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ALASKA MIGRATORY BIRD
CO-MANAGEMENT COUNCIL

Dimond Center Hotel
Anchorage, Alaska

January 26, 2006
9:00 a.m.

Members Present:

- Doug Alcorn, U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service
 - Matt Robus, Alaska Department of Fish and Game
 - Joeneal Hicks, Copper River Native Association
 - Taqulik Hepa, North Slope Borough
 - Peter Devine, Aleutian/Pribilof Islands Association
 - Ralph Andersen, Bristol Bay Native Association
 - Myron Naneng/Tim Anderson, AVCP, YK-Delta Region
 - Herman Squartsoff, Kodiak Area Native Association
 - Matt Kookesh, Central Council of Tlingit-Haida Indian Tribes
 - Patty Brown-Schwalenberg, Chugach Regional Resource Commission
 - Fred Armstrong, Executive Director
- Recorded and transcribed by:
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P R O C E E D I N G S

(Anchorage, Alaska - 1/26/2006)

(On record)

CHAIRMAN ALCORN: Why don't we go ahead and get ready to take our seats and we'll kick this off.

By pounding on the gavel, I guess, I'm calling the meeting to order. Before we go any further we'll begin the meeting with a traditional moment of silence. We don't have it on the agenda but we'll go ahead and do that and then we'll begin to go through the agenda.

(Moment of silence)

CHAIRMAN ALCORN: All right, thank you. The first thing on the agenda, I understand that you all have packets in front of you, the first thing on the agenda after the moment of silence is to seat the alternates.

I recognize a couple of new faces. Do we have letters that appoint those individuals, Fred.

MR. ARMSTRONG: Thank you, Mr. Chair. We have Southeast Alaska Tribal Fish and Game Commission appointing Matt Kookesh as the alternate representing Southeast.

CHAIRMAN ALCORN: Welcome Matt.

MR. KOOKESH: Thank you.

MR. ARMSTRONG: I think that's the only one we received.

CHAIRMAN ALCORN: Okay.

MR. ANDERSEN: Mr. Chairman. I move that we seat Matt.

MR. SQUARTSOFF: Second.

CHAIRMAN ALCORN: All right, we have a first and a second. Does anyone oppose the motion.

(No opposition)

CHAIRMAN ALCORN: Seeing none, Matt, you're

1 seated.
2
3 MR. KOOKESH: All right, thank you.
4
5 CHAIRMAN ALCORN: Welcome. Thanks, Ralph.
6 All right, we're going to do a roll call. Austin is not
7 here, he's our secretary, I'll ask Fred, the Executive
8 Director, Fred Armstrong to do the roll call for us.
9
10 MR. ARMSTRONG: AVCP.
11
12 (No comments)
13
14 MR. ARMSTRONG: Bristol Bay Native
15 Association.
16
17 MR. ANDERSEN: Here.
18
19 MR. ARMSTRONG: Chugach Regional Resource
20 Commission.
21
22 (No comments)
23
24 MR. ARMSTRONG: Copper River Native
25 Association.
26
27 MR. HICKS: Here.
28
29 MR. ARMSTRONG: Kawerak, Mr. Chairman, is not
30 going to be here.
31
32 Central Council of Tlingit-Haida Indian
33 Tribes.
34
35 MR. KOOKESH: Here.
36
37 MR. ARMSTRONG: Kodiak Area Native
38 Association.
39
40 MR. SQUARTSOFF: Here.
41
42 MR. ARMSTRONG: Mr. Chairman, Enoch Shiedt
43 called me yesterday and said he wouldn't be here for the
44 meeting.
45
46 North Slope Borough.
47
48 MS. HEPA: Here.
49
50 MR. ARMSTRONG: Tanana Chiefs Conference.

1 (No comments)
2
3 MR. ARMSTRONG: Alaska Department of Fish and
4 Game.
5
6 MR. ROBUS: Here.
7
8 MR. ARMSTRONG: U.S. Fish and Wildlife
9 Service.
10
11 CHAIRMAN ALCORN: Here.
12
13 MR. ARMSTRONG: You have a quorum, Mr. Chair.
14
15 CHAIRMAN ALCORN: Thank you.
16
17 MR. ARMSTRONG: Aleutian Pribilofs.
18
19 MR. DEVINE: Here.
20
21 MR. ARMSTRONG: Sorry, Peter.
22
23 CHAIRMAN ALCORN: We saw Peter come in a
24 little bit late, he's here.
25
26 All right, we do have a quorum. We have next
27 on the agenda is introductions. Shall we go around and just
28 introduce ourselves.
29
30 I'm Doug Alcorn, I'm with the U.S. Fish and
31 Wildlife Service, Assistant Regional Director for Migratory
32 Birds and State Programs is my title. I've been with the
33 Council for four or five year and my second term to Chair.
34 And I'll go that way to Matt.
35
36 MR. ROBUS: Matt Robus. Director of Wildlife
37 Conservation, Alaska Department of Fish and Game from Juneau.
38
39 MR. ANDERSEN: Ralph Andersen. CEO, Bristol
40 Bay Native Association.
41
42 MR. HICKS: Joeneal Hicks. Copper River
43 area, AHTNA region.
44
45 MR. SQUARTSOFF: Yeah, Herman Squartsoff. I
46 believe now officially of the Shoonag Tribal Kodiak region.
47
48 MR. DEVINE: Peter Devine, APIA region.
49
50 MS. HEPA: Taqulik Hepa. Director of the

1 North Slope Borough, Department of Wildlife Management.
2
3 MR. KOOKESH: Matt Kookesh. I chair the
4 Southeast Alaska Intertribal Fish and Wildlife Commission
5 which is a consortium of Tlingit-Haida.
6
7 MR. ARMSTRONG: Fred Armstrong, Executive
8 Director for the Council.
9
10 CHAIRMAN ALCORN: And let's go through the
11 audience, we'll start with you Cynthia.
12
13 MS. WENTWORTH: I'm Cynthia Wentworth.
14 Subsistence harvest survey coordinator for migratory birds.
15
16 MR. OSTRAND: Bill Ostrand. Staff to the
17 Council.
18
19 MR. ROTHE: Tom Rothe. Waterfowl
20 coordinator, Department of Fish and Game.
21
22 MR. SIMEONOFF: I'm Mitch Simeonoff from the
23 village of Akhiok. Chairman of the Alaska Native Partners
24 for (away from microphone).
25
26 MS. CASTRODALE: I'm Louisa Castrodale and I
27 work for the State Health Department.
28
29 MR. FISCHER: Julian Fischer, U.S. Fish and
30 Wildlife Service.
31
32 MR. OATES: Russ Oates, U.S. Fish and
33 Wildlife Service, waterfowl management.
34
35 MR. LEEDY: Bob Leedy, Fish and Wildlife
36 Service, Division of Migratory Bird Management.
37
38 MS. ROCQUE: Deborah Rocque, Fish and
39 Wildlife Service, Avian influenza coordinator.
40
41 MR. PAINTER: Kevin Painter, U.S. Fish and
42 Wildlife Service, Refuge Information Technician coordinator.
43
44 MR. BURNER: I'm Jim Burner. I'm the
45 director of Community Health for the Alaska Native Tribal
46 Health Consortium.
47
48 MS. DEWHURST: I'm Donna Dewhurst, Staff.
49
50 MR. ARMSTRONG: Okay, Fred's just reminded me

1 that we do have a sign-in sheet and I believe it's over here
2 on this table. If you've not signed in, we'd appreciate it
3 at the break, if you'd make sure that we get your name and
4 any other information that's on the sheet for us.

5
6 Well, we have two new titles, Fred just
7 reminded me. We did hear them in the introductions. But
8 Ralph is the CEO of the Bristol Bay Native Association,
9 right, congratulations, Ralph, on your new job, you've been
10 in it a year now?

11
12 MR. ANDERSEN: No.

13
14 CHAIRMAN ALCORN: Has it been that long?

15
16 MR. ANDERSEN: Four months.

17
18 UNIDENTIFIED VOICE: It just feels that way.

19
20 CHAIRMAN ALCORN: Four months.

21
22 MR. ANDERSEN: It feels like a year.

23
24 CHAIRMAN ALCORN: It feels like a year.

25
26 (Laughter)

27
28 CHAIRMAN ALCORN: And Taqulik is the director
29 now, right, of the North Slope Borough.....

30
31 MS. HEPA: Department of Wildlife.

32
33 CHAIRMAN ALCORN:Department of
34 Wildlife. Congratulations.

35
36 All right, well, we're at Item 5 on the
37 agenda where we will hear any public comment. We typically
38 do that as sort of a tradition and a process of order for our
39 meetings. This meeting is a little bit different because
40 it's an ad hoc meeting called by me for the sole purpose of
41 discussing avian influenza. If there are any comments from
42 the public that you wish to be put on the record, you have my
43 okay to sit at the microphone after my illustrious colleague
44 on my left says something.

45
46 MR. ROBUS: Thanks, Doug. I just wanted to
47 mention to the Council. I'm apparently involved in some
48 legal issues today so I'm going to be stepping out to the
49 phone quite often and I just want to let you know before that
50 starts happening that it's not due to any lack of interest in

1 avian influenza issues. I've been involved with that now for
2 a couple of months, well, no, since August, and I'm highly
3 interested and highly involved but unfortunately may be
4 pulled in a couple of different directions today and I wanted
5 to apologize beforehand.

6
7 CHAIRMAN ALCORN: Thank you, Matt. Is there
8 anyone in the audience have anything that they'd like to say
9 before we go, put it on the record.

10
11 I see a hand there.

12
13 MR. DEMARBAN: I was just waving to her.

14
15 CHAIRMAN ALCORN: Would you introduce
16 yourself.

17
18 MR. DEMARBAN: Yeah, I'm Alex DeMarban from
19 the Anchorage Daily News.

20
21 CHAIRMAN ALCORN: Okay, welcome Alex.

22
23 MR. ALEX DE*: Thank you.

24
25 CHAIRMAN ALCORN: All right. Seeing no hands
26 raised and hearing no voices, so we're going to go in now --
27 I'll just introduce the purpose of the meeting and really
28 what we're here for is to share with you, the Council, sort
29 of the current knowledge that we have on avian influenza in
30 the state, the strategy that is being thought of right now
31 for sampling and for detecting the virus, if it ever occurs
32 in this state. We hope by the end of the day we hope that
33 you all leave here knowing as much as we know. And the
34 reason that I felt compelled to call this meeting is because
35 before the Christmas holidays I began to get telephone calls
36 from a number of you saying, what do we do, what do we tell
37 our hunters, should we hunt, should we not hunt, fill us in;
38 and my only response at that time was go to the web page that
39 I believe Louisa Castrodale was engaged in helping put
40 together. The information on that is the only information
41 that we had, that I knew of, and that was my only response.
42 And I felt like we needed some face time to talk about this
43 after the thinking of the agencies began to coalesce and take
44 some kind of form that we could share with you.

45
46 So we'll give you the best knowledge that we
47 have and the best ideas that we have at this point and we'd
48 welcome ideas from you all, too.

49
50 So that's really the purpose of the meeting.

1 Anybody have any questions before we move into hearing some
2 of our speakers that have been prepared?

3

(No comments)

4

5
6 CHAIRMAN ALCORN: Okay, don't see anything.
7 We'll start Item A is an update on Avian influenza. Oh,
8 Russ.

9

10 MR. OATES: I'm sorry, Doug, I just had a
11 question on the.....

12

13 CHAIRMAN ALCORN: Come to the mic, you need
14 to come to the mic. Introduce yourself.

15

16 MR. OATES: Yeah, I'm Russ Oates, Fish and
17 Wildlife Service. I just had a question there, there's a
18 couple of folks that are not here representing a couple of
19 regions that had some very high degree of interest in this
20 issue and I was wondering if there's any way we're going to
21 be able to get this information -- I see we don't have any
22 provisions for like teleconference or anything like that,
23 anyway, we can get these PowerPoint presentations or somehow
24 get this information and get these folks hooked up.

25

26 I know, Enoch, specifically, was calling our
27 office and asking questions and you're aware of the level of
28 concern that Myron expressed at the workshop.

29

30 So I'm just concerned that there's going to
31 be some folks that are very much out of the loop as a result
32 of not being able to be here.

33

34 CHAIRMAN ALCORN: Right. And I guess the
35 only thing I would respond to is that whatever information we
36 develop here, if there are presentations, if we can get
37 copies of them, we'll be glad to send them out to our
38 partners in the regions that are not represented here.

39

40 I was not aware that AVCP was not going to be
41 here. I was hoping Myron would be here.

42

43 Let me say, before we go into the discussion,
44 we did have a workshop last week that had about 60 attendees.
45 It was coordinated by USGS, State of Alaska and the Fish and
46 Wildlife Service, and we asked two Council members to come
47 in, there was very limited seating but I negotiated and
48 twisted an arm or two and was able to get a couple of places
49 for us to sit and Taqulik and Myron came in because they had
50 both expressed interest to me that, you know, for their

1 regions, they needed to know what was going on as soon as
2 they could so we gave them a call and they agreed to come in
3 and we appreciate them. So Taqulik, you're welcome to share
4 what you learned at the meeting during the course of today's
5 meeting as well.

6
7 And I do want to recognize Patty that just
8 came in. Patty, do you want to introduce yourself for the
9 record.

10
11 MS. BROWN-SCHWALENBERG: Patty Brown-
12 Schwalenberg for the Chugach region.

13
14 CHAIRMAN ALCORN: All right, thanks. Okay,
15 good point Russ and we'll make sure and get this information
16 to everybody that's not at the table here, by email or by
17 hard copy.

18
19 Ralph.

20
21 MR. ANDERSEN: Thank you, Mr. Chairman.
22 Before we begin, I noticed in our meeting packet there's a
23 document titled Co-Management Capacity Building. And I'm
24 wondering if -- and I don't notice it anywhere on the agenda,
25 and I'm wondering if it's there for our information or if
26 you'd like action on it from us today.

27
28 CHAIRMAN ALCORN: Thanks, Ralph. Fred, do
29 you want to respond to that.

30
31 MR. ARMSTRONG: Yeah, Mr. Chair. We're using
32 the packets that we had distributed earlier this year. I
33 think it was a couple years ago that the Council had
34 requested us to develop an informational packet identifying
35 our needs and since this was a special meeting, we had a
36 surplus of these so we just decided to use them. So they're
37 in there for your information type thing.

38
39 CHAIRMAN ALCORN: Just consider it free note
40 paper if you need some.

41
42 All right, we're ready to start our update of
43 Avian influenza and we are going to -- Bob, before we go to
44 Louisa, did you have any, maybe any kind of overarching
45 comments on the Avian influenza workshop or any observations
46 that you wanted to share with the group or do you want to
47 just turn it over to Louisa and we'll move forward?

48
49 MR. LEEDY: Bob Leedy, Fish and Wildlife
50 Service. No, Doug, I don't have any overarching comments

1 other than there will be, both transcripts and a full meeting
2 summary from that workshop and the summary, in particular,
3 would be probably something good to hand around to the
4 participants here so they can get the full flavor and range
5 of discussions.

6
7 I will say, just by way of general
8 introduction, the workshop included 60 plus people from
9 literally across the country and including several State and
10 Federal agencies. This whole effort to sample birds in
11 Alaska for early detection of Avian influenza in Alaska
12 actually arose out of a Homeland Security request that
13 includes just an incredible number of agencies and at this
14 point billions of dollars. And this effort for early
15 detection of Avian influenza in Alaska is just a very small
16 part of that, as important as it is to us, and we just need
17 to keep that in mind throughout.

18
19 And with that, if questions arise during the
20 day or if any discussion you'd like to bring up, Taqulik, you
21 know, from the workshop needs to continue, we can do that.

22
23 CHAIRMAN ALCORN: Taqulik.

24
25 MS. HEPA: Thank you, Mr. Chair. I just
26 wanted to add my participation in the meeting, as well as
27 Myron's, it was good to hear that there is a plan for the
28 state of Alaska involving various different agencies and
29 other folks from Wisconsin and what not.

30
31 One thing that was clear to both me and
32 Myron, and probably Fred here is that the community or the
33 local people weren't -- it was talked about how we were going
34 to cooperate with the plan or work together with the plan,
35 but I'm hoping that from that meeting and with our meeting
36 here today, that we'll kind of fill the gap of how we can
37 better participate together. And that's what I was hoping
38 that some of the things that we would talk about today is how
39 can we be a player in the state-wide plan, you know, as
40 people from the Native community. Because I feel
41 responsibility from our region to be able to provide
42 information to the people to let them know what is happening.

43
44 So I just wanted to add that.

45
46 Thank you.

47
48 MR. LEEDY: Okay. And when Deb Rocque, who
49 has been newly brought on as the coordinator for Avian
50 influenza activities for the Fish and Wildlife Service, she

1 will make a presentation that summarizes a lot of the kinds
2 of information that was presented in the meeting and some of
3 the first steps we're taking to try to organize and develop
4 structure that includes AMBCC and local, at least to the
5 degree we can do it.

6
7 CHAIRMAN ALCORN: Thanks, Bob. All right,
8 Louisa, you're up. We're going to hear -- are you the one
9 with the PowerPoint?

10
11
12 MS. CASTRODALE: I have a PowerPoint.

13
14 CHAIRMAN ALCORN: Great, we have a
15 PowerPoint, we'll hit the lights.

16
17 It would be best if you could sit by a
18 microphone so we can get you on the transcripts.

19
20 MS. CASTRODALE: Okay, are we ready to go
21 ahead and start then?

22
23 CHAIRMAN ALCORN: You bet.

24
25
26 MS. CASTRODALE: Okay. So thanks so much for
27 letting me give a quick presentation. I borrowed a lot of
28 these slides from Dr. Jay Butler, he's the Section Chief from
29 the Section of Epidemiology, and I'm just going to give you
30 kind of an overview of some influenza concepts, what we see
31 usually and then also some unusual things that we're
32 concerned about.

33
34 So I want to talk a little bit about the
35 natural history of influenza and this is the influenza virus
36 in general. What we see usually and what we see unusually
37 and then talk a little bit about pandemic influenza and
38 planning that's gone on in the Health Department. And then
39 some general precautions for staying healthy, and that
40 involves specifically some animal handling guidelines, and
41 then also there's still a lot of work that needs to be done,
42 so I'll talk a little bit about that.

43
44 So starting off just to tell you about
45 influenza, many of you have probably experienced influenza
46 yourselves many times, but it's primarily a respiratory
47 illness caused by the influenza virus. And this is just a
48 picture of somebody sneezing. And so droplets are released
49 there and that's a good way to pass influenza from one person
50 to another. So transmission is by respiratory droplet or

1 airborne particles. And the incubation period is one to five
2 days. And that means once you're exposed to the virus, you
3 get sick in about one to five days. Twenty percent of people
4 who do get exposed to the virus never become sick, so they
5 don't have any illness. And then when you're sick you're
6 infectious from the day before or the day of the illness
7 onset, which is the day you get sick and then for three to
8 five days longer. So when you're sick, you've got a couple
9 days there where you can give the virus to other people and
10 that tends to be a little bit longer in kids.

11
12 So influenza viruses are a very large group
13 of viruses. There's lots of different groupings and this
14 gets kind of complicated. There are three main types, and
15 that's Influenza A, Influenza B, or Influenza C. And then
16 within, we're probably just going to -- we actually are just
17 going to talk mostly about Influenza A, so if you look at
18 Influenza A there is subtypes, and I'll talk a little bit
19 more about that on the next slide. And then if you also look
20 at any influenza virus there's usually an origin to it, the
21 first place it was culture, so sometimes you'll have a virus
22 that says it's from Hong Kong or from New Zealand and this
23 becomes important especially for human vaccine production
24 because each year a new vaccine is made and it's based off of
25 the strains that were circulating the year before, and so the
26 origin of the virus is usually really important. And then a
27 final thought on classifying influenza viruses is their
28 pathogenicity, and that means what kind severity of disease
29 they can cause. And this is a concept that's really -- it's
30 a little bit artificial because it deals mainly with what
31 happens to this virus when it's put into chickens. So it's
32 more of an agricultural concept where you have a virus that
33 hits domestic poultry and if you inject it into them and it
34 kills a bunch of them you call it high-pathogenicity and if
35 it doesn't you call it low; and so that's more just
36 introduction to the unusual virus we're going to talk about
37 in a minute.

38
39 So this is a little bit of about the
40 molecular features of Influenza A, and I had mentioned before
41 that there is subtyping of this virus. And mainly what that
42 means is there are two proteins that you find on this virus,
43 the hemagglutinin and the neuraminidase. And not to get too
44 technical but these are two factors that will cause damage to
45 your cells and they vary or these protein vary and so for any
46 influenza virus, you'll have someone say there's a number
47 that goes with the hemagglutinin and then there's a number
48 that goes with the neuraminidase, and you can get a big
49 combination of those. We'll show you more on the next slide.
50

1 But what this means is that Influenza A can
2 have a lot of different types, a lot of different subtypes
3 and a lot of different strains, and so it's kind of a fast
4 moving target.

5
6 The other thing that's a little bit
7 interesting about Influenza A as far as molecular features go
8 is that it's got a lot of genes that change a lot or there
9 are properties of it that allow for changes to be made. So
10 every year we see a little bit of changes as it circulates
11 around the world and that's why we have to change the vaccine
12 every year. And then when we see a big change, that's when
13 we're concerned about a pandemic, and I'll talk a little bit
14 more about pandemics in a minute.

15
16 So Influenza A, we're going to keep talking
17 about that. It has a reservoir in waterfowl, and what that
18 means is that it naturally occurs in waterfowl. It usually
19 causes them no harm whatsoever, it's just a virus that you
20 can culture from these guys at any point in time. And the
21 subtypes that I was mentioning before, there are 16 kinds of
22 the H and there are nine kinds of the N. And so each
23 Influenza A virus has one H and one N, and so you can get --
24 you can think about just multiplying that together and you
25 can get a large combination of different types of virus from
26 that. The other interesting thing about Influenza A, and
27 really you should think about Influenza A as like a group of
28 viruses and not just one thing, is that, there are multiple
29 species that are affected and infected by different subtypes.
30 So we see Influenza A, a certain subtype, we see that in
31 horses, we see it in pigs, we see it in -- you can actually
32 see it in marine mammals as well, they've seen it in dogs,
33 and these are all very different subtypes and they may or may
34 not infect other animals, other species.

35
36 So what's usual? For human in influenza we
37 see Influenza A and B each year, and the strain may vary
38 slightly each year, and that's why you got a different
39 vaccine each year, but it's very common and we have some nice
40 data in Alaska that shows, you know, what happens any given
41 year. So that's sort of what goes on with the humans. And
42 then Influenza A usually or naturally occurs in waterfowl and
43 this is everywhere, but there's also data from Alaska that
44 shows some of these viruses circulating as well. And then
45 occasionally there are outbreaks of influenza among domestic
46 poultry worldwide, and this is also usual, it happens all the
47 time, the reports are made to an international agency and for
48 the most part these are -- they cause problems in domestic
49 poultry but for the most part they're pretty self-limiting
50 with human intervention, I mean there are protocols that get

1 followed.

2

3

4 So this is something that you can find on our
5 website if you're ever wondering what's going on with
6 influenza each season. We post the number of cases that --
7 we've got folks around the state that will culture people who
8 are sick for influenza, and then this gets reported on a
9 weekly basis on our website. And this is pretty common, what
10 we see, you can see on the bottom there, it's the months
11 October, November, December, January and then the vertical,
12 the height of the vertical bars shows you that that's how
13 many cases have been reported. So you can see kind of in
14 December and January there's been a peak of cases of flu and
15 this is pretty common what we see every year. Usually what
16 we see is if this was, you know, later in the season, you'd
17 see first of all a bunch of Influenza A and then that peak
18 kind of levels off and then in the spring we usually, for
19 some reason start seeing a little bit of Influenza B and
20 that's just what we've seen pretty regularly for the last
21 couple of years. Alaska's a very interesting state because
22 we see lots of influenza, or we see influenza year-round and
23 many other states don't see that. And one reason for that is
24 because we do have a huge tourist cruise ship situation in
25 the summer and we've got a lot of people coming from a lot of
26 parts of the different hemispheres and so there is a fair
27 amount of -- we don't usually think of flu as being that
28 seasonal, we see it year-round.

28

29 Okay, so that's kind of what's usually going
30 on with influenza in the humans in Alaska.

31

32

33 What's unusual now, I'm going to talk about
34 the current world situation with the Avian H5N1 influenza,
35 and when I'm talking about Avian H5N1, I'm referring to the
36 strain that's circulating now that has caused a fair amount
37 of death in domestic birds and also some human cases, human
38 deaths in southeast Asia, and in Turkey actually the most
39 recent country. But the stats on this is that since December
40 of 2003 there have been dead birds seen with this type of flu
41 across Southeast and also Eastern Europe, and there have been
42 151 human cases and of those 82 people have died. All the
43 people who have gotten their cases, and, of course, those who
44 have died have had direct contact with infected domestic
45 poultry or their secretions. So these are people who were,
46 they maybe had a little backyard flock, and their chickens
47 died and they had contact with them and then they later got
48 ill. There have been no human cases associated with contact
49 with migratory birds. So these are all people who have
50 gotten sick because they were handling diseased domestic
poultry or products, or like meat had been passed, diseased

1 meat.

2

3

4 This is just a quick map to show you where
5 there have been cases of this Asian H5N1 influenza and this
6 is a map that the FAO, the Food and Agricultural Organization
7 put together and it's current as of December 2005. And
8 what's shaded is -- the regions are shaded based on the
9 number of outbreaks that they've seen among their birds. And
10 so the darker red, darker pink to red are larger number of
11 outbreaks and the white is zero outbreaks. And so it just
12 gives you an idea that there has been -- and it's shaded, the
13 whole country, so this doesn't mean that there have been
14 outbreaks all across, you know, Russia or all across Turkey
15 it just means that that nation has reported a certain number
16 of outbreaks. But it gives you an idea that it is affecting
17 a fair number of countries.

17

18

19 So I mentioned, you know, that we usually
20 have influenza in humans and we usually have influenza in
21 birds, but where does one of these new influenza viruses come
22 from. And what happens is because in some animals they can
23 be infected by more than one strain and when you have an
24 animal that's infected with more than one strain, some of
25 these genes as they're replicating can mix, and then you can
26 create a novel strain that way. And then when you've got a
27 novel strain there's certain mutations or certain changes
28 that may happen and that allows a strain to spread to another
29 species. Because for the most part if you've got a influenza
30 virus that affects horses, say, this isn't something that
31 typically would go out and infect other animals, it's usually
32 sort of pretty limited to that species. But sometimes if you
33 have an animal like let's say a pig or let's say a bird that
34 can become infected by another strain you can get this
35 mutation and you can get this reassortment.

35

36

37 This is a pretty complicated little diagram
38 but this is some recent research that kind of proposes what
39 they think happened with this current strain that's
40 circulating. If you look all the way on the left, you know,
41 it's a picture of a wild waterfowl there and the thought was
42 that this wild waterfowl just had it's, you know, normally
43 circulating influenza and in the part of the world where
44 there's a lot of ducks that are in and around lots of human
45 habitation, these ducks are pretty much domesticated, but the
46 thought is that they mixed, they were hanging out with the
47 wild ducks, they were passing their viruses back and forth,
48 some changes were eventually made that caused the virus to
49 become different and also a little bit more deadly to the
50 domestic animals like the ducks and the chickens. And then
51 if you look kind of in the middle you see a chicken that's on

1 its back and a little bit dead there, and so after this
2 mixing of these viruses it got to a point where it was pretty
3 deadly for the chickens. And then unfortunately these dead
4 chickens, dead domestic poultry were in contact with humans,
5 and then the humans were able to -- because the virus had
6 changed so much, the humans were able to pick up this virus
7 from the dead chickens and get sick that way.

8

9 Maybe one way to think about this a little
10 bit is if you go from the left to the right, if you think
11 about that game, Broken Telephone, you know, where you
12 whisper something into somebody's ear and then you whisper it
13 into the next person's ear, well, from the start to the
14 finish it's a pretty different message that happens and if
15 you think about the virus as maybe, you know, starting in one
16 animal and not being at all -- and being of a certain type
17 and then by the time it makes it through a couple different
18 species it comes out on the other end a little bit different.

19

20 So then what's important to also notice about
21 this one is that, you know, look at the humans on the right-
22 hand side there, where are they potentially getting it from,
23 they're getting it from the dead chickens there and they're
24 also getting it from the waterfowl there, or the domestic
25 ducks in the middle there, and these are domestic ducks that
26 live in and around humans with close contact to poultry.

27

28 Yeah.

29

30 MS. BROWN-SCHWALENBERG: So is that diagram
31 telling us that the waterfowl could potentially getting it
32 back from the chickens?

33

34 MS. CASTRODALE: Yeah. That if waterfowl are
35 in contact with dead chickens, that potentially the waterfowl
36 could be -- if the virus has -- the virus could potentially
37 get back to the migratory birds, yeah.

38

39 MS. BROWN-SCHWALENBERG: And that was my next
40 question, how does it pass from one species to another?

41

42 MS. CASTRODALE: Oh, I'm sorry. It's -- I
43 don't know, Deb might talk a lot more about the bird
44 situation, but this virus is shed in the feces and in the
45 secretions. So it's a fecal, you know, contact with that and
46 then, you know, contact with respiratory secretions, too.

47

48 So this is just a proposed -- this is just
49 what they think happened with this current strain that's
50 circulating.

1 MR. OATES: The fact that the arrow between
2 the dead chicken and the pig was solid, does that mean
3 there's confirmed evidence of the bad stuff moving from
4 infected chickens to pigs?

5
6 MS. CASTRODALE: You know, that's
7 interesting. I didn't think that there was. Because usually
8 pigs are considered to be -- pigs have a lot of genes that
9 are -- the influenza that can infect pigs is a lot of
10 similarities to that that affects human, and so they're
11 usually considered this mixing vessel of genes, but I really
12 haven't heard that much about pigs in this current situation.

13
14 MS. ROCQUE: And, Louisa, I just have another
15 point because you are going into a lot more depth than what
16 I'd planned to go into.

17
18 MS. CASTRODALE: Oh, okay.

19
20 MS. ROCQUE: And so the question that was
21 asked about the dead chicken, if we can get back to
22 waterfowl, I think it would be great if you could explain
23 that how the virus has mutated enough so that it's more --
24 it'd be deadly now to the waterfowl and then -- or maybe I just
25 said it myself, and that's why we're getting some mortality
26 of this in migratory birds.

27
28 MS. CASTRODALE: Yeah, that's a really good
29 point. For the most part we sort of talked about how
30 migratory waterfowl don't tend to be -- they don't tend to
31 get sick from the influenza viruses that they have, but Deb's
32 right, there was an event in Shanghai in China where there
33 was a large die-off of some waterfowl and the thought is
34 that, exactly that, this top overarching arc back to the
35 waterfowl is that they were in close proximity to some
36 domestic chickens that were sick and dead and dying, and that
37 it passed back to them in a different form so that it was,
38 you know, caused them illness.

39
40 So I'll talk a little bit more about what the
41 Health Department's doing and talk a little bit about what is
42 a pandemic. And you may have heard that term before, you
43 probably have heard the term, epidemic, before. An epidemic
44 is a situation where you've got illness in and above a number
45 that you would usually expect, so we usually have flu at a
46 certain level and then when we have more flu we say we have
47 an epidemic.

48
49 We say we have a pandemic when there is
50 illness that's occurring in many geographic places and it's

1 causing illness in a lot of people. So what could cause an
2 influenza pandemic.

3
4 Well, if there's a new influenza virus that
5 comes up that the population has never seen before and so
6 they've never had a chance to develop any immunity towards
7 that, that could cause a large number of people to get ill.
8 Also if the virus is able to replicate in humans. And that
9 means is that right now what we've seen is that the people
10 who have gotten sick from this Asian H5N1, it's been a
11 relatively small number of people compared to the millions
12 and billions of birds that have gotten -- the poultry that
13 have gotten sick from it. And so if there was some way that
14 this virus, when it got into a human could then be
15 transmitted from human to human, then we could see a lot of
16 illness, but at this point in time it hasn't really happened.
17 Everyone has been -- everyone who has gotten sick has had
18 contact with a dead bird and it hasn't been a person to
19 person transmission, and that's what the third bullet
20 mentions. If there is efficient and sustained person to
21 person transmission.

22
23 So for the human health perspective, there's
24 a lot of things being done. The state of Alaska has a
25 pandemic influenza plan, and this is a large document. And
26 you can see here it's dated March 2005, there's just recently
27 been a big rewrite of it because the plan on your right is
28 the national plan and that came out about a month or so ago
29 with some new sort of protocols. And so the state of Alaska
30 plan is taking those updates and is redoing our plan, and
31 that should be on our website shortly. There needs to be a
32 few more edits and things like that. But the point of these
33 plans is that they're going to be works in progress until
34 they need to be implemented so there's going to be a constant
35 revision and constant examination of what's being proposed
36 and what needs to happen.

37
38 And what these plans talk about are how to
39 detect disease among -- and because we're human agencies,
40 it's how to detect disease among humans; plans to stockpile
41 medications and medical supplies, ways to do vaccine
42 distribution, if there's a need to have a massive vaccination
43 clinic. And those are going to be in a lot of the hub areas,
44 as well, and so there are going to be lots of practices, and
45 exercises there that you all might be involved with. And
46 then also infection control strategies. If someone comes off
47 a plane and does have illness, where are they going to go,
48 who's going to take care of them, who's going to follow who
49 they associate with, and all those kind of things are part of
50 the plan.

1 And then just kind of on a smaller level, in
2 the Division of Public Health, we've kind of ramped up health
3 care provider surveillance, which means that health care
4 providers around the state, asking them to be on the lookout
5 for certain kinds of symptoms, developing the capacity in our
6 State lab to test for some of these novel influenza viruses,
7 and then also assisting with local planning and emergency
8 preparedness with these mass vaccination clinics, planning
9 for what we need to do if something happens. And on our
10 website there is some information there for health care
11 providers about some of these plans for the increased
12 surveillance.

13
14 So, you know, the guidelines to do for the
15 usual flu are just exactly what your mom always said,
16 respiratory etiquette and hand hygiene and also what your
17 doctor said, a balanced diet, enough rest, exercise. It's
18 pretty important to get an annual flu shot, and then just
19 some recommendations as far as alcohol in moderation and also
20 avoiding tobacco smoke and that helps you out with the usual
21 flu. And these are some posters that are being put around
22 just to remind people that, you know, cover your cough and
23 also if you're sick don't go to work and keep your colleagues
24 safe. And then also just the importance, it sounds really
25 simple, but the importance of washing your hands. There's
26 all kinds of nifty little studies that they have done on
27 little kids who have washed their hands, and haven't washed
28 their hands and there's definitely data that shows that it
29 helps you stay well.

30
31 So maybe something that's a little bit of
32 more interest to you guys, is there's also guidelines for
33 handling animals. And really, you know, the Asian H5N1
34 aside, there are really some universal animal handling
35 guidelines, and they are applicable to any situation where
36 wild animals are being handled. And currently there's no
37 evidence of this Asian H5N1 in North America, and so all
38 these animal handling guidelines are based on that. If the
39 virus is detected, you know, whether it's in Alaska or
40 anywhere else, the folks at the Center for Disease Control
41 and also the wildlife agencies will be evaluating the
42 guidelines and changing those and we'll be in a different
43 situation then.

44
45 But at this point we've put out also another
46 bulletin that's a little bit more specific to contact with
47 wild animals and I can send you the link or give that to
48 Doug. It's loaded on the website. And I put up our bulletin
49 up here, which has pretty much the same information as the
50 bulletin or the fact sheet that the folks from ADF&G put

1 together and it's just some background information, although
2 the case counts and maybe the geography of some of the cases
3 are -- it's a little bit out of date. But the guidelines are
4 still good about what people should keep in mind when they're
5 having contact with wild animals.

6
7 Here are the specific guidelines, it's kind
8 of probably in small font, but when you're thinking about
9 hunters who are handling animals, it's a good idea to where
10 rubber or disposal gloves and for sure wash your hands
11 thoroughly with soap and water after you've been dressing
12 animals or handling animals. And if you can't wash your
13 hands with soap and water, just avoid rubbing your eyes,
14 eating, drinking or smoking before you can get to some water
15 and wash. If your hands aren't visibly soiled, like they're
16 not caked with gunk, then you can use alcohol-based hand
17 products, because those do a great job of cleaning surface
18 bacteria and viruses. And then you want to make sure you
19 disinfect all equipment and surfaces that come into contact
20 with game, and that means cleaning out, you know, knives that
21 you might be using or if you're using rubber gloves that you
22 use again and again, you want to be cleaning those as well.

23
24 Do not handle or eat game that is found dead.
25 If you found some dying or some dead animals, then it's
26 probably not a good idea to eat those. Game meat that you do
27 eat, you should cook it to 155 or poultry to 165, and the
28 Department of Environmental Conservation has a food safety
29 website and you can read all about the particular
30 temperatures for particular meats on that website.

31
32 One of the things that's really nice about
33 flu in general, or influenza viruses in general is that they
34 are pretty fragile and so they're readily inactivated. This
35 isn't -- you know, we have trouble with some viruses that
36 don't inactivate so readily but flu is really nice that way,
37 and so soap and water is adequate. A 10 percent bleach
38 solution also works fine. And pretty much any other
39 commercial disinfectant will work on it. And alcohol-based
40 sanitizers, those little hand rubs work great. The only
41 caveat with those is that if your hands are pretty gunked up
42 then, you know, those do just a surface cleaning and won't,
43 kind of get to the center of your gunked up stuff.

44
45 I guess the really important thing for us, as
46 far as from the Health Department, to keep in mind is that,
47 especially some of these wild birds, there's lots of just
48 normal bacteria that they carry and they will always carry
49 that can cause illness in you, and so everyone is pretty
50 concerned about Asian H5N1, but really we're concerned that,

1 you know, you need to be thinking about these things at any
2 point in time because there are other bacteria that can get
3 you sick from a bird.

4
5 So there's just a lot of things that we don't
6 know about this Asian H5N1. Can one person give it to
7 another person. There's been maybe some thought that that
8 could happen but if it has happened, it really hasn't
9 happened to a great degree. And there's definitely a
10 question as to whether that can happen at this point.
11 Everyone's had exposure to dead and dying domestic poultry
12 and so that's the explanation for how they got it, so we just
13 need more information about whether people can get it from
14 each other.

15
16 Also need more information about some of the
17 drugs that we use for regular flu, how are they going to work
18 for this new flu. Will this new flu, you know, is this just
19 the beginning of a potential pandemic or is this just
20 something that, and this has happened in the past, we
21 periodically see it, what kind of vaccines do we need to
22 develop for this and how can we make those.

23
24 And then also there really isn't clear
25 evidence about what the role of migratory birds has been in
26 spreading the virus to new locations. There's been a lot of
27 evidence that shows when there is -- when you see it in a new
28 area. There has been movement of dead poultry parts or sick
29 people, and so that's a great explanation for why you might
30 see it in a new area. And it's still kind of fuzzy as to
31 whether migratory birds are doing anything to bring virus to
32 new locations.

33
34 And then there's certainly a lot of things
35 that need to be done. From the Health Department's
36 perspective there's a lot of refinement that needs to happen
37 to these pandemic plans. There's a need to continue an
38 enhanced statewide public education and that's public
39 education on things like just, you know, what to look for
40 when you're feeling sick or what to do with birds or what to
41 do with, you know, dead birds that you might see in your
42 locations and things like that. And then to ensure that the
43 borders are secure. There's a lot of work that's being done
44 by different agencies that are responsible for inspecting
45 shipments that come from areas where there is this Asian
46 H5N1. As well if there is surveillance for people who are
47 sick who are coming from these areas as well, and if people
48 look sick and they're coming off a plane, there are protocols
49 and precautions to be taken so that isn't the way that we
50 would get an introduction of this disease to us. And then,

1 of course, there's a lot of surveillance that's being
2 proposed to go on in wild birds, and I think Deb's going to
3 talk a fair amount about that.

4
5 So I think that was kind of quickly what I
6 just was going to let you guys know about. I can take
7 questions now or you can do questions later or whatever you
8 would like.

9
10 CHAIRMAN ALCORN: Thanks, Louisa. We'll take
11 questions now. Herman's got his hand raised. Go ahead,
12 Herman.

13
14 MR. SQUARTSOFF: Yeah, Mr. Chair. Yeah,
15 ma'am, are we going to be able to have access to get a hold
16 of this plan before we go back, to take back to our people?

17
18 MS. CASTRODALE: Oh, the pandemic plan?

19
20 MR. SQUARTSOFF: Yeah, the state one.

21
22 MS. CASTRODALE: Right now it's loaded on our
23 website. The March 2005 one is loaded on our website and I
24 can give you that URL. And like I said they're doing an
25 updated version of it and that should be on our website
26 shortly too.

27
28 MR. SQUARTSOFF: Yeah, but in our smaller
29 villages we have limited access to the internet sometimes or
30 sometimes we don't get it.

31
32 MS. CASTRODALE: Then you just give me your
33 name and I'll send you one.

34
35 MR. SQUARTSOFF: All right, appreciate it.

36
37 MS. CASTRODALE: Sure.

38
39 MR. SQUARTSOFF: Thank you.

40
41 CHAIRMAN ALCORN: Any other questions for
42 Louisa.

43
44 (No comments)

45
46 CHAIRMAN ALCORN: Okay, thanks, Louisa,
47 appreciate it. We do have this handout that's in the packet
48 and this was developed, well, last summer, if I recall when
49 I saw this -- August is the first time I saw this, and it has
50 some questions and answers, commonly asked questions and

1 answers, and it does have on the backside, it does have seven
2 advices, I suppose you could call them on using the type of
3 ways to avoid spreading this or contracting this virus when
4 you're handling birds. And then there are some commonly
5 asked questions.

6
7 The last question on this list, I think, is
8 important, just to kind of set the frame of thinking here.
9 This is the best information that we have, but the question
10 is, how concerned should bird hunters be about Asian H5N1; I
11 think that's the fundamental question most of us are asking
12 right now. The answer is: Hunters should not be overly
13 concerned about H5N1 at the present time, but should take
14 common sense precautions about hunting, hygiene, wild
15 migratory birds are not known to spread H5N1 between regions,
16 there are no known cases of human H5N1 infection from wild
17 birds, and it is not clear whether H5N1 is persistent in wild
18 bird populations or whether birds pose a long distance, long-
19 term risk. More research and surveillance over the coming
20 year will allow more accurate assessments of risks to
21 Alaskans.

22
23 The reason I read that answer was because I
24 believe that activities that we're going to be talking about
25 today fall under sort of two categories. The one category is
26 what are we doing to detect the bird, or the virus, excuse
27 me. What activities are we going to engage in, and what's
28 the strategy, what's the thinking and the planning for
29 detecting the virus.

30
31 And then the second category is if the virus
32 is detected, then what. And I think we need to keep our
33 thinking along in those terms.

34
35 So the wildlife agency that I represent, Fish
36 and Wildlife Service and the Alaska Department of Fish and
37 Game, our job is to engage in a process to do sampling,
38 wildlife sampling, and to detect the virus if it occurs in
39 the state; that's really our role. What happens after that,
40 if an announcement is made and there's a positive detection,
41 then another set of processes kick off, which are not within
42 our purview as a wildlife management agency. So we'll keep,
43 maybe those discussions in sort of in those categories, it
44 might help us to understand what activities we are thinking
45 about right now.

46
47 Ralph.

48
49 MR. ANDERSEN: Yeah, I have a question. And
50 I was just thinking about how to ask it or who to ask. On

1 your complicated chart with arrows, you know, you have pigs
2 as being one of the figures up there, a lot of our people
3 don't hunt pigs. You know, we're dependent on moose and
4 caribou. And I'm wondering, you know, how or if there are
5 plans to monitor those populations. And Doug was just
6 mentioning testing, you know, are there plans to gather
7 information or to gather data or do some testing of some kind
8 for the moose and caribou or is there even a chance that the
9 virus can be spread to our subsistence resources?

10

11 MS. CASTRODALE: Thanks for the question. I
12 don't know that much about moose and caribou as far as
13 influenza goes. There's definitely influenza viruses that
14 affect horses. And there was, I guess it was last year,
15 there was some concern that some horse viruses had actually
16 affected some dogs down in Florida. But as far as I know
17 there's nothing naturally that's been shown in moose and
18 caribou, and so I don't know if there are any plans to do any
19 testing for them. I don't know that that would be necessary
20 because I don't think of them being a reservoir where you
21 would get novel viruses and so on. So I don't know that
22 there would be any need to worry about that at all.

23

24 The pig thing is more, just traditionally,
25 we've had these strange viruses pop up in the past in the
26 world and when they've been a problem it's usually been in
27 areas where the pigs have been mixing with the birds. And
28 then the pigs have been able to kind of take some of the bird
29 virus and kind of mix it up inside themselves with their own
30 viruses and then spread it easily to the humans, and that's
31 sort of just been the model for what's happened in the past.

32

33 It doesn't seem like it's been the case for
34 this recent one, that the pigs have had a central role like
35 they have in the past. And so I'm not exactly sure why they
36 put that in their model, maybe just because that's what it's
37 looked like in the past.

38

39 CHAIRMAN ALCORN: Ralph, go ahead.

40

41 MR. ANDERSEN: I have, I don't know if it's
42 so much of a question as it is a statement. We've seen the
43 Northern Alaska Peninsula Caribou Herd just take a real nose
44 dive from 25,000 animals a decade ago to 1,100, 1,200 caribou
45 now. You know, we've heard from our area biologist that one
46 of the causes for the decline is virus. That they're
47 infected pretty highly with viruses that cause a whole bunch
48 of other problems. That the virus is transferred through
49 feces and other things, and I'm wondering if birds are --
50 migratory birds, I mean they share the same habitats as

1 caribou and moose. Because I mean that would be more of a --
2 you know, throw up a real red flag for me because, I mean it
3 does show up, and I lived in Barrow for a long time, and, you
4 know, up there and even everywhere else in Alaska, the
5 habitat is shared. And I wonder if, you know, how -- I guess
6 I'm concerned about monitoring the other wildlife species and
7 how we can go about doing it, I guess that was more of a
8 statement than a question.

9
10 MS. CASTRODALE: Sure. I can talk just a
11 little bit about that. I mean I think there's -- I'm not on
12 the wildlife section so much, but my understanding of it is
13 is there is sort of protocols and procedures for going
14 through when you've got a die-off of caribou or birds, and
15 it's pretty important, you know, there's just a number of
16 viruses out there. And many viruses, I mean human viruses,
17 dog viruses, caribou viruses are pretty well adapted to one
18 species and so you wouldn't expect that you'd see a lot of
19 transfer. You do need to figure out, you know, what is
20 causing an illness if you're seeing a die-off like that, and
21 I think the normal mechanisms that you'd go through, so I
22 guess I wouldn't just want to blanketly say if you're seeing
23 a die-off of caribou that you need to be concerned about
24 birds or what have you, but that you just need to kind of
25 report that through the channels and get some testing done in
26 that way.

27
28 Because I think as far as from a management
29 perspective, you guys are pretty interested in knowing what's
30 going on regardless of whether it's a bird or a caribou, you
31 want to know why they're dying.

32
33 CHAIRMAN ALCORN: Right. I don't know that
34 we have any plans to do sampling right now. But, you know,
35 I've written your question down Ralph and it makes sense
36 that, you know, somebody ought to have an answer for that
37 question and so we'll take the question, we'll get an answer,
38 we'll find out, you know, if there are protocols out there.

39
40 Tom.

41
42 MR. ROTHE: Doug, I'll just offer to have our
43 department veterinarian look into the aspect of viruses in
44 caribou and get that back to you.

45
46 CHAIRMAN ALCORN: Okay, thanks. And I saw
47 Jim Berner back here with the Alaska Native Health Consortium
48 raising his hand. Jim, did you have a response that you'd
49 like to.....

50

1 MR. BERNER: Yeah, just for.....

2
3 CHAIRMAN ALCORN: Could you come to the mic
4 for us, thanks.

5
6 MR. BERNER: That's an interesting question.
7 And I think one of the reasons the pig was on there was
8 because they're part of the ecosystem in southeast Asia where
9 domestic waterfowl and domestic poultry are raised, however,
10 you could look for the answer to this question you have in a
11 system that has caribou as part of the human ecosystem. Like
12 for instance, the Shami Reindeer Herders (ph), and I'm pretty
13 sure that the Scandinavians have looked at the species
14 specificity of influenza viruses in caribou. They
15 intensively monitor those animals. They call them reindeer,
16 of course, but it's exactly the same species. So I think you
17 could probably find that answer somewhere in the Scandinavian
18 literature because they keep such close contact on it.

19
20 For pigs, you know, the first 13, from one to
21 13 of the H subtypes can infect a pig. Humans, it's mostly,
22 you know, the first three, one through three. So there's a
23 crossover in the viruses that can be present at the same time
24 in both human and pigs living together.

25
26 Well, I don't know whether that's the case in
27 caribou and reindeer or not, but probably that answer is
28 known. And it is an issue in Scandinavia, I've heard them
29 talk about it because the wild waterfowl use the tundra in
30 the north there just like they do here, and the caribou and
31 reindeer drink out of the same ponds, so it's more than
32 theoretical.

33
34 And as far as monitoring the kinds of things
35 that come through in subsistence animals, that is one of the
36 things that the Tribal Health Consortium and CDC are working
37 on, trying to establish utilizing hunting communities.
38 Native subsistence hunters. And it isn't as hard these days
39 to monitor for a whole suite of viruses as it used to be. A
40 hunter could simply take a piece of filter paper and blot it
41 in the caribou's blood, put it in a baggie and send it off.
42 And down at the lab, you can allude off dozens and dozens of
43 antibodies to diseases you're interested in. So it is
44 possible to do. It's fairly inexpensive these days compared
45 to what it used to be. It's highly feasible, especially up
46 here and it is something we should talk about together
47 sometime.

48
49 CHAIRMAN ALCORN: All right, thanks, Jim.
50 Russ, we see your hand in the back. Before Russ comes to the

1 microphone, go ahead and come on up, but I want to just put
2 for the record that Tom wasn't at a microphone when he
3 volunteered the Department to -- Tom volunteered to contact
4 the Department veterinarian to see if there is an answer to
5 that question as well, so that goes into the record.

6

7

Russ, you're on.

8

9

MR. OATES: Thank you. Russ Oates, Fish and
10 Wildlife Service. I just had a question, having looked at
11 the slide there that shows that -- it appears to me, anyway,
12 that given the long, long history of Avian influenza and wild
13 birds here in Alaska, that -- and looking at the slide there,
14 it seems like the troubles with human health concerns tend to
15 originate when wild birds come in contact with domestic
16 poultry and the really dangerous mutations occur within the
17 domestic poultry. I don't know, I don't think that there's
18 much keeping of domestic poultry out in villages, I don't
19 know, but I know there is some of it that occurs in Anchorage
20 and probably Mat-Su Valley, and maybe even in Fairbanks.

21

22

My question is, I guess, to Louisa, is the
23 State Health Department doing anything with regards to making
24 the public aware of this danger and trying to ensure that
25 people that do have poultry are keeping them isolated from
26 contact with wild poultry -- or wild birds?

27

28

MS. CASTRODALE: This is Louisa again. The
29 State Health Department hasn't actually done anything with
30 that. But the State Vet's office in the Department of
31 Environmental Conservation has been interacting with domestic
32 poultry folks. And that's a good idea, though, as far as
33 more education out there, that we need to work together as
34 far as if there's something on one person's -- on agency's
35 website, just to make sure that it's on all the other
36 websites, or there's access to that information in multiple
37 locations. But I can talk to Bob Grelack about that.

38

39

CHAIRMAN ALCORN: Any other questions for
40 Louisa.

41

42

MR. HICKS: Yes.

43

44

CHAIRMAN ALCORN: Joeneal.

45

46

MR. HICKS: It's not necessarily a question.
47 Maybe it's a dumb question, but how might you associate this
48 to, let's say, mad cow disease, I mean is there any
49 connection or something like that? I mean, you know?

50

1 MS. CASTRODALE: No.

2

3 MR. HICKS: Could you differentiate between
4 that?

5

6 MS. CASTRODALE: Yeah. Let's see, the agent
7 that affects, that causes mad cow disease is just worlds
8 different from this virus. It's not even a virus, it's a --
9 it's called a preon, it's kind of a little weird protein
10 thing, and I guess, let's see how else would you say, so it's
11 just two different entities as far as disease goes. That's
12 pretty well worked out as far as how -- I mean I guess the
13 one similarity that there is is that animals were eating
14 animals and the preon was kind of changing a little bit as it
15 went through a different animal, so that's the only sort of
16 similarity that you'd see. But it's really pretty far apart
17 as far as disease causing agents are. It wouldn't be
18 something that you would see together and it doesn't really
19 affect birds.

20

21 MR. HICKS: And the other kind of comment, I
22 guess, maybe question, too, is that, I mean I've heard over
23 the last six months or maybe to a year or so is don't buy
24 chicken no more, like in stores and stuff like that. I mean
25 there's people who are aware of this flu going around and,
26 yeah, they have voiced opposition to even buying chicken in
27 the store.

28

29 MS. CASTRODALE: Yeah, I'd say buy chicken,
30 I mean there is no reason not to buy chicken.

31

32 You know, we've got a pretty robust set up in
33 this country of monitoring import. So what I would say is,
34 you know, if somebody came to you from -- you know, a
35 relative who was in Asia came to you and said, hey, look, I
36 smuggled this chicken in my bag, I wouldn't eat that. But,
37 you know, the U.S. Department of Agriculture has to inspect
38 chicken -- or poultry plants and their, you know,
39 commercially produced chicken is perfectly safe to eat.

40

41 The one caveat for that is that like I said,
42 you know, chicken and ducks and waterfowl can carry bacteria,
43 and so eating raw chicken is not a good idea anywhere you
44 are, you just need to make sure you're cooking it and you
45 also need to make sure you're washing your hands when you're
46 touching raw poultry. But there's no reason not to eat
47 chicken.

48

49 MR. HICKS: Thank you.

50

1 CHAIRMAN ALCORN: Louisa, I have a question
2 in the audience, Cynthia and then Herman.
3
4 MS. CASTRODALE: Yes.
5
6 MS. WENTWORTH: Yeah, I have a disclosure to
7 make. I.....
8
9 CHAIRMAN ALCORN: You need to come to the
10 mic, Cynthia, and identify yourself.
11
12 MS. WENTWORTH: Okay. Yeah, I'm Cynthia
13 Wentworth. I have a disclosure to make, I don't know, you'll
14 probably all kick me out of the room when I say this, but I
15 have checked chickens. I've had chickens for many years and
16 I, you know, could have my own eggs that way, now, does this
17 mean that I should just isolate them or what? And also I
18 guess I don't understand is how could my chickens be a
19 danger, like what Fred just said -- or not Fred, Russ just
20 said, from waterfowl that would actually have the disease
21 contacting my chickens or what?
22
23 MS. CASTRODALE: Yeah, I guess, you know, the
24 pathway in some of the Asian countries has been that people
25 had domestic ducks that were just sitting out, you know, in
26 the environment and that wild birds were able to mingle with
27 them and mingle with their domestic poultry, and, you know,
28 over the course of time passed their viruses back and forth.
29 And so one thing that the U.S. Department of Agriculture
30 under their bio-security for birds program has recommended
31 is, you know, if you're going to have domestic poultry, to
32 have them in an enclosed environment or such that they're not
33 mingling with these migratory birds. And the State
34 veterinarian's website will have a lot of information on that
35 as well as the U.S. Department of Agriculture.
36
37 So that's sort of the mingling idea.
38
39 MS. WENTWORTH: I see.
40
41 MS. CASTRODALE: Keep them in your room.
42 Keep them in your house.
43
44 (Laughter)
45
46 CHAIRMAN ALCORN: All right, thank you.
47 Herman.
48
49 MR. SQUARTSOFF: Yeah, Mr. Chair. Yeah, Joe,
50 asked you a question about eating chicken. I know my answer

1 to this question already what I'm going to do, but, what
2 about the ducks? I've been asked that already.

3
4 MS. CASTRODALE: At this point in time
5 there's no evidence that Asian H5N1 is in North America and
6 so there should be no restriction on, you know, eating ducks,
7 on eating chicken. The same precautions are always in place
8 as far as, you know, hygiene for cooking them and washing
9 your hands and not eating raw product, but there's no reason
10 not to.

11
12 MR. SQUARTSOFF: Right. But your answer's
13 not like, go ahead and eat the chickens, it's gotten a little
14 more lengthier.

15
16 MS. CASTRODALE: Oh, okay, go ahead and eat -
17 - well, I just.....

18
19 MR. SQUARTSOFF: Thank you.

20
21 (Laughter)

22
23 MS. CASTRODALE: I just didn't want someone
24 from the USDA to think I was, you know.....

25
26 MR. SQUARTSOFF: Right.

27
28 MS. CASTRODALE: I mean go eat ducks, yes.

29
30 MR. SQUARTSOFF: Thank you.

31
32 (Laughter)

33
34 CHAIRMAN ALCORN: All right, any other
35 questions before -- we're going to take a quick break if
36 there are no other questions right now.

37
38 (No comments)

39
40 CHAIRMAN ALCORN: Let's come back in 15
41 minutes from wherever your watch is, 15 minutes from now.

42
43 (Off record)

44
45 (On record)

46
47 CHAIRMAN ALCORN: Before we go to the next
48 item on the agenda, which is the Science Perspective
49 Presentation by Deb Rocque, the Avian influenza coordinator
50 for the Service, I did want to recognize Mike Smith walked in

1 from TCC. He came in during the last presentation. And also
2 I wanted Russ to talk a little bit about, just for one
3 minute, why we've given you these wonderful items here that
4 you have, these insulated mugs and these ball caps. Russ,
5 did you want to talk about just one minute about the survey.
6

7 MR. OATES: Is this going on the record.
8

9 CHAIRMAN ALCORN: Yes, come up to the
10 microphone.
11

12 MR. OATES: Okay. These items that you have
13 here have this funny looking little orange symbol on it with
14 a duck and an airplane, and in 2005 the Fish and Wildlife
15 Service celebrated 50 years of aerial waterfowl population
16 survey in Canada and the Lower 48 primarily. Just we have
17 our own little point of pride here in Alaska because 2007
18 will be the 50 year anniversary for the aerial waterfowl
19 survey program here in Alaska, so 2007 it will be 50 years
20 that people in our positions have been flying around the
21 state of Alaska counting birds to help manage our wild
22 waterfowl resource for the benefit of all the hunters.
23

24 So we're pretty excited about it and we want
25 you to take these and display them proudly because you're our
26 partners and we appreciate that.
27

28 Thank you.
29

30 CHAIRMAN ALCORN: Thanks, Russ. Mike also
31 told me, Mike Smith also told me that Myron is on his way
32 here, too, so we should just about have a full Council.
33

34 Someone pointed out that we are in a Council
35 meeting right now and that we do have a protocol for hearing
36 comments and having discussions, and I would like to ask the
37 audience to keep their questions until we get to the Item 8,
38 invitation for public comments, if you have questions. If
39 you have things that you're contributing to the conversation,
40 if you're answering questions I'll call on you, but let's try
41 to just keep general questions to a minimum so we can move
42 through our agenda. Other folks have reminded me that they
43 have other commitments to make.
44

45 So with that, Deb Rocque, you're up.
46

47 MS. ROCQUE: I think it was about a week ago
48 today where I saw Russ stand up in front of a room of 60
49 people and apologize because he had flunked PowerPoint 101,
50 I don't have any excuse.

1 But I wanted to try and outline what the Fish
2 and Wildlife Service's role in Avian influenza here is in
3 Alaska and we're concerned mostly with early detection and
4 monitoring. For the purpose of this talk I'll probably
5 duplicate a lot of what Louisa's already gone through but
6 restricting my comments to Avian influenza in wild birds and
7 then I'll go on to discuss the role of the Fish and Wildlife
8 Service with the Avian influenza and some of the plans that
9 we have for the spring here.

10
11 So as Louisa said, Avian influenza is a viral
12 disease that's found in birds. It's present in the saliva,
13 the nasal secretions and the feces and that's how it's passed
14 among bird populations. She also went into a fairly detailed
15 description of how it's a combination of two proteins that
16 can combine to be low pathogenic, which is fairly common
17 among waterfowl or high-pathogenic, which is fairly uncommon.
18 You'll see the low pathogenic abbreviated LPAI, in domestic
19 fowl to this high-pathogenic in waterfowl, and what we're
20 concerned with here today is the H5N1, which is a highly
21 pathogenic Avian influenza.

22
23 Louisa also showed a geographic distribution
24 of H5N1 and these are little dots that show places that it's
25 been detected, most recently in Turkey, and a list of the
26 areas where H5N1 has been seen.

27
28 To put it in perspective, I think Louisa did
29 a fairly good job of this, is that, Avian influenza is
30 present in wild bird populations everywhere, and so this
31 highly pathogenic H5N1 has -- there's been about 24 major
32 outbreaks since 1959, and the response to this has been to
33 stamp it out, if you will, but to cull domestic bird
34 populations. So over the past, what is that, almost 50
35 years, there's been 23 million turkey -- poultry farms that
36 have -- heads of poultry that have been killed. There's been
37 over 400 human cases. I guess this is kind of old, but it
38 says one death and that's not actually true.

39
40 So what I really want to talk about is the
41 roots of induction to North America. We're looking at three
42 paths that the H5N1 virus can come to North America. That's
43 through infected individuals, international travelers and
44 commercial traffic and in wild birds. And what we're
45 concerned about here today as far as the Fish and Wildlife is
46 concerned is transmission by wild birds.

47
48 Fish and Wildlife Service is involved with
49 many of our partner agencies and organizations in early
50 detection and monitoring of H5N1 in wild bird populations.

1 This is going to involve several areas of sampling. We'll be
2 sampling in live birds both the spring, fall and some in the
3 summer. We'll be looking at hunter harvested birds.
4 Subsistence harvested birds. And then we'll also be putting
5 together some type of a plan for investigating mortality and
6 morbidity events.

7
8 We've compiled a list of priority species.
9 This may either be inclusive or pared down but this is the
10 list that we're looking at now. We're in the process of
11 developing species plans for these species to help us
12 generate a sampling plan that encompasses all those three
13 areas, the live bird, the hunter harvest and the subsistence
14 harvest birds. And this is actually the stage that we're at
15 right now, where we're developing these species lists that
16 look at the life history of the birds and where we can get
17 the easiest samples and the highest number of samples.

18
19 So this is just a schematic of waterfowl
20 banding sites with the major surveys that are overlaid, which
21 gives us a little bit of insight of to where we want to try
22 and concentrate our sampling efforts.

23
24 And this is the same schematic for shorebirds
25 and land birds. The stars are the banding sites.

26
27 One of the other components that I talked
28 about was detecting mortality events. And from a mortality
29 events, they're going to be fairly difficult for us to detect
30 and so this slide is showing the distribution of towns and
31 villages and how actually the towns and villages will be the
32 most important component of detecting mortality events. And
33 while we do have -- my understanding is that we do have money
34 to look at mortality events, we have not yet even started
35 planning on how we're going to respond to that or how we're
36 going to instruct villages and towns to let us know about
37 mortality events.

38
39 I think what the main focus is that we wanted
40 to talk about today is the component of subsistence sampling.
41 And I can't stress enough that we are currently in the
42 planning stage and as I said, right now the planning stage
43 consists of is developing these species plan. We're looking
44 at subsistence sampling to augment other sampling for some
45 species and in some aspects it will be the only opportunity
46 to sample some species.

47
48 This was just a very bare bones throw
49 together kind of presentation and I think that may even be
50 the last one. I just want to -- I stole this slide from Tom

1 and I wanted just to emphasize Louisa's point.....
2
3 (Noise from computer)
4
5 MS. ROCQUE: Boy, Tom, I didn't know it was
6 animated like that.
7
8 (Laughter)
9
10 MR. SMITH: He definitely passed 101, didn't
11 he?
12
13 MS. ROCQUE: Yes, he did.
14
15 (Laughter)
16
17 MS. ROCQUE: If I had started with that the
18 expectations would have been a lot higher.
19
20 (Laughter)
21
22 MS. ROCQUE: But the most likely source of
23 the Asian strain of H5N1 is through travelers or cargo and
24 probably not migratory birds.
25
26 So that is the brief outline of what we're
27 doing. And as I said I just started this position about a
28 week ago so I'm learning an awful lot and we are trying very
29 hard to get our plans in place to start our spring sampling.
30
31 Yes.
32
33 MS. BROWN-SCHWALENBERG: Can you further
34 describe what your spring sampling is going to entail, is
35 that bio-sampling, is that live birds?
36
37 MS. ROCQUE: Yeah, for our sampling what
38 we're doing is collecting cloacal swabs and as I said and
39 what Louisa said as well is that the virus is present in the
40 intestines so we will be taking fecal swabs which involves
41 taking live and/or recently killed or dead birds, swabbing
42 the cloaca and putting the swab in a vile that contains a
43 media that then needs to be immediately frozen and then those
44 viles will be shipped to the National Wildlife Health Center
45 in Madison where they will do the analysis and screen for the
46 H5N1 virus.
47
48 CHAIRMAN ALCORN: Mike, go ahead.
49
50 MR. SMITH: Thanks. It's not in.....

1 CHAIRMAN ALCORN: You need to turn on your
2 mic.
3
4 MR. SMITH:the blood, though.
5
6 CHAIRMAN ALCORN: Mike, could you turn your
7 mic on for us.
8
9 MR. SMITH: It's not in the blood, though, is
10 that correct, I didn't notice blood on your slide?
11
12 MS. ROCQUE: My understanding, I'm looking
13 for help from the audience, is that it's not in the blood, it
14 may -- go ahead, Bob.
15
16 CHAIRMAN ALCORN: Bob, would you come to the
17 mic.
18
19 MR. LEEDY: Yeah, again, I'm not a virologist
20 and we have none working for us on this at the moment, but my
21 understanding is it is from shed viruses, the virus goes
22 through a cycle and then it will shed the contaminating
23 particles that would then come out in the feces.
24
25 MR. SMITH: In the excrement, yeah. and then
26 you mentioned -- I appreciate the fact that you're still in
27 the process of planning all this and.....
28
29 MS. ROCQUE: The initial phases of planning.
30
31 MR. SMITH: Yeah. So, I mean, are you going
32 to pare your list down then and try to focus on certain
33 species or are you going to try to sample all those species?
34
35 MS. ROCQUE: My understanding is, is that is
36 a pared down list of the Avian species that occur in Alaska.
37 For some of those it's going to be fairly easy to sample, for
38 others it's going to be very difficult and it may be the
39 logistics that cause some changes in that list, but right now
40 we're looking at that list as being an inclusive list.
41
42 MR. SMITH: And you mentioned that the sample
43 would have to be immediately frozen?
44
45 MS. ROCQUE: Or kept fairly cold, yes.
46 Louisa mentioned that in the environment the virus breaks
47 down very quickly. We have some indication from the health
48 center that if a bird is kept 40 degrees or colder that the
49 virus may be viable in the carcass for up to a week. We've
50 asked them these questions just in considering sampling

1 subsistence harvest.

2

3 MR. SMITH: Well, that's where I was kind of
4 going at, is, how could we utilize subsistence users to help
5 in this sampling? In the past when I've done subsistence
6 sampling, not bird species but fish and stuff, we ran into
7 that problem of keeping stuff frozen.....

8

9 MS. ROCQUE: Uh-huh.

10

11 MR. SMITH:and trying to figure out a
12 way by which we could get our samples in and frozen in a
13 timely manner and it did prove a little cumbersome and a
14 little hard.

15

16 During the other outbreaks that occurred
17 since 1959, did any of those end up in the migratory birds or
18 were they all domesticated stocks as well?

19

20 MS. ROCQUE: My understanding is that they,
21 just like this virus, is that they began from waterfowl
22 populations, mutated in the domestic flocks and then you'll
23 have those mortality events that we talked about. But the
24 major transmitters are not migratory birds in any of these
25 cases.

26

27 MR. SMITH: Okay, thank you.

28

29 CHAIRMAN ALCORN: All right. I see two hands
30 up, Russ had his hand up first, I think you were going to add
31 to the answer to the first question, and, then Bob I'll call
32 on you.

33

34 MR. LEEDY: Russ can do it.

35

36 CHAIRMAN ALCORN: All right, just Russ.

37

38 MR. OATES: Deb was not present when we
39 developed that list of species and I just wanted to give you
40 a quick thumbnail sketch.

41

42 What we did was we took the list of 250, 300
43 species of migratory birds that occur in Alaska and we went
44 through a process whereby we developed criteria, five
45 criteria, and I can't tell you exactly what they are right
46 off the top of my head, but among the things we considered
47 was whether or not the species ever went to Asia and where it
48 went in Asia, if it was an area that had a known outbreak of
49 a disease or if it encountered birds that were in an area of
50 a known outbreak. And these were ranked differently.

1 If it -- definitely -- the bird like Northern
2 pintail definitely goes to areas where outbreaks have
3 occurred so it ranked a little higher than say stellers
4 eiders which are currently not in areas where the outbreaks
5 occur but they do go to Asia.

6
7 We looked at things like the total number of
8 birds of a species that come from Asia to Alaska, and we
9 looked at whether or not the birds are ones that we could
10 very easily collect samples of because we have minimum sample
11 sizes that are necessary to detect the occurrence of the
12 disease at -- we're expecting very low levels.

13
14 So what we're trying to do is emphasize
15 species, number 1, that have a high probability of -- well,
16 as high a probability as we can expect of having the disease
17 and that we've got a high probability of getting samples of.
18 And so that's kind of where the list came from.

19
20 Now, the process that we're currently going
21 through and Deb's in the middle of this and hopefully we'll
22 have the results of that within the next week or so, we're
23 looking at -- of all these species that you saw, we're
24 looking at the overlays of where these species occur in
25 Alaska to look for areas that we can go where we can optimize
26 to get as many samples of as many of those species as we can.
27 And so basically we're in a process now of trying to develop
28 the most efficient sampling process. And there's a time
29 component, too, because there's a number of birds that spend
30 the winter in Asia and then spend the summer up here, and
31 there are a number that spend the summer in Asia and come
32 through here during migration or spend the winter here so
33 we've got a spring and summer approach to this thing as well.

34
35 So we're going through a process. We got a
36 lot of people that know a lot about bird distribution and
37 migration in Alaska together in this group and we're kind of
38 going through and working through all these species. So
39 we're hoping that we're going to come up with a sampling plan
40 that will get adequate numbers of samples for as many of
41 these species as possible.

42
43 So just to let you know the approach.

44
45 MR. SMITH: And -- if I might.

46
47 CHAIRMAN ALCORN: Mike, go ahead.

48
49 MR. SMITH: Thank you, Doug. And what are
50 your plans then for outreach to those rural communities and

1 stuff like that, what are you.....

2

3 MR. OATES: Well, as Deb indicated we are in
4 the early stages of developing that, but we've gone through
5 several scenarios of how we're going to do that.

6

7 I would say step one is what we're doing here
8 today and that's just to let you know what we're thinking
9 about. And I'm not exactly sure what step two is but I think
10 it's absolutely critical, first of all, that we get the right
11 information about the relative risk based on what the folks
12 that human health experts tell us, that's why Louisa was here
13 today, number 1 on the list, because we knew that that was
14 probably going to be your upper most concern; what's the risk
15 to people. And then second, what we're doing from the
16 perspective of monitoring the disease in wild birds. And so
17 where it goes from here, I really don't have the answer but
18 we've talked about several scenarios where we have follow up
19 meetings with representatives from the different regions and
20 to some extent we're all hoping that the information that's
21 been transmitted here today, you will carry back to your
22 regions as well.

23

24 And.....

25

26 MR. SMITH: Well, that was going to be my
27 next question, I guess, is, is, one, is there a package put
28 together yet, do you know of Avian flu package that I could
29 send to my villages or -- and I assume you folks are
30 available to come to meetings and stuff as well to give
31 presentations or something of that nature?

32

33 MR. OATES: Well, we haven't really talked to
34 any degree about what availability we have for that purpose.
35 So I really can't respond to that. But that's up to our
36 supervisor as to whether or not they're going to send us all
37 over the country side and I think there's some elements on
38 that.

39

40 CHAIRMAN ALCORN: I've got two hands raised,
41 Bob raised his hand first, and then Tom, I think will maybe
42 be able to respond to that question.

43

44 MR. OATES: I'll go sit down.

45

46 CHAIRMAN ALCORN: Bob.

47

48 MR. LEEDY: Well, let me try to take a crack
49 at where I think the AMBCC and users have the best
50 opportunity to exert a lot of influence.

1 First of all, on the live bird sampling, the
2 way we've envisioned it is going to be largely an extension
3 of a lot of the biological activities that we've done in the
4 future [sic], okay, but that leaves two major other areas
5 that we really are undecided on as to how we're going to
6 implement. One of them, and most significant to this group,
7 I think, is that there are directions and funds available to
8 collect samples from subsistence hunter killed birds, okay.
9 Due to the prior process and the biology applied to this and
10 part of the national plan, the species are pretty well laid
11 out already, but we will, I think, be absolutely open to
12 recommendations from this group as to how best to collect
13 those samples from subsistence hunters.

14
15 CHAIRMAN ALCORN: I had Tom who had raised
16 his hand, let Tom come and then, Mike, you can follow up and
17 then Patty and then Herman did you have your hand -- okay,
18 Patty. So Tom, and then Mike and then Patty.

19
20 MR. LEEDY: Okay, and just -- and the other
21 area is in this morbidity and mortality question, you know,
22 the case of die-offs and how to involve local people in that.

23
24 And then finally I was going to mention that
25 one of the items discussed in the workshop last week brought
26 up by Tom dealt specifically with a broader communication
27 group and communication plan.

28
29 So I think there are those three areas in
30 particular that warrant a lot of consideration here.

31
32 CHAIRMAN ALCORN: Thanks, Bob. Tom.

33
34 MR. ROTHE: I just wanted to offer a thought
35 on Mike's outreach question. And I think at this point we
36 have a commitment to form an information/communications
37 committee on Asian H5N1 and it's kind of modeled after a
38 network that Louisa really did a lot of work on to put
39 together for West Nile virus. It's a combination of human
40 health folks, wildlife agencies and a bunch of others that
41 share information on what's going on and then help figure out
42 what's the best communication methods and products that we
43 can use to get out, especially to villages.

44
45 So I guess we're really interested in
46 figuring out what questions you're hearing from folks out
47 there, what are their worries, what are their information
48 needs. And when we get into our first couple of meetings and
49 get cranking we will call on whoever wants to be involved in
50 this to help develop some products. And I know the Tribal

1 Health Consortium has, already, you know, done a little
2 talking out in rural areas through the public health care
3 system, and so those are the kind of partners that we would
4 pull together and figure out how to get the right information
5 to people out in villages.

6
7 CHAIRMAN ALCORN: Thanks, Tom. Mike.

8
9 MR. SMITH: Yeah, I appreciate that and
10 certainly that's what I would think. I mean certainly I'm --
11 I got an annual meeting coming where, you know, I know people
12 have been asking me about a possible presentation at our
13 annual meeting in March.

14
15 Additionally, we have set up systems similar
16 to that to where we've done some sampling for people where
17 we've hired individuals in the communities and provided them
18 with ice coolers and the sampling stuff that we need and set
19 up charge accounts on the airplanes and we're able to get our
20 DNA samples shipped to us on a pretty regular basis in
21 coolers and where it was gotten and who got it and so on and
22 so forth, all that relevant information that goes along with
23 that. So, yeah, we -- at least my region is somewhat
24 familiar with the process of taking samples and getting them
25 on the airplane in a timely manner and getting them in town
26 relatively cold and all that. So I thank you for all that.

27
28 CHAIRMAN ALCORN: Patty.

29
30 MS. BROWN-SCHWALENBERG: Yeah, I just was
31 going to echo actually what Mike had just said, is that,
32 there are some programs currently in place with like the
33 Alaska Native Harbor Seal Commission, the Alaska Steller Sea
34 Lion and Sea Otter Commission that do bio-sampling. They
35 have strict training regiments of the hunters and they have
36 a process all in place that's been running successfully for
37 several years and maybe we could look at their program and
38 model something like that for this.

39
40 CHAIRMAN ALCORN: Thank you. Bob, I have a
41 hand in the audience.

42
43 MR. LEEDY: Just a quickie -- oh, mic, Bob
44 Leedy, Fish and Wildlife. Just to expand a little bit more
45 on the sampling technique itself, because some of you were
46 thinking specifics here. First you have to catch the bird,
47 okay, then you get it in hand and you swab it, okay, the swab
48 is broken off, it's put in a vile of a live medium, okay,
49 because you don't want to kill the virus, and then that vile
50 is then put in a, what is minus 40 degree fahrenheit or

1 something, it's a nitrogen tank, okay, I mean real hard
2 frozen, and it's stored in there until you can ship it.

3
4 When we were talking earlier about the
5 viability of samples in birds the emphasis there was on how
6 long, and under what conditions was the bird dead before you
7 took a sample, but after you take the sample it's nitrogen
8 containers and cataloging and shipping and so forth.

9
10 MR. SMITH: And.....

11
12 CHAIRMAN ALCORN: Mike, go ahead.

13
14 MR. SMITH: In other words, extremely
15 cumbersome and hard to deal with.

16
17 MR. LEEDY: Exactly so.

18
19 MR. SMITH: Yeah.

20
21 CHAIRMAN ALCORN: Herman.

22
23 MR. SQUARTSOFF: Yeah, it doesn't sound that
24 cumbersome and hard to deal with to me, you know, to be able
25 to do that, so.....

26
27 MR. SMITH: Well.....

28
29 MR. SQUARTSOFF: I kind of like Patty's
30 suggestion of maybe having something like the bio-sampling,
31 you know, the program that we've been doing down there
32 already, you know, it sounded like a very good idea.

33
34 Because you're going to have the guys out
35 there in the fields anyway, they're going to be bringing in
36 the birds.

37
38 MR. SMITH: Oh, I wasn't indicating that we
39 couldn't do it, it's just that it's a cumbersome.....

40
41 MR. SQUARTSOFF: Thank you, Mr. Chair.

42
43 MR. SMITH:process of putting nitrogen
44 on airplanes and things of that nature and the relative
45 safety of shipping that stuff on airplanes and things of that
46 nature.

47
48 CHAIRMAN ALCORN: There's an entire sampling
49 protocol that's going to have to be designed and I'm not sure
50 that that's developed yet and these are good ideas, and some

1 of the models that are already in place can certainly be
2 looked at.

3
4 I think that there is, correct me if I'm
5 wrong, Bob, a steering committee, that there's a separate
6 committee that is going to be put together to talk about
7 sampling protocols or has that already been developed.

8
9 MR. LEEDY: Bob Leedy. I think the protocols
10 are pretty well developed. I think what the question is, is
11 the process, you know, how we actually go about collecting
12 these samples. Again, I need to point out from a Fish and
13 Wildlife Service point of view, the direction we have from
14 the Homeland Security Agency, is to collect samples, okay.
15 So we've got a need to collect subsistence samples, and a set
16 protocol but we don't have a specific process in mind, we
17 don't have, you know, specific sample collectors in mind, you
18 know, we have thought, because of the closely related public
19 health aspects of this thing and assuming that everybody
20 that, you know, I mean when you're taking samples from a bird
21 in the field looking for a virus, you know, that's got to put
22 people a little bit on edge, so we'd like to have some
23 communication capabilities in the field of people who know
24 their stuff about health and disease.

25
26 So one of the things we've thought about is
27 running a sampling system somehow through the regional and
28 village health clinics. Okay, now you people know a whole
29 lot more about how that is set up organizationally than I do
30 but that seemed like one way that you could go that would
31 kind of make a connection with local people and knowledgeable
32 local people that could be in a better position than our bio-
33 techs, for instance, you know, in picking up health samples.

34
35 And I want to also comment that for anybody
36 involved in this there's an assumption of training, both
37 about the disease, the potential disease and the
38 methodologies.

39
40 CHAIRMAN ALCORN: And we're going to provide
41 that training, correct?

42
43 MR. LEEDY: Yes.

44
45 CHAIRMAN ALCORN: All right. Tom.

46
47 MR. ROTHE: I think the gathering of samples
48 to maximize what we learn out of those is really important
49 and what Bob is saying about our detection system is that
50 ideally we want to get these immediately chilled, super

1 cooled samples so they can do everything they need to do in
2 the lab to really nail it down.

3

4 I just wanted to mention that there are a
5 couple of other things that may -- a couple other ways of
6 sampling that may eventually be part of this game. There are
7 some sort of quick and dirty things you can do to determine
8 if it's at least an H5 type, that can be screened fairly
9 quickly by easier means. But the absolute valuable samples
10 are the ones that we get fresh, get frozen down, and then
11 they actually go through quite a few complicated processes to
12 verify that is this Asian H5N1.

13

14 CHAIRMAN ALCORN: Mike.

15

16 MR. SMITH: Yes, thank you, Mr. Chairman.
17 Yeah, no, that's what I was getting at, I mean I think -- I
18 mean I'm just in your discussions about the relative strength
19 of the information that you need out of those samples and,
20 you know, a down and dirty sampling method at the village
21 level may work better than trying to ship nitrogen out to all
22 our communities and, you know, loading nitrogen tanks in the
23 small airplanes and things of that nature.

24

25 That's just a thought.

26

27 CHAIRMAN ALCORN: Thank you.

28

29 MS. ROCQUE: I just want to respond to you,
30 Mike, is that we wouldn't actually be shipping nitrogen,
31 we'd.....

32

33 MR. SMITH: Well.....

34

35 MS. ROCQUE: So I mean we wouldn't have that
36 concern, so that makes it actually a little.....

37

38 MR. SMITH: But there are.....

39

40 MS. ROCQUE:easier.

41

42 MR. SMITH:there are air safety
43 concerns that, you know, have.....

44

45 MS. ROCQUE: Yeah.

46

47 MR. SMITH:to go through this.....

48

49 MS. ROCQUE: Sure.

50

1 MR. SMITH:whole process of shipping
2 that stuff even if it's minuscule amounts and things of that
3 nature.

4
5 MS. ROCQUE: Uh-huh.

6
7 CHAIRMAN ALCORN: Yeah, there's a number of
8 logistical issues that are going to have to be thought out
9 and determined, predetermined, I guess, before we take that
10 next step. But I think we would look to some of the folks
11 that are in the profession already. Some of the folks that
12 Patty is talking about or the health clinics themselves who
13 ship medical supplies and what not.

14
15 But somehow we're going to have to get
16 materials in and out of those communities.

17
18 Bob, do you have something.

19
20 MR. LEEDY: Maybe one final comment on this
21 issue. I also want to emphasize that this is not a program
22 that we would view going on in all villages, it would overall
23 probably be a relatively small number of villages, you know,
24 10's of villages perhaps, rather than more, a 100 or more,
25 and would be directed largely by where we would have the best
26 likelihood for picking up the species, the priority species.
27 And that information, I think, will be available in, as Russ
28 said, graphic form within a week to three weeks.

29
30 MR. SMITH: That would be my next question,
31 is what the timeline is on this and when we need this stuff
32 on the ground.

33
34 MR. LEEDY: Oh, we needed to do this last
35 year.

36
37 (Laughter)

38
39 MR. LEEDY: But we don't have that luxury so
40 I would say if you guys can determine how you would like to
41 fit into the process we'll help to develop a process that
42 includes you.

43
44 MR. SMITH: Well, I mean speaking from my
45 region we'd be more than happy to participate in the sampling
46 and I think we would appreciate that. But one, with the
47 education that goes along with it to help alleviate some of
48 the fears, certainly, and, then secondly of course is our
49 ability to collect samples from across the region and so on.

50

1 CHAIRMAN ALCORN: Why don't you hold that
2 thought, Mike, because the next agenda item is where do we go
3 from here.....

4
5 MR. SMITH: Okay.

6
7 CHAIRMAN ALCORN:and I think we'll
8 probably start talking about, you know, what role does the
9 Council want to engage in in this process. Once we kind of
10 find out, you know, what's up and what the agencies that are
11 charged with collecting samples, what their mission is, and
12 we've heard that -- one of the things that I asked Russ or
13 somebody to do is get a map on the wall and here it is and
14 I've asked the question, what are the likely hot spots, I
15 mean for activity, not for prevalence of the virus but the
16 activity for sampling. And the answer basically is around
17 the coast, the coastal zones, the coastal regions is really
18 where the principle activity is going to be occurring. But
19 any more than that, I can't give you any more detail than
20 that.

21
22 Is there any more thinking along that line,
23 Russ, do you want to comment on that. And I've got Patty and
24 then I've got Myron -- I'm sorry Patty.

25
26 MR. OATES: Given that we're trying to
27 maximize dealing with birds that come from Asia, looking as
28 you said primarily at coastal areas, but we know that there
29 is a number of waterfowl species that spend the summer in
30 Asia and migrate theoretically, anyway, in these directions.
31 So we think St. Lawrence Island, for instance, is going to be
32 an important area for us to work. The Seward Peninsula.
33 Potentially along the North Slope here. Yukon-Kuskokwim
34 Delta. Aleutians. And the Alaska Peninsula. And we think
35 there's a possibility in the fall, too, some of the pintails
36 that come from Asia may well go through Interior Alaska. And
37 so Yukon Flats and Minto areas are areas that we're likely to
38 be working in as well.

39
40 So I think the emphasis is going to be here
41 and a little less in the Interior and Southeast. But we're
42 still working on these plans as we speak. We're right now in
43 a process of reviewing first drafts of sampling plans. We
44 met yesterday and we talked about the individ -- started
45 talking about the individual species, didn't get through the
46 list, but there's a group talking about land birds and sea
47 birds, there's a group talking about shorebirds and there's
48 a group talking about waterfowl, and we talked about the time
49 of year. In the spring we'll be looking heavily at things
50 like shorebirds in shorebird areas because some of these are

1 coming from Asia wintering areas, and there's also some
2 waterfowl that winter in Asian areas, some of the eiders,
3 emperor geese, some of the brandt, some of the pintails, and
4 so we'll be looking at them in the spring. In the fall we're
5 going to -- there would be more emphasis on the waterfowl, I
6 think spring will probably be some of the land birds as well,
7 some of those that spend the winter in Asia.

8

9 So that's where we are. But we're currently
10 reviewing the first drafts that talk about where and when and
11 for some of the species that have a higher probability of
12 encountering the disease, like pintails, for instance,
13 there'll be more intensive sampling effort at more locations
14 over larger areas we expect.

15

16 But once these individual, the species
17 groups, the people working on waterfowl and the people
18 working on shorebirds get through with their groups then
19 results will come together and that's where we look over the
20 overlays and the efficiencies among the species groups.

21

22 CHAIRMAN ALCORN: Great, thanks Russ. Patty.

23

24 MS. BROWN-SCHWALENBERG: I would just urge
25 the planning committees not to work in a vacuum. I mean
26 there's some models out there that we can access. Both of
27 the organizations I mentioned, the Harbor Seal Commission and
28 the Sea Otter Commission are statewide organizations, they
29 work along coastal Alaska and they deal specifically deal
30 with the hunters. Now they necessarily wouldn't be the
31 organizations to do this, but we certainly can use them as a
32 model.

33

34 I think we also, our organization's also done
35 sampling on clams for PSP, or shellfish for PSP and we went
36 through the health organizations to do that. So there's some
37 ideas out there that they can access.

38

39 Thank you.

40

41 CHAIRMAN ALCORN: Great, thanks, Patty.

42 Myron, did you have your hand raised.

43

44 MR. NANENG: Yeah, thank you, Mr. Chairman.
45 Sorry for being late. I thought the meeting was going to
46 start at 1:00 o'clock this afternoon.

47

48 CHAIRMAN ALCORN: Oh, well, we apologize for
49 any misscommunication. We're glad you got here early then.

50

1 MR. NANENG: Well, got up early.

2

3

(Laughter)

4

5 MR. NANENG: Last week there was a couple of
6 us that attended that meeting of the scientists here in
7 Anchorage and it was more or less to try and get an idea of
8 what the scientists are planning on doing and how they can
9 cooperate and collaborate with their efforts in putting
10 together an Avian flu study.

11

12 I know it's going to get on to the next
13 agenda item but there's already organizations in our region
14 that are trying to move ahead with meetings and at the same
15 time people are calling their relatives saying that come
16 spring time don't go hunting. And I know that this study
17 group, or the coordinated -- science coordinating group as
18 mentioned by Bob is trying to figure out which locations that
19 they may be trying to do their biological studies and we know
20 that it's going to be at their established camps where
21 they've done their scientific studies in the past. But one
22 of the things that I know is that we have observed in the
23 past, some birds falling out of the sky and at times when our
24 people have observed this, they never get the feedback as to
25 why they're falling out of the sky. At some point in the
26 future, maybe five years later, we hear that they've been
27 falling out of the sky because they've been starving or lack
28 of food source or some other ill effects that may be causing
29 the birds to fall out of the sky.

30

31 With the Avian flu, with a lot of things that
32 have been going on in the press, CNN and the presentations,
33 most of it seems to be emphasized on domestic livestock, or
34 birds right now, but the possibility of it affecting and
35 impacting the wild birds that migrate through our regions in
36 the state, we are going to have to find a way where that
37 information comes back ASAP, instead of saying that, oh,
38 let's just let those people out there in the villages collect
39 the birds, send it off and never hear anything back. It's
40 going to be very important that this information of why these
41 birds may be falling out of the sky gets back to the
42 villages.

43

44 So I can't emphasize that enough. And that
45 is one thing that I would like to see in part of the graph,
46 that you guys put that strategy together, of what you guys
47 are going to be as studies, plus I'd like to thank Russ last
48 week for telling the scientists that the only -- the people
49 that are really going to provide the information of where the
50 die-offs are occurring are those who live in the villages.

1 And if that's happening I think there's got to be a strategy
2 in place where there can be a rapid response, where people
3 are saying that there's quite a number of birds that we have
4 found that have died off in these certain areas.

5
6 You know, it's good to say that we're going
7 to plan on doing a study but all these other considerations
8 have to be put into the plan so that people in the villages
9 will not panic, or even the scientists who are doing the
10 studies for that matter will not panic and forget to work
11 with the people in the villages.

12
13 So I just wanted to share that thought with
14 all of you.

15
16 Thank you.

17
18 CHAIRMAN ALCORN: Thank you, Myron. I saw
19 Matt raise his hand, but before Matt speaks, I'm going to
20 have his Staff speak because I think Tom talked just a little
21 bit about the question that you're asking about, early
22 detection and there are some techniques to get early
23 detection but not necessarily the H5N1. But, Tom, did you
24 want to just say what you said earlier about the quick field
25 tests, early response.

26
27 MR. ROTHE: I think there's a lot of agencies
28 and parties involved in Avian influenza stuff and I just
29 emphasize that our primary interest is getting really high
30 quality samples from birds so that we can classify whatever
31 they've got right down to the exact Asian H5N1. But there
32 are some quick tests that can be done to at least see if
33 there are any H5 types in the samples. And I know there are
34 a couple labs in the state that are thinking of trying to
35 take a look at some of that. And the University of Alaska at
36 Fairbanks has another program where they are going to be
37 sampling and testing themselves, too.

38
39 So I think in the end there will be a number
40 of different programs sampling different things and I think
41 it will end being a pretty good network as it is.

42
43 CHAIRMAN ALCORN: Okay, hold your -- okay,
44 I'll come to you Mike. But one of the points that was made
45 last week, Myron, and I was only in there off and on but I
46 heard someone say that from the Federal government's
47 perspective any announcement is not going to be made by a
48 field biologist or even this regional office, that the
49 announcement is actually going to go to the Secretary's
50 level, the Cabinet level, so how long that will take, I'm not

1 sure. Bureaucracy is what it is. But we've been told that
2 that public announcement will be made at the Secretary's
3 level.

4
5 I know that doesn't give you much comfort but
6 that's the policy that we're operating under right now.

7
8 Matt had his hand and then Mike and then
9 Myron.

10
11 MR. ROBUS: Thanks, Mr. Chairman. And I was
12 going to speak along those same lines. In all the multi-
13 agency talk between the biological agencies and the public
14 health agencies, this very topic has come up, Myron, and we
15 have repeatedly tried to make the point that word needs to
16 get back to the point of origin just as soon as possible.
17 And the problem with this is that it is a complicated enough
18 process to analyze what the virus is down to the specific
19 level and that that then needs to be confirmed by a second
20 laboratory, that there is some period of time between the
21 time you swab the bird, send the sample off, it has to go
22 through one lab process, then if it's positive another lab
23 process, and then something that we biologists and people
24 living around Alaska don't deal with very often is that
25 there's a formal process for how these disease organisms get
26 announced. And so there will be some sort of an official
27 announcement process through the national and state public
28 health authorities. But we've also been assured in several
29 meetings with the state public health leaders and the State
30 veterinarian, that there's a requirement that any disease as
31 dangerous as this, if it gets found gets reported -- is
32 mandated to be reported back to the state and out to the
33 villages in a very rapid manner.

34
35 So, you know, I want to assure you that we're
36 paying attention to the fact that word gets back to the
37 places where the birds are sampled, but it's not going to be
38 announced as soon as that sample gets into the Anchorage
39 airport, you know, it's going to take longer than that, but
40 it's not going to be a one-way process.

41
42 CHAIRMAN ALCORN: Thank you, Matt. I have
43 Mike and then Myron.

44
45 MR. SMITH: Thank you. I hope all you guys
46 are coordinating your activities because I had talked to some
47 people at UAF and they were making plans and now you guys are
48 making plans, and certainly I hope you guys are communicating
49 our plans to each other.

50

1 But I wanted to echo a little bit about what
2 Myron was saying, too, about the rapid response back because
3 it's really likely that should it occur and, you know, it's
4 highly unlikely that it is, of course, but should it occur
5 that we would need to know that in our areas by the end of
6 the harvest. And, you know, so we're talking a couple weeks
7 time there, or two or three weeks period of time that we
8 would -- if it was prevalent we would exposed without having
9 -- and just going on doing our own thing without having any
10 knowledge that it is present. And so I just wanted to echo
11 a little bit about what Myron says about figuring out some
12 way that that doesn't occur, that we don't continue
13 harvesting for weeks on end and have that virus in the
14 waterfowl.

15
16 CHAIRMAN ALCORN: All right, I had Myron --
17 Myron, passes. Taqulik, you had your hand raised.

18
19 MS. HEPA: Yeah, I guess that kind of -- I've
20 been waiting for the next item to come up but I'm going to go
21 ahead now. And it's part of what outreach message we would
22 like to carry to our regions and I think that's going to be
23 our biggest challenge of, what the current plan is with these
24 different organizations, or agencies, what plan do they have
25 and to let the people know that there is a plan in place and
26 that some of the mixed messages that they're hearing from the
27 media shouldn't be -- you know that they should be not
28 alarmed by it. Because we're hearing that in our region,
29 like the birds are coming soon, you know, and you hear people
30 telling them that it's -- you know, we shouldn't be hunting
31 these birds and that could do more damage than anything.

32
33 And just to lead us off to the next agenda
34 item.

35
36 CHAIRMAN ALCORN: Okay, thanks. That is the
37 next topic of discussion, and that is where we go from here,
38 but I have three hands back there. Tom. Bob. Russ. Okay,
39 Tom, then Bob.

40
41 MR. ROTHE: We're probably jumping up to
42 address the same things but let me try to add just a little
43 context on what we kind of think testing is going to be about
44 and what it means, and, Louisa or Jim can address technical
45 details.

46
47 But I guess what I was referring to is that
48 there are some quick tests that can tell us if it's an H5
49 type virus. That takes a matter of days. You know get the
50 lab set up and they're geared up to do this. Now, we had a

1 case in Canada where they prematurely announced, the food
2 agency in Canada announced they had an H5, it created a big
3 buzz about H5 being found in several provinces, but it was
4 meaningless because this was a low pathogenic type and it
5 didn't turn out to be the bad bug.

6
7 In addition, the bug that we're dealing with
8 in Asia is primarily a bird disease right now, it's really
9 not that dangerous to people, so got to keep that in mind.

10
11 So if the systems are set up we could get a
12 quick glimpse that maybe there's an H5 in a certain sample
13 batch. Then, as Matt says, it's got to be processed, it's
14 got to be genetically reproduced and typed and if it turns
15 out to be H5N1 then a red flag comes up and it goes through
16 even a third test and, of course, we don't want to cause a
17 panic so that's why all these confirmation steps are put into
18 place so that if someone actually does find the bad bug that
19 it becomes very official as far as the notifications go. But
20 even if it is Asian H5N1, that's not a human health issue --
21 at least -- or Louisa can comment on this if she wants, it's
22 not a human health cause for panic that should stop people
23 from hunting and messing around with birds.

24
25 MR. SMITH: Well.....

26
27 MR. ROTHE: The perception might be there
28 but.....

29
30 MR. SMITH:I think that's exactly
31 what's going to happen and I think that's what Myron is
32 noticing already and certainly Taqulik, you know, just the
33 perception out there is sufficient enough to scare people
34 into not harvesting.

35
36 And, you know, we've seen that, you know, for
37 like example ichthyophonus is not bad for humans in salmon,
38 but nobody wants to eat an ichthyophonus fish, you know, so
39 that's kind of where I'm coming from in that regards.

40
41 CHAIRMAN ALCORN: All right, Bob.

42
43 MR. LEEDY: Bob Leedy, Fish and Wildlife.
44 Yeah, Tom, in fact, hit most of the highlights I wanted to
45 bring up but there were a couple other points I wanted to
46 make. One is just you have -- we all have a common
47 understanding of sampling timeframes.

48
49 First of all you collect the sample, then you
50 ship it, in our case we intend to ship these to Madison.

1 These live viruses, it takes a minimum of two weeks to run
2 the initial test. If the initial test proves positive as Tom
3 said, it goes to the -- the lab in the U.S., the Department
4 of Ag Vet Lab for final testing and then it goes up through
5 procedures to our Secretary of Interior before we ever hear
6 about it.

7
8 So please understand this is -- that becomes
9 a human health concern and it's beyond our control. So, I
10 mean, you're looking at weeks at the absolute soonest.....

11
12 MR. SMITH: So we won't know.

13
14 MR. LEEDY:to get a positive back,
15 okay.

16
17 MR. SMITH: We won't know until the next
18 year.

19
20 MR. LEEDY: It could be awhile, okay. And
21 the time only goes up from then. Regarding this early
22 testing, I want to emphasize a point that all the virologists
23 assume we will get some initial positives for the H type
24 virus, H5 virus. But, you know, it may be in some
25 populations it wouldn't be unusual to maybe have that in five
26 percent of the population. Those would be false/positives,
27 you know, and what, in my view, that could do is create even
28 more of a panic because, uh, they found it only to find out
29 some time later that it was not the Asian Avian virus that
30 we're all concerned about.

31
32 So this is not a simple issue to address.

33
34 And finally I just want to draw a very firm
35 line between the Fish and Wildlife Service's responsibilities
36 as bird biologists and the public health concerns were also
37 rightly concerned about. And that, again, is something I'd
38 kind of like to have you consider when we discuss -- when you
39 discuss sampling of subsistence hunter caught birds because
40 I personally feel it's really critical to have that human
41 health element built into it somehow.

42
43 CHAIRMAN ALCORN: Thanks, Bob. Any other
44 comments or questions.

45
46 (No comments)

47
48 CHAIRMAN ALCORN: Oh, Joeneal.

49
50 MR. HICKS: If I may. So you're saying, who

1 do I refer to, but the mortality, I guess, deaths, in humans,
2 is pretty much preventable? In other words, if I were caught
3 with it or something like that I have a good chance of being
4 cured; am I correct?

5
6 CHAIRMAN ALCORN: Louisa will come to the
7 microphone.

8
9 MS. CASTRODALE: So the Asian H5N1 that's
10 been affecting folks over in Asia, it's a good question,
11 there have only been, you know, 150 some cases, and of that
12 80 people have died. So if you look at that that's not very,
13 so it's like, you know, more than 50 percent of the people
14 who presented with it and went to the hospital with it died.

15
16 MR. HICKS: Okay.

17
18 MS. CASTRODALE: That's not very good.

19
20 MR. HICKS: So my next question, I guess,
21 would be those who have died from it, could I safely say that
22 the reason why they died from it was attributed to the time
23 lapse, in other words the testing, or is it an inability to
24 get treated or.....

25
26 MS. CASTRODALE: Well, I guess there are a
27 couple of things. The first is that like with a lot of
28 diseases, West Nile is a great example, if you think of West
29 Nile virus you have this number people that died and then you
30 have this number of people who went to the hospital and then
31 you have this number of people that we don't we know that's
32 huge that may have been exposed to it and never gotten sick,
33 so we don't know actually how, you know, how bad the virus
34 is.

35
36 The people that you're talking about, the
37 time lagging reporting isn't really -- doesn't really factor
38 in there. These are people who were harvesting or burying
39 their own dead chickens and dead birds and getting exposed
40 that way. And some of them -- we also don't know, you know,
41 maybe -- some of them were little kids and some of them were
42 older people and so it might just be also an immune situation
43 that they just weren't so healthy anyway. But it wasn't that
44 it wasn't detected, these were all people that were in the
45 hospital they just -- you know, it just overpowered their
46 systems.

47
48 And I guess this is sort of related to a
49 little bit of what I had been talking about before, but I
50 kind of see this as, you know, when we have a disease in a

1 village situation, you know, the first -- when we get a
2 result from the laboratory this is, you know, different,
3 because you guys could be testing birds, but from the human
4 sample, when we get a result from the laboratory, the first
5 person that we talk to is not the Daily News, it's the person
6 who is sick, who's in the village, who's directly affected by
7 it. And so, you know, that kind of model for reporting is,
8 I think, what everyone wants to work with here. If a
9 positive comes up, the wildlife agencies will be talking to
10 the health agencies, the location where the sample was taken,
11 I mean they're not going to be the last people to know that
12 the -- the intent is that there is information going directly
13 back to that area.

14
15 Have I answered all the questions, sort of?

16
17 CHAIRMAN ALCORN: Yeah, I think you did.
18 Thanks, Louisa.

19
20 Matt.

21
22 MR. ROBUS: Thanks, Mr. Chair. I just wanted
23 to follow up in the wake of Joeneal's question and make sure
24 that the points that have been made are recognized, that the
25 people who have gotten sick from this have all been
26 associated with being very closely involved with domestic
27 poultry, and that there's no documented case that I'm aware
28 of so far of somebody catching it from a wild bird that had
29 the Asian H5N1 highly pathogenic form of the virus.

30
31 And I want to reemphasize the point that Tom
32 Rothe made, I just want to reemphasize it, that if it comes
33 to Alaska in wild birds it's a disease of birds right now,
34 that it's something to be wary about and concerned about and
35 do surveillance for because of the public health
36 implications, but it's not an immediate direct you're going
37 to get sick from this bird situation, especially if the
38 information that we in cooperation with other agencies have
39 published about how to handle birds. You know, any wild bird
40 you get you need to handle with a certain amount of caution
41 because they do carry various diseases, but if you dress it
42 carefully and wash your hands a lot and cook it properly,
43 even if it has this it's probably not going to cause any
44 problem in humans.

45
46 So those are just things to think about
47 before you get to the point of saying, if I catch this can I
48 be cured, you know, there's a lot of jumps that have to be
49 gone through before a human can even get to that point.
50

1 MR. HICKS: Thank you, Matt. I'm just saying
2 that because I know, like, for instance, my particular area,
3 people that go berserk once they hear something like that
4 that's going on and if there's a way of answering it
5 correctly then.....

6
7 MR. ROBUS: Right.

8
9 MR. HICKS:that's what I want to know.

10
11 CHAIRMAN ALCORN: Well, that's a good segue
12 into the next topic. Let's move into that topic and that is
13 where do we go from here. We've heard what the tendencies of
14 the virus is, what the migratory bird routes are. We've
15 talked about what the agencies have talked about for sampling
16 protocols in general. And now I think it's pertinent for us
17 to talk about where do we go from here, where do we, as a
18 Council, see ourselves in this process, what role do you
19 envision for yourself for sharing information or
20 communicating with the hunters.

21
22 Anybody have any ideas.

23
24 Myron, and then Peter.

25
26 MR. NANENG: Yeah, thank you. We're going to
27 be holding a waterfowl conservation committee meeting next
28 month. There's already been some efforts to try and have
29 some type of health service providers meet in our region but
30 I think the people that really have to be informed are the
31 ones out in the villages.

32
33 And so as a first step within our region
34 we're holding the waterfowl conservation committee meeting
35 around the 21st, 22nd, 23rd of February and we're inviting
36 anyone who may want to come and join us to listen in and, I'm
37 sure we'll work with both State of Alaska and Fish and
38 Wildlife to get as much information that we can share. Plus
39 we're holding our spring convention on March 7th, 8th and
40 9th, as a way to try and get some of this information out to
41 village representatives that are at our convention.

42
43 CHAIRMAN ALCORN: Okay. Peter.

44
45 MR. DEVINE: Yes, I was wondering what kind
46 of testing and monitoring is being done on refuges, you know,
47 are the technicians doing any sampling to see if this virus
48 is around?

49
50 CHAIRMAN ALCORN: Well, I can tell you

1 they're not doing any sampling yet because we don't have the
2 sampling strategy in place. But there possibly is a role
3 that the RITs are going to be engaged. There are a number of
4 groups of people that sort of spun off of last week's meeting
5 that are thinking about, for example, just information and
6 communication sharing. There's a group talking about how
7 we're going to get the message out. And then there's also a
8 group talking about how we are going to collect samples. How
9 we're going to obtain those samples, swabs, or tissue or
10 whatever sample products that we need, and that group is
11 still waiting on input from the species groups, if I'm not
12 mistaken. The species groups are talking about, you know,
13 shorebirds for example, you heard Russ talk about shorebirds,
14 what shorebirds ought we to be sampling, how many do we need,
15 what areas need to be sampled, when, and those kinds of
16 strategies are still being thought through. And so the RITs
17 are, you know, one component of that overall strategy and,
18 certainly, if they have a role to play they're going to be
19 engaged.

20

21 MR. DEVINE: I have one more.

22

23 CHAIRMAN ALCORN: Okay.

24

25 MR. DEVINE: Couldn't we use them as a point
26 of contact, I mean instead of training 20,000 subsistence
27 users, you know, train 20 RITs, you know, to take samples and
28 then have them as a point of contact for subsistence hunters
29 to bring in samples.

30

31 CHAIRMAN ALCORN: Anybody, Bob or Russ or
32 Tom, any of you guys that have had more detailed discussions
33 about the sampling protocols and processes, do you want to
34 respond to that.

35

36 MR. LEEDY: Well, as you suggest there could
37 be a role for RITs but that's not been defined yet. At this
38 point we don't know absolutely even who's doing the sampling.
39 I mean the sort of range of options considered, you know,
40 start with hire five or six people on contract to travel
41 around the state and somehow collect samples to, you know,
42 like say -- there's a real possibility going through the
43 health clinics to do this kind of thing.

44

45 It's really -- it's open. No, I mean it's
46 not defined. I don't think anybody would anticipate, Peter,
47 that, you know, just anybody and everybody who shot a bird
48 would be going out there and collecting these samples. You
49 know it certainly would have to be centralized. Again, we're
50 not talking about 150 villages or something like that, I mean

1 just a couple dozen villages, maybe. And it's not clear yet
2 at this point if, you know, we need to operate out of a
3 regional center like Bethel or Nome or Kotzebue or whatever,
4 and, you know, have branches out from there sort of a
5 regional collection center before you send it into Anchorage.
6 These things are just not decided yet. But I think it would
7 be more like two or three dozen people trained up to collect
8 in villages than 200.

9

10 CHAIRMAN ALCORN: Ralph. Thanks, Bob.

11

12 MR. ANDERSEN: Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

13 Sitting here listening there are some things that have just
14 come pretty clear to me.

15

16 You know a lot of our question deal with the
17 plan and the plan hasn't yet been developed. We're asking
18 questions about sampling protocols, those protocols are still
19 in draft form. We're asking questions about the nuts and
20 bolts of something that hasn't yet been developed. And I
21 think that's why we're having trouble trying to find answers.

22

23 But I think that the real basic place to
24 start in getting all this accomplished, for us anyway would
25 be to develop a strategy for us on how we're going to deal
26 with the different aspects of the issue as they come up.

27

28 I think the first thing that we need to focus
29 on, pretty immediately, is letting people know that something
30 is being done. That we know about it, we hear about, this is
31 what's happening, we're doing a plan.

32

33 And, you know, getting information like this
34 out. You know the first sentence up there, you know, nothing
35 yet has been found in North America, that's really important.
36 Because, you know, I've heard elders tell me during steam
37 baths this past fall, that they're afraid to hunt geese or
38 hunt birds because they're scared of dying or getting the bug
39 when really -- you know, the real damage has been done
40 already by the media, I think, by having the media portray
41 this as something that's airborne and that it's transmittable
42 between humans, in between humans and birds, I mean just by
43 eating the flesh. I think we need to start with that --
44 outreach needs to be part of the strategy that we put
45 together. And I think it's probably the first thing we need
46 to focus on is getting information out because you're going
47 to get fears from everywhere.

48

49 I mean people start getting scared of things
50 and start opposing things if they're not given information.

1 So the more information we put out first about where we are,
2 what we're doing and how these things are going to be
3 addressed to help alleviate some of those fears, I think,
4 would be great.

5
6 Thanks.

7
8 CHAIRMAN ALCORN: Thanks, Ralph. Matt, go
9 ahead.

10
11 MR. ROBUS: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I think
12 Ralph's point is an especially good one, and I think that
13 while the agencies have tended to try to come to grips with
14 the technical aspects of this and understand the disease and
15 how it might move and what bird species we should be worried
16 about and so forth, we've always talked about this need to
17 get information out and I think it's something that this
18 Council could be pretty helpful in figuring out how to make
19 progress.

20
21 So I strongly support your point.

22
23 I had to leave the room when you were talking
24 about this earlier so I don't know exactly what got said
25 about it, but this double-sided piece of paper was put
26 together by, not just Fish and Game, but all the agencies
27 that are involved with this in Alaska, and it was put out to
28 be one standard document that has as much factual information
29 as possible. It's at all of the Fish and Game offices around
30 the state. I believe it's also at the Refuges around the
31 state. And it's available for any of your organizations to
32 use. You can get it off our website, we could, you know,
33 between us and the Service, probably figure out how to help
34 produce more copies of it. But, you know, as good a
35 document as it is and we intend to keep it updated, it is in
36 written form and that's not the best way to communicate in
37 all the parts of the state, as you know better than me, so
38 one thing that we might want to brainstorm now or in the near
39 future, is how to springboard from this to something that
40 works in your region as a source of information to reassure
41 people about what we do know, as well as what we're beginning
42 to do, in a coordinated fashion between all the agencies and
43 other organizations.

44
45 So I think outreach is something we really
46 need to do and this is a good organization to help us figure
47 out how to do it.

48
49 CHAIRMAN ALCORN: Thanks, Matt. Joeneal, and
50 then Taqulik, and then Herman.

1 MR. HICKS: I agree one hundred million
2 percent with Ralph, what he's saying, you know, outreach is
3 very, very, very important and it needs to be done like now,
4 and that's kind of the reason why I have asked those
5 questions. I mean, like, for instance, the mortality and
6 deaths and the big scare about the chicken and all that
7 because that's what's really happening out there right now.
8 I mean it's out there, believe me, and until you start making
9 an effort to get out there and educate them and say, hey, you
10 know, migratory it's not true it's going to continue.

11
12 And I just got shown an article in the
13 Anchorage Daily News Miner which kind of leads me to the
14 question, what happened to our News Miner guy, is he still
15 here, I mean there's an article in the paper here, I mean if
16 you want me to read it. The outline is Native hunter --
17 Native hunters first in bird's flu sights. It goes as
18 follows:

19
20 As I read more about the Avian flu going
21 around, I wonder how is the American
22 government going to protect the Native
23 hunters out in the village. The men go
24 spring hunting and collect geese, swans,
25 ducks and cranes every year. These birds
26 migrate from the Lower 48 and go as far as
27 Asia. They need to be prepared for this
28 outbreak before it's too late. That will be
29 a shame to sit back and watch.

30
31 I mean now something like that is going to
32 make a little scare also so, you know, all I'm saying is that
33 we need to, you know, as a Council take action now and not
34 wait.

35
36 CHAIRMAN ALCORN: Thanks, Joeneal. Taqulik.

37
38 MS. HEPA: Yeah, just as probably what
39 happened in your villages, people have expressed the concern
40 and they expressed it at different public meetings that we
41 have had in our region, at the assembly meetings, city
42 council meetings, and we can't just sit there and listen to
43 their concerns, so what we did locally is we -- working with
44 the different organizations and different departments within
45 the North Slope region, we created a steering committee to
46 deal with this -- to start dealing with this locally, to
47 provide the right information, the correct facts about what
48 the Avian flu is, to let them know that there is a
49 surveillance program going on, you know, with the various
50 different agencies. So just locally, you know, instead of

1 waiting for someone to come to our villages and tell us, you
2 know, these facts or what the plan is, we've kind of created
3 our own steering committee, and it's been pretty effective.
4 And they expect an update every month from us to let us know
5 if we've learned of new information.

6
7 So that's something for us, you know, from
8 rural Alaska to think about.

9
10 And then the more that we learn from what,
11 you know, the state as a whole is learning, then we just
12 continue to feed our people with that information hoping that
13 they won't stop hunting ducks until, you know, we find
14 something positive, and then what would the next step be.
15 And they should always know where we are going. If there is
16 a positive, people should be aware of the -- and prepared for
17 what the next steps would be.

18
19 CHAIRMAN ALCORN: Thank you. I think Herman,
20 and then Deb, did you have your hand raised -- okay, Herman
21 and then Deb.

22
23 MR. SQUARTSOFF: Yeah, Mr. Chair. Yeah,
24 Ralph and Matt and them, you guys are on the right track on
25 this, you know, the outreach and the education. But this was
26 the first time that I seen this, you know, even though it's
27 out there all over, communication is really not getting out
28 so we need to really emphasize on that a lot more.

29
30 And then having Deb or Tom, Bob, somebody
31 coming into our -- when we have regional meetings or
32 something like that, like Mike mentioned earlier, would be a
33 real good one on the education part. Because we've had
34 people, you know, a few that are concerned about it, you
35 know, about eating the ducks, but I've also had some saying,
36 well, at least I know if I die I'm going to be happy with
37 something that I ate, it tasted good anyway, at least it was
38 a good meal at the end there.

39
40 (Laughter)

41
42 MR. SMITH: It doesn't affect the taste?

43
44 MR. SQUARTSOFF: Yeah, the outreach and the
45 education, communication really needs to get in there, you
46 know, for people to be able to see this material that's
47 coming out. You could send it to your tribals a lot of
48 times, and a lot of times they're real busy there, you know,
49 and so stuff like this gets filed, you know, they don't even
50 get to see it, or they'll post it in one little spot or

1 something. So we need to get the people out there to talk to
2 them also.

3

4 Thanks.

5

6 CHAIRMAN ALCORN: Thanks, Herman. Deb.

7

8 MS. ROCQUE: Well, I just wanted to address
9 what Ralph first was discussing and I think I come from the
10 perspective as you do Ralph, is just arriving here a week ago
11 and being involved in the Avian influenza, we have to -- my
12 understanding is, is that we're in a pretty huge time crunch
13 and so we've got a number of different committees or pieces
14 of the puzzle that have to operate concurrently and that may
15 not be the best way but it's the way that we have to do it
16 just because we're in this time crunch. So sort of in some
17 areas I kind of think that we're putting the cart in front of
18 the horse but we don't have a choice because we haven't quite
19 developed the horse yet.

20

21 But to address your communications needs, we
22 have set up a communication committee and volunteered a group
23 of people to be on that committee, and I think my
24 understanding is that we'll be setting up a hot line for
25 people to report die-off events, and I would think that
26 somewhere out of that we would also be able to set up some
27 kind of a hot line or a phone number for people to call in
28 with concerns. And what I'm hearing from all of you, that I
29 will make sure gets addressed, is that, just setting that up
30 and having those materials available isn't good enough, it
31 needs to be disseminated to you folks. And I'm not sure, at
32 this point, how to do that, I'm hearing that we, at least,
33 need to distribute it to the villages and then maybe we even
34 need to go a step farther from what Herman just said. But
35 I'll make sure that that's something that that communication
36 committee addresses and deals with.

37

38 And we are having training events. I'm not
39 sure how we're going to structure those training events, but
40 also the Fish and Wildlife Service wants to work with all you
41 folks and we'll be happy to send somebody out to villages as
42 you guys have meetings and all that to keep you informed.

43

44 CHAIRMAN ALCORN: Okay, let me ask you to
45 hold your questions or statements for just a moment. I
46 wanted to ask Jim, Jim, I had you penciled in here as a third
47 presenter, did you have something that you could add to this
48 discussion, germane to this particular issue, outreach and
49 reaching of the hunting public.

50

1 Could you come to the mic, if you would, and
2 then I'll get back to

3
4 MR. BERNER: Yes, I could do it now or I
5 could do it at a time -- it would probably take 10 minutes,
6 a bit or so, maybe it would be better to see where in the mix
7 of things, as you finish these comments on this topic or
8 something.

9
10 CHAIRMAN ALCORN: Okay, what's the preference
11 of the Council, do you just want to hear from Jim on that for
12 10 minutes.

13
14 (Council nods affirmatively)

15
16 CHAIRMAN ALCORN: Okay. And then maybe that
17 will alleviate some questions and we can address them. Deb,
18 go ahead.

19
20 MS. ROCQUE: I also just wanted to say that
21 I think probably a good idea for that communication committee
22 is to extend an invitation for one or two people to be maybe
23 -- maybe they can't be on the committee itself but to be on
24 kind of a subcommittee that feeds in and gets information
25 immediately from that committee, and that's maybe something
26 that we ought to think about, structuring.

27
28 CHAIRMAN ALCORN: Okay. Well, I'll ask the
29 members just to hold that thought for now and to be thinking
30 about that if it comes times for us to take any actions.

31
32 Myron, did you have something to say.

33
34 MR. NANENG: Yes, thank you, Mr. Chairman.
35 I think it also would be good, instead of the committees that
36 have been established by the Federal agencies to expect
37 people to come to their meetings, that they, too, expect to
38 be invited and make presentations to those that are being
39 held at the regional levels.

40
41 You know, it gets a little frustrating where
42 people say that, oh, we're setting up a committee to
43 communicate, yet, they're not willing to learn how to
44 communicate with people out in the villages. So I would
45 strongly suggest that if any of these committees are formed,
46 don't invite us to come to those committee meetings, we
47 expect you to come and learn how to communicate with our
48 people as well in providing this information on this issue.

49
50 And one of the other comments I'm going to

1 make, there's already been a suggestion by one of our people
2 at their last fall convention that we quarantine our region,
3 and it's going to be very difficult to quarantine our region
4 when the birds are not going to honor the quarantine.

5
6 But, you know, those are some of the things
7 that are already popping up. So I just wanted to share those
8 things because this is going to be a very important issue out
9 in our region because 80 percent of the harvest is done by
10 our people out there in the YK Delta.

11
12 CHAIRMAN ALCORN: Thanks. Ralph, and then
13 we'll let Jim give his presentation.

14
15 MR. ANDERSEN: Just to follow up on a comment
16 that Myron just made. And, you know, you've identified hot
17 spots, you know, where you're going to be sampling and maybe
18 it would be a good thing to hold meetings out in the regions
19 there, I mean where you're planning to collect samples on the
20 coast, you know, as you go about developing the plan.

21
22 I had another question, not a question, but
23 a comment for Deb and a question to the Chairman, don't we
24 have an outreach committee, what role do you see our -- I
25 mean what role could our outreach committee play in this
26 effort in coordinating with the communications committee that
27 the agency types have set up?

28
29 CHAIRMAN ALCORN: Well, that's a good
30 question, and I'm not sure I have an answer. I think,
31 certainly, if this group wants to participate in this and
32 accept the invitation then that's the first place that I
33 would suggest we go to is the folks that have volunteered to
34 do that, we do have an outreach committee.

35
36 But hold that thought, because I think we're
37 going to get down to some actions, you know, after a little
38 while.

39
40 Jim, if you'd like to come and maybe address
41 the group, and introduce yourself again for the record.

42
43 MR. BERNER: Thank you very much. I'm Jim
44 Berner. I'm a pediatrician with the Alaska Native Tribal
45 Health Consortium and I'm the director of community health.
46 And our job, basically, is to anticipate, and as much as we
47 can, deal with in a preventative way, health problems for
48 Alaska Natives, mostly our work is outside of hospitals.

49
50 Some of our folks do some hospital care and

1 I do as well, but for the most part our work is in the
2 villages. And it is designed, basically to involve to the
3 maximum extent Alaska Native communities in solving their own
4 problems.

5
6 Now, it's of interest to us to find out that
7 the draft plan that you all have worked on, we didn't know
8 about it until late this fall and so we went ahead and put
9 together a plan based around the human health concerns of
10 Alaska Natives and our matral partners in this were the
11 University of Alaska, CDC and the State. So we've actually
12 put together a collaborative plan to do Avian influenza
13 surveillance that's based on, essentially, our perspective,
14 that it's a rural Alaska Native problem at this point both
15 the human health concerns and any possible risks and the way
16 the sampling is carried out. And our goal, when we put this
17 together was to maximize the cooperation between agencies to
18 maximize village involvement and to maximize the number of
19 specimens that get taken. Because none of us really know the
20 prevalence of any Avian influenza virus in our birds. We
21 really don't have a good idea, not just the one we're looking
22 for from Asia right now, but any of them. And all 144
23 substrains of the virus have been reported in birds. So of
24 the 16 H types and the nine N types, there are 144
25 combinations, they've all been found in birds at one point or
26 another.

27
28 Okay, so with that being the case, what we
29 did was put together something that sounds a lot like what
30 Bob's been describing. Our plan was to have pilot community
31 sites where we would train, in cooperation with the agencies
32 involved, a coordinator in the village, and that coordinator
33 would be the person that made sure that the specimens were
34 properly collected off each bird, properly put in the storage
35 media, transport media, stored and shipped. Because we think
36 two things are important in this process, number 1, to get as
37 many specimens as we can from the spots where we're likely to
38 find the highest percentage of Asian immigrant birds, and
39 number 2 to maximize the yield.

40
41 Now, to us, maximizing the yield we applied
42 the kind of experience we've had in health related village
43 projects. We get a higher yield on our viral processes, the
44 things we collect, if we send them, not out of state, but in-
45 state, because then the transport, which is tricky from
46 villages anyway, which is the weak link in our process,
47 doesn't have as far to go as if it has to go to Madison or
48 Atlanta. So what our early planning involved was building
49 capacity to do the screening, just the screening, not the
50 final track down of the specimens that were collected in the

1 state within the state. And then from the positives, and now
2 by that I mean positive for any Avian influenza, not just the
3 H5N1 because most of them won't be, those get sent to a lab
4 that does the reference work.

5
6 Now, I don't think the folks in Madison, I
7 could be wrong, but I don't think the folks in Madison want
8 to look at all the negative specimens we'll collect. I mean
9 their time could be better spent on the positives. And our
10 view is, and we've made this case to Senator Stevens and he's
11 agreed to help us get the funding to augment in-state
12 capability to do bird specimen screening, not the final
13 identification, but screening, and we think that's the step
14 that has to be done in-state to get the highest number of
15 positive yields.

16
17 Now, I think in our view we can work with
18 just about and, will, work with just about anyone around this
19 lab issue. So I don't consider that something that's not
20 flexible enough to be worked with. However, our view is that
21 there should be a robust in-state screening capability and
22 not have to depend on the lab in Madison to do every one of
23 the -- because maybe 80 percent of them will be negative and
24 there's no point in shipping them all that far and if we ship
25 them all that far we'll lose some of the positives just
26 because of the things that occur in shipping that you can't
27 anticipate.

28
29 So in-state screening, a coordinator in the
30 pilot sites, and then a public outreach effort that's, as
31 many of you have already pointed out, we think is really
32 essential. And to begin with we won't have a lot of data
33 from viral screening to report back. What you can do is
34 report the stuff from the rest of the world that we're
35 learning about this virus.

36
37 For instance on the website of the World
38 Health Organization, they've got new data that the virus
39 lives, this particular virus, the H5N1 virus can live for six
40 weeks in bird feces on the ground if the ambient temperature
41 is less than four degrees centigrade which is about 39
42 degrees, and it can live for a week at 37 degrees centigrade
43 which is body temperature. So, you know, that will be pretty
44 useful information for us to deal with. And the fact that
45 Louisa points out the virus is delicate, she's right but
46 there we're talking about when exposed to the decontamination
47 and disinfection techniques we use. They can't stand those,
48 but it sure lasts in the environment fairly well, and that
49 could be a big advantage to us in the future when we can do
50 actually environmental sampling of stuff from tundra ponds,

1 for instance.

2

3 So I think there's a lot of the science that
4 needs to be developed here.

5

6 Another question that has not been answered
7 and Louisa touched on this, is in the group of people that
8 work every day, say, in the poultry market in Thailand and
9 the disease, the H5N1 is endemic there, they're exposed to it
10 probably all the time, have any of them ever been silently
11 infected without knowing it. Nobody's looked for that. Very
12 interesting question and nobody's looked for it. We feel
13 like, and CDC has agreed with us, that it needs to be one of
14 those things that we offer subsistence hunters in villages,
15 a blood test to see if there are antibodies to these bird
16 influenza viruses. If so, in fact, it probably shows that
17 humans are quite resistant to the Avian strains and that the
18 fact that a few people have been infected with this means
19 that they're genetically probably a little bit different in
20 some way or immunologically a little bit different, but the
21 vast majority of people probably aren't even bothered by it
22 until it undergoes the mutations that Louisa talked about to
23 acquire the ability to infect humans easily.

24

25 But those are questions that we could answer
26 in our population and there an awful lot of village residents
27 who are interested in knowing just that. So it's one of
28 those things that I feel is important to offer people. It
29 would obviously be one of those voluntary efforts, and we
30 feel like it's just as important to offer that screening to
31 the wives of hunters, because they spend an awful lot of time
32 with birds once they've been shot, and they're likely to have
33 been exposed, or undoubtedly have been exposed to many Avian
34 influenza viruses because they're pretty common, but nobody's
35 getting sick from it. The question is are they developing
36 antibodies because they've been silently infected, and we'd
37 like to know the answer to that. That would be an important
38 one to find out.

39

40 Another one of these issues that's, I think,
41 important to keep in mind is that the University of Alaska
42 has already been doing some screening of subsistence killed
43 specimens, and they've developed and used a protocol that I
44 think everybody uses, it's the one you briefly described, it
45 certainly can be done but they had their problems with
46 shipments from the village and part of it was around somebody
47 in the village not being exactly sure how to do it. So I do
48 think, and this is the way the consortium works, we hire
49 somebody to work during the spring and during the fall, we
50 would, during the spring and the fall hunts to be the person

1 that sees that specimens are collected properly, that the
2 data on the kill is entered as part of that specimen's
3 identification, and that they get stored and shipped
4 properly. And I think that's the only way to ensure you get
5 a positive yield.

6
7 Last week we had a chance to talk to Senator
8 Stevens about this from the perspective of things that he
9 would support us pursuing funding for, and he felt like the
10 pilot project to involve villages was quite worthwhile. My
11 view is that if we can show it works well in the pilot sites,
12 that we can expand it, and I think we probably should. But
13 the number of villages we came up with for the pilot was very
14 similar to what Bob's talking about, it's 15, 16 villages, in
15 the key hot spot regions. And I think as a concept you could
16 prove it worked and then begin to expand it when you showed
17 how valuable it was.

18
19 And one other thing to leave you with, Louisa
20 pointed out that we develop each year's human influenza
21 vaccine from last year's human circulating viral influenza
22 data, it's my belief that if we continue a monitoring
23 process, a surveillance process in Alaska, and I think we
24 should because I don't think this should be something we do
25 just this year, there's going to be another Avian influenza
26 bad actor after this one, I mean it's not the last one that's
27 ever going to occur, and this is the spot where if it enters,
28 via a wild bird, it's likely to do it for the North American
29 continent. So my view is that we could show how useful this
30 is and make it a permanent feature in rural Alaska. And the
31 data set we get for that, on the viruses that come in with
32 the in migrating birds and leave with the out migrating birds
33 would reflect the evolution of the virus over the summer as
34 it's exchanged between birds, and even between species. That
35 data set, after a few years, could help us model what's going
36 to be the next bad actor in humans, and that -- that could
37 finally enable us to get ahead of the influenza curve on
38 vaccine development. But I don't think it could be done
39 anywhere except here because the kind of data on the
40 hemispheric meetings of wild waterfowl only occurs here.

41
42 Okay, I can stop with that. But that's the
43 gist of what the consortium and the University, CDC and the
44 State have put in their collaborative proposal, a pilot
45 village sampling scheme, a human survey to look at the
46 possibility of silent human infection, data collection over
47 years, and then a public outreach -- and one of the things we
48 use in public outreach on these topics is video spots, that
49 are played on rural TV and you could put it in the community
50 health aide clinic in the waiting room and they're really

1 useful and we've done that quite a bit and it's helped us.

2

3 CHAIRMAN ALCORN: All right, thanks, Jim.

4 Any questions of Jim -- Herman.

5

6 MR. SQUARTSOFF: Yeah, Mr. Chair. Yeah, Jim,
7 I heard you say that it's possible that some of us might be
8 building an antibiotic or a tolerance, would you say maybe
9 towards some of these influenzas, because I believe we do, us
10 along the coast, do with the PSP on the clams; did I hear you
11 right?

12

13 MR. BERNER: Well, you heard me right. What
14 I said was is I think that it's likely, I know that people
15 who hunt wild birds all the time are exposed from time to
16 time to do the viruses the birds carry, not just influenza
17 but others. And the question is, even though they don't
18 cause disease, do they cause an antibody response. In other
19 words, do they get into your tissues and generate an immune
20 response, cause an immune response and if they do that would
21 be very useful information to know.

22

23 MR. SQUARTSOFF: Right. That would be great
24 because I believe, like I said with the clams, the PSP,
25 so.....

26

27 MR. BERNER: Well, you may be right.

28

29 MR. SQUARTSOFF:that might be a good
30 tool on communications and outreach, not to let people worry,
31 that's a good possibility right there.

32

33 Thank you.

34

35 CHAIRMAN ALCORN: Any other questions of Jim.
36 All right, it's nearly noon, and I would like to take a lunch
37 break and then have us have an opportunity to think this over
38 lunch about where we do go from now.

39

40 I think we've heard from the experts as much
41 as is known right now, and I think what we need to do is
42 start asking the kinds of questions that Ralph asked early on
43 and what our strategy will be. So let's break, 1:00 o'clock
44 reconvene and we will move from there.

45

46 Mike.

47

48 MR. SMITH: Can I request the Staff, does
49 somebody know, have we analyzed the 2005 samples yet, do we
50 have those results somewhere?

1 CHAIRMAN ALCORN: Bob, do you want to respond
2 to that.
3
4 MR. LEEDY: Yeah, just speaking for the
5 Federal government and the samples that went to the Madison
6 Health Lab this last year, I believe there were in the
7 neighborhood of 1,100 samples most of which have been done,
8 maybe all of them have been done that can be done and like,
9 they're all negative. I mean that's the bottom line.
10
11 MR. SMITH: Were they sampled just for the N1
12 or.....
13
14 MR. LEEDY: No, I mean I'm certain that any
15 number of other.....
16
17 MR. SMITH: Yeah.
18
19 MR. LEEDY:viruses were found.
20
21 MR. SMITH: Okay.
22
23 MR. LEEDY: But there were no positives on
24 H5N1 highly pathogenic Avian influenza from Asia.
25
26 MR. SMITH: Is that information available
27 somewhere, I'd be interested in looking at the other stuff,
28 the stuff that was found.
29
30 MR. LEEDY: Yeah, I'm sure it's available but
31 I mean you'd have to go through -- Dr. Derksen, you've met
32 him -- okay, USGS has that data.
33
34 MR. SMITH: Okay.
35
36 MR. LEEDY: And we can help you get it if you
37 want it.
38
39 MR. SMITH: Okay, thank you.
40
41 MR. LEEDY: But it hasn't been reported upon
42 yet, per se.
43
44 CHAIRMAN ALCORN: All right. Let's convene
45 at, let's say try to get here at 1:00, we'll push it out to
46 1:10 if we have to, but 1:00 o'clock.
47
48 (Off record)
49
50 (On record)

1 CHAIRMAN ALCORN: Let's go ahead and
2 reconvene, we're only missing Mike, Matt had to leave, and
3 Myron said that he had to step out to a different meeting and
4 he's asked Tim to sit in. I assume you have his proxy.

5
6 MR. ARMSTRONG: He's the alternate.

7
8 CHAIRMAN ALCORN: You're the alternate, okay,
9 so Tim's sitting at the table.

10
11 We're going to pick up where we left off from
12 our discussions this morning and I've asked Ralph if he might
13 just sort of set the stage with what he was touching on,
14 strategy, that the Council might think about, and start off
15 for discussion. Ralph, would you reiterate what you earlier
16 said.

17
18 MR. ANDERSEN: Sure. Thank you, Mr.
19 Chairman.

20
21 I first want to thank Louisa, Deb, Russ and
22 others who participated in the meeting this morning. And
23 what I had said earlier was that just in observing and
24 listening to the questions and conversations that were going
25 on during the morning sessions, it's clear to me that we were
26 at -- while they were good questions, I mean excellent
27 questions, and the struggles were coming up with answers to
28 something that hasn't yet been developed.

29
30 So what I suggested is that we develop a
31 strategy for community outreach. It turns out that, you
32 know, the information that I got this morning, if there's
33 been a communications committee -- and I think part of the
34 strategy really needs to focus on getting information out to
35 the villages to help lay to rest a lot of the concerns that
36 are raised just by the news media and all the reports of
37 people dying from this disease is causing fear among our
38 people that they may soon be getting it as well if they eat
39 ducks or geese or any other migratory bird.

40
41 You know during lunch I was kind of pondering
42 what would be the most effective role that the AMBCC can play
43 in this process.

44
45 From what I understand there are a number of
46 committees that have been formed, committees of scientists to
47 address the scientific aspects of the issue. There's also
48 been a communications committee that's been established. And
49 I was trying to figure out what the best role would be for
50 AMBCC. And it seems to me that those of us sitting around

1 the table, especially those of us from the Native community,
2 we don't have Ph.d.'s, we don't have the scientific
3 background that those in the audience and those on the
4 committees have, and it seems that our biggest role, or the
5 best role that we bring to the table is a connection to our
6 people, a connection to our villages, a connection to our
7 regions and knowing how best to get information out to them.
8

9 I think if the strategy, and I'm not quite
10 sure, it wasn't clear to me this morning, just where the
11 communications committee that's been organized already, what
12 progress they've made. But I think that it would be really
13 important for members of our outreach committee which has
14 also been a similar, more general charge, of getting
15 information to our communities, if members of it -- you know,
16 if there's a mechanism that we can establish for
17 coordination. And maybe I'm wrong but it seems to me that
18 the representatives on the communications committee that was
19 set up by the agencies have representations from the
20 different fields; the health field, science field, biology
21 and all that. The aspect that's missing, though, seems to be
22 the strength that we bring to this table, the connection with
23 us. We don't have representatives on your committee that's
24 deciding, you know, how to communicate about this, and
25 developing communication tools and mechanisms.
26

27 So I mean during the lunch hour I gave that
28 some thought and I was thinking that, if there was a way that
29 we could bring the two groups together, and I especially
30 think that it's important that we have Native representatives
31 on the committee, whichever it turns out to be, our committee
32 or their -- you know, there needs to be some Native
33 representatives. Because one of the things that Myron
34 brought up, which I thought was a really, really good point
35 is that meetings need to be held in our region because our
36 people are or will be most directly affected. They're going
37 to see -- they're going to be involved in any sampling that
38 takes place in any of the hot spot areas that were
39 identified. They'll want to know what's happening with it,
40 where the information is, what's going to be happening with
41 the information, how can they find out results.
42

43 So I mean with that, what I would suggest is
44 that we appoint members, Native members of our outreach
45 committee to work with the other committee, and I'm not quite
46 sure if it's called that, your communications committee to
47 help design the communications plan because I think that's
48 where we offer the most, you know, that's where we offer the
49 most strength.
50

1 CHAIRMAN ALCORN: Thank you, Ralph. There's
2 one idea. I see a hand back there. Anybody on the Council
3 before I call Deb, anybody on the Council want to respond to
4 Ralph's idea.

5
6 Herman.

7
8 MR. SQUARTSOFF: Yeah, Mr. Chair. Yeah,
9 Ralph, I think that's a very good idea that we get somebody
10 on that committee off here, and then the outreach -- from our
11 outreach committee, sounds good.

12
13 Thank you.

14
15 CHAIRMAN ALCORN: Thanks, Herman. Anyone
16 else on the Board.

17
18 (No comments)

19
20 CHAIRMAN ALCORN: Okay, Deb, you raised your
21 hand.

22
23 MS. ROCQUE: I wholeheartedly invite one, two
24 members to sit on the communications committee. I just want
25 you to know, Ralph, we set up the communications committee
26 last night around 4:30 so we weren't trying to exclude you at
27 all and we welcome your participation, I think we need your
28 participation and, yes, you can get in touch with either
29 myself or Tom to let either one of us know who you would like
30 to have on that committee.

31
32 CHAIRMAN ALCORN: Do we have any -- okay,
33 Ralph, go ahead.

34
35 MR. ANDERSEN: Along that theme, I think that
36 it would be also important to make room for, you know,
37 whatever members are interested, other Native members who are
38 interested might be -- you know, can participate on the other
39 committees as well. We might not be experts or we might not
40 be scientists, but the information and the discussion that
41 occurs as you're putting together the plan, I think is
42 important enough for us to at least to be aware of and
43 involved in those.

44
45 CHAIRMAN ALCORN: Thank you, Ralph. Taqulik.

46
47 MS. HEPA: And then to follow up with that,
48 I was just curious how many committees does the plan have?
49 I think one of them might involve collecting samples from
50 subsistence, that would be one, but if we could see a list

1 then we could give our recommendation of who from this
2 Council could participate in some of those committees.

3

4 CHAIRMAN ALCORN: Deb or Bob or Tom, any idea
5 what the thinking of the steering committee is right now for
6 farming some of this work out to these other subcommittees.

7

8 Bob.

9

10 MR. LEEDY: As Russ mentioned there are
11 several, what we've referred to loosely, as species group
12 committees, people that are just refining the information on
13 timing and whereabouts of birds, okay, and that's on such a
14 fast track right now and as you already heard it's so key to
15 everything else, that frankly that would be difficult to
16 interact on directly. But I would say that on the
17 subsistence caught bird sampling, that's something where if
18 we got together, I mean absolutely, as soon as possible, we
19 don't have a committee set up for that yet, we are waiting
20 for today but it makes sense that, you know, the two major
21 agencies responsibility for the hunter sampling of birds are,
22 you know, the State and the Fish and Wildlife Service and
23 that if we could -- and I haven't, frankly talked to Tom
24 about this yet, specifically, but I know we agree that we
25 need to get together with people as soon as possible and talk
26 about the avenues we have for contracting because we need to
27 be getting the paperwork in gear and going forward. We need
28 to be developing, you know, the subsistence sampling part of
29 the message that would then go into the communications
30 committee and so on and so forth.

31

32 So I think once again if you guys could, in
33 this case, because it's more, you know, State, Fed, Native,
34 almost like this group, if you guys wanted to offer up
35 several representatives, you know, especially in the areas
36 most likely impacted, which would be the west coast, but, you
37 know, not to cut out Interior, they have their interests,
38 too, you know, we could get working on that sooner rather
39 than later, starting to, you know, just conceptually,
40 initially, and then talking specifically, how are we going to
41 contract for this. I mean frankly in my mind would it be
42 better to contract through a single entity rather than, you
43 know, have a whole bunch of different people doing different
44 things and trying to coordinate, so that would work well.

45

46 And then finally we mentioned earlier and you
47 saw in the workshop last week, the network, the existing
48 Native villages, I mean, and clearly if we're going to find
49 any -- the big major die-offs, that's going to happen from
50 people on the ground and that's clearly -- and that's another

1 area, it overlaps so much with communications because, you
2 know, we are going to want to be telling people to keep their
3 eyes open and to get word back to us but we need to make
4 clear what expectations on how many immediate responses can
5 be and so on and so forth.

6
7 So I'd say for those three purposes, you
8 know, you guys have to play a major role and we'd like to
9 have individuals identified that we can work with on that.
10 And I really like the idea that Ralph brought up earlier that
11 we do have a communications committee as part of this group
12 and to have them start working, at least, in parallel and
13 then perhaps overlap with this statewide committee, multi-
14 agency committee makes a lot of sense to me.

15
16 CHAIRMAN ALCORN: Before I call Tom, Bob, can
17 you give us an idea just off the top of your head time
18 commitment if somebody were to volunteer to be on this? I
19 mean are we talking a day a week for the next three months,
20 or are we talking -- well, I see Deb shaking her head yes
21 but, I mean, how much of a commitment are we talking about
22 here before people start raising their hands?

23
24 MR. LEEDY: Well, it's going to be, I don't
25 know, I think maybe we do need to hear from both Deb and Tom
26 on that, but I would say maybe days a week for the next
27 couple of months at least. I mean we're really on the fast
28 track, we've got to have everything pretty much set up by
29 early to mid-April or, you know, it's too late.

30
31 CHAIRMAN ALCORN: Okay.

32
33 MR. LEEDY: So it will be a heavy emphasis on
34 the next couple of months.

35
36 CHAIRMAN ALCORN: Okay. So we know what we'd
37 be getting into if we want to be engaged in this and play.

38
39 Did I see any other -- Tom, you had your hand
40 raised.

41
42 MR. ROTHE: Just a couple quick notes on the
43 communications committee stuff. If I get a chance I'll make
44 some copies here of -- this is kind of like the prospectus
45 for what we thought the committee should be doing to give you
46 a better idea of some of the functions and players.

47
48 I think we're going to want a lot of input
49 about how to communicate in the best way, with rural areas
50 especially, getting things down to the village level.

1 I'd really like to make a plug for the idea
2 that Taqulik has pointed out, that the North Slope Borough to
3 took the incentive to get a couple of people together as
4 their designated flu committee. That would be immensely
5 helpful if each of the regions had one contact, somebody who
6 was going to pay attention to flu and just kind of be a
7 person that we could work with. You know, I'm sure I'm not
8 going to call the CEO of Bristol Bay Native Association and
9 say, Ralph, what do you think about this thing, you know. So
10 think about that when you go home and see if you can -- I
11 think that would be really helpful to get us going quicker if
12 we were able to put our finger on one person, at least, from
13 all the key regions to talk to.

14
15 The communications committee we're still
16 putting names together and I don't know when we'll actually
17 meet but we see this as an ongoing function that may be in
18 existence for a couple of years. So I guess as soon as we
19 get it together for the first time, get a sense of what
20 people think we need for information products or some
21 initiatives to get communication going, we'll see where we
22 want to go there.

23
24 Ultimately somebody among these partner
25 agencies is going to have to step up to the plate and
26 actually commit to delivering things or we'll have to put a
27 couple people together to write things and produce things.

28
29 CHAIRMAN ALCORN: Can we get copies of that
30 so we could distribute those around the table?

31
32 MR. ROTHE: Yeah.

33
34 CHAIRMAN ALCORN: Maybe, Bill, if you could
35 go get us some copies made at the desk.

36
37 MR. OSTRAND: Okay.

38
39 CHAIRMAN ALCORN: Thanks. And that will give
40 us a little bit better feel for what's being envisioned.

41
42 Tim.

43
44 MR. ANDREW: Thank you, Mr. Chair. Tom, can
45 you speak about flu contact person, do you speak in a health
46 perspective or a subsistence hunter perspective or just a
47 general?

48
49 MR. ROTHE: Well, this is an issue where we
50 need both, if people are worried about their health, we're

1 going to have the human health people right there with us
2 advising folks on what the risks are to them. We obviously
3 have a mission on the bird side of things to just try to find
4 out if the virus, and when the virus arrives.

5
6 So I don't know what the opportunities are in
7 your region, for example, you know, YKHC is just down the
8 road a ways and it would be helpful to have one name is the
9 best, but if there's somebody in both. Now Louisa's
10 department is communicating with all health care providers
11 and the consortium is also communicating with health aides,
12 clinics and the hospitals. So there's a pretty good human
13 health network that already exists that we can get word
14 through. But the main thing, I guess, we don't have right
15 now is the wildlife natural resource contacts.

16
17 CHAIRMAN ALCORN: Ralph, go ahead.

18
19 MR. ANDERSEN: Thanks, Tom. And it seems to
20 be a little deeper than that. I think from what I -- just
21 from the comments I've heard, you know, while there are
22 contacts in the regions in the health areas, there isn't much
23 going past there. I mean if elders are telling me they
24 didn't shoot any ducks because they're afraid of dying from
25 Avian flu, that tell me they're not getting any information.
26 So I mean while there might be good contacts in the health
27 consortium, it might not be going beyond that.

28
29 CHAIRMAN ALCORN: Patty.

30
31 MS. BROWN-SCHWALENBERG: Along that same
32 line, I was glad to see that you did invite ANTHC here
33 because it seems like they're on their own track and haven't
34 really, I don't know, given consideration to the subsistence
35 hunter side of thing, but I think we really do need to
36 coordinate and make sure that the information that's coming
37 from that direction, ANTHC and the State health is the same
38 information that, you know, is going to be coming out of this
39 group. So we just need to really make sure we coordinate
40 because people have a tendency to, you know, they have a goal
41 and they're going there and kind of put blinders on.

42
43 So I was really glad to see that they were
44 invited, it was interesting to hear what they were doing.

45
46 CHAIRMAN ALCORN: Good point. And I did talk
47 with Jim after we broke for lunch, very briefly, and I gave
48 him my card and I said we definitely need to be coordinating.
49 I talked with Bob, I told him that Bob is the lead, he and
50 Deb, for the Fish and Wildlife Service in this region, and

1 there's definitely going to be some communications.

2

3 And my objective in talking with him was if
4 they get their proposal funded through Senator Stevens and
5 they go off and start doing work, we just need to be
6 coordinated and make sure that it compliments the work that
7 we've been funded to do. And it's very clear, what Bob
8 mentioned earlier and I mentioned today, our job, with the
9 money that the Department is sent to us is to do the bird
10 sampling, we need to collect samples, that's our role.
11 That's been prescribed for us. And what Jim has proposed is
12 something beyond that but they definitely need to match and
13 be coordinated and so we're moving in that direction.

14

15 Tom.

16

17 MR. ROTHE: In terms of the communications,
18 I think somebody said it, we're a year late in doing a lot of
19 this stuff, but in the last month or two all of are now
20 starting to get in the same rooms and talk and figure out
21 what the other guy is doing, so we're really hoping this
22 committee ends up being a nice single source for things.

23

24 Now, one of our problems with misinformation
25 about this flu is that all the media outlets are going to
26 whatever their favorite source is for the hottest stuff and
27 you may read conflicting things in the newspaper and things
28 that aren't quite accurate, so we're also hoping that this
29 committee then becomes the go to source for good information
30 for both wildlife and human health, where we got the messages
31 just right and that might improve things quite a bit.

32

33 CHAIRMAN ALCORN: Okay, so I've heard two
34 invitations. One from the committee doing outreach and
35 another invitation from the science committee or the
36 committee that's developing this strategy for collecting the
37 samples. And I would entertain discussion or a motion to
38 respond to those invitations if the Board is willing.

39

40 MR. ANDERSEN: Mr. Chairman.

41

42 CHAIRMAN ALCORN: Ralph.

43

44 MR. ANDERSEN: Before we do that, what I
45 would like to do is call a caucus.

46

47 CHAIRMAN ALCORN: You bet, how much time
48 would you like?

49

50 MR. ANDERSEN: How much time do we need?

1 MR. SQUARTSOFF: Five minutes.
2
3 CHAIRMAN ALCORN: Okay, do it, I'll ask those
4 of us that are not in the caucus to excuse ourselves out of
5 the room, okay, you guys can keep the room.
6
7 (Off record)
8
9 (On record)
10
11 CHAIRMAN ALCORN: All right, let's come back
12 to order.
13
14 Ralph's going to report out from the caucus.
15
16 MR. ANDERSEN: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. As
17 a result of our caucus we make the following proposal.
18
19 CHAIRMAN ALCORN: Is this in the form of a
20 motion?
21
22 MR. ANDERSEN: Yes, it is.
23
24 CHAIRMAN ALCORN: Okay.
25
26 MR. ANDERSEN: That Tim and Peter be
27 designated to work with the science group in putting together
28 the plan, I mean the study plan or the research plan or
29 whatever it is that they're working on, the subsistence part
30 of the plan, working with the sampling committee, the
31 subsistence bird sampling committee.
32
33 Joeneal and Patty will be the designated
34 alternates in the event that Peter or Tim are not able to
35 attend, either in person or telephonically.
36
37 We also would like to appoint Taq and Patty
38 to the communications committee with Joeneal as a designated
39 alternate in the event either of them, either Taq or Patty
40 are not able to attend the meeting in person or
41 telephonically.
42
43 That's my motion.
44
45 MR. SQUARTSOFF: I'll second the motion.
46
47 CHAIRMAN ALCORN: Okay, we have a motion and
48 a second. Any discussion.
49
50 (No comments)

1 CHAIRMAN ALCORN: Hearing none, anyone oppose
2 the motion as stated.

3
4 (No opposing votes)

5
6 CHAIRMAN ALCORN: Seeing no opposition, the
7 motion carries. Thank you very much.

8
9 Now, is there any other discussion about what
10 we want to take away from this group to take back to your
11 communities from this meeting, is there any discussion about
12 that?

13
14 Herman.

15
16 MR. SQUARTSOFF: Yeah, Doug, I want to see if
17 I can get a bunch more copies of these to take back.

18
19 CHAIRMAN ALCORN: You got it.

20
21 MR. SQUARTSOFF: Thank you.

22
23 CHAIRMAN ALCORN: Patty.

24
25 MS. BROWN-SCHWALENBERG: And is it possible
26 to get copies of the two PowerPoint presentations that were
27 given this morning?

28
29 CHAIRMAN ALCORN: I'm 99 percent sure those
30 are probably available. I'm sure Deb would give hers up.
31 Louisa's not here but I don't see that she would be
32 protective over that.

33
34 MR. ARMSTRONG: We can send them out.

35
36 CHAIRMAN ALCORN: We'll send them out
37 electronically and then you'll have them.

38
39 MS. BROWN-SCHWALENBERG: All right, thank
40 you.

41
42 MR. SMITH: And who should we be contacting
43 if we were interested in inviting people to our meetings and
44 stuff like that, who is the contact person within the agency,
45 Bob, is that going to be you?

46
47 MR. LEEDY: I'd say Deb.

48
49 CHAIRMAN ALCORN: Deb Rocque is our recently
50 acquired, transferred into our program, coordinator for this

1 Avian influenza, will be with us for the next couple years
2 most likely.
3
4 MR. SMITH: Where'd you transfer from?
5
6 MS. ROCQUE: The contaminants program.
7
8 MR. SMITH: Oh, okay.
9
10 CHAIRMAN ALCORN: She's well credentialed.
11 I believe you have a Ph.d. in Avian influenza; is that right?
12
13 (Laughter)
14
15 MS. ROCQUE: Ph.d., Avian C.
16
17 (Laughter)
18
19 CHAIRMAN ALCORN: The Avian part, all right.
20
21 All right, we have one agenda item left which
22 is to hear public comment, is this a Staff comment or a
23 public comment Cynthia?
24
25 MS. WENTWORTH: I guess it's a Staff comment.
26 I just need.....
27
28 CHAIRMAN ALCORN: Okay, come to the.....
29
30 MS. WENTWORTH: Could you repeat to me, I
31 missed the first.....
32
33 CHAIRMAN ALCORN: Turn your mic on.
34
35 MS. WENTWORTH: Could you just repeat to me
36 what you said about who is on the committees, I got Taq and
37 Patty for the communications committee but what was said
38 right before that, I didn't get the names down. Was that on
39 the harvest committee?
40
41 MR. ANDERSEN: I have the subsistence bird
42 sampling committee.
43
44 MS. WENTWORTH: Yeah, that's what I need.
45 Could you just repeat that for me?
46
47 MR. ANDERSEN: Tim and Peter with Joeneal and
48 Patty as the alternates.
49
50 MR. SMITH: Andrew.

1 MR. ANDERSEN: Tim Andrew and.....
2
3 MR. SMITH: Peter Devine.
4
5 MS. WENTWORTH: And Peter.
6
7 MR. SMITH: APIA.
8
9 MS. WENTWORTH: Devine. And who is the
10 alternate again, Patty?
11
12 MR. ANDERSEN: Joeneal and Patty.
13
14 MS. WENTWORTH: Joeneal. Patty. Thanks.
15
16 CHAIRMAN ALCORN: Okay. Anyone from the
17 Council have anything to say before we turn it over to the
18 public with anybody from the public to comment.
19
20 Mike.
21
22 MR. SMITH: I know.....
23
24 REPORTER: Turn on your mic.
25
26 CHAIRMAN ALCORN: Turn your mic on.
27
28 MR. SMITH: You know, I kind of appreciate
29 the fact that we'll be exposed to a lot of the going's on,
30 but I'm wondering if we shouldn't formally charge somebody to
31 keep us informed to the extent, like Bill to send out emails
32 to the Council once a month saying what's going on with this
33 and stuff, or something along those lines to kind of keep the
34 rest of the members up to speed on the various committees and
35 as things are progressing over the course of the next couple
36 months so that, you know, if things really need to start
37 hopping at some point in the next couple months we'll at
38 least be up to speed on what's been happening and we'll be
39 able to convey that and why we need to start hopping and
40 stuff.
41
42 CHAIRMAN ALCORN: Let me offer this. Deb's
43 our coordinator, she can get the list served that Fred uses
44 for the Council.....
45
46 MR. SMITH: Okay.
47
48 CHAIRMAN ALCORN:and any time she has
49 information that's relevant, that needs to be broadcast, she
50 can push a send button and send an email. We'll have her do

1 that and I won't say it will be monthly it will probably be
2 more frequently than that.

3
4 MR. SMITH: Yeah, but whatever it is.

5
6 CHAIRMAN ALCORN: But whenever it's opportune
7 we'll have some communications going out electronically.....

8
9 MR. SMITH: Thank you.

10
11 CHAIRMAN ALCORN:to all of you. We've
12 got everyone's email addresses, so that'd be probably the
13 most efficient way to do it.

14
15 Taqulik.

16
17 MS. HEPA: Mr. Chair. One thing we did
18 forget to bring up from our caucus discussion there was about
19 the funding to participate in these committees. I know, for
20 example, that I wouldn't have additional extra funding to go
21 if we're going to meet once every three weeks or what not,
22 but I take it most of them will be by teleconference. But if
23 we could identify some source of funding to help us get to
24 these meetings.

25
26 CHAIRMAN ALCORN: All right, and that's a
27 good suggestion. We have agreements with you all already in
28 place and that's the place that I would suggest you begin to
29 bill when you have -- if you have to travel to a meeting or
30 something like that. And we will talk internally, also, with
31 the planning committee on how that money is going to be
32 allocated to cover expenses. But expenses, you know, must be
33 covered. There's no way that all of, you know, everyone is
34 going to have bear some of that, I mean there will be some
35 contributed time and Staff time and what not but we'll try to
36 cover as much as we can. But there's a limited pot and we've
37 got to have some discussion on how that's going to be sent
38 out right now.

39
40 MS. HEPA: Again, just to clarify, I know
41 that we have an X amount in our current agreements, but if I
42 start going to this one particular committee I'm going to eat
43 up a lot of that money.....

44
45 CHAIRMAN ALCORN: Right.

46
47 MS. HEPA:because it is expensive for
48 me to come from Barrow. And do we, you know, for us to hold
49 our meetings we pretty much use it all. So just to keep that
50 in mind. And we did try to pick Patty since she was here

1 locally so it could be less of an expense.

2

3 CHAIRMAN ALCORN: Okay. Great. Mike.

4

5 MR. SMITH: Yeah, thank you, Mr. Chairman.
6 I think I would agree with that. I mean I think there's a
7 lot of new money out there available and we should not be
8 compelled to dig into the limited pot of money that goes to
9 the regionals to pay for this. There's a lot of money coming
10 down the pipe for this, your agency and health people and
11 everybody else got a lot of money and I think that they could
12 probably give up a little bit to offer our participation in
13 the process.

14

15 CHAIRMAN ALCORN: Herman.

16

17 MR. SQUARTSOFF: Yeah, Doug. Yeah, Mike, I
18 don't know if they have a lot of money but didn't I hear Deb
19 or Bob or somebody say that you had some money for this or
20 did I hear wrong a while ago.

21

22 MR. LEEDY: No, no, you heard it right.

23

24 MR. SQUARTSOFF: Yeah, okay, so we shouldn't
25 have to dig into our own little pocket of money that we have
26 to have these people on this committee, right?

27

28 CHAIRMAN ALCORN: We have the -- the
29 agreement's in place is what I'm saying so that we have a
30 mechanism to cover expenses. And when we do contract -- we
31 can do contract mods, modifications of those contracts to
32 cover expenses.

33

34 MR. SQUARTSOFF: Sounds good. Thank you, Mr.
35 Chair.

36

37 CHAIRMAN ALCORN: All right, any other
38 discussion.

39

40 (No comments)

41

42 CHAIRMAN ALCORN: I'm going to open up the
43 mic up to anyone from the public or Staff. Bob, I see you
44 kind of scratching your chin.

45

46 MR. LEEDY: Yeah. We do have one more area
47 that will involve the villages to a great extent and that is
48 on the monitoring of bird die-offs. The fancy title they
49 give it in all this flu stuff is morbidity/mortality
50 investigations, but basically it's bird die-offs. And,

1 again, we don't know exactly how we're going to handle this
2 yet. You heard Deb refer specifically earlier to the
3 potential of having like a hot line, you know, a number where
4 people can call if they see die-offs, and that's about as far
5 as we've got this concept.

6
7 I mean this is sort of new to us because we
8 don't have that many die-offs in Alaska that we've been aware
9 of in the past but, you know, this is something that we want
10 to follow very closely. So we either need to have another
11 person or two that we can work with, you know, to help
12 develop whatever kind of system we need for reporting two-
13 way, to the degree possible in die-offs or that can
14 conceivably could be a part of the communications committee
15 but be aware that there is this other specific element of
16 getting input from the villages on die-offs.

17
18 CHAIRMAN ALCORN: Ralph. Tim. Mike.

19
20 MR. ANDERSEN: That's a good issue, Bob. I
21 think it's more geared toward information. Gathering
22 information than it is collecting morbidity and mortality
23 statistics, right?

24
25 MR. LEEDY: Right. We're not asking people
26 to pick up birds for the most part.

27
28 MR. ANDERSEN: Yeah, and so it's more of a
29 communications issue than anything else. And I hope that
30 will be developed by the communications committee.

31
32 CHAIRMAN ALCORN: Thanks, Ralph. Tim.

33
34 MR. ANDREW: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I was
35 looking at the brochure from the Department of Fish and Game,
36 it would be nice to perhaps put in an 800 number so people
37 would be more compelled to call rather than taking the
38 expense to call from the villages to these telephone numbers.

39
40 The other thing is we did have bird die-offs
41 in the past. I mean probably some time before we heard about
42 the H5N1, it might have been due to starvation or what, what
43 other factors may be out there. People from the villages
44 call me, they call AVCP and let us know what exactly is going
45 on out there and we pass it on to the agencies that need to
46 know about it. So perhaps including in the partners in the
47 notice -- or the fact sheet would probably help open up some
48 communication lines as well.

49
50 CHAIRMAN ALCORN: All right. Let me follow

1 up with that. Are you suggesting, Tim, that there be -- to
2 report dead birds on this sheet, that we would put our
3 regional partner contacts?
4

5 MR. ANDREW: If there's no objection from
6 other regional partners.
7

8 CHAIRMAN ALCORN: Okay. Well, then that begs
9 the question then, do each of the regions want to identify
10 someone if that's something that's -- I mean does every
11 region have a point of contact that they want to have the
12 public calling.
13

14 (Council nods affirmatively)
15

16 I'm seeing people nod but -- okay. All
17 right, if the general consensus is, is that we'll try to get
18 names, all the regional partners will try to get names to --
19 who is actually coordinating.....
20

21 MR. SMITH: Well, I think.....
22

23 CHAIRMAN ALCORN:the material?
24

25 Mike go ahead.
26

27 MR. SMITH: Mr. Chairman. I think for the
28 time being.....
29

30 REPORTER: Mike, your mic.
31

32 MR. SMITH: Mr. Chairman. I think for the
33 time being, I mean for the immediate sake of what's going on,
34 certainly over the course of the next couple of weeks and so
35 on and so forth, I think we should go ahead and utilize the
36 partners that are sitting at the table as the initial
37 contacts right now and assume -- unless given otherwise notif
38 -- otherwise that that's who they contact, is, you know,
39 either the partners or the partners wildlife programs.
40

41 In regards to your die-off stuff, I mean I
42 think, and maybe erroneously, but I kind of assumed that that
43 would be part and parcel of this education effort that we get
44 out there and that I fully anticipate at some point posters
45 put up asking to keep an eye out for die-offs and things of
46 that nature that we can put up in our village council offices
47 and things of that nature, you know, and certainly a 1-800
48 number would help facilitate that.
49

50 I know Matt can't do 1-800 numbers, because

1 I put in a proposal and it got kicked out because admin
2 covers that, but.....

3

4 MR. ROBUS: Lots of rules.

5

6 CHAIRMAN ALCORN: Okay, I have Matt and then
7 Tom.

8

9 MR. ROBUS: I just wanted to mention a couple
10 of factors you might want to think about before getting on to
11 our list too quickly, and those are not only would you put
12 your partner organization in the position of communications,
13 first line of hearing from local people and then passing it
14 on, but you'd also put yourself in the position of getting
15 questions from people and I think we kind of thought that it
16 might be preferable for the agencies to be put in the
17 position of having to do all this explaining because you're
18 going to have to have people available at whatever number you
19 pick that could go through a lot of the things that we've
20 talked about today and if you do, that's fine, but it just
21 means more people and more places have to be brought up to
22 that standard of ability to explain the disease and explain
23 the human health processes and so forth.

24

25 So it's -- I mean there are other things that
26 go along with that in addition to just being first in line to
27 hear about die-offs or that type of thing.

28

29 I'm not saying, I don't think you should do
30 it, but just consider all the ramifications of being put into
31 that position.

32

33 CHAIRMAN ALCORN: Let me suggest an
34 alternative before I turn the mic over to Tom and, that is,
35 that Fred's shop sends out to 20,000 plus P.O. Box holders
36 every year the regulation packet, it's not the real regs,
37 it's just a description of the regulations, not to be thought
38 of as the legal regulations. However, that gets mailed to
39 the vast majority of our hunting public and Fred's already
40 told me that they're going to try to dedicate space in that
41 publication to discuss this and there might be an opportunity
42 to list the names there, that way it goes directly to your
43 hunters and then that contact can come through you and it's
44 not put on a State publication. You might avoid some of the
45 confusion that Matt's describing.

46

47 Let me let Tom speak and then Ralph I'll let
48 you have it.

49

50 MR. ROTHE: Mr. Chairman. I think one of the

1 first tasks the communications committee sort of agreed to
2 take on was to set up this reporting system like we had for
3 West Nile virus. Just so you know, that particular flier on
4 Avian influenza was something our department whipped up
5 really quickly, and that's why there's only Fish and Game
6 phone numbers. If you went to look at the West Nile virus
7 phone number, there's a public health number, a Fish and
8 Wildlife Service number and some other contacts. And what
9 our goal is is to have someone reporting in kind of no more
10 than two or three phone calls and get to someone who knows
11 what to do and so that what we wrestled with with West Nile
12 is not going through a whole bunch of people, and so we
13 designated key offices so that everybody knows you call, you
14 know, this number in Fairbanks, this number in Anchorage,
15 this number in Bethel, whatever it is. And guarantee that if
16 you called that number you're going to get somebody that will
17 do something.

18
19 So I think this communications committee
20 needs to figure out the most efficient, most short chained
21 way to address that. That will give us the reporting part of
22 this stuff, in other words, we'll hear from people about dead
23 birds. What the steering committee talked about yesterday
24 then was somebody needs to sit down and cook up a response
25 plan. What happens when you do get a call that says I got 10
26 dead kittiwakes on the beach or something, you know, so
27 that's to be done yet, the response part of it.

28
29 CHAIRMAN ALCORN: Thanks, Tom. I had Ralph
30 and then Tim.

31
32 MR. ANDERSEN: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I
33 agree with Matt, that we might be putting ourselves in a
34 pretty precarious position here by jumping in the middle of
35 someone reporting -- making reports directly to the agencies
36 and us stepping in between that.

37
38 And just for the sake of this, I think this
39 is already busy enough, I mean this is really a busy sheet of
40 paper here. And I think that -- and I expect that others
41 will be distributed in the future by the -- you know as
42 they're developed by the communications committee. But I
43 think that for this initial thing, that I think it's okay to
44 keep the contacts just the way they are. That way it would
45 save time and money to get this document put out.

46
47 I also feel pretty -- I feel a little
48 uncomfortable stepping into the middle of a communications
49 link because I think that the people in the villages really
50 deserve direct communication to the agencies and, you know,

1 putting ourselves in the position of stepping in between that
2 I think is pretty -- you know could be construed as
3 dangerous.

4
5 CHAIRMAN ALCORN: Tim.

6
7 MR. ANDREW: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I am
8 kind of rethinking the recommendation that I made earlier.

9
10 The only problem that we'd have in our area
11 would be the language. People in the villages call, they
12 speak primarily in Yup'ik, and probably would feel more
13 comfortable in describing situations in their own language,
14 or in the Yup'ik language in our area. And I just don't know
15 how we could possibly accommodate that with the numbers
16 given, even on the sheet, unless we serve as the in between
17 person for the people that can't speak English or would
18 prefer to do their reporting in Yup'ik.

19
20 CHAIRMAN ALCORN: Mike.

21
22 MR. SMITH: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I
23 appreciate this discussion that's been going on but I think
24 we're talking about kind of two different levels of
25 communication here. To a large extent we're going to get
26 calls from just our constituents who are can I go -- simply
27 going to ask can I go out and hunt birds, is it safe for me
28 to go hunting these birds and eat them. At some other level
29 we may be getting communications that want more detail, you
30 know, I'm not going to talk about, you know, the gene that
31 causes the mortality within the -- and the virus to somebody
32 on the telephone, certainly I don't have that expertise and
33 that those can be referred. You know, we simply have a list
34 of named people in the departments and who can answer those
35 more detailed questions should they arise. I think to a
36 large extent, though, the vast majority of the questions will
37 be simple questions like, can I eat this bird I shot
38 yesterday, you know, migratory is it safe for me to eat this
39 bird, you know, and so we -- and as a -- I mean I think Tim's
40 correct is that people are going to talk to us first, to a
41 large extent, you know, if they have concerns and I'll say,
42 no, right now we're fine, eat your birds, you know,
43 everything's cool, you know, type of deal.

44
45 Well, a little more detail than that
46 probably, Cynthia, but then if they needed more detail, or
47 more intense information then certainly we'd have a list of
48 referral numbers that they could call, you know, and I think
49 that might cover some of the concerns we're expressing right
50 now.

1 CHAIRMAN ALCORN: Matt.
2
3 MR. ROBUS: As we go through this I have a
4 few feeble ideas but it strikes me that maybe the Council is
5 getting down into the communications committee business.
6
7 So I think there's some good thinking but it
8 ought to be done with the right circle of people.
9
10 CHAIRMAN ALCORN: All right, I agree with you
11 and why don't we leave it at that and let the folks that
12 we've already now designated to be participating on that
13 committee come up with the right strategy and give them full
14 privileges to implement it.
15
16 Herman, did you have something that you
17 wanted to say?
18
19 MR. SQUARTSOFF: Nope, totally agree with you
20 guys.
21
22 CHAIRMAN ALCORN: Okay. All right. Is there
23 anything else from the Board before I turn it over to the
24 public here or Staff.
25
26 (No comments)
27
28 CHAIRMAN ALCORN: Anyone from Staff that
29 needs to say anything.
30
31 (No comments)
32
33 CHAIRMAN ALCORN: All right. Well, let's
34 anybody from the public.
35
36 Herman.
37
38 MR. SQUARTSOFF: Yeah, one more, hey,
39 appreciate being here again and thank you all for taking the
40 time on this hot and heavy issue for us, so, and especially
41 the Staff that's put the time in for the presentations.
42
43 Thank you.
44
45 CHAIRMAN ALCORN: Tom. Come to the mic.
46
47 MR. ROTHE: I just want you to know that I
48 appreciate that if you're confused on a lot of all these
49 details, so are we, and there's a huge amount of information
50 out there so if you need anything, you know, call Deb, me,

1 Bob, or whoever, we have lots of PowerPoint material. We're
2 going to be developing a lot of written summaries of meetings
3 and things. So we'll dump as much of it to you as we can
4 stand, but there's going to be a lot of it within the next
5 couple of months, so just let us know.

6
7 MR. SMITH: I just want you to come read it
8 for me as all.

9
10 MR. ROTHE: I'm familiar with the Athabaskan
11 dialect that would be appropriate.

12 (Laughter)

13
14 MR. ANDERSEN: Move to adjourn.

15
16
17 CHAIRMAN ALCORN: Do we have anyone from the
18 audience that would like to address the Council.

19 (No comments)

20
21
22 CHAIRMAN ALCORN: Seeing no hands, we have a
23 motion to adjourn, do I have a second.

24
25 MR. SQUARTSOFF: Second.

26
27 CHAIRMAN ALCORN: Bill. Wait, wait before we
28 vote. We have a Staff comment.

29
30 MR. OSTRAND: This is off the topic of today,
31 but I just wanted to remind the Council of their committees
32 and that many of them need to meet before the spring meeting.
33 This might be a good time to decide upon meeting times and
34 dates since you're all together.

35
36 CHAIRMAN ALCORN: Well, that would certainly
37 make your life easier. Does anybody have -- do you know
38 which committees absolutely need to meet?

39
40 MR. ANDERSEN: Well, Mr. Chairman, I suggest
41 that Staff contact the committee members and.....

42
43 MR. OSTRAND: We've tried.

44
45 CHAIRMAN ALCORN: But they have, though,
46 Ralph. I've been witness to the emails that have gone out
47 and with no response. And so if you would all bear with us.

48
49 MR. ANDERSEN: I'm a member of a committee
50 and I haven't received an email.

1 MR. SMITH: About the next meeting.
2
3 MS. BROWN-SCHWALENBERG: I got one.
4
5 CHAIRMAN ALCORN: Well, I've seen a number of
6 email requests for responses and they're telling me they're
7 not getting a real strong response so if you would bear with
8 us for five minutes, it would help our Staff, and our Staff
9 is overworked already, I'll commit to that, all right. So
10 Bill, you got the floor for five minutes.
11
12 MR. OSTRAND: Well, it was decided at the
13 last Council meeting that the Tech Committee would meet in
14 conjunction with the Harvest Survey Committee to review the
15 request from the Washington office on whether or not we
16 should have a separate EIS for Alaska or join in the national
17 EIS, so that committee needs to meet fairly soon to come up
18 with an opinion.
19
20 MR. SMITH: Don't we need just an EA?
21
22 MR. OSTRAND: No. We're at the point in time
23 where an EIS is mandated.
24
25 And then other committees that should meet
26 soon are the exclusion committee.
27
28 CHAIRMAN ALCORN: I've had no problem, you
29 and I, coordinating with our -- so we'll leave that, we'll
30 schedule by email.
31
32 MR. OSTRAND: Okay.
33
34 CHAIRMAN ALCORN: We'll be able to do that.
35
36 MR. OSTRAND: A new committee that hasn't met
37 yet is the Law Enforcement Committee. And we were looking
38 for, I believe, one more appointee from the State, looking
39 for a law enforcement person. Do you recall that Matt?
40
41 MR. ROBUS: I recall that, I thought we'd
42 named -- did we just name one person?
43
44 MR. ARMSTRONG: No, Al, and you.
45
46 (Laughter)
47
48 MR. ARMSTRONG: You named them.
49
50 MR. ROBUS: Well, I'll work on getting

1 somebody from the Troopers because that's a more appropriate
2 person.
3
4 CHAIRMAN ALCORN: Is there a need for them to
5 meet before the spring meeting?
6
7 MR. OSTRAND: Well, that's up to the Council.
8 They were charged to meet and given a topic to discuss.
9
10 CHAIRMAN ALCORN: All right.
11
12 MR. SMITH: Did we set a date for the spring
13 meeting?
14
15 CHAIRMAN ALCORN: Yes, the spring meeting is
16 the week of April 3rd. It's the 4th, 5th and 6th, the
17 workshop is the 4th, the 5th and 6th is the days scheduled
18 for the meeting. Correct?
19
20 MR. OSTRAND: (Nods affirmatively)
21
22 MR. SQUARTSOFF: Is that going to be here?
23
24 CHAIRMAN ALCORN: It's going to be here in
25 Anchorage. All right, so we have one committee that I heard
26 you mention, the Tech Committee meeting with what other
27 committee?
28
29 MR. OSTRAND: The Harvest Survey.
30
31 CHAIRMAN ALCORN: Harvest Survey Committee.
32 That committee needs to talk when we adjourn, you need to see
33 Bill and you need to set a time, and you need to have that --
34 it doesn't have to be a meeting, it can be just a
35 teleconference or even an email discussion if you want to do
36 it that way, but there needs to be some discussion of that
37 issue. I know that it was raised in the fall, and the
38 Service is proposing to host a scoping meeting in conjunction
39 with the AMBCC meeting in the spring here, possibly. So we
40 need your input on whether or not that scoping should include
41 subsistence harvest or just sport harvest, which is what the
42 SEIS traditionally has had in it.
43
44 All right.
45
46 MR. SMITH: Sports harvest.
47
48 CHAIRMAN ALCORN: Sports harvest, I'm sorry,
49 did I say.....
50

1 Tom.
2
3 MR. ROTHE: What's the new official deadline
4 for comments on that?
5
6 MR. ARMSTRONG: March.....
7
8 CHAIRMAN ALCORN: Bob, do you know?
9
10 MR. LEEDY: I'm trying to think, it's after
11 the North America meeting so I'd say the end of March or
12 early April would be my guess, I think.
13
14 MR. ARMSTRONG: I thought it was mid-March,
15 I'm not sure.
16
17 CHAIRMAN ALCORN: Okay. So you have your
18 charge, you two committees. So when we adjourn, make sure
19 that you see Bill.
20
21 Matt.
22
23 MR. ROBUS: Are you done.
24
25 CHAIRMAN ALCORN: I'm through with that.
26
27 MR. ROBUS: The last thing before
28 adjournment, Ralph, I'm leaning away from Ralph. I believe
29 that this -- I don't think that this is the absolute latest
30 version of this. There's a very small tweak that was made to
31 a couple of words, and so whoever produces these for
32 distribution, the one that's on our website now is Version 2,
33 this, I believe is Version 1.
34
35 MR. SMITH: Under Wildlife Conservation?
36
37 MR. ROBUS: It's on Wildlife Conservation
38 website. I believe it's also on the Service's website, and
39 I assume that's been updated, too.
40
41 CHAIRMAN ALCORN: We just have a link to your
42 website is what it is.
43
44 MR. ROBUS: Okay. This one is Version 2, I
45 thought there was a revision date on Version 2. At any rate,
46 perhaps I'm.....
47
48 CHAIRMAN ALCORN: The web URLs are all listed
49 on the back page there. I assume Fish and Game is on there.
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MR. ROBUS: Okay.

CHAIRMAN ALCORN: Okay.

Any opposition to the motion.

(No comments)

CHAIRMAN ALCORN: Hearing none, we're
adjourned.

Thank you all very much.

(Off record)

(END OF PROCEEDINGS)

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C E R T I F I C A T E

UNITED STATES OF AMERICA)
)ss.
STATE OF ALASKA)

I, Joseph P. Kolasinski, Notary Public in and for the state of Alaska and reporter for Computer Matrix Court Reporters, LLC, do hereby certify:

 THAT the foregoing pages numbered 02 through 94 contain a full, true and correct Transcript of the ALASKA MIGRATORY BIRD CO-MANAGEMENT COUNCIL taken electronically by Nathaniel Hile on the 26th day of January 2006, at the Dimond Hotel in Anchorage, Alaska;

 THAT the transcript is a true and correct transcript requested to be transcribed and thereafter transcribed by under my direction and reduced to print to the best of our knowledge and ability;

 THAT I am not an employee, attorney, or party interested in any way in this action.

 DATED at Anchorage, Alaska, this 2nd day of February 2006.

Joseph P. Kolasinski
Notary Public in and for Alaska
My Commission Expires: 03/12/08 _