SAFINE: Go ahead, Ryan.

42  
43                   MR. SCOTT: I've got a couple, I guess.  
44 One, is this just dead birds or are we including eggging  
45 as well?

46  
47                   MR. SAFINE: Okay. That is a great  
48 question. Yes, I think we have data on both. We have  
49 data on bird harvest and egg harvest, so we would want  
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1 to incorporate both of those for sure. That's a good  
2 clarification.

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5 MR. SCOTT: I guess I'm a little  
6 confused, but I get the gist of how you came up with  
7 somewhere in the range of 6,000 birds, eggs, whatever,  
8 while the season's been open. I guess that doesn't  
9 really quite jive with me thinking about some of the  
10 harvest data we've seen from Lili. We can talk offline  
11 or whatever. I'm just kind of curious where -- a  
12 little bit more detail on where that 6,000 birds came.

13

14

15 MR. SAFINE: Okay. Sure. That's  
16 another good question. So the 6,000 birds is basically  
17 -- and the real number is something like 5,800. It's  
18 the average of the estimated harvest that we had from  
19 the AMBCC's HAP program, Harvest Assessment Program,  
20 from the years 2017, '18 and '19.

21

22

23 So the estimates I think in the first  
24 year was pretty low. It was 2,000-some odd birds. The  
25 second year was around 10,000 and the third year was  
26 more moderate around 5,000. So that's the data we  
27 have. So I'm just saying the average of that is in the  
28 neighborhood of 5,800 or so.

29

30

31 MR. SCOTT: Okay. That's fair. I  
32 wasn't thinking about some of the low harvests that  
33 would bring it down. Okay. Thank you.

34

35

36 MR. SAFINE: Yeah. So what we want to  
37 do is just use the data we have available. We have a  
38 lot of years of data under the closed season, so we're  
39 pretty confident that that harvest is in that 3,000  
40 bird range. Then, like I said, just basically plugging  
41 in something in the middle just to see if we could get  
42 harvest to that moderate level, how is that going to  
43 affect our objectives.

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Any other questions on that piece?

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(No comments)

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MR. SAFINE: Okay. And then, like I  
said, based on the results that we see from this effort  
and the ensuing discussions we may have on conservation  
measures, we may realize we left something out or we  
feel like we left something out. Well, this one we  
like, but what about this and we realize we forgot to

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1 include an objective or something early on. Like I  
2 said, we could go back and add that in.

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If we feel like we're missing something, process allows us to go back and make adjustments. So we'll be thinking about that throughout this process of things we missed and the reasons that we may not be satisfied with the outcomes of these various processes. Just know that none of it is set in stone until we sign the plan basically.

Okay. So kind of where we're going with this. The working group, I'm trying to get folks together to hopefully meet in November or as soon as we can sometime in November and that's the five of us. Basically plan our path forward for our winter meeting cycle. So perhaps between November and say May all the meetings we're going to have and try to plan out how we're going to do those. Last winter we met monthly and that seemed to work reasonably well for a lot of people, so I might propose something like that again.

Anyway, first by getting the working group together and then ideally we get that full committee together once the results of that modeling effort are available that Erik is working on. Ideally mid-December or January. So I know it's around the holidays, so it's going to be a little tough to get folks pinned down and we may not be able to meet until January. That's our general plan there.

I believe that was my last slide. So any other additional questions on the effort that the Management Committee is undertaking?

MR. SCOTT: Can you go back to your timeline there, a slide back.

MR. SAFINE: Yes.

MR. SCOTT: So I'm just curious. I know you don't got a glass ball, but when do you think the Executive Committee will see something you'd want us to take action on?

MR. SAFINE: Okay. That's another good question. When are we going to have a product in front of you guys. I would hope that by -- okay, the next time this statewide group would meet would be April. I

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1 would hope -- I'm not going to say we're going to have  
2 a final draft. I'm shooting for a final draft of the  
3 plan by fall 2023.

4  
5 So perhaps by the spring meeting we  
6 would have what I would like to see is a pretty  
7 reasonable concept of the harvest strategy for the full  
8 AMBCC to review. So between now and the spring I'd  
9 like to see us work toward getting that harvest  
10 strategy on paper that's at a reasonable place that  
11 most folks are agreeable with it. If that seems like a  
12 reasonable timeline for everybody.

13  
14 MR. SCOTT: I'm not pushing. Just  
15 curious. Thank you.

16  
17 MR. SAFINE: Yeah.

18  
19 MADAME CHAIR HOSETH: That sounds good.  
20 Would it then be in time for the SRC meeting in the  
21 fall for them to -- if we have a final Emperor Goose  
22 Management Plan or AMBCC one, would that then go to the  
23 SRC for final approval in time for their fall meeting?

24  
25 MR. SAFINE: Okay, another good  
26 question. This one is a little tricky. The management  
27 plans would be approved by the two different councils,  
28 AMBCC and Pacific Flyway Council, but they don't  
29 require approval by the SRC. So the plan itself is  
30 just approved by the Council. Any regulatory actions  
31 that come from those management plans would need to be  
32 approved.

33  
34 So if we did have a new management plan  
35 and it said, hey, underneath the new plan we're going  
36 to recommend action A, B and C, which is some type of  
37 regulatory change, then, yeah, we would have to propose  
38 that by next fall's Pacific Flyway Council meeting. My  
39 guess is we won't be that far to propose a new  
40 regulatory action based on a new plan if we're just  
41 signing it in the fall. Hopefully that clarification  
42 helps.

43  
44 MADAME CHAIR HOSETH: Okay. Is the  
45 Pacific Flyway Council meeting in the fall then if we  
46 were having a final in the fall?

47  
48 MR. SAFINE: Right. So the Pacific  
49 Flyway Council would be meeting probably next year in  
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1 August or September. So, yes, if there is a final  
2 available, it could be signed by that Council around  
3 that time after a meeting in August/September of 2023.

4  
5 MADAME CHAIR HOSETH: Okay.

6  
7 MR. SAFINE: I guess similarly this  
8 management body could sign the plan at this meeting  
9 next year potentially.

10  
11 MADAME CHAIR HOSETH: Okay. Thank you.  
12 I'm in favor of the monthly meetings again, but just  
13 not Mondays at 8:30 a.m. Maybe we could do Tuesday.

14  
15 MR. SAFINE: I would agree. Monday  
16 mornings are no good. So perhaps a Tuesday through  
17 Thursday. Here's a question. We were meeting this  
18 past winter from 9:00 to noon approximately, so we  
19 could propose either a Tuesday/Wednesday or a Thursday  
20 from 9:00 to noon. Does that seem reasonable to  
21 people?

22  
23 MADAME CHAIR HOSETH: Yeah, I think  
24 that would be better. A Tuesday would be better than a  
25 Monday.

26  
27 MR. SAFINE: I think what we did last  
28 winter was the second week of the month for whatever  
29 reason. I could propose we do the same thing again if  
30 folks like that idea.

31  
32 MADAME CHAIR HOSETH: Okay. Karen.

33  
34 MS. PLETNIKOFF: Thanks, Madame Chair.  
35 I just wanted to note that I'm looking forward to this  
36 process, but the concerns I have about the basis for  
37 the model, the new information going into the model and  
38 how these different scenarios play out with that  
39 modeling and understanding those interactions.

40  
41 I feel like we really need to get going  
42 on that to have a thorough discussion about that and  
43 that that part of it was the weak point of the previous  
44 plan where it basically got discussed at the last  
45 minute at the last meeting and then we had to move  
46 forward or we weren't going to have an open harvest.

47  
48 I think having an active management  
49 plan is a goal we all have, but I think we're better  
50

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1 off having that thorough discussion about how these  
2 actually play out before committing to it rather than  
3 pushing back these discussions until we get to a place  
4 where we were rushing it like last time.

5  
6 I just want to encourage the staff from  
7 both of the managing bodies to come with all that you  
8 can to these meetings so that we can really see what  
9 these potential outcomes, these potential decision  
10 points are.

11  
12 Thanks.

13  
14 MADAME CHAIR HOSETH: Good points,  
15 Karen.

16  
17 MR. SCOTT: Karen, I appreciate that  
18 comment. What I'm hoping is that you and I, Gayla,  
19 Jason and Erik can have that exact discussion in  
20 November. That's what I'm kind of hoping for. I think  
21 I sent an email out to folks to try to pin down a day  
22 for that meeting to occur and that would be a great  
23 time to talk with Erik Osnas about where he is in the  
24 process and offer input at that time and think about  
25 what are the key assumptions and make sure we're  
26 comfortable with those key assumptions.

27  
28 Let me know if folks on the working  
29 group can meet and what the best time is in November  
30 and then we'll have that conversation at that time.

31  
32 Thank you.

33  
34 MADAME CHAIR HOSETH: Thank you. Any  
35 other questions for Dave.

36  
37 (No comments)

38  
39 MADAME CHAIR HOSETH: Hearing nothing.  
40 Dave, did you have any more information to present?

41  
42 MR. SAFINE: That's all I have, Madame  
43 Chair. I appreciate the time today and I appreciate  
44 everybody's continued interest and participation in  
45 Emperor goose management. I also really appreciate the  
46 process we went through this summer and the work that  
47 the Yukon-Kuskokwim Delta Region went through to make  
48 sure to provide their feedback to us and let it be  
49 known that they felt like we should be more  
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1 conservative at this time. So I appreciated that  
2 process in getting an opportunity to work with the WCC.

3  
4 That's all I have.

5  
6 Thank you.

7  
8 MADAME CHAIR HOSETH: Yeah. Thank you  
9 for all your work, Dave, and keeping this on track with  
10 the meetings and the work that you are putting into  
11 this. We all have a lot of work in the Emperor goose,  
12 but I appreciate all the work that you've done.

13  
14 Brandon.

15  
16 MR. AHMASUK: Thank you, Madame Chair.  
17 I'd like to request that the Chair recognizes Ben  
18 Charles as he has a question.

19  
20 MADAME CHAIR HOSETH: Oh, yeah. Thank  
21 you. Go ahead, Ben.

22  
23 MR. CHARLES: Quyana. Thank you for  
24 allowing the public to attend. My name is Benjamin  
25 Charles with Inuit Circumpolar Council of Alaska.  
26 Thank you for all the informative information and  
27 different reports and presentations.

28  
29 This question -- I won't take up too  
30 much of your time -- is directed to Dave. My question  
31 is related to the holistic accumulative effects both  
32 natural and anthropogenic of the populations of  
33 migratory birds for instance within your model. Is  
34 there room that would include humans as part of this  
35 food system or within this model?

36  
37 That could be in the form of a variable  
38 of food security and requiring to adapt and relying on  
39 other food sources and decisions that could be made for  
40 managing that population.

41  
42 MR. SAFINE: So our main human  
43 component currently that we're thinking about is really  
44 just in the form of harvest and then I guess anything  
45 that humans are doing to influence the environment in  
46 carrying capacity to how the population may respond to  
47 environmental factors and harvest.

48  
49 So we don't have anything in there  
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1 related to food security, but we would be happy to  
2 entertain any ideas. So if you have some thoughts on  
3 how we could incorporate that, please let us know if  
4 you're interested in attending the meetings. We'd be  
5 happy to listen to that.

6  
7 MR. CHARLES: Thank you. Thank you for  
8 the answer. Appreciate the opportunity to ask the  
9 question, Chair.

10  
11 MADAME CHAIR HOSETH: Thank you.

12  
13 MR. SAFINE: What are your thoughts on  
14 how -- I guess could you expand on that a little bit so  
15 I can make sure I understand that.

16  
17 MR. CHARLES: I'm just thinking of the  
18 quantifiable calculus variables that could be  
19 integrated within a formula that could account for  
20 human adaption in harvest numbers. Like, for instance,  
21 Brandon described the ability to or the need to adapt  
22 in relying on other food sources if one population is  
23 lower than individual subsistence users or for relying  
24 on food security would have to adapt in harvesting  
25 another species or rely on harvesting greater numbers  
26 of different species. If that clarifies your question  
27 or answers your question.

28  
29 MR. SAFINE: Okay. Now I think I  
30 understand that comment better. Unfortunately right  
31 now most of our models are all single species models,  
32 so we're not really thinking about them in the context  
33 of the ecosystem and sort of switching among resources.  
34 But that's a good point and something we should be  
35 thinking about.

36  
37 The good thing in the case of Emperor  
38 geese is that the other species of geese that people  
39 may harvest instead of them are generally doing pretty  
40 well, particularly White-fronted geese. They are  
41 generally more abundant. So we do have some good  
42 options for hunters to harvest other waterfowl  
43 resources that are currently plentiful. That's a good  
44 point.

45  
46 Chuck, I see your hand is up.

47  
48 MR. FROST: Yes. Thanks, Dave. And  
49 thanks, Madame Chair, for the opportunity here to  
50

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1 weight in on this. Ben, that's a great point and I  
2 think the way that this currently works now, we often  
3 have just a population model that we use to sort of  
4 project the population into the future under various  
5 circumstances.

6  
7 This is one rare case in harvest  
8 management in general where we've actually got the  
9 harvest model as well as it's been optimized over the  
10 value system of the three agencies that are represented  
11 here today. When the model was developed, we had  
12 elicited the values for population size from the Native  
13 Caucus, from the State and then from the U.S. Fish and  
14 Wildlife Service. So we actually have food security  
15 built in as it is represented by just the number of  
16 Emperor geese that exist in the world.

17  
18 What I mean by that is we take the  
19 population model and then project forward various  
20 scenarios of harvest. Early on we had a large range of  
21 harvest built into there because as a group we knew  
22 almost nothing about the harvest. We knew there was  
23 some harvest, but probably not tremendous harvest. But  
24 we built tremendous harvest into the model just to sort  
25 of make a more conservative decision in the face of  
26 food security.

27  
28 So just in case there were a lot of  
29 geese harvested in one year or died by some other  
30 manner there was still a cushion built in in the  
31 optimization, in the yellow and red zone, that said we  
32 can still close the season for a year because that  
33 gives it that ability to bounce back for, you know, in  
34 your case, what you call food security.

35  
36 We don't have like a multi-species food  
37 security built in there, but inherently the difference  
38 in this model and the model that the State had  
39 presented way back when was that we explicitly tried to  
40 model and optimize over the value system of the three  
41 agencies. If that makes sense. I'm happy to elaborate  
42 on that.

43  
44 MR. CHARLES: It does. Thank you.  
45 Appreciate it.

46  
47 MADAME CHAIR HOSETH: Thank you for  
48 bringing that up, Ben, and thank you for participating  
49 from the public. There's going to be an opportunity  
50



0081

1 that we're going to have public comments towards the  
2 end of the meeting, but if you see something, go ahead  
3 and raise your hand. I didn't know that you had a  
4 question. Thank you for bringing that to the table.

5

6 Any other questions or comments for  
7 Dave.

8

9 (No comments)

10

11 MADAME CHAIR HOSETH: Thanks, Dave. We  
12 will move on to -- Patty, do we want to do that today  
13 or right now with the agenda change or are we talking  
14 about after we get through old business?

15

16 MS. SCHWALENBERG: After old business,  
17 but we can mention it as long as you brought it up.  
18 Representative Wendy has to leave for a flight  
19 tomorrow, so we requested that -- we put Will Lacy up  
20 as first under new business so that she's available to  
21 answer questions.

22

23 MADAME CHAIR HOSETH: Okay. So you're  
24 just going to be with us today? Did we want to -- I  
25 know that we never approved for an open agenda. I  
26 guess we would have by consensus of the group for  
27 moving agenda items around. Is anyone opposed?

28

29 (No opposing votes)

30

31 MADAME CHAIR HOSETH: Did we want to do  
32 the AMBCC budget now then and move that up or tomorrow?

33

34 MS. LOYA: We'll do it tomorrow. I was  
35 just asking in order to make sure I'm here to help  
36 address questions around the budget that we do it  
37 earlier in the day. I'll have to leave at 12:30. We'll  
38 get a motion to have someone sit in for me when I do  
39 have to leave if the meeting is continuing past 12:30  
40 tomorrow.

41

42 MS. SCHWALENBERG: We can do Lili's  
43 report. Hopefully we can get it done today and then  
44 adjourn at 2:00 and we can do Will first thing tomorrow  
45 morning. Will that work, Wendy?

46

47 MS. LOYA: Fantastic. I appreciate it.

48

49 MADAME CHAIR HOSETH: That sounds

50

0082

1 great. Thank you. So we will now turn to Liliana  
2 Naves with ADF&G for the Harvest Assessment Program.  
3 Hi, Lili.

4  
5 MS. NAVES: Thank you, Madame Chair. I  
6 will ask to share my screen so I can have a visual  
7 there as we move along. Are you seeing my screen?

8  
9 MADAME CHAIR HOSETH: Yes, we do.

10  
11 MS. NAVES: Okay. Thank you. So I  
12 usually provide a written summary for the topics  
13 related to the Harvest Assessment Program and the bird  
14 related work done at the Division of Subsistence of the  
15 Alaska Department of Fish and Game. So those materials  
16 start on Page 48 of the meeting package and it starts  
17 with one or two page summary there. I'll have some  
18 additional slides to illustrate some topics.

19  
20 Starting on item number one of my  
21 update is just a quick record that the AMBCC has  
22 decided to cancel the annual harvest survey in 2022  
23 because of insufficient funding and the AMBCC is still  
24 to decide how to move forward with the annual survey in  
25 the years ahead. So we're not getting data collection  
26 this year and we are up to date with the final reports  
27 for all the previous years of surveys. So we're  
28 current on reporting.

29  
30 A brief budget update on item number  
31 two. Fish and Wildlife Service has established a  
32 predator agreement with the Division of Subsistence of  
33 Fish and Game to cover specifically the work related  
34 with permit reporting for the 2022 Cordova and Kodiak  
35 Island roaded area permit for the spring season and all  
36 other work done by the Division of Subsistence in the  
37 report here today are covered by other grants and soft  
38 funding that we have been able to secure to competitive  
39 grants and using matching funds from the Division of  
40 Subsistence.

41  
42 An update on staffing. Lara Mengak  
43 that had worked with us for the last two previous years  
44 she recently left her State job to pursue grad school.  
45 She moved to Oregon. So I'm again back to one person  
46 working with birds there at the Division of  
47 Subsistence. As both her position and my position are  
48 based on soft funds, I don't have plans to refill that  
49 position in the short immediate term here.

50

0083

1                   Going down to item number three. I'm  
2 working with the local partners for the permit  
3 reporting for the 2022 Cordova and Kodiak Island Roaded  
4 Area Permit Reporting. The local partners issue the  
5 permit on demand at their local offices. So the local  
6 partners are the Forest Service and the Eyak Tribe at  
7 Cordova. The tribal councils for Tatitlek and Chenega,  
8 this is for the Cordova permit, and the Shungnak Tribe  
9 for the Kodiak permit. So we work closely with  
10 partners to implement the required harvest reporting  
11 for those permits.

12  
13                   Data collection is done by mail. We  
14 receive the information for permits issued from our  
15 local partners and we made three ways of reminders and  
16 forms for the permit holders to report their harvest.  
17 They're mostly done with data work for Cordova because  
18 their season closed earlier in the year. So far we  
19 have 63 percent reporting rate and some still trickling  
20 in. For the Kodiak permit we just mailed the first  
21 mailing, so we still have two more to go. Right now  
22 we're about four to five percent response rate, but we  
23 still have more to come.

24  
25                   So I would like to thank for the  
26 collaboration and working together with our local  
27 partners for this work on the permits.

28  
29                   Moving on item number four. This  
30 relates to the permit reporting for 2021, so last year  
31 for the Kodiak area. We have shared results and worked  
32 with Fish and Wildlife Service and the Shungnak Tribe  
33 to address comments and questions. We discussed the  
34 results on the March meeting of the Kodiak Regional  
35 body, but there was no quorum to vote on adoption. So  
36 just a reminder that's standing there and I'll keep in  
37 touch with our regional partners there to get that all  
38 wrapped up.

39  
40                   That is the summary for the Kodiak 2021  
41 permit results. That's on Page 50 of the meeting  
42 package. It has three pages.

43  
44                   Now moving on to the Emperor Goose  
45 Harvest Management Projects. So when we started  
46 working with Emperor goose with different questions  
47 related to harvest management and some gaps in harvest  
48 data, the Division of Subsistence obtained PR funding  
49 with a match from the Division of Subsistence back in  
50

0084

1 2019 to conduct four projects that addressed different  
2 questions related to Emperor goose harvest management.

3

4

5 We are now halfway through that work.  
6 We have mostly completed the work on two of those  
7 projects. There are summary results on the meeting  
8 package starting on Page 53 for these projects. So one  
9 of the projects that is now mostly wrapped up we're  
10 just working on final reporting for those projects that  
11 are published as peer reviewed articles. We already  
12 have those reports reviewed by the AMBCC.

13

14

15 We shared presentations at past AMBCC  
16 meetings. We already shared this one-page before. So  
17 this is just to keep this fresh in our memories that  
18 these studies exist. The intent of conducting them  
19 were to help inform the review of the management plans  
20 and we hope that these studies will be helpful with  
21 that as we move forward.

22

23

24 So one of the projects was based on  
25 expert opinion and we worked with Native managers,  
26 managers at State and Federal agencies and the  
27 researchers that work with Emperor goose to identify  
28 priorities for information needs and conservation  
29 action. Also to clarify perspectives of different  
30 groups.

31

32

33 One of the results of this study it  
34 seems that there is a difference in perspectives  
35 between Native managers and biologists and Federal and  
36 State managers regarding the value of egg harvest as a  
37 conservation manage. Traditionally in population  
38 dynamics it's understood that eggs contribute a little  
39 to population growth because there's lots of mortality  
40 that happens between the egg state until birds are  
41 ready to breed two or three years later, as in the case  
42 of the Emperor goose.

43

44

45 So I think that this may be where  
46 biologists and Federal and State managers come with the  
47 perspectives that maybe egg harvest may not be a very  
48 effective conservation measure. I mean closing egg  
49 harvest. But that seems important for Native users and  
50 Native managers. That came up on this study. We see  
continuing through the support of the AVCP for  
continuation of the egg closure, the egg harvest  
closure.

49

50

0085

1                   So it will be interesting to understand  
2 better how Native users and managers understand how  
3 curtailing egg harvest helps with conservation. Maybe  
4 it's not taking the eggs per se, but maybe there are  
5 other things that happen that they understand that's  
6 important.

7  
8                   So when you do studies like that  
9 sometimes we clarify which are the differences, but we  
10 didn't have all the information to understand why this  
11 is different in perspective. So this was one of the  
12 results. There are other things in this study that  
13 came out to similarities and adversity of perspectives.

14  
15                   The other study that is largely  
16 completed we took a look at fall/winter harvest  
17 management. We compared the results from the permit  
18 reporting with household harvest surveys. We also did  
19 a survey of permit holders. One of the results of that  
20 study is that there is data that suggests that people  
21 that get a permit they are reporting their harvest.  
22 The reporting rate is 96 percent. But for two regions  
23 for which we had data it seems that not all hunters are  
24 getting the permit.

25  
26                   So the household surveys are indicating  
27 a higher harvest than indicated by the permits. This  
28 has already -- household permits are known to perform  
29 better than permits in many cases. For instance those  
30 results also mirror for moose tickets, for salmon  
31 reporting on fisheries and also for the swan permit.  
32 So Emperor goose is not an isolated case. This is just  
33 one result of that study. The full set of results are  
34 in the one pager.

35  
36                   So there are two other projects about  
37 Emperor goose that we already completed data collection  
38 in 2021 and now we are completing that analysis in  
39 writing results. Our next step now is to get things  
40 set up to do data review at the community level with  
41 the people that worked for this study. When data  
42 review happens at that level we will bring our results  
43 for review at the AMBCC.

44  
45                   So one of these studies the project  
46 summary is on the meeting package on Page 57. So one  
47 of the studies was to try to better understand local  
48 and traditional knowledge of subsistence users related  
49 to Emperor goose and the perspectives of subsistence  
50

0086

1 users about harvest management and conservation.

2

3

4 So data collection for these projects  
5 happened during the height of Covid, so we had to  
6 improvise and do what we could do at that time. So for  
7 this project we did key respondent interviews by  
8 telephone, which the Division has not done before. We  
9 understand the challenge with that, but that's what  
10 would be possible to do at that time.

10

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On this map here we see the communities where we interviewed people across the distribution range of the Emperor goose. The smaller circles are the communities where we interviewed one or two people. The larger circles are the communities where we interviewed three to five people.

I'd like to thank our AMBCC partners and the people in the communities and other management bodies that helped us identify potential candidates for those interviews. They identified more than -- about 117 people and we were able to complete 37 interviews. Understand that for lots of those people we couldn't find, we could not get contact information or could not get a hold of them. But 37 key respondent interviews is pretty robust information for traditional knowledge studies and we are now working on those results. All interviews have been transcribed and such we are moving down the line there with this project.

The fourth project about harvest management for Emperor goose that we are doing was bird harvest surveys in the Aleutian and the Kodiak regions. So those regions have not been included in the AMBCC annual harvest surveys, but this data gap became more apparent when we started work with Emperor goose harvest management. So we conducted a bird harvest survey including all kinds of birds as well as Emperor goose to get harvest data for these regions for which we don't have much harvest information.

So again the data collection for this project was conducted during the height of Covid in April and March 2021. We worked with the tribal councils and the local research assistants to get surveys delivered door to door and people completed the surveys on their own and send them back to us by the mail. We did surveys in eight or nine communities and I'd like to thank the tribal councils and the local

0087

1 research assistants that helped in that data collection  
2 and I'm going to name them.

3

4

5 So that was Mik Turnvall for Adak;  
6 Carmen Bereskin for Akutan; Michelle Gronholdt for Sand  
7 Point; Aaron Lestenkof and Paul Melovidov for Saint  
8 Paul; Marilyn Arneson for Larsen Bay; Renae Kewan for  
9 Port Lions; Danielle Butts, Daniel Hernandez, and  
10 Dahlia Berns for Kodiak City; Emilia Hakansson for the  
11 Kodiak Road connected area; and Alicia Short-McEwan for  
12 Womens Bay. A big thank you also go to all households  
13 that completed that harvest survey.

13

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Surveys were delivered to about 2,600 households. We boosted sample sizes with phone surveys. In total for all communities we completed 565 surveys. The intent of the surveys is to generate harvest estimates at the regional level. So we're going to use the data from all those communities and generate harvest estimates in a broader geographic area.

Here is the map for the communities in those areas. So the blue dots are the communities that we can look at the survey in 2020. So the survey has to cover 2020 harvest and the other communities in the regions are the red dots on the map.

Next I'll try to give an update on two relatively new projects that we are conducting at the Division of Subsistence to generate updated harvest estimates for waterfowl and/or ptarmigan and grouse. So those are two separate projects, but they have lots of similarity in the sense that they don't rely on new data collection. We are using all data that's already published and publicly available to generate updated harvest estimates for those two groups of birds that are very important subsistence resources.

So for waterfowl the statewide overview that was last done was in the mid '90s and the waterfowl was about 85 percent of the total bird harvest, so it was time to refresh those harvest estimates. For ptarmigan and grouse, they are bird resources. They account for at least 10 percent of the total bird harvest in the state. But because of the management history we have had much more attention on the harvest assessment for migratory birds, but not much attention on our resident birds. So this would be

0088

1 the first time that you are taking a look on those  
2 important subsistence resources of our resident  
3 species.

4  
5 For those harvest estimates I'm pulling  
6 together a large dataset that includes published data  
7 from the AMBCC harvest survey as well as other surveys  
8 conducted over decades by the Division of Subsistence,  
9 which are publicly available in the community  
10 subsistence information system, which is an online  
11 publicly available database.

12  
13 They also include as available surveys  
14 conducted by other entities such as universities and  
15 Native organizations. For instance Kawerak has  
16 conducted harvest surveys and the North Slope has a  
17 strong tradition in doing harvest surveys in the North  
18 Slope. So we try to gather all data that is available  
19 and compatible when we try to put all data together.  
20 draft report for review and input by AMBCC partners.

21  
22 This is also funded with PR funds and  
23 Jason Schamber of the Waterfowl Program at Fish and  
24 Game is a partner for the waterfowl component and Rick  
25 Merizon with the Small Game Program at Fish and Game is  
26 a partner for the ptarmigan and grouse study.

27  
28 Next I'd like to give an update on work  
29 ongoing with the shorebird outreach in the Y-K Delta.  
30 There is material also in the meeting package for this  
31 project and I have a few additional slides here that  
32 will show what I'm telling.

33  
34 We have been hearing concerns about the  
35 conservation status of shorebirds. This is back to  
36 2012. I was receiving data requests at the flyway  
37 level regarding harvest of shorebirds in Alaska. In  
38 2017 we were able to secure funds to generate an  
39 overview of shorebird harvest for all the rural areas  
40 in Alaska.

41  
42 As part of that project we also  
43 conducted key respondent interviews to better  
44 understand traditional knowledge and perspectives of  
45 indigenous peoples about shorebirds in the Y-K Delta.  
46 So the harvest estimates over all the rural regions --  
47 for the indigenous knowledge part we focus on the Y-K  
48 Delta because we cannot do everything. That was what  
49 we could do at the time.

50





0090

1 interviews we learned that -- first you've got to  
2 understand better about the basics of the shorebird  
3 local names and ethnotaxonomy. This means how local  
4 people name and group those birds in different  
5 categories. So we're able to create a common  
6 vocabulary to communicate when we talk about  
7 shorebirds.

8

9 We also heard from local people that  
10 they have seen fewer shorebirds in their area. We also  
11 heard that the younger generations are less familiar  
12 with the shorebirds and their traditional names and  
13 that the elders and the older generations are more  
14 familiar with the traditional bird names.

15

16 We also heard that people were  
17 interested in learning more where those birds go  
18 because lots of people they know that the birds go  
19 south when comes fall, but they don't know where those  
20 birds go.

21

22 So we developed a place- and  
23 culture-based outreach project that would allow us also  
24 to further share the results of that study with the  
25 local communities. So shorebirds are a great  
26 educational team. They produce a context and materials  
27 for lessons, culture, social/emotional, language arts,  
28 science, geography and social studies.

29

30 The activities and materials we  
31 developed for this program are aligned with the latest  
32 curriculum standards and we partnered with the Wildlife  
33 Conservation -- or Wildlife Education Program at the  
34 Fish and Game. They have staff that has special  
35 training and experience. The network of working with  
36 the local school districts and Brenda Duty is our  
37 partner there at the education program.

38

39 So we had planned to go to schools and  
40 have staff visits and we obtained village consent to  
41 formal tribal resolutions with the tribal councils to  
42 visit the schools, but then during Covid we were  
43 clearly unable to visit schools. So we expanded and  
44 made a robust program to work with the local educators.  
45 So this program now is largely working in collaboration  
46 with the local schools, the local educators and the  
47 school districts.

48

49 We offer a kit, a package of materials

50

0091

1 for the local educators. We can help getting started  
2 with those materials via workshop. The educators can  
3 choose and adapt the materials to better meet the  
4 learning needs and goals that they have. Now we can  
5 have a staff visit to schools to help educators using  
6 those materials. Before and after the activities there  
7 is a quick online survey for students and educators so  
8 we can assess how learning changed with the use of the  
9 program and for them to provide feedback to improve the  
10 program.

11

12 So in the last year, in winter to  
13 spring last year, the program was used in eight  
14 communities in the Y-K Delta. This was in Nunapitchuk.  
15 The kids were painting godwits. Using materials for  
16 the program the school at the Hooper Bay reached out to  
17 Pukorokoro Miranda Shorebird Center in New Zealand  
18 where the bar-tailed godwits winter.

19

20 Working together the school in Hooper  
21 Bay and the Pukorokoro Center arranged a gathering via  
22 Zoom, including participation of Maori Culture there,  
23 so Maori are the indigenous people from New Zealand and  
24 they have lots of strong connections with godwits that  
25 are very interesting to learn about and a big point of  
26 connection for Native peoples across the migration  
27 route of the bar-tailed godwit.

28

29 Following the activity the kids painted  
30 a shorebird flock on wooden silhouettes and they sent  
31 that down to the Pukorokoro Center in New Zealand and  
32 these are the birds from Hooper Bay that are there  
33 embellishing the lounge in the Pukorokoro Center in New  
34 Zealand. So this activity that we used on the outreach  
35 project is also being used by other places along the  
36 flyway as a way to connect the peoples and the cultures  
37 along the migratory routes of the shorebirds.

38

39 For more information about this program  
40 there is a folio for the program on Page 59 of the  
41 meeting package and through the QR codes there you can  
42 access the website for the program and the second QR  
43 code are for educators that are interested in  
44 participating in the program. There is contact  
45 information for myself and Brenda.

46

47 We are now planning on activities for  
48 the fall/winter, but with the storm that just hit in  
49 western Alaska we are giving some time for the local  
50

0092

1 communities and schools to kind of get grounded again  
2 and we may resume activities when conditions are more  
3 favorable.

4  
5 Also in the meeting package is a  
6 pamphlet that was produced in English and Yup'ik that  
7 has the core material or the core content and message  
8 for the outreach project and other activities and the  
9 materials pulled from this pamphlet.

10  
11 As a last update I'd like to invite  
12 everyone in Anchorage to attend the presentation that I  
13 was asked to offer at the Alaska Zoo next week. They  
14 have a program during the winter on Wednesdays that's  
15 called the Wildlife Wednesdays that is a public program  
16 targeted for adults and teenagers. We already did a  
17 presentation there a few years ago when we had this  
18 Migratory Bird Treaty Act. We talked about bird  
19 harvest and subsistence bird harvest and the impacts of  
20 the Migratory Bird Treaty on the traditional harvests.

21  
22 This time I'm planning to talk about  
23 the wild foods in the economy of Alaska remote  
24 communities and talk some about the bird harvest and  
25 the importance of birds in Alaska Native cultures. So  
26 it's a public program and everyone can attend.

27  
28 When I do presentations like that I  
29 like to bring a first voice. So when talking for  
30 instance about the importance of birds in Native  
31 cultures I like to share codes for interviews that we  
32 have done in traditional knowledge interviews about  
33 birds. So I share those codes so we can have a first  
34 voice of the indigenous peoples speaking from  
35 themselves.

36  
37 Thank you very much. That's what I  
38 have for my update.

39  
40 If you have questions, I'll be happy to  
41 take them.

42  
43 MADAME CHAIR HOSETH: Thank you, Lili.  
44 You covered quite a bit of topics. I had some  
45 questions, but I wanted to see if anybody had any  
46 questions from the group for Lili.

47  
48 (No comments)

49  
50

0093

1 MADAME CHAIR HOSETH: I had a question  
2 for you, Lili. Going back to the survey results for  
3 the harvest survey data. I don't remember what page it  
4 was on where we had the harvest survey results and it  
5 was on the Emperor goose with the number of permits and  
6 the number of birds harvested. There was a little  
7 graph, a little table.

8  
9 MS. NAVES: Would you like to go back  
10 to that?

11  
12 MADAME CHAIR HOSETH: And if you could  
13 explain. There was one that had 1,900. Was that for  
14 the 2018? Is that the one with just in general the  
15 harvest survey results or was that specifically with  
16 Emperor geese.

17  
18 MS. NAVES: Let me navigate to my pages  
19 here. Okay, I found it. I'll try to share that.

20  
21 MADAME CHAIR HOSETH: While you're  
22 looking for it, thank you for all the work that you're  
23 doing.

24  
25 MS. NAVES: Thank you. So I don't  
26 waste too much time sharing the screen and such. That  
27 is on Page 55 of the meeting package. For some reason  
28 my PowerPoint got stuck.

29  
30 MS. SCHWALENBERG: Which document is  
31 it, Lili? I can pull it up maybe.

32  
33 MS. NAVES: Oh, thank you. So that is  
34 on Page 55 of the meeting package and it has kind of  
35 yellow banners on the top and bottom of the page.

36  
37 MADAME CHAIR HOSETH: Right there.  
38 There it is. It starts off Human Dimensions of  
39 Fall-Winter Emperor Goose Harvest Management at the  
40 top.

41  
42 MS. NAVES: Yes. So this table there  
43 we look at numbers of birds reported on the permits.  
44 Number of birds reported on the AMBCC harvest surveys  
45 by rural hunters only. So that's rural only because  
46 the AMBCC does not cover hunters in other parts of the  
47 state, so I had to narrow this comparison for the rural  
48 areas only. It has the estimated harvest based on the  
49 AMBCC survey. This is only for the three regions for  
50

0094

1 which we had data.

2

3

4 So for 2017-2019 from Bering Strait  
5 Region for instance, in 2017 three geese were reported  
6 via the permit -- for the Bering Strait Region on the  
7 first three years of the permit we never got a bird  
8 detected harvest there via the permit system. But if  
9 you look at the raw data from the AMBCC survey, we had  
10 the three birds in 2017, 42 birds in 2018 and 0 birds  
11 in 2019. On the last column there to the right side is  
12 the estimates based on these reported numbers.

12

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So for the purpose of AMBCC survey what matters is the estimated numbers. The reported numbers is just raw data. But for Emperor goose as well as other birds that are harvested in relatively low numbers the harvest estimates have a wide confidence interval. That is just how the data is. There is lots of variation in data. It's intrinsic to the data and there is really not much that can be done to narrow this confidence interval. It's just intrinsic to the data.

But there has been lots of debate on using this data for harvest management because the confidence intervals are wide. So the AMBCC has asked to report the raw numbers. So what we're seeing there are the raw numbers reported on the AMBCC annual reports and the harvest estimates that go along.

MADAME CHAIR HOSETH: Okay. Thank you. I just wanted to circle back to that table. I just had a question as you were going through. Karen put a thank you for all the work that you are doing as well and how important this data collection is. So we really appreciate the work that you do.

Ryan, you have a question. Go ahead.

MR. SCOTT: Just a comment. Another comment about the AMBCC workshop that we had down here. Lili did a lot for that as well. Not only did we have all the partners from the AMBCC, but Lili put in a ton of time with other Division of Subsistence staff. For folks that came up to this they had -- which is different for them. It's largely unique to us, the subsistence use of wildlife resources like we do. I just wanted to say thank you, Lili, for all that.

0095

1                                   And good luck at the zoo. I wish I  
2 could be there. I think it would be pretty fun.

3  
4                                   MS. NAVES: Thank you. So for the  
5 shorebird work -- I'm seeing that Wendy chimed in there  
6 on the chat box. I'd like to acknowledge funding for  
7 that project. So that project was initially funded by  
8 a grant from the NFWF, the National Fish and Wildlife  
9 Foundation. That grant is a 50 percent match and used  
10 a match from the -- at the time with the funding that  
11 we had from the Wildlife Conservation for Fish and  
12 Game. Now funding for that program, for the Shorebird  
13 Outreach, is coming from the Science Applications  
14 Program for Fish and Wildlife Service. So we have  
15 funding for one more year or one more round of the  
16 shorebird work and I really appreciate the funding from  
17 the Science Applications Program from Fish and Wildlife  
18 Service for that.

19  
20                                   Thank you.

21  
22                                   MADAME CHAIR HOSETH: Thank you, Lili.  
23 Anybody else.....

24  
25                                   MS. NAVES: One more thing before I  
26 forget. Sorry.

27  
28                                   MADAME CHAIR HOSETH: That's okay.

29  
30                                   MS. NAVES: It would be important for  
31 us to coordinate with Dave Safine and Chuck Frost and  
32 other folks working on that so we can coordinate for  
33 harvest data that is coming regarding Emperor goose.  
34 For instance, we have preliminary harvest estimates for  
35 the Kodiak and Aleutian areas, which we didn't have in  
36 the past at all. So this data is for the period after  
37 the opening. So this is coming soon here.

38  
39                                   Also we have statewide harvest  
40 estimates for Emperor goose that are coming with the  
41 waterfowl project. For that part of the project we  
42 narrow the data for Emperor goose just for the period  
43 prior to the opening because we didn't have much data  
44 after the opening. So with this we had a clear cut  
45 there from the management timeframe. So to make sure  
46 that we have those numbers that are the most current as  
47 we go along. I'm thinking about the timeline that Dave  
48 Safine was explaining. I'm afraid I'm a little behind  
49 there as it goes data review and such, but let's try to  
50

0096

1 coordinate for that.

2

3 Thank you.

4

5 MADAME CHAIR HOSETH: You got a thumbs  
6 up from Dave. Anybody have anything else. Oh, there's  
7 that picture of the krill that we were talking about  
8 that got washed up on the beach. So you guys can get a  
9 picture of that. I don't know if you guys seen that.  
10 Is that you pulling that up, Patty?

11

12 MS. SCHWALENBERG: Yeah. Brandon sent  
13 it to me.

14

15 MADAME CHAIR HOSETH: Okay. Nice.  
16 Yeah, that was surprising how many there are there.

17

18 MS. SCHWALENBERG: Crazy.

19

20 MADAME CHAIR HOSETH: Thank you for the  
21 presentation, Lili. I don't think that anybody has any  
22 questions for that. It looks like we're about three  
23 minutes to 2:00. Looking at our agenda we would be  
24 able to just start fresh tomorrow with new business and  
25 we could put Will Lacy right at the top as requested if  
26 there's no objections to that. I believe that we'll be  
27 able to go through and have good discussion with the  
28 survey results, USGS, the seabird die-off and then the  
29 avian influenza. We'll have a lot of issues to talk  
30 about with that presentation as well.

31

32 Do we need a motion to recess or could  
33 I just recess the meeting?

34

35 MR. SCOTT: I think we could just  
36 recess. It's not adjourn.

37

38 MADAME CHAIR HOSETH: Right.

39

40 MS. SCHWALENBERG: I think so too.

41

42 MADAME CHAIR HOSETH: I think we need a  
43 motion to recess and then we'll just go into recess.

44

45 MR. LOYA: Wendy Loya will make a  
46 motion to recess.

47

48 MADAME CHAIR HOSETH: Thank you.

49

50



0097

1 MR. HARRIS: Second.

2

3 MADAME CHAIR HOSETH: Who seconded it?

4 Priscilla?

5

6 MR. HARRIS: Cyrus.

7

8 MADAME CHAIR HOSETH: Oh, Cyrus. Okay.

9 It's been moved and seconded. Any discussion.

10

11 (No comments)

12

13 MADAME CHAIR HOSETH: All those signify

14 by saying aye. Oh, did you have something, Gloria?

15

16 MS. STICKWAN: We convene at 9:00 in

17 the morning?

18

19 MADAME CHAIR HOSETH: Yes, at 9:00.

20

21 MR. HARRIS: Is that with the same link

22 that we got on today or is there going to be a new link

23 for tomorrow morning?

24

25 MS. SCHWALENBERG: Same link.

26

27 MR. HARRIS: Same link. Okay.

28

29 MADAME CHAIR HOSETH: Good discussions.

30 Good meeting. All those in favor of the motion signify

31 by saying aye.

32

33 IN UNISON: Aye.

34

35 MADAME CHAIR HOSETH: Those opposed

36 same sign.

37

38 (No opposing votes)

39

40 MADAME CHAIR HOSETH: Motion carries.

41 We'll recess until tomorrow at 9:00.

42

43 Thank you, everybody.

44

45 (Off record)

46

47 (PROCEEDINGS TO BE CONTINUED)

48

49

50

