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VOLUME I

ALASKA MIGRATORY BIRD CO-MANAGEMENT COUNCIL

FALL MEETING

FAIRBANKS, ALASKA
SEPTEMBER 23, 2015

Members Present:

- Bruce Dale, Alaska Department of Fish and Game
- Pete Probasco, U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service
- John Reft, Kodiak/Aleutian/Pribilof Islands Association
- Jack Fagerstrom, Kawerak
- Cyrus Harris, Maniilaq Association, Kotzebue
- Taqulik Hepa, North Slope Region, Barrow
- Joeneal Hicks, Copper River Native Association
- Gayla Hoseth, Bristol Bay Native Association
- Randy Mayo, Tanana Chiefs representative, Interior
- Tim Andrew, Association of Village Presidents

Executive Director, Patty Brown-Schwalenberg

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P R O C E E D I N G S

(Fairbanks, Alaska - 9/23/2015)

(On record 9:09 a.m.)

CHAIRMAN PROBASCO: While Eric is setting us up on the call-in line I'd like to welcome everybody and good morning. Before we get started just a friendly reminder for people sitting at the table as well as the audience members who wish to speak please state your name. Particularly on this side because our court reporter can't see your name tags and that's for our transcripts, so keep that in mind. Once Eric has that dialed in, we will get into our meeting.

(Pause)

CHAIRMAN PROBASCO: At this time I'd like everybody to rise and recognize a moment of silence.

(Moment of silence)

CHAIRMAN PROBASCO: Thank you. At this time, Patty, do we have any seating of alternates?

MS. SCHWALENBERG: Tim Andrew is here for AVCP and John Reft is here for Kodiak in place of George Squartsoff.

CHAIRMAN PROBASCO: Okay. Thank you. Will you please conduct roll call.

MS. SCHWALENBERG: North Slope.

MS. HEPA: Here.

MS. SCHWALENBERG: AVCP.

MR. ANDREW: Here.

MS. SCHWALENBERG: Copper River is here, but not here yet. Kodiak.

MR. REFT: Here.

MS. SCHWALENBERG: Tanana Chiefs.

MR. MAYO: Here.

1 MS. SCHWALENBERG: Kawerak.
2
3 MR. FAGERSTROM: Here.
4
5 MS. SCHWALENBERG: Maniilaq.
6
7 MR. HARRIS: Here.
8
9 MS. SCHWALENBERG: State of Alaska.
10
11 MR. DALE: Here.
12
13 MS. SCHWALENBERG: U.S. Fish and
14 Wildlife Service.
15
16 CHAIRMAN PROBASCO: Here.
17
18 MS. SCHWALENBERG: Bristol Bay.
19
20 MS. HOSETH: Here.
21
22 MS. SCHWALENBERG: Mr. Chairman, we
23 have a quorum.
24
25 CHAIRMAN PROBASCO: Thank you, Patty.
26 At this time I'd like to do introductions and
27 introductions will also include our audience. So we
28 will start over on my left. Taqulik, please.
29
30 MS. HEPA: Hi. Good morning, Mr. Chair
31 and members of the AMBCC and our visiting guests. I
32 just want to thank Mr. Mayo for the hospitality that he
33 provides for us and I'm from the North Slope Borough.
34
35 MR. ANDREW: Good morning. Timothy
36 Andrew, AVCP, Bethel.
37
38 MR. HICKS: Good morning. Joeneal
39 Hicks, Copper River.
40
41 MR. REFT: Good morning. John Reft,
42 Kodiak, Alaska.
43
44 MR. DALE: Bruce Dale, Alaska
45 Department of Fish and Game.
46
47 CHAIRMAN PROBASCO: Good morning.
48 Peter Probasco, U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service.
49
50 MS. HOSETH: Good morning. I'm Gayla

1 Hoseth. I'm with Bristol Bay Area Health -- Bristol
2 Bay Native Association in Dillingham. Sorry, that was
3 my previous job. I'd like to welcome you all here
4 today.

5
6 Thank you.

7
8 MS. SCHWALENBERG: Good morning. Patty
9 Schwalenberg with the Alaska Migratory Bird Co-
10 Management Council.

11
12 MR. HARRIS: Good morning. Cyrus
13 Harris, Maniilaq Association, Kotzebue.

14
15 MR. FAGERSTROM: Jack Fagerstrom,
16 Kawerak.

17
18 MR. MAYO: Good morning. Randy Mayo
19 representing the Tanana Chiefs region and on behalf of
20 the 43 tribes of our region we'd like to welcome all of
21 the visitors and guests to our traditional homeland
22 here. Along with myself, our regional representative,
23 Mr. Don Honea, Jr. of Ruby, our vice chair, and Mr.
24 Alfred Demientieff, our Lower Yukon representative.

25
26 Just real quickly for people that
27 aren't familiar with this region, we have a vast region
28 here made up of 43 sovereign Dena'ina Nations in this
29 region here alone. So it's a pretty vast area.
30 Traditionally we're Dena'ina peoples here. So thank
31 you.

32
33 CHAIRMAN PROBASCO: Randy, thank you
34 for bringing us to your home. Brandon, please.

35
36 MR. AHMASUK: Brandon Ahmasuk,
37 subsistence director for Kawerak and Nome.

38
39 MR. HONEA, JR.: Randy already
40 introduced us and I'm Don Honea, Jr. I also serve on
41 Western Interior Regional Advisory Council for Federal
42 lands, so this has a direct bearing on when we meet.
43 We don't go thoroughly as this body does into migratory
44 birds and stuff, but it falls under that heading. Like
45 Randy, I'd like to welcome you guys to this area. I'd
46 like to thank Pikes for the hospitality for the
47 accommodations that they've given. I think it's
48 excellent.

49
50 Thank you.

1 DR. SANDERS: Todd Sanders, U.S. Fish
2 and Wildlife Service.
3
4 MR. DEMIENTIEFF: Alfred Demientieff,
5 TCC.
6
7 MS. DEWHURST: Donna Dewhurst, U.S.
8 Fish and Wildlife Service, Staff to the Council.
9
10 MS. NAVES: Liliana Naves, Fish and
11 Game, Division of Subsistence.
12
13 MS. DEWHURST: Eric Taylor was there,
14 but he stepped out to print your document hopefully.
15
16 DR. ROSENBERG: I'm Dan Rosenberg with
17 the Alaska Department of Fish and Game.
18
19 MR. SFORMO: Todd Sformo, North Slope
20 Borough.
21
22 MR. DOOLEY: Good morning. Josh
23 Dooley, Fish and Wildlife Service, Division of
24 Migratory Bird Management.
25
26 MR. STEVENS: Good morning, everyone.
27 My name is Ben Stevens. I work with TCC.
28
29 MR. MATHEWS: Vince Mathews with Yukon
30 Flats, Kanuti and Arctic Refuges.
31
32 DR. OTIS: I'm Dave Otis with Colorado
33 State University.
34
35 DR. GEORGE: Luke George, Colorado
36 State University.
37
38 MS. DIETRICH: Tammy Dietrich, Fish and
39 Wildlife, Migratory Birds and Science Applications.
40
41 MS. WEBER: Natalie Weber, Fish and
42 Wildlife conservation.
43
44 MR. PEDERSON: Good morning. My name
45 is Mike Pederson, North Slope Borough.
46
47 MS. IKUTA: Good morning. Hiroko
48 Ikuta, Fish and Game, Subsistence Division.
49
50 MR. SIMON: Jim Simon with Division of

1 Subsistence, Department of Fish and Game.

2

3 REPORTER: Meredith Downing with
4 Computer Matrix Court Reporters.

5

6 CHAIRMAN PROBASCO: And Meredith will
7 keep us on track, correct? Thank you. Review and
8 adoption of agenda. Gayla, you had a suggestion?

9

10 MS. HOSETH: Yes. Thank you, Mr.
11 Chairman. I'd like to ask if we could move the
12 regional representative reports further down the
13 agenda.

14

15 CHAIRMAN PROBASCO: Let's move them
16 between old and new business. Any objections?

17

18 (No objections)

19

20 CHAIRMAN PROBASCO: That will give
21 Council representatives opportunities, as we worked
22 through the work session yesterday and today, to get
23 your thoughts in order and what you would like to
24 report to the AMBCC as well as to the public. Any
25 other changes.

26

27 MR. ANDREW: Move to adopt.

28

29 CHAIRMAN PROBASCO: Thank you, Tim.
30 Any objections to the motion.

31

32 (No objections)

33

34 CHAIRMAN PROBASCO: Hearing none, the
35 agenda will be as changed. Go ahead, Gayla.

36

37 MS. HOSETH: Thank you, Mr. Chairman.
38 We have some people on the phone, if we could recognize
39 them.

40

41 CHAIRMAN PROBASCO: Oh, thank you. On
42 the phone, please, will you identify yourselves.

43

44 MS. CARTY: Good morning, Mr. Chairman.
45 This is Courtenay Carty, Bristol Bay Native
46 Association, Director of the Natural Resources
47 Department and alternate to the AMBCC.

48

49 Thank you for having me.

50

1 CHAIRMAN PROBASCO: Thank you,
2 Courtenay. Anyone else?
3
4 (No response)
5
6 CHAIRMAN PROBASCO: Okay. Thank you.
7
8 MR. REFT: Mr. Chair.
9
10 CHAIRMAN PROBASCO: Yes, John.
11
12 MR. SIMON: Tom may be calling in. We
13 gave him the number for the conference call, so he
14 should be calling in.
15
16 CHAIRMAN PROBASCO: Okay, John. When
17 Tom calls.....
18
19 MR. REFT: Kodiak representative.
20 Thank you.
21
22 CHAIRMAN PROBASCO: Thank you. Any
23 other before we go to opportunity for public to come up
24 and speak.
25
26 (No comments)
27
28 CHAIRMAN PROBASCO: Hearing none. At
29 this time it's an opportunity for public members to
30 come up and make comments, ask questions, et cetera.
31 So I open the floor for any public member that would
32 like to come forward and speak. Please come up to the
33 front table and identify yourself and turn on the mic.
34
35 MR. DEMIENTIEFF: Good morning. My
36 name is Alfred Demientieff. I'm from Holy Cross, TCC,
37 with Randy and Don. I'd just like to -- I'm here to
38 see how you guys do your process and it's very
39 important for our regions. It's pretty tough for us to
40 start to work things out. I thank everybody here, Fish
41 and Game, for trying to help, you know, with all the
42 problems that's going on here. You guys are doing an
43 excellent job for me as I see it as an observer to try
44 to make the process work. I thank you all for
45 everybody in your regions for doing a good job and
46 trying to help your people.
47
48 Thank you.
49
50 CHAIRMAN PROBASCO: Thank you, Alfred.

1 Very well said. Anyone else. Please.

2

3 MR. HONEA, JR.: I appreciate being
4 able to attend this meeting. As individual RACs, TCC,
5 we don't get to meet very often. Maybe once or twice a
6 year, if even that. I think it's pretty good that you
7 guys hold your public meetings in other than Anchorage.
8 I don't like traveling to Anchorage too often. So if
9 it's an alternate place, Fairbanks or a rural hub or
10 something, I appreciate being able to come up front and
11 see how you guys -- what protocol is once we make up
12 these proposals and such. I think it's a great
13 learning experience. I'm just kind of sorry that
14 there's not more of the public here. Just like in our
15 RACs we face the same difficulties, but we're out there
16 to serve our people.

17

18 Thank you.

19

20 CHAIRMAN PROBASCO: Thank you. Your
21 name, please.

22

23 MR. HONEA, JR.: Oh, I'm sorry. Don
24 Honea, TCC.

25

26 CHAIRMAN PROBASCO: Thank you, Don.

27 Others.

28

29 (No comments)

30

31 CHAIRMAN PROBASCO: Okay. During the
32 meeting we run a more relaxed than probably some of the
33 other meetings we're familiar with, like Federal
34 Subsistence Board, Board of Fish, Board of Game, so if
35 there are items that you'd like to comment on, just
36 please raise your hand and I will recognize you and you
37 can come up to speak. So at this time I will turn
38 over to Patty for action items, please.

39

40 MS. SCHWALENBERG: Thank you, Mr.
41 Chairman. I just wanted to make a note for the Council
42 members that are new or alternates that the action
43 items were created so that the Council could keep a
44 handle on the directives given to the Staff and make
45 sure those things are being followed through.

46

47 The action items at this particular
48 meeting were mostly all motions for adopting various
49 things, so there really were no directives to the
50 Staff. However, there is, following the document of

1 the action items there is a narrative report. If you
2 would like me to go through that, I can, or the Council
3 members can read it and there's copies on the back
4 table.

5
6 CHAIRMAN PROBASCO: Patty, why don't
7 you just give a brief synopsis of your report for the
8 public, please.

9
10 MS. SCHWALENBERG: I worked really,
11 really hard.

12
13 (Laughter)

14
15 MS. SCHWALENBERG: This period of
16 activity covers the last quarter of the Federal fiscal
17 year, July through September. The work that we were
18 focusing on this quarter mostly were handicrafts,
19 wanton waste and the proposed subsistence harvest of
20 Emperor Geese. As you know, the Service Regulations
21 Committee met in July and they ended up adopting the
22 handicrafts and the wanton waste on their consent
23 agenda as well as approving or authorizing, I guess,
24 the Co-management Council to work on a framework for a
25 subsistence harvest of Emperor Geese in 2016. So those
26 were the major activities we had.

27
28 At the Service Regulations Committee
29 they also authorized the Migratory Bird Management
30 Staff to utilize an administrative process for
31 publishing non-annual regulations rather than going
32 through the Service Regulations Committee. So the
33 regulations that become a part of our permanent regs
34 that aren't changing on an annual basis are the ones
35 that I'm talking and I think that's a huge step forward
36 for co-management because the SRC is recognizing that
37 with the three partners here we are working together to
38 pass regulations that everyone is agreeable to and it's
39 focused on the conservation of the migratory birds.

40
41 So from now on we send our -- if it's a
42 non-annual regulation and it passes through the AMBCC,
43 we send it through to the Fish and Wildlife Service.
44 Once it gets approved by the upper management in
45 Washington, D.C., it goes to the Director and then the
46 Assistant Secretary and it's published in the Federal
47 Register the same as the other proposals, but it
48 bypasses that requirement to present these proposals to
49 the Service Regs Committee. So that was really good
50 news for us.

1 When we were in D.C. we also met with
2 Edith Thompson, the Legislative liaison for the Fish
3 and Wildlife Service, to discuss expanding the number
4 of bird species included in the handicraft regulation.
5 So they're going to be meeting with Japan here in a
6 couple months and hopefully we can bring some good news
7 back to the Council in the spring.

8
9 We also met with other agencies.
10 Bureau of Indian Affairs being one of them and talking
11 about 638 contracting the AMBCC program to one of the
12 Native entities. We also discussed other funding
13 avenues for the AMBCC to augment the existing funding
14 that we receive from the Fish and Wildlife Service.

15
16 We worked with the Technical Working
17 Group and the folks from Colorado State University on
18 the Harvest Survey Program review and the report that
19 they issued, so we were working with the communities
20 and trying to get comments back on that document.

21
22 Another emerging issue that seems to
23 keep coming up is the fall/winter subsistence harvest
24 season, so we are going to start putting a little bit
25 more effort into that now that the handicrafts issue
26 and the wanton waste issue are taken care of so we have
27 a little bit more time to work on other things.

28
29 So if there are any questions, I'd be
30 willing to entertain them. Mr. Chairman, thank you.

31
32 CHAIRMAN PROBASCO: Thank you, Patty.
33 As Patty noted, it's under Tab 1, a more detailed
34 report. I would confirm that Patty does work very hard
35 for this process. I think Donna and I would be lost
36 without your assistance, Patty. Thank you. Questions.
37 Go ahead, Tim.

38
39 MR. ANDREW: Thank you, Mr. Chair. I
40 just noticed on Tab 1 there's also sort of a minutes
41 right at the beginning. Pardon my ignorance. I
42 haven't been able to attend the last several Council
43 meetings because Myron has covered those. I was just
44 wondering are we going to be provided the opportunity
45 to adopt and approve the minutes.

46
47 CHAIRMAN PROBASCO: Thank you, Tim, and
48 thanks for making a note of that. Yes, we will do
49 that. So you have comments?

50

1 MR. ANDREW: Yeah. In that case, I
2 move to adopt the minutes.
3
4 CHAIRMAN PROBASCO: Is there a second.
5
6 MS. HEPA: Second.
7
8 CHAIRMAN PROBASCO: It's seconded.
9 It's open for discussion. Tim.
10
11 MR. ANDREW: Thank you, Mr. Chair. On
12 page 2 there's a motion to adopt the 2013 harvest
13 survey report. Just a clerical error, Mr. Naneng
14 rather than Ms. Naneng.
15
16 CHAIRMAN PROBASCO: Thank you, Tim.
17 Taqulik.
18
19 MS. HEPA: Just another correction, Mr.
20 Chair, on the list of visitors. Eugene Nageak should
21 read Ernest instead of Eugene. I don't think we have a
22 Eugene Nageak, but Ernest. Thank you.
23
24 CHAIRMAN PROBASCO: Thank you. Other
25 additions or corrections.
26
27 MS. HOSETH: I guess a guest could be
28 added. Kenton Woods was also here for most of our
29 meeting in April.
30
31 CHAIRMAN PROBASCO: Okay. Is there any
32 objections to approving the minutes.
33
34 (No objections)
35
36 CHAIRMAN PROBASCO: Hearing none.
37 Thank you, Patty. And it's passed. Back to any
38 questions on Patty's report. Taqulik.
39
40 MS. HEPA: Thank you, Mr. Chair. On
41 behalf of the North Slope Region I would like to thank
42 Patty, Joeneal, Michael, Todd, Dan and Eric for going
43 back to represent the AMBCC and the hard work that they
44 did. A lot of good things came from this last meeting
45 this summer. So I want to congratulate you and tell
46 you all a great job.
47
48 Thank you.
49
50 CHAIRMAN PROBASCO: Thank you. There

1 was a lot of heavy lifting particularly at that Pacific
2 Flyway meeting that they made happen. Any others.
3 Gayla.

4

5 MS. HOSETH: Thank you, Mr. Chairman.
6 I also would like to echo Taqulik's comment and thank
7 you for the hard work that everybody did at the Flyway
8 Council and the SRC on our behalf. It was really
9 exciting. It was exciting to get the emails and the
10 messages as they were going through their meetings, so
11 thank you also for keeping us in the loop during that
12 process.

13

14 CHAIRMAN PROBASCO: Others. Okay,
15 thank you. At this point we'll go to old business. We
16 will go to agenda item 10(a). I will first turn the mic
17 over to Mike Pederson, followed by Joeneal. Mike,
18 please.

19

20 MR. PEDERSON: Good morning. Mike
21 Pederson, North Slope Borough. I don't really have
22 anything to add based on what Patty discussed earlier.
23 I just wanted to let you guys know that we did travel
24 to Reno and Washington, D.C. We had some late nights,
25 early mornings and stuff like that meeting with
26 everybody that Taqulik had mentioned earlier.

27

28 What we do at the meetings is discuss
29 the proposals that the AMBCC passed at the April
30 meeting to the Pacific Flyway Council and then they
31 recommend to the SRC our proposals to be acted on. As
32 Patty stated earlier, some of the issues that we
33 discussed don't have to go through the SRC. Even the
34 SRC, at their meeting, had to decide whether they
35 needed to do this or go directly to the director of the
36 Fish and Wildlife Service. So the annual regulations
37 go to the SRC, but the codified regulations under the
38 CFR part don't have to go through the SRC, so that was
39 good to know.

40

41 Both me and Patty worked on
42 presentations at the PFC, SRC and we tag-teamed at the
43 SRC. I did talk about the subsistence aspect of our
44 regions and Patty talked about the history of the AMBCC
45 and where we're at today.

46

47 Again, I just want to thank everybody
48 that went; Todd, Eric, Dan, Pete, Joeneal, Patty.
49 There were a lot of issues that we unexpectedly had to
50 deal with. At first they sounded simple, but then they

1 became really difficult to deal with. As Gayla said,
2 you know, we stand united in the work that the AMBCC is
3 doing. I just want to thank you guys for your -- I
4 don't know how to say it. Your support in doing --
5 going back to represent the whole state at the PFC and
6 SRC.

7

8 Joeneal, do you want to add anything?

9

10 MR. HICKS: I'll just reflect on what I
11 said yesterday. This particular process is an
12 experience that I believe everybody should be aware of
13 or become involved in. It's a challenge, but it's
14 there. Like I said yesterday, I believe we are really
15 moving forward. I mean I've been here since the
16 beginning and I see that we have made progress that
17 really benefits the people of Alaska. I just believe
18 that we are really moving forward and I really
19 appreciate your support.

20

21 Thank you.

22

23 CHAIRMAN PROBASCO: Thank you, Joeneal.
24 Questions, comments.

25

26 (No comments)

27

28 CHAIRMAN PROBASCO: I would like to
29 just state since I was at the presentation that Mike
30 and Patty did at the SRC -- I mean you can have Eric
31 and I and Dan and Todd speak on the AMBCC, but the
32 value of having people that live and rely on these
33 resources actually speak is much more valuable. They
34 actually understand it better than me blabbing, so I
35 really appreciate their reports. They were done very
36 well. I also heard comments from our Assistant Director
37 Jerome Ford and others that they really appreciated
38 that. So job well done.

39

40 Okay. Thank you. Liliana, you are up.

41

42 Let's take five minutes to grab a cup
43 of coffee. Don't leave the room.

44

45 (Off record)

46

47 (On record)

48

49 CHAIRMAN PROBASCO: Liliana, the floor
50 is yours. Can I have everybody sit down, please.

1 MS. NAVES: Thank you, Mr. Chairman.
2 So I would like to give an update on work that was
3 recently completed at the AMBCC harvest assessment
4 program, to talk a little bit about ongoing work and
5 this will include a presentation on seabird harvest.
6 So everything about the harvest assessment program is
7 in Tab 3 of the meeting folder. There are also
8 materials there on the table and the handout for the
9 seabird presentation is also there in the meeting
10 folder and there are extra copies at the round table in
11 the end of the meeting room there.

12
13 In the meeting folder there are a bunch
14 of items with this yellow colored little flags. They
15 are not in order, but I will navigate through them and
16 I'll point you to which one you'll be referring to.
17 I'll try to not stick too much into the weeds here to
18 try to go quickly through things.

19
20 The first paper there is what you're
21 seeing there on the screen. It's just a summarized
22 update on what's going on. The first thing behind it
23 on tab number 2 is a copy of a chapter of this book
24 here that has sea duck harvest in Alaska. This work
25 was done with a bunch of other items. In this book
26 chapter it talks about sport hunt of seabirds and also
27 subsistence hunt in Canada and in U.S. Prior to that
28 talks about subsistence harvest that starts on page
29 447. So I provided a copy for everyone. We already
30 had a presentation on this on the last fall meeting, so
31 I just wanted to make sure I had a copy of the chapter
32 because the book cost 140 bucks.

33
34 So the next item is the 2013 final
35 report was distributed soon after the spring meeting.
36 There may be an extra copy or so there on the table
37 that was done. The third item is the completed draft
38 report of the 2014 survey. This is the little flag
39 number 5 there on the folder. It looks like that.

40
41 So in 2014 the survey was conducted in
42 six villages of the Upper Yukon subregion of Interior
43 Alaska and also it was conducted in Cordova. That was
44 the first year of the subsistence hunt of birds in
45 Cordova and we had a survey for that. One thing
46 different on this report too is that it included the
47 subregion estimates, but also we worked on that release
48 agreement at the village level with the communities
49 that participated and at this time we have that release
50 agreement set up for three of the six villages

1 included. So the report also include these village
2 estimates.

3
4 So this report refers to an action item
5 for this meeting and at this time I propose that you
6 work on it. So this would be to adopt the draft
7 estimates and, if adopted, I will provide the final
8 report sometime soon. So would you like to work on
9 that now or would you like.....

10
11 CHAIRMAN PROBASCO: Finish with the
12 other report, then we'll come back and pick that up.

13
14 MS. NAVES: All right. That sounds
15 good. The other thing is that the preliminary results
16 for the 2015 Cordova harvest are available now. The
17 2015 registration at Cordova happened, followed the
18 same model as last year working with the Eyak tribe and
19 also with the Park Service there. It's really great to
20 have the local partners. Soon after the harvest
21 closure we already had the mail survey sent out and
22 then two other reminders were sent.

23
24 At this point we have a 65 percent
25 response rate on the survey. This year a total of 20
26 households are registered compared to 36 households
27 last year, so it's relatively small participation in
28 the hunt. I think it's largely related because people
29 can hunt only the Barrier Island, so that's kind of
30 difficult to access. But the preliminary results are
31 available. It's on the table there too.

32
33 This is item 4 on the little stickers
34 there. This year so far we have no reports of birds
35 harvest, but we had reports of eggs harvested and so
36 far the estimate is 303 gull eggs taken for 2015.

37
38 In the section of ongoing and upcoming
39 we have continued participation in the survey review.
40 I have been providing data and other information they
41 need. Other item is that since about a year I have
42 been working with the information management unit at
43 Division of Subsistence to make online interface to
44 download our subregion and region estimates online.
45 This is how it's going to look like, so there it can
46 select the region, subregion, a species and if it's
47 birds or eggs and you can download data, annual data,
48 also for the seasonal estimates. This is now under
49 review at the Internal Website Committee at the Fish
50 and Game and they hope that to be online sometime soon.

1 This is part of the efforts of doing the survey data
2 more accessible and usable.

3
4 A sister project to this one is the
5 AMBCC data book, which is on the tab 3 there of the
6 meeting folder. So there has been requests in the last
7 few years to have something that compiles data for all
8 the species on a single table, so this is much easier.
9 That helps people during meetings if they need a quick
10 access to the information. So this report has a page
11 per species with annual estimates. For instance,
12 Emperor Goose is on page 32. Now when people ask me
13 that it's much easier that I can just refer to this.

14
15 So as part of the comments that Fish
16 and Wildlife Service provided to the 2014 report on
17 which we're going to act today, they again asked for
18 this kind of document and I'm happy to say that it's
19 available. It's in draft form. As people provide
20 documents, I can fine tune it. It's up there. A
21 possibility that you can discuss is to integrate this
22 with the flyway data book. We can talk to Todd and see
23 how that goes, if this is something that's of interest
24 to everyone.

25
26 Other work in this last year is some
27 research on bird and egg conversion factors in terms of
28 food production. We use it to deal with numbers of
29 birds and this information is important to relate
30 harvest with population numbers. But when thinking
31 about food production and how harvest is contributed to
32 subsistence economies, to have how to transform those
33 number of birds and edible pounds is really important.
34 I have tried to do this for AMBCC data and then the
35 conversion factors are all over the place. Eventually
36 it became a project on its own.

37
38 So this has involved a survey that some
39 of you guys here have already completed, asking about
40 how birds are processed and also ask about the harvest
41 of eggs because people commonly report a bucket of
42 eggs, how many eggs fit in that bucket, that kind of
43 thing. So this includes this survey, literary review
44 component and the other components of plucking and
45 weighing a bunch of birds.

46
47 A quick update on the plans for the
48 2015 survey. We are working with the Y-K Delta Refuge
49 to start working on the field work part of the survey
50 in early November. There's lots of preparatory work

1 that goes on that. The Y-K Delta Refuge has a new crop
2 of RITs and I'm really happy working with the folks
3 there. I'd like to take the opportunity to introduce
4 Chris Tulik. That's the new RIT for the Y-K Delta
5 Refuge. Stand up, Chris, for us. It's great to have
6 RITs from the Refuges here. They're the first line of
7 communication. The Refuges work with the communities.
8 Great people to work with. They do class A+ work. I'm
9 always very happy to work with them.

10
11 I'd also like to highlight the presence
12 of Jon Dyasuk here. Jon Dyasuk has attended previous
13 AMBCC meetings and that's always great to have him
14 here. We're also happy to have Y-K Delta also at these
15 meetings.

16
17 What else. Just as another heads up,
18 as I have been working on groups of works, we did the
19 sea duck harvest and now we just completed the seabird
20 harvest. The next one in line is the shorebird
21 harvest. I have been getting lots of requests on
22 shorebird harvest data, so I'm planning to start on
23 that later this winter.

24
25 With that said, if there are no
26 questions about those things, we can move on to the
27 presentation or to the adoption of the 2014 if you
28 think that's better.

29
30 CHAIRMAN PROBASCO: So, first, are
31 there any questions or comments. Tim, please.

32
33 MR. ANDREW: Thank you, Mr. Chair. I
34 was wondering about the online availability of
35 information. I believe it was 2004 to -- no. Anyway,
36 it's pretty extensive years and I was just wondering if
37 that's broken down into subregions.

38
39 MS. NAVES: (Nods affirmatively).

40
41 MR. ANDREW: It is.

42
43 MS. NAVES: Yeah. There is a drop-down
44 list on each of the options that people can choose if
45 they want for the whole state or if they want for a
46 specific region or subregion. Then you get that as an
47 Excel file.

48
49 MR. ANDREW: If I may follow up, Mr.
50 Chair. Thank you, Mr. Chair. And at some point, I

1 can't quite remember, in the AMBCC process we had gone
2 from village specific to subregion of data availability
3 and I was just wondering if that reflects that in this
4 data.

5
6 MS. NAVES: AMBCC data is released only
7 at the subregion and the region unless there is a
8 specific data agreement in place to release the
9 community level data. So this data on this interface
10 there it's only region and subregion.

11
12 MR. ANDREW: Quyana, Mr. Chair.

13
14 CHAIRMAN PROBASCO: Thank you, Tim.
15 Let me follow up on Tim's question. So this is on the
16 State of Alaska's website.

17
18 MS. NAVES: Yes. Will be.

19
20 CHAIRMAN PROBASCO: Will be. Would it
21 be possible for us to put a link on AMBCC to link up to
22 this?

23 MS. NAVES: Sure.

24
25 MS. DEWHURST: It's already there.

26
27 CHAIRMAN PROBASCO: It's already there?

28
29 MS. NAVES: No, not this one because
30 this is not in there.

31
32 MS. DEWHURST: Donna Dewhurst, Fish and
33 Wildlife. The actual PDFs of all these reports are on
34 the AMBCC site now and it should be no problem to link
35 to this new version, but the PDFs are already on the
36 AMBCC site.

37
38 MS. NAVES: But we can put a link to
39 that.....

40
41 MS. DEWHURST: Yeah. No problem.

42
43 CHAIRMAN PROBASCO: Thanks, Donna.
44 What I like about this is how you can access. It looks
45 like it's fairly user-friendly for someone like me and
46 we'd be able to access by region, et cetera, the
47 information.

48
49 MS. NAVES: Yeah.

50

1 CHAIRMAN PROBASCO: Thank you. Others.
2 Gayla.

3
4 MS. HOSETH: Thank you, Mr. Chair. I
5 just wanted to thank Liliana for all your work that
6 you've done. Her and I have had some conversations of
7 the duck plucking and weighing and I just wanted to
8 recognize all your hard work. So thank you.

9
10 MS. NAVES: Thank you.

11
12 CHAIRMAN PROBASCO: Good job on
13 plucking the ducks too.

14
15 MS. NAVES: Well, I'm not showing you
16 my plucked birds because they may not meet the quality
17 standards, but I'm getting there.

18
19 (Laughter)

20
21 CHAIRMAN PROBASCO: Thank you. So
22 could we shut off the projector and then we can take
23 action on your.....

24
25 MS. NAVES: Sure.

26
27 CHAIRMAN PROBASCO: Thank you, Eric.
28 Josh, can we get the lights. Okay. We do have an
29 action item here that we need to address. Liliana
30 presented it and it's the 2014, correct?

31
32 MS. NAVES: Yes.

33
34 CHAIRMAN PROBASCO: 2014 harvest
35 estimates. It's a draft report.

36
37 MS. HEPA: What tab is it?

38
39 MS. NAVES: It's the little one, number
40 5.

41
42 CHAIRMAN PROBASCO: Of yours? So of
43 Liliana's report, which has a big binder clip, red tab
44 5. It's a technical paper that will be published if we
45 approve it. Alaska Subsistence Harvest of Birds and
46 Eggs 2014, Alaska Migratory Bird Co-Management Council.
47 I'll first open it up for questions, et cetera.
48 Taqulik.

49
50 MS. HEPA: (Away from microphone).

1 CHAIRMAN PROBASCO: Let's do that
2 first. That's more appropriate anyway. Thank you.

3
4 MS. HEPA: If I may, Mr. Chair, I'd
5 like to make a motion to approve the technical paper
6 with no number as of yet. The title is Alaska
7 Subsistence Harvest of Birds and Eggs 2014, Alaska
8 Migratory Bird Co-Management Council. Move to approve.

9
10 MR. ANDREW: Second.

11
12 CHAIRMAN PROBASCO: Seconded by Tim
13 Andrew. I open the floor up for questions and
14 comments. Thank you. I know that my staff have been
15 working with Liliana and have reviewed this report and
16 the Service does support that this report moves forward
17 to completion. Randy.

18
19 MR. MAYO: Yeah, Mr. Chair. We had our
20 regional management council meeting here earlier this
21 week and, you know, the Upper Yukon area is in our
22 region and our board directed me to recommend to the
23 full board acceptance for the Upper Yukon survey
24 results with some concessions. I'll read these
25 concessions here.

26
27 CHAIRMAN PROBASCO: Go ahead, Randy.

28
29 MR. MAYO: Number one, a footnote be
30 added explaining that the 2014 harvest estimation was
31 lower than usual because spring weather and ice
32 conditions were unfavorable to bird harvest. The
33 language for this footnote will be developed in
34 collaboration with our Yukon Flats subregional
35 representative, Mr. Andrew Firmin. The second
36 stipulation was provide extra time for the Fort Yukon
37 Tribe to consider data release at village level on the
38 data release agreement where the two stipulations
39 coming from our management council.

40
41 CHAIRMAN PROBASCO: Thank you, Randy.
42 On your second point, I don't think we have it at the
43 village level in this report, is that correct, Liliana?

44
45 MS. NAVES: Yeah, not yet. I only
46 included there the villages for which we already have
47 data release agreement in place. If the Fort Yukon
48 Tribe provide the signed agreement, it will be easy to
49 include it in there. We already provided Dan all the
50 information at the village level for their review, so

1 the process is underway.

2

3 CHAIRMAN PROBASCO: Those two points
4 that Randy provided would be placed on this report
5 before completion.

6

7 MS. NAVES: Yes.

8

9 CHAIRMAN PROBASCO: Okay. Questions or
10 comments. Tim. Others, please.

11

12 (No comments)

13

14 CHAIRMAN PROBASCO: Okay. At this
15 time, Patty, I'd like to take final action on the
16 motion before us.

17

18 MS. SCHWALENBERG: The motion is to
19 approve the 2014 harvest estimate report. State of
20 Alaska.

21

22 MR. DALE: Yes.

23

24 MS. SCHWALENBERG: U.S. Fish and
25 Wildlife Service.

26

27 CHAIRMAN PROBASCO: Yes.

28

29 MS. SCHWALENBERG: Native Caucus.

30

31 MS. HOSETH: Yes.

32

33 MS. SCHWALENBERG: Motion passes.

34

35 CHAIRMAN PROBASCO: Thank you, Patty,
36 and thank you, Liliana. At this point, once it's
37 completed, what's the process then? It becomes an
38 ADF&G technical report, correct?

39

40 MS. NAVES: Yeah, and the goals online
41 on both the AMBCC and the ADF&G website and also I
42 distribute hard copies to all AMBCC partners.

43

44 CHAIRMAN PROBASCO: Thank you.

45 Anything else?

46

47 MS. NAVES: I'd like just to call your
48 attention to a little detail on this report. On the
49 page of the acknowledgments on Page 2 there is a
50 paragraph from a book from Velma Wallis that is very

1 known, a recognized writer from the Fort Yukon area,
2 that very much summarizes -- yeah, this is on Page 2 of
3 the report.

4

5 CHAIRMAN PROBASCO: So Tab 5, Page 2.

6

7 MS. NAVES: Yeah. Summarizes what the
8 spring harvest means for people there in the Upper
9 Yukon area. We have surveyed that area there. I got
10 permission from the publisher to reproduce this
11 paragraph there. I think it describes it very well.

12

13 CHAIRMAN PROBASCO: Thank you for
14 pointing that out. Okay. Anything else, Liliana?

15

16 MS. NAVES: That's it.

17

18 CHAIRMAN PROBASCO: Thank you. Very
19 well done. So at this time we will go to the
20 handicraft.....

21

22 MS. NAVES: Oh, there is a presentation
23 about the seabird harvest.

24

25 CHAIRMAN PROBASCO: Oh, I'm sorry. Is
26 that you?

27

28 MS. NAVES: Yeah. You're not rid of me
29 yet.

30

31 CHAIRMAN PROBASCO: Okay. A
32 presentation on seabird harvest by Liliana. Here we
33 go.

34

35 MS. NAVES: So the handout for this
36 presentation is the little tab in number 6. There's
37 extra copies around the table there, the back of the
38 room. So this pertains to the geographic and seasonal
39 patterns of seabird subsistence harvest in Alaska. In
40 the interest of time, I'd like to ask that you save the
41 questions for the end of the presentation so we don't
42 go much beyond my time here.

43

44 So why a study on seabird harvest. So
45 seabirds are long lived and have low breeding
46 productivity. This means that populations are usually
47 sensitive to adult mortality. Harvest sustainability
48 has been a priority for circumpolar seabird
49 conservation. The Circumpolar Seabird Group has
50 produced a series of documents, which are those here,

1 that address seabird harvest in the circumpolar areas.
2 There are other documents on this area. So this may be
3 a topic that's new for us at the AMBCC here as our
4 discussions, but there's lots of work done in this
5 field.

6
7 Also, according to the Alaska Seabird
8 Conservation Plan, which is this other document here,
9 providing opportunities for sustainable seabird
10 harvest, the opportunities is a management priority.
11 Worldwide in the last decade the conservation status of
12 seabirds has deteriorated due to many factors,
13 including competition for food with the commercial
14 fisheries, mortality in fishing gear, invasive
15 predators and the environmental and food web changes.

16
17 Among seabird species likely harvested
18 in Alaska, there are several species of conservation
19 concern. So harvest has not been implicated as a
20 primary cause of seabird population declines in Alaska,
21 but harvest data are needed to better understand the
22 role of harvest, if any, in population dynamics. Also
23 in some cases where harvest is low or not occurring,
24 having the harvest data available helps alleviate
25 conservation concerns regarding harvest.

26
27 This study was motivated by recurrent
28 harvest data requests I have received in the last few
29 years, especially regarding the Aleutian tern, the Red-
30 faced Cormorant and the Red-legged Kittiwake. The
31 objectives of this study were to quantify current
32 harvest, better account for local patterns related to
33 seabird coloniality, to describe seasonal harvest
34 patterns and to address harvest of species of
35 conservation concern.

36
37 This information is needed to put
38 subsistence harvest in perspective to other factors
39 potentially affecting seabird populations, to engage
40 subsistence users in seabird conservation, to support
41 sustainable harvest opportunities and to inform
42 collaborative management actions.

43
44 The data set used included 516
45 community years. A community year refers to a specific
46 year in a community where household surveys were
47 conducted in a place. So most data were from the AMBCC
48 database at 390 out of the 516 community years. This
49 data was supplemented with data from the CSIS, the
50 Community Subsistence Information System, that is an

1 online database that summarizes harvest data collected
2 by the ADF&G Division of Subsistence. I also used a
3 smaller proportion of other data collected by other
4 entities.

5
6 The estimates represent average annual
7 harvest for each region and also have Alaska-wide
8 estimates and numbers of birds and eggs per year.
9 Those estimates do not account for birds struck but not
10 retrieved.

11
12 Many seabird species are difficult to
13 tell apart, so harvest surveys usually use a species
14 categories. Species identification issues are not
15 exclusive to the subsistence harvest surveys. It's also
16 a big difficulty in seabird population monitoring. I
17 used 15 species categories. They are listed there from
18 top to bottom, starting on top with the birds that are
19 harvested in large numbers. Those 15 categories
20 include 36 species likely available in Alaska. Loons
21 and Grebes are usually considered together with
22 seabirds. I will not go into detail on Loon harvest
23 because you already have dealt with lots of that in the
24 Yellow-Billed Loon listing process.

25
26 So this pie chart on the right side it
27 shows the general composition of harvest of migratory
28 birds in Alaska and the subsistence harvest. This was
29 based on a study conducted by Page and Wolfe using that
30 from the mid-'90s. The idea there is to show that
31 seabirds account for about 10 percent of the total
32 harvest of migratory birds, so it's a relatively small
33 slice of the pie.

34
35 In this list of species, the species
36 shown in red -- I mean in blue. Sorry, the species
37 shown in blue are the species of conservation concern.
38 So they are about a third of the 36 species there. So
39 when talking about seabird harvest, we're dealing with
40 a species that are usually harvesting low numbers and
41 there's a bunch of species of conservation concern. So
42 it's just how it is, but I don't think I have too many
43 bad news today.

44
45 The data is presented for the usual
46 regions that we use here at AMBCC. The only difference
47 is that I broke down the Bering Strait/Norton Sound
48 region and St. Lawrence, Diomed Islands and the Bering
49 Strait mainland.

50

1 This is a general composition of
2 harvest for birds and eggs. On the left pie, the
3 average seabird harvest was about 23,000 birds per
4 year. Murres accounted for one-third of the harvest,
5 followed by auklets, cormorants and gulls, which are
6 the blue shades of slices there. We also included the
7 tan and the red there, which are the kittiwakes. So
8 this is number of birds.

9
10 Thinking in terms of food production,
11 murres are real large birds, kind of two pounds per
12 bird live weight and auklets are small birds, kind of
13 0.4 pounds per bird. So in terms of food production,
14 they'll have about seven edible pounds of murres for
15 each pound of auklet harvested. This is just to give
16 you an idea of why I have interest in looking at food
17 production.

18
19 On the right side of the pie is the egg
20 harvest. So the average was 145,000 seabird eggs per
21 year. Murre eggs represented more than half of the
22 total egg harvest. Gulls represented 41 percent, which
23 is the different shades of blue there. The estimated
24 harvest of 10 eggs, which is the yellow slice, 4,500
25 eggs per year. In terms of species of conservation
26 concern, the 10-egg harvest I think is the one of
27 potential concern and I'm going to talk more about this
28 later.

29
30 Looking at the regional breakdown of
31 the harvest, the vertical axis there of the regions and
32 the bottom we have the estimated number of birds per
33 year from 0 to 18,000. St. Lawrence/Diomed Islands
34 accounts for 78 percent of the total seabird harvest in
35 the state with 18,000 birds per year. The harvest in
36 this area is about one-third murres, one-third auklets
37 and the rest is divided among the cormorants, gulls,
38 and other seabirds.

39
40 The Aleutian/Pribilof Islands and the
41 Bering Strait mainland come in a distant second and
42 third place. Aleutian/Pribilof we get 1,800 birds per
43 year in the Bering Strait mainland with about 1,300 per
44 year.

45
46 This is the seasonal breakdown on top
47 of there for St. Lawrence/Diomed Islands and on the
48 bottom for Aleutian/Pribilof Islands with the regions
49 for bird harvest in the state. So on St. Lawrence
50 spring, which is the white part of the bars, account

1 for half of the annual harvest, and the spring harvest
2 there is mostly composed of murre and auklets and for
3 winter harvest it's composed for a larger diversity of
4 species. On the Aleutian/Pribilof Islands also spring
5 harvest is about half of the annual seabird harvest and
6 this is composed of kittiwakes, murre, auklets and
7 puffins. The fall/winter harvest is mostly composed of
8 cormorants and kittiwakes.

9
10 Looking at the original egg harvest,
11 there again I have the regions on the vertical X and
12 the estimates on the horizontal X go from 0 to 70,000
13 eggs per year. The different colors on the bars there
14 are gulls, terns, murre and other seabirds.
15 St. Lawrence Island accounted for 44 percent of the
16 total egg harvest in the state, seabird egg harvest in
17 this area. Most harvests are murre eggs. That's 99
18 percent of the harvest in this area. Most other
19 regions gulls represented a large part of the egg
20 harvest. That's the gray there in the bars. Harvest
21 of tern eggs were reported by most regions. Regions
22 with the highest, tan, egg harvests were the Y-K Delta
23 with 24 percent of the total egg harvest, Southwest
24 Alaska 22 percent, Bristol Bay 18 percent and Bering
25 Strait mainland 14 percent.

26
27 So next I'll give a little bit more
28 information on the species of conservation concern. So
29 conservation concerns regarding Red-faced and Pelagic
30 Cormorant related to decline in bird numbers in the
31 monitored colonies. The concerns relate mostly to Red-
32 faced Cormorant because the overall smaller population
33 size compared to the Pelagic, so there are about 20,000
34 Red-faced Cormorants in Alaska.

35
36 Based on species distribution, 98
37 percent of all Cormorant harvested in the state are
38 Pelagic Cormorant in the St. Lawrence, Diomedes and the
39 Bering Strait mainland areas because only Pelagic
40 Cormorant occur in those areas. Harvest on the other
41 regions is real low, 6-7 birds per year and include
42 unknown proportions of Pelagic, Red-faced and Double-
43 crested Cormorants.

44
45 In the western Aleutian Islands where
46 are the main Red-faced Cormorant colonies that are in
47 decline, those areas are likely not subjected to
48 harvest because there are no communities nearby and
49 Red-faced Cormorants are not known to migrate far from
50 their breeding colonies. So harvest is unlikely to be

1 involved in this population declines.

2

3 Most Cormorant harvest occurred in
4 fall/winter and there is harvest preference for young
5 birds, at least on St. Lawrence/Diomedes, because they
6 are fatter and tenderer than adult birds. So harvest
7 likely included a significant proportion of hatch year
8 birds, which lessens harvest effects on populations
9 because then you have a lower harvest-related adult
10 mortality.

11

12 The conservation concerns regarding
13 Red-legged Kittiwake relates to its limited
14 distribution range. Most birds are on the Pribilof
15 Islands. That's the dot there in the middle of the
16 distribution area there, the orange dot on the map.
17 Also with the decline of 50 percent in numbers of birds
18 in these colonies in the '70s and '90s, since then the
19 population has stabilized at lower levels.

20

21 On the Pribilof Islands there is a
22 documented harvest preference for Red-legged Kittiwake
23 and this has raised interest in evaluating potential
24 harvest effects on populations. So there is very
25 little data on Red-legged Kittiwake data because there
26 are very few data for the Pribilof Islands. The only
27 data point is for 1991. Based on this limited and
28 outdated harvest data, the harvest represents 0.3
29 percent of the Red-legged Kittiwake number on the
30 Pribilof Islands.

31

32 Based on indications of decline in
33 subsistence harvest by Pribilof Island communities, it
34 is unlikely that the harvest of Red-legged Kittiwake
35 and their eggs would have increased in recent decades
36 compared to unknown historic harvest levels.
37 Collaboration with Pribilof Island communities would
38 improve understanding of Red-legged Kittiwakes as food
39 and cultural resource and clarify current harvest
40 amounts.

41

42 Aleutian and Arctic Terns.
43 Conservation concerns related to a decline of 90
44 percent in tern numbers in the monitored colonies, so
45 population declines have been detected for both Arctic
46 and Aleutian Terns, but so far the conservation
47 concerns refer most to the Aleutian Terns because of
48 the small general population of the Aleutian Terns. So
49 the most recent estimates is that there are 5,500
50 Aleutian Terns in Alaska.

1 The average Alaska-wide harvest of
2 terns was low, about 70 birds per year, but the tern
3 egg harvest was widespread and maybe substantial
4 related to coastal tern populations and egg
5 productivity. So based on very rough assumptions the
6 egg harvest may be about 18 percent of the egg
7 production in the tern coastal colonies. Egg harvest
8 may also contribute to colony destabilization and
9 increased predation and nest abandonment.

10

11 So inclusion of local and traditional
12 knowledge of subsistence users related to terns,
13 together with the biological research, has great
14 potential to help fulfill data needs across Alaska and
15 to help develop collaboration among stakeholders and
16 also to help devise conservation measures that
17 recognize subsistence users.

18

19 There is a paper on Aleutian Tern
20 conservation situation that will appear later this year
21 I think and the researchers and managers at the
22 Maritime Refuge in Homer are leading initiatives for
23 Aleutian Tern conservation. So for more information on
24 this topic I suggest inviting folks from the Maritime
25 Refuge to the next AMBCC meeting.

26

27 Some final considerations. So
28 providing a species specific harvest that's made for
29 most seabirds is nearly impossible in the species
30 verification system such as wings and tails provided by
31 hunters, considering their harvest information
32 available. The conservation and management need this
33 so we can then ask two questions: are the data at the
34 species category level good enough for management and
35 conservation, and then what will be potential species
36 identification issues.

37

38 In this study, I used rather broader
39 categories. For instance, I lumped all loons together,
40 but harvest surveys commonly use narrower categories or
41 even the species level.

42

43 Another consideration is that the
44 Alaska seabird harvest at about 23,000 birds per year
45 is small compared to other traditions in northern
46 latitudes where the circumpolar harvest may amount
47 about a million birds per year. So Alaska is a small
48 slice of that total pie.

49

50 It's difficult to infer about seabird

1 harvest trends in recent decades based on the data
2 available, but there are indications of reduced
3 subsistence uses of seabirds. So, for instance, there
4 is no recent documentation of Fulmar and Murrelet
5 harvest for both birds and eggs. Another indication is
6 a potentially lower Auklet harvest in this most recent
7 estimates compared to previous ones.

8
9 Also there's a perceived reduction in
10 use of seabirds as subsistence resources. Finally,
11 there's reduced human population on several islands
12 where seabirds were an important subsistence resource.
13 However, seabird harvesting and the harvest of their
14 eggs remains culturally important and also is an
15 important component of complex food security systems in
16 remote communities.

17
18 That's it. Thank you. Questions.

19
20 CHAIRMAN PROBASCO: Questions for
21 Liliana. Tim, please.

22
23 MR. ANDREW: Thank you, Mr. Chair. In
24 your conclusions, you indicated that there was a
25 decline in seabird harvest. Is that attributed to the
26 lower populations or just because people aren't
27 interested in seabirds anymore?

28
29 MS. NAVES: Those are indications that
30 the harvest may be decreased compared to previous
31 decades, but there's no hard, solid evidence for that.
32 The fact that there is reduced human population on the
33 islands, that's well known, and changes in food
34 preference or harvest has been documented in some
35 places, but I think that's more up to you to tell us
36 what to think that's going on. Those are indications
37 that I've compiled as kind of may indicate that.

38
39 MR. ANDREW: One other question I had
40 was on the Kittiwake presentation. There's a blue
41 section to the south of the Aleutian Islands, Aleutian
42 Chain. Is that the wintering area?

43
44 MS. NAVES: Yes.

45
46 MR. ANDREW: Okay. Thank you.

47
48 CHAIRMAN PROBASCO: Thank you, Tim.
49 Others. Go ahead, Joeneal.

50

1 MR. HICKS: If I may, Liliana. There
2 was several graphs that I saw there on the Copper
3 River.

4
5 MS. NAVES: This one?

6
7 MR. HICKS: Well, just my comment here
8 is why does it show zero? Is that because of lack of
9 surveys in that area?

10
11 MS. NAVES: No, I didn't choose the
12 zero. Seabird harvest has not been reported there. In
13 the surveys that are available for the Copper River,
14 there is no harvest of seabirds and their eggs.
15 There's no seabirds in your area there, so it's not
16 surprising that you're not harvesting that much.
17 Interior Alaska also it's very little. So I think it's
18 more a matter where seabirds are. This is only
19 seabirds. It's not all the birds.

20
21 MR. HICKS: Well, the picture you have
22 on there is a seagull and we have seagulls in our area.

23
24 MS. NAVES: Yeah. I put a seagull
25 there because seagulls are very important for the other
26 areas.

27
28 MR. HICKS: Thank you.

29
30 CHAIRMAN PROBASCO: Thank you, Joeneal.
31 Others.

32
33 (No comments)

34
35 CHAIRMAN PROBASCO: Liliana, just my
36 own personal curiosity. Alaska Peninsula, is that
37 split between Aleutians and Bristol Bay as far as your
38 egg harvest?

39
40 MS. NAVES: The north part of the
41 Alaska Peninsula, the longest to the Bristol Bay
42 region, and the south part would be in the Kodiak, I
43 think. No, no, no.

44
45 CHAIRMAN PROBASCO: Aleutians.

46
47 MS. NAVES: In the Aleutians, yeah.

48
49 CHAIRMAN PROBASCO: So split would be
50 Sand Point west and then Sand Point east would be

1 Bristol Bay.

2

3 MS. NAVES: Yeah. So the part that's
4 included in Bristol Bay.

5

6 CHAIRMAN PROBASCO: Thank you. Others.

7

8 (No comments)

9

10 CHAIRMAN PROBASCO: Liliana, very good
11 report. Thank you. Gayla.

12

13 MS. HOSETH: I just wanted to say
14 something. Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I just wanted it
15 for the record. Thank you for pointing out in your
16 Alaska subsistence harvest of birds and eggs, the
17 statement from the book. We're probably going to go
18 for a break, but I just wanted to have this paragraph
19 on the record because I think we need to really reflect
20 on the words that are written here.

21

22 CHAIRMAN PROBASCO: Please.

23

24 MS. HOSETH: In the spring, we looked
25 forward to the returning sun, it's heat that melted
26 everything until the leaves let go of their fragrance
27 and it filled the air. My siblings and I fought like
28 dogs over the muskrat tails that we toasted on top of
29 the woodstove until they were crisp and tasted like
30 pork rinds, only better. Beaver meat was delicious,
31 too, with its willowy flavor, and we devoured the
32 boiled meat with relish. But there was no comparison to
33 the singed duck soup that my mother made with dried
34 vegetable flakes, adding rice and macaroni. We always
35 ate our duck soup with Pilot Boy crackers spread with
36 margarine. These foods were all we knew, and to this
37 day I can't say I know of a finer meal.

38

39 That was from Velma Wallis from
40 "Raising Ourselves." I just wanted to point that out.

41

42 CHAIRMAN PROBASCO: Thank you, Gayla.
43 Thank you for reading it. So, Liliana, thank you
44 again. At this time we'll take a 10-minute break and
45 I'd like everybody back at 10:35, please.

46

47 (Off record)

48

49 (On record)

50

1 CHAIRMAN PROBASCO: All right. I'd
2 like to bring us back into session. As Patty just
3 reminded me, thank you, that today we do have to be out
4 of here between 4:00 and 4:30. Depending upon where
5 we're at at 4:00 we'll make that call. So we'll go
6 from there.

7
8 At this time we're going into -- unless
9 anybody want to make some comments before we go to the
10 next agenda item. I know we have a few more people
11 online. Would anybody like to identify themselves.
12 Gayla, would you like to make a comment?

13
14 MS. HOSETH: No.

15
16 CHAIRMAN PROBASCO: Okay, thank you.
17 So, with that, I'd like to call Todd up on handicrafts,
18 please.

19
20 MR. SFORMO: Todd Sformo, North Slope
21 Borough. As most people know, in the April AMBCC
22 meeting, the proposed rule change passed unanimously.
23 You can see that in the handout or a copy of that with
24 the Title 50 CFR, Part 92. The proposed rule change
25 then was presented to the Pacific Flyway Council and
26 also passed the SRC in the June/July meeting and you
27 can see more details in Patty's trip report, which is
28 on Tab 2.

29
30 Currently the proposed rule change is
31 in the prepping phase at the regional office, which is
32 Alaska, and is due by 2 April 2016 and doesn't seem to
33 be any indications of problems or anything like that at
34 the moment.

35
36 So while the Japanese meeting was
37 cancelled, a letter was sent to the Japanese delegation
38 by Jerome Ford and Pete said he would forward a letter
39 to the Handicraft Committee so everybody can stay
40 involved. A rescheduling of the meeting is taking
41 place in November. That's the report.

42
43 CHAIRMAN PROBASCO: I would add to
44 that, Todd, that I hope to be able to get an invite to
45 Patty to attend with us.

46
47 MR. SFORMO: Thank you.

48
49 CHAIRMAN PROBASCO: Taqulik.

50

1 MS. HEPA: Mr. Chair. Is there any
2 indication from the Japanese on what their
3 interpretation is? Have you guys had any
4 communications or just the letter?

5
6 CHAIRMAN PROBASCO: No direct
7 communications from them. I guess the person that
8 would be equivalent to my counterpart asked some
9 clarifying questions because keep in mind you're taking
10 an English letter and translating to Japanese. I think
11 that's -- I don't know how to do that, but it's very
12 challenging. So we did some clarifications for them.
13 But as far as a direct comment to that, no. There is a
14 meeting scheduled for November with the Japanese
15 delegation where Jerome Ford will be the lead. I just
16 confirmed with Brad that he would like me to attend. I
17 asked for an invitation for Patty as well. This is
18 handled out of the D.C. office so it's not something
19 that I control, but we'll keep you posted.

20
21 MR. SFORMO: It's my understanding,
22 right, that the meeting is really to see if there's a
23 possibility of expanding the number of species that
24 could be used, not -- so if that doesn't go forward, it
25 really shouldn't affect the proposed rule change we
26 have with a limited number of species.

27
28 CHAIRMAN PROBASCO: Thanks for the
29 clarification, Todd. No effect at all. In fact,
30 that's an independent process. The letter is seeking
31 agreement, if you will, on our interpretation, the U.S.
32 interpretation. If there is agreement, that would
33 actually provide more species to the list of those
34 birds that are currently harvested that may -- we're
35 not sure if they conflict or not between the two
36 treaties.

37
38 MS. CARTY: Excuse me, Mr. Chairman.
39 This is Courtenay. It's quite difficult to hear you.

40
41 CHAIRMAN PROBASCO: Go ahead,
42 Courtenay. Your question, please.

43
44 MS. CARTY: I'm sorry, I don't have a
45 question. It's just difficult to hear you. I can hear
46 Todd though, but you're rather distant.

47
48 CHAIRMAN PROBASCO: Yeah, that's the
49 problem. Todd is right over the speakerphone and I'm
50 about three tables or two tables away. I don't know

1 how to remedy that, but I'll speak louder.

2

3 MS. CARTY: Yeah, whatever you're doing
4 now I can hear you much better. Thank you very much.

5

6 CHAIRMAN PROBASCO: Okay. Gayla, keep
7 me out of trouble. Others, please. Gayla.

8

9 MS. HOSETH: Thank you, Mr. Chairman.
10 I just had a question. Is there any communication with
11 the handicraft language with AFN? With AFN coming up
12 next month, is this going to be a topic that is
13 presented? Because I know that was an issue during the
14 AFN convention meetings and so we could get the word
15 out and let people know about the comment period that's
16 going to be coming up.

17

18 CHAIRMAN PROBASCO: I do know that
19 Regional Director Geoff Haskett wants us to have a
20 booth, if you will, at AFN. Donna, on behalf of
21 Migratory Birds, takes the lead. We'll be with Marine
22 Mammals. So we have that venue to provide information.
23 So what's the wishes of the Council. Go ahead, Donna.

24

25 MS. DEWHURST: Depending on the timing
26 of AFN, if we haven't published the proposed rule yet,
27 we really aren't supposed to be putting out there for
28 public comment until we actually publish the proposed
29 rule because the language or something might get
30 changed until it's actually published. Until it's
31 approved by the Deputy Secretary of the Interior. So
32 it just depends on the timing of AFN and the timing of
33 when the proposed rule goes through. If the proposal
34 is published, then certainly we will have information
35 and be soliciting public comment.

36

37 CHAIRMAN PROBASCO: Thanks, Donna. I
38 think, technically, we have to respect that. There's
39 always a work-around. We can give a status report of
40 AMBCC and what we've been working on.

41

42 MS. SCHWALENBERG: Can we mark that
43 language draft and share that with the delegation?

44

45 MS. DEWHURST: We're not supposed to
46 because it isn't draft until it's published. I mean
47 it's not to be released until it's published until it's
48 published. I mean it's one of those technicalities
49 because it could still be changed. You could put it
50 out and they could still change it. That's my

1 understanding, is we're really not supposed to do any
2 sort of outreach or anything until we actually publish
3 the rule. I'm hoping we'll be published by the end of
4 October, but no guarantees.

5
6 CHAIRMAN PROBASCO: Go ahead, Gayla.

7
8 MS. HOSETH: AFN is October 15th, 16th
9 and 17th. I know that a lot of people will be
10 attending that convention and it would be -- we don't
11 have to put exact language, but it would be good to
12 give notification that this will be coming up in the
13 future. I know it is really good information. Great
14 news that we're going to be able to do this. I want
15 the word to get out and that people will be able to be
16 aware of it.

17
18 CHAIRMAN PROBASCO: Gayla, if we get
19 into the quagmire of bureaucracy, which is a high
20 probability, let's go to plan B where we would give an
21 AMBCC summary that would lay out what we worked on,
22 what Patty and Mike and Joeneal took to the SRC and
23 that will at least give the sideboards of what was
24 worked on and what was agreed to. We can share the
25 actions of the SRC.

26
27 MS. DEWHURST: That certainly would be
28 agreeable. I mean I think that would be okay. Just we
29 couldn't go into all the in-the-weeds details.

30
31 MS. HOSETH: Thank you.

32
33 CHAIRMAN PROBASCO: Would you give me
34 those dates again, Gayla.

35
36 MS. HOSETH: October 15th, 16th and
37 17th.

38
39 CHAIRMAN PROBASCO: I'm assuming in
40 Anchorage?

41
42 MS. HOSETH: Yes.

43
44 CHAIRMAN PROBASCO: Okay. Thank you.
45 Go ahead, Donna.

46
47 MS. DEWHURST: Just an update on that.
48 We aren't going to be having an AMBCC booth that we've
49 had in the past. In the past, we've shared one with
50 Marine Mammals. This AFN it's more going to be generic

1 Fish and Wildlife booth where we'll still be part of
2 it, but it's not going to be focused on AMBCC and
3 Marine Mammals. It's going to be focused on more Fish
4 and Wildlife Service in general.

5
6 CHAIRMAN PROBASCO: Since I'm paying
7 part of the booth we'll have a role in it, okay.
8 Taqulik.

9
10 MS. HEPA: Thank you, Mr. Chair. At
11 AFN I may be participating in a panel discussion if I
12 have very direct talking points. If I have time at the
13 end, I might just mention it to the people that will be
14 participating or attending that work session along with
15 a handout or something to share with those people.

16
17 CHAIRMAN PROBASCO: Good
18 recommendation. We'll develop some talking points. So
19 Donna and I will work with Patty and get something that
20 will be concise but information. Okay. Other
21 comments.

22
23 (No comments)

24
25 CHAIRMAN PROBASCO: Okay. Thank you.
26 So action item for Patty, myself and Donna is to do as
27 I just stated. Our next report will come from our co-
28 chair Dan Rosenberg, Fish and Game, on Emperor Goose
29 management. Dan, please.

30
31 DR. ROSENBERG: Thank you, Mr. Chair.
32 I'm Dan Rosenberg with the Alaska Department of Fish
33 and Game and I'm the chair of the Emperor Goose
34 Committee that's a joint committee of the AMBCC and the
35 Pacific Flyway. I'm here to report on our Emperor
36 Goose Committee meeting yesterday, Tuesday, September
37 22nd. So the original intent of that meeting was to go
38 over a management plan revision and go through the
39 process and scheduling for that revision in some detail
40 and address some of the issues that we were faced with
41 in updating the plan.

42
43 However, a little background, that got
44 waylaid due to some other concerns and those concerns
45 were that, as you may recall, back in April the AMBCC
46 regulatory meeting was prior to the Fish and Wildlife
47 Service flying their survey that we use to index the
48 population of Emperor Geese. When the results of that
49 survey were released prior to the July flyway meeting,
50 we looked at those and the three-year average of that

1 index was now above 80,000 for the first time since
2 1984, I believe.

3
4 So the current management plan, the
5 2006 management plan, allowed us to consider opening a
6 hunt when that population reached 80,000 based on the
7 three-year average of that index. So in July we
8 scrambled to try to accommodate that and proposed
9 through the Flyway Council to the Fish and Wildlife
10 Service that we open a limited subsistence hunt.

11
12 Under the flyway recommendation, the
13 terms of that hunt would have been determined through
14 the AMBCC process; however, that recommendation, when
15 it got to the SRC, the SRC put some conditions upon the
16 opening of that hunt. Of course, as you are well
17 aware, those were the 3,500 allocation and that
18 allocation had to be divided among regions and we also
19 had to come up with a harvest reporting system and we
20 had to have a new management plan in place by spring of
21 2016.

22
23 So when we went into the meeting
24 yesterday, it was apparent that we hadn't finalized
25 some of the more immediate concerns that need to be
26 addressed before we could open up a hunt and that's
27 because the allocation and the harvest reporting had to
28 be formulated in the next few weeks in order to meet
29 the Federal Register printing deadlines.

30
31 So we essentially changed the original
32 intent of the meeting to try to address those issues.
33 So we went through that, a continuation of that process
34 that we had started in August and we went through that
35 process in our meeting. Out of that process there was
36 some unease with some of the conditions and all that
37 had been set, so the Native Caucus met to discuss where
38 they wanted to go, how to proceed with a harvest
39 reporting system and a harvest allocation system.

40
41 If I may paraphrase that meeting, and
42 correct me if I'm wrong, but out of that meeting it was
43 established or it was determined -- I guess the
44 consensus was to delay opening the Emperor Goose season
45 and not open it in spring of 2016. Rather use our time
46 and energies to develop a management plan prior to
47 opening the season and use the management plan as the
48 mechanism to address a lot of these concerns and
49 issues. Please correct me if I misstated that from
50 anybody's perspective.

1 So what that means is now we have some
2 more time to develop a management plan and in that
3 management plan we will include things like a
4 population objective and some harvest strategies and
5 perhaps harvest reporting as well. We'll see how it
6 goes. That management plan will be developed jointly
7 between the regions and the Fish and Wildlife Service
8 and the Alaska Department of Fish and Game. Our goal
9 now is to have that management plan finalized by
10 September of 2016.

11

12 Any questions so far?

13

14 CHAIRMAN PROBASCO: Dan, the only thing
15 I would also add to your summary of the Native Caucus,
16 they also had the opportunity to review two future
17 reports. One that Josh Dooley will be giving here as
18 well as the -- I don't have a title for the other
19 report, but both of them address the issues on Emperor
20 Goose as well.

21

22 DR. ROSENBERG: I'm just pausing right
23 now to just capture any concerns up to this point.

24

25 CHAIRMAN PROBASCO: I thought you were
26 done.

27

28 DR. ROSENBERG: Oh, no, I'm not done.
29 I've got -- what time is it?

30

31 (Laughter)

32

33 DR. ROSENBERG: So I just want to
34 finalize. So then we did in the work session further
35 address the management plan issues. In that work
36 session, Josh Dooley presented a synopsis of his report
37 that will be finalized in December that is for January,
38 I believe, that is currently out for review. He did a
39 very good job of capturing some of the concerns of the
40 survey, concerns with indices versus population
41 estimates and the potential harvest and that sort of
42 thing.

43

44 So that report will go into the plan.
45 I mean it will be incorporated into the plan along with
46 a complimentary process that we have going on right now
47 in another modeling project conducted by Bob Stehn, a
48 retired biologist with U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service,
49 and Steve Fleischman, a modeler at Fish and Game, to
50 also look at some of these population demographic

1 issues.

2

3 Anyway, the goal is to, of course,
4 merge the results of these two processes and
5 incorporate it into the management plan to help us come
6 up with a population objective and some harvest
7 potential. That, I believe, is all I have unless
8 there's questions or comments.

9

10 CHAIRMAN PROBASCO: I'll open it up for
11 comments or questions. We do have an action item that
12 we need to address. We discussed it during the work
13 session yesterday when the Native Caucus reported back
14 to us that their recommendation is to forego the 2016
15 season as Dan summarized and focus on the points of
16 interest and emphasis related to the management plan.
17 I think it would be appropriate at this time for us, as
18 the Council, to take action on that recommendation. Is
19 there any disagreement with that?

20

21 (No comments)

22

23 CHAIRMAN PROBASCO: So, Gayla, you
24 represent the Native Caucus. Would you like to put it
25 on the record, please, or do you want a little time
26 to.....

27

28 MS. HOSETH: Well, could you just
29 repeat what you said because I was thinking about our
30 Native Caucus session wondering if I should bring up a
31 point during our discussion. Well, we could stop and
32 then we could take your comments and we could come back
33 if you prefer that.

34

35 MS. HOSETH: Okay. Well, I mean, you
36 know, we appreciate the opportunity to have the Emperor
37 Goose harvest and we appreciate all the hard work that
38 went into it and bringing it to the table. Some of the
39 concerns that we did have was co-management and that
40 was a concern that we had, that the number was given to
41 us and we had to take that number and go back to our
42 councils and figure out how we would do this in
43 regions.

44

45 The frustration that we had was we
46 didn't have a voice at the table and neither did the
47 State. That was one of our big concerns. Having the
48 3,500 for the whole state for us to go through and
49 divvy up these birds and figure out how are we going to
50 have 500 birds for Bristol Bay, 1,600 birds for Y-K

1 Delta was really a lot to go through when we were going
2 through the process. We did our homework, we went back
3 to our councils, we brought it onto the table. Every
4 council made their decision of how they wanted to have
5 the options.

6
7 There was a lot of unknowns. We didn't
8 know if we could do things ourselves in each region or
9 if we all had to agree upon ourselves as one way to do
10 this for this 2016 harvest. It was at a really, really
11 fast pace. So when we did come together, I think there
12 was a couple of us that -- I think two regions agreed
13 the same and another two regions agreed the same. If
14 we knew that we all had to come up with one way for us
15 to manage this for 2016, that would have been great to
16 know from the beginning.

17
18 So when we were in our meeting, you
19 know, we just want to make it clear on the record that
20 we are standing united on behalf of our customary and
21 traditional way of harvesting and that's why we chose
22 to wait to revise the Emperor Goose Management Plan for
23 harvest in 2017. We want to have the co-management.
24 We want everybody to have a voice in this management
25 process and for the allowance of the Emperor Geese.

26
27 CHAIRMAN PROBASCO: Thank you, Gayla.
28 Comments to follow up with what Gayla said. John.
29 Mic, please.

30
31 MR. REFT: Yeah, I have to compliment
32 Gayla and Patty and Mike and the rest of them on Native
33 Caucus. It was not an easy decision to just make. We
34 have to think of our people and what they want. When
35 we come here, it's a lot different when you get into a
36 caucus. The decision we made, like Gayla just stated,
37 was united. I think it was a great decision even if
38 there were different votes, but we came together and
39 that's where we are for the benefit of all our people.

40
41 Thank you.

42
43 CHAIRMAN PROBASCO: Thank you, John.
44 Others. Go ahead, Jack.

45
46 MR. FAGERSTROM: Thank you. I just
47 worry about the population counts and the surveys that
48 have been done with the realization that we're going to
49 set a harvest level. Are there any other areas that
50 have not been surveyed as far as the Emperor Goose

1 population goes? Kodiak Island for one. Areas John
2 referred to. Probably Savoonga and Gambell should be
3 surveyed. They're increasing numbers there based on
4 our observations from our regional meetings from their
5 rep. Certainly there's some by Wales also.

6
7 If we're going to be looking at numbers
8 available to harvest, I think a better effort and a
9 population survey should be undertaken and whatever
10 else we find there. That's more of a harvest
11 opportunity for us. I feel very strongly that these
12 numbers should be included in whatever population
13 survey is being done. Thanks.

14
15 CHAIRMAN PROBASCO: Jack, thank you for
16 your comments. Yesterday during the work session Eric
17 Taylor did report on the expansion we did last year
18 addressing Kodiak. I know he and his staff are open to
19 other suggestions where there may be possible
20 concentrations during the survey window. The answer to
21 your question is, yes, there's latitude to expand our
22 surveys.

23
24 MR. FAGERSTROM: Thank you.

25
26 CHAIRMAN PROBASCO: Dan, please.

27
28 DR. ROSENBERG: Thank you, Mr. Chair.
29 I'd just like to thank Jack for his comments and
30 mention that part of the planning process is to
31 consider all of these things. That's the venue we will
32 use to review the surveys and come up with appropriate
33 designs and it will all, of course, go into -- and, of
34 course, population objectives and some other things.

35
36 So thank you.

37
38 CHAIRMAN PROBASCO: Thank you, Dan.
39 Gayla, I'm going to turn the floor back to you as far
40 as the Native Caucus's recommendation and additional
41 action by Bruce and myself. Please put the
42 recommendation on the table.

43
44 MS. HOSETH: Thank you, Mr. Chairman.
45 I'd like to make a motion that we wait to revise the
46 Emperor Goose Management Plan and not have a harvest
47 for 2016. Revise the Emperor Goose Management Plan for
48 harvest in 2017.

49
50 MR. REFT: Second.

1 CHAIRMAN PROBASCO: It's been moved and
2 seconded. John seconded. Further discussion.

3
4 (No comments)

5
6 CHAIRMAN PROBASCO: Patty, final
7 action, please.

8
9 MS. SCHWALENBERG: State of Alaska.

10
11 MR. DALE: Alaska supports the Caucus's
12 motion to defer the Emperor Goose harvest to 2017.

13
14 MS. SCHWALENBERG: U.S. Fish and
15 Wildlife Service.

16
17 CHAIRMAN PROBASCO: I concur.

18
19 MS. SCHWALENBERG: And the Native
20 Caucus.

21
22 MS. HOSETH: I support.

23
24 MS. SCHWALENBERG: Motion passed.

25
26 CHAIRMAN PROBASCO: Thank you, Patty.
27 Any more issues, Dan or Council members, on the Emperor
28 Goose issue.

29
30 (No comments)

31
32 CHAIRMAN PROBASCO: Thank you, Dan.

33
34 DR. ROSENBERG: Thank you, Mr. Chair
35 and members of the Committee.

36
37 CHAIRMAN PROBASCO: We are now going to
38 go to the update of the Harvest Assessment Program.
39 That's under Tab 4. I think, Luke, you get the baton,
40 correct? Go ahead, Luke.

41
42 DR. GEORGE: Thank you, Mr. Chairman,
43 Council. So I'll just give a quick summary of where
44 the Colorado State University group is on the review of
45 the subsistence harvest survey. To catch you up as to
46 what's been done since the last AMBCC meeting, we have
47 produced our final report on the subsistence harvest
48 survey review. We went over a lot of the information
49 in a preliminary draft of that report at the April
50 AMBCC meetings.

1 After that meeting we took those
2 comments, provided the Technical Working Group with a
3 draft of the report in June, got comments back in July,
4 responded to those comments and produced our final
5 report in late August, which was then sent out to the
6 Technical Working Group. In that final report, we
7 summarized the objectives that were identified for the
8 harvest survey by all the stakeholders, the uses the
9 data had been put to, issues about data quality that
10 had been raised about the harvest survey, summarized
11 precision at the regional scale for the surveys that
12 had been done and then, at the end, suggested
13 alternative designs to the current approach.

14
15 I'm not going to go over the
16 information in that report. It's in Tab 4 of the
17 booklet. We can take a look. I think there's copies
18 around the table there. One thing I just wanted to
19 talk about briefly were the objectives. There was a
20 fair amount of consensus in the objectives by the
21 various stakeholders.

22
23 All three stakeholder groups identified
24 commonly harvested species as the top priority for
25 harvest estimates. They all identified annual
26 estimates as the preferred frequency. There was a
27 difference in terms of the scale at which the three
28 groups identified as the highest priority for those
29 estimates. Fish and Wildlife Service identified
30 statewide estimates as the highest priority, Native
31 Caucus and Alaska Department of Fish and Game
32 identified regional estimates. Fish and Wildlife
33 Service also didn't exclude regional estimates, but
34 just put a higher priority on statewide.

35
36 From the inception, the objection of
37 the harvest survey was to identify statewide estimates.
38 Our assessment is that it's not an either/or. Both
39 statewide and regional estimates can be obtained using
40 the alternative approaches that we'll go over.
41 Secondary objectives just collectively -- and I won't
42 go into detail here -- were rarely harvested species,
43 estimates of harvest of rarely harvested species, egg
44 harvest and regions of lower harvest.

45
46 Our overall conclusion, looking at the
47 objectives that were identified and reviewing the data
48 that had been collected over the previous 10 years, was
49 that the current survey design as implemented is not
50 meeting many of the objectives identified by the

1 stakeholders. So our conclusion is that the current
2 survey needs to be redesigned in order to better
3 address those objectives.

4
5 We have three alternative survey
6 designs, fairly straightforward. Number one is what we
7 call the all-region statewide survey where there are
8 estimates obtained from every region every year.

9
10 Secondly, an alternative to that would
11 be what we call the priority regions only survey and
12 that is that a subset of all of the regions would be
13 identified to be surveyed annually. A decision as to
14 exactly which regions those would be would depend on
15 the total amount of harvest of, again, the commonly
16 harvested species since that's the focus. Based on our
17 assessment, that would be either four or five regions
18 and that would cover 90 to 95 percent of the total
19 harvest. That would mean, however, that some regions
20 would not be surveyed again.

21
22 The third approach is the mixed
23 priority statewide survey where a small subset of
24 regions are surveyed annually. These would be regions
25 with high harvest of commonly harvested species and the
26 other regions would be sampled less frequently on some
27 kind of a rotating basis.

28
29 One thing that should be pointed out is
30 that all three of these alternative survey designs
31 would differ from the current design in a fundamental
32 way and that is that effort at the regional level would
33 now be proportional to the harvest that occurs in that
34 region and the cost of sampling that region. Using
35 those two things you can optimize the level of effort
36 in those different regions in order to obtain the best
37 precision across the entire area.

38
39 The way it's currently implemented is
40 half of the villages in a region are sampled every time
41 that a survey is implemented in a particular region.
42 That's a very high sampling rate. We think you can get
43 more bang for your dollar by changing the way that that
44 effort is allocated.

45
46 Because we don't know exactly what the
47 budget will be for the harvest survey in the future,
48 we've asked the Fish and Wildlife Service for some
49 bounds to give us a high estimate of what they might be
50 able to provide, a low estimate if things don't look

1 good. We're thinking that we'll target some
2 intermediate value halfway in between and assess how
3 that would play out in terms of how many villages could
4 be surveyed in the various regions and then what kind
5 of precision that would give on the estimates that you
6 would obtain for the commonly harvested species.

7
8 Given the proportional allocation, the
9 budget, and we're going to get estimates of how much it
10 costs to get out to the villages and do these surveys
11 from the Department of Fish and Game, we can estimate
12 how many villages and households can be visited and,
13 using that, come up with simulations of what the
14 statewide precision would be under those conditions and
15 what the regional precision would be.

16
17 Our plan now is to run these
18 simulations over the next few months. We're looking
19 for direction from the Technical Working Group as to
20 which of those alternative survey designs they would
21 like us to focus on. We have a limited amount of time.
22 It's going to take a fair amount of time to get the
23 simulations up and running for each one of those, so we
24 would prefer to have to just focus on one or two
25 designs rather than trying to provide information on
26 all three.

27
28 One thing that came out of our
29 Technical Working Group meeting on Monday morning, in
30 addition to asking the Technical Working Group to give
31 us input on which design or designs they would like us
32 to evaluate, we also asked which of the special studies
33 that we had identified in the report they would like us
34 to consider to move forward and possibly develop a plan
35 for implementing them in the 2016 season.

36
37 These special studies addressed some of
38 the data quality issues that have been raised with the
39 survey issues such as misidentification of species, the
40 effect of memory bias or memory error as it's referred
41 to, if you're asking someone many months after they've
42 harvested birds, how many and what species they
43 harvested, how that may affect the estimates and so on.

44
45 The Technical Working Group felt that
46 those sorts of special studies were of lower prior and
47 directed us to focus our efforts now on developing
48 information on the alternative survey designs. There's
49 a possibility of including some questions on the
50 redesign of the survey to address the issue of

1 non-response error, but, again, the Technical Working
2 Group felt that that wasn't a high priority. Response
3 rates are very, very high at the community and
4 household level for the survey, therefore it's unlikely
5 that non-response error is having a big effect on the
6 estimates.

7
8 So next steps. Again, we're looking
9 forward as opposed to kind of re-evaluating the review.
10 By December 2015 we hope to have a report summarizing
11 the results fo the alternative survey designs that I
12 talked about using those metrics that I reviewed and
13 provide that information to the Technical Working Group
14 and then get direction from them as to which of the
15 alternatives they'd like us to consider for
16 implementation in the 2016 field season and given
17 start-up time and need to identify individuals that can
18 implement the survey. We feel like that needs to be
19 done by February of 2016 in order to implement the
20 survey in the field season of 2016.

21
22 So that's all I have.

23
24 CHAIRMAN PROBASCO: Thank you, Luke.
25 Questions. Do you have your hand up, Vince? Please
26 come up or yell it.

27
28 MR. MATHEWS: Just a quick question
29 because when he said it would be analyzed based on Fish
30 and Game staff traveling to the villages, does that
31 mean to conduct the surveys or to conduct the training?
32 The model we used in the areas I covered was we brought
33 in the surveyors for training. That was conducted by
34 Fish and Game staff as well as others and then the
35 surveys were conducted in the village. The reason I
36 bring that up is that it's a lower cost than agency
37 staff traveling to do each village. So I'm a little bit
38 confused with that statement. Has the model changed
39 that it's not going to be local based?

40
41 CHAIRMAN PROBASCO: Luke, please.

42
43 DR. GEORGE: Yeah, I don't remember
44 saying that. Maybe I did. We are addressing the issue
45 of the identity of the surveyors at this point and
46 certainly would look to Alaska Department of Fish and
47 Game to develop the actual implementation of the
48 survey.

49
50 CHAIRMAN PROBASCO: Thank you, Luke.

1 That's my understanding as well. Mic, please.

2

3 MR. PEDERSON: Mike Pederson, North
4 Slope Borough. I just wanted to point out that the
5 work that CSU did on this issue some of it is based on
6 the funding that we currently get to do the survey and
7 how it's been done. So I think one of your statements,
8 Luke, should reflect that the implementation of the
9 survey is as funded currently.

10

11 Thank you.

12

13 CHAIRMAN PROBASCO: Luke, please. Then
14 I will go to Patty and then Jim.

15

16 DR. GEORGE: Yeah, I'm not in charge of
17 the funding for the actual survey itself, whether our
18 review has impacted the funds that are available to
19 that. I think it would be a Fish and Wildlife Service
20 question.

21

22 CHAIRMAN PROBASCO: And I think, Luke,
23 earlier in your presentation you did a good summary
24 that what the future holds as far as funding is
25 uncertain and that you're going to develop an approach
26 where you look at the sideboards that we provided on a
27 high end to low end and probably in the middle. I
28 think right now that's the best we can do.

29

30 Let me go to Patty and then Jim.

31

32 MS. SCHWALENBERG: Thank you, Mr.
33 Chairman. I think what Mike was referring to is your
34 conclusions of your report. You state that the current
35 survey design as implemented is not meeting many of the
36 objectives. Well, I don't think -- or the way I see
37 it, I guess, is that if it was fully funded, it would
38 be meeting the objectives. So I think that you need to
39 recognize it's being implemented the way it is because
40 there is a lack of funding. So that should be
41 mentioned in your conclusion because it almost appears
42 as though the survey design is not adequate, but I
43 don't think it's the design. I think it's the funding.

44

45 Thank you.

46

47 DR. GEORGE: Yeah, I would agree with
48 that. If the current design were implemented as it's
49 stated in the 2010 report, then I do feel it could
50 provide the information and meet those objectives.

1 It's simply too expensive at this point with the
2 current funding.

3

4 CHAIRMAN PROBASCO: Jim, please state
5 your name and then the mic.

6

7 MR. SIMON: Hello, Jim Simon, Division
8 of Subsistence. I'm the regional supervisor for the
9 northern two-thirds of Alaska. I used to be on the
10 Technical Committee for the AMBCC as well as on the
11 Harvest Survey Committee more than 10 years ago and
12 it's a little bit of deja vu today. I just wanted to
13 follow up on some of the points that both Mike and
14 Patty have already mentioned.

15

16 Originally we had similar outside
17 organizations review a harvest survey program and came
18 up with some of the same options that we've seen today.
19 The issue ended up really being the problem of adopting
20 a method that the AMBCC could never pay for. So I just
21 want to reiterate the importance of keeping the funding
22 amount available consistent with the methods that you
23 adopt to do the annual harvest estimate efforts.

24

25 It's somewhat disappointing to see so
26 many years later that we're still struggling with the
27 same basic principals and I think that what Patty has
28 said with respect to the methodology of the survey is
29 not the problem. It's the funding source.

30

31 Thank you.

32

33 CHAIRMAN PROBASCO: Thank you, Jim.
34 Any follow up, Luke.

35

36 DR. GEORGE: I will say one thing about
37 how we're looking at the redesign. One thing that
38 didn't change when the survey was redesigned in 2010
39 was the intensity of sampling at the village and
40 household level within the regions. We feel like that
41 is an area where there could be cost savings by
42 changing that formula essentially.

43

44 CHAIRMAN PROBASCO: Thank you, Luke.
45 Gloria, did you have your hand up or were you just
46 getting my attention? Thank you. Others? John,
47 please. Mic.

48

49 MR. REFT: Yeah, this is a personal
50 view. Hunted all my life with some great captains

1 commercial fishing. One of them was Herman von
2 Scheele. We fished the south end for king crab. Tough
3 winters, icing, everything. But when we pulled into a
4 place to anchor for the night, like Russian Anchorage
5 inside of Trinity and the Geese Islands, I'd say,
6 Herman, there are no geese here. I said we need to go
7 to Moser or Olga Bay. He said there are geese here.
8 You've got to learn. I said learn what. He said learn
9 that when it gets dusk and it starts getting dusk and
10 the moon comes out, this place is going to be packed
11 with geese. I said you can't prove it by me. He said
12 just row ashore and wait. This is when we were a
13 territory, before Statehood. So I took his advice. I
14 went ashore. There was a stream and a lagoon in there.
15 He said lay across that bank and just wait until dusk
16 and he said you'll hear the whirl of wings and you will
17 have geese all around you in no time. I didn't believe
18 him, but I did it and he was right. There was so much
19 geese coming in, flock after flock, to feed because
20 this was their feeding ground. The activity outside of
21 the boats coming in anchoring and stuff during the day
22 kept them out in the islands on the outside. They
23 didn't get brave enough until the dusk and the dark
24 came.

25
26 But birds and animals, even the sea
27 mammals are the same. Just like humans. When you need
28 food, you know where it's at. You're going to get it no
29 matter what. I don't care if there's laws or what, but
30 if you've got to feed your family and you're out of
31 food, you figure a way to get in there. So a lot of
32 the animals and birds have gotten smart, especially the
33 bloody sea otters in Kodiak in Womens Bay. They have
34 gotten so smart that they stay out of the bay during
35 the day, but as soon as dark comes there's hundreds,
36 several of them in that bay feeding all night. As soon
37 as daybreak comes, they disappear and you think there's
38 no sea otters in there. They're smart.

39
40 Well, the geese, according to what
41 Herman taught me and I hunted, they're the same. And
42 the birds on the road system, you think there's no more
43 mallards or anything, you go in there, park and over
44 the telephone wires when it got dark, but you have to
45 have moonlight, and they would come in just -- you
46 could hear the whirl of wings and you could get what
47 you needed to eat. But you would think there's no
48 birds in the area anymore. They're gone. But at
49 nighttime they're just like us. They figure a way to
50 come in and get their food to survive and they're

1 there. There's a lot of geese down in the south end.
2 I know.

3

4 Thank you, Mr. Chair.

5

6 CHAIRMAN PROBASCO: Thank you, John.

7 Others?

8

9 (No comments)

10

11 CHAIRMAN PROBASCO: Well, Luke, we've
12 got our work cut out. You especially. I think we need
13 to figure out a strategy to address the challenge by
14 February 2016. I don't have an answer right now, but I
15 need to work with Patty and others on how we can best
16 approach that once the report is completed.

17

18 Thank you.

19

20 DR. GEORGE: Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

21

22 CHAIRMAN PROBASCO: Okay. Eric was
23 scrambling for us and I think what I'm going to do is
24 wait on the Steller's Eider release. Do you have
25 something, Eric? Thank you, Eric, for tracking that
26 down.

27

28 DR. TAYLOR: Thank you, Mr. Chair. I'm
29 Eric Taylor with Fish and Wildlife Service. There was
30 a bit of confusion on the agenda on the Steller's Eider
31 reintroduction update. Fish and Wildlife Service is
32 prepared, but they're prepared for tomorrow. They're
33 currently in Anchorage. We saw the item on the agenda
34 and I noticed no one was here. Sarah Conn and/or
35 Neesha Stellrecht from the Fairbanks Field Office will
36 be here tomorrow to provide an update on Steller's
37 Eider reintroduction.

38

39 CHAIRMAN PROBASCO: Okay. We might
40 finish today though. All right. Thank you. Dan has
41 already given us a good timeline report on the plans
42 for this coming year for the Emperor Goose Management
43 Plan. Dan, anything you want to add to it?

44

45 DR. ROSENBERG: Without approaching the
46 microphone, Mr. Chair, I am leaving at noon and I
47 wanted to give an update on the Cackling Canada Goose
48 stakeholder's workshop. There's an area farther down
49 on the agenda.

50

1 CHAIRMAN PROBASCO: Would you please
2 come up and do that.

3
4 DR. ROSENBERG: I'll do that now.

5
6 CHAIRMAN PROBASCO: So, Council
7 members, we're on agenda item 12(b).

8
9 DR. ROSENBERG: Mr. Chair, members of
10 the Council. I'm Dan Rosenberg with the Alaska
11 Department of Fish and Game. I was asked to update the
12 Council on Cackling Canada Goose workshop that we had
13 back in June in Oregon and it's part of a continuing
14 structured decision-making process to address Cackling
15 Canada Goose management issues. We have another
16 meeting scheduled for October 7th to 8th down in
17 Portland.

18
19 So a little background. Our goal here
20 is to update the Cackling Canada Goose Management Plan
21 and there are several issues that have been ongoing for
22 many, many years that have become very contentious
23 issues over time and they center around establishing a
24 population objective maintaining or improving
25 subsistence opportunities while at the same time
26 providing overwintering habitat for the birds in Oregon
27 and southwest Washington while being responsive to
28 agricultural damage from large populations of Cackling
29 and other Canada geese.

30
31 Cacklers, as you know, all nest on the
32 Y-K Delta. Almost 100 percent of the population nest
33 on the Yukon-Kuskokwim Delta and they almost all winter
34 in the Willamette Valley of Oregon and southwest
35 Washington. In the current management plan, we have a
36 population objective of 250,000. Based on the most
37 recent three-year average, using a breeding grounds
38 index from the Yukon-Kuskokwim Delta, we estimate the
39 current population to be around 311,000. So above the
40 objective.

41
42 Back in the 1980s Cackling Canada Geese
43 were very low. The population was somewhere between 25
44 and 40,000 at its low point in the mid-'80s. At that
45 time most of the Cackling Canada Geese wintered down in
46 California. Sometime in the 1990s, as the population
47 was increasing, those birds moved up into the
48 Willamette Valley of Oregon and southwest Washington,
49 which has a very large agricultural economy base there.
50 We were getting complaints about crop depredation,

1 birds feeding in fields, and causing economic damage to
2 that community.

3

4 So this has been an issue that we've
5 been trying to resolve over the years. As a result of
6 some of the difficulties we contracted with Oregon
7 State University to conduct a structured decision-
8 making process, which is what these meetings were
9 about, to try to resolve land use issues in Oregon and
10 the population objective and so on, with a goal, of
11 course, of reaching some sort of consensus. Once we do
12 that, then we can proceed with revising the management
13 plan.

14

15 So as I said we had our first meeting
16 in June in Portland. Myron was there representing the
17 Association of Village Council Presidents. Myron
18 Naneng was there, I was there, Eric Taylor, Todd
19 Sanders were both in the room were also there, Josh
20 Dooley was there. There were several other
21 representatives from the Fish and Wildlife Service,
22 both from Oregon and Washington as well as Brian
23 McCaffery from the Yukon-Kuskokwim Delta. There were
24 also other stakeholders there. Of course, the Oregon
25 Farm Bureau being the big one. And Jim Fall, of
26 course, was also there from the Subsistence Division of
27 the Alaska Department of Fish and Game.

28

29 We went through a lot of background
30 information and I do want to say that Jim Fall gave a
31 presentation on the importance of migratory birds to
32 the rural economy of Alaska and I think that was really
33 a show-stopper in terms of presenting the importance
34 and really hitting that home to the agricultural
35 community of just how important these birds are. Brian
36 McCaffery also gave a presentation on the ecological
37 importance of Cacklers to the Yukon-Kuskokwim Delta.
38 And as well we had Farm Bureau presentations and so on.

39

40

41 So we discussed stakeholder viewpoints,
42 trying to define the problem, the management
43 limitations, the management objectives and potential
44 management actions that we could take. Oregon State
45 University prepared a meeting summary that we could
46 send to people if they're interested of that first
47 meeting. Again, we're supposed to have another meeting
48 in a couple weeks down in Portland where I assume many
49 of the same people will be there. Our ultimate goal is
50 to have an updated management plan for Pacific Flyway

1 Council to review in March. Whether it will get there
2 by March or not, but if not March, then it will be
3 September.

4
5 I'm here to take any questions or
6 comments if you'd like.

7
8 CHAIRMAN PROBASCO: Thank you, Dan. I
9 think it would be good, if you're the venue or the
10 avenue, to get the summary of the meeting to Patty. I
11 think also that report that Dr. Fall provided would be
12 a good resource for us.

13
14 DR. ROSENBERG: Yeah, it's very good.

15
16 CHAIRMAN PROBASCO: So if you'd take
17 the lead on that, I'd appreciate it, to get it to
18 Patty. Thank you.

19
20 MS. SCHWALENBERG: Mr. Chairman.

21
22 CHAIRMAN PROBASCO: Patty.

23
24 MS. SCHWALENBERG: The meeting summary
25 from the June meeting is on the back table here. I
26 didn't put it in the packets, but it is over there.

27
28 CHAIRMAN PROBASCO: Okay. Thank you.
29 So that's one off the list. Others. Tim, are you or
30 Myron going to be at that October meeting?

31
32 MR. ANDREW: Yeah, I certainly think
33 so. It will be either myself or Myron. I don't know
34 what his schedule is at the moment. I know our
35 convention is right about that time as well. Hopefully
36 one of us will be able to attend.

37
38 CHAIRMAN PROBASCO: Thank you. Others.
39 Eric, please.

40
41 DR. TAYLOR: Thank you, Mr. Chair.
42 Eric Taylor with Fish and Wildlife Service. I think
43 when you read the report one of the findings, and Dan
44 and I were both pleased with this finding, at least on
45 day one of the structured decision-making meeting, was
46 that the group -- and the group again is comprised of
47 farmers from the Oregon Farm Bureau, the Alaska
48 Department of Fish and Game, U.S. Fish and Wildlife
49 Service, the Yukon-Delta Refuge, sportsmen hunters from
50 Oregon. One of the findings that the group decided

1 upon as a group was not to lower the population
2 objective of Cackling Canada Geese.

3
4 Dan and I have been working with the
5 Pacific Flyway because clearly it's a contentious issue
6 in Oregon relative to crop depredation. The farmers
7 have been concerned at a high level, all the way at the
8 political level, that have previously occurred in the
9 state of Oregon. I think both Dan and I, I can speak
10 with Dan, that we were pleased to see the recognition,
11 thanks to Jim Fall and Brian McCaffery and others,
12 recognition of the group that the population objective
13 of currently 250,000 for Cackling Canada Geese should
14 be maintained.

15
16 The group recognized the major problem
17 in Oregon and Washington is not so much the actual
18 population size but the distribution of Cackling Canada
19 Geese in the sense that when they overnight on refuges
20 or other lands and then move out to private lands that
21 are adjacent to refuges, that that's going to be a
22 continual problem whether the population is lowered or
23 not. That it's more of a distribution problem as
24 opposed to a population problem. Anyway, that was an
25 important finding for this group and certainly for the
26 Yukon Delta.

27
28 CHAIRMAN PROBASCO: Thank you, Eric.
29 Tim, please.

30
31 MR. ANDREW: Thank you, Mr. Chair.
32 Eric or Dan, several years ago there was an initiative
33 to -- I believe it was part of the farm bill to provide
34 the Oregon farmers with devices to keep the geese away
35 from their lands, you know, like whatever, scarecrows
36 and noise-making devices and all that sort. Is that
37 continuing or part of the stakeholders' discussion?

38
39 DR. ROSENBERG: Yes, thank you. It is
40 continuing. I don't know if it's continuing because of
41 anything to do with the farm bill or not, but the
42 Oregon farmers do use a myriad of devices to try to
43 move geese off their fields. Sometimes from their
44 field to their neighbors. They are hazing birds, but
45 they're, I guess, frustrated with the amount of effort
46 that it takes for them to do that for limited results.

47
48 Another outcome of this larger Cackling
49 population -- you know, this issue has been a very
50 complex issue that's been going on for many, many

1 years. Another factor in it is that Cacklers mix with
2 Dusky Canada Geese, which are a much smaller population
3 that breed on the Copper River Delta. Great efforts
4 have been taken to try to allow a Cackler harvest while
5 minimizing a Dusky Canada Goose harvest. They are, to
6 most people, very much look-alikes. So, in order to do
7 that, Oregon has had to maintain a series of check
8 stations and they've restricted the amount of time that
9 one can hunt Cacklers just due to the cost of
10 maintaining those check stations.

11
12 So, as part of this process, if you
13 will, Oregon has decided to close the season to Dusky
14 Canada Geese, no longer maintain check stations, and
15 this will allow them to have more days per week of
16 Cackler hunting. So that I think unto itself has been
17 a great source of relief to the farmers and has sort of
18 set the tone for I think much more cooperative efforts
19 and much more willingness to maintain a higher
20 population objective.

21
22 As Eric stated at that meeting, there
23 seemed to be agreement among Myron and among the Farm
24 Bureau to a 250,000 population goal. A little skittish
25 to say that just because the farmers that were there on
26 the first day were not all there on the second day and
27 this was agreed to on the second day. We didn't agree
28 per se yet, but we moved in that direction in a
29 favorable way. So I'm hoping that that attitude
30 maintains itself throughout the next meeting.

31
32 In some way I -- you know, this has
33 been going on so long that in some ways I think we're
34 seeing a generational change in farmers and the younger
35 farmers might be more willing to live with this than
36 some of the older farmers who have been banging on our
37 door for years and years and years. So we'll see how
38 that goes, but hopefully it will work out well.

39
40 MR. ANDREW: The other question I had
41 was the bag limits for the sport hunt. Have they
42 increased in Alaska and Oregon?

43
44 DR. ROSENBERG: Yes and yes. Todd,
45 remind me what they are. In Oregon, I think they're up
46 to four.

47
48 DR. SANDERS: Four.

49
50 DR. ROSENBERG: Four per day in Oregon

1 and southwest Washington. In Alaska overall for the
2 state, it's four per day, but on the Y-K Delta and
3 places in western Alaska where Cacklers occur it's six
4 per day.

5
6 MR. ANDREW: Thank you.

7
8 CHAIRMAN PROBASCO: Thank you, Tim.
9 Anybody else.

10
11 (No comments)

12
13 CHAIRMAN PROBASCO: Thank you, Dan.
14 Safe travels.

15
16 DR. ROSENBERG: Thank you.

17
18 CHAIRMAN PROBASCO: At this time, if
19 there's no objections, we'll take a break for lunch.
20 I'll give you a little time so we don't all have to eat
21 at the same one restaurant here. So why don't we be
22 back at 1:15, an hour and a half. Fair enough? Jack
23 says so. Okay, we're good. See you at 1:15.

24
25 (Off record)

26
27 (On record)

28
29 CHAIRMAN PROBASCO: Okay. Our next
30 presenter. Are you ready, Josh?

31
32 MR. DOOLEY: Thank you, Mr. Chairman.
33 My name is Josh Dooley. I'm a wildlife biologist,
34 goose specialist, with the Fish and Wildlife Service,
35 Division of Migratory Bird Management. I'm going to be
36 talking about some of the analysis of Emperor Goose
37 aerial nest plot survey data and evaluation of harvest
38 potential. I did talk yesterday and will be giving a
39 more abridged talk today about these same findings. So
40 if you have any questions afterwards, please let me
41 know.

42
43 Again, the objectives of this study was
44 to evaluate Emperor Goose status trends and monitoring
45 methods and then to also determine harvest potential of
46 the population. A quick overview of the timeline of
47 the project. So this started last year in
48 November/December. We prepared initial findings and
49 what we were going to analyze for the April AMBCC
50 meeting. Subsequent to that we took input from the

1 meeting. We've gone through about four internal
2 reviews within the Fish and Wildlife Service. Also
3 been coordinating with Steve Fleischman, Bob Stehn on
4 their modeling efforts.

5
6 We just distributed an external review
7 draft for everyone last week, so we'll be getting input
8 from everyone on that. That's gone out to about 20 or
9 30 reviewers. We're hoping to incorporate all those
10 comments and produce the finalized report in January.

11
12 So the talk is broken in two sections.
13 I want to first talk about evaluating status trends and
14 monitoring methods. So this boiled down to two
15 questions: Is the population increasing or decreasing;
16 and, if so, at what rate? And then we wanted to know
17 all the surveys we're doing are they consistent with
18 each other.

19
20 So first talk about -- again, there's
21 questions about indexes versus population estimates.
22 The idea here I'd like to describe is that we don't go
23 out and count all Emperor Geese in Alaska. We count
24 certain areas during certain times and that gives us an
25 index of the population. So we use that index to talk
26 about status and trend of the population.

27
28 Shown here is a red line representing
29 let's say the true population size and that true
30 population could be increasing and decreasing through
31 time. Let's say on average 11 percent per year, what
32 we call the trend.

33
34 We go out and survey particular areas.
35 We may only index 75 percent of the population, but if
36 it's doing the same thing the true population is doing,
37 we're going to get a good valid assessment of what the
38 population is doing. So is it going up or down.
39 Again, we get the same trend estimate that we would for
40 the true population size.

41
42 So we go to index a smaller proportion
43 of the population, let's say only 60 percent, and those
44 both provide indexes to the true population. So what
45 we're looking in this analysis is the different indexes
46 that we have. Do they give consistent information.

47
48 So I'll quickly describe the Emperor
49 Goose surveys that we currently conduct. We conduct
50 surveys on Emperor Geese as they're moving through

1 their migratory cycle, wintering on the Aleutian
2 Islands and other areas and then breeding on the Y-K
3 Delta. So the first survey we conduct is the spring
4 aerial staging survey, which is conducted late April,
5 early May. Again we get an index or a count of Emperor
6 Geese within that area. We've conducted that survey
7 since 1981. So then as birds are moving to the
8 breeding grounds, we conduct a summer nest plot survey
9 where we go out and measure the number of nests and
10 eggs.

11
12 We also during that time conduct an
13 aerial survey where we get an index of breeding in
14 total birds. Those surveys started in 1985. As birds
15 are moving back to wintering areas, we conduct a fall
16 aerial staging survey. Again, we get an index or a
17 count of the primary staging area. Also in the fall we
18 get an estimate of juveniles from a photograph age
19 ratio survey where we take photos and then we count the
20 number of juveniles compared to adults.

21
22 So in our analysis we are looking to
23 see if all these surveys give us consistent
24 information. Shown here are those four main surveys.
25 So the summer nest plot survey, the spring aerial
26 survey, the fall aerial survey and then the summer
27 aerial survey. If we look at those, they track
28 similarly through time. Overall, if we combine all that
29 information, it suggests that the Emperor Goose
30 population is increasing about 1.3 percent per year
31 since 1985.

32
33 Again, I would note that hunting was
34 closed in 1986 for sport hunting and subsistence
35 hunting was closed in 1987. So we are interested in
36 looking at when the population might have been at a low
37 before those harvest closures and then for the next 30
38 years. If we look at our individual surveys, they give
39 very similar estimates to our overall trend, showing
40 that all these surveys were very consistent and showing
41 limited population growth of about 1 percent per year.

42
43 So, again, we didn't see anything like
44 this where one survey was showing either a really rapid
45 increase or a really rapid decrease. So all the
46 information we have, what we did see, suggests that
47 Emperor Goose population is showing very limited
48 growth.

49
50 Again, we didn't see anything like

1 this. Shown here are graphs of the summer indexes for
2 total birds for Cackling Canada Geese and then Greater
3 White-fronted Geese. I'd like to have you focus in
4 between those dashed lines, which is the time period
5 that harvest was either closed or very restricted.
6 What we saw with these two species were that they
7 showed very rapid growth, so about 16 percent per year
8 or 15 percent per year.

9
10 For Emperor Geese for that very same
11 survey what we saw was growth of about 1 to 2 percent
12 per year. Again, this indicates it seems unlikely that
13 for the same survey Emperor Geese might be growing at,
14 let's say, 10 or 15 percent, but somehow we're not
15 picking that up on our survey. Then, when we conduct
16 multiple surveys in different areas, different times of
17 the year, we have about 30-year datasets on those and
18 they're all pretty consistent because it's a good idea
19 of potentially what the population is doing, which is
20 showing limited growth.

21
22 In summary, all the surveys that we
23 conducted were consistent with each other and they all
24 showed limited positive growth.

25
26 For the second objective, we were
27 looking to determine harvest potential. Yesterday I
28 showed some different graphs. I added some different
29 slides to hopefully clarify a few issues. So the first
30 part, which I just showed there, that was the trend
31 analyses of the data we have. So that's growth under
32 current harvest that is occurring. What we did in the
33 second part was analysis to look at harvest potential
34 using a different analysis.

35
36 So this boiled down to a couple
37 questions. What is a harvest level that balances both
38 harvest opportunity and population growth. We also
39 wanted to know what harvest levels may cause population
40 declines. Then also how does harvesting different aged
41 birds impact the population.

42
43 For this analysis we used what's called
44 the prescribed take level model. So this model and
45 this approach has been used very pervasively in
46 wildlife management for the last two to three decades.
47 It's been used by NOAA to determine mortality limits on
48 marine mammals. Also used for determining harvest
49 thresholds for various species, so quotas for other
50 game species like Sandhill Cranes and Greater Snow

1 Geese. Also the Service has used this approach for
2 issuance of depredation permits for Black Vultures and
3 Cormorants. So this is a modeling approach we use to
4 try to determine these harvest thresholds.

5
6 So what we're doing in the analysis is
7 to try to come up with that potential growth capacity
8 of the population. That's based on reproduction and
9 survival. For example, we've been conducting that nest
10 plot survey on the Y-K Delta for 30-plus years, so we
11 have a good idea of how many eggs an Emperor Goose lays
12 per year and then how many chicks and how many
13 fledglings come from those. So we try to estimate
14 growth potential from those parameters. Again, when we
15 conduct that analysis, it shows that potential growth
16 is about 4 percent per year.

17
18 So what we're interested in is to try
19 to come up with a harvest rate from that potential
20 growth. Again, if the population is growing at 4
21 percent, we're trying to say are we going to take all
22 of that potential growth or are we going to take some
23 of that potential growth. This balance harvest rate,
24 which is commonly used in wildlife management, is to
25 take half of that potential growth. So you're saying
26 the population is going to continue to grow, that
27 ensures that it's going to continue to keep increasing
28 and that we're also going to provide for harvest
29 opportunity.

30
31 Then to take that harvest rate of 2
32 percent you need another two percent of what population
33 size. Again, for this analysis, we looked at a range
34 of population size estimates to capture the current
35 uncertainty in that parameter. So we have ways to
36 extrapolate the breeding population estimate on the Y-K
37 Delta by the non-breeding portion of the population and
38 then also integrating with the work that Bob Stehn and
39 Steve Fleischman are doing on their analyses.

40
41 So we have a wide range and uncertainty
42 in that population size estimate, but again we have a
43 medium value of where it's most likely. So there's
44 about a 90 percent chance the population size is
45 between 100,000 and 180,000. There's about a 60
46 percent chance that the population is between 120,000
47 and 160,000.

48
49 So what I want to show here is a
50 harvest rate of 2 percent of the population, how that

1 translates to potential harvest levels for a given
2 year. So across the bottom is shown as population
3 size, ranging from 100,000 up to 180,000. So if we
4 look at a harvest rate of 2 percent of that, it gives
5 us harvest levels of 2,000 up to 3,600.

6
7 Again, one point I'd like to make here
8 is that there's uncertainty in that population size
9 estimate, but it doesn't make a huge difference in that
10 potential amount of harvest because you're talking
11 about the new growth each year. So if the population
12 was 140 versus 160, it's not talking about an
13 additional 10,000 or so birds that could be taken.
14 It's talking about a very limited number of about 100
15 to 200.

16
17 Again, we looked at harvest rates a
18 little bit higher and a little bit lower than what I
19 just showed. So that other graph was showing a 2
20 percent harvest rate. This shows a harvest rate of 1.5
21 percent and 2.5 percent. So that lower line is 1.5
22 percent, the upper line is 2.5 percent. Again, if we
23 look at a median population size, so a likely
24 population size given the uncertainty on that, gives an
25 estimate of harvest of about 2,100 to 3,500 Emperor
26 Geese per year.

27
28 Again, from that analysis we determine
29 harvest thresholds. So a harvest of approximately
30 3,000 Emperor Geese per year is a harvest level that
31 maximizes both harvest opportunity and population
32 growth. A harvest of approximately 3,000 Emperor Geese
33 per year is also similar to the current estimated
34 harvest level of 3,200 Emperor Geese per year. So
35 that's based on the subsistence harvest survey. If we
36 look over the last 10 years of estimated subsistence
37 harvest, it's about 3,200. So we did a separate
38 analysis, we identified the threshold that it would be
39 at and that matches up closely with what estimated
40 harvest is right now.

41
42 Current estimated harvest is near the
43 level that maximizes both population growth and harvest
44 opportunity. Shown here is the same concept now in a
45 graph. So this shows the harvest thresholds based on
46 that PTL model analysis. The idea here is that if you
47 had no harvest, the top line, we'd have the most growth
48 in the population, but there's no harvest opportunity.
49 The second line shows that balance between growth and
50 opportunity.

1 So that was what we estimated from the
2 analysis to be about 3,000 Emperor Geese per year.
3 Then if you doubled that, so not taking half splitting
4 it between the population and splitting it between
5 harvest, that gives an upper threshold of about 6,000
6 Emperor Geese per year. So right there you have no
7 growth, but there's the most harvest opportunity. So
8 you're harvesting more, but the population isn't
9 growing. Then anything beyond that would indicate
10 population decline.

11
12 So to tie this to management objectives
13 a little bit, this graph, is that prior to last year or
14 this year the management objective was to increase the
15 population to 80,000 to allow for harvest and to
16 increase the population ultimately to 150,000. So what
17 we were looking at was that top line that we had zero
18 harvest. So we're allocating all that potential growth
19 to the population so it grows the most to reach those
20 objectives.

21
22 Now we've reached the 1,000 mark, so
23 we're splitting that potential growth between harvest
24 opportunity and then splitting it between the
25 population. I'd also like to note here this lower
26 threshold of 6,000 Emperor Geese per year. So during
27 1985 and 1986 estimated subsistence harvest of Emperor
28 Geese was 5-6,000 birds per year. Again, that was
29 during a time period that Emperor Geese hunting was
30 open. The closure began in 1987. So that estimate of
31 6,000 Emperor Geese when the season was open likely
32 indicates harvest during that time period, particularly
33 early in the subsistence harvest survey when there's
34 likely desire to document subsistence harvest uses.

35
36 Sport hunting during the 1970s and '80s
37 was about 1-3,000 birds. So we can think about adding
38 that potential subsistence harvest during that time
39 period of the early '80s to the sport hunting harvest.
40 That gives you an estimate of about 6-9,000 Emperor
41 Geese per year. Again, during that time period in the
42 '70s and '80s the Emperor Goose population showed
43 decline. Also the indexes that we had during that time
44 were higher than we have now. So that suggests that
45 the population was potentially higher than it is now.
46 Under that harvest when we had an open harvest of both
47 subsistence harvest and sport harvest, which likely was
48 a harvest greater than 6,000 Emperor Geese, we saw
49 population decline.

50

1 So again this whole analysis we looked
2 at potential thresholds of harvest. If we look at just
3 our trend, so observed data what the population is
4 doing, shows very limited growth. And then if we look
5 at past data of when we had open harvest for both sport
6 and subsistence, we saw a population decline. So this
7 whole analysis kind of indicates that there's not a lot
8 of additional harvest capacity beyond current levels.

9
10 We also looked at age of harvest. So
11 we wanted to know what was the impact of taking a
12 breeding adult, as shown here, versus younger life
13 stages. So based on our analysis, taking a breeding
14 adult had the same impact on the population as about
15 3.5 fledglings or two one-year-olds. So given the
16 concept is that harvest in breeding adults has a much
17 greater impact on the population than harvesting
18 younger life stages.

19
20 We also looked at reported harvest by
21 area. Again, this shows the harvest by the different
22 regions. Harvest of Emperor Geese. Most harvest
23 occurs in the Yukon-Kuskokwim Delta, about 55 percent.
24 There's about 33 percent harvest in Bering
25 Strait/Norton Sound. So between those two regions
26 about 88 percent of all Emperor Goose harvest occurs
27 there. Bristol Bay, Aleutian Islands and Kodiak shows
28 smaller percentages.

29
30 We also looked at reported harvest by
31 season. So during spring about half of all the harvest
32 occurs during that time, 18 percent occurs during the
33 summer and 34 percent during fall/winter. Again, based
34 on documented harvest, most is occurring on the
35 breeding grounds and during the spring when there's
36 potentially a lot of breeders present in the
37 population, which we saw from the last slide, that
38 could have more of an impact on the population than
39 harvesting other life stages.

40
41 So, in summary, again based on these
42 identified thresholds from the analyses, looking at the
43 small observed growth rate of the population and then
44 also looking at past data, there doesn't appear to be
45 much harvest capacity beyond current levels.
46 Increasing current harvest levels may result in
47 decline. Again, current harvest levels should allow
48 for limited positive growth. Harvesting breeding adults
49 has more impact on the population than harvesting
50 younger life stages.

1 I've also included one slide here
2 because there's been a few questions again about the
3 spatial area of the surveys, so I thought this slide
4 might be helpful. Shown here is the survey area out on
5 the Alaska Peninsula where we conduct the spring and
6 fall aerial surveys. So the area in blue is the
7 primary survey area. Many times we go up to King
8 Salmon, but I looked at analyses of what trends and
9 estimates might be if we just use data from that
10 primary area compared to this large area which we have
11 traditionally surveyed since 1980.

12
13 If we look at trend estimates just for
14 that blue area, it showed an increase of 1.3 percent
15 per year and 90-95 percent of the birds we count each
16 year are in that blue area. If we look at trends in
17 that larger area, so using all data where we have it,
18 it shows basically the same answer, that the population
19 is increasing 1.3, 1.4 percent per year and only 5-10
20 percent of everything we count is in that area.

21
22 Again, this comes back to what the
23 objective is of the particular surveys. So if you're
24 interested in just assessing trend, try to get an idea
25 of how much the population is increasing or decreasing.
26 It doesn't make a lot of sense or, like what I would
27 tell Eric, it's not essentially worth, you know, flying
28 two or four extra days to come up with the same answer
29 if you're just interested in trend, but if there's an
30 interest in knowing if Emperor Geese are in certain
31 areas, that's a different management objective trying
32 to achieve with those surveys.

33
34 So again that's all questions which we
35 talked about earlier to be addressed in the management
36 plan revisions. With that I'll take any questions.

37
38 CHAIRMAN PROBASCO: Go ahead, Tim.

39
40 MR. ANDREW: Thank you, Mr. Chair. In
41 the nest plot surveys that are conducted in that
42 specific area from Kashunuk River down south to the
43 North Kuskokwim Bay, what is the average clutch size of
44 Emperor Geese there?

45
46 MR. DOOLEY: The average clutch size of
47 Emperor Geese based on about 30 years of data from the
48 summer nest plot survey is 4.85 eggs.

49
50 MR. ANDREW: And what's the -- from the

1 eggs being laid to fledgling or whatever you call them,
2 whatever goes on between there when they get to that
3 point, what's the survival rate?

4
5 MR. DOOLEY: So we looked at survival
6 rates from eggs to chicks. Again, in the report that
7 was sent out we have documentation of all the
8 parameters we used in that model and those estimates
9 and where they came from. Offhand, I would say roughly
10 about 80 percent for that next stage.

11
12 Again, what we did in the analysis was
13 include all the uncertainty around that parameter, so
14 we didn't just say it's 80 percent. We said it could
15 range from whatever it may be, whatever is documented
16 in the literature. Let's say they did a study and it
17 was 50 percent, so we have some evidence it might be 50
18 percent. If we did another study, it might have been
19 90 percent. So we included that full range of
20 information.

21
22 MR. ANDREW: Yeah, I guess there's -- I
23 mean it brings up a whole bunch of different kind of
24 questions. You heard my question about the Russian
25 Emperor Goose hunt and its possible contribution to the
26 slow growth that we've been seeing. Also there's the
27 factor that a subsistence hunt is still occurring. The
28 other geese populations are growing at a 16 percent
29 average?

30
31 MR. DOOLEY: Uh-huh (affirmative).

32
33 MR. ANDREW: The higher populations of
34 Greater White-front and also the Cackling Canada Geese
35 as well. So it seems like the subsistence hunt cannot
36 possibly be inhibiting the growth given 80 percent
37 survival and 4.8 nest clutch size.

38
39 MR. DOOLEY: Yeah, I can comment on
40 that. I think one major difference between Emperor
41 Geese and other goose species is that winter
42 distribution and some of their life history parameters.
43 So, again, Emperor Geese winter out in these cold
44 areas. They don't migrate south whereas many of those
45 other goose species do. So the few limited studies that
46 there are on Emperor Geese for some of the young that
47 go out to those wintering grounds is extremely low
48 survival. They've had documented 10, 15 percent
49 survival. So we know that for Emperor Geese that might
50 be a limiting factor, their wintering grounds.

1 It's a very harsh environment compared
2 to, you know, geese that go down south where the
3 temperature is very moderate comparatively. As we've
4 discussed, there's a lot of agricultural production.
5 So survival for temperate nesting geese many times
6 juveniles are documented as having higher survival than
7 adults, whereas arctic nesting geese it's the opposite,
8 that the adults typically have higher survival and you
9 see lower survival in the younger life stages.

10
11 So the idea is that Emperor Geese show
12 a little bit different life history. So they might be
13 limited on their wintering grounds, whereas then, if
14 there's a lot of potential harvest on their breeding
15 grounds as well, they might be limited in both spots.

16
17 MR. ANDREW: If I may, Mr. Chairman.
18 The Pacific Black Brant are starting to winter in the
19 same areas as the Emperors, so something obviously is
20 improving or providing the food source for the Black
21 Brant. I don't know Emperors or Brant at all. I don't
22 know what their feeding ecology is like in that area,
23 but if the Emperors are saying -- not Emperors, but
24 Pacific Black Brant are saying, hmm, there's food here,
25 I can survive the winter, I'm going to stay here rather
26 than making the trip all the way down to Mexico, it
27 indicates to me that the food in Izembek Lagoon and
28 other areas are improving. Would that be a correct
29 assumption?

30
31 MR. DOOLEY: The assumption of what is
32 causing the distribution I think that we don't have a
33 lot of information on that. I actually have a slide
34 here maybe if I can find this. Shown here on the
35 bottom left is our winter counts of Pacific Brant at
36 Izembek and it does show a very substantial increase of
37 Pacific Brant at Izembek over the last 20, 30 years.
38 So, again, there's only 2-3,000 during our winter
39 surveys there during the '80s and now we're counting
40 about 40-50,000. Again, that's very suggestive of a
41 redistribution. So that's been documented. I think
42 the reason for it is little known.

43
44 MR. ANDREW: No further questions.

45
46 CHAIRMAN PROBASCO: Thank you, Tim.
47 Others, please. Go ahead, Gayla.

48
49 MS. HOSETH: I have a question. Thank
50 you, Mr. Chairman. On that one slide where it says the

1 true population and the true index. I think it's your
2 example slide.

3

4 MR. DOOLEY: Yes. That one?

5

6 MS. HOSETH: Yeah. So you guys don't
7 know the true population of the Emperor Geese though,
8 correct?

9

10 MR. DOOLEY: So right now there's
11 uncertainty around that estimate. Again, based on an
12 estimate of the breeding population and then we have an
13 idea of how many breeders there are to non-breeders
14 based on those survival rates, so we can expand it by
15 that. Then again, using the analysis it's all
16 uncertainty around that parameter to date. So using
17 those methods and then working with Steve and Bob too
18 on some of their modeling approaches.

19

20 So I can also show -- I have
21 information here then given those population sizes what
22 those indexes might represent then from our surveys.
23 Again, if we look at kind of that middle range of what
24 population size might be, this gives some idea of what
25 proportion of the population that we're actually
26 indexing. So for our spring aerial survey our counts
27 are typically about 90,000, so that would represent for
28 those population sizes roughly 56-75 percent of the
29 population. Very similar for the fall aerial survey.
30 Then our index for the summer aerial survey out there
31 on the Y-K Delta that index is much lower, so we'd be
32 potentially indexing 20-25 percent of the population.

33

34 MS. HOSETH: So the total population --
35 or a 60 percent chance that we're between 120-160,000?

36

37 MR. DOOLEY: Based on the uncertainty
38 to date.

39

40 CHAIRMAN PROBASCO: Tim, please.

41

42 MR. ANDREW: Thank you, Mr. Chair.
43 During the spring aerial surveys that are being
44 conducted on the Emperors primarily occurs in April?

45

46 MR. DOOLEY: The spring survey occurs
47 late April to early May. Typically those surveys are
48 conducted in about a week.

49

50 MR. ANDREW: I was just looking at the

1 confidence intervals on some of those counts and that's
2 pretty tight compared to situations where -- I mean if
3 you take into consideration whether sightability,
4 whatever, fog into it, it seems like the confidence
5 intervals would be a lot wider than what they are shown
6 right now. What's contributing to that tight
7 confidence intervals in the report of that?

8
9 MR. DOOLEY: So the indices of the
10 spring aerial survey again have shown variation through
11 time. There's two processes going on. So there's the
12 true population process, the population increasing or
13 decreasing, and then, as you mentioned, there's
14 observer effects off of that. So whatever the true
15 population is, then we have to go out there and observe
16 that. You mentioned some of the observer effects. So
17 also what's in the report, first part of that trend
18 analysis, is we looked at that. So we looked at
19 observer effects, survey timing effects and all those
20 different things. We didn't see that there's really
21 any bias on those trend estimates from those factors.

22
23 MR. ANDREW: You know, I deal with
24 fisheries and also deal with mammals and whatnot and a
25 lot of those are conducted through aerial surveys of
26 moose habitat and whatnot and salmon. It's not the
27 best way to quantify salmon on the spawning grounds.
28 So the confidence levels in the aerial surveys for
29 salmon are just way way out there compared to the weirs
30 that they're able to count salmon.

31
32 In quantifying the moose population,
33 they just do it in various plots and develop areas that
34 they will survey and then there are other known areas
35 that have moose and they put in a sightability
36 correction factor to compensate for or to account for
37 those areas that were not surveyed and areas that
38 normally have moose but they didn't see any for
39 whatever reason. They didn't have snow or whatnot.

40
41 Is there utilization of cameras or
42 anything like that with the survey?

43
44 MR. DOOLEY: Currently, besides the
45 fall photographic age ratio survey, my understanding is
46 photographs are not used for those counts. I don't
47 know if they have been experimentally or not. But I
48 know the technology we have it, but they have not
49 currently been used for that use.

50

1 MR. ANDREW: It just seemed to me that
2 would greater increase the accuracy of the count,
3 especially with a whole bunch of geese in an area and
4 the white heads of the Emperors being there. That's
5 what I hear from the Kodiak representative is that's
6 how you can tell there are Emperors out there.

7
8 CHAIRMAN PROBASCO: Tim, I would add to
9 what Josh said. Under Eric's program, Julian Fischer
10 is in charge of the aviation program and we are in the
11 process of upgrading our aircraft substantially, which
12 will include additional camera ports, but at this point
13 in time it's not our main methodology.

14
15 MS. HOSETH: Thank you, Mr. Chairman.
16 I guess I just want to get this. It's a lot of
17 information. I just want to make sure that we have it
18 right. So is your population objective then your true
19 population or not?

20
21 MR. DOOLEY: No. The population
22 objectives in the management plan are based on the
23 indexes of those particular surveys. So the management
24 plan objective, for example, was 80,000 for the spring
25 aerial survey, that is what has been used. That's for
26 the index count.

27
28 MS. HOSETH: Okay. It would be
29 interesting to see if you guys -- I mean so you're 60
30 percent sure there are 120,000 to 160,000 birds. Is
31 there a way that you could do that same analysis and
32 give us a report for the past 30 years of what your
33 percentage is of what you think the true population has
34 been all these years?

35
36 MR. DOOLEY: Again, the idea if there
37 was a threshold established for a true population size,
38 you would be expanding from that index up to the true
39 population size. So your threshold wouldn't be 80,000,
40 it would be whatever that expansion is up to the true
41 population size, but the two are the same. If the
42 index reaches that index threshold, that would be the
43 same as the expanded population count reaching this
44 expanded threshold. So the use of a threshold on an
45 index is the same as expanding out, trying to use a
46 threshold on a population size.

47
48 MS. HOSETH: You lost me on part of
49 those populations, explaining it. I know it's really
50 hard to absorb. I didn't see that slide before of what

1 the estimated true population size is for the 120-
2 160,000. I was just asking is there a way that you
3 could give us that data over the past 30 years of what
4 you have with all of your indexes compiled for an
5 estimated true population?
6

7 MR. DOOLEY: We could do a similar
8 expansion what's done in the analyses how we get the
9 current population size for those analyses we use with
10 the three-year average like the breeding population
11 estimate and then expand it by that non-breeding
12 portion. So those would give a time series of total
13 population expanded estimates.
14

15 CHAIRMAN PROBASCO: Done?
16

17 MS. HOSETH: Done.
18

19 CHAIRMAN PROBASCO: Others. Jack,
20 please.
21

22 MR. FAGERSTROM: Have you noticed any
23 change in the timing or abundance of your birds when
24 you're doing your surveys? Since everything seems to
25 be getting warmer and the Brant are overwintering more,
26 do you think the Emperor Geese may shift a little bit
27 as far as where they gather now?
28

29 MR. DOOLEY: We look at distributional
30 changes or potential changes within the survey areas
31 that we have surveyed and we didn't see any strong
32 indication of a distributional change within the areas
33 that we survey. In regards to the survey timing, we
34 looked at that as well and didn't see any indication
35 that it would have biased our trend estimates. Like we
36 didn't go out real early in the 1980s and do all our
37 counts, then we went out real late, like here recently.
38

39
40 There is indication that some of the
41 biology of Emperor Geese is shifting with the changing
42 climate. So on our summer nest plot survey we do
43 document the date of nest initiation, so when they
44 start nesting on the breeding grounds, and that has
45 gotten earlier over the last 30 years at a rate of --
46 it's, on average, about 10 days. Don't quote me on
47 that, I guess, but it has gotten earlier over the last
48 30 years.
49

50 CHAIRMAN PROBASCO: I think, Jack, your

1 question is a fair one and Josh answered it correctly.
2 Managers are always cautious of using an index because
3 there can be shifts in location or the index area or
4 index systems may change. Josh has been monitoring
5 that in his report. To me, listening to Gayla's
6 questions and listening to Josh's report, looking at
7 the trend of population growth is a very key factor
8 with these Emperors.

9
10 Josh went through a couple different
11 analyses which will confirm that we're dealing with a
12 population that does not grow as fast as other
13 populations of geese that we're accustomed to. So to
14 me, as a management biologist, that's a key factor that
15 tells me that when I see a growth rate that low or that
16 much slower than others, dictates a much slower harvest
17 rate.

18
19 Now the true population size, which
20 Gayla has been asking, we know it's larger than the
21 index, but what the exact number is we don't know, but
22 we know that the harvest rate, because of the growth
23 rate, should be lower than what we do with other
24 species.

25
26 Other questions. Go ahead, John.

27
28 MR. REFT: Yeah, John Reft. In my
29 personal observations over the years, it seems to me
30 the birds move according to the high winds and the
31 freezing weather. That's when the bays freeze and you
32 get those high northwesterlies like you get down in
33 Alitak, Moser, Geese Islands. When the bays freeze
34 over, then you get high winds and the ice breaks up and
35 washes on the shoreline where they feed and stuff.

36
37 It seems to me that's when they move.
38 They migrate to a place where they can get food, which
39 would normally or automatically be a warmer section of
40 the island, like Kodiak. Kodiak is a lot warmer than
41 the mainland in the wintertime. It's a lot warmer than
42 down in Alitak, Moser, those places. I've seen a lot
43 of Emperors down there, like I said several times, in
44 the winter. But when we have ice and cold weather,
45 that seems to be the influx of a larger population of
46 Emperors out in our Womens, Middle, Kalsin Bay areas.

47
48 It has to do a lot with weather and
49 their feeding grounds where they can get food. To me,
50 they're just like bullies. When they come in in a big

1 bunch and take over an area or a bay, it pushes the
2 rest of the smaller ducks out because they don't mix
3 with the bullies. A lot of it to me, Mr. Chair, has got
4 to do with the weather. I do not know any idea how
5 many come off the mainland over to Kodiak in the winter
6 to get refuge from the wind and cold and ice and stuff
7 here, but I know they do migrate according to the
8 weather.

9

10 CHAIRMAN PROBASCO: Thank you, John.
11 Others.

12

13 (No comments)

14

15 CHAIRMAN PROBASCO: Thank you, Josh.
16 Appreciate the report.

17

18 MR. DOOLEY: Thank you very much.

19

20 CHAIRMAN PROBASCO: Could we get the
21 projector so Bruce and I can see. Our next agenda item
22 is tabled proposals which were referred to our various
23 committees. Patty did brief statements on some of
24 those. So, Patty, on the fall/winter subsistence
25 harvest season where are we at with that one?

26

27 MS. SCHWALENBERG: All the proposals
28 listed there have been referred to the committees that
29 have been assigned to work on those. The fall/winter
30 committee has not met due to the fact that other issues
31 have been more pressing. So, as I stated earlier this
32 morning, we're going to convene that committee and
33 start looking at those proposals. And then the Emperor
34 Goose one was reported this morning.

35

36 Thank you.

37

38 CHAIRMAN PROBASCO: Thank you. Any
39 questions on those two? I think they're pretty
40 straightforward on how we're going to proceed. By next
41 spring we'll anticipate work on both those items and
42 possible action. Definitely number two, Emperor Goose.

43

44 So based on the earlier agenda change,
45 it's at this time that we'll go to our Council reports.
46 This is an opportunity for each of you representing
47 your respective councils to report items from your
48 meetings, concerns, recommendations, et cetera.

49

50 Who would like to go first.

1 Taqulik, thank you.

2

3 MS. HEPA: Thank you, Mr. Chair. I
4 will try to be straight to my points. So this spring
5 migratory bird hunting was very successful as well as
6 in the summer. Observations from hunters that geese
7 continue to be very abundant. Notable in the last 10
8 or so years there seems to be more observations of more
9 Snow Geese on the North Slope, across the North Slope.

10

11 We did have our regional management
12 body meeting a week and a half ago or so in Wainwright,
13 Alaska. I want to thank Eric Taylor and Michael
14 Pederson for the reports that they provided to that
15 community and our hunters. Eric and Michael both did
16 an excellent job of providing up-to-date information
17 related to the AMBCC and some of the birds of the North
18 Slope.

19

20 In regards to birds arriving earlier,
21 again springtime came fast, so snow melt was early. We
22 usually head out to our geese hunting camps. At the
23 end of the first week of May when we went out there,
24 there was already pretty big sizes of flocks of at
25 least the Greater White-fronted Geese. Usually when we
26 get to our geese camps we have time to set up our
27 dugouts and our camps. When we were there the birds had
28 already arrived, so we did notice that.

29

30 The other thing too was that our
31 department has been doing research on a number of
32 different geese and waterfowl on the North Slope. This
33 particular year -- and we have been doing this goose
34 molting study for over 20 years and this year was
35 really different because we were receiving phone calls
36 from hunters that we were interrupting with their
37 subsistence fishing and caribou hunting activities. In
38 all the 20 years we never had one complaint. I think
39 it just goes to show that there are more geese now, so
40 we have more areas to cover.

41

42 Not just that, but the people that were
43 on the ground doing the fieldwork, Dr. Brian Person, at
44 least with the Snow Goose colony, that things were
45 about a week and a half earlier than normal. So the
46 geese were already ready to fly when they were going to
47 go to band the geese. So things are happening sooner.

48

49 At least one hunter told me it's not
50 just the geese that they're seeing more of, they're

1 also seeing a lot more numbers of migratory ducks. So
2 things are looking good on the North Slope and I'm
3 happy to report that.

4
5 CHAIRMAN PROBASCO: Thanks, Taqulik.
6 Questions.

7
8 (No comments)

9
10 CHAIRMAN PROBASCO: Tim, why don't we
11 just go down the line.

12
13 MR. ANDREW: Thank you, Mr. Chair. As
14 I have indicated, we have not had our regional
15 management body meeting either for the spring or the
16 fall. We've been busy with a whole bunch of other
17 things and Myron's schedule and my schedule and the
18 schedule at the Waterfowl Conservation Committee.

19
20 The spring hunting season was
21 incredibly challenging for the hunters in our area
22 primarily because we had an anomalous warm winter, very
23 early breakup, no snow. So primary modes of
24 transportation to accommodate the spring hunt it was
25 totally unusual. People were walking, people were
26 utilizing four-wheelers, they weren't out there by
27 snowmachine and being able to reach those prime hunting
28 areas. So I suspect due to the limitations on
29 transportation that the hunting activity was greatly
30 reduced.

31
32 We received reports from one of the
33 villages with open water in front of the community and
34 there was a bird out there that was in the water
35 continuously for the entire winter starting in
36 February. The water remained open. They tried looking
37 with binoculars. They identified it as either a loon
38 or a murre, but I suspect that it might have been a
39 murre that was there. This is on the Yukon River about
40 180 miles from the coast.

41
42 We've heard reports from people in the
43 villages spotting swans flying in extremely early, like
44 in March or late February. So, you know, a whole bunch
45 of odd things going on with the birds. They're just
46 coming in at odd times because of the global warming or
47 the climate change situation that we're facing.

48
49 As Dan had indicated earlier, Myron
50 continues to work with the Emperor Geese situation,

1 some of the political issues surrounding it. I'm not
2 going to say it at the moment. And also working with
3 our flyway counterparts dealing with the Cackling
4 Canada Goose increase issues and plans to be
5 continuously involved.

6
7 That's about it for our report. Thank
8 you, Mr. Chair.

9
10 CHAIRMAN PROBASCO: Thank you, Tim.
11 Questions.

12
13 (No comments)

14
15 CHAIRMAN PROBASCO: Tim, didn't the
16 Kuskokwim break up twice last winter?

17
18 MR. ANDREW: Yes, it did. We had a
19 warming situation in December I believe it was where
20 the upper part of the Kuskokwim River broke and the ice
21 flow came down and jammed up the Little Kalskag and
22 then refroze and then went again in late April, early
23 May. It's just totally unusual.

24
25 CHAIRMAN PROBASCO: Yeah, I just asked
26 that question to emphasize it was a weird
27 winter/spring. Joeneal.

28
29 MR. HICKS: Thank you, Mr. Chair. We
30 held our meeting in early August. There was no action
31 items. It was pretty much an open discussion type
32 meeting. We talked about issues that is before the
33 AMBCC, such as the wanton waste and such as the
34 handicraft proposal. Pretty much, like I said, open
35 discussion just to get feedback from the group.

36
37 Geoff and Patty was at the meeting. I
38 thank them for attending and they gave pretty much an
39 overview of what we are up against and what we are
40 facing and our successes and stuff like that. The
41 meeting turned out quite well.

42
43 One of the basic topics of discussion
44 was on boundaries. I see that is an agenda item on
45 here, so I'll just kind of like not talk about it at
46 this particular point. Just for those who are here,
47 just briefly, there is an issue in the Upper Copper
48 River area that has to do with who is eligible to
49 harvest migratory birds. That particular issue I
50 believe would have to be done in a proposal to make it

1 more restrictive. Currently right now eligible
2 residents are considered eligible if they have a post
3 office box in that particular village and that was not
4 my understanding of it in the first place. We'll talk
5 more about that later.

6
7 Our migratory bird culture camp was a
8 success again this year, although I did not attend. I
9 helped prepare it, but I did not attend it. It was
10 held at Mile 23 on the Nabesna Road. There was 56
11 youth and elders in attendance at various times anyway,
12 in and out. We did not get a moose, but there is one
13 issue of concern and that's what Taqulik and Tim have
14 referred to and that is climate change if you want to
15 call it that.

16
17 There's two streams in the Upper Copper
18 River area called Tanada Creek and Fish Creek. These
19 two creeks are at the headwater of the Copper River and
20 that's where the last place salmon go to spawn. I've
21 observed visually along with the Park Service who has a
22 weir on Tanada Creek and that -- for instance, Tanada
23 Creek is just completely dry. Again, that's where the
24 salmon go to spawn. So over a four-year cycle, when
25 four years come up from now, you won't see any salmon
26 in there. That's the same thing at Fish Creek. I mean
27 the water is just like about three inches deep and the
28 salmon go up there and they can't even get in there. I
29 just want to point that out because that is a big
30 factor especially in that particular area. The lakes,
31 ponds are drying up.

32
33 I would have to say that the hunting
34 season for migratory birds was fair to good. That
35 concludes my report.

36
37 CHAIRMAN PROBASCO: Thank you, Joeneal.
38 Questions.

39
40 (No comments)

41
42 CHAIRMAN PROBASCO: We'll get into the
43 discussion of boundaries when we get to that proposal
44 discussion. John, for Kodiak.

45
46 MR. REFT: Basically my statement would
47 be on the wanton waste like I mentioned yesterday. The
48 reports are that the Coast Guard are going out and
49 hunting ducks during the regular hunting season, not
50 the spring but the regular hunting season, bringing the

1 ducks back, throwing them into the dumpster or feeding
2 them to the dogs.

3

4 As you know, that's not right. That's
5 wanton waste. I'd rather have them contacted and say
6 if that's what they do when they go duck hunting, then
7 get it together into a drop-off place and deliver it to
8 the tribe where it could be utilized by the elders.
9 They're the ones -- the Native elders are the ones that
10 need these ducks, you know. If they're wasting them,
11 then they're just hurting everybody and the food that
12 they're used to is not there. It's hard enough.

13

14 We discussed the proposal earlier of
15 what's happening on the spring hunt, the 500. I guess
16 that will come later. It's basically no pressure from
17 the Filipino population like anticipated or the Coast
18 Guard until now when I heard of wanton waste.

19

20 Thank you.

21

22 CHAIRMAN PROBASCO: Thank you, John.
23 Gayla, please.

24

25 MS. HOSETH: Thank you, Mr. Chair. We
26 had our Yaquillrit Kelutisti or YKC we call it back at
27 home or Keeper of the Birds Regional Council last week
28 and we flew everybody in. We had a quorum. We had a
29 good representation from people around the region.
30 BBNA was having their full board meeting during that
31 time, so members from outlying villages were able to
32 come in and provide public testimony and give feedback.

33

34 The overall reports from our council is
35 we had a great hunting season this spring. There is an
36 abundance of birds. We didn't have any snow. We
37 didn't have snow pretty much all winter, just like a
38 lot of the other regions also reported, so our council
39 members were stating that the birds weren't going to
40 their traditional places because everything was wide
41 open, so the birds were just all over on the tundra.

42

43 The elders from the Togiak subregion
44 were stating that the elders told them that when there
45 is no snow, the birds go farther inland. They like to
46 take shortcuts just like we do and when there is snow,
47 they follow along the coastline up to the Y-K Delta
48 Region. Then the birds are only in our area, the geese
49 are in our area for about one to two weeks for our
50 season of what we have in our region.

1 One of the main topics that we had, of
2 course, was the agenda item for the Emperor Goose
3 harvest and we were to pick which option we wanted to
4 do for our area, so we spent a long time talking about
5 what we would want to have done in our area. I told
6 them the things we face and what we do here. We were
7 happy to be able to -- the option that we chose is we
8 really want to show that we can manage these resources
9 ourselves and we were going to do that at the village
10 level. We were wanting to have that opportunity to do
11 that and we were ready to do that and maybe we'll be
12 given the opportunity once we revise that Goose
13 Management Plan.

14
15 We had a past Council member from the
16 AMBCC come and provide public testimony, which was
17 Frank Woods. All of you know him quite well. I was
18 glad that he came in and provided public testimony
19 because that's always lacking in all of our Council
20 meetings is public participation. I'm really glad to
21 see that we do have public here at this meeting because
22 usually at this meetings it's the Council and Agency
23 Staff. So I'm really glad to see that there's public
24 here.

25
26 One the things that -- the issue that
27 he brought up was the State Duck Stamp issue. So
28 that's still an issue in our area that we are required
29 to have a State Duck Stamp to participate in the spring
30 hunting season. We would like to figure out what we
31 can do here at the AMBCC level if we do a proposal for
32 that or if we just do a proposal or something to do
33 with our -- gather the Native Caucus and we come up
34 with something if we can't do it at the AMBCC level.
35 So that's something that our council would like to have
36 done is to still push that issue of us not being
37 required to have a State Duck Stamp.

38
39 One of the examples that was brought
40 out is they were out hunting on August 31st and they
41 didn't have their Duck Stamp on them. Therefore, they
42 seen a bunch of birds and they couldn't legally hunt
43 the birds. So for us to be required to have things on
44 our person and to do things is really putting a
45 hindrance on the subsistence users to gather food for
46 their freezers and for their families.

47
48 We are also noticing -- I kind of
49 highlighted we are noticing climate change. The
50 interesting thing is, you know, when we have these

1 meetings we don't only talk about migratory birds, we
2 talk about moose and caribou and everything that is
3 around us. A lot of different subregions we're
4 noticing a reduction in ground squirrels and they
5 couldn't understand why they're hardly seeing any
6 ground squirrels in our area. They're wondering where
7 are they going, why aren't we seeing them anymore.
8 They're called parka squirrels in some areas because
9 that's what they make the parkas out of.

10

11 This is the first year that we've seen
12 an abundance of berries. We had a couple years where
13 we didn't have any berries and salmonberries in
14 particular. So this year we had some salmonberries and
15 there was a few blackberries, a lot of cranberries.
16 Huckleberries are back again this year. All of it kind
17 of ties in together.

18

19 Let's see, what else do I have to talk
20 about. The proposal. You know, I just want to bring to
21 the table here just to remind everybody that the Native
22 Caucus sits here. We're the ones that are out there,
23 you know, living and breathing by these regulations and
24 our people are having to comply. We're the ones that
25 are providing food on our tables. This is our food
26 that we're talking about with the birds that we hunt in
27 our regions.

28

29 When we have regulations and
30 requirements put upon us, it's a lot. Even to go
31 hunting just in general, if you have a skiff, your
32 skiff has to be registered. You have to have your
33 licence, your king stamp for king salmon, your Duck
34 Stamp for the State, registration for moose and
35 caribou, your swan permits. You pretty much have to
36 have a binder or a booklet to go hunting these days.
37 Then how do we get that information to people living in
38 a dual management. State requirements, State
39 regulations, Federal regulations. How do we get this
40 information to the people. It's really hard to try to
41 get people educated as to all of these regulations that
42 we have to follow.

43

44 I would like to thank Randy for always
45 offering for us to come to Fairbanks for the meeting.
46 I think that having the meeting up here was really
47 great. So thank you for inviting us and I'm really
48 happy that we were able to have our meeting here. It's
49 been great. It's been a great stay coming to your
50 community. It's actually rewarding and the people get

1 to work closely together.

2

3 When we go to Anchorage, everybody is
4 like shopping and we're running around, we have all of
5 this stuff that we need to do coming in from the
6 villages and stuff. So it kind of bonds everybody
7 closer together when we have the meetings outside of
8 Anchorage. So I would like for us to do this at least
9 every other year or fall or spring or something even if
10 we come up to Fairbanks. It wasn't that much of an
11 expense for us to travel from Anchorage to Fairbanks.
12 It was just maybe, I think, \$200 more for airfare.

13

14 That's pretty much my report. I just
15 wanted to emphasize we had a lot of discussion
16 regarding the Emperor Geese during our meeting. I just
17 wanted to highlight on that again. Ralph Anderson also
18 came to our meeting and provided testimony and reminded
19 us that these are our birds. These are Alaska birds
20 and for us not to be able to harvest them -- we had the
21 harvest opportunity, but not with co-management.

22

23 So thank you for this time and that's
24 our report from Bristol Bay.

25

26 CHAIRMAN PROBASCO: Thank you, Gayla.
27 Please give our best to Frank. I haven't seen him in a
28 while.

29

30 MS. HOSETH: Will do.

31

32 CHAIRMAN PROBASCO: Okay. Thank you.
33 Tim.

34

35 MR. ANDREW: Thank you, Mr. Chair.
36 Thank you, Gayla, for your report. Any of your members
37 ever see any wild exotic birds come into the region?
38 One year coming into our region we had a Great Blue
39 Heron because of the changes that are occurring out
40 there.

41

42 MS. HOSETH: The only reports that we
43 had was from our Chignik representative and he said
44 that he was seeing some kind of blue birds in the
45 Chignik area. I don't know what kind of bird he was
46 seeing.

47

48 CHAIRMAN PROBASCO: Others.

49

50 (No comments)

1 CHAIRMAN PROBASCO: Thanks again,
2 Gayla. Cyrus, your turn.

3
4 MR. HARRIS: Thank you, Mr. Chairman.
5 We didn't have a fall meeting this fall. It's been a
6 pretty busy year. I did make an effort to work with
7 our village representatives over the phone and through
8 email to respond to this email that I received as far
9 as a harvest allocation and monitoring options, so we
10 did come up with something, but unfortunately it got
11 changed here, but for the better.

12
13 Just like the other regions we are
14 experiencing climate change. We had reports from
15 Noatak that they did spot a couple of ducks on the
16 Noatak Flats and that was the early part of April with
17 not a drop of water anywhere except for little open
18 spots on the river that's naturally open. For the
19 first part of April we're still out there
20 snowmachining, hunting caribou, fishing for trout and
21 so forth. But a couple of ducks first of April, that
22 was an unusual sighting.

23
24 There was a lot of sightings of a lot
25 of waterfowl, a lot of ducks, a lot of geese, coming in
26 a little bit sooner than before and also going up
27 later. Our fall time was also extended. It usually
28 starts freezing at about normal time, but a week later
29 we get the southeast winds and takes the ice back away,
30 so our fall freeze-up extends for at least another two
31 to three weeks. As of last fall we were not even able
32 to cross the bay until the middle part of November. We
33 should have been crossing it end of October.

34
35 CHAIRMAN PROBASCO: That's when it
36 freezes?

37
38 MR. HARRIS: Yeah. Well, who knows.
39 We were able to cross the bay end of October. Today
40 we'd be lucky to make it to camp by Thanksgiving. But,
41 yeah, we are experiencing the climate change back home.
42 A lot of sightings, a lot of ducks. Actually I just
43 left all the ducks back home for this meeting here. So
44 I'm sure they're going to be still there when I get
45 back home. Although it's starting to freeze, it's
46 going to warm up again.

47
48 After working with our village
49 representatives, during the last meeting from our first
50 meeting that we did last winter, they were interested

1 in putting new proposals in, so I emailed Patty three
2 new proposals that's going to be submitted from our
3 area. They're simple date changes on regulations as
4 far as egg gathering and spring bird hunting. So they
5 should be in your binder somewhere.

6
7 That's pretty much what I've got to
8 report on here.

9
10 CHAIRMAN PROBASCO: Thanks, Cyrus.
11 Questions. You said it's going to warm up.

12
13 MR. HARRIS: Yeah. It's starting. It
14 froze last night, it's water today.

15
16 CHAIRMAN PROBASCO: Okay. Thank you.
17 Jack, your turn.

18
19 MR. FAGERSTROM: I'm Jack Fagerstrom,
20 Kawerak. I live in Golovin, representing people from
21 Stebbins to Shishmaref and Wales. Mosquitos and every
22 one of them communities came up way earlier.
23 Everything is warmer, freezing up later. Personally, I
24 can remember going trout fishing through the ice on
25 October 15th with a snowmachine. You can't do that no
26 more. White Mountain, which is 18 miles away from our
27 bay, they're on the river, they used to go out trout
28 fishing in October and now it's not uncommon to have a
29 running river in January.

30
31 At our spring meeting, a few common
32 observances were less terns. Everything coming in
33 earlier and leaving later. We got a few storm surges
34 over the last few falls. There's a lot of concern in
35 particular from Savoonga and Gambell and Wales and
36 Shishmaref about increased traffic in the Bering
37 Straits. We wonder what kind of safeguards we're going
38 to have if we have an oil spill and that effects Eider
39 Ducks and Emperor Geese.

40
41 This year cranes took off. They had
42 very favorable tail winds, so they didn't stick around
43 very long. There were a lot of swans. I think they
44 were growing at a much higher rate than Eric seems to
45 think, but that's just a personal opinion. They are
46 bully geese much like Emperor Geese. The bay hosts a
47 good number of Brant during the spring and we seen
48 increased numbers of swans affect the feeding habits of
49 Brant. They're bullies.

50

1 Tim brought up an interesting fact
2 about Brant being hunted in Mexico commercially. The
3 less said about that the better, I guess. Another
4 observation that came out of Savoonga and Gambell and
5 to an extent Shishmaref is Emperor Geese nesting out
6 there again. I figured I'd best pass that on.

7
8 That's from the village point of
9 things. If Brandon has anything he'd like to add. Oh,
10 sorry. March 24th, 2014 we had a spring meeting and a
11 Savoonga rep stated in our minutes and we've got them
12 somewhere Fish and Wildlife Service -- well, to him,
13 they were Federal marshals, went to Savoonga and
14 purchased over 300 boxes of .22 shells and assorted
15 ammunition. They went into the store and bought
16 everything out and took off. Kind of hard to go
17 hunting when you've got no shells. They wondered why
18 that was. I imagine when we go to our meeting they'll
19 probably answer that. By the way, you're still invited
20 to our next meeting.

21
22 That concludes my report unless Brandon
23 has anything to add.

24
25 CHAIRMAN PROBASCO: Brandon, please.

26
27 MR. AHMASUK: Brandon Ahmasuk,
28 subsistence director for Kawerak. We did have another
29 unusual bird sighting this last summer in Wales. They
30 reported a turkey vulture. If you remember, I remember
31 it at our last spring meeting and a couple individuals
32 laughed at me. You know, hurt my feelings a little
33 bit, but I'm okay.

34
35 (Laughter)

36
37 MR. AHMASUK: But I contacted our local
38 Fish and Game and actually this isn't the first time.
39 We had a confirmed turkey vulture in the Nome area back
40 in '97. They sent it off, confirmed it, yes, it is a
41 turkey vulture. That was right in Nome. This last
42 report was in Wales.

43
44 CHAIRMAN PROBASCO: Taqulik.

45
46 MS. HEPA: Yeah, can I ask, because I
47 just came back from Anaktuvuk Pass and they had
48 reported a sighting of a vulture. Is that similar or
49 is that something different? I was going to ask if
50 maybe they looked at -- because that's the way they

1 described this bird in the Brooks Range, but they
2 didn't know the right name for the bird.

3

4 MR. AHMASUK: As far as vultures go,
5 I'm not an expert in vultures, but this one has a red
6 head, a very pronounced nasal hole that goes through
7 the top of the beak. It's very pronounced. You can
8 see all the way through it. At first they thought they
9 were looking at a crazy raven that had its head
10 feathers blown off and it was bleeding.

11

12 (Laughter)

13

14 MR. AHMASUK: But the reports have come
15 -- let's see, the two reports were in October and then
16 the one was the middle of summer.

17

18 CHAIRMAN PROBASCO: Taqulik, any follow
19 up. Very interesting. Brandon, the one in 1990-
20 something they actually sent the bird in to get
21 verification?

22

23 MR. AHMASUK: Yes. It was sent here to
24 Fairbanks actually and they confirmed it was indeed a
25 turkey vulture.

26

27 MS. HEPA: Was that in the '80s?

28

29 MR. AHMASUK: '97, I believe. Again,
30 like I said, when I reported it this last spring I got
31 laughed at. Hurt my feelings a little bit, but okay.

32

33 MS. HEPA: The reason I say that is
34 because we did a raffle a long time ago with other kids
35 in Alaska that got live turkeys from I think the Valley
36 and we raffled them off for Thanksgiving and some
37 people didn't want to kill the turkeys, so they just
38 let them go. That was years ago.

39

40 CHAIRMAN PROBASCO: Wild turkeys in
41 Barrow?

42

43 MS. HEPA: Because they were alive and
44 they didn't know what to do with them.

45

46 CHAIRMAN PROBASCO: Interesting,
47 Brandon. Eric, did you have something to say?

48

49 DR. TAYLOR: Yeah.

50

1 CHAIRMAN PROBASCO: He's our turkey
2 expert.

3
4 (Laughter)

5
6 MS. HEPA: Just regarding that too,
7 Todd just mentioned that there was a reported turkey
8 vulture in Barrow in 2005.

9
10 DR. TAYLOR: Todd was faster at the
11 internet than I was. Eric Taylor with Fish and
12 Wildlife Service. So, Brandon, no one should have
13 laughed at you. The first turkey vulture in Alaska was
14 actually observed in Delta Junction in 1979. Sure
15 enough, you're exactly right, on October 24th, 1996 a
16 turkey vulture found in Nome near the Nome River mouth
17 was verified by University of Alaska Fairbanks, right
18 here, by Brina Kessel. And Taqulik you got them there
19 too. One was seen in mid-June in 2004 at Barrow.
20 Anyway, they do occur here. Pretty interesting.
21 Coming from Missouri, they're an old bird friend of
22 mine.

23
24 CHAIRMAN PROBASCO: You're saying you
25 brought them up?

26
27 (Laughter)

28
29 CHAIRMAN PROBASCO: Brandon, that's it?

30
31
32 MR. AHMASUK: Yeah.

33
34 CHAIRMAN PROBASCO: Jack, on the
35 Emperor Geese nesting sightings that have increased,
36 give me an idea or a feel. Is it a large number of
37 birds or what do you think it is?

38
39 MR. FAGERSTROM: These are mostly
40 observations from people who are kind of quiet,
41 reserved. It wouldn't be the kind of people who would
42 go out and say there's a lot because they want them to
43 increase. I would say, yes, there's good numbers.

44
45 CHAIRMAN PROBASCO: Thank you. Other
46 questions. Gayla.

47
48 MS. HOSETH: Thank you, Mr. Chairman.
49 I just, you know, with the point that Jack brought up
50 about all the ammo being bought out. Was it in

1 Savoonga?

2

3 MR. FAGERSTROM: Savoonga.

4

5 MS. HOSETH: In Savoonga in March right
6 before a spring harvest, that just blows my mind away
7 that all of their ammunition would be bought out in the
8 village. That's not acceptable. You know, follow up
9 needs to happen on that as to why. For us being out in
10 the villages, especially the village of Savoonga, I
11 mean getting food, gas, ammo is really, really hard and
12 people can't just go to the store and buy it. That was
13 their store where that ammunition was. So I would like
14 to see follow up maybe on that, about as to why, maybe
15 who was it, why was that done and a report given back
16 to us about that, please.

17

18 CHAIRMAN PROBASCO: Thank you, Gayla.
19 I don't have any info, but we'll get more from Jack.
20 We probably all can speculate. If you look throughout
21 areas that some ammo is a premium, particularly .22
22 shells, it's hard to get. You said somebody outside of
23 the community purchased them. That would be my guess
24 why, but that's just a guess. Jack, why don't you work
25 with Patty, provide that info and we'll go from there.

26

27 MR. FAGERSTROM: Okay. Thanks.

28

29 CHAIRMAN PROBASCO: Anything else for
30 Jack. Tim.

31

32 MR. ANDREW: Not related to Jack, but
33 related to birds showing up in our region. I was
34 trying to put it on the internet, but I'm pretty slow.
35 Maybe somebody is faster than I am. We had a dove of
36 some sort show up in two locations. I think one was
37 down around Togiak or somewhere around there, Platinum,
38 and then we had another one show up in one of our
39 villages. Well, it's a dove that's pretty common in
40 the Asian countries and some way or another, it may
41 have blew in through a storm or something, it ended up
42 in the area.

43

44 CHAIRMAN PROBASCO: Thanks, Tim. I
45 know last winter for quite a while from Bethel the
46 robin sightings continued. Okay. With that, Randy,
47 your turn.

48

49 MR. MAYO: Thank you, Mr. Chair. We
50 just conducted our regional management body here this

1 past Monday. We had half of our subregions
2 represented. I think outside of AVCP this is a pretty
3 big region here. TCC region itself and you know we're
4 spread out from the Canadian border almost to the
5 Bering Sea, 43 tribes within our region alone. In my
6 subregion, there's 12, 13 tribes in my subregion alone.

7
8 At our meeting, you know, I gave the
9 updates on some of the statewide issues of most
10 interest to us in this region. The invitation and the
11 transport -- development of the transport language were
12 some of the things we discussed. Mainly talked about
13 trying to do a whole lot on a small budget and bringing
14 our people up to speed since it's a big region, kind of
15 like what Gayla mentioned. Especially our people out
16 in the field hunting.

17
18 It's one thing to have these meetings
19 here. You know, like even right here in Fairbanks, you
20 know, a lot of tribes, but even though this is supposed
21 to be local they're still out there far away and can't
22 get here. So, you know, some of those efforts
23 regionally we're going to work on to try to spread the
24 word out there, you know, tighten our communications up
25 and get a little more proactive locally here.

26
27 Outside of my own immediate region I
28 can't really say, you know, how the harvest was and
29 different particular reasons or people were observing
30 different things due to weather change or not. Where
31 I'm from, you know, we had a pretty successful harvest.
32 Some people were observing a few different things
33 probably due to the weather and whatnot, you know.

34
35 Those are some of the things we're
36 going to work on. It is a problem since we're, like I
37 said, so spread out. I get a few phone calls and
38 emails from some of the tribal members in the region
39 wanting clarification on some of the regulations and
40 rules and also get emails just from the general public
41 wanting to know things, you know, if the spring hunt
42 was a general hunt for everybody.

43
44 So I think across the board, as the
45 state is going to start growing and growing -- you
46 know, quite a few people are finding out about the
47 spring hunt and they're wanting to know, well, you
48 know, I'm a resident now, I've been here six months,
49 almost a year, and I want to go out there and hunt too.
50 Some of these areas where they're asking about hunting

1 is on Native land.

2

3 I think that's going to become more of
4 an issue here where it's heavily impacted like some of
5 the other places like Joeneal's area, but it's changing
6 pretty quick here in this region. A lot more
7 competition, more people out there competing in our
8 areas for the same resources.

9

10 I don't know if Don or Alfred might
11 want to report on their area on any observances out of
12 the normal. I'd like to recognize Alfred Demientieff
13 of Lower Yukon.

14

15 CHAIRMAN PROBASCO: Please, Alfred.

16

17 MR. DEMIENTIEFF: Thank you, Mr. Chair,
18 Randy. My name is Alfred Demientieff. I'm from Holy
19 Cross. I represent the Lower Yukon subregion. It's
20 four villages; Grayling, Ambler, Shageluk and Holy
21 Cross. The last few years we've been having no snow
22 and it's been pretty tough getting around. There's
23 more birds when those come in and a few people that
24 have to get them, but it's hard to get around. There's
25 no snow at all. The winter is all glare ice, not like
26 how it used to.

27

28 We're seeing a lot of changes.
29 Recently muskox came to our village and that's a
30 history. We also saw little blackbirds, magpies.
31 They started coming around too. So there's changes
32 coming around our country.

33

34 Another concern we had, it doesn't
35 pertain to geese, but pertains to our moose population.
36 Just something I'd like to bring up if you don't mind.
37 Recently there was a big concern, but Vince Mathews
38 back here he was going to explain to me later, but they
39 didn't have a moose survey back home and they went
40 ahead and did the moose hunt for Unit 21E. There was
41 more hunters coming in, more than usual, more moose was
42 taken and it was because -- I can't say for all of us
43 if there was enough moose to be getting even though the
44 survey wasn't done, so there was a concern there.

45

46 Overall there's a lot of geese in the
47 country and more birds coming in, but there is no snow
48 and it's harder to move around.

49

50 Thank you.

1 CHAIRMAN PROBASCO: Alfred, at all
2 meetings Vince is fair game, so keep it up.

3
4 MR. DEMIENTIEFF: Thank you.

5
6 CHAIRMAN PROBASCO: Thank you. Any
7 questions for Randy or comments.

8
9 (No comments)

10
11 CHAIRMAN PROBASCO: Thank you, Randy.
12 Patty, as our executive director, you get a lot of
13 correspondence and questions throughout the year. Do
14 you have anything you'd like to bring to our attention
15 or comments?

16
17 MS. SCHWALENBERG: Thank you, Mr.
18 Chairman. I think that everything I have been dealing
19 with has come through the Council members, so we've
20 been pretty much working on the same issues, I think.
21 So, no, I don't have anything to add.

22
23 Thank you.

24
25 CHAIRMAN PROBASCO: Thank you. At this
26 time, before we get into our new business, we'll take a
27 10-minute break. That will give time for Eric to get
28 set up and we'll continue to plot on. Keep in mind we
29 have to be out of here between 4:00 and 4:30. 4:00?
30 Okay. So we're going to have to be out of here by
31 4:00. Donna is persistent. She wants to get all of
32 our pictures at some point in time.

33
34 Thank you.

35
36 (Off record)

37
38 (On record)

39
40 CHAIRMAN PROBASCO: Eric, the floor is
41 yours.

42
43 DR. TAYLOR: Thank you, Mr. Chair.
44 Members of the Council. I appreciate the opportunity to
45 come here this afternoon. This is a similar
46 presentation that I've given in years past. I've tried
47 to update it with some current information that I've
48 talked to various Council members about.

49
50 Two objective for the talk. One is

1 that I'm going to talk about population objective and
2 abundance and trend and also some concerns we have
3 relative to some species. The other objective, and I'm
4 really delighted to hear the questions and the
5 discussions, even some of the confused faces, in terms
6 of other presentations today. I want to encourage
7 folks. There's no such thing as a dumb question.
8 There's a high probability that if you have a question,
9 other people in the audience or sitting around the
10 table have the same question but may not have the
11 gumption to ask, so I do encourage you.

12
13 Furthermore, if you feel like, you
14 know, my response wasn't satisfactory or if it caused
15 even more confusion, which I hope not, please see me at
16 the break or afterwards and we'll discuss it. I think
17 the only way we're going to get at some areas that
18 we're confused about or disagree upon are these
19 discussions and I'm really pleased with what's happened
20 so far.

21
22 The data that I'll present today are
23 not mine. They're a compilation of all that group of
24 people there. I work with a very talented, sweet
25 biologist in the Division of Migratory Bird Management
26 and we have about 30 employees all together, but the
27 people that do the survey work include three pilot
28 biologists, several statisticians, we have a new GIS
29 specialist, the guy in the center smiling with his foot
30 up on the float of the aircraft. It's Michael Swaim,
31 comes from Togiak Refuge out of Dillingham. Michael is
32 a new employee as of this year.

33
34 These folks all have a significant
35 amount of education. Many of them, like Michael, came
36 from rural areas like in Alaska and bring with that
37 that experience. Again, I want to give these
38 individuals credit and I'm just kind of the
39 spokesperson.

40
41 We do our surveys mostly with aircraft
42 and we have three Cessna 206 amphib aircraft. All are
43 amphibious equipped in the sense that we can land on
44 land or water. We do our surveys typically in a
45 straight line or transect method where we move across
46 the habitat or a geographic area in straight lines
47 using GPS and look out both sides of the aircraft.
48 Typically we fly at low altitudes, 100 to 150 feet off
49 the ground at around 110 knots.

50

1 As Josh mentioned, we're very sensitive
2 about using the same pilot or same observer to the
3 capacity we can. Sometimes folks get sick or have
4 children or whatever sorts of things, so we have to
5 substitute somebody, but for the most part we use the
6 same pilot, same observers, start the survey at the
7 same time, keeping track of chronology or phrenology.
8

9 The first species I'll talk about are
10 Cackling Canada Geese. This map is a bit confusing
11 because it shows all of Canada geese for all of North
12 America, but what we're talking about is that circle
13 right there on the Yukon-Kuskokwim Delta. About 95
14 percent
15 of the population of Cackling Canada Geese nest on the
16 coastal fringe of the Yukon-Kuskokwim Delta.
17

18 Yeah, Taqulik.
19

20 MS. HEPA: Did you say that was
21 multiple populations?
22

23 DR. TAYLOR: Yeah. So that map is from
24 birds of North America, so it's basically all the
25 species of Canada geese, but that dot right there is
26 the Yukon-Kuskokwim Delta and about 95 percent Cacklers
27 nest there. They used to migrate down up until the mid
28 1990s to the Central Valley of California, but
29 beginning in the mid 1990s they started migrating back
30 up north and now winter primarily in northwest Oregon
31 and southwest Washington.
32

33 As Dan mentioned, Myron and Tim, as
34 well as Dan, myself, Brian McCaffery from the Yukon
35 Delta are involved in what's called a structured
36 decision-making meeting. In essence, it's a meeting
37 for people with opposing or different viewpoints or
38 perspectives to get a chance to get together and share
39 their values and perspectives and try to come up with
40 some common ground. The first meeting was held in
41 June. The second meeting is going to occur in two
42 weeks.
43

44 You'll see this figure, you've seen it
45 in previous years, it's similar. On the vertical axis
46 is the estimated fall population for Cacklers. The
47 horizontal axis is the date going from 1965 to 2015.
48 Each one of those white vertical bars is a population
49 estimate for Cackling Canada Geese. The black line
50 that is curved and goes low in the 1980s and then

1 starts increasing in the 1990s is the three-year index.
2 So the Pacific Flyway uses what's called a three-year
3 index to manage the population.

4
5 The reason we do so is if you look at
6 any three of those bars three years in a row, you'll
7 see variability and the variability is the result of
8 any survey that one does with wildlife. It varies in
9 terms of weather conditions. It could vary with
10 differences of observers. It could vary if our timing
11 is not exactly right or if, in this case, birds are
12 moving into an area or out of an area. That all
13 differs a little bit each year, so you use a three-year
14 index.

15
16 The yellow line at the top is the
17 population objective. That's the flyway population
18 objective. That was set both by the Yukon-Kuskokwim
19 Goose Management Plan and the Pacific Flyway Management
20 Plan. It's 250,000. You can see the three-year
21 average is 311,900 birds or so. So we are exceeding
22 the population objective at the current time.

23
24 Yeah, Tim.

25
26 MR. ANDREW: I have a question before
27 you move on from this slide. What happened back in
28 1969 and 1974 where you have a dip in those two years?
29

30 DR. TAYLOR: Tim, I can't, you know, in
31 terms of exactly why that population is low in 1969 and
32 in 1974. I'd have to go back to records. If for some
33 reason the year was very odd for example or if we had a
34 different observer or some kind of condition. I'd have
35 to go back to the reports and give you an answer. I'll
36 do that.

37
38 MR. ANDREW: Yeah. In the grand scheme
39 of things, it's not really important. I was just
40 curious.

41
42 DR. TAYLOR: Yeah. Let's see, the
43 purple box indicates the 10-year growth rate, so that's
44 the growth rate from 2005 to 2015 or the trend. It
45 shows about 2.3 percent per year, so a slight increase
46 is the way we describe it.

47
48 Here's an example of Cacklers in
49 Oregon. It gives you an idea if you were a farmer and
50 you own that pasture and you intended to put a herd of

1 Angus out there, you might say, well, there's going to
2 be less grass there a few days after this than there
3 was a few days before. So that's the sort of problem
4 that private landowners in Oregon are trying to
5 address, is why are we responsible for wintering
6 migratory birds that we don't gain any benefit from.

7
8 So, in summary, population objective
9 250,000. We're above population objective at about
10 311,000. Ten-year population growth is stable to
11 increasing. The crop depredation issue remains,
12 however I'm optimistic that meeting in Oregon will be
13 productive and still maintain the population objective
14 that we have.

15
16 As I said, in October 2015, a couple
17 weeks from now, there will be a meeting at Oregon State
18 University to assess the values, concerns and
19 priorities regarding Cackling Canada Geese. So relative
20 to subsistence interest, Myron or Tim or perhaps both
21 will be there, Dan Rosenberg will be there, Todd
22 Sanders will be there and Brian McCaffery from the
23 Yukon-Delta Refuge. All those people are well aware of
24 the importance of Cackling Canada Geese not only to the
25 subsistence hunter but also to the ecology of the Yukon
26 Delta Refuge and I'll bring that up a little bit.

27
28 But things are going very, very good on
29 the Yukon Delta Refuge for many species, including
30 threatened Spectacled Eiders. It's not only Fish and
31 Wildlife Service's perspective, but it's other people's
32 perspective that the abundance of Cackling Canada Geese
33 is due in part to that. They are providing a prey
34 buffer for arctic and red foxes and gulls. Because
35 they're releasing that predation pressure on other
36 species, like Spectacled Eiders, we're seeing
37 significant growth of Spectacled Eiders on the Yukon
38 Delta.

39
40 The next species, Pacific Black Brant.
41 Again, about the majority of the population, about 80
42 percent, nest in Tim's country on the Yukon-Kuskokwim
43 Delta, 20 percent occur elsewhere, including the Seward
44 Peninsula, the Arctic Coastal Plain or the North Slope.
45 Some birds also nest in Russia. There's a separate
46 smaller subspecies, Western High Arctic Brant that nest
47 to the east in the Canadian islands and Canadian arctic
48 coast.

49
50 Both Pacific Brant and Western High

1 Arctic Brant migrate along the coast and stage at
2 Izembek Refuge and Cold Bay area where they fatten up
3 on eel grass and then do a coastal migration down the
4 Pacific Coast and winter primarily in Mexico, both in
5 the western coast of the mainland and also Baja
6 Peninsula, but they also winter up along the Pacific
7 Coast, California, Oregon and Washington.

8
9 The population objective shown there by
10 the, in this case, black dashed line is 162,000. The
11 most recent three-year index is about 158,000, so we're
12 just a little bit below the population objective. The
13 10-year growth rate over the last 10 years for Brant is
14 pretty stable, 0.1 percent per year for a growth rate.

15
16 In terms of summary again, the
17 population objective 162,000. We're just about there at
18 158,000. Relatively stable growth the last 10 years.
19 Here's some concerns. One, we're seeing a decline in
20 the historic colonies on the Yukon and Kuskokwim
21 nesting area. These are colonies that historically
22 have supported most of the Brant and we're seeing a
23 decline in that area. What we're seeing now is a more
24 increased numbers of pairs on the Arctic Coastal Plain,
25 so that's being picked up by our North Slope or Arctic
26 Coastal Plain population.

27
28 The most significant thing that we have
29 seen -- and I think, Tim, you mentioned this relative
30 to an Emperor Goose comment, which I thought was a
31 really good comment. 1986, when I went out -- right
32 after I did my master's degree on Oldsquaws or
33 Long-tailed Ducks I went out to Izembek and there were
34 about 5,000 wintering Brant, so relatively few numbers
35 of birds. Thirty years later 10 times that many. So
36 we have now over 50,000 Brant staying in Alaska
37 compared to migrating down typically to Mexico where
38 they were.

39
40 So Tim's point was how is that
41 increasing population of Brant potentially affecting
42 wintering Emperor Geese that occur in that same area
43 and also feed on eel grass. They also feed on other
44 sorts of things that Brant -- Brant primarily feed on
45 eel grass. Emperor Geese feed on an assortment of both
46 vegetation as well as berries as well as mollusks.
47 This is something we're concerned with. Izembek has
48 the largest eel grass bed in the world. It is a unique
49 and valuable resource. Nonetheless, when you see a
50 tenfold increase in a species that's overwintering in

1 an area, we're watching how that may impact this
2 population.

3
4 One thing you might say is, for
5 example, if a bird wintered in Mexico, you might say it
6 has a higher probability of gaining fat reserves and in
7 better condition than a bird that has to withstand
8 Izembek winter conditions. So we are beginning a study
9 where we're trying to assess how Brant that winter in
10 Izembek what their reproductive performance is compared
11 to Brant that winter elsewhere. So that's something
12 we're trying to get an idea on.

13
14 We are revising the Pacific Flyway
15 Brant Management Plan. It's currently being led by the
16 state of California. I expect that a draft plan will
17 be available for the AMBCC to review and comment on
18 here in certainly early 2016. Yeah.

19
20 MR. ANDREW: Before we leave the
21 Pacific Black Brant. Any idea of what the harvest was
22 like down in Mexico from the sport hunt that occurs?

23
24 DR. TAYLOR: Tim, there are estimates
25 for that. Not very good estimates, but it's my
26 understanding it's not that great. David Ward is a
27 research scientist with USGS Alaska Science Center.
28 David is one of North America's eel grass experts and
29 David has worked in Mexico quite a bit. So what I'll
30 do is I'll follow up with him and get some estimates.

31
32 I don't think it's really substantive.
33 I know there's commercial guides there. I know there
34 is. But I also know that the numbers of United States
35 hunters going down, if I'm not mistaken, has declined
36 because I think there's restriction of bringing birds
37 back. So I think the interest of people going down
38 there to hunt has declined. But I'll follow up with
39 David and I'll send you an email.

40
41 MS. HOSETH: Thank you, Eric. Are you
42 on that management plan?

43
44 DR. TAYLOR: Both Dan and I serve on
45 that plan, so the committee is Dan, myself and then
46 scientists from British Columbia, Andre Breault, and
47 then state biologists from California, Washington and
48 Oregon. So that's the committee. We will make sure
49 that when a draft is available that it goes out
50 particularly to folks like Tim and others that have a

1 real stake in the Brant population because they're
2 responsible for the breeding grounds.

3

4 Pacific Greater White-fronted Geese.
5 Another bird that Tim's in charge of on the Yukon-
6 Kuskokwim Delta. Ninety-five percent of the population
7 nest on the Yukon Delta. There's a few birds that
8 winter in the Bristol Bay lowlands and the Innoko River
9 Valley, but again most of the birds nest on the
10 Yukon-Kuskokwim Delta. They winter -- another coastal
11 bird that migrates down the Pacific Coast down to the
12 Sacramento Valley of California.

13

14 This population is doing very well,
15 just like Cacklers. Exceptionally well. The
16 population objective is 300,000. The current three-
17 year average is 565,396. So just about double the
18 population objective. Since the introduction of the
19 Yukon-Kuskokwim Delta Goose Management Plan and the
20 Flyway Management Plan in 1986 the population has grown
21 substantially in the last 30 years. Right now it's
22 relatively stable, 0 percent per year.

23

24 Again, the population objective
25 300,000. We're almost double that at 565,398. It's
26 stable over the last 10 years, so it appears that
27 overall the population has leveled out. There is some
28 concern about crop depredation in California as a
29 result of increasing Pacific Greater White-fronted
30 Geese. The Fish and Wildlife Service started a
31 depredation permit program in California. It's being
32 used sparsely. Very few farmers are actually using it.

33

34 Mid-continent White-fronts that Taqulik
35 mentioned are increasing on the Coastal Plain. These
36 birds nest on tundra habitats on the North Slope or
37 Arctic Coastal Plain of Alaska as well as all arctic
38 areas there to Canada, all the way over to the Queen
39 Maud Gulf area.

40

41 Mid-continent White-fronts do an
42 interior migration, so there's the breeding area. They
43 do an interior migration through the Central Flyway and
44 Mississippi Flyway, wintering in Mexico, Louisiana and
45 Texas. As Taqulik mentioned in her regional report,
46 they are growing, so it's not just her perception.
47 They actually are significantly increasing in the past
48 10 years. They're still growing slightly at 2.4
49 percent. If you look at that number from the early
50 2000s all the way up to 2015, the population has really

1 taken off.

2

3 So our index for the Arctic Coastal
4 Plain is around 204,189. In terms of the summary,
5 that's our population index for the North Slope. We
6 also count about 30,000 birds in the Interior of Alaska
7 through another survey called the Waterfowl Breeding
8 and Population Habitat Survey. So the 10-year growth
9 rate is stable to increasing right now, but they have
10 increased in the past. The North American population
11 objective is 650. Just like Pacific Greater White-
12 fronted Geese, they're over population objective for
13 the Mid-continent population 823,062.

14

15 We monitor this population when they
16 all go to Saskatchewan and stage there. So as they're
17 migrating down from Alaska and Canada, they stage in
18 Saskatchewan during the fall and that's when we do an
19 aerial count and get our index for that.

20

21 Okay. For those folks on the North
22 Slope pay attention. I think this slide created quite
23 a stir in Wainwright and that was a great meeting. One
24 of the best meetings I've been to. We have monitored
25 Snow Geese from our Arctic Coastal Plains since 1987.
26 So if you look at that 1987 through about 2002 or so,
27 it's pretty flat. Somewhere around maybe 1,000 birds
28 or so. Starting off in 2005 we're seeing an increase.
29 Over the past 10 years that population has increased by
30 over three times from about 9,000 birds to over 34,000
31 birds.

32

33 So given this population growth rate,
34 which is 34 percent per year, population could double
35 every three to four years. Snow Geese are a particular
36 problem in the Central Flyway and causing substantive
37 impacts to arctic tundra habitats and negatively
38 impacting other species, including waterfowl and
39 shorebirds.

40

41 There's a handout that I'll put on the
42 table by the U.S. Geological Survey, the Alaska Science
43 Center, by Jerry Hupp. They have been studying Snow
44 Geese up on the Colville River delta for the past few
45 years. As a result of this increase, have some pretty
46 interesting results. I'll just quickly go through
47 those.

48

49 So how come Snow Geese are increasing?
50 Well, they nest earlier than Brant and White-fronts.

1 Because they nest earlier, they hatch earlier. When
2 goslings hatch earlier for most areas, they're allowed
3 better forage, they get bigger. Because they get
4 bigger and they leave the tundra habitats bigger, they
5 have an increased survival rate.

6
7 Snow Geese have higher nest survival
8 compared to Brant and White-fronts, so up to 25 percent
9 more goslings. The adults of Snow Geese are better at
10 protecting their nests compared to Brant and White-
11 fronts, so 25 percent more. Female Snow Geese have
12 higher fidelity to breeding areas. They're more likely
13 to return than female Brant.

14
15 In terms of banding studies that USGS
16 has done, hunting is not affecting the population.
17 This is similar to the Greater Snow Goose population in
18 the Central Flyway where, in essence, Texas hunters
19 can't control the population. Limits are such that
20 individuals could hunt just about as much as they can
21 and hunting pressure is not affecting that population
22 right now. Less than 3 percent of the birds that are
23 banded in Alaska are harvested in North America and
24 that's a low enough rate that it's not affecting
25 population growth.

26
27 So the take-home message here is you
28 get high reproductive success and you have high adult
29 survival and you have an increasing Snow Goose
30 population. When I gave this presentation at the
31 invitation of Taqulik and Mike at Wainwright, Harry
32 Brower with the North Slope Borough and others are very
33 interested in sitting down with the Fish and Wildlife
34 Service and Department of Fish and Game and having
35 discussions about how we can monitor this population to
36 try to ward off what could happen and what has happened
37 in the Central Flyway.

38
39 Tundra Swans. This slide I put in for
40 Jack. Jack has been after me for the past couple years
41 going, Eric, what the heck is going on with Tundra
42 Swans. They seem to be increasing in Golovin and my
43 area. Jack, again just like Taqulik, the observations
44 are absolutely correct.

45
46 Our survey for Tundra Swans on the
47 Arctic Coastal Plain are showing an increase of almost
48 7 percent per year. So we'll take a look at the
49 difference between the three-year index from 2005 when
50 we only counted about 8,000. We're counting over

1 double right now in 2015. So Jack's concern, as he's
2 talked to me about, when Tundra Swans come in to a
3 wetland to nest, they're very aggressive and they will
4 keep birds like Brant off the nesting grounds.

5
6 Josh has covered Emperor Geese quite a
7 bit, so I'm just going to give just a couple overhead
8 slides. John, one thing I want to talk about just is
9 where we survey because you had good observations of
10 large numbers of Emperors wintering in Kodiak and that
11 indeed is correct.

12
13 So just quickly the range of Emperors.
14 Most Emperors nest on the Yukon-Kuskokwim Delta,
15 greater than 90 percent. Additional birds nest on
16 Seward Peninsula and St. Lawrence Island. As was
17 mentioned today, also Russia. They winter in the
18 Aleutian Islands, Kodiak Island and Alaska Peninsula.
19 So those are the birds you're seeing there in Kodiak.

20
21 Your question was -- well, let me jump
22 through this. So the population objective here for
23 Emperors at the current plan, and everyone knows that
24 this plan is being revised, so these numbers could very
25 well change. The objective currently is 150,000. The
26 population would be reopened. They've been closed, as
27 Josh mentioned, to sport hunt since 1986 and
28 subsistence hunt since 1987. They would reopen when
29 the population three-year index was 80,000. We hit
30 that in 2015 with 81,875, so we were able to consider
31 opening the season and then it would close again if the
32 population was 60,000 or less. Again this is the
33 current plan and we're dependent upon this group to
34 provide us input.

35
36 So, John, this is the survey that we do
37 for Emperor Geese. So it's the survey that was adopted
38 by the Yukon-Kuskokwim Delta Goose Management Plan.
39 Ralph Anderson, Brandon Ahmasuk, Peter Devine all
40 served on those committees back then to adopt this
41 survey. We used this survey because this is when birds
42 are concentrated in one area, they're highly visible,
43 and it's the historic survey.

44
45 So this survey is done in late April,
46 early May. The last few days of April, early May. We
47 go all the way from Jack Smith Bay, along the coast,
48 along the Alaska Peninsula, out to Cold Bay, Bechevin
49 Bay and then we count on the south part of the Alaska
50 Peninsula all the way to Wide Bay.

1 As Josh mentioned, about 95 percent of
2 that population occurs from Egegik out to Cold Bay. So
3 on average we're counting about 95 percent of the birds
4 of this survey in this area. This area is pretty tough
5 to survey given weather conditions and wind conditions.
6 Once in a while we don't do a particular survey just
7 because conditions are too hazardous. In that case we
8 take a three-year average.

9
10 This is the survey that is currently
11 being used to index Emperor Geese, but as part of this
12 management plan and as part of Josh's analysis, this
13 may or may not be the survey that we use to monitor
14 Emperor Geese in the future. This is a discussion all
15 of us will have to say what's the survey we have the
16 greatest confidence in, what gives us the best
17 information on the population and trend. So, again,
18 we'll review this survey as well as the other three
19 aerial surveys that we do as well as other potential
20 designs if people have other ideas.

21
22 I think, John, the point you wanted to
23 make is we may not be counting the birds in your neck
24 of the woods in Kodiak and you are correct. The time
25 period that you're seeing them, February/March, if I
26 remember correctly, is not the time that we do our
27 survey. Those birds are wintering. What we would
28 expect is the birds that you're seeing, if you went
29 back there in mid-April to late April, you should see
30 very few birds. You might see one or two hanging out,
31 more than one or two, but the majority, 80-90 percent,
32 should be out of there and they should be in that area
33 that we're surveying.

34
35 What we did last year because of the
36 concern that this group expressed is I sent a note to
37 all regional AMBCC representatives right before we did
38 the survey asking them for observations of Emperor
39 Geese with the promise that if, for example, you went
40 off on your porch or you went from your tent and you
41 looked out and you saw substantive numbers, a few
42 hundred, a few thousand Emperor Geese, I'm asking you
43 to call me and then, if it's at all possible and our
44 survey crew is out there, we'll go check that spot out.

45
46 We're certainly interested in
47 observations of birds that we may not survey. We do
48 have a pretty good indication in terms of the history
49 of the survey that the distribution has not shifted.
50 Nonetheless, we're dependent upon local observations to

1 tell us if it has.

2

3 Gayla, did you have your hand up?

4

5 MR. AHMASUK: I did.

6

7 DR. TAYLOR: Oh, Brandon. Okay.

8

9 MR. AHMASUK: Yes, thank you. Brandon
10 Ahmasuk, subsistence director at Kawerak. Just a
11 correction. You mentioned my name as part of that
12 survey.

13

14 DR. TAYLOR: Oh, it was Austin.

15

16 MR. AHMASUK: Yes. Thank you.

17

18 DR. TAYLOR: Sorry. It was Austin.

19 Okay. Any other questions. John.

20

21 MR. REFT: Yeah, Eric, basically for
22 Kodiak is we just want to be able to hunt them when
23 they come through whether they're going south or
24 heading north, but the time that they do pass through
25 Kodiak is not when we can hunt them. That's all we're
26 asking for is a chance. Down south, you know,
27 California, Washington, Oregon, where they have an
28 influx of a lot of geese, and I said this the last time
29 I was here and the meeting was in Anchorage, if they've
30 got a big problem with it, cut them down, feather them,
31 gut them, bag them and ship some to Kodiak. We'll buy
32 them. I'd pay five or ten dollars for a goose. I mean
33 it's no problem if we could get it to eat. That's part
34 of our diet, our food, is ducks.

35

36 Thank you.

37

38 DR. TAYLOR: No, it's a good point. I
39 would expect that conversation discussion to occur
40 during the revision of the management plan. Everyone
41 knows the spring/summer subsistence season extends from
42 April 2nd to August 31st. Folks like you in Kodiak,
43 Peter and the Aleutians, birds do not occur there
44 during spring and summer. They occur there during
45 primarily the fall and winter. That's a discussion
46 that we need to have in terms of are there
47 opportunities on either side of that possibly for a
48 hunt or are there other options that may be available.

49

50 Any other questions. Taqulik.

1 MS. HEPA: Yeah, I want to just say
2 this for the record too. You know, we talked about
3 things happening earlier, but at least from my
4 observation and talking to a few families that having
5 access to hunt the resources is becoming more
6 challenging, so not as many people are harvesting,
7 especially geese. Like I said, when we went there
8 early to prepare to geese hunt, the geese were already
9 there in full numbers.

10
11 Not just that, but when we went home it
12 was May 18 and May 18 is when a lot of the families
13 would just be arriving and spend the last couple weeks
14 of May at our geese hunting camps, but people don't
15 have access because the snow is melted, the rivers are
16 flowing. So I think it's going to become more of a
17 challenge for us to hunt spring geese, so we have to be
18 more flexible to plan to go out earlier, which
19 conflicts with our spring whaling time. So I wanted to
20 mention that.

21
22 DR. TAYLOR: A valid concern that I
23 would agree with. I mean I think it's similar to what
24 Cyrus is talking about with his proposals in the
25 Kotzebue area where people no longer can gain access
26 because rivers are either freezing up or not freezing
27 up compared to what they used to use. I think all of
28 the people around this table are going to experience
29 changes both in bird migration -- certainly not, you
30 know, vultures aren't going to occur in everybody's
31 backyard. Nonetheless, I think the changes that you're
32 seeing are real.

33
34 That was one of the reasons the
35 President came here a few weeks ago. I have to say
36 it's pretty fun to sit around the table with Cyrus who
37 got to shake the President's hand. I think one of the
38 few people that I've ever met that actually met a
39 President.

40
41 Anyway, it's a concern. I think, you
42 know, there's a 30-day closure period in there and I
43 think all the regions should look at that and say
44 should that be shifted one way or another. Still
45 protect the birds, but then perhaps allow us access at
46 a different time. Things are changing. That's the
47 most important point.

48
49 Pete's looking at his watch, so I've
50 got to get going here.

1 MR. REFT: One more thing, Eric, just a
2 quick one, kind of Pete too. With the 500 feet
3 offshore that we have been given for our spring hunt,
4 we don't have access to the seagull eggs and stuff that
5 we did before because it costs a lot of money for old
6 people to get skiffs, outboards and et cetera. But now
7 I am noticing, especially this spring, right now what's
8 going on there, there are so many seagulls from Womens
9 Bay, Middle Bay, Kalsin, on out.

10
11 With no snow all winter to run into the
12 streams the salmon are building up at the mouth of the
13 streams and the seagulls are down there in hundreds
14 just in Kalsin Bay alone, Middle, Womens, and they're
15 eating those salmon because they can't get up to spawn.
16 We need to curtail the seagull eggs like we used to
17 before this 500-foot thing came in.

18
19 I can see right from my three-story
20 home U.S. Geological Survey, the Alaska Science Center,
21 by Jerry Hupp down in the channel. When the salmon fry
22 migrate out of the Buskin, they go out in that channel
23 in the colder, deep water until they're ready to go
24 further out. The seagulls are just hundreds out there
25 just picking away at all the salmon fry. The seagulls
26 are really populating.

27
28 Thank you.

29
30 DR. TAYLOR: Thank you. Certainly
31 gulls are increasing in other areas of Alaska. Again,
32 I can't emphasize enough that when you see increases
33 like that and it's consistent year after year that you
34 bring that to my attention or to Dan's attention to
35 say, okay, is this something that's just an odd time,
36 you know, one or two years, or is this a trend that's
37 going to be a problem in the future.

38
39 MR. REFT: Just like our bear
40 population. They protect them so much. We're scared
41 to go out to the Buskin and fish salmon to take home
42 for the winter. There's bears everywhere.

43
44 DR. TAYLOR: All right. In terms of
45 Emperor Geese, the population, as I said, is monitored
46 by our spring staging survey. The population objective
47 is currently 150,000. We would resume hunting at
48 80,000, which we attained this April, the last few days
49 of April 2015, where we counted a little over 98,000
50 Emperor Geese in our spring staging survey and that

1 bumped the three-year index up to 81,875.

2

3 I'll just quickly go through some
4 demographic considerations that Josh mentioned. I do
5 encourage you to read at least the summary of Josh's
6 report. I think just two or three pages in that
7 summary will be enlightening to all of you concerned
8 with Emperors. Harvest has been identified as a
9 potential factor limiting the population size all the
10 way back from 1992, but most recently up to 2008 for
11 Emperors.

12

13 We're trying to find the ideal here
14 where we would recommend a harvest of Emperor Geese
15 that maximizes both your opportunity to hunt them as
16 well as population growth. There's a fancy term for
17 that called maximum sustained yield. What that refers
18 to is basically allowing opportunity to harvest a
19 population concurrent or at the same time allowing that
20 population to grow. Right now our analyses seems to
21 point to the fact that there's little evidence to
22 suggest substantial harvest capacity beyond the current
23 levels. So that's currently what we have found.

24

25 Emperor Geese are susceptible to
26 hunting. Those of you that have hunted them in the
27 past likely know this, but compared to other birds they
28 seem particularly easy to decoy. Once you kill one
29 others return to that spot and provide additional
30 opportunity.

31

32 As Josh said, he distributed his report
33 to not only this group but the Department of Fish and
34 Game, the U.S. Geological Survey, population ecologist
35 at University of Alaska Fairbanks and Jim Sedinger,
36 University of Nevada Reno. We actually sent it out to
37 about 30 people. We asked for review comments by the
38 first of November.

39

40 I'm going to take this a step further
41 and actually do contracts with four to five
42 professional reviewers to actually ensure this report
43 gets the review that it needs. There are particularly
44 some really top-shelf scientists in the United States.
45 I encourage all of you if you have someone that you
46 want to make sure reviews this thing, don't hesitate to
47 give me his or her name.

48

49 The revision of the Pacific Flyway
50 Management Plan, Dan has the lead on that. We'll

1 involve all of you that are interested in Emperor
2 Geese. We will look at and review the population
3 objective, the survey methods that we use to monitor
4 the population. Gayla and others want to know what's
5 the population, what's the true population, how do we
6 monitor it, what's an index and how good is the index.
7 We'll also revise the harvest strategy and then
8 identify other research management priorities.

9
10 For example, this group might say is
11 predation on the Yukon-Kuskokwim Delta a population-
12 limiting factor. Should the Fish and Wildlife Service
13 consider gull control, for example, or fox control on
14 the Yukon Delta in order to increase recruitment. Those
15 are the sorts of questions and priorities that we hope
16 you will weigh in on.

17
18 Spectacled Eiders, one of two
19 threatened species in Alaska for sea ducks. We
20 measured two populations. There's a breeding
21 population on the Arctic -- let me go back here. There
22 we go. It was listed as threatened in 1993 and closed
23 to all hunting. The reason it was listed is the
24 population on the Yukon Delta declined by 96 percent
25 from an estimated 50,000 breeding pairs down to less
26 than 2,000 breeding pairs in a 20-year time period.

27
28 Spectacled Eiders nest in two primary
29 areas, the Yukon-Kuskokwim Delta, and in the Arctic
30 Coastal Plain, so we have two surveys to monitor the
31 population. Basically the entire world's population
32 winters just south of St. Lawrence Island. So birds
33 that nest in the Yukon Delta, birds that nest in Arctic
34 Alaska and birds that nest in Russia all congregate to
35 that kind of maroon or dark-colored area right south of
36 St. Lawrence Island.

37
38 We do two surveys, one in the Arctic
39 Coastal Plain and one in the Yukon Delta. Both have
40 about the same breeding population index, about 6,000
41 birds. Population growth rate differs, substantially
42 differs. For the Arctic Coastal Plain, the population
43 is stable to declining. Reasons are unknown. For the
44 Yukon Delta, they're substantively increasing.

45
46 Like on the Arctic Coastal Plain, we
47 don't know the reasons why they're declining. We also
48 don't know why the birds in the Y-K Delta are
49 increasing. We have suspects. Decreased use of lead
50 shot, decreased harvest. As I mentioned earlier when I

1 talked about Cacklers, that increased Cackler
2 population may be providing a prey buffer. So instead
3 of picking off Spectacled Eider ducklings, foxes or
4 gulls are concentrating on Cacklers.

5
6 Steller's Eider listed in 1997. The
7 North American breeding population was listed as
8 threatened in 1997 and was closed. They're sparsely
9 distributed across the North Slope or Arctic Coastal
10 Plain and the area near Barrow has the highest density
11 of breeding Steller's Eiders in North America.

12
13 Alaska breeding population is small,
14 about 500 to 600 birds we estimate. If you look at the
15 last 10-year average population, although it's very
16 variable because you can imagine we don't count all of
17 those 500 to 600 birds. We count very few of them and
18 then have to extrapolate. We believe it's stable.

19
20 So just the last couple reminders.
21 Second to last slide, Pete, so don't pull the hook out
22 of me yet. There is an Avian Disease Response Plan on
23 the table. It looks like this with some Steller's
24 Eider juveniles on it. I would encourage all of you as
25 representatives in your region to please grab a copy.
26 All of you probably remember a few years ago we had
27 Alaska's first avian cholera event in history on St.
28 Lawrence Island. This year we've had an unprecedented
29 number of seabird mortalities that started out in June
30 and we're still getting reports of murre, gulls and
31 other species washing up on shore primarily due to
32 starvation.

33
34 What we want to do is we have about 35
35 what are called first responders, people that are
36 trained and have personal protection equipment, special
37 suits, gloves, boots. Then most importantly the
38 training because the first thing we want is make people
39 there safe, but the second objective is to get a group
40 of people called first responders in remote areas. So
41 if you see birds that are washing up on shore, you've
42 got concerns, you've got the training to collect some
43 birds, preserve them properly and then we cover the
44 shipping and get them down to the National Wildlife
45 Health Lab.

46
47 We had one training event in 2015. We
48 plan on having another event or events in 2016 and we
49 hope all of you identify a person or persons from your
50 region that has an interest in becoming a first

1 responder and we will work with you to get them to come
2 to Anchorage and do the three to four day training. So
3 please pick up a copy of this report before you go
4 home.

5
6 The last thing is, I always make this
7 pitch, please do not hesitate to contact me to
8 participate in your regional meetings. Thanks to Mike
9 and Taqulik, I had a really enjoyable time with both
10 the residents of Wainwright and the eight villages of
11 the North Slope. The questions were great. It was
12 really fun to hear their observations on the ground.
13 For example, Phalaropes are declining and people don't
14 see them anymore and that's exactly what our surveys
15 have shown too. So, again, there's a lot of benefit by
16 collaboration between our two shops.

17
18 I think that is it.

19
20 CHAIRMAN PROBASCO: Go ahead, Tim.

21
22 MR. ANDREW: Thank you, Mr. Chair. I
23 was kind of hoping that you would cover the other
24 population of the Snow Geese that come up. I think
25 that might be the Wrangell Island population that
26 migrates through in millions and migrates south along
27 the coastal areas.

28
29 DR. TAYLOR: I can do that next time.
30 Yeah, you'll be impressed with that population growth
31 in that one.

32
33 CHAIRMAN PROBASCO: Other questions for
34 Eric.

35
36 (No comments)

37
38 CHAIRMAN PROBASCO: Very good report,
39 Eric. And I didn't have the hook out.

40
41 DR. TAYLOR: Thank you.

42
43 CHAIRMAN PROBASCO: You did a good job.
44 Thank you. Because we have to get out of here and it's
45 a couple minutes to 4:00, I think this would be a good
46 time to recess for the evening. We're coming back at
47 9:00 tomorrow morning. Do we need to put everything
48 away or what's the status?

49
50 MS. DEWHURST: You need to take

1 everything with you of your own stuff. We don't have
2 to move tables, but we do have to help Meredith pull
3 all the electronics down and put them back in the back.

4

5 (Off record - 4:00 p.m.)

6

7 (PROCEEDINGS TO BE CONTINUED)

