

1 ALASKA MIGRATORY BIRD CO-MANAGEMENT COUNCIL

2

3

FALL WORK SESSION

4

5

SEPTEMBER 25, 2007

6

7 Members Present:

8

9 Herman Squartsoff, Kodiak Area Native Association, Chair

10 Doug Alcorn, U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service

11 Ron Clarke, Alaska Department of Fish and Game

12 Joeneal Hicks, Copper River Native Association

13 Taqulik Hepa, North Slope Borough

14 Patty Brown-Schwalenberg, Chugach Regional Resource

15 Commission

16 Molly Chythlook, Bristol Bay Native Association

17 Peter Devine, Aleutian/Pribilof Islands

18 Nathan Sobaloff, Southeast Inter-Tribal Fish and Wildlife

19 Commission

20 Mike Smith, Tanana Chiefs Conference, Interior Region

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22 Fred Armstrong, Executive Director

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P R O C E E D I N G S

(Fairbanks - 9/25/2007)

(On record - 9:07 a.m.)

CHAIRMAN SQUARTSOFF: I'd like to call our fall meeting to order at 9:07. Thank you. Mr. Alcorn, can you take roll, please.

MR. ALCORN: We have moment of silence first.

CHAIRMAN SQUARTSOFF: Okay, moment of silence, sorry. And then Tom Rothe wanted a minute before we went into moment of silence. Tom.

MR. ROTHE: I'd just like to ask you to remember a fellow, Jack Hendrickson, who passed away a week ago. He was mostly president for life of the Alaska Waterfowl Association and someone who really felt strongly about preserving ducks and geese and raised a lot of money for habitat conservation to preserve the future of hunting for all. So we'll miss Jack out in the marsh next year. Thank you.

CHAIRMAN SQUARTSOFF: Thank you, Tom. Can we have a moment of silence.

(Moment of silence)

CHAIRMAN SQUARTSOFF: Thank you. Next on the agenda is the seating of alternates. I think we have Nathan from Southeast. We may have a letter, I believe.

MR. ALCORN: Mr. Chairman, would you like me to call the roll and name Nathan or how do you want to do that?

CHAIRMAN SQUARTSOFF: Well, you've got the seating before on the agenda for roll call, so let's go ahead and seat him, I guess.

MR. OSTRAND: Mr. Chair, we do have a letter for Nathan.

CHAIRMAN SQUARTSOFF: You do? Okay. Thank you. So Nathan is seated in place of Matt. Okay. Now I guess we can get into roll call.

1 MR. ALCORN: Thank you, Mr. Chairman.
2 Yukon/Kuskokwim Delta Region.
3
4 (No response)
5
6 MR. ALCORN: Not here. Bristol Bay
7 Region.
8
9 MS. CHYTHLOOK: Here.
10
11 MR. ALCORN: Gulf of Alaska Region.
12
13 MS. BROWN-SCHWALENBERG: Here.
14
15 MR. ALCORN: Upper Copper River Region.
16
17 MR. HICKS: Here.
18
19 MR. ALCORN: Bering Straits/Norton
20 Sound Region. Kawerak.
21
22 (No response)
23
24 MR. ALCORN: Not here.
25 Aleutian/Pribilof Islands Region.
26
27 MR. DEVINE: Here.
28
29 MR. ALCORN: Kodiak Archipelago Region.
30
31 CHAIRMAN SQUARTSOFF: Here.
32
33 MR. ALCORN: Northwest Arctic Region.
34
35 (No response)
36
37 MR. ALCORN: Not here. North Slope
38 Region.
39
40 MS. HEPA: Here.
41
42 MR. ALCORN: Interior Region.
43
44 MR. SMITH: Here.
45
46 MR. ALCORN: And Southeast Region.
47
48 MR. SOBALOFF: Here.
49
50 MR. ALCORN: We have a quorum. We have

1 eight members, Mr. Chair.
2
3 CHAIRMAN SQUARTSOFF: Thank you, Mr.
4 Alcorn.
5
6 MR. ALCORN: Excuse me. I'm sorry. I
7 forgot to call the Agency representatives. Ron Clarke,
8 Alaska Department of Fish and Game.
9
10 MR. CLARKE: Here.
11
12 MR. ALCORN: And I'm here representing
13 the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service. That's 10. We
14 have a quorum.
15
16 CHAIRMAN SQUARTSOFF: Thank you, Mr.
17 Alcorn.
18
19 MR. HICKS: Mr. Chair.
20
21 CHAIRMAN SQUARTSOFF: Yes, Joe.
22
23 MR. HICKS: Correction on the Upper
24 Copper River Region. I don't know where upper came
25 from, but it's Copper River.
26
27 CHAIRMAN SQUARTSOFF: Okay. You bet.
28 Thank you. We'll do that. Now we'll get into
29 introductions. Start with the council and we can work
30 here from you, Doug.
31
32 MR. ALCORN: I'm Doug Alcorn,
33 representing the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service from
34 Anchorage.
35
36 MR. HICKS: My name is Joeneal Hicks.
37 I represent the Copper River region.
38
39 MS. HEPA: I'm Taqulik Hepa and I
40 represent the North Slope region.
41
42 MR. SMITH: Mike Smith, Tanana Chiefs
43 Conference.
44
45 MS. CHYTHLOOK: Molly Chythlook,
46 Bristol Bay Native Association, Dillingham.
47
48 MR. SOBALOFF: Nathan Sobaloff with
49 Southeast Alaska Inter-tribal Fish and Wildlife
50 Commission from the Southeast Region, Juneau, sitting

1 in for Matthew Kookesh.

2

3 MR. DEVINE: Peter Devine,
4 Aleutian/Pribilof Island Association, Sand Point.

5

6 MS. BROWN-SCHWALENBERG: Patty Brown-
7 Schwalenberg, Gulf of Alaska Region.

8

9 MR. CLARKE: My name is Ron Clarke.
10 I'm filling in now for Matt Robus. I'm the assistant
11 director of the Wildlife Conservation Division of the
12 Alaska Department of Fish and Game and I work out of
13 Juneau.

14

15 CHAIRMAN SQUARTSOFF: Ron, you're
16 replacing him, right?

17

18 MR. CLARKE: Yes.

19

20 CHAIRMAN SQUARTSOFF: Herman
21 Squartsoff, Sun'aq Tribal, Kodiak Region. You all have
22 to bear with me today. I didn't expect to be chairing
23 the meeting. It's been a couple years, a little rusty.
24 Thank you. We'll start with the lady behind Molly,
25 please.

26

27 MS. HEDIGER: Eileen Hediger (ph) from
28 the Yakutat Tlingit Tribe.

29

30 MR. ROTHE: Tom Rothe, waterfowl
31 coordinator, Alaska Department of Fish and Game.

32

33 (Introductions away from microphone)

34

35 MR. OSTRAND: Bill Ostrand, Fish and
36 Wildlife Service.

37

38 MR. OBERHOLTSEY: Steve Oberholtser,
39 Fish and Wildlife Service, law enforcement in
40 Anchorage.

41

42 MS. DEWHURST: Donna Dewhurst, Staff
43 counsel.

44

45 MR. OATES: Russ Oates, Division of
46 Migratory Bird Management, Fish and Wildlife Service in
47 Anchorage.

48

49 MR. TROST: Bob Trost, Fish and
50 Wildlife Service. I'm a Pacific Flyway representative.

1 MS. SHARBAUGH: Susan Sharbaugh, Alaska
2 Bird Observatory.

3
4 CHAIRMAN SQUARTSOFF: Thank you all.
5 Sara, could you tell me who you're with, please.

6
7 MS. McCANN: Oh, I'm just a visitor.

8
9 MR. OSTRAND: She's my significant
10 other.

11
12 CHAIRMAN SQUARTSOFF: Okay. I forgot.
13 I just wanted to make sure everybody knew who was who.
14 Staff support. There you go. Thank you. Sometimes I
15 think staff needs it. Okay. Thank you all. The next
16 thing on the agenda is a welcome from senior scientist,
17 Dr. Susan Sharbaugh. Did I say it right? Thank you.
18 Can you step up to a mike, please. And then also Ron
19 Engel (ph) and Ron's not here, so Bob will kind of, I
20 think, fill in his place. Can you also come on up too.
21 We've got you both at the same time. Thank you.

22
23 MS. SHARBAUGH: Again, I'm Susan
24 Sharbaugh. I'm the senior scientist here at Alaska
25 Bird Observatory and I'd like to offer a warm welcome
26 to all of you for coming to our facility. It's an
27 honor to have you.

28
29 What the Alaska Bird Observatory is is
30 a non-profit organization and we promote the
31 conversation of birds and their habitat through
32 education and research. We do a lot of passerine
33 research, but this past spring we did venture into the
34 world of waterfowl. We did aerial surveys down in
35 Wrangell/St. Elias National Park and we have a strong
36 research program, mostly banding songbirds over at
37 Creamer's Field. We have citizen science programs
38 involving the public and some of our scientific
39 programs with watching bird feeders to get an idea of
40 how many birds are in the Fairbanks area in the winter
41 time.

42
43 Also what I'd invite you to be involved
44 in is we're looking at the northward migration of
45 Black-billed Magpies. So we have a site on our website
46 that you can report Black-billed Magpies if anybody has
47 seen them near their villages. They're large black and
48 white birds, a member of the crow family related to
49 ravens and we've been tracking their northward
50 migration for the last year. We had two really

1 significant sightings this year, one in Shageluk and
2 one in Nulato and they've not been out in those regions
3 before. So I invite you to join us in that program.
4 We also have a strong education program.

5
6 So I welcome you all here. I hope you
7 have a successful meeting. If there's anything that we
8 can do for you in the course of these two days, be sure
9 to let us know. I also offer an apology for the slight
10 difficulties this morning with the conference room.
11 When you have biologists working with technical
12 problems, it takes a little time sometimes. So
13 welcome. Thank you.

14
15 CHAIRMAN SQUARTSOFF: Thank you. Is
16 there any questions of Susan? Yes, Molly.

17
18 MS. CHYTHLOOK: I guess I missed -- is
19 it the crow, black and white?

20
21 MS. SHARBAUGH: It's Black-billed
22 Magpie. I have some posters that have feeder birds on
23 it that I can pass out to all of you and it has a
24 picture of a Black-billed Magpie on that and they're
25 feeder birds that come in throughout the state of
26 Alaska. So I can make sure each one of you has one of
27 those and then you can pass on that information. If
28 anybody wants an information packet sent to their
29 office, give me your information and I can send the
30 information out to you all.

31
32 CHAIRMAN SQUARTSOFF: Susan, I have a
33 question. How do they differ from the regular magpies?

34
35 MS. SHARBAUGH: Well, the magpies, up
36 until about the year 2000 were mostly thought to only
37 go as far north as the Alaska Range, so many of you are
38 familiar with magpies. It's no big deal because you
39 have them all over. So it's the same magpies that are
40 down in Kodiak only because we think of moderating
41 climate in the winter time they're extending their
42 range north. So before you wouldn't see them north of
43 Healy and now we're seeing them in Salcha, in town here
44 in Fairbanks and our farthest north sighting is in --
45 up north of here. What's the mining town towards
46 Central where they have the outhouse races? Chataneka.
47 Thank you very much. So that's as far north as they
48 go. They go up north for the outhouse races.

49
50 CHAIRMAN SQUARTSOFF: Thank you. Any

1 more questions for Susan. One more. Mike.

2

3 MR. SMITH: Thank you, Susan. I just
4 want to commend you and your organization on all the
5 good work you've done here. Working with Tanana Chiefs
6 Conference, we've been able to see it firsthand and be
7 exposed to it. I just wanted to commend you and your
8 organization on all the good stuff you've been doing
9 here lately. Thanks.

10

11 MS. SHARBAUGH: Thank you very much,
12 Mike. I appreciate that.

13

14 CHAIRMAN SQUARTSOFF: Thank you, Susan.
15 Bob, please.

16

17 MR. TROST: Good morning everyone.
18 It's a pleasure to be here and see most of you again.
19 I've been a party to these meetings, I guess, since
20 before this Council was even formed, so I always enjoy
21 the opportunity to listen in and hope I can be of some
22 help to you. As you go through your deliberations, if
23 you have any questions about what's going on with
24 regard to some of the flyway issues that we've dealt
25 with and for a lot of the birds we share, I'll be glad
26 to do what I can to help out along those lines. If
27 there's anything else that you may think I have some
28 input that would be useful to you, I'd be glad to offer
29 that as well. I'm just here to observe and provide
30 input as you request. Once again, thanks an awful lot
31 for having me back. I enjoy coming up to visit.

32

33 CHAIRMAN SQUARTSOFF: Any questions for
34 Bob? Mike.

35

36 MR. SMITH: Bob, maybe you could just
37 help me out in regards to -- Congressman Young has just
38 recently introduced a new bill. Does the Flyway
39 Council get involved in those type of things or do they
40 pretty much stay out of it?

41

42 MR. TROST: In general they don't deal
43 with legislation unless an entity brings it to them as
44 an issue. Occasionally they do get involved in those
45 things but not often. For example, we just did write a
46 letter on the pending wetland legislation that's part
47 of the ag bill, so they will occasionally take
48 positions on those things. So if there's legislation
49 that you think the Council should be aware of, you
50 should probably send us a copy of it and we'll

1 distribute it and see whether or not it's an issue that
2 they wish to offer an opinion on. They can be very
3 influential because almost all the various states have
4 someone in their state government organization that's
5 directly responsible for legislative affairs, so they
6 do on occasion weigh in on issues.

7

8 CHAIRMAN SQUARTSOFF: Mike.

9

10 MR. SMITH: If you have something as
11 significant as a seasonal change to the Migratory Bird
12 Act or something like that, you guys would get
13 involved?

14

15 MR. TROST: Oh, certainly. Yeah, any
16 changes. I think you're well aware the only change
17 that's ever been made to the Migratory Bird Treaty is
18 the amendment that brought into being this Council.
19 But as far as changes to the legislation itself, those
20 changes are fairly infrequent. I don't know what Bill
21 you have in mind here, Mike.

22

23 MR. SMITH: Well, it was just one
24 provided in our packets that says House Concurrent
25 Resolution 174 introduced by Congressman Young that
26 would change the hunting season from September 1st to
27 August 1st if I've read it correctly. Anyway, it would
28 require amendments, I guess. That's what I was just
29 asking about, if the Flyway Council would get involved
30 in something like that.

31

32 MR. TROST: They may well take a
33 position on something like that. I will also offer you
34 the observation that those dates are set in the treaty,
35 so it's not even something that legislation could
36 alter. It would have to be an amendment to the treaty.

37

38 MR. SMITH: Yeah, but he is calling for
39 a change in that Migratory Bird Treaty, I mean modify
40 to allow for goose and duck hunting during the last
41 week of August in areas north of 49 degrees north
42 latitude.

43

44 MR. TROST: It's certainly an issue I'd
45 think they would have an opinion on.

46

47 MR. SMITH: Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

48

49 CHAIRMAN SQUARTSOFF: Bob, could you
50 wait one second.

1 MR. TROST: Sorry. I keep trying to
2 escape.

3
4 CHAIRMAN SQUARTSOFF: You know, Bob was
5 talking about input up here and everything else and I
6 went down again this year for the first time in a
7 couple to the Flyway Council meetings along with Patty
8 and the SRC. A lot of you guys mention once in a while
9 how well they do in the flyway and all that and
10 everything else. Bob does a great job for us down
11 there. A lot of input for AMBCC, does a lot of follow
12 up on our proposals, everything that goes down there,
13 so I want to commend Bob for the great job he does for
14 us down there. Thank you, Bob.

15
16 MR. TROST: Thank you.

17
18 CHAIRMAN SQUARTSOFF: The next item is
19 approval of the agenda. Yes, Doug.

20
21 MR. ALCORN: Thank you, Mr. Chair. I
22 would like to offer one change. Steve Oberholtser is
23 going to be presenting the report under committee
24 report 12(d), 2007 law enforcement summary of
25 activities. Is it a video or PowerPoint?

26
27 MR. OBERHOLTSEER: PowerPoint.

28
29 MR. ALCORN: It's a PowerPoint that
30 they wanted to provide to the Council, but Steve is
31 going to have to leave after today at some point and I
32 was wondering if we might move that up in the agenda
33 earlier on so he can get that taken care of and he can
34 get on his airplane.

35
36 CHAIRMAN SQUARTSOFF: So when are you
37 leaving, Steve?

38
39 MR. OBERHOLTSEER: Afternoon flight. I
40 have a 5:00 o'clock flight.

41
42 MR. ALCORN: Maybe move it after lunch
43 or something.

44
45 CHAIRMAN SQUARTSOFF: So we can go
46 ahead and do that.

47
48 MR. ALCORN: Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

49
50 CHAIRMAN SQUARTSOFF: I'd like to add

1 one myself. I understand we're going to have a booth
2 here at AFN now, so maybe we can add that onto the
3 agenda under new business, under G. Anybody else have
4 anything else they might want to add on?

5
6 MR. SOBALOFF: Yes, Mr. Chairman, I do.
7 Southeast Inter-tribal, we had a meeting in Angoon and
8 we talked about two proposals that we'd like Council to
9 give us support for. If you could give us some time at
10 some point when it's appropriate for Eileen Hediger to
11 talk about a proposal for some gathering of Aleutian
12 Arctic Tern eggs in Yakutat and then also I just have
13 something just as quick with the Hoonah Elders Council
14 proposal to gather some migratory bird eggs in Glacier
15 Bay.

16
17 CHAIRMAN SQUARTSOFF: Maybe we can add
18 that under new business H.

19
20 MS. HEPA: Mr. Chair.

21
22 CHAIRMAN SQUARTSOFF: Yes.

23
24 MS. HEPA: Would that be appropriate
25 for regional management body reports where each of us
26 gets a chance to talk about outcomes of our regional
27 meetings?

28
29 MR. SOBALOFF: We have a management
30 report also, but these are proposals.

31
32 MS. HEPA: Okay.

33
34 CHAIRMAN SQUARTSOFF: So put them under
35 H, I think. Peter.

36
37 MR. DEVINE: I'd like to put this
38 letter from Aleutian/Pribilof Islands Association
39 seeking support from the AMBCC for oiled bird banding.

40
41 CHAIRMAN SQUARTSOFF: I think we can
42 add that under new business because that's like a
43 Council action thing. Do we have anything else.

44
45 (No comments)

46
47 CHAIRMAN SQUARTSOFF: If not, can I
48 hear a motion to.....

49
50 MR. DEVINE: So moved.

1 CHAIRMAN SQUARTSOFF: So moved by
2 Peter.
3
4 MR. ALCORN: Second.
5
6 CHAIRMAN SQUARTSOFF: Seconded by Doug.
7 Thank you all. Okay. Approval of April 4, 2007
8 Council action items. I'll allow the Council five
9 minutes to go ahead and look at all the action items.
10 Thank you.
11
12 (Off record)
13
14 (On record)
15
16 CHAIRMAN SQUARTSOFF: Mike.
17
18 MR. SMITH: Just as a matter of word-
19 smithing, I guess, should this be the approval of the
20 April 4th minutes? Is that what we're doing? We're
21 not reviewing or approving any of the Council actions
22 again. We're just approving the minutes of that
23 meeting.
24
25 CHAIRMAN SQUARTSOFF: Doug will comment
26 on that, Mike.
27
28 MR. ALCORN: Thank you, Mr. Chair.
29 This is kind of a convoluted way we've come about.
30 Originally we had approval of the minutes and the
31 minutes were like 50 pages and then we voted about four
32 years ago to just have a list of the action items
33 reported out that we would review at the subsequent
34 Council meeting and then approve those as a record of
35 those actions, not approve the actions themselves
36 because the actions have already been taken by the
37 Council.
38
39 CHAIRMAN SQUARTSOFF: Thank you, Doug.
40 Are you guys pretty much ready. I need to go back to
41 the approval of the agenda. I did not ask if there was
42 any opposition to it.
43
44 (No comments)
45
46 CHAIRMAN SQUARTSOFF: Hearing none, so
47 moved. Thank you. Now we'll go to approval of the
48 April 4, 2007 Council action items. Doug.
49
50 MR. ALCORN: I would move that we

1 approve the list of action items. There are two items
2 that I don't see in here. On Page 2 there was a motion
3 to table agenda items -- oh, they're all here. The
4 variable season closures, interpretation of the 30-day
5 Japanese treaty closure. This is the fourth bolded
6 item down on Page 2. And duck stamp exemption until
7 the fall meeting. Those are now placed on Items B, C
8 and D of the agenda. So just with that note, we're
9 going to get to those, I move that we approve the list
10 of action items as recorded.

11

12 MS. HEPA: I'll second the motion.

13

14 CHAIRMAN SQUARTSOFF: It's been so
15 moved by Doug and seconded by Taqulik. Are there any
16 questions on them.

17

18 (No comments)

19

20 CHAIRMAN SQUARTSOFF: No questions.
21 Any opposition on approval of the action items.

22

23 (No comments)

24

25 CHAIRMAN SQUARTSOFF: Not hearing any,
26 so moved. Okay. We are in invitation for public
27 comments. Do we have anybody out there in the public
28 that would like to comment? If you do, move up to the
29 mike, please.

30

31 (No comments)

32

33 CHAIRMAN SQUARTSOFF: Not hearing any.
34 That's fine. Thank you all. I assume we must be doing
35 all right then if we don't have any public comments out
36 there. Thank you all for that. Regional management
37 body reports. We can start around the table with --
38 Doug, you guys are part of it, too, right? So we'll
39 start with Doug here on my left. I'm a left-hander, so
40 I'm always going to start on my left. Thank you.

41

42 MR. ALCORN: I guess I'll report for
43 the Fish and Wildlife Service and for the Staff. The
44 report for the Staff is that we have a vacancy now in
45 our Staff. That vacancy is Cynthia Wentworth retired
46 about two months ago. She headed up the Harvest Survey
47 Committee, harvest survey work and she was working for
48 the committee, which was chaired by Austin, and that is
49 opening up an opportunity for this Council to have a
50 discussion on structuring the harvest survey and the

1 work of the committee. So that's an opportunity that I
2 think this Council is going to have to consider.
3 Rather than the Fish and Wildlife Service just fill the
4 position, I would like to invite some discussion by the
5 Council at some point and maybe in executive session we
6 can have that discussion for staffing because we do
7 have a staff review, performance review in the
8 executive session under 11(a). So that's something
9 that's happening at the Staff level for the AMBCC.

10

11 For the Fish and Wildlife Service, we
12 have a new staffing arrangement also. Russ Oates is
13 now the division chief of the Division of Migratory
14 Bird Management, so we welcome Russ. He was formerly
15 the branch chief for the Waterfowl Management branch
16 and now he's the division chief. He replaced Bob
17 Leedy, who retired a year ago, so we're proud to have
18 Russ in that position. Russ is in the process now of
19 filling that position behind him that left another
20 vacancy. So that's what's happening in Fish and
21 Wildlife Service.

22

23 CHAIRMAN SQUARTSOFF: Thank you, Doug.
24 Joe.

25

26 MR. HICKS: Again, I'm from the Copper
27 River area. Just a little bit of background about
28 myself. I'm from Mentasta and that's where I was born
29 and raised. It's the upper Copper River. I guess maybe
30 that's where the mix-up comes from. Anyhow, I
31 represent the Copper River Region. That's pretty much
32 from Mentasta, what we call the headwaters people, all
33 the way down to let's say the gulf or Cordova.

34

35 Anyhow, the Copper River Region, I'm
36 sure that a lot of you can probably attest to it, but
37 there's been a lot of effects on what you might call
38 global warming, climate change. There's critics out
39 there that say that it's not even a fact. Anyhow,
40 we've experienced a lot of just dry weather. In other
41 words, very little rain. Meaning a lot of our mud
42 puddles, a lot of our waters are just pretty much down
43 to almost nothing. Even the lakes and the ponds are
44 just dried up. There's nothing but grass. So I think
45 that's a real picture that we really need to seriously
46 take a look at. Not just now, but I mean it's
47 something that is really serious. In that regards,
48 what we are looking at currently now is in water
49 resources. In other words, how can we preserve water.
50 Not just for human consumption, but for habitat

1 conservation/preservation.

2

3 Given that, we held our regional
4 meeting back in May. We need to continue to
5 restructure that particular regional body. It's hard
6 to get people in our particular region together,
7 especially when they live like 200 miles apart and
8 stuff like that, especially just to hold a meeting.
9 It's hard to do. So that's something that we need to
10 really work on here, is our next regional meeting.

11

12 Currently we're doing our duck survey.
13 We have six villages that are in the picture of doing
14 the survey, the last leg of it. In other words, the
15 fall hunting is to be completed somewhere by the end of
16 this month. Hopefully we get more data that's really
17 lacking for our area on the books. That's all I have.

18

19 CHAIRMAN SQUARTSOFF: Thank you, Joe.

20 Taqulik.

21

22 MS. HEPA: Good morning. Again, I'm
23 Taqulik Hepa and I work for the North Slope Borough and
24 representing the North Slope Region. As Joeneal
25 mentioned, this summer it's been a very warm, dry
26 summer. This is the first time in my lifetime that
27 I've noticed that we didn't have any snow or rain from
28 July through August. It just finally snowed the other
29 day. It was a pretty unusual summer.

30

31 Spring geese hunting and duck hunting
32 for the summer, both went well. Hunters were very
33 content about the hunt that did occur. Because of the
34 warmer summer, it was a couple weeks ago we had several
35 days of 60 degree weather up on the Slope and we have a
36 lot of White-fronted Geese, some Brant and small birds
37 that are sticking around, which is pretty unusual.
38 Typically we don't hunt birds this time of year, so a
39 lot of the geese have moved into the community, in
40 between houses, at the school, so we're seeing a lot of
41 that.

42

43 Also I think it's important to mention
44 that right now we have a tundra fire up on the Slope
45 and from BLM I've heard it was the largest fire that
46 happened in the state of Alaska this year. We can smell
47 it in Barrow every now and then depending on the wind
48 direction, but that's in the foothills of the Brooks
49 Range between the Killik and the Anaktuvuk Rivers. You
50 can see it on the satellite.

1 Through outreach, Robert Suydam has
2 done a couple radio shows. People calling, wondering
3 what the geese were doing in town. So we talked about
4 what happened this summer in regards to it being warm
5 and did some outreach on this management body, which
6 was really good.

7
8 We did hold our regional meeting in
9 Wainwright in August. We were fortunate to have law
10 enforcement come, Staff from the Service, including
11 Fred and Tim Jennings, come up to Wainwright and have a
12 meeting. One of the main reasons we had it there is
13 because Wainwright had been pretty vocal about issues
14 that come with bird hunting, so we thought it was
15 appropriate to travel to the village and have a
16 meeting. We're thinking about maybe next year going to
17 a different community if the budget allows to have
18 another meeting. I figured that's one way to connect
19 with the communities because there's only so much
20 outreach that you can do. We had a good turnout.
21 Local people asked a lot of good questions, so I was
22 very pleased with that.

23
24 This summer and spring we did have a
25 presence of law enforcement on the North Slope. Of
26 course, there are issues that are going to come up, but
27 we're working with law enforcement staff on that. They
28 were basically doing more outreach than writing
29 citations and they will report the outcomes of that
30 during their presentation.

31
32 I do hope, because law enforcement is
33 new on the North Slope and we heard a lot of concerns,
34 people talking on the VHF and CB about their presence
35 on the North Slope, but I think it's very important for
36 them to come back to the community to talk to them
37 about what they're doing up there maybe after this
38 season. They did indicate to our city mayor that they
39 were going to do that, so people ask me when they're
40 coming up. So just a message for your supervisor to
41 think about when we could schedule that.

42
43 And I wanted to thank Patty Herman and
44 others that traveled back East and to Washington,
45 Spokane, to support our proposals that we submitted
46 last spring and that went very well. I apologize for
47 not being able to be there, but I really wanted to
48 thank you guys on behalf of our people because those
49 two proposals are very important to our people and they
50 were glad to hear that they did pass.

1 While we were in Wainwright, the main
2 issues -- hopefully this next meeting we have this
3 winter we'll re-look at the regulations and one area of
4 concern that we had that came out from Wainwright was
5 the boundaries issue. When we look at the boundaries,
6 it's split into three different units and in some
7 communities you're hunting in two different units with
8 two different regulations. So we would like to work
9 with the communities to make the boundaries more
10 appropriate to their actual hunting area so they're not
11 hunting in two different units.

12
13 We are currently conducting the harvest
14 survey and that's going very well. Michael Peterson,
15 our subsistence coordinator, he's overseeing that. All
16 communities, except for Barrow, are -- Barrow is going
17 to be a challenge, but we have faith that we'll be able
18 to get that done.

19
20 And then one last thing. I just want
21 to briefly mention that we did have an issue with a
22 subsistence fisherman's net being pulled by a Service
23 employee. I won't go into the details, but I just
24 wanted to say that the issue was resolved and I wanted
25 to thank specifically Laverne Smith, assistant regional
26 director, and Tom Melius and Ted Swem (ph), the
27 supervisor of the employee, for taking this issue very
28 seriously. It did impact a subsistence fisherman.
29 There were a couple Yellow-billed Loons that were in
30 the net and they did release them. It was resolved and
31 it was resolved quickly. They did write a letter of
32 apology and sent it to the Arctic Sounder to be in the
33 Arctic Sounder so people know that they did give their
34 sincere apology. So I just wanted to thank the Service
35 for taking such quick responsible action in that
36 regard. That's all I have. Thank you.

37
38 CHAIRMAN SQUARTSOFF: Thank you,
39 Taqulik. Mike.

40
41 MR. SMITH: That was certainly
42 impressive, Taqulik, as always.

43
44 CHAIRMAN SQUARTSOFF: That shows, Mike,
45 that somebody is doing something.

46
47 MR. SMITH: Yeah, certainly. I
48 appreciate that. Mike Smith, Tanana Chiefs Conference.
49 I wanted to apologize for not being at the last
50 meeting. At TCC we were involved in a tragedy that we

1 were dealing with at that time, so we apologize for not
2 being able to attend the last meeting, but look forward
3 to getting up to speed on what's been going on.

4
5 We, too, had some enforcement issues
6 this year here in this region. Of course, it goes back
7 to the question of duck stamps not being available in
8 the communities when the hunt was occurring and things
9 of that nature again. I'm not sure to what extent
10 enforcement actions were taken. Maybe I could get some
11 insight into that this year as to that issue. Once
12 again I think it brings up the issue once again of
13 people getting in trouble for hunting without having
14 the availability of duck stamps in their communities.
15 I guess that's going to be coming up again in a report
16 by staff so we look forward to that as well.

17
18 I certainly don't have a report near as
19 in depth as Taqulik's, but look forward to getting back
20 involved with the Bird Council. Thank you.

21
22 CHAIRMAN SQUARTSOFF: Thank you, Mike.
23 Molly.

24
25 MS. CHYTHLOOK: Good morning. I'm
26 Molly Chythlook and I work for Bristol Bay Native
27 Association under their natural resources program or
28 department. Under Bristol Bay Native Association we
29 have 31 communities. I'll start off, I guess, with the
30 update of the bird surveys because that's up in front
31 for us now. The migratory bird surveys, the Natural
32 Resources Department just hired a subsistence
33 coordinator in March to help with this project because
34 when I came on board I was involved with it in spite of
35 other stuff that I was doing to try to keep this going
36 and held a regional meeting too. But now we have a
37 subsistence coordinator that's overseeing this project.
38 Because he's a commercial fisherman, he was on
39 commercial fish leave from May to August and so he is
40 hard at this project now and he's covering -- we have
41 16 communities that we're doing the surveys for and
42 he's pretty well covered a majority of that. He's
43 going to be working on three communities that he hasn't
44 contacted. Well, he's contacted them, but he needs to
45 be in person.

46
47 The thing that I'm really stressing is
48 for the coordinator to be in the villages in person to
49 train these surveyors because if they're not trained
50 correctly, the instant they get confronted from the

1 communities, they back off and then the survey project
2 for that community kind of sloughs off. So that's one
3 thing that I'm encouraging and making sure that the
4 surveyors that are hired in the communities know what
5 they're supposed to be doing so that they will be
6 comfortable if they get confronted by village folk,
7 that they'll continue to do the survey.

8

9 As far as our weather in Bristol Bay,
10 we've had rain and I was hoping that at least we'd have
11 sunshine up here, but we've had so much rain, our lakes
12 and rivers are overflowing. It's affecting our
13 spawning grounds. It's affecting the hunting season,
14 our overall large land mammals and even birds, because
15 it's miserable for the hunters to travel in this
16 weather. In fact, we had kind of a typhoon or
17 something go through our region a couple days ago where
18 we had 50-60 mile an hour winds. I wish I could share
19 some of our rain to Joe's region.

20

21 The regional meetings, soon after our
22 subsistence coordinator was hired, that's the first
23 project he did was hold a regional meeting. In spite
24 of a few reps that we have for the 16 communities,
25 they're so widespread that one community -- well,
26 mainly two communities kind of eat up our travel budget
27 because just to bring one person from
28 Iliamna/Nondalton, if we don't find another charter
29 that's going up there, it's \$1,500 round trip. So we
30 need to do something.

31

32 We're getting ready to -- well, soon
33 after the survey project is over for our region, we're
34 going to be holding another regional meeting, Council
35 meeting. With my region we have a normal survey period
36 which starts April through end of October and that's
37 with the Southwest Region from Iliamna communities to
38 Dillingham and our area. Togiak National Wildlife
39 Refuge takes care of Togiak, Twin Hills and two of
40 their villages in the west. Where we're having a little
41 bit of -- it's not a problem, but it just kind of
42 offsets our schedule, our peninsula communities,
43 Southwest communities, the survey project goes almost
44 year around. It goes from April to March and then
45 there's a little break before their season goes again.
46 This process started before I came on board. I guess
47 it's because they harvest birds year round, so their
48 survey starts from the normal period and then it ends
49 -- like this survey period, their survey period is
50 going to end in March of '08. This is the first time

1 I'm dealing with this, so I'm just going with the
2 process and we'll see what happens. But we're going to
3 be ending up our Southwest section the end of October.

4
5 At our last Council meeting -- I know
6 when I first held my first Council meeting June of '06
7 there was a concern about not being able to read the
8 data, the harvest data, and because I couldn't really
9 follow the data I requested Cynthia to be on
10 teleconference to explain the harvest data to the
11 Council and we did the same thing at our last Council
12 meeting. I guess we'll deal with our next round when
13 it comes.

14
15 It seems that the bird flu issue is not
16 as scary as it used to be. It seems like it's kind of
17 simmering down. Our harvests are coming back up again.
18 When that bird flu issue was rampant, people were
19 really not certain how to deal with their harvests.
20 There was some households that still harvested, but
21 hopefully this round will be better for the harvesters.

22
23
24 That's long enough. Thank you.

25
26 CHAIRMAN SQUARTSOFF: Thank you very
27 much, Molly. Good report. Nathan, right?

28
29 MR. SOBALOFF: Yes. Good morning
30 everyone. Nathan Sobaloff again sitting in for Matt
31 Kookesh with Southeast Alaska Inter-tribal Fish and
32 Wildlife Commission. Our organization over the last
33 year has been working on two things I'll bring up here
34 today, but before I start, in regards to some of the
35 things that Molly and Joeneal talked about as far as
36 surveying, our outfit has been doing surveys with Matt
37 Kookesh and things he's affiliated with for a number of
38 years. I know that within the realm of the Migratory
39 Birds Co-Management Council and Indigenous People's
40 Commission on Marine Mammals and everything like that
41 and Alaska Department of Fish and Game and the Division
42 of Subsistence, everyone runs into many problems with
43 surveyors and surveying.

44
45 Maybe the Council at some point in the
46 future can spearhead and kind of gather up a whole
47 bunch of people from all these different outfits and
48 talk about what works best in Alaska for doing these
49 subsistence-type surveys. I've worked in this field
50 for close to 10 years now and we all have good ideas

1 that we could probably share. There's always one
2 person in each community who is really good at doing
3 the surveys and they end up doing all the surveys and
4 when you lose that person, it really hurts the kind of
5 information we're trying to gather up. That's just my
6 thoughts on that.

7
8 As far as Southeast Inter-tribal's work
9 in migratory birds, earlier in the spring there was
10 quite a bit of ruffling of feathers going on in the
11 Eagle feather realm. That's something that Matthew
12 Kookesh has been really curious, issues quite dear to
13 his heart and we did quite a bit of work with the Fish
14 and Wildlife Service on trying to come up with some
15 better posters and I think that work has been going
16 pretty well for public outreach posters as far as the
17 legality and the process in which Eagle feathers are
18 managed. They've tried to work with Senator Lisa
19 Murkowski on getting legislation passed to make the
20 gathering of Eagle feathers easier for Alaska Natives,
21 especially because we have a huge surplus of Eagle
22 feathers lying around at least in Southeast. The
23 system requires that you send your Eagle feathers off
24 to a repository and then they get sent back. I guess
25 it's quite a headache of a problem.

26
27 That work went pretty well for a while
28 until Senator Lisa Murkowski's office discovered that
29 there wasn't much support over in Indian country in
30 that realm and the whole enthusiasm kind of petered out
31 on that project. I know one of my co-workers, Don
32 Bremner, sent out over 150 emails throughout Indian
33 country trying to gain support for the Eagle feather
34 proposals, things like that, and he only got one reply
35 back from someone in the Dakotas that said I used to
36 remember a Bremner so and so, are you related to them.
37 All his hard work. That's what his path was.

38
39 Then the last thing was we had our
40 migratory bird issue meetings just last week in Angoon
41 and at the meetings they came up with 17 point lists of
42 concerns, but I'll only trouble you with six of them.
43 This was community members and our commissioners. This
44 is for the Co-Management Council just to consider. I
45 have the list I can pass out to you guys, but just the
46 six main points was they'd like some clarification in
47 the migratory bird lines of authority and legislative
48 input changes and that was kind of directed from the
49 Eagle feather thing.

50

1 They'd like to see a little more TEK
2 stuff and maybe producing a migratory bird handbook and
3 some other kind of outreach projects. That kind of
4 came up after someone in our staff was trying to drum
5 up some support for some of these migratory bird
6 proposals and they called a local tribe and someone who
7 answered the phone said, oh, we don't even deal with
8 migratory birds as far as I know. So that really
9 concerned Southeast Inter-tribal staff.

10
11 I wasn't at that meeting and they said
12 the commissioners would like maybe a changing from the
13 Alaska Migratory Bird Co-management Council in name to
14 the Alaska Native Migratory Bird Co-management Council.
15 I can't speak to what they were thinking about that. I
16 don't know what this group thinks, but that's what the
17 commissioners would like to see or one of their points.

18
19 They also decided they see a need to
20 have more detailed plans regarding the issues of
21 climate change on migratory birds in Alaska. I know
22 that's a huge thing and a huge undertaking.

23
24 Then again, relating to Eagle feathers,
25 there's a need for Federal agencies to do better
26 consulting with tribes prior to listing and de-listing
27 migratory birds as being threatened or endangered.

28
29 The last point I'll bring up is that
30 the Southeast Inter-tribal staff and commissioners
31 would like to see better or equal hunting and gathering
32 for Alaska Natives in all the National Parks of Alaska.
33 I know that in some of these proposals that I'll talk
34 about a little later on it seems to me each tribe or
35 village must go to each park and ask for their own
36 specific exemption to come in and harvest birds or
37 eggs. Rather than one fell swoop, they really want to
38 micro-manage everything and especially in the Southeast
39 Region where you have people from many different clans
40 living in many different communities, it seems to us
41 that as far as getting these exemptions and things for
42 harvesting that those are only approached on a clan-by-
43 clan or community-by-community basis, when, in reality,
44 all of Southeast should have rights to a certain thing.

45
46 So that's some of the things that
47 Southeast Inter-tribal brought up at our migratory bird
48 meetings and the issues we worked on this year.

49
50 CHAIRMAN SQUARTSOFF: All right. Thank

1 you, Nathan. Peter.

2

3 MR. DEVINE: Peter Devine,
4 Aleutian/Pribilof Islands Association. I represent 13
5 villages in our region. We've had one informational
6 meeting in Cold Bay in '06 and we had -- who was all
7 there. Doug was there, I think Bill was there, Fred,
8 and that was when the bird flu stuff was going around.
9 We went into Cold Bay and nobody showed. Everybody was
10 out hunting, so I guess everything was okay down there.

11

12

13 But as far as our regional management
14 body goes, we have teleconferences since we all can't
15 get together. Out of 13 villages, we have four or five
16 that respond every time but the rest just don't give a
17 darn, I guess. So, of the four or five that we had,
18 there was no major concerns or anything that they seen.
19 So, I'll keep it short. Thank you.

20

21 Oh, and on the outreach -- or not the
22 outreach, but the survey committee, I believe we should
23 get together and maybe get something that works for us
24 because I don't agree with the numbers they give us.
25 Out of 13 villages for '05, we had 26,000 seabirds that
26 we harvested according to the report. That means each
27 village would have had to take 2,000 birds. When you
28 only have 30, 40 people in some of those villages, I
29 think this needs some work.

30

31 CHAIRMAN SQUARTSOFF: Thank you, Peter.
32 Patty.

33

34 MS. BROWN-SCHWALENBERG: Good morning.
35 The Gulf of Alaska Region, we had our regional
36 management body in late September. we did replace our
37 primary representative with Patrick Norman and I'll be
38 getting a letter to Doug regarding that. He's the
39 chairman of our board. He's also the chairman of the
40 Port Graham Village Council, so I'm sure he'll do a
41 good job.

42

43 The harvest season went well. It was
44 noted that some of the birds were later than usual, but
45 still within the seasons we had set. The villages said
46 that they would go back and take a look at those season
47 dates and meet with their villages to make sure they
48 were still valid, so we may have proposals this year.
49 I'm not sure.

50

1 We had a lengthy discussion about the
2 regulations process. Since I had just gone to Spokane,
3 Washington, I felt it was important for the board to
4 understand how important it is to participate in the
5 regulations of migratory birds, especially in the
6 spring season. It opened up some eyes. I was kind of
7 surprised how little people did know the impact that
8 the Migratory Bird Co-management Council has on the
9 overall management of migratory birds. So that was a
10 pretty good exercise that we did. That's about it.
11 Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

12
13 CHAIRMAN SQUARTSOFF: All right. Thank
14 you, Patty. Ron, I don't know if you have anything for
15 the State.

16
17 MR. CLARKE: Thank you, Mr. Chairman.
18 Just to acknowledge the service of Matt Robus who
19 retired a couple of months ago. With Matt's departure,
20 he's been replaced by Doug Larson, who has spent close
21 to 20 years in the department. Some of that time in
22 Kotzebue, some of that in Ketchikan. He, like I, is a
23 graduate of University of Alaska Fairbanks. He and I
24 went through grad school about the same time. Doug is
25 going to be an excellent man at the helm of the
26 Division of Wildlife Conservation, so we're glad to
27 have him on board.

28
29 I guess I'd like to associate myself
30 with Molly's comments about we'd be happy to export a
31 little precipitation to places that need it. We set an
32 all-time snowfall record in Juneau this year and it's
33 been a pretty wet summer and a pretty wet fall, too. I
34 don't know if that's an artifact of global climate
35 change or what, but it's pretty wet down in Juneau.

36
37 I'd like to echo what Patty said. I
38 did have the opportunity to go to the Spokane
39 conference as well. While there's been a fair bit of
40 progress, I think subsistence and life in Alaska in
41 general is largely a mystery to a lot of the people on
42 the Pacific Flyway Council and whatever we can do to
43 help them understand what life here is like will go a
44 long way. I was very impressed with the impact that
45 the AMBCC has in that arena. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

46
47 CHAIRMAN SQUARTSOFF: Thank you, Ron.
48 Now I guess it's my turn from the Sun'aq Kodiak Region.
49 I represent -- it was six villages. We now have three
50 more, we added three more tribal councils, so there's

1 nine of us down there in Kodiak. It may sound small,
2 but weather-wise, to come out to the villages or have
3 people come in even for our regional meetings -- you
4 know, you guys are talking big areas you guys have and
5 a lot of communities. We have a small bunch of
6 communities, but it's so hard to get people in and out
7 and stuff down there, so we're kind of in the same boat
8 as you guys even though we sound like we're real small.
9 It's hard to work these things out a lot.

10

11 I went down along with Patty. We had
12 one proposal in there from Kodiak. We had two actually
13 in our spring meeting, but we withdrew one because of
14 legal issues. The one we took down worked out real
15 well and passed. We did form kind of a -- well, we
16 added onto a committee that we had and I need to get
17 that from Bill if I can. I'm not seeing it in our
18 packet, the people that are assigned to different
19 committees. I'm trying to figure out the one that we
20 added onto. Peter Devine, Sky and myself and somebody
21 else got added onto that one so we could work on our
22 other proposal for registration and all that. I was
23 kind of lost in my report on who's in that committee.
24 Now that my season has wound down there, I run a
25 charter business and all that, I'll be able to get back
26 on our issues here with migratory bird stuff.

27

28 We will be holding another meeting, a
29 regional meeting down there shortly, probably via
30 teleconference. I need to bring this proposal
31 withdrawal up to the regional body down there and we'll
32 get going with that. Hopefully we'll get going with
33 Sky. I guess he worked on the shark card issue, which
34 is the halibut one, and he'll be able to help us on
35 this other thing we're trying to do for registration,
36 you know, and all that.

37

38 But, otherwise, that's pretty much it.
39 I was pretty impressed with Bob. Also we need to
40 mention, you know, besides Patty, Bob, Doug was down
41 there, Russ is down there, you know, and I met Ron down
42 there in Spokane, but we also go down to D.C. too.
43 These guys do a great job for this Council. That's why
44 Ron was saying how well known AMBCC is becoming. We
45 ran into one little thing, but I guess I'll probably do
46 that on the report which is coming up next. But these
47 guys do real well for us down there and we really,
48 really appreciate the work they do in their committees.
49 They report to the main Council and all that. Sorry,
50 Tom. I forgot Tom Rothe is right down there with them

1 and doing a lot of work too, so I really appreciate it.

2

3 And I appreciate all of you guys's
4 reports. It sounds like there's a lot of good work
5 being done out in the regions and that's what makes
6 this Council work. It's coming from the region on up
7 to here and that makes a big difference, especially for
8 our people. So thank you all.

9

10 I think with that maybe we could take
11 about a 15-minute break. Thank you.

12

13 (Off record)

14

15 (On record)

16

17 CHAIRMAN SQUARTSOFF: I'd like to call
18 this meeting back to order. It's Patty's and my
19 reports from the SRC and Pacific Flyway Council
20 meeting. So, Patty, I guess I'll let you go first.

21

22 MS. BROWN-SCHWALENBERG: Thank you,
23 Herman. As we've been talking throughout the morning,
24 we did attend the Service Regulations Committee meeting
25 in Washington, D.C. and the Pacific Flyway Council
26 meeting in Spokane on behalf of the Migratory Bird Co-
27 management Council to support the proposals from the
28 North Slope and also Kodiak.

29

30 As always it's an education process
31 both ways. The biggest thing I think we found out this
32 time was, like Ron was saying, the lack of
33 understanding about subsistence in Alaska and the
34 importance of the spring hunt and harvest to Alaska
35 Natives.

36

37 The Pacific Flyway Council developed a
38 new committee called the Non-Game Committee and we
39 decided this year I think for the first time to take
40 the proposals to them so they would get an idea of what
41 we're doing and who we are and the kinds of issues that
42 we have. They, for the first go round, did not support
43 the proposals that we put forth because they felt they
44 didn't have enough information and we weren't sure what
45 the process was. Fortunately, Russ Oates stepped in
46 and went back to the meeting after they had taken their
47 action, convinced them to put it back on the agenda and
48 after some further information and providing additional
49 information from his office, they finally did support
50 the proposals. Whether they support them or not does

1 not really make a difference in the long run of whether
2 or not it goes to the Service Regs Committee, but it
3 makes a difference as far as the support that the
4 Migratory Bird Co-management Council gets and the
5 credibility we have. I think that was the most
6 important thing.

7
8 So we did agree, after all was said and
9 done, to put on some type of a workshop on subsistence
10 to the Pacific Flyway Council at the meeting next year,
11 so Fred will be working on that along with Doug. I'm
12 sure any of the other Council members who are
13 interested would be more than welcome to help out with
14 that.

15
16 We talked about this before and I went
17 to the meetings last year as well and I would like to
18 again stress the importance of having migratory bird
19 reps at these meetings. It's good to have the same
20 people there for a continuity aspect, but I think it's
21 also good to rotate another person in just so they can
22 get that education and understand the impact that we
23 have. I can't even say enough how powerful that was to
24 have people there that can speak to the culture and the
25 traditional knowledge and the scientific research and
26 harvest monitoring that's going on because they really
27 don't understand the vastness of Alaska, the diversity
28 of the cultures, the reliance on the subsistence food
29 and the desire for the subsistence food, so that's all
30 got to be relayed it seems to me every meeting.

31
32 It's been several years since the
33 Migratory Bird Co-management Council has been in
34 existence, but we're still relatively a new player on
35 the block. So I think that our involvement in these
36 meetings is still pretty important and we need to make
37 sure that we have two people at these meetings every
38 year if at all possible.

39
40 As always, since I live in Anchorage,
41 it's easy for me to get to these meetings, less costly
42 for me to get to these meetings, I'm always willing to
43 step in on behalf of any of the regions to support
44 their proposals, but it's always good to have those
45 people there as well. Thank you.

46
47 CHAIRMAN SQUARTSOFF: Thank you, Patty.
48 The reason I let Patty go first is so I won't have to
49 say so much. Patty did a wonderful job down there.
50 Even just our presence down there, even before we

1 speak, a lot of guys come up to us and question us and
2 everything else on behalf of the Council and they're
3 really excited for us up here, you know, for the AMBCC,
4 having a council and everything else. They see the
5 things we're doing so far and reporting to them. The
6 proposals that we've been putting out to them, they're
7 real happy with it, they're really impressed on the
8 work this Council is doing here, plus the Staff. I'm
9 not going to forget the Staff. They've been doing a
10 great job for us.

11
12 Then we got to meet, I think, the new
13 head director down there. I can't remember what his
14 name was.

15
16 UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER: Gale Hall.

17
18 CHAIRMAN SQUARTSOFF: Yeah, Gale Hall.
19 He talked a little bit about education, educating and
20 stuff like that, and I had the opportunity to throw
21 onto him that we do that a lot in our Native way of
22 life. So we got him pretty excited on that, that we do
23 a lot of this education stuff out in our villages and
24 our regions and everything, so he was really impressed
25 with that. So we got to help him along with that
26 stuff.

27
28 The thing that I was going to mention
29 earlier, I said we had that slight snag, Patty already
30 covered that. That was that Non-Game Bird Committee
31 and we appreciate the efforts of the Staff and people
32 going in there and having them re-talk it. We'll do a
33 good power presentation to them next year and get them
34 up to date a little more on who we are and where we're
35 coming from. Some of the proposals, they wanted to act
36 only on a few of them that just concerned them and that
37 was some of the shorebird things, but we convinced them
38 otherwise.

39
40 So I think it turned out great and I
41 think it will be a lot better for them next year.
42 Their chair came up and apologized to us after their
43 first recess that they had and told us that he was
44 sorry, that they weren't really that familiar, and
45 that's why they were balking at some of the stuff.
46 They worked things out with us and it worked great.

47
48 Like Patty says, it's good for anybody
49 else that might want to step up to the plate and go
50 down there. I enjoy doing it. It gives me kind of a

1 break from my summer season and I love to represent the
2 Council. You guys know me, I'm not bashful to talk.
3 It does help sometimes. Thank you.

4

5 Mike and then Molly.

6

7 MS. CHYTHLOOK: I was just going to ask
8 Patty, one was no subsistence understanding and what
9 was the other one?

10

11 MS. BROWN-SCHWALENBERG: Just Alaska
12 geography and then the diversity of the cultures in
13 Alaska and their different harvest practices.

14

15 I also forgot to mention that we did
16 put in a plug for additional funding for the Co-
17 management Council as long as the director of the
18 service was there.

19

20 CHAIRMAN SQUARTSOFF: Molly, the one
21 that was no understanding, that was that new committee
22 we just got introduced to, the Non-Game Bird. Mike.

23

24 MR. SMITH: Thank you, Mr. Chairman.
25 I'm not sure if this might be more appropriate for
26 Russ. Russ, could you maybe come to the front.

27

28 CHAIRMAN SQUARTSOFF: Please.

29

30 MR. SMITH: Yeah, please. Thank you.
31 I saw you had your hand up anyway. Something you
32 wanted to say anyway, right? Maybe this will segue
33 into it for you. Maybe you could just explain to me
34 the intention of the Non-Game Committee and how it's
35 going to work in conjunction with the Pacific Flyway
36 Council itself. If I got Patty correct, they are to
37 consider non-game proposals, they make their
38 recommendations, then it goes to the Flyway Council.

39

40 The membership issues I guess I'm a
41 little concerned about. The membership of the Non-Game
42 Committee is comprised of membership of the Flyway
43 Council, is that correct?

44

45 CHAIRMAN SQUARTSOFF: Russ, go ahead.

46

47 MR. OATES: Mr. Chairman. Russ Oates,
48 Fish and Wildlife Service. With regard to the
49 membership, it's very similar to the Game Bird
50 Technical Committee. Each state, and they're 11 member

1 states, has an agency representative and then the Fish
2 and Wildlife Service has one person there. In this
3 case it's Tara Zimmerman out of our Portland office
4 that sort of represents the interests of the Fish and
5 Wildlife Service. The Pacific Flyway representative,
6 Bob Trost, also flip-flops back and forth between the
7 game and the non-game technical committees as the
8 issues dictate a need for his time in the various ones.
9 So basically they deal with regulatory proposals
10 primarily, but also other issues relative to non-game
11 and such things as a permitting arena and also trying
12 to bring a flyway-wide north/south concept to other
13 issues relative to non-game species. Their primary
14 charge at this point -- they're a young organization.
15 This is either the second or third year that they've
16 even been in existence. So they're feeling kind of
17 growing pains, kind of like this group has done over
18 time, and they're just learning their way around.

19
20 While they have been charged first and
21 foremost with regulatory issues with regard to non-game
22 birds. I think as this body matures, it will probably
23 deal with other non-regulatory issues as well. Anyway,
24 that's their principal purpose at this point. When I
25 get through here, I would like to invite Bob Trost or
26 my supervisor, Doug Alcorn, if they want to add
27 something to what I've already said about what their
28 function is to add a little to that.

29
30 Just a couple thoughts with regard to
31 what Patty and Herman described with regard to the
32 reception of the regulatory proposals from the Co-
33 Management Council. My sense is that this group is
34 very interested in supporting the proposals that this
35 body produces for consideration ultimately by the
36 Service Regulations Committee. These people are non-
37 game bird biologists. Just like on the game side,
38 they're waterfowl biologists primarily. They're
39 trained in the sciences just as the waterfowl
40 biologists are and they have the same sorts of
41 expectations about data and things like that supporting
42 management.

43
44 The concept for a harvest of the
45 species they're working with is a little bit of a new
46 thing for them to get used to, so they want to have as
47 much reassurance that what is being proposed, whether
48 it's a continuation of a long-standing tradition or
49 even a new thing, is something that is sustainable in
50 the long-term by the populations. So, given the way

1 biologists can be prickly about things like data and
2 stuff on occasion, you know, they want to be
3 comfortable that they're not voting for and presiding
4 over an activity which will ultimately represent a
5 demise of a population of birds.

6
7 There was, I guess, insufficient
8 communication about what these proposals represented
9 and I think they felt that they were kind of being
10 given a pop quiz and they didn't really feel
11 comfortable that the information that they received
12 supporting the documents, either that they had enough
13 time to really talk about it among themselves and
14 consider it or that maybe there was enough numbers on
15 the table to make them feel comfortable. So what we
16 did was beat the bushes a little bit more and try and
17 see if there was a little more supporting information
18 that we could provide for them and give them some
19 reassurance. Basically we were sort of codifying
20 activities that had been ongoing and there was really
21 no evidence there was any concern.

22
23 I think the highlight of it was that
24 the subsistence concept and the harvest concept was new
25 to them. I think they were feeling a little bit of
26 angst about it all. One of the things we did, I think
27 Fred Armstrong was there and what we call it was
28 subsistence 101 that we're proposing when we go back to
29 the meeting next year that we're going to give them --
30 Fred and company are going to give them a pretty
31 detailed overview of subsistence.

32
33 I'll mention too that one of the things
34 that was extremely helpful and beneficial was having
35 Patty and Herman there and they expressed themselves
36 extremely well and I think made a huge amount of
37 progress with the group just in that short period of
38 time. I think the key thing is it's incumbent upon
39 those of us that travel from Alaska to participate in
40 these meetings to ensure that the proceedings of this
41 group are provided to that technical group in advance
42 with sufficient explanation and a little more
43 orientation about what subsistence is all about. I
44 think it will be much smoother and I think we're going
45 to be okay.

46
47 MR. SMITH: If I might just follow up,
48 Mr. Chairman. I was just curious about this committee
49 and I was just wondering are they going to -- by virtue
50 of the fact that they're going to start considering

1 these proposals, have to start -- I'm just trying to
2 think of harvest limits, harvestable surpluses on
3 shorebirds, have to start taking those type of things
4 into consideration and, if so, those are considerations
5 that they normally didn't have to deal with before and
6 what does that portend for the future, I guess.

7

8 And then just quickly if you could, the
9 Flyway Councils are funded by the Fish and Wildlife
10 Service and then these subcommittees are also funded by
11 the Fish and Wildlife Service?

12

13 MR. OATES: I really can't -- I think
14 most of the activities of the member states are funded
15 by the state agencies, I believe. I would really like
16 to lateral this one to Doug or Trost. But with regard
17 to the bag limits or things like that, I can't really
18 see that far into the future. I'm not sure that the
19 technical data at this point in time are really present
20 to support that kind of view of things. I'm just
21 speculating at this point. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

22

23 CHAIRMAN SQUARTSOFF: Thank you, Russ.
24 Before you start, Tom. Mike, this committee now is
25 brand new and they're in the same situation we were
26 six, seven years ago, so I wouldn't jump to too many
27 conclusions. Go ahead, Tom.

28

29 MR. SMITH: Mr. Chairman. I appreciate
30 the fact that they are brand new, but certainly how
31 they go about their business and stuff is what concerns
32 me because certainly we will be the only people that
33 they will be dealing with who will be harvesting these
34 animals that they're specifically charged with
35 regulating, so I think at some point in the future we
36 will be coming back to this committee and having to
37 deal with them on issues.

38

39 CHAIRMAN SQUARTSOFF: Right. Thank
40 you. Go ahead, Tom.

41

42 MR. ROTHE: Thank you, Mr. Chairman.
43 Just a couple clarifications. The Flyway Council
44 established its Non-Game Bird Committee in June of
45 2006, so they are brand new and they're learning about
46 subsistence. One thing to keep in mind is that the
47 Flyway Council members are the State wildlife agencies,
48 like the Fish and Game Departments. We pay our own
49 way. The relationship between us and the Fish and
50 Wildlife Service is we have an MOU on how we're going

1 to relate, but the council itself is made up of State
2 agencies. As Russ said, they've now contributed a non-
3 game biologist to work on that committee.

4
5 The way this all comes together is that
6 the Non-Game Committee makes recommendations and then I
7 work with the Game Committee and those all go to the
8 same Council members. In this case, it will be Ron
9 Clarke for us. So we conference up and make sure
10 everything goes smooth so we don't have two committees
11 fighting each other over recommendations.

12
13 And I just wanted to get this out.
14 Matt Robus was really sensitive Fred to this
15 miscommunication thing that happened in Spokane and so
16 he got with Fred and I think Herman and Patty and
17 actually put on the record in the minutes, which I'll
18 give you, things we have pledged to do to improve
19 communication and that includes our department non-game
20 person, Mary Raab, will start coming to the Co-
21 Management Council meetings. Russ's non-game staff
22 will show up here more often and get engaged with any
23 proposals dealing with non-game birds, and then we will
24 work together to bring information and messages to the
25 flyway groups at that stage. So I'll get that handout
26 hopefully at lunch for you to see that.

27
28 CHAIRMAN SQUARTSOFF: Thank you, Tom.
29 Yeah, Mike, it got pretty well covered down there and
30 everything real well, so it got handled real good. I
31 think with them just getting started like we did seven
32 years ago, things will work out great. You know, with
33 more education to them and everything else, I think
34 things will be fine.

35
36 The next item on the agenda is variable
37 season closures and that's, I believe, Doug.

38
39 MR. ALCORN: Thank you, Mr. Chairman.
40 The next three items, 10(b), (c) and (d) are items that
41 we had on the spring agenda.

42
43 CHAIRMAN SQUARTSOFF: Wait. Could I
44 cut in. Fred, are you online? Are you there, Fred?
45 Hey, sorry, I was thinking of trying to find out if you
46 were there a while back, but we get carried away once
47 in a while as you know. We want to welcome you on
48 board. If you have anything to throw in.....

49
50 MR. ARMSTRONG: (Indiscernible -

1 simultaneous) think we'll make do.

2

3 CHAIRMAN SQUARTSOFF: I can't hear you
4 too well. But if you have anything to throw in on any
5 of this stuff, please let us know, okay. Thank you.

6

7 MR. ARMSTRONG: Okay, I will. I'll
8 listen in and cut in when I can.

9

10 CHAIRMAN SQUARTSOFF: I think we have
11 you down for the nesting season. That's about the
12 third one down here. Okay, Doug. Sorry.

13

14 MR. ALCORN: The three items are left
15 over and tabled from our spring meeting and they were
16 follow-up reports or discussions from earlier meetings
17 and primarily the fall meeting from a year ago.
18 Because we were running short of time, Council opted to
19 put them off for this meeting.

20

21 So the first item is a variable season
22 closure and this is an idea that I wanted to put on the
23 table based on some activities that Taqulik and our
24 Fish and Wildlife Service law enforcement people did.
25 They did some outreach meetings and visited Wainwright,
26 I believe it was, was it last summer, Taqulik?

27

28 MS. HEPA: Yes.

29

30 MR. ALCORN: The purpose was to talk
31 about the regulations and do outreach on the whole
32 spring hunt. One of the observations made by our folks
33 that were going up there was that they were there when
34 the season was open, but the water was still frozen.
35 If you recall, spring of 2006 was a late spring and the
36 birds hadn't even arrived yet and yet the season was
37 supposed to be open and then, of course, we have the
38 30-day nesting closure that all the regions have dates
39 they've identified to close for the principal nesting
40 season, which keeps the U.S. in compliance with the
41 treaty with Japan, which is the next time we'll be
42 discussing here.

43

44 The point is that the timing seems to
45 be off. There's a fixed date when -- on the North
46 Slope Region for Wainwright, there's a fixed date when
47 the nesting season closure begins. It was clear to
48 those staff that were there and to some of Taqulik's
49 staff that that date was not going to be consistent
50 with the biology of the birds that year. So it sort of

1 started the discussion of a variable season nesting
2 closure approach like we have instituted in the Y-K
3 Delta Region. Tim Andrew is not here today to talk
4 about how they do that.

5
6 AVCP villages and some of the folks
7 that live in those villages are in direct communication
8 with the Fish and Wildlife Service refuge manager and
9 refuge staff and there is regular communication during
10 the spring. At some point the refuge manager in
11 consultation with Myron, they agree when the season --
12 the 30-day closure should start. Then the contact goes
13 to our regional director who has the authority under
14 the regulations to call for a 30-day closure, so it's a
15 floating date.

16
17 MR. SMITH: So a floating date -- say
18 that again. Based upon when you think the birds are
19 starting to nest.

20
21 MR. ALCORN: Correct.

22
23 MR. SMITH: So they don't fall under
24 the treaty language, per se.

25
26 MR. ALCORN: No, they do.

27
28 MR. SMITH: When do they start?

29
30 MR. ALCORN: That's the whole point.
31 They start -- their biology is dependent on the
32 environment when they begin to breed, obviously. So,
33 rather than a fixed date, AVCP advocated, I don't know,
34 maybe four or five years ago, to allow that date to
35 shift based on the environmental conditions and it was
36 designed to be more responsive to what the birds were
37 actually doing and to what the hunters' needs were.

38
39 MS. SMITH: Is that within the brackets
40 of the treaty?

41
42 MR. ALCORN: The 30-day minimum closure
43 still had to shift with it, so there still had to be --
44 in order to comply with the treaty, it still had to be
45 a 30-day closure. So whenever the date was agreed upon
46 to start the closed season for the nesting season, 30
47 days hence it was closed.

48
49 MR. SMITH: But they would be
50 harvesting up to that point.

1 MR. ALCORN: Correct. So what the
2 outreach meetings the law enforcement folks and
3 Taqulik's folks were involved in led them to have that
4 same discussion, I presume, so I wanted to put it on
5 the table for discussion for the Council just to
6 provide that as another model of a way we can be
7 responsive to the needs of the birds and the hunters.
8 So that if there are environmental conditions that are
9 driving that date, that that date that they actually
10 nest is not close to the date that we have fixed in our
11 regulation, so that the regulations are not as rigid,
12 providing opportunities.

13
14 Of course, all of that -- you know, the
15 model that's in the Y-K Delta is a pretty sophisticated
16 way that they are interacting and there's a lot of on-
17 the-ground observations, there's a lot of
18 communications that are occurring, and then that
19 communication then goes to our regional director, who
20 actually is the one that has the authority to open a
21 season or close a season based on our regulations.

22
23 The discussion item is to express that
24 as an opportunity, but it's always dependent on the
25 ability to actually have the infrastructure to do that.
26 So it may fit in some regions where there is that
27 opportunity, where there is that capability, and maybe
28 other regions it may not be feasible if we don't have
29 enough Staff around, that would be Regional Staff as
30 well as Service or State Staff biologists to work
31 together.

32
33 But that's an opportunity I wanted to
34 put out just for discussion sake. I don't know,
35 Taqulik, you wanted to comment on your experiences last
36 summer or not. But that's it for the agenda item
37 anyway to introduce it.

38
39 CHAIRMAN SQUARTSOFF: Thank you, Doug.
40 Taqulik.

41
42 MS. HEPA: Thank you, Chairman. He is
43 correct that we did have this issue come up, not this
44 summer but the summer before, about the 30-day closure.
45 The hunters are fully aware that it all depends on
46 Mother Nature of when the nesting does occur.

47
48 You know, one hurdle that I see, and I
49 know that it can be worked out, is that on the North
50 Slope we don't have a Service employee who would be

1 communicating with the people. In regards to that, I
2 really think that it would be appropriate to have, you
3 know, for the local people that are on the ground and
4 that are observant of birds nesting to be a part of the
5 solution on when to pick the dates.

6

7 I think it would be -- this topic will
8 be discussed at our next meeting this winter and I'm
9 very curious and would like to have discussions with
10 Myron and Tim in regards to how it exactly works. I
11 know that they work with the refuge managers that are
12 in their area, but obviously we don't have an employee
13 who could be on the ground to actually see if the
14 timing is right.

15

16 CHAIRMAN SQUARTSOFF: Thank you,
17 Taqulik. Mike.

18

19 MR. SMITH: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I
20 was just going to comment, yeah, AVCP does have kind of
21 something going for them that most of the other regions
22 don't have. They have a historical relationship with
23 the Waterfowl Committee that's been going on for 20
24 years or something of history of working together with
25 the managers out there and stuff. But I think we
26 should definitely explore the options available to us
27 because of the varying migratory changes that seem to
28 be occurring.

29

30 Doug, I'm just trying to think of how
31 this -- the director has an emergency closure and
32 opening authority now across species and across any
33 number of things, right? That's the provision that
34 AVCP area uses for.....

35

36 MR. ALCORN: Mr. Chair. That authority
37 comes from our AMBCC recommendations to the Service
38 Regulation Committee and then the Secretary of the
39 Interior has the actual authority to establish the side
40 boards when the seasons will be open. You're right,
41 the regional director is delegated the authority for an
42 emergency closure. But this is not an emergency
43 closure. It is a closure that is scheduled, but it's
44 going to be scheduled at the call of the regional
45 director in consultation with the regional
46 co-management partner. So it is described in our
47 regulations, in AMBCC's regulations.

48

49 MR. SMITH: I'm wondering how you might
50 envision this on a statewide type of a scenario and

1 where that might attempt to work or how it might
2 attempt to work.

3

4 CHAIRMAN SQUARTSOFF: Doug.

5

6 MR. ALCORN: I think the -- I don't see
7 it as a statewide approach. I see it as a region-by-
8 region specific approach and I think what Taqulik said
9 is she needs to take it to her regional management body
10 and introduce the idea and then talk about the
11 specifics, the details of how it would work in that
12 particular region and what that communication protocol
13 would be, what expertise would be needed in that
14 particular region to make that call. And then the way
15 I see it, each region would submit a proposal if the
16 region wants to do that. It's going to take a lot of
17 work because I can tell you AVCP is pretty actively
18 involved with the refuge staff, so it does take a lot
19 of work and communicating and identifying when those
20 birds are getting on the nests.

21

22 If the regional management body and the
23 regional representative is ready to step into that more
24 refined kind of management and proactive management,
25 the real challenge is making sure that we have that
26 infrastructure established. So if a regional
27 management body wants to work with the Service or wants
28 to work with the State and we can figure that out so
29 that it does meet both needs, then I think it behooves
30 the Council to consider that.

31

32 But if that infrastructure hurdle is
33 not met, then where we are now may be the best we can
34 achieve with the resources that we have. If Patty has
35 been successful in getting us more money for the
36 Council, then we would have more opportunity to be more
37 proactive.

38

39 CHAIRMAN SQUARTSOFF: Thank you, Doug.
40 I didn't think we were going to get into a heavy
41 discussion on this here, but anybody else from the
42 Council have any comments on this one.

43

44 (No comments)

45

46 CHAIRMAN SQUARTSOFF: If not, thanks.
47 Fred, I believe we have you up next on the nesting
48 season.

49

50 MS. HEPA: Mr. Chair.

1 CHAIRMAN SQUARTSOFF: Sorry, Taqulik.

2

3 MS. HEPA: Thank you, Mr. Chair. If I
4 may just add one more thing. I think it's important
5 for us to always keep this in mind as we move with this
6 Co-management Council, but, you know, it had been many
7 years when our people did what they did without
8 regulations. Our people who hunt the migratory birds,
9 we have a relationship with the birds and up on the
10 Slope people know when to stop. We didn't need a
11 regulation to tell us when it was time to stop hunting
12 birds. Either the birds paired up or they knew they
13 were going to make their nest and people come back home
14 and they finish their hunting. In some cases the bird
15 nest close to camps because they use people for
16 protection from the predators, so we do have that
17 relationship. It's just trying to figure out a way to
18 make the regulations match what we've been doing for
19 many, many years.

20

21 At every opportunity that we get from
22 the regions, we need to bring points like that to the
23 table because I think that's where, you know, my
24 responsibility is, is to try to fix the regulations to
25 match what we currently do because I don't think that
26 we intend to do anything wrong.

27

28 In addition to that, you know, egg
29 picking was more active years ago. When you look at
30 the harvest information we collected over the last
31 several years, not all communities are heavy egg
32 pickers. There's only certain communities on the North
33 Slope that pick eggs. You've heard Myron and others
34 say that they don't pick all the eggs, they pick one
35 egg and leave the rest from each different nest they go
36 to to pick eggs because they want to make sure that
37 there continues to be a healthy population of the birds
38 that they depend on.

39

40 CHAIRMAN SQUARTSOFF: Thank you,
41 Taqulik. Very well spoken. I didn't mean to cut you
42 off real quick on that. I believe we're going to bring
43 this back up at our next meeting, I'm assuming. I do
44 recall we talked quite a bit on this before last fall.
45 Doug.

46

47 MR. SMITH: Bring it up as a proposal
48 or just another discussion item?

49

50 MR. ALCORN: Mr. Chair. I guess I'm

1 like Mike. I don't understand how this is -- unless we
2 opt as a Council to put it on the next meeting's
3 agenda, this was basically a report of activities from
4 2006. I think the way it does translate, I think Mike
5 is right, it would probably translate into a proposal
6 from a region because we have a request for proposals.
7 We all are aware of the fall six-week period roughly
8 when the Council has a request for proposals, and then
9 in the spring we consider those and those have all been
10 vetted over the wintertime. So if it does come back on
11 the table, I would assume it would come in the form of
12 a proposal from the region.

13

14 CHAIRMAN SQUARTSOFF: I would hope so.
15 And then into a workshop instead of right into a
16 regular meeting. Thank you. Fred, I believe we have
17 you up next on the interpretation of the Japanese
18 Treaty closure during the principal nesting season.
19 Are you still with us?

20

21 MR. ARMSTRONG: The reception is not
22 the best. Basically the interpretation of the Japanese
23 Treaty closure, I think there was a question posed as
24 to how it came about with the 30-day closure. I
25 believe it was last year or the year before and the
26 agenda item kept getting postponed and put on a later
27 agenda. Just the report item, basically how we came
28 about with the 30-day closure was early on in the
29 formation of the Council we had a discussion in the
30 Gordon Watson conference room here in Anchorage and we
31 had our regional solicitor there, Laurie Adams, she's
32 since moved on, but we tried to figure out how we could
33 comply with the Japanese Treaty and still implement the
34 amendments. Being that the season was from April 2
35 through August 31, we had to figure out a closure
36 between those dates to comply. So there was some dates
37 thrown out. I think we started out with 45 days and
38 eventually the 30-day closure was agreed upon by all
39 the partners. That's just about the thrust of the
40 discussion that was held at that meeting.

41

42 I don't know if there are any
43 questions. I could try to answer them. I think most
44 of the partners that are on the Council now were there
45 with an exception of a few, but I think this question
46 was posed because we've had turnover in Council
47 membership and alternates that were coming to the
48 meeting and asking questions. I think that was how the
49 agenda item came about.

50

1 CHAIRMAN SQUARTSOFF: Thank you, Fred.
2 Anybody have any questions for Fred? For you that
3 don't know Fred, he's our executive director here on
4 the Council. He just had an operation, so that's why
5 he's not here. No questions for you, Fred. Thank you
6 very much.

7
8 The next one we have here is the duck
9 stamp exception. Doug Alcorn. Thank you.

10
11 MR. ALCORN: Thank you, Mr. Chairman.
12 This is also, again, sort of a rollover from a meeting
13 a year ago. The background is this. Mike Smith
14 brought a recommendation to the Council a year ago or
15 maybe a year and a half ago asking for the Council to
16 endorse or establish a resolution supporting an
17 exemption for Alaska Native hunters or Alaska
18 subsistence hunters, I'm not quite sure, I don't
19 remember exactly what group was specified, to establish
20 a resolution by the Council supporting an exemption to
21 the duck stamp requirement.

22
23 I recall that my response was that I
24 couldn't support that and the reason I gave was because
25 I haven't vetted it through our chain of command in our
26 agency. I would be putting the agency and the
27 department in a position or taking a position on
28 something that I didn't know what the answer was and
29 what the position of the Secretary or the position of
30 the director of the Service would be. So it had to be
31 vetted through the chain of command.

32
33 The follow-up question was can you come
34 back and explain what that chain of command is and
35 explain what would have to occur to get an approval of
36 that kind of resolution. So I've asked the questions
37 of my boss and run it up through the chain of command
38 on that particular issue. The answer is this, the
39 chain of command, of course, is my boss and his boss,
40 which is the regional director of the Fish and Wildlife
41 Service for the Alaska Region. Tom Melius is his name.
42 His boss is the director of the Fish and Wildlife
43 Service. The director, of course, works for the
44 Secretary. That's a rough description of the chain of
45 command. There's a lot of supervisors in between. But
46 that, in essence, is the chain of command.

47
48 So for me to take a position, when we
49 have an agenda like this, I brief our regional director
50 on each of these agenda topics and present to him the

1 issues, Fred and I brief him on that and then he
2 basically tells me what position the Fish and Wildlife
3 Service is going to take on these.

4
5 So, with that particular issue, we
6 briefed him and his response was essentially that the
7 Service or the Department does not regularly take
8 positions on legislation that's being proposed or
9 legislation that's not yet been introduced on the Hill.
10 We will take positions on legislation when it is
11 presented to us by the Hill when we're asked to take a
12 position. But we don't normally, as a normal part of
13 our practice, express a position on an eventual bill or
14 on a concept. So this, in essence, is a concept, I
15 guess, and we would wait as an agency to take the
16 position on a bill that actually had specific language
17 and then we would take an agency position. So that's,
18 in essence, a position we would take on that kind of a
19 resolution.

20
21 CHAIRMAN SQUARTSOFF: Thank you, Doug.
22 I think Mike has a question for you there, Doug.

23
24 MR. SMITH: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I
25 guess, Doug, that wasn't what I was asking. I guess
26 there must have been some confusion as to what I was
27 trying to get at. What I was trying to get at is
28 whether or not you, as an agency representative on this
29 body, can endorse a proposal by this body to seek -- or
30 a resolution by this body, the AMBCC, to seek a duck
31 stamp exemption. That was my question, not whether or
32 not the agency can respond to legislation. I know they
33 can.

34
35 My question, and this kind of gets back
36 to my whole concern about the agency having kind of
37 control of what we can or cannot go forward and seek
38 and one of the ones is a duck stamp exemption. That
39 type of exemption I thought needed to be supported and
40 endorsed by this body and that's what we were
41 attempting to do at that time, was to pass a resolution
42 seeking exemption to the Duck Stamp Act for the
43 purposes of the Alaska Migratory Bird Treaty. I guess
44 that's where I was going with that.

45
46 I appreciate your work on it, but that
47 still didn't answer my question. If we submitted a
48 resolution here endorsing the exemption to the Duck
49 Stamp Act, could you or could you not vote on it?
50

1 CHAIRMAN SQUARTSOFF: Go ahead, Doug.

2

3 MR. ALCORN: I think I could vote on it
4 if I knew it was coming, if it was an agenda item, and
5 I would vet it with my chain of command. Again, it's
6 the same bureaucratic answer I gave last time. But I
7 would have to vet it and it would have to go to my
8 regional director and we would discuss it and if my
9 regional director felt comfortable taking a position,
10 then he could tell me how to vote, yes or no. If not,
11 then we would run it further up, as high as the
12 director, to get an agency position on that kind of a
13 resolution.

14

15 The reason I didn't vote to support it
16 then is because it was introduced and I hadn't had the
17 opportunity to vet it. That's just part of the way we
18 do business in this agency.

19

20 CHAIRMAN SQUARTSOFF: Thank you, Doug.
21 Any other questions for Doug. Yes, Nathan.

22

23 MR. SOBALOFF: My only question is,
24 because I'm new to this, the exemption or the
25 theoretical exemption was for the purpose because it's
26 difficult to obtain the permit at the time or financial
27 reasons or all of the above? I understand because I
28 deal with this stuff quite a bit for various marine
29 mammals and other things like that. Was it primarily
30 because of the availability of the stamps?

31

32 CHAIRMAN SQUARTSOFF: Go ahead, Mike.

33

34 MR. SMITH: Thank you, Mr. Chairman.
35 Well, that certainly is the issue, but I think it goes
36 back to a deeper reference than that. It was illegal
37 for us for 60-some years to harvest these birds and we
38 sat there and negotiated the treaty implementation and
39 the intent was that it was going to at least somewhat
40 resemble our traditional activities and the traditional
41 way we harvested those spring waterfowl and that didn't
42 necessarily include a State duck stamp, a Federal duck
43 stamp and a State hunting license.

44

45 MR. SOBALOFF: Right. Okay.

46

47 MR. SMITH: And then the practical
48 implications of that, too, as to the availability of
49 those duck stamps in rural areas. They're just not
50 there when it comes time to hunt.

1 CHAIRMAN SQUARTSOFF: Thank you,
2 Nathan, Mike. Go ahead, Doug.

3
4 MR. ALCORN: Thank you, Mr. Chairman.
5 And I think Mike and Nathan also brought up the issue
6 of availability of duck stamps and that's been a real
7 sensitive issue that we have a bureaucracy have tried
8 to deal with because we think that's a fair criticism
9 of a legal requirement. The legal requirement is that
10 under the law, the Federal Duck Stamp Act, that anyone
11 that harvests migratory waterfowl in North America in
12 the U.S. has to have a Federal duck stamp. We, as an
13 agency, don't have the legal authority to not require
14 that, to not require that hunters have that.

15
16 This Council dealt with that issue
17 early on in one of our very formative meetings that we
18 had as a Council and we went to our legal staff, our
19 attorneys in the department, and asked them is there an
20 opportunity for an exemption to that with the way the
21 Act is written and the answer was, no, not with the way
22 the law is written now. It would have to be amended to
23 offer that kind of exemption.

24
25 So we have a six or seven-year history
26 of talking about this issue. My agency is in a
27 position of we have to implement the laws as they're
28 written and until they're amended we have to use
29 whatever the legal interpretation is and that is the
30 legal interpretation of whether or not a Federal duck
31 stamp requirement applies to the spring and subsistence
32 harvest.

33
34 So, in order to address the issue of
35 availability, we've done a few things. One is the U.S.
36 postal offices in each of the villages are committed to
37 carrying those Federal duck stamps through June 30th.
38 They used to, I believe it was March 30th, return all
39 of those unsold duck stamps to the vendor, which is a
40 contract vendor out of, I think, Texas. The contract
41 vendor said in order to allow us to do an inventory of
42 what was sold and what was left in surplus, they called
43 them back I think it was March 30th. We have been in
44 contact with the vendor. The vendor has agreed for
45 Alaska to let the post offices and any vendor retain
46 those duck stamps through June 30th. So that's one
47 provision we've just recently negotiated with the
48 vendor.

49
50 The other is Fred has met with the

1 regional director of the U.S. Postal Service and we
2 have a verbal agreement to have those post offices and
3 those postmasters retain those duck stamps until June
4 30th every year and also to be a vendor for them
5 because I think in recent history some of those
6 postmasters have probably not sold them, but we have an
7 agreement with the regional director to require that of
8 the postmasters now. So that means if there's a post
9 office and there's a salaried or a paid postmaster in
10 any village, then that postmaster will have available
11 duck stamps.

12

13 The third thing that we've also
14 mentioned and we recognize limitations is that these
15 can be acquired online, duck stamps can be purchased
16 from the vendor in Texas and from the Federal duck
17 stamp office in Washington, D.C. It does require
18 online access, obviously, and it does require a credit
19 card. But that access is still provided in those ways
20 as well.

21

22 Then the fourth part of this strategy
23 to make duck stamps available is that I've been in
24 discussion with my counterpart, who is the chief of all
25 the refuges in this state and we are soon going to have
26 those refuges that do have subsistence hunting
27 activities occurring on their lands, those refuge
28 managers of those refuge offices will also handle duck
29 stamps and have those for sale, but they'll be at the
30 refuge headquarters or maybe some satellite offices
31 that they may have.

32

33 But those are sort of four strategies
34 that we're putting in place to make duck stamps more
35 available for our subsistence hunters.

36

37 CHAIRMAN SQUARTSOFF: Thank you, Doug.
38 Taqulik, do you still have a question?

39

40 MS. HEPA: Yeah, just quickly. What
41 year was the Federal Duck Stamp Act into effect?

42

43 MR. ALCORN: What was that date?

44

45 MR. OATES: 1934.

46

47 MS. HEPA: I have a follow-up question.
48 This is a very important issue for our people. It was
49 passed in 1934. It's just not a customary and
50 traditional practice for our people. I know that we've

1 talked about that, but, you know, when something like
2 that is going to have such a big impact on our people,
3 I just really think that there needs to be proper
4 consultation. I don't even think that it's right for
5 the Federal government to expect the Native people from
6 Alaska and maybe from other states to always kind of go
7 with their direction and the way they want to move
8 forward.

9
10 This one is going to be a very
11 difficult one. Maybe as the regional bodies, if we get
12 an opportunity to caucus today, we need to really sit
13 down and try to come to a united way on how we want to
14 move forward with this if this Council cannot take
15 action on it. I know that we've had some discussions
16 on it, but if they are going to start implementing like
17 he mentioned the four or five steps that they've taken,
18 here in the near future they're going to expect and
19 they're going to start writing citations and it's not
20 going to be very nice. So as regional bodies
21 representing our people, we need to sit down and talk
22 amongst ourselves and how we could try to move forward
23 with this on our own.

24
25 MR. SOBALOFF: As I understand it, this
26 Council.....

27
28 CHAIRMAN SQUARTSOFF: Wait a minute,
29 Nathan. I've got Mike and then Molly.

30
31 MR. SMITH: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I
32 agree with Taqulik that if that's the situation, then
33 we definitely need to submit a proposal at the next
34 meeting to take this into consideration in order to
35 seek an exemption to the duck stamp. Can somebody
36 please refresh my memory to -- is it true we don't get
37 any of this money either? There's some pot of money
38 that they were charging that we do not get in Alaska
39 because we don't account for some sharing plan or
40 something.

41
42 CHAIRMAN SQUARTSOFF: Mike, I had Tom
43 raise his hand first on that, might want to address
44 that issue. Thank you.

45
46 MR. ROTHE: Mike, the answer to your
47 question is that the Federal law requires the State
48 Legislature to pass a brief resolution that basically
49 grants permission to use that money. The Service
50 operates the Migratory Bird Conservation Commission

1 that passes the money out to other states. Our
2 Legislature has never approved the use of Federal duck
3 stamp money to buy land in Alaska.

4
5 CHAIRMAN SQUARTSOFF: Thank you, Tom.
6 Did that answer your question, Mike?

7
8 MR. SMITH: But there is another pot of
9 money, and maybe I'm just wrong, that we do not
10 receive.

11
12 CHAIRMAN SQUARTSOFF: Russ or Bob,
13 either one of you.

14
15 MR. OATES: Mr. Chairman, Russ Oates.
16 While it's true that there's no refuge land acquired
17 within the state of Alaska with duck stamp money, the
18 duck stamp money is being used to buy wintering habitat
19 for the birds that breed in Alaska and consistent with
20 what we talk about the flyways, the birds that are used
21 by subsistence hunters in Alaska benefit tremendously
22 from duck stamp funds. The notion that Alaska does not
23 receive any benefit from duck stamp funding is not a
24 correct notion.

25
26 CHAIRMAN SQUARTSOFF: Thank you, Russ.

27
28 MR. SMITH: I don't think I said
29 benefit.

30
31 CHAIRMAN SQUARTSOFF: Thank you, Mike.
32 Molly had a question.

33
34 MS. CHYTHLOOK: Thank you, Chairman.
35 You know, it's just been the last few years when I
36 first started working for State of Alaska early '80s,
37 traditional and ecological knowledge was really not
38 recognized. It was considered an anecdotal. Now both
39 agencies, all agencies are coming into our communities
40 and wanting to learn the traditional and ecological
41 knowledge of our people. Our people are so giving that
42 they want to share. When people come in to learn about
43 the traditional and ecological knowledge, they think
44 maybe if we share our traditional and ecological
45 knowledge they'll work with this, they'll understand
46 what we've been doing for years and they'll change the
47 regulations. Our traditional regulations will work
48 with their science regulations or whatever regulations
49 came up.

50

1 When things like this come on and when
2 things like this come into the villages already in
3 place, for our communities not to be able to make any
4 comments or inputs, it hurts the communities. My
5 request, let's be giving both sides because I hate to
6 -- even though there's been improvements made even
7 since I've been on for a couple years at this table
8 with this duck stamp issue, let's go to our villages.
9 Regional management, like Taqulik said, need to work
10 with this. When we have our Regional Council meetings,
11 sensitive things like this need to be resolved before
12 we bring them to our Council members for them to try to
13 deal with. They need to be dealt with before. Let's
14 maybe work with this first before it becomes too far
15 advanced, I guess. Thank you.

16
17 CHAIRMAN SQUARTSOFF: Thank you, Molly.
18 Nathan, do you still have a question?

19
20 MR. SOBALOFF: Oh, I was just going to
21 say it sounded like this Council could vote on that and
22 Doug will have whatever -- votes however he can, but
23 the Council can still make its decision to support such
24 a thing. I know for a fact Southeast Inter-tribal's
25 position would definitely favor this duck stamp
26 exemption even though we're well aware of the uphill
27 battle. There's many different ways to skin a cat or a
28 goose to accomplish ones goal. The anti-permit stuff
29 runs very deep in Southeast. I know our region and our
30 chairman, Matthew Kookesh, would be very willing to
31 give his time to offer up any ideas to the resolution
32 of this problem.

33
34 CHAIRMAN SQUARTSOFF: Thank you,
35 Nathan. You're new on here too and, like Molly said,
36 it's been ongoing ever since we started on the Council.
37 I think we need to look to AVCP and what they're doing
38 on it as individual regions and work on it. I don't
39 think we're going to make a whole lot of headway on
40 this Council on it, but if we go through our regions
41 and work with AVCP and see what they're coming up with,
42 we might have a better chance of getting something
43 done. Mike. Mike, Peter is first, I guess.

44
45 MR. DEVINE: Thank you, Mr. Chair. I
46 know Myron's been working with this pretty extensively
47 and we've all supported it. It's come to the Council
48 as a resolution in a proposal and he was asking for
49 letters of support, we all supported it and now here we
50 are talking about it again and it's gotten nowhere.

1 Maybe it's time for the Invitation Committee to get
2 together and start doing their job and invite anybody
3 who has a tribal card to hunt without a duck stamp.

4
5 CHAIRMAN SQUARTSOFF: That's a very
6 good suggestion. Thank you, Peter. Mike, do you still
7 have a question or no?

8
9 MR. SMITH: No, not right now.

10
11 CHAIRMAN SQUARTSOFF: Thank you. Maybe
12 we could finally move on on the agenda. Our next item
13 is in new business and we're going to be going -- oh,
14 sorry, Doug.

15
16 MR. ALCORN: I would just like to make
17 a suggestion on how we managed -- the next item is in
18 executive session. Since it's almost lunch time, I
19 would recommend that perhaps the Council could adjourn
20 or recess the meeting at this point for lunch to allow
21 the folks in the audience to have lunch and maybe we
22 could stay back and have that discussion and maybe set
23 a time, say at 1:30, to get back after lunch. That
24 will allow us to have a discussion and get lunch too.

25
26 CHAIRMAN SQUARTSOFF: That sounds good,
27 Doug. Any objections from the Council on that.

28
29 (No comments)

30
31 CHAIRMAN SQUARTSOFF: Okay. See you
32 all back at 1:30. We're going to go into executive
33 session.

34
35 MR. SOBALOFF: I'll make a motion to
36 move into executive session.

37
38 MS. CHYTHLOOK: Second.

39
40 CHAIRMAN SQUARTSOFF: Seconded by
41 Molly. Okay.

42
43 (Off record)

44
45 (On record)

46
47 CHAIRMAN SQUARTSOFF: Could we bring
48 the meeting back to order, please. It's 1:37. Thank
49 you. I need to have a motion from the Council to
50 suspend the rules of the day.

1 MS. HEPA: So moved, Mr. Chair.

2

3 CHAIRMAN SQUARTSOFF: So moved by
4 Taqulik. Do I hear a second.

5

6 MR. CLARKE: Second.

7

8 CHAIRMAN SQUARTSOFF: Seconded. We
9 need to suspend the rules so we can get Steve moved up
10 on the agenda so we can let him do his presentation.
11 Also, we're planning on having the next item, a budget
12 item, do a caucus with our Native group right after
13 Steve's presentation. Are there any objections from
14 the Council on the motion.

15

16 (No comments)

17

18 CHAIRMAN SQUARTSOFF: Not hearing any,
19 so moved. Thank you. Steve, you're up.

20

21 MR. OBERHOLTZER: Thank you. Actually,
22 it's going to be one of our agents out of Fairbanks,
23 Eric Marek. He's right here.

24

25 CHAIRMAN SQUARTSOFF: Thank you. Eric,
26 it's on you then.

27

28 MR. MAREK: Thank you, Mr. Chairman and
29 members of the Council. Thanks for the opportunity to
30 talk to you folks today. I'll try to make this as
31 quick as we can because I know there's a lot to cover
32 today. Generally I don't mind if you ask questions
33 throughout the whole thing, but if we can hold the
34 questions until the end, I'm sure there will be a few,
35 just to try to get through my presentation because a
36 lot of it is kind of background, so it really doesn't
37 have a ton to do with law enforcement activities in
38 2007, but I'd like to go over it. If you have a dire
39 question, go ahead and ask it, but if you could hold it
40 until the end, then Steve and I would be happy to
41 answer anything you have or, if not, get the answer for
42 you if we don't have it.

43

44 Once again, thank you for the
45 opportunity to speak to you about the Alaska
46 subsistence waterfowl season, spring and summer, and
47 2007 as well as prior enforcement seasons. A quick
48 thing on the office of law enforcement with the U.S.
49 Fish and Wildlife Service, we generally have two jobs.
50 One is to investigate wildlife crimes and the other is

1 to facilitate the trade of wildlife. That's something
2 you don't see a lot in Fairbanks, but in Anchorage a
3 lot of imports and exports and so we get involved in
4 that as well. A lot of stuff comes in and out of the
5 country, so we're there to regulate that.

6

7 This is our locations. We're around
8 the country as you can see. Here are our offices in
9 Alaska. The phone number is up there. We've got toll-
10 free numbers too, so if folks do have questions and you
11 want to copy these numbers down or you want to get them
12 from me later, I'll be more than happy to pass them
13 along.

14

15 One of the things I'm really here to
16 talk to you about is outreach and enforcement and kind
17 of emphasize the outreach portion. That's really what
18 I think talking with committee members from wildlife
19 groups as well as AMBCC Council members, outreach,
20 speaking to the hunters, is one of the more important
21 things that we can do as an enforcement agency. I'd
22 also like to discuss a little bit about 2008
23 enforcement as well.

24

25 A quick history. Actually 1960, 1959
26 was the first year that U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service
27 Federal agents got involved in waterfowl enforcement
28 and the reason for that was statehood. Much of the
29 wildlife enforcement was turned over to the State at
30 that point, but migratory birds stayed under Federal
31 control. We actually had Federal agents go to every
32 village or almost every village in Alaska to discuss
33 waterfowl regulations, duck stamp requirements and that
34 was in 1960.

35

36 Not a lot happened in 1970, 1980 for
37 law enforcement specifically related to wildlife, then
38 came along the Goose Management Plan, which many of you
39 know much more than I do, but from an enforcement
40 standpoint I guess the key is that the Goose Management
41 Plan had an enforcement aspect, which was we've got
42 four species of geese that Fish and Wildlife Service is
43 going to get involved in regulations and part of that
44 will be enforcement of the guidelines that come up in
45 the plan. So I'll kind of leave it at that.

46

47 It's kind of rolled into 2003
48 regulations that are now published for the subsistence
49 season. It was the court decision that basically said
50 Fish and Wildlife Service needs to come up with a

1 better way to manage subsistence waterfowl. As that
2 all came to pass, Fish and Wildlife law enforcement
3 officers were involved in the Goose Management Plan
4 enforcement and then that rolled into enforcement on
5 the North Slope in the early 1990s and that was related
6 to the threatened Eiders that were threatened or
7 proposed to be threatened, so Fish and Wildlife Service
8 went to the North Slope to discuss the regulations
9 concerning the listing of the Eiders.

10

11 From that point on, Fish and Wildlife
12 Service law enforcement officers were involved in
13 outreach and limited enforcement of spring subsistence
14 migratory bird hunting regulations. So '96 was the
15 President's order to Fish and Wildlife Service to amend
16 the treaty. '97, '98 was the publications for the
17 policy that Fish and Wildlife Service is going to
18 enforce the ban on the use of lead shot for subsistence
19 hunters and that was put into regulation in the policy
20 in 1998.

21

22 Steel shot clinics started, which was
23 more of an outreach thing. Once again, many of you
24 were involved in that. This particular PowerPoint was
25 put together for the North Slope specifically, but
26 there were steel shot clinics on the North Slope and
27 this was to help assist hunters for the transition from
28 lead to steel.

29

30 There was an example of some high lead
31 that was found in Steller's Eiders in Barrow and Fish
32 and Wildlife agents were sent there to basically
33 investigate why there's lead showing up in these
34 Eiders. You can see there was contact with hunters, so
35 three violations were issued for possession of lead
36 shot. This was a couple years after the ban on the use
37 of lead shot.

38

39 Finally, 2003, which a lot of you folks
40 worked on, we had regulations published that now
41 something concrete that we can point to that say these
42 are the rules, these are the regulations. From that
43 point on law enforcement officers have been heavily
44 involved with trying to reach out, talk to folks,
45 explain the regulations when there's questions or
46 conflicts and enforce regulations where it's needed.

47

48 This is continually going on through
49 2004, 2005, 2006 and that's just a couple examples of
50 different things that have been done and this has also

1 been in conjunction with Fish and Wildlife Service
2 outreach personnel as well as members of AMBCC, the
3 State, everybody working together to try to get the
4 message out these are the regulations, these are the
5 rules and this is what we'd like you to follow.

6
7 2005, the same type of thing. Once
8 again, this was set up in the North Slope, so we
9 attended some meetings at the North Slope Borough Fish
10 and Game Department and discussed our enforcement
11 strategies for the upcoming season. Then the same
12 thing in 2006, agents contacted hunters and most of the
13 North Slope villages had fairly good compliance with
14 most of the regulations in the subsistence guidebook.

15
16 Then in 2007, just a quick -- our
17 enforcement during 2007 and then we'll get to the
18 questions. Once again we were involved in attending
19 meetings at the North Slope Borough as well as in the
20 Y-K Delta area. One thing we did do is speak to most
21 of the postmasters or mistresses in the villages to ask
22 them about the duck stamps, which is another thing
23 Council members have been working on long before we got
24 involved. We actually had pretty surprising results
25 with the number of duck stamps. For example, in
26 Barrow, the post office in Barrow had 50 duck stamps
27 this year and they sold two. The postmaster was well
28 aware of the duck stamp requirement and actually
29 ordered 25 more duck stamps for this year.

30
31 We did have an issue, actually as of
32 this month we were in Barrow and we did observe lead
33 shot 224's being sold in the AC store. It's not
34 illegal to sell it, but still kind of questioned why
35 that lead shot is there and it is a concern that we
36 need to look into.

37
38 So this is actually some 410 shot.
39 This picture was taken in one of the North Slope
40 villages. I'm not sure which one it was. Agents did
41 conduct enforcement activities for the subsistence
42 season in Dillingham/Togiak area and also conducted an
43 outreach meeting there in Quinhagak. Approximately
44 3,600 were contacted and no violations were -- no
45 tickets were issued in that particular enforcement
46 activity.

47
48 Agents conducted enforcement out in
49 Bethel area and you can see there some of the problems
50 that were found. Then there was also further

1 enforcement in Bethel where there were several tickets
2 issued for lead shot and for closed season hunting.

3
4 The North Slope, we actually were able
5 to go to most of the villages on the North Slope this
6 year to do enforcement activity. Contacted over 150
7 hunters, issued six tickets on the North Slope for lead
8 shot and the take of Spectacled Eider.

9
10 This is a photo of us talking to some
11 guys in Wainwright and this is the stuff we enjoy
12 doing, is talking to the hunters, passing out the
13 regulations, one-on-one contacts. That's where we feel
14 we're most efficient in getting our message out and
15 also getting to know the folks and letting them know
16 that we need to work together.

17
18 A few verbal warnings for one or two
19 lead shot shells mixed in with steel shot. People had
20 a pocketful. We explained the hunting license
21 requirement, the Federal duck stamp and State duck
22 stamp requirement and actually issued verbal warnings
23 to folks, telling them you have to have these, here's a
24 warning for not having your State license, your State
25 stamp or your Federal stamp.

26
27 Hunters ask us often because now you
28 start bringing up regulations, what about limits, you
29 know, what about the number of birds you can kill and
30 we said, well, under the regulations you can kill as
31 many birds as you feel necessary as long as it's not in
32 a wasteful manner and then that brought up the question
33 of what is waste. So here's some photos that were took
34 this year and, you know, just did the question marks
35 there. It's something that we will continue to look at
36 from the enforcement aspect. If we consider a
37 situation wasteful, it may lead to enforcement action.

38
39 Once again, 2008, similar things will
40 be occurring in our enforcement clan. Similar things,
41 looking still at non-toxic requirement, still be
42 enforcing that. No open season, which may adjust
43 according to the 30-day closure. We'll continue to
44 outreach and try to meet with hunters one-on-one. Once
45 again, we think that's most effective. We'll be
46 available for hunter meetings. We'll be available to
47 assist in any way we can. We'll continue to outreach
48 with hunters and this is what we enjoy doing. This was
49 up in Wainwright this past year.

50

1 I guess a couple quick notes on
2 enforcement activity that was taken this year. There
3 was some enforcement action taken in Fort Yukon area
4 that Mike Smith had mentioned and there was about 10 to
5 12 hunters that were checked for compliance with the
6 regulations and they were issued warnings or I guess
7 they were requested that they obtain hunting licenses
8 and were asked to mail a copy of that hunting license,
9 show proof of hunting license to the refuge officers
10 within two weeks of the contact in the field. Of all
11 those individuals, they all showed proof of purchasing
12 a license to the refuge officers, no tickets were
13 issued in that area. They were told about the State
14 and Federal duck stamp requirement, but there were no
15 tickets issued for failure to have a Federal or State
16 duck stamp. One individual failed to provide proof of
17 license but has not been issued a citation for that
18 violation.

19
20 There was also six violation notices
21 issued in the Minto State Game Refuge area for
22 violations of individuals that did not qualify as being
23 in the areas open to subsistence hunting and to
24 motorboating rallying birds.

25
26 That's it for me. If anybody has any
27 questions, we'll be happy to take them. Yes, sir.

28
29 MR. HICKS: (Away from microphone)

30
31 MR. MAREK: Nothing is wrong with
32 Copper River Drainage. One of the reasons that we do
33 spend time on the northern portion of the state would
34 be because of the closed species, the Eiders. That's
35 high priority for us to try to make sure those birds
36 aren't taken.

37
38 MR. OBERHOLTZER: This presentation was
39 made for the North Slope Borough. It's a little bit
40 misleading, I guess, to insinuate that we only worked
41 up there. We did work the Delta pretty hard too and
42 other places. If we should be spending more time out
43 in the Copper River area, by all means.

44
45 CHAIRMAN SQUARTSOFF: Do we have any
46 more questions for Eric or Steve. Molly.

47
48 MS. CHYTHLOOK: Thank you, Chair. I
49 guess my interest would be a definition for non-
50 wasteful manner. You just showed dead birds on the

1 ground. So is that your definition for a non-wasteful
2 manner?

3

4 MR. MAREK: I think in that situation
5 that's why the question marks are up there because
6 those were birds that we found either in the field or
7 in situations where we felt they had been left for a
8 long period of time that maybe had been abandoned or
9 forgotten about. So, once again, the definition -- you
10 know, I don't think there is a definition. It's going
11 to depend on a case-by-case basis. Those are just
12 situations that we ran into this year that as
13 enforcement officers we're looking at that just saying,
14 hmm, that's interesting, is this a waste situation and
15 that's really where it ended.

16

17 CHAIRMAN SQUARTSOFF: Yes, Molly.

18

19 MS. CHYTHLOOK: Just from observation
20 and hearing comments from the villages, there's always
21 this conflict, misunderstanding regarding non-wasteful
22 manner. Traditionally we eat the birds and just leave
23 the bones. Other hunters will just take the breast and
24 leave the rest of the edible parts of the birds. It's
25 not just the birds, it's also large land mammals. So I
26 think we need to define non-wasteful manner. I know
27 that's going to be hard to do because just taking the
28 breast is considered non-wasteful manner. Thank you.

29

30 CHAIRMAN SQUARTSOFF: Thank you, Molly.

31 Yes, Steve.

32

33 MR. OBERHOLTSEY: The regulations
34 already have a definition for it. Just kind of put
35 that on the record that there is a definition in the
36 back of the regulations. It really doesn't say what
37 happens to it after it gets to the person's place of
38 residence or where they're going to eat it, but up to
39 that point it does talk about having to make a
40 reasonable effort to retrieve and that type of thing.

41

42 CHAIRMAN SQUARTSOFF: Thank you, Steve.

43 Another thing too, I seen that duck that was just
44 laying there. It's a possibility it could be dropped
45 when they're going out of the field, you know. You
46 might want to take that into consideration, too.

47

48 MR. CLARKE: Mr. Chairman. Just from
49 the State perspective there's a requirement that
50 hunters salvage edible meat from the quarry they take.

1 Edible meat, when it comes to birds, is defined as the
2 meat of the breast. So, from the State perspective,
3 that's our definition.

4

5 CHAIRMAN SQUARTSOFF: Thank you. Any
6 other questions for Eric or Steve. Mike.

7

8 MR. SMITH: I don't have the regulation
9 right in front of me, Steve. Does it pretty much
10 follow State regulation as to the definition of what
11 wanton waste is?

12

13 CHAIRMAN SQUARTSOFF: Go ahead, Steve,
14 if you want to respond.

15

16 MR. OBERHOLTSEY: It's very similar to
17 the sport hunting wasteful take regulation. It means
18 making a reasonable effort to retrieve all birds killed
19 or wounded, retaining such birds in possession from the
20 place where taken to the hunter's permanent or
21 temporary place of residence or to a location where the
22 birds will be consumed or preserved for food.

23

24 MR. SMITH: It doesn't specify any
25 parts or anything like that. It just kind of talks to
26 the bird.

27

28 MR. OBERHOLTSEY: Right. There again I
29 think at a minimum we would follow the State's
30 definition also as salvage the meat, the breast. We're
31 certainly not going to pursue anyone if they breast it
32 out and leave the rest of the carcass. No, we're not
33 looking at that type of thing.

34

35 MR. SMITH: I'm just kind of interested
36 to try to address the issue that was presented there
37 and I'm not sure how that's dealt with in other
38 regulatory arenas. Does the State pretty much stop any
39 type of enforcement action after the field? I mean if
40 it gets home and hangs on the wall for three weeks,
41 there's really nothing the State can do about that in
42 their regulations, is there?

43

44 MR. OBERHOLTSEY: Can you say that
45 again, Mike. I'm not sure I followed.

46

47 MR. SMITH: I'm just trying to figure
48 out and attempting to think about how we might address
49 some of the concerns expressed by the comments about
50 how that might take shape. And the State's

1 requirements, of course, is just the removal of the
2 breast and you can do that right in the field and leave
3 everything else behind. Currently, I guess that's the
4 way we would be looking at any type of wanton waste
5 situation in this arena, but I'm not sure if there's
6 anything after that. In the State regulations, there
7 isn't. So I mean if it's sitting on the wall -- I mean
8 in some of your pictures you showed some of the birds
9 hanging on a wall and you thought they might have been
10 hanging there too long for consumption and stuff like
11 that, but under the State regulation we wouldn't have
12 anything similar to that at all.

13

14 MR. CLARKE: Mr. Chairman. I think --
15 I should probably defer to Tom on this, but if somebody
16 went out and shot 30 ducks and breasted the meat out,
17 put it in a plastic bag and laid it in the sun and
18 didn't treat it properly, that would be a problem. But
19 I'd defer to Tom.

20

21 CHAIRMAN SQUARTSOFF: Yes, Tom, go
22 ahead.

23

24 MR. ROTHE: Yeah, it's a fine line
25 about intentions, but the State regulation does say
26 salvage for purposes of human consumption. You can't
27 feed it to the dog or just leave it go. But, again,
28 you're going to have freezer-burned stuff, there's meat
29 that's going to go bad sometimes.

30

31 CHAIRMAN SQUARTSOFF: Thank you, Tom.

32

33 MR. SMITH: Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

34

35 CHAIRMAN SQUARTSOFF: Thank you, Mike.
36 No more questions. Yes, Mike, go ahead.

37

38 MR. SMITH: Have you had discussions
39 with some of the other agencies, the Park Service, for
40 example, specifically about some of their policies? Do
41 you coordinate your enforcement with them or are they
42 just kind of on their own, doing their own thing? I
43 was curious, and the reason I ask, in the AVCP
44 situation you have the enforcement policy embodied in
45 the Goose Plan and that policy that you guys operate
46 under is not binding on the Park Service, I assume, but
47 have you talked to the Park Service about that policy?
48 I guess that's what I'm trying to get at is how closely
49 you work with Park Service employees and kind of
50 coordinate your efforts.

1 CHAIRMAN SQUARTSOFF: Go ahead, Steve.

2

3 MR. OBERHOLTSEER: I guess the answer
4 would be a couple different things. As far as the
5 Goose Management Plan and us operating under that as
6 far as an enforcement policy, the answer will be no.
7 We operate under the regulations that the Council sets.
8 The Goose Management Plan is not binding on us for
9 enforcement policy.

10

11 As far as coordination with other
12 agencies, absolutely. We talk to the troopers pre-
13 season, we talk to the Forest Service, we talk to the
14 Park Service. There again it might be a higher
15 priority at that particular time of year for our agency
16 than for theirs. So the long and the short of it is
17 Fish and Wildlife Service does end up doing the bulk of
18 subsistence bird hunting enforcement. But we do
19 coordinate with them and we routinely work with them on
20 other issues, too.

21

22 MR. SMITH: Thank you. I want to thank
23 you for the explanation of what happened at least in my
24 region this year. Certainly there was confusion as to
25 what a citation is and what exactly was happening to
26 those folks up there and they were somewhat confused as
27 to that and probably just some definition of the issue,
28 but thanks for the explanation.

29

30 CHAIRMAN SQUARTSOFF: Thank you, Mike.
31 Thank you, Steve. I need to have a motion made to
32 resume back to the regular agenda. Doug.

33

34 MR. ALCORN: So moved.

35

36 MS. CHYTHLOOK: Second.

37

38 CHAIRMAN SQUARTSOFF: Moved and
39 seconded by Molly. We are going to go into our budget
40 report expenditures. Do we want to call a short caucus
41 here with the Native entities to go over our budget
42 real quick on that. If you all could go outside for a
43 little bit. Thank you.

44

45 (Off record)

46

47 (On record)

48

49 CHAIRMAN SQUARTSOFF: Call the meeting
50 back to order. Fred, for your information, we're on

1 new business on B on the budget report, expenditures
2 and budget projected. We're going to pass on to you
3 that we're going to go ahead and leave the summary of
4 our funding, our grant funding the way it is, the
5 figures and everything.

6

7 MR. SMITH: Fred, with the minor
8 exception that I need to work out an arrangement with
9 Kawerak on their total amount and my total amount.

10

11 CHAIRMAN SQUARTSOFF: Yeah, we
12 discussed that earlier, Mike, that was going to happen.
13 Thank you. We are on line item C under new business
14 and I believe that's Doug.

15

16 MR. ALCORN: Thank you, Mr. Chairman.
17 This is Yellow-billed Loon regulations. This is an
18 issue that's on the table at the request of the
19 chairman of the Service Regulation Committee. At the
20 summer meeting of the Service Regulation Committee the
21 issue that Taqulik mentioned in the regional report
22 came up as a point of discussion by the SRC. The way
23 the regulations read now for the Yellow-billed Loon
24 harvest, inadvertently caught birds are taken, and I
25 assured the SRC to the best of my recollection that the
26 proposal was presented by the North Slope and approved
27 by the Council with the understanding that
28 inadvertently caught meant salvaging of dead birds,
29 birds that had been tangled in nets, that wasn't a
30 targeted hunt, people weren't setting nets to try to
31 catch Yellow-billed Loons. The chair then asked me to
32 come back and convey this request to the Council and
33 that was for the Council to consider the language
34 inadvertently caught and, if possible, to clarify what
35 inadvertently caught means. Does it mean entangled or
36 does it mean drowned and found dead. Because the
37 question is if there's an entangled bird found, is the
38 intent to release the bird or is the intent to take the
39 bird.

40

41 CHAIRMAN SQUARTSOFF: Thank you, Doug.
42 Any questions for Doug. Originally this was incidently
43 caught, but I guess incidently wasn't the right word to
44 put in there. Doug, go ahead.

45

46 MR. ALCORN: Incidental has a legal
47 definition under the Endangered Species Act, incidental
48 act, so we were advised not to use the word incidental
49 and inadvertent was the word that was selected.

50

1 CHAIRMAN SQUARTSOFF: Thank you, Doug.
2 Yes, Peter.

3
4 MR. DEVINE: Yes, Mr. Chair. This has
5 been in regulation for a couple years, so I don't know
6 why it's coming back looking for a word change. I mean
7 I thought we hammered this all out.

8
9 CHAIRMAN SQUARTSOFF: Thank you, Peter.
10 No, it's supposed to be brought up every year until --
11 I forgot whatever else was supposed to be in place.
12 Doug.

13
14 MR. ALCORN: What's coming into place
15 -- Peter, this may have preceded your appointment to
16 the Council. When Taqulik first presented this to the
17 Council, there was some recommendation by the Service
18 to approach this issue -- since it's not a targeted
19 harvest, to approach it through a permitted use or
20 permitted take process. When we briefed the Washington
21 office staff and the SRC, who happens to be the boss of
22 the Washington office staff, the chair of the SRC said
23 the Fish and Wildlife Service does not have a
24 permitting process for any birds other than Eagles for
25 customary and traditional uses. Eagles are the only
26 things we issue permits for for customary and
27 traditional uses. Until the Fish and Wildlife Service
28 develops a permit program for non-Eagle migratory
29 birds, the SRC opted to address this in the form of
30 regulations instead of a permit. So that's why the
31 AMBCC is taking it up annually, because the SRC said
32 when the Fish and Wildlife Service gets the permit
33 program in place, we will re-address this issue with
34 the AMBCC.

35
36 CHAIRMAN SQUARTSOFF: Thank you, Doug.
37 Any other questions for Doug. Taqulik.

38
39 MS. HEPA: Doug is correct. I don't
40 think with our local people that the word caught is an
41 issue. If people get the opportunity, if a Yellow-
42 billed Loon is caught in their net and dead, that there
43 is a possibility that they will use it for their
44 traditional headdress for our ceremonies. In most
45 cases, when any loon is caught in a net, we do get
46 phone calls from the fishermen to allow us to assist
47 them to release the loons. Our biologist over here,
48 Josh Bacon, did a number of those this summer. He said
49 he at least let eight go this summer at the very least,
50 but he's keeping track of that. At the spring meeting,

1 we'll give a full report on the numbers of birds we did
2 release. So they're looking to our department to
3 provide assistance in releasing birds that are still
4 alive.

5
6 CHAIRMAN SQUARTSOFF: Thank you,
7 Taqulik. Mike.

8
9 MR. SMITH: Thank you, Mr. Chairman.
10 Taqulik, I assume you're pretty intimately aware of
11 this. Is there language that you can think of that
12 would be better? I mean where do you see this all
13 going, I guess? I assume a proposal will come forward
14 with different language.

15
16 MS. HEPA: If I may, Mr. Chair.
17 Honestly, I don't see a problem with the way that it's
18 written. I think it's fine the way it is. I think
19 because of the Service employees who release the
20 Yellow-billed Loons from their net maybe thought that
21 this wasn't clear. Obviously, I don't think that we
22 intentionally set out nets to harvest Yellow-billed
23 Loons, so I think it's fine the way it is. I don't
24 foresee that there's a problem with that.

25
26 CHAIRMAN SQUARTSOFF: Thank you,
27 Taqulik. Mike.

28
29 MR. SMITH: Doug, is the SRC expecting a
30 response from us on this?

31
32 MR. ALCORN: I think that was the
33 intent of Paul Schmidt, who is the chairman of the SRC.
34 He asked me and maybe I'll defer to Patty and Herman,
35 who was in the same meeting, when he asked us to convey
36 this concern to the AMBCC that the SRC was looking for
37 some clarifying language. So that is the expectation,
38 I believe.

39
40 CHAIRMAN SQUARTSOFF: Thank you, Doug.
41 Taqulik, go ahead.

42
43 MS. HEPA: So just a little bit of
44 history to go with that. The fisherman whose net was
45 pulled up, I felt obligated to go let him know before
46 he went out there, so I went up to him and I was
47 telling him about the Yellow-billed Loons and after I
48 was done telling him he goes what are you talking
49 about. He thought I was saying yellow balloons.
50 Because I was a little bit -- my blood pressure was

1 going up and I sounded like I was talking about yellow
2 balloons and he was like what yellow balloons.

3

4 CHAIRMAN SQUARTSOFF: Thank you,
5 Taqulik. Also, it was mentioned down there that the
6 ones that were caught and released, it was mentioned in
7 front of the SRC committee meeting down there and it
8 was well taken. Also, we did explain that people do
9 not just intentionally go out there and set nets all
10 the time to catch these things and it's not a whole
11 bunch of people at once that are setting nets. It's
12 only individuals at certain times that are trying to
13 get fish, so we kind of explained that to them a lot
14 down there and it helped some. Thank you.

15

16 Okay. If no more questions, I think
17 we're on D. Oh, sorry, Patty.

18

19 MS. BROWN-SCHWALENBERG: Doug, are you
20 going to try and formulate some type of response to
21 this? I mean it doesn't seem like we've resolved it.
22 In my opinion I think there's a cultural difference in
23 the definition of the word caught, is what it is. In
24 the Western sense of the word, when you catch
25 something, that kind of gives you the impression it's
26 still alive. In the Native community, when you catch
27 something, you're going to catch a deer, that doesn't
28 mean you're going to take it home on a lasso or, you
29 know, let it follow you home kind of a thing, so I
30 think that's kind of where the problem lies and I don't
31 know how you want to resolve that.

32

33 CHAIRMAN SQUARTSOFF: Go ahead, Doug.

34

35 MR. ALCORN: Thanks, Mr. Chairman.
36 Taqulik and I had breakfast together and we talked
37 about this issue and I suggested that maybe Taqulik
38 come to the SRC meeting and explain the intent to the
39 SRC so that they have a better understanding of really
40 what occurs and that might suffice. It may not require
41 an actual written change. I would defer to Taqulik to
42 be responsive to this. I'm not going to personally try
43 to redefine what that is. I think that's the
44 prerogative of the regional representative.

45

46 CHAIRMAN SQUARTSOFF: Thank you, Doug.
47 Go ahead, Taqulik.

48

49 MS. HEPA: And I thought that was a
50 great idea. Next summer, when the SRC comes around, I

1 would like to attend and speak on behalf of this
2 proposal and to present them with the effort we did
3 with trying to get in touch with the fishermen and
4 whatnot like you guys did for us this last year and the
5 year before.

6
7 CHAIRMAN SQUARTSOFF: Thank you. Doug,
8 do you have another follow up.

9
10 MR. ALCORN: Yeah, just one follow up.
11 I think one of the issues that we deal with, as Patty
12 mentioned, there's sort of a difference in the
13 understanding of what caught is from a cultural
14 standpoint. From an administrative standpoint, when
15 you're writing regulations, regulations have to be
16 understandable and they have to be specific enough so
17 that an agency can -- law enforcement, for example, can
18 look at it and understand what it means and a hunter
19 can look at it and understand what it means, so
20 inadvertently caught may very well mean different
21 things to a law enforcement officer versus a hunter.
22 If there is that potential for miscommunication and
23 misunderstanding, then I think the onus is on the
24 Council to clarify that. I think that's kind of where
25 we are at this point. There is misunderstanding I
26 think on both parts.

27
28 CHAIRMAN SQUARTSOFF: Yes, Russ, do you
29 want to respond to that?

30
31 MR. OATES: I was just going to ask a
32 question would it make sense based on what you just
33 said, Doug, to put after the word caught in the
34 regulations in parentheses drowned or killed, a single
35 word just to provide sort of a Western translation for
36 it.

37
38 CHAIRMAN SQUARTSOFF: Doug, do you want
39 to respond to that or Taqulik.

40
41 MR. ALCORN: I don't think it's for me
42 to say. I think I would defer again to Taqulik.

43
44 MS. HEPA: I think when I go back to
45 the SRC that this issue will be resolved because I
46 don't think -- you know, you could pick any word in
47 these regulations and there could be a definition
48 issue. I would like to take that route for us to go
49 there to help explain what this means to us and that
50 there really isn't an issue there.

1 CHAIRMAN SQUARTSOFF: All right. Thank
2 you, Taqulik. I know you mentioned earlier that there
3 was no problem in your region with that word caught, so
4 I don't know why we're discussing it so much. Thank
5 you.

6
7 Next item is D, the 2009 conservation
8 issues and we have Russ Oates and Tom Rothe up on that.
9 Thank you.

10
11 MR. ROTHE: Russ and I got together and
12 given the theme of this meeting is to identify any
13 conservation issues of concern for the coming year for
14 the Co-management Council, we put together a few slides
15 on the status of particular bird populations of
16 interest so that you and your Regional Committees can
17 think about anything you think is necessary in terms of
18 regulations or gathering information. So what we're
19 going to do is just step through at least just those
20 bird populations that we have in the past or currently
21 have some concerns about. It's basically some of the
22 goose populations you've heard about before, sea ducks,
23 which are the listed Eiders and Black Scoters and then
24 the two loons, Yellow-billed and Red-throated.

25
26 I'll kind of give you an introduction
27 and Russ can chime in. We're kind of like a pair. You
28 don't get just one of us, you get both of us at the
29 same time.

30
31 MR. OATES: Howdy, partner.

32
33 MR. ROTHE: So you've heard a lot about
34 our concerns about Emperor Geese, the population
35 declined somewhere in the late '70s, early '80s,
36 probably from around 150,000 birds to half of that and
37 they've never really improved much since then. This
38 was the main bird and the subject for the Y-K Delta
39 Goose Plan in the beginning of 1986 and we've been
40 working with AVCP ever since to find a way to get this
41 population going again.

42
43 This just shows you some of the long-
44 term data that are being collected. This is the
45 breeding grounds information. The top blue line is
46 total geese from the aerial survey. The bottom line is
47 the number of breeding pairs that we think are out
48 there. You can see there's some evidence of what looks
49 like an increase in the number of birds that are
50 nesting, but the one problem we always face is they

1 improve a little bit and then they decline, so the
2 overall effect for the population is one of generally
3 just not making any progress.

4
5 The most important bars on this graph
6 are the red ones. The spring survey is the official
7 index for the Y-K Goose Plan and that we use in our
8 Flyway Management Plan. So, as you can see, it bounces
9 around, but the trend is pretty flat over the long
10 term.

11
12 MR. OATES: This is the migration
13 survey, not the breeding ground survey.

14
15 MR. ROTHE: Yeah. So we're kind of
16 puzzled as to what's going on here, but this suggests
17 that if the number of breeding pairs is going up but
18 the population isn't growing, it may have something to
19 do with winter survival because these birds are in the
20 Aleutians during the winter or some other aspect, like
21 predation, that can be reducing the number of birds
22 that are recruited into this population.

23
24 Regulations-wise, all seasons are
25 closed on Emperor Geese statewide and that's what we
26 feel we need to do to keep adult survival up so we can
27 see the population grow.

28
29 So it's below the objective level,
30 which, at this point, we need to get at least a three-
31 year average of 80,000 before we can think about
32 hunting again. There is some harvest, especially in
33 the areas of the Y-K Delta. Some out the Peninsula and
34 the Aleutians and St. Lawrence. We don't have a good
35 idea of how much. As I mentioned, winter survival is a
36 concern for this population because the birds are
37 wintering in some pretty rugged conditions.

38
39 This is a Black Brant. It's important
40 in all the coastal regions in Alaska for subsistence
41 harvest and fall harvest and winter harvest occur.
42 You've seen all this, so I won't spend too much time
43 with it. The long-term population trend is downward
44 for probably a variety of reasons. We have some
45 recruitment problems, lower numbers of young being
46 produced. We have habitat degradation during winter
47 everywhere from Washington to Mexico. A lot of
48 different things they're working on. At this point we
49 don't think harvest is a major cause of the decline,
50 but something we need to watch carefully. As you know,

1 in 2005, when the population took that big dip, we came
2 to you and asked for harvest restrictions for
3 everybody. So you can see they've recovered a bit in
4 the last couple of years.

5
6 This was an unusual year. We're not
7 sure what to make of this, but most of the birds go to
8 Mexico where they spend the winter on the west coast,
9 the big lagoons. Izembek, near Cold Bay, is a big
10 lagoon that has supported a few thousand birds and then
11 10-15,000 birds started staying there all winter long.
12 As long as the lagoon stays ice-free, they've got food
13 and they can survive there. This year we were really
14 worried because the Lower 48 counts that Bob adds up
15 they're pretty low. Finally, Russ's folks went out and
16 flew a survey and they found 40,000 Brants stayed at
17 Izembek all winter long. That's a third of the
18 population. That is a very weird thing.

19
20 MR. OATES: It's over twice the
21 previous high record number counted at Izembek.

22
23 MR. ROTHE: I don't know if anybody
24 understands what that means. Somebody said, well,
25 maybe that's global warming, the lagoons are going to
26 be able to support birds in the long run, but we're
27 also worried it could be a trap. If there was a severe
28 winter with that lagoon iced up, those birds would have
29 to spread out in different places and could have an
30 effect.

31
32 The other thing that happened is on the
33 colonies, at least a couple colonies, a lot fewer
34 nesting pairs showed up. Some biologists were wondering
35 if this wintering in the far north reduced their body
36 condition and ability to lay eggs and breed, so those
37 are just questions we don't know the answer to. Molly.

38
39 MS. CHYTHLOOK: When they migrate and
40 go through that peninsula there, do they stop there or
41 do they just go on through?

42
43 MR. ROTHE: That's Izembek Lagoon at
44 Cold Bay, so they start coming in there in September.
45 They usually all build up until about the first part of
46 November. When the weather is just right, they all go
47 to Mexico. This year there were 40,000 that stayed
48 there all winter.

49
50 MS. CHYTHLOOK: The reason why I ask is

1 because we had that Bristol Bay oil concern and it's
2 right there in that area. Thank you.

3

4 CHAIRMAN SQUARTSOFF: I think Mike has
5 a question.

6

7 MR. SMITH: Yeah, thanks, Tom. I'm
8 just trying to understand your grasp here a little bit.
9 From 2005 to 2006 we saw a fluctuation there of what
10 looks like about 30 or 40,000 birds, which equates to
11 30 or 40 percent fluctuation. Is that a common
12 occurrence? I mean it looks like it is in some sense.

13

14 Secondly, the birds that stayed in
15 Izembek Lagoon, do we have any idea if they were all
16 just young birds or do we know?

17

18 MR. ROTHE: We could look up the age
19 information because usually the lagoon they count
20 family groups, the number of young, but I'd have to get
21 out of the slide show. I'll look it up for you.

22

23 MR. OATES: I suspect they were family
24 groups.

25

26 MR. SMITH: That 30-40 percent
27 fluctuation is a relatively common occurrence it looks
28 like.

29

30 MR. OATES: You're referring to the
31 winter survey?

32

33 MR. SMITH: Yeah, the numbers.

34

35 MR. ROTHE: But production was really
36 good in 2006, so we would expect higher numbers of
37 young birds in the population, but I can't imagine that
38 would be the reason that so many stayed north.

39

40 MR. SMITH: I'm just trying to
41 understand how you guys do your calculations for this.
42 I, of course, deal with fish all the time and how they
43 extrapolate out for fish and try to predict brood years
44 in fish, but in this situation, of course, it would be
45 the youngest.

46

47 MR. OATES: The answer is the Service
48 flies the Mexico survey and the Izembek survey and the
49 states do counts in Washington, Oregon and California
50 all in the wintering areas. So, theoretically, you add

1 them all up and there's your answer. The counts from
2 British Columbia are erratic at best in terms of
3 consistent counts.

4

5 CHAIRMAN SQUARTSOFF: Tom, Peter has a
6 question.

7

8 MR. DEVINE: In the Shumagins this last
9 year was really unusual year for us because not only
10 did you have the birds over in Izembek, but the
11 humpback whales, they were supposed to be down in Baja,
12 California and they were still in Sand Point in January
13 putting on a heck of a show right in front of town.

14

15 On another note, we were doing a sea
16 lion survey in January and before we could even get off
17 the air field we counted 400, you know, where usually
18 you'd see four, but for some reason there was all kinds
19 of food there this last year. We've had four sea lions
20 that had markings, tags, or brandings. The unusual
21 thing about that is -- I mean they were tagged on two
22 different ends. We had one show up from Bogoslof down
23 by Unalaska. Another one was branded up in Kenai area.
24 For some reason they were all there in January. In our
25 sea lion survey, we probably counted 4,000. So there's
26 something going on out there that's pretty interesting.

27

28 CHAIRMAN SQUARTSOFF: Thank you, Peter.

29

30 MR. ROTHE: So what we do know is that
31 in 2007 Brant production probably wasn't very good,
32 again, because some of the colonies had fewer nesting
33 pairs. I think the weather was reasonable, but we
34 don't think production is going to be really all that
35 good. We have enough birds now, so we're above our
36 threshold where we can maintain normal hunting
37 regulations.

38

39 Again, we're trying to eventually, if
40 we can figure out how to do it, to get Brant to 150,000
41 birds. This is the Black Brant. We know we've
42 constantly got habitat threats and disturbance issues
43 in the Lower 48 and Mexico areas. We need to get some
44 better harvest data in certain areas. The Y-K Delta
45 and the North Slope are probably the largest
46 contributors, but it would probably be good to have a
47 little bit better information from some of the other
48 spots.

49

50 Washington and Oregon aren't harvesting

1 many Brant at all, so it's mainly subsistence harvest
2 -- actually, Washington state I guess gets a few and
3 Alaska sport harvest and the Mexico harvest.

4
5 MR. SMITH: Do you have a sense of the
6 Mexico harvest at all?

7
8 MR. ROTHE: A little bit. The USGS
9 guys would go down there to do various research
10 projects. Dave Ward in particular has some of the
11 local fellows he works with go to all of the clubs
12 where they host the American Hunters mostly and he gets
13 some sense, but I don't think we've got anything
14 recently, like in the last year or two. It's been
15 fairly flat. The regulations in Mexico have been
16 tightened up, which has kind of discouraged some
17 hunting. It looks like it's probably lower than it was
18 in the 1980s.

19
20 MR. OATES: Just to be a little more
21 specific for your question, Mike, during this period in
22 2005 when the population went down and we asked for
23 harvest restrictions throughout the flyway, we also
24 worked with Mexico on that and I think Dr. Trost might
25 have been involved in that. The management units that
26 they use in Mexico called umas, they have area quotas
27 or ceilings if you want to call it for harvest. In
28 their efforts to cooperate on behalf of Brant, they cut
29 their harvest objectives or quotas by 50 percent to be
30 consistent with the actions taken in the Pacific Flyway
31 and Alaska.

32
33 MR. SMITH: (Away from microphone)

34
35 MR. OATES: Theoretically that should
36 result in a significant reduction in harvest assuming
37 they were meeting their quotas before.

38
39 MR. SMITH: In comparison, just to give
40 me a sense of relevance on this, the harvest we're
41 talking about down there in regards to numbers, is that
42 comparable to our subsistence harvest or do you think
43 it's more than that? I mean just for a sense of
44 relevance.

45
46 MR. OATES: The best estimate we had
47 was somewhere in the vicinity of 1,500 birds, maybe
48 2,000. Dr. Trost might want to confirm that for me.

49
50 MR. TROST: Yeah, that would be true.

1 MR. ROTHE: I left those slides out for
2 brevity because you probably seen those three or four
3 times, but Y-K Delta has three or four thousand birds
4 per year. I don't know what your North Slope total is.

5
6 MS. HEPA: 1,500.

7
8 MR. ROTHE: 1,500. Washington state is
9 anywhere from 600 to 1,000. It all adds up.

10
11 MR. OATES: Oregon is usually one to
12 three birds. Go back to the map. One thing I wanted
13 to mention to the group here, I guess an early heads
14 up, although I'm sure the North Slope folks are aware
15 of it, I think we were pretty successful in working
16 with the North Slope folks to provide a legal season
17 for the Wainwright area migration harvest this last
18 year. I worked primarily with Josh. I see him here
19 and I haven't said hi yet, so, hi, Josh. I think we
20 were pretty successful on that.

21
22 During the course of working on that
23 regulation I worked with Robert Suydam and Josh and
24 other biologists that have worked on the North Slope to
25 review the regulation proposal relative to the timing
26 of certain events regarding migration of breeding birds
27 for the North Slope and the migration of non-breeding
28 molting birds going to the North Slope and the timing
29 of nesting of Brant on the North Slope.

30
31 In the course of that investigation or
32 whatever you want to call that, review of the
33 information suggested that the proposal for the
34 migrating Brant, the timing of that proposed opening
35 was consistent with a period that was after the
36 breeding birds migrated, so it really posed no threat
37 whatsoever to the birds that were going to be breeding
38 on the North Slope. Since the proposal was intended to
39 target failed breeders that were migrating to the Slope
40 primarily from the Yukon Delta, the regulation was very
41 consistent with both the intent of the proposal and the
42 protection of the birds that bred on the North Slope.

43
44 One of the other things that I
45 discovered and basically just had noticed was the fact
46 that the current closure for the nesting period up
47 there for the northern unit, not the southern unit
48 where the opening was, but the closure for the northern
49 unit for Brant, among other birds, is June 16th to July
50 15th. Brant are covered under that closure period,

1 whereas King and Common Eiders closure period is June
2 7th to July 6th. The timing, based on information that
3 I received talking to a couple researchers up there,
4 one of which was Paul Flint, who was using data from
5 Colville Delta, and talking to Phillip Martin of
6 Ecological Services, was that the Brant nesting timing
7 is much more similar to the Eiders than it is to the
8 other species.

9

10 So, if our intent through this closure
11 is to protect the birds during the key nesting period,
12 the Brant probably should be closed during the same
13 period in the northern unit as the King and Common
14 Eiders, June 7th to July 6th.

15

16 This is just what I think is probably
17 the most biologically appropriate timing of that
18 closure for them up there, so I'll be continuing to
19 work with folks in the North Slope Borough and the
20 possible end result being a proposal for the next
21 regulation cycle this fall. I just wanted to let you
22 folks know we were thinking about that.

23

24 The fact is, during the course of this
25 I actually inserted the language in the proposal that
26 was just passed this last year and was promptly
27 reminded by Robert Suydam and my assistant regional
28 director that we hadn't really discussed it within this
29 venue and it really wasn't appropriate to make the
30 change at that time, so realizing the error of my ways
31 I quickly withdrew that part in the proposed change, so
32 we can visit on that and talk about it and see what's
33 most appropriate. Anyway, that's my heads up on that.

34

35 MR. SMITH: Real quickly. Taqulik and
36 you, yourself, mentioned units and I'm just trying to
37 get an idea -- because she was talking about changing
38 some of the seasons in some of the units to accommodate
39 some of the villages and things like that. What units
40 are you talking about, State Game Management Units?

41

42 MR. OATES: Page 9 of your regulations
43 book shows the units that were defined -- the
44 boundaries of which were defined by the Borough. Page
45 9, the map at the top.

46

47 MR. SMITH: So not State Game
48 Management Units.

49

50 MR. OATES: No. The proposal that I'm

1 talking about would affect the northern unit and the
2 Wainwright proposal that was passed this last
3 regulation cycle affected the southern unit.

4

5 MR. ROTHE: Okay. Cackling Geese.
6 I'll be really brief on this. You've seen this before.
7 This is a population that's recovered pretty well after
8 the mid 1980s. Again, the Goose Management Plan with
9 AVCP with the mechanism that we used. The big issue is
10 that the birds no longer winter in California. They're
11 in Washington and Oregon on the west side and have been
12 for quite a long time now. The main things we're
13 struggling with are how to manage geese that are eating
14 agricultural crops and creating some damage complaints
15 and also trying to get the population to its objective.

16

17 So here's the long-term history. We
18 had really good recovery into the late '90s and then
19 kind of stalled out. Right now we're just tuning up
20 regulations for fall and winter hunting to see if we
21 can get the population to start going up again.

22

23 Last year Washington and Oregon reduced
24 their bag limits and we did here too in fall, the fall
25 hunt on the Alaska Peninsula. Unfortunately, I guess
26 Washington and Oregon just had a really good hunting
27 season last year, so they did get a lot of geese and we
28 didn't end up saving a bunch of Cacklers, but we think
29 the bag limit reduction eventually should make a
30 difference. I don't think there's any big reason for
31 concern, but the sooner we can get those birds up to
32 250,000, the better we're going to feel about it.

33

34 So we're below our goal, we've got this
35 shift that they've pulled on us that we're going to
36 have to live with forever probably. We still have to
37 deal with the farmer complaints down south. The
38 Washington, Oregon departments spend a lot of their
39 time dealing with those folks as well as Bob Trost and
40 their Region 1 people.

41

42 We've got this problem of having lots
43 and lots of geese on our shrinking land base, so
44 eventually that may make our problems worse as far as
45 allowing public land to hold the geese off of private
46 crop land.

47

48 MR. OATES: I'll just mention one of
49 the things that we're hoping to do is try to get more
50 of the duck stamp money going to those wintering areas.

1 MR. ROTHE: This one is primarily for
2 Mike's benefit. The mid continent White-fronted Goose
3 breeds from northern Alaska all the way across to
4 Canada. We've talked about this one in the past. As
5 you can see from the left-hand graph, we knew that the
6 management plan and the hunting regulations probably
7 were going to allow for more harvest in the early 2000s
8 and, indeed, the population went down. So restrictions
9 were put on the harvest in the Central Flyway and the
10 Canadian providences, so we've got the population
11 starting to rise again. That's the way the system is
12 supposed to work. When you see a decline, adjust
13 regulations and hopefully we'll come out of it okay.

14
15 The component that breeds in the
16 Interior part of Alaska is less productive and the
17 long-term work by Koyukuk and Kanuti Refuges and Innoko
18 have indicated that the survival rates on those
19 Interior Alaska breeding birds is lower than birds that
20 nest in Canada. In general, we're looking at stable
21 numbers as far as we can tell. Hopefully this
22 continental population increase will keep going up.

23
24 CHAIRMAN SQUARTSOFF: Mike.

25
26 MR. SMITH: Thank you, Mr. Chairman.
27 Just to remind myself, there was attempts to -- I mean
28 I guess there was this issue of their combining the
29 Canadian nesters and the Alaska nesters in Canada at
30 the same time. Apparently we were getting there
31 earlier and the Canadians ones hadn't showed up yet.
32 Had that been addressed?

33
34 MR. ROTHE: The provinces did adjust
35 their hunting season, but I can't tell you exactly how
36 they did it. I'm betting that they probably didn't
37 adjust the season opening dates much. It was probably
38 a bag limit change, but I don't know.

39
40 MR. OATES: Tom and I were heavily
41 involved in the Central Flyway when they were revising
42 the management plan for this population and we were
43 trying to build in the safeguards necessary to protect
44 those Interior birds when they got down into the
45 flyway. We've got no real control over what the
46 Canadians do. There was an effort in Texas, in the
47 western edge of that green area in Texas, there's a
48 spot down there where the Alaska birds were going and
49 some of the guides down there were trying to liberalize
50 in that area during a period when our birds were -- I

1 say our. The Alaska birds were particularly vulnerable
2 and we were successful in kind of snuffing that effort
3 out down there to try to keep some of the pressure off.
4 Our intent is to maintain the availability of those
5 birds in Alaska in sufficient numbers that folks can
6 use them for food in the spring.

7
8 MR. ROTHE: There's one problem that's
9 kind of a technical problem, but the south Saskatchewan
10 River where we get this fall index on the left graph,
11 as more and more Snow Geese are piling in there and
12 making the counting job really difficult, we're going
13 to be seeing if Canadian Wildlife Service can think of
14 some ways to improve the survey, but they're just
15 getting swamped by Snow Geese in that spot because it's
16 a good resting area for lots of geese.

17
18 MR. SMITH: Do they do genetic testing
19 on those at that time to see if they're Canadian or
20 Alaska birds at all or do they just do a cumulative
21 count.

22
23 MR. OATES: Are you referring to the
24 White-fronts?

25
26 MR. SMITH: Yes.

27
28 MR. OATES: That's just a cumulative
29 count. The down side of that, the population
30 trajectories, increasing or decreasing of different
31 parts of the range of those birds, is not the same
32 because at one point the Interior Alaska birds were
33 declining when birds in other parts of the range were
34 increasing. It made it really difficult for us to go
35 down to Central Flyway and argue for reductions in
36 harvest because of the inability to target, either
37 through protection or allowing harvest, the birds from
38 Alaska relative to the other populations which were
39 increasing, which is why we did the collaring work with
40 the red collars. That enabled us to pinpoint the parts
41 of the range and the timing so that we could manage
42 regulations within those areas to protect the Alaska
43 birds as necessary.

44
45 The other advantage of that is, even if
46 this problem that Tom described of the Snow Geese
47 creating a lot of problems with the survey in
48 Saskatchewan, is that basically overwhelms our ability
49 to track the continental population. Continuing to do
50 the surveys in Alaska will still allow us to track the

1 Alaska breeding birds and knowing where they go, we
2 could still potentially affect the regulations in such
3 a way that we could protect the Alaska birds if
4 necessary given that they do decline again. So it
5 gives us a little bit of independence of this
6 continental survey in the south Saskatchewan River,
7 which is becoming questionable in terms of its value
8 for management.

9

10 MR. ROTHE: Most of our valuable
11 information of harvest comes from a pretty good sample
12 of birds that are banded on those Interior refuges.

13

14 MR. SMITH: Thank you, Mr. Chair.

15

16 MR. OATES: Oh, this is my part of the
17 show. Okay. We wanted to give you a little
18 information about Steller's Eiders as well. You're all
19 familiar with the range of this species. You've seen
20 this slide before. The red area being the known range
21 with one little red dot on the Yukon Delta and the
22 principal breeding range of North America being on the
23 North Slope and the molting and wintering areas being
24 on the Alaska Peninsula both sides up to Kodiak and
25 Cook Inlet down to the Aleutian Chain.

26

27 We really don't have a way of
28 adequately monitoring the portion of the population
29 that breeds in Alaska because the wintering area that
30 was shown in yellow is the combined Russian and U.S.
31 breeding population. So what we try to do is monitor
32 this population as it stages in preparation for
33 migration in the early spring in the Alaska Peninsula
34 up to the Yukon-Kuskokwim Delta and we fly this as the
35 birds are aggregating in preparation for migration to
36 the breeding areas and the red speckles on the map
37 there show some of the major areas. There's a few on
38 the south side there that are not shown, but these are
39 the major staging areas during the spring and we count
40 out there every year. Most recently we counted this
41 last spring in 2007, but at the time -- well, as of yet
42 we have not got the data compiled and available.

43

44 2006 we attempted to do the survey, but
45 there was no decent weather window, so we weren't able
46 to get the survey flown. As you can see in the early
47 years of this survey, it looked like things were kind
48 of going down the tubes and then in the three most
49 recent years that we have data compiled for it, it
50 looked like they popped up a little bit. So we're

1 going to be particularly interested to see what the
2 2007 results are when we get them.

3
4 Just a word on the Spectacled Eider. A
5 little more complex map here, but the red areas again
6 are the breeding areas. Current breeding areas, the
7 white areas, are the reported historical breeding
8 range. The green are molting areas and the yellow is
9 the known wintering area. We survey these birds in the
10 two red areas. Actually, there are a few nests on St.
11 Lawrence Island I didn't mention. But the two primary
12 red areas, North Slope and the Y-K Delta, is where we
13 survey these birds.

14
15 The principal way we survey them on the
16 North Slope is with an aerial survey because they're
17 thinly distributed. They breed in low densities over a
18 very broad range. The principal way on the Y-K Delta
19 is using ground base plots. They actually breed in a
20 slightly larger range than the little box on the left
21 corner depicts, but they breed in fairly high density
22 in those areas and we actually are able to go out and
23 count the birds' nests on the ground and we can
24 extrapolate to a slightly larger area based on
25 correction factors for Eiders seen from the air over
26 areas where we count the nests, so we can relate that.

27
28 The bars on the one on the left
29 indicate -- the green bar is the birds seen and the
30 kind of brown bar is the correction for visibility and
31 the gray bar above that is the extrapolation to the
32 total area where they nest on the Y-K Delta. As you
33 can see, it looks like they're, in the last 10 years I
34 guess that represents now, maybe they're slowly
35 creeping up, but basically pretty much a static
36 population at this point.

37
38 Just a word on the North Slope. The
39 bars there represent different things. The pale green
40 bar on the bottom is the single birds, the pale bar in
41 the middle is the pairs and the green bar is flocks.
42 When you add that all together, you get that graph and
43 it looks like essentially a stable population at this
44 point in time on the North Slope. That's kind of the
45 best shot we've got right now at those.

46
47 I just want to talk a minute about
48 another species that we've had some concern about
49 continentally. The Black Scoter is a species of sea
50 duck that's declined continentally based on broad-based

1 surveys over the entire known breeding range of this
2 bird or most of the entire known breeding range, about
3 50 percent over time. We, in cooperation with the
4 Arctic Goose joint venture, designed and put together a
5 pretty comprehensive survey of the main breeding areas
6 for Black Scoters in Alaska and that's represented by
7 the light gray shading.

8
9 Superimposed on that are black dots and
10 that gives you a feel -- the lines that those black
11 dots present or suggest pretty much shows where the
12 actual transect lines were and clusters of black dots
13 indicating more birds. We've been doing that for
14 several years now just to try to monitor the breeding
15 population on the breeding grounds. The next slide
16 will show -- well, this just shows the actual transect
17 lines and the higher density areas for the four main
18 areas that are represented by the darker shades of the
19 same basic color.

20
21 So here are our best estimates of the
22 population, which are the gray bars here and the tan
23 bars are the actual indices that were done in the
24 survey areas and the gray bars are expanded to a little
25 bit bigger areas that weren't totally sampled. One
26 year we did a correction with a helicopter at the same
27 time we did an aerial survey and found that the results
28 were pretty similar. It's presumed and this suggests
29 that you get slightly better search image out of a
30 helicopter than you do a fixed wing, but it's extremely
31 costly and less efficient given that they've only got
32 an effective fuel range of less than two hours and our
33 survey planes can go five or six hours.

34
35 Anyway, we wanted to see what the best
36 estimate would be if we had the ideal survey platform.
37 At any rate, no real dramatic conclusions to be reached
38 yet, but we're going to continue to try to monitor
39 these birds so we can make sure we are able to manage
40 them and maintain sustainable populations here in
41 Alaska. Did you want to add something to that?

42
43 MR. ROTHE: Maybe one note is that
44 Scoters are a real problem because they nest late, so
45 the Alaska Yukon breeding bird survey is flown in May
46 and into early June, but Russ's crew, including Ed
47 Malaku (ph) who was in Fairbanks here for many years,
48 figured out that the timing for a Scoter survey is
49 about mid to third week in June.

50

1 MR. OATES: I think that's about right.

2

3 MR. ROTHE: So they're weeks later than
4 Mallards and Pintails and everything else, which is a
5 real problem because that means we would ask Fish and
6 Wildlife Service to pay for a whole new survey. It's
7 pretty expensive, but that's what you have to do to get
8 these kinds of answers.

9

10 MR. OATES: Thanks for that. This
11 gives you a little bit of information about the
12 regional populations. For all regions, we think
13 there's somewhere in Alaska in the vicinity of maybe a
14 couple hundred thousand birds and we've done some
15 additional survey work in earlier years and those are
16 potentially interesting for comparison back in the
17 early '90s when we were doing expanded survey coverage
18 just to try to evaluate our basic continental breeding
19 pair survey. A couple of them maybe suggest that
20 Scoter numbers have gone down a little bit on the Yukon
21 Delta and the Seward Peninsula, although the gray
22 vertical stripes represent R-bars and they do overlap,
23 so no real conclusions can be drawn from that. As you
24 can see, the Yukon Delta Region appears to have more
25 Scoters than any of the other regions followed by
26 Bristol Bay and then Seward Peninsula.

27

28 CHAIRMAN SQUARTSOFF: Yes, Molly. Turn
29 your mike on, please.

30

31 MS. CHYTHLOOK: When you do the survey,
32 do you just do live birds and not eggs?

33

34 MR. OATES: These graphs all represent
35 overflights with airplanes. We have a survey that we
36 do on the Yukon Delta where we count nests and it was
37 designed primarily for geese. It's been done every
38 year since about 1986, I believe. It's primary purpose
39 now is for the Spectacled Eiders. That was the data
40 set I was describing on the Yukon Delta for the
41 Spectacled Eiders. We also count Scoter nests when we
42 find them, but we don't find a whole lot of them.
43 Unfortunately, I can't recall off the top of my head
44 what, if any, kind of trend line we got off of the
45 Scoter nest data for the Yukon Delta, but we could
46 potentially find that out. I think Tom has got that
47 report on his computer.

48

49 CHAIRMAN SQUARTSOFF: Go ahead, Mike.

50

1 MR. SMITH: Quickly. The gray line you
2 said that's your R value then or your uncertainty?

3
4 MR. OATES: That's a 95 percent
5 confidence or more.

6
7 MR. ROTHE: Tell us, Russ, how do you
8 count yellow balloons.

9
10 MR. OATES: Yellow balloons. I go to
11 the party store. No. The Yellow-billed Loon we've been
12 counting them incidental to surveys on the North Slope
13 for some years. Just a couple things about them. As
14 you probably know, they're long-lived birds, they
15 mature late, they have low annual reproduction and the
16 population trend is very sensitive to adult survival.

17
18 The map here shows one of the major
19 surveys that we do on the North Slope in the
20 springtime, aerial surveys, and the white area is where
21 they're essentially less than one loon per 100
22 kilometer squared and the dark red is the highest
23 density, anywhere from 31 to 40 Yellow-billed Loons per
24 square kilometer. So, based on this, we think there's
25 about 3,300 Yellow-billed Loons on the North Slope on
26 average, about 1,100 of which we believe are non-
27 breeding birds and we also think the North Slope
28 population at this time is stable. There's about 700
29 other Yellow-billed Loons in other locations in Alaska
30 and most of those probably on the Seward Peninsula.

31
32 MR. SMITH: What's a non-breeding loon?
33 How do you classify that?

34
35 MR. OATES: I believe that's when --
36 typically you see a pair of loons and often there will
37 be a nest and one will be near the nest or on the nest
38 and the other one will be swimming around, and if you
39 just see a single loon and no evidence of a nest or
40 another bird anywhere nearby. I'm pretty sure that's
41 correct. I'm not 100 percent positive. I haven't
42 specifically asked the surveyors that question.

43
44 MR. ROTHE: And they mature really
45 slowly, so the one-year-olds, the two-year-olds may not
46 even try to nest or couple up. Sometimes they tend to
47 occur in little groups.

48
49 MR. SMITH: What is the age of maturity
50 for them?

1 MR. OATES: Uh-oh. You finally got us,
2 Mike. Sorry about that.

3
4 MR. SMITH: Mr. Chairman, that's okay.
5 They brought it up is all.

6
7 MR. OATES: I'll get back to you. Non-
8 breeding isn't necessarily immature.

9
10 CHAIRMAN SQUARTSOFF: Taqulik had a
11 question, too.

12
13 MS. HEPA: I just had a comment. We
14 observe a lot of loons traveling between their nesting
15 and the ocean. We see them flying back and forth all
16 day long. If you spend time along the coast, you see
17 them bringing fish back. I don't know if that makes a
18 difference in what you thought that word non-breeders
19 was. We see a lot -- well, I do.

20
21 MR. OATES: I appreciate that, Taqulik.
22 I know that Red-throats do that pretty regularly. You
23 say Yellow-bills do, too? Okay. To this point, my
24 knowledge, that quote non-breeding number has never
25 been used in any management context. Before we would
26 do that we would certainly be able to want to confirm,
27 you know, what indeed that is. At any rate, our best
28 estimate is about 3,300 birds and we recognize the fact
29 that we're not going to get them all for whatever
30 reason. There's definitely sideboards on this that are
31 probably a little broader than we'd like.

32
33 This is an early June survey and we do
34 a couple surveys that enumerate Yellow-billed Loons and
35 this survey, again, is singles, pairs and flocks. The
36 bottom, paler green is singles and the darker green is
37 pairs and the hatched is flocks. So it looks like
38 basically stable, possibly increasing. Again, that
39 confidence intervals overlap.

40
41 Before we go to Red-throated Loons, one
42 of the things that was asked that we do, and I'm
43 certainly not the best person to do this, so I've asked
44 Neesha Wendling, who is here to participate today to
45 provide an update on the status of the petition to
46 list, and there have been some events in recent months
47 with regard to that and I would ask her if she could
48 take a minute, please, and just give us a brief update
49 of where we are on that.

50

1 MS. WENDLING: And I am not the expert
2 either, but I do have a document that basically I'm
3 just going to read from that will update everybody on
4 the status. The history, which I don't know how much
5 of the history is known, the Service was petitioned to
6 list the Yellow-billed Loon and designate critical
7 habitat. We reviewed that petition and presented a 90-
8 day finding, which concluded that the listing may be
9 warranted based on the information presented in the
10 petition.

11
12 So the next step is, as funding becomes
13 available, the Service will conduct a status review to
14 determine if the best available biological data
15 supports the need to list the species and at the end of
16 that review process the Service will conclude in a 12-
17 month finding one of the following. There's three
18 options: the data doesn't support the need to list,
19 which is listing is not warranted; the data support the
20 need to list, which would mean listing is warranted; or
21 the data supports the need to list, but other species
22 are of higher priority in the listing process.

23
24 So basically that's where we are right
25 now. At this time we expect funding will be available
26 to complete that status review that I just spoke about
27 by October of 2008. It's kind of in a hiatus until we
28 get funding to complete the review.

29
30 CHAIRMAN SQUARTSOFF: Thank you,
31 Neesha. Patty.

32
33 MS. BROWN-SCHWALENBERG: Can you tell
34 us what the review entails, please.

35
36 MS. WENDLING: You know, to be honest,
37 I'm not the person to speak of that. There's a woman
38 in our office who did this review and I could have her
39 contact you or write something up for the Council if
40 that would be helpful, but I didn't do any of that
41 work, so I'm basically reading a briefing that we gave
42 to someone else to present this information in a Fish
43 and Game Committee meeting in Wainwright. My
44 understanding is it's basically a review of that data.
45 Basically we get Sue to list the species and they
46 provide the reasoning, they give us a bunch of data, we
47 review that data and determine whether that lawsuit is
48 warranted, is how I believe it works, but I don't know
49 what all went into that review.

50

1 CHAIRMAN SQUARTSOFF: Go ahead, Tom.

2

3 MR. ROTHE: Yeah, the process is
4 basically, as Neesha said, a petition from a citizen's
5 group, which the Endangered Species Act is one of those
6 few things that allow citizens to jump in and ask for
7 an action. The Service now has 180 days, I guess, to
8 review everything available on this bird, but the main
9 functions are to be looking for very specific evidence
10 of listed kinds of threats. So, for the Service to
11 find that the bird is seriously in trouble, they're
12 going to have to look at things like predation, habitat
13 loss, harvest. Very specific resources and potential
14 threat and then besides are any of those serious enough
15 to go ahead with the listing. For example, the North
16 Slope harvest, the gillnet stuff. All of that will be
17 discussed and reviewed to see if there are serious
18 threats there.

19

20 CHAIRMAN SQUARTSOFF: Thank you,
21 Neesha. Mike.

22

23 MR. SMITH: Tom, do you have population
24 figures? Are you trying to say the trend is going
25 upwards, so the consideration of putting them on the
26 Endangered Species List looks good for not?

27

28 MR. ROTHE: Well, it depends. One
29 thing on the trend, if it's flat, if the birds have
30 been stable for a long time, that sort of a good sign.
31 Remember, the thing we're worried about is we only have
32 3,300 birds in Alaska. Any little bump that could put
33 those birds in jeopardy could warrant a listing. We
34 keep our fingers crossed.

35

36 MR. OATES: Just an additional comment.
37 Statisticians would tell you because of those vertical
38 black strips basically overlap a horizontal line, it's
39 not significantly different from no trend at all, no
40 increase or decrease. I mean this is encouraging, but
41 statistically it's not going to make your argument. At
42 the same time it's not significantly declining either.
43 And this is a fairly short string here. Even the long-
44 term one there's a lot of overlap. Basically what it
45 says is try as we might we don't have the most precise
46 measure in the world, but the fact remains that we're
47 seeing fair numbers every year, so they're obviously
48 still hanging in there anyway.

49

50 Susan Sharbaugh, it didn't occur to me,

1 we're sitting here in the Alaska Bird Observatory, so
2 Susan informed me that the age of maturation for
3 Yellow-billed Loons is three years. So there you go.
4 Thank you very much to our hosts.

5
6 And I want to thank Neesha, too. I
7 kind of put her on the spot this morning, but before we
8 started today I was frantically calling Ecological
9 Services office and somebody in the office over there
10 would have noticed that a phone rang at this desk and
11 then it rang at that desk and then it rang at that
12 desk, but I couldn't find anybody home over there until
13 I got Phillip Martin, who said somebody was going to be
14 over here. So thank you, Neesha, for letting me put
15 you on the spot.

16
17 CHAIRMAN SQUARTSOFF: Russ, I think
18 Molly has a question.

19
20 MS. CHYTHLOOK: I have a question for
21 Tom. He mentioned 3,300 in Alaska or 3,300 in North
22 Slope?

23
24 MR. ROTHE: This is a North Slope
25 survey with about 1,100 birds, so that's about a third
26 of the total in the state.

27
28 MS. CHYTHLOOK: So the 3,300 is
29 overall?

30
31 MR. OATES: No, 3,300 on the North
32 Slope.

33
34 CHAIRMAN SQUARTSOFF: Molly, you need
35 to turn your mike on, please.

36
37 MS. CHYTHLOOK: So it's 3,300 just in
38 North Slope, not in Alaska?

39
40 MR. OATES: Right. 4,000 in Alaska
41 total, 700 in other locations, 3,300 on the North
42 Slope.

43
44 MS. CHYTHLOOK: Okay, thanks.

45
46 CHAIRMAN SQUARTSOFF: Mike, Taqulik had
47 a question before Molly. I'm sorry I didn't catch
48 that.

49
50 MS. HEPA: I was just going to mention

1 about traditional knowledge, that this bird not only
2 provides us an opportunity to make headdresses and it's
3 not very often that we do. The two headdresses that we
4 have in Barrow with the Barrow Dance Group were made in
5 1972 by two very elder dance leaders who have now
6 passed on. The ones before are in a museum here in
7 Fairbanks and I think they were made like in the early
8 1900s. It's not just Barrow that uses them, but all
9 the communities.

10

11 More importantly, this bird -- we sing
12 songs to it. It brings good fortune to our people. So
13 when you hear a Yellow-billed Loon or see one, we
14 have special songs that we sing to it and also special
15 dances, hoping for them to bring us good fortune. So
16 we ask for good weather, good hunting and so on. So
17 it's culturally important to our people.

18

19 CHAIRMAN SQUARTSOFF: Thank you,
20 Taqulik. Mike, do you still have a question.

21

22 MR. SMITH: Yeah. I was just curious
23 as to when -- concerning an Endangered Species listing,
24 in this situation, I'm just trying to get an idea what
25 baseline you would reference in order to determine the
26 state of the species.

27

28 CHAIRMAN SQUARTSOFF: Go ahead, Tom. I
29 thought you guys explained that already.

30

31 MR. ROTHE: Unfortunately, there
32 haven't been historic surveys to compare with the
33 airplane stuff now. In the late 1970s, there were some
34 surveys done around Igpikpuk River so you had a sense
35 of how many birds might be in that region. There are
36 some birds on the Colville Delta that we knew about
37 prior to Alpine being built. But there were just no
38 Slope-wide aerial surveys until -- well, I guess maybe
39 the NPRA surveys of 1977-78 would be the closest we
40 have.

41

42 MR. SMITH: Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

43

44 CHAIRMAN SQUARTSOFF: Thank you.

45

46 MR. OATES: Red-throated Loons. This
47 is a species that historically we've had some concern
48 about, the graph on the right side, when we first
49 started counting loons on the survey we weren't very
50 good at it, so the first couple years when we started

1 counting loons in the 1970 period, I'm not sure how
2 good those were, but there was consistency in observers
3 beginning at that high point until about 2004-2005 era
4 when the individual that was doing that retired. So we
5 felt like the Red-throated Loons -- it looked like the
6 survey that that represents was everywhere in the state
7 with major wetlands except the North Slope. So we had
8 some concerns statewide that they might be declining
9 and we're still trying to sort out whether the right
10 side of the graph is an observer error function or
11 whether it represents -- we don't believe there's any
12 way that represents population increases of that level.
13 The data for the statewide survey are equivocal, are
14 confusing to us.

15
16 Similarly, we have an early June survey
17 on the North Slope and a later June survey. The early
18 June survey in the lower left with the green bars is
19 done primarily for Eiders because in their breeding
20 aggregations they're paired up and the males are still
21 present earlier and the upper survey is our traditional
22 arctic coast plane survey, which we have actually
23 discontinued this year for the first time since the mid
24 '80s because we felt we could probably index most
25 species pretty well with the later survey.

26
27 At any rate, we got two different
28 results based on the timing of the survey and we're
29 still trying to sort out what that means, but the later
30 survey suggested that Red-throated Loons were
31 increasing and the earlier surveys suggest that they
32 might be declining somewhat. Again, there's overlap
33 with the exception of a few years which did not
34 overlap.

35
36 So, basically, for some years we were
37 very concerned about the status of Red-throated Loons
38 statewide, but it's still, orders of magnitude, more
39 Red-throated Loons breeding in the state of Alaska than
40 there are Yellow-billed, so it's not a listing kind of
41 an issue, but we did have some concerns about it. I
42 guess what I'm trying to say is we're interested in
43 conserving loons, but we're having a little bit of a
44 problem sorting out what our data means and we're
45 undergoing some additional analyses on all these data
46 sets to try to really sort out where the problems lie.
47 Hopefully we'll be able to do that.

48
49 MR. SMITH: What's the timing of the
50 top graph on the left?

1 MR. OATES: That one is a little later.
2 It's probably the third week in June or so. That
3 survey was timed more for things like Pintails and
4 Scaup and things like that.

5
6 MR. SMITH: But we're talking about a
7 two week difference here.

8
9 MR. OATES: Yeah. I don't have
10 anything else. I think that's the Tom and Russ show
11 this time. If there are any questions that we can
12 answer, we'll do our best.

13
14 CHAIRMAN SQUARTSOFF: Thank you very
15 much, Tom and Russ. I believe you've had 10 million
16 questions. Are there any more?

17
18 (No comments)

19
20 CHAIRMAN SQUARTSOFF: All right. Thank
21 you very much. Sorry. Go ahead, Molly.

22
23 MS. CHYTHLOOK: With any video
24 presentations in the future, it would be nice to have
25 (indiscernible - away from microphone).

26
27 MR. OATES: Sorry about that. We were
28 actually working on this at 10:00 o'clock last night.
29 We can do that. We will. Sorry, Molly. You're right,
30 we usually do that. We didn't. I apologize. Tom and
31 I were spinning in different orbits.

32
33 CHAIRMAN SQUARTSOFF: All right. Thank
34 you guys again. Next agenda item is membership/bylaws
35 and I believe -- is Fred going to do that or you?
36 Fred, are you online? Did you bring up the
37 membership/bylaws?

38
39 MR. ARMSTRONG: I'm trying to think
40 what the issue was, but I think it was our discussions
41 with TCC and whether or not they were going to continue
42 in the program and I don't know what's been resolved.
43 Other than that, if there were going to be any changes,
44 then it would require a bylaw change of partnership.
45 But everything is contingent on what the Council wants
46 to do as far as representation in the Interior is
47 concerned.

48
49 CHAIRMAN SQUARTSOFF: Okay. Yes, Doug.
50

1 MR. ALCORN: From my understanding of
2 the report from the budget and the caucus, the budget
3 was approved and Mike is going to work with Austin and
4 Kawerak, so I would say this issue is moot then.

5
6 CHAIRMAN SQUARTSOFF: Okay. Next item
7 is the Harvest Survey Program update and that is who
8 since Austin is not here?

9
10 MR. ALCORN: Mr. Chair. This was a
11 discussion item that is on the agenda for discussion
12 because of the change that we've had in Staff that I've
13 mentioned earlier. Austin was going to be here
14 chairing. He also chairs the Harvest Survey Committee.
15 And this was just an opportunity for us as a Council to
16 discuss maybe what we would like our approach to be.

17
18 I would put on the table for discussion
19 sake that Tom has mentioned that the subsistence
20 program from the State has a white paper that they're
21 putting together. When that is completed, I would
22 recommend that that be submitted to the Harvest Survey
23 Committee. Austin is chair and the committee would
24 convene, which he has expressed an intent to get them
25 together in the near future. I don't know how long
26 that might be now that he and his wife are having a
27 baby.

28
29 At whatever point they get together, we
30 would ask them to consider this whole issue of staffing
31 and moving forward with the harvest survey and any
32 modifications that might be needed. Then that report
33 and recommendations come either to the Executive
34 Committee to have a discussion, which is the Regional
35 representative, the State representative and myself as
36 a Department representative, or to put it back on the
37 table for an AMBCC discussion, have an ad hoc meeting I
38 would recommend by teleconference to discuss the
39 one-point item, which is managing the harvest survey.
40 So that's a couple ways we could deal with that.

41
42 CHAIRMAN SQUARTSOFF: Thank you, Doug.
43 The first one you suggested sounds good to me to work
44 that way. Is there any objections from the rest of the
45 Council?

46
47 MR. ALCORN: I think you need a motion.
48 I'll move that we ask the Harvest Survey Committee to
49 consider options that we have for managing the harvest
50 survey and it would be in the context of the white

1 paper that the State subsistence program is going to
2 provide and in the context of us having a vacant
3 harvest survey coordinator position on the AMBCC staff
4 and the Harvest Survey Committee would make a
5 recommendation to the Executive Committee and the
6 Executive Committee would then decide whether or not it
7 warrants full AMBCC discussion or if the Executive
8 Committee feels comfortable making that decision.

9

10 CHAIRMAN SQUARTSOFF: The motion has
11 been so moved by Doug. Do I hear a second.

12

13 MS. HEPA: Second.

14

15 CHAIRMAN SQUARTSOFF: Seconded by
16 Taqulik. Any other discussion on it.

17

18 (No comments)

19

20 CHAIRMAN SQUARTSOFF: Any opposition to
21 it.

22

23 (No opposing votes)

24

25 CHAIRMAN SQUARTSOFF: None being heard,
26 so so moved.

27

28 MR. SMITH: I'm just trying to follow
29 it all. Doug, are you suggesting that the Executive
30 Committee would make a decision on the issue prior to
31 coming back to the full AMBCC?

32

33 MR. ALCORN: Yeah, the report from the
34 Harvest Survey Committee would be given to the chair
35 and then the chair would convene the Executive
36 Committee. If the Executive Committee feels like it's
37 not a real contentious issue, we could decide and then
38 make that decision and just do it as a management
39 action or if the Executive Committee feels like it
40 needs to go to the full body of the Council, we would
41 ask Fred, the executive director, to convene a
42 teleconference AMBCC meeting, notice to the public, and
43 make that provision, but then have the agenda just a
44 one-item agenda, one discussion item, and that is how
45 we're going to proceed with the harvest survey. That's
46 the motion.

47

48 MS. CHYTHLOOK: And I'm going to make
49 the suggestion to have this meeting in person. I think
50 that would be -- instead of a teleconference.

1 CHAIRMAN SQUARTSOFF: Thank you, Molly.
2 Anything else on it. Yes, Doug.

3
4 MR. ALCORN: Meetings cost us about
5 \$10,000 a piece. For one agenda item it seems to me
6 that might not be an efficient way to use our resources
7 that we realize are pretty limited. That leaves us a
8 couple of options. We could convene and do that or we
9 could table any action until the spring meeting, but
10 that delays any action for the next five or six months,
11 but that's another option. Right now my motion would
12 be to have the Executive Committee discuss that and if
13 it does need discussion by the full Council, which I'm
14 willing to just say automatically that it would be
15 discussion by the full Council, I'd be willing to make
16 that amendment to the motion, but I don't see that it
17 warrants a face-to-face meeting in Anchorage for that
18 purpose.

19
20 CHAIRMAN SQUARTSOFF: Thank you, Doug.
21 Go ahead, Mike. I thought we went through the process
22 and it was done. There was no opposition on it.

23
24 MR. SMITH: Can I speak?

25
26 CHAIRMAN SQUARTSOFF: Yes.

27
28 MR. SMITH: I guess what I was
29 wondering about is the timing of this for you, Doug.
30 Right now you have a funded position that is not --
31 nobody is sitting in that seat right now. That money
32 is accumulating and you need to decide what you're
33 going to do with that money before some point, I guess,
34 in the near future. Do we have time to hold this off
35 until the spring meeting or is it something that -- for
36 example, if I was interested in it, what I need to do
37 then is start participating with the Harvest Survey
38 Committee and stuff like that. I guess that's what I
39 was trying to get at, a time.

40
41 MR. ALCORN: We have time. Cynthia
42 just retired and the way the Federal retirement system
43 works is we -- the money, the salary savings that we
44 realize from her retirement in June, typically there's
45 a severance pay for accumulated annual leave and things
46 like that. So very typically, with a couple months
47 left of salary savings for this fiscal year, it will
48 most likely be paid off to her for any accumulated
49 annual leave and other severance pay.

50

1 In the new fiscal year, which starts
2 October 1st, we have until next year at this time to
3 obligate money. So it's not like we're in a big rush.
4 Where we are in a crunch though, that is moving the
5 harvest survey along and I think that's why I'm
6 recommending the Harvest Survey consider this issue
7 because they'll be most sensitive, I think, to the need
8 for moving the process along as well as obligating the
9 money, but we've got another 11, 12 months to do that.

10

11 MR. SMITH: Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

12

13 CHAIRMAN SQUARTSOFF: Thank you, Mike.
14 Thank you, Doug. Are there any other questions on the
15 issue.

16

17 (No comments)

18

19 CHAIRMAN SQUARTSOFF: Any objections or
20 opposition to the motion.

21

22 (No opposing votes)

23

24 CHAIRMAN SQUARTSOFF: Not hearing any,
25 so moved. I'd like to suggest we take about a five-
26 minute break. Thank you.

27

28 (Off record)

29

30 (On record)

31

32 CHAIRMAN SQUARTSOFF: Next item on the
33 agenda is G. We had a discussion of an AFN booth and I
34 guess they're planning on having a booth up here for
35 AFN and how many people want to man it or whatever.
36 Maybe that's what we can discuss here, who wants to
37 come up and do it. I'll leave it open to the rest of
38 the Council members. I would like to come up. I don't
39 know if anybody else does or not. It's here in
40 Fairbanks this year and I think it's the 24th to the
41 27th. I'm not sure. I don't know who from the Staff
42 is going to be here. Maybe Bill might know or Fred.

43

44 MR. OSTRAND: I believe Donna and I
45 will be here.

46

47 MS. DEWHURST: I don't think we have a
48 choice.

49

50 MR. OSTRAND: That's right, we don't

1 have a choice. We're coming.

2

3 CHAIRMAN SQUARTSOFF: I'm asking if any
4 other Council members want to come up. I'm planning on
5 coming up. I guess we'll go ahead and work with you
6 all in the booth. Taqulik? Okay, that's three of us.
7 Thank you.

8

9 MR. OSTRAND: I'll send out another
10 reminder.

11

12 CHAIRMAN SQUARTSOFF: Sounds good,
13 Bill. Thanks. Next item on the agenda is -- we added
14 on, I think, Nathan's proposals.

15

16 MR. SOBALOFF: Yeah. And they're not
17 even proposals. They'll be brief. It's two letters of
18 support that we're asking from the Alaska Migratory
19 Bird Co-Management Council. The first one is just
20 requesting support for the Hoonah Elders Council's
21 proposal to gather migratory bird eggs in Glacier Bay.
22 There's a book that I'll submit to the Council for you
23 guys to look at.

24

25 Essentially they're looking to gather
26 the bird eggs in Glacier Bay and everyone knows that
27 the Park Service and everyone else doesn't get along.
28 In our recent meeting with Wayne Howell of the Park
29 Service and the Hoonah Elders Council, it was suggested
30 and supported that we enter into discussions with the
31 U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service on the Hoonah Elders
32 Council proposal that we request the Co-Management
33 Council to assist and/or take the lead in addressing
34 these issues with the interested parties because the
35 Park Service actually wanted to sit down and meet with
36 them. If we get approval from the Migratory Bird Co-
37 management Council just saying we could have their
38 support, that would be better than anything. So that
39 could be something that you guys could just approve or
40 not.

41

42 Then the other one is we brought up
43 Eileen Hediger from Yakutat and I have a similar
44 proposal just requesting support for it and she can
45 discuss that briefly. Do you want to?

46

47 CHAIRMAN SQUARTSOFF: Go ahead. Your
48 name is Eileen. Just step up to the mike. I think,
49 you guys, that's all you really need to do, is just
50 submit proposals at the proposal time when they're to

1 be submitted. I think that's all they have to do,
2 right, Donna? Yeah.
3
4 MR. SOBALOFF: Oh, even just for asking
5 for support?
6
7 CHAIRMAN SQUARTSOFF: Right. We don't
8 really need to give you a letter of support. You need
9 to submit a proposal and then we act on it here at the
10 Council. But go ahead, Eileen.
11
12 MS. HEDIGER: The Yakutat Tlingit have
13 been gathering Arctic and Aleutian eggs traditionally
14 since we arrived there and basically we'd like to ask
15 that they be considered for inclusion to be harvesting
16 the eggs only in the same area as the Claucous spring
17 gull eggs are gathered. Because of their earlier
18 nesting season we would like to ask that the open
19 season for gathering these eggs be made first until
20 July 30th.
21
22 CHAIRMAN SQUARTSOFF: What area did you
23 say you were, Eileen?
24
25 MS. HEDIGER: Yakutat area.
26
27 CHAIRMAN SQUARTSOFF: Yakutat. Is
28 Yakutat included? Yes, Yakutat is already included and
29 all you've got to do is submit a proposal in.
30
31 MS. HEDIGER: Okay.
32
33 CHAIRMAN SQUARTSOFF: Mike and then
34 Bill.
35
36 MR. SMITH: Did I hear you correctly,
37 did you say the Park Service wanted to meet with the
38 AMBCC on these proposals?
39
40 MR. SOBALOFF: Oh, yeah. They love to
41 make any requests. I think I might have a couple of
42 these to read. Should I give you these letters for
43 submission?
44
45 CHAIRMAN SQUARTSOFF: Nathan, one
46 minute. I guess Donna had something to say on that
47 too. Sorry, Bill. I forgot about her back there.
48
49 MS. DEWHURST: Well, I've been talking
50 with -- this is an old issue. When the proposal first

1 came through, it included Glacier Bay and the Council
2 approved it for Glacier Bay, but the Park Service
3 regulations do not allow subsistence harvesting in
4 Glacier Bay National Park period. There is no
5 harvesting allowed or hunting or egg gathering or any
6 sort of harvesting. So it's a Park Service issue. The
7 Park Service has been working to change this, but it's
8 a legislative thing. It's not something we can do with
9 regulations. They have to change the actual Park
10 Service legislation that says those national parks do
11 not allow subsistence harvesting. They are trying to
12 do that. They have been working on that.

13

14 I've gotten calls from them
15 periodically for the past three years and they've been
16 working on trying to change that legislation. I'm not
17 sure where this came from. It's kind of a mystery to
18 me because we've been in the loop with the Park Service
19 on it and they've been working pretty hard at it for
20 several years. The last I had heard they were in the
21 process of trying to change the legislation. But it's
22 not anything we can do. This is sort of like the Duck
23 Stamp Act. It's a legislation thing. It's not
24 regulatory.

25

26 CHAIRMAN SQUARTSOFF: Thank you, Donna.
27 So you're saying we passed these a couple years ago?

28

29 MS. DEWHURST: When the proposal
30 originally came down, we approved it for the whole
31 area, but then the Park Service jumped in and said wait
32 a minute, there's no harvesting allowed in the Park, so
33 then we had to cut a hole basically in the area because
34 of that.

35

36 CHAIRMAN SQUARTSOFF: Okay. Then maybe
37 it is possible we can send some kind of letter to the
38 Park Service to encourage them to speed up the process
39 or something. We did already pass these proposals a
40 couple years ago and we're wondering why it's taking so
41 long or something to see what's going on. Anyone else
42 comment on that. Mike.

43

44 MR. SMITH: Mr. Chairman. I think I'd
45 agree we need to support their efforts in getting the
46 Park Service to change their regulations. Doug, maybe
47 you could remind me. The Park Service is, of course --
48 you know, the Park Service is set up specific -- it has
49 specific legislation setting up the Park and they
50 operate under that legislation. Have we ever solicited

1 or got an opinion as to the impact of the Migratory
2 Bird Treaty Act on Park Service lands? We haven't done
3 anything specifically asking the solicitor that
4 question or anything.

5

6 CHAIRMAN SQUARTSOFF: Go ahead, Doug.

7

8 MR. ALCORN: No, I don't think we've
9 ever asked that question. And I don't know -- I think
10 the fundamental question is, does the legislative
11 amendment to the Migratory Bird Treaty and subsequently
12 to the Act, I presume, does it trump the organic
13 legislation for the Glacier Bay National Park. I don't
14 know what the answer is, which one would trump the
15 other. Maybe Donna has the answer.

16

17 MS. DEWHURST: Yeah. It's already in
18 our regulations. Our regulations specifically say it
19 does not trump. If you look in the book, and this is
20 the watered-down version, but special requirements for
21 National Park Service Lands. It's Page 3 that
22 specifically outlines that, that these parks are closed
23 to all subsistence activities. Their legislation
24 trumps ours when it comes to those national parks.
25 Those are what they call old hard parks. They were
26 done way before ANILCA and they have very different
27 regulations than the ANILCA parks. So there's no
28 subsistence harvesting for birds. There's also none
29 for the ANILCA subsistence. So there's nothing we can
30 do about it. That's something they have to change.

31

32 CHAIRMAN SQUARTSOFF: Donna, can you
33 wait a minute. There should be no reason though that
34 we shouldn't be able to support them on this. You guys
35 have been working on it with them for so long. If we
36 could send a letter, there should be no reason we
37 shouldn't be able to do that, right?

38

39 MS. DEWHURST: Yeah, I haven't had any
40 impression that they aren't working on it. I mean it
41 sounds like they're working on it as fast as they can.
42 It just takes a long time to change legislation. The
43 impression that I've had is they have been working on
44 it.

45

46 MR. SOBALOFF: The meeting that we had
47 over there, I guess that's what prompted the letters
48 because that's what they actually said. The Park
49 Service was requesting it. Anyway, not to take up any
50 more of your time. Thank you.

1 CHAIRMAN SQUARTSOFF: Thank you, Donna.
2 Thank you, Nathan. Does the Board so move that we do
3 write a letter of support for these guys.

4
5 MR. HICKS: I so move to write a letter
6 of support.

7
8 MS. CHYTHLOOK: Second.

9
10 CHAIRMAN SQUARTSOFF: So moved by Joe,
11 seconded by Molly. Any other discussion on it.

12
13 (No comments)

14
15 CHAIRMAN SQUARTSOFF: Hearing none, so
16 moved.

17
18 MR. SMITH: And they will be submitting
19 a proposal for the harvest?

20
21 CHAIRMAN SQUARTSOFF: It's already
22 there. They already have one in.

23
24 MR. OSTRAND: That's what I was going
25 to speak to. I just wanted to offer to help the
26 community of Yakutat. If you're unfamiliar with the
27 proposal process, our phone number is in the reg book
28 and we can walk you through the process. It's not very
29 difficult, but you simply fill out a proposal form and
30 submit it to me. The open period begins November 15th.

31
32 CHAIRMAN SQUARTSOFF: Thank you, Bill.
33 The next item on the agenda is I and that's Peter's
34 letter. Peter, where are you. (Pause) We can't find
35 Peter right now, so we're going to go ahead and move on
36 to the next item on the agenda and that's the Harvest
37 Survey Committee. Since Austin is not here, Molly,
38 would you want to report on that.

39
40 MS. CHYTHLOOK: I'm not prepared.

41
42 CHAIRMAN SQUARTSOFF: Yeah, I didn't
43 really, but I just thought I'd ask in case you were.
44 We'll just table that one. Peter is here to give his.
45 Thank you.

46
47 MR. DEVINE: Thank you, Mr. Chair.
48 Aleutian/Pribilof Island Association would like to have
49 something put in. It says here in the letter what it's
50 about. I think it should be statewide support so they

1 could do bird banding other than what the Fish and
2 Wildlife Service is doing so that if there's an oil
3 spill, the hunters know that that bird was
4 rehabilitated and released.

5
6 CHAIRMAN SQUARTSOFF: Thank you, Peter.
7 Do we have any questions. Mike.

8
9 MR. SMITH: Peter, I appreciate that
10 concern. I'm just trying to think how best to do that,
11 you know. I'm thinking that in light of how those
12 activities occur -- you know, the Exxon Valdez comes to
13 mind where they cleaned thousands of birds down there
14 and then released them. If we're going to do that, we
15 don't want it to only be in Alaska, I guess. I think
16 we want it to occur anywhere if they're involved in an
17 oil spill and they get cleaned up and rehabilitated and
18 released again that we be aware of that. I'm wondering
19 if a motion just to direct Staff to look into this
20 issue because it's far reaching ramifications across a
21 nation where the migratory path takes these birds.
22 Maybe deal with that more as an environmental disaster
23 form or something like that. I'm not sure. Do you
24 understand what I'm saying? Just limiting it to Alaska
25 would -- I mean I understand what you're saying, but I
26 think we need to take it farther than that and be more
27 broad-based in our attempts to identify rehabilitated
28 birds.

29
30 MR. DEVINE: I think this would be a
31 first step, you know, to show that we're doing it and
32 I'm sure other states would follow. If they had a
33 disaster or something like that in their area, maybe
34 they'd place a similar band on the bird and have it
35 identified.

36
37 CHAIRMAN SQUARTSOFF: Go ahead, Nathan,
38 then Joe.

39
40 MR. SOBALOFF: Peter, it seems to me --
41 and we support this. It seems to me that if it's just
42 a matter of calling the toll free number that they must
43 have a computerized database that perhaps they could
44 just make it available online where you could just go
45 online and check to see if the band has a record. It
46 seems like that should be a fairly inexpensive thing to
47 implement.

48
49 MR. SMITH: The band isn't even put on
50 now.

1 MR. SOBALOFF: Oh, it's not? Okay.
2 Open mouth, insert foot. The proposal says currently
3 the only band put on the bird is a standard band with a
4 toll free number, so I took that to mean that if it had
5 been oiled and cleaned.....

6
7 CHAIRMAN SQUARTSOFF: Joe, I'm going to
8 let Tom respond.

9
10 MR. ROTHE: I don't know a whole lot
11 about it. Bob Trost might know more. Bird banding
12 labs really improved things a lot, so, for example,
13 when I shot a duck two weeks ago I go to the internet,
14 report a band, as soon as I have the basic data entered
15 there's a little part of the screen below that says
16 this bird was banded on this date and gives you some
17 basic information when you submit it. You can get an
18 email certificate in a couple days, but that's about
19 the closest we have right now to quick reporting and
20 that's assuming the banding records get loaded in a
21 timely way right after the birds are marked.

22
23 CHAIRMAN SQUARTSOFF: Bob, do you want
24 to respond to that, too. Up here, please. Thank you.

25
26 MR. TROST: Just real briefly. I've
27 got a couple thoughts about this. The first is that
28 what would have to be done to put this into effect is
29 you would have to write a letter to the director of
30 USGS who oversees the bird banding lab because those
31 are the folks that control the regulations about how
32 birds are banded to begin with, so this isn't a Fish
33 and Wildlife Service issue.

34
35 The second thing would be that although
36 you can find out where and when a bird was banded
37 fairly easily and, as Tom said, right now the system is
38 improving every year and actually you can punch that
39 stuff in. There's no, to my knowledge, requirement or
40 way to identify when a rehabilitator has banded a bird.
41 You'll get the name of whomever did it, but you won't
42 know that they're a rehabilitator.

43
44 The way I heard this proposal
45 originally was that it was proposed that a second
46 separate band be placed on these birds that clearly
47 identified them in the band as a bird that had been
48 released by a rehabilitator. That would require a
49 regulatory change by USGS, so that's how you should
50 proceed with your letter, I think, if that's your

1 desire.

2

3 I'd also point out that even if we do
4 this for the United States and such a regulation will
5 be put in place for us, it's not going to cover birds
6 banded in Canada, birds banded in Russia or Japan, all
7 of which may have come from a rehabilitator. So all
8 your bases aren't ever going to be covered and we have
9 no ability to control that type of regulatory mechanism
10 outside the United States. With the exception of
11 Canada, I wouldn't expect that to be too big of an
12 issue.

13

14 CHAIRMAN SQUARTSOFF: Thank you, Bob.
15 I hope that helped you, Peter. It sounds like a good,
16 lengthy process to get those other bands on there.

17

18 MR. DEVINE: Yeah, I think that was one
19 of the concerns that APPIA's environmental department
20 had, was that there's no way of identifying them. It
21 shows that they were banded and released, but it don't
22 show where they came from or what brought the banding
23 about, so that's why they're looking for a second band.

24

25 CHAIRMAN SQUARTSOFF: Mike.

26

27 MR. SMITH: And they might not even
28 have a first band. I guess that's the thing, too. If
29 they don't have that identification band, then you have
30 no clue at all about that bird. Peter, I think you're
31 onto something here and I'd be more than happy to offer
32 my help in going after USGS and talking to the banding
33 guy and finding out what could possibly be done about
34 this.

35

36 CHAIRMAN SQUARTSOFF: Sorry, Joe. Go
37 ahead.

38

39 MR. HICKS: Peter, I want to say that
40 I'm in support of what you're doing also. I was going
41 to say let's move on and I would make a motion to that
42 effect, but now I'm kind of understanding what the
43 implications might be, so I'd have to say, okay, hold
44 on here, I'm jumping too fast. But, yes, I do support
45 you, Peter.

46

47 CHAIRMAN SQUARTSOFF: Any other
48 questions. I feel the same way, too, Peter. I want to
49 support, but I don't really see us to be able to do
50 anything right here until you guys get more things

1 going to see how that process is going to work for you.

2

3 MR. DEVINE: Okay. We'll send a letter
4 to the USGS and see where it goes from there. Maybe by
5 the spring meeting we'll have something more solid, a
6 direction to go.

7

8 CHAIRMAN SQUARTSOFF: Thank you. Bill.

9

10 MR. OSTRAND: Mr. Chair. I'll
11 volunteer to work with Peter to make sure he finds out
12 who the right people are and whatever the process might
13 be to submit a proposal to the USGS.

14

15 CHAIRMAN SQUARTSOFF: Thank you very
16 much, Bill. Peter, hold him up to it. Okay. Next
17 item on the agenda is -- I guess we tabled the harvest
18 one. Avian flu report, Russ Oates. Please, can you
19 step up to the table.

20

21 MR. OATES: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I
22 don't usually give this report, but I don't remember if
23 Doug announced this, but Deb Rock has accepted a
24 position with the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service here
25 in Fairbanks with Ecological Services and has left the
26 Division of Migratory Bird Management. So we're in the
27 process of figuring out who is going to pick up that
28 ball and run with it. She did provide me with some
29 information, mostly a bunch of numbers, but I'll kind
30 of bring you up to date where we are in 2007.

31

32 Thus far there have been 7,057 samples
33 sent to the National Wildlife Health Center for
34 analysis. Of those, 4,909 samples were from live birds
35 that were captured and released and 2,148 were from
36 subsistence hunter kill birds. I think this total
37 includes some of the fall hunter kill birds as well.
38 Of that total, 6,146 have been tested, had the
39 preliminary testing for avian influenza and of those 18
40 were positive for some form of avian influenza, but of
41 those 18 none were of the highly pathogenic variety.
42 So they were all different strains of avian influenza
43 which have little or no effect at all on people. So no
44 worries so far.

45

46 Of those 18, 12 were live Pintails that
47 were captured and banded and six were hunter sample
48 birds. Four of the hunter sample birds that were
49 positive were Emperor Geese. One was a Snow Goose and
50 one was a Mallard. The balance of the 18, as I said

1 before, were Pintails that were captured on -- one from
2 Koyukuk National Wildlife Refuge, eight from Yukon
3 Delta National Wildlife Refuge and three from Minto
4 Lakes in the Fairbanks area that were sampled by the
5 State of Alaska.

6
7 For the geographic sampling locations
8 of the hunter samples, about 1,929 were from the Yukon
9 Delta and 216 from the Seward Peninsula and three from
10 St. Lawrence Island. For the live samples, 2,800 were
11 from the Yukon Delta, 615 from the North Slope, 566
12 from Koyukuk with lesser numbers in other areas in the
13 Interior and coastal areas.

14
15 Basically we expect -- there's several
16 projects that are still in the field and we're
17 expecting maybe another 1,000 max samples going in yet
18 and there's 900 and some that are already in the lab
19 that we haven't gotten any results from, but we'll
20 provide updates on the final results of that once we
21 get them. We are in the budget for fiscal year 2008
22 for one more field season. Beyond that we don't know.

23
24
25 We anticipate there will be some sort
26 of a field effort. We may fine tune it some more. We
27 had a little less of an effort this year than we did
28 last year and we may fine tune it some more. But one
29 and two-thirds years' results thus far suggest that the
30 highly pathogenic variety of this virus has not been
31 successful in crossing the water to North America, at
32 least through Alaska. That's all I have at this point.

33
34 CHAIRMAN SQUARTSOFF: Thank you, Russ.
35 The other 900 that you have in the lab, when do you
36 expect to get those results back?

37
38 MR. OATES: I'm not actually sure of
39 that. I don't know what the turnaround rate is. I
40 would ask Tom Rothe, as a major partner in this effort,
41 to fill in any of the gaps that he would like to or
42 make any additional comments with regard to this. But
43 the 900 are already in the lab and the other ones are
44 in various stages of either not been collected or in
45 the freezer in Anchorage awaiting shipment. I'd be
46 glad to have any of my colleagues provide additional
47 information on things that need to be clarified or that
48 I left out.

49
50 CHAIRMAN SQUARTSOFF: Thank you, Russ.

1 Tom, do you have anything to add. We can let you go
2 first before Doug. Thank you.

3

4 MR. ROTHE: Thanks, Herman. Russ did a
5 good job of just emphasizing that we haven't really
6 found any bad bugs yet. Last year we put together a
7 paper reporting the Alaska surveillance effort, 21,000-
8 some birds. Our end result was 1.7 percent of the
9 birds had some sort of low-grade influenza, so that was
10 really good.

11

12 For this year, a couple strategy
13 changes were made that are probably of interest to you.
14 Last year we did almost all cloacal sampling out of the
15 rear end of the bird because the virus is shed through
16 the digestive system. Some data from Canada and other
17 places suggested these highly pathogenic viruses are
18 more engaged in the respiratory system, so this year
19 all birds have swabs in both ends which will allow the
20 people in the lab to determine which is the best way to
21 detect this and really learn some things about viruses
22 and birds.

23

24 That's one big strategy change. The
25 other one is, in the Lower 48 there's much more effort
26 into going into looking for dead birds rather than
27 catching live birds because where these viruses kill
28 birds usually the dead bird is going to tell you right
29 away something is there, so they're spending a lot of
30 time patrolling areas and looking for dead or sick
31 birds.

32

33 CHAIRMAN SQUARTSOFF: Thank you, Tom.
34 Go ahead, Doug.

35

36 MR. ALCORN: Thank you, Mr. Chairman.
37 The regs packet that Donna handed out, on the very back
38 page is a website. If you're interested in knowing
39 what the current data reporting is, you can go to that
40 website and I believe -- I'm not sure that's the actual
41 website with the data on it, but it will have a link to
42 it, to the National Wildlife Health Center. And that's
43 real time. You can click on that and it will tell you
44 currently what data has been -- what samples have been
45 analyzed, how many, and what the results have been.

46

47 CHAIRMAN SQUARTSOFF: Thank you, Doug.
48 No other questions. We'll move on to the next item on
49 the agenda. I think that puts Neesha back up here.
50 Thank you.

1 MS. WENDLING: First of all I want to
2 say thanks to the Council for the opportunity to give
3 this presentation. My name is Neesha and I'm a
4 biologist here in the Fairbanks Fish and Wildlife
5 office. I'm mostly involved with doing a little bit of
6 Eider research and then mostly doing education and
7 outreach on the North Slope.

8
9 So what I wanted to do here was
10 basically just share some of the things that we're
11 doing on the North Slope and see if there's any
12 possibility of expanding some of these efforts to the
13 other part of the state, if there's interest in doing
14 that. Also, if other people are doing outreach
15 activities that they have found to be successful, I'd
16 love to hear about those as well.

17
18 I know it's late and I'm tired and you
19 guys are tired, so I'm going to breeze through this as
20 fast as we can. If you guys can just save the
21 questions for the end, that would probably be best
22 unless you really feel the need to throw it out now.

23
24 As most of you know, there are four
25 species of Eiders in Alaska. Two of them are
26 threatened and on the Endangered Species List, so these
27 are the two that we are mostly concerned with and work
28 on.

29
30 MR. SMITH: Can you pronounce those?

31
32 MS. WENDLING: I can, in fact.
33 (Indiscernible).

34
35 MS. HEPA: (Pronounces away from
36 microphone)

37
38 MS. WENDLING: All right. I was close.
39 To go back, the King and the Common. Taqulik, do you
40 want to.....

41
42 MS. HEPA: (Pronounces away from
43 microphone)

44
45 MS. WENDLING: So most of you probably
46 know this. I wasn't sure what the audience would be,
47 so if I'm boring you with details you already know,
48 sorry. This is the Steller's Eider and it's the
49 smallest of the four Eiders. It's about a third to
50 half the size of the common Eider. The male is on the

1 left, distinctive white head, beautiful birds, and the
2 females are the typical mottled brown, as all the Eider
3 ducks are, with the white and blue speculum on the
4 wing.

5
6 Basically these birds historically
7 nested all across the North Slope and on the Y-K Delta
8 they virtually disappeared from the Delta and currently
9 are only nesting on the North Slope and right around
10 the Barrow area is where we regularly see them. So
11 they were listed on the Endangered Species List in 1997
12 and are one of the species that are closed to migratory
13 bird hunting.

14
15 This is the map that Russ showed that
16 basically shows the wintering molting range where all
17 the birds, the Russian breeding population as well as
18 the Alaska breeding population, come together and molt
19 around the Alaska Peninsula at Izembek Lagoon, Nelson
20 Lagoon area. This is just a map to show that Barrow is
21 the only known regularly used place and this is where
22 we do most of our research on Steller's Eiders.

23
24 These are basically just numbers to
25 kind of make the point that there's not very many birds
26 left. There's an estimated 300 breeding pairs on the
27 North Slope and the nest, 20 to 40 we find in Barrow
28 and that's not in every year. These birds don't nest
29 every year. On the Delta we'll find one nest every few
30 years or so. As far as the Arctic Russia goes, the
31 numbers are unknown.

32
33 The other bird, the Spectacled Eider,
34 that we're concerned about, just a brief history.
35 Again, the map that Russ showed that shows the
36 historical breeding range in white, current breeding
37 range in red and then the molting areas. This bird was
38 listed in 1993 and is also closed to subsistence
39 hunting. An estimate of the numbers on the North
40 Slope, we think about 6-8,000 breeding pairs and the
41 same number on the Delta, and then basically half that
42 number for the number of nests on the North Slope and
43 on the Delta.

44
45 So what I want to mostly talk about is
46 some of the programs that we're doing, Eider education
47 and outreach on the North Slope and these programs that
48 we're doing are based on -- there's a recovery team
49 that has these high-priority tasks, so all the programs
50 that we develop address these high-priority recovery

1 tasks. And the ones that the outreach mostly work on
2 is reducing Eider exposure to lead, the hunting
3 mortality and nesting young disturbance.

4
5 So the existing programs -- the one I
6 have at the top there, the annual North Slope Eider
7 outreach meeting, I wanted to really focus on that
8 because we had this meeting for the first time in 2005
9 and I believe it's the reason for a lot of the success
10 that we've had on the North Slope. We had a group of
11 people, including the Department of Wildlife. We
12 brought in the Office of Law Enforcement. We had local
13 resident, folks from AMBCC and we had this meeting in
14 Anchorage for the first time and together we developed
15 kind of a North Slope outreach plan that we all agree
16 on and try to follow. We agreed on the high-priority
17 Eider issues and we basically have a list of projects
18 and a time line that all of us try to work on together
19 and it's been really successful. We had another
20 meeting this past February and hopefully we'll have
21 another annual meeting in February coming up.

22
23 So one of the programs that's been
24 ongoing since 1999 we call it Eider Journey. It's a
25 program that involves Barrow high school students and
26 we get them involved in the Eider project that we have
27 on the North Slope in Barrow, so they work two weeks
28 looking for birds and then up until this year we've
29 been going down to Izembek where the Steller's Eiders
30 molt in winter. They go down there and are involved in
31 the banding drive. On the way down we stop at the Sea
32 Life Center and it's been a really great program. It
33 gets the kids out there doing research. They have to
34 do community presentations at the end, so they're
35 basically delivering our message for us and there tends
36 to be way more people that come to these presentations
37 when the kids are giving them.

38
39 This year we actually changed it up a
40 little bit and went to the Delta and worked on the
41 Spectacled Eider and the goose nest survey, which was
42 another really successful trip. So here's just some
43 fun pictures of kids doing Eider research.

44
45 Another program that we started in '05
46 was the North Slope Culture Camp. We had a camp in '05
47 and '06 in Barrow and this is basically we wanted to
48 expand our efforts to a younger age because we were
49 only doing high school stuff. So this was for middle
50 school age students. It was open to any kids from the

1 North Slope villages. Unfortunately, we didn't get a
2 lot of recruitment from other villages, so we mostly
3 had Barrow kids, but it was a really great camp. The
4 kids went out with researchers. We had a lot of local
5 people that helped with the camp.

6
7 We did that for two years successfully
8 in Barrow and then this year we only had about three
9 applications from Barrow, so we decided to go out to
10 the villages and we've been wanting to do that anyway,
11 to move out of Barrow a little bit and try to do more
12 outreach in the villages. So this year we went out to
13 Point Lay in Wainwright and Donna Dewhurst with the
14 AMBCC went and Laurel Devaney, my supervisor. The
15 three of us basically showed up in these villages with
16 just a bunch of stuff to do and got on the VHF and said
17 we're in town and a bunch of kids came to the community
18 center and we took them out. We were a little bit late
19 as far as ID'ing birds go. We went in August, so a lot
20 of the birds were gone, but it was still a blast. We
21 did everything from bird dissections to face painting
22 to going out on the tundra and looking for bugs. So I
23 think it was really successful. We had a good time.
24 We had a great reception from the community. Even one
25 of the elderly ladies got her face painted, so that was
26 fun.

27
28 Another outreach activity that we
29 coordinate is a calendar contest, which a lot of you
30 may be familiar with. It's pretty much a statewide
31 contest. Basically the kids get to do artwork and
32 literature. I coordinate that contest for all the
33 North Slope villages except for Kaktovik, which Arctic
34 Refuge coordinates. I think most of you are probably
35 doing these in your regions. If not, I would
36 definitely recommend it. It's a great contest. They
37 win nice prizes. Then you have a local judging, so you
38 have a lot of community participation and people come
39 and judge the entries and then they go down to
40 Anchorage for a statewide competition. This year we
41 had a girl from Atqasak who was a grand prize winner in
42 the literature, so she's down there standing with her
43 bike, which was pretty exciting. These kids that win
44 at the statewide level will end up in the Alaska
45 migratory bird calendar.

46
47 So just a few other things that we've
48 been doing that I have found to be successful with
49 basically getting this information from locals and from
50 Taqulik and Department of Wildlife on how to get these

1 messages out. We've learned that basically trying to
2 get it out every way you possibly can is successful, so
3 we've done everything from getting on the VHF, we have
4 TV roll-arounds on the Barrow local station.
5 Everything we can get in the Arctic Sounder.

6
7 We do flyers and posters that have been
8 real successful. We created this one on the top there
9 that talks about lead shot and how do you know if
10 you're using lead shot. Actually, I went to Wainwright
11 a few months ago and a guy came to me with a box of
12 lead shot that he didn't even realize was lead shot and
13 said I saw your flyer and matched this up and wanted to
14 trade it in, so that was kind of nice. So here's some
15 examples of other posters and signs that we've created
16 and just posted all over the place.

17
18 One of the things that was asked from
19 the locals on the North Slope for us to do was to
20 condense the AMBCC regulations into these one-page
21 flyers so they could easily understand them and not
22 have to go through the booklet. So we created these
23 and those have been pretty helpful for the North Slope.

24
25 A couple of the other things that we've
26 been doing, we had a workshop back in '05 and brought
27 somebody in from all the villages to Barrow. That was
28 successful. We were able to figure out where to focus
29 our efforts, what people in the villages wanted and
30 basically they wanted more of our presence in the
31 villages. They wanted information to not only be
32 presented in Barrow but to get out to the villages, so
33 we've been doing that the last couple of years.

34
35 One of the great success stories is
36 last year the North Slope Fish and Game Management
37 Committee put in a proposal to ban lead shot for all
38 bird hunting on the North Slope and that did go
39 through, so now there is this ban. There's also a new
40 proposal from the Y-K Delta that's just come in and
41 we'll go to the Board of Game in November, I believe.
42 So I just wanted to put a plug in for that. There's a
43 comment period open right now if anybody wants to
44 comment on that proposal to ban lead shot. Or if
45 anybody else wants to submit similar proposals for
46 their regions, it would really be nice to see lead shot
47 make its way out of Alaska and everybody just start
48 using non-toxic shot.

49
50 So, as far as future plans, we're going

1 to hopefully continue to work with the North Slope
2 Borough, the Office of Law Enforcement, anyone else who
3 is interested in partnering up with us or if anyone is
4 interested in expanding these efforts to other parts of
5 the state, we'd be willing to do that. Continue to do
6 the presentations and just keep getting the word out.
7 I think we're making headway. It seems like we're
8 making progress. It's hard to evaluate outreach
9 efforts because there's not really any way to take data
10 and scientifically determine if you're doing something,
11 but it seems like people are starting to hear more and
12 more about Eider issues and lead shot and what's going
13 on.

14
15 So, with that, I just wanted to throw
16 up this slide of partners. There's no way we could
17 possibly do this work without having a ton of people on
18 board. Just point out some of the ones we've been
19 working with a lot. The North Slope Borough and
20 actually the folks in this room, Mike Peterson and Josh
21 and Taqulik I work with pretty much on a daily basis.
22 They probably get tired of hearing from me all the
23 time, but they've been extremely helpful as far as
24 helping us get the word out on the North Slope. And
25 then the Bureau of Land Management provides quite a bit
26 of money to do a lot of this work. Conoco has given
27 money every year to pay for hiring kids on the North
28 Slope, so people are looking to trying to get kids
29 involved in research projects. The oil companies are a
30 good source to get money from.

31
32 With that, I'm going to leave it open
33 for questions.

34
35 CHAIRMAN SQUARTSOFF: Thank you,
36 Neesha. I think you might have solved enforcement's
37 problem with that lead shot. Send a pretty lady out
38 there and they'll just swap shells.

39
40 (Laughter)

41
42 CHAIRMAN SQUARTSOFF: No tickets. Any
43 questions for Neesha. Taqulik, go ahead.

44
45 MS. HEPA: Again, I just want to thank
46 Neesha for all the hard work. This didn't happen
47 overnight. It's taken several years for us to get
48 where we are today. Her dedication and consistency and
49 making sure that she's working with the local people, I
50 just wanted to send my thank you to her and we look

1 forward to working together. I'm glad that I have Mike
2 and Josh here to help us deal with outreach issues.

3
4 When she first started traveling to the
5 villages, people thought she was one of our staff, so
6 that's good to hear. When I travel to the villages,
7 they know Neesha works for the Fish and Wildlife
8 Service. That's a big indicator to me that there is an
9 increasing presence of Service employees and I just
10 want to thank you.

11 MS. WENDLING: Thank you.

12
13 CHAIRMAN SQUARTSOFF: Thank you,
14 Taqulik. Anyone else.

15
16 (No comments)

17
18 CHAIRMAN SQUARTSOFF: If not, thank you
19 again, Neesha. Good report. I think we are on number
20 13, committee appointments. Doug, if the Federal
21 doesn't have any changes, I talked with Ron already and
22 he doesn't have any and we don't have any changes.

23
24 MR. ALCORN: I don't think we have any.
25 I'll defer to Russ. Russ, are you aware of any
26 staffing changes that might have resulted in a need to
27 change the committee? Okay. We'll pass on that.

28
29 CHAIRMAN SQUARTSOFF: All right.
30 Thanks. Public comments. Can you step up and state
31 your name. Thank you.

32
33 MR. GILBERT: Hi. My name is Matthew
34 Gilbert. I came as an RIT, but due to uncertainties
35 about that, I'm just going to be representing myself as
36 a former climate change researcher in my area.
37 Actually, I can attest to the fact that Magpies have
38 been spotted in my village and other villages south, so
39 it's actually a lot farther north than you guys think.
40 They've gone a lot farther north.

41
42 Also, two things. For one reason, for
43 probably explainable, it's hard to say, factors I
44 haven't been able to get to you guys to tell you all
45 this information. That's the first thing. The second
46 thing is I did find out a lot of interesting things on
47 birds in my area. First off, there's a number of them
48 but I'll quickly go over them just to shorten the
49 comment here.

50

1 One is we don't see the Snipe anymore.
2 Second, we don't see a lot of birds anymore. We don't
3 hear -- and when they are around, we don't hear them
4 anymore. I went to talk to Susan during the break and
5 she told me that when there's less water in the land,
6 the birds tend to migrate other places. The majority
7 of the people I spoke to believe it's global warming, a
8 lot of our lakes and rivers are sinking and drying up.
9 They think that's probably one reason why we don't
10 really see any birds any more.

11
12 Also, we don't see them sitting on the
13 telephone poles anymore. We don't see sea gulls
14 sitting on the banks across the river. When I was a
15 little kid, I always saw that and now I don't see it
16 anymore. Second, I don't really see a lot of Swallows
17 making those mud houses along the eaves. Also, some
18 traditional hunters tell me when geese fly over they no
19 longer fly in V's and they no longer make sounds.

20
21 So all these observations and I didn't
22 know where to bring them and I'm glad I came here
23 because it seems like you guys are the dudes on that.

24
25 CHAIRMAN SQUARTSOFF: Okay. Is that
26 it?

27
28 MR. GILBERT: Yeah.

29
30 CHAIRMAN SQUARTSOFF: Thank you very
31 much. I guess, Susan, you said you talked with her
32 earlier about the Magpies, so that sounds good. I
33 think Doug was noting down some of that stuff. Where
34 do you live now?

35
36 MR. GILBERT: Arctic Village.

37
38 CHAIRMAN SQUARTSOFF: It sounds a
39 little strange all these things aren't happening any
40 more.

41
42 MR. GILBERT: Yeah. I notice you guys
43 obviously have a lot of issues that you're dealing with
44 in your respective regions, but I do think climate
45 change is an overall issue that I strongly suggest you
46 guys start addressing because it's everywhere. So,
47 thanks.

48
49 CHAIRMAN SQUARTSOFF: Thank you very
50 much. Any other public comments. Yes, Wanda.

1 MS. CATANICKOFF: Good afternoon. My
2 name is Wanda Catanickoff. I'm the natural resources
3 and environmental coordinator for the Sun'aq Tribe of
4 Kodiak. I've been in this position for three months
5 and didn't know until yesterday morning that I was
6 coming up here for this meeting. I just wanted to make
7 a brief comment and that is that it's really neat and
8 refreshing to see Native organizations working with
9 different governmental organizations for a common good
10 and I just look forward to working with you guys, you
11 know, getting information through Herman and I just
12 think it's really neat that you guys are doing this.
13 Thank you.

14
15 CHAIRMAN SQUARTSOFF: Thank you, Wanda.
16 I didn't know you were coming either. Checking up on
17 me, I guess. No other public comments?

18
19 (No comments)

20
21 CHAIRMAN SQUARTSOFF: That was pretty
22 good. At least we got two out of the afternoon.
23 Nothing this morning. Staff reports. We could start
24 with whoever.

25
26 MR. ALCORN: Is Fred on the line? I
27 don't see a light on there. It looks like he's not.
28 So, Donna or Bill, do either of you have something to
29 report out? The mike is open.

30
31 MR. OSTRAND: Just one other thing,
32 please leave the black books when you go and I have a
33 couple extra copies, take home versions of the black
34 book if anyone needs them.

35
36 MR. ALCORN: And I would like to
37 suggest if I may, Mr. Chairman, that those of you that
38 have enjoyed the donuts today you might want to drop a
39 buck or two in the cup because that helps pay Donna and
40 Bill, who pay for these out of their own pockets. I'd
41 appreciate that. For those of you that don't know,
42 Fred is out because he had a second knee replaced just
43 a week or two ago, I think two weeks ago, and he's
44 convalescing now at home.

45
46 CHAIRMAN SQUARTSOFF: Thank you, Doug.
47 Thank you Bill and Donna for the donuts. We went down
48 on a trip to the Flyway Council meetings, I think that
49 was in Wyoming, and we were ribbing Bill about this per
50 diem, so we finally got something else out of him. It

1 took a while, but we got it. Thank you, Bill. Council
2 comments. Anyone. Joe.

3

4 MR. HICKS: I'd like to respond
5 somewhat to the gentleman from Arctic Village. I hear
6 what you're saying. I see it happening in my
7 particular area. I do know that a lot more attention
8 needs to be directed towards not just global warming,
9 climate change, I don't know what the exact word is.
10 But it is happening. I don't know what the answer is
11 to it, but I do know that something needs to happen
12 now. Like I say, I hear you and I understand you.

13

14 CHAIRMAN SQUARTSOFF: Thank you, Joe.
15 Molly.

16

17 MS. CHYTHLOOK: I just want to make a
18 comment. This is my third meeting here and it's been
19 really interesting to be on this committee to share
20 issues with the other regions. When we were talking
21 about banding, it's not a traditional and ecological
22 knowledge, it's just misunderstandings I think from the
23 villages, the residents of the villages, just from
24 observing caribous and moose being collared and when
25 they harvest ducks that have been banded they're not
26 certain and sometimes they think these have been
27 handled or possibly been shot with whatever and so
28 they're afraid to eat them. I think education isn't
29 being done, and I'm partly responsible especially with
30 my regional committee, to educate the communities about
31 the bands and whatever else happens to disturb the
32 birds.

33

34 I know when there was testing of eggs,
35 traditional and ecological knowledge regarding touching
36 eggs and even baby birds or baby anything, baby
37 animals, is not what we're supposed to do. When that
38 happens, then the parents of the birds or any animal
39 rejects their babies, including eggs. So I guess when
40 things like this that are foreign to our communities
41 come on, I think it would be a polite thing for
42 agencies that are working with these to please come to
43 the communities and explain what you're doing so that
44 if by chance any birds are harvested that have bands or
45 whatever else is on them, signifying that these have
46 been captured and done whatever to them, that our
47 people in the communities won't be afraid to eat them.

48

49 That's all I have and thank you again
50 for this great group of people, including the agencies.

1 We sometimes kind of butt heads, but that's part of
2 learning, I guess, and getting along. Thank you.

3

4 CHAIRMAN SQUARTSOFF: Thank you, Molly.
5 Taqulik.

6

7 MS. HEPA: Thank you, Mr. Chair. I
8 would like to make a point. It has nothing to do with
9 birds, but it has something to do with how we have
10 culturally and traditionally done stuff and this is a
11 really good example because it happened this summer in
12 Anaktuvuk Pass. Anaktuvuk Pass is known and the people
13 there are known for making beautiful Eskimo masks and
14 they sell them at the museum and people buy them.
15 Justice Mikeon (ph) is an elder who's been making masks
16 for many years. One of the items he uses is black bear
17 fur or brown bear fur and he was informed this summer
18 that it was illegal for him to do so and he has been
19 doing this since he was a kid. The Park Service
20 employee said we need to change the regulation before
21 you can sell these in the museum.

22

23 I wanted to make that point because
24 when we were asked to do a 30-day closure, the people
25 from the North Slope had a really difficult time
26 because they didn't think it was necessary because we
27 have our traditional practices of knowing when to stop
28 hunting. They struggled. It just doesn't seem right.
29 We are working with the community of Anaktuvuk Pass to
30 change the regulations, but it's going to take time.
31 In the meantime, he was explaining to me that he felt
32 like a criminal for something he's been doing for many
33 years.

34

35 We have to go both through the Federal
36 Subsistence Board and the Alaska Board of Game to
37 change the regulations to match what he's been doing.
38 The same thing goes when the law enforcement guy
39 mentioned something about there are too many things you
40 do, you deal with criminal issues, and a lot of these
41 things that we've been doing for a long time, it's
42 going to take time.

43

44 I really appreciate all the work and
45 effort that you guys put into working with the
46 communities, but it is going to take time. I just
47 really hope that we're sensitive to that and using that
48 example from Anaktuvuk Pass is pretty universal. So I
49 would like us to think about that as we go to our next
50 meeting and our future meetings that we're working with

1 people who have been doing things for a long time and
2 you're catching up these regulations to what we've been
3 doing for a long time. Thank you.

4

5 CHAIRMAN SQUARTSOFF: Thank you,
6 Taqulik. Anyone else. I'd like to thank the whole
7 Council here for the time and effort you all put into
8 coming down here for this meeting. We kind of pretty
9 much made it in what I thought we were going to, so it
10 worked out pretty good. I'm really impressed with the
11 way the Lord works in His mysterious ways because I
12 didn't know Wanda was coming, I didn't know I was
13 chairing a meeting today and I would get done this
14 early, so it worked out pretty good.

15 And I want to thank all of you out
16 there for coming up also and taking your time and
17 effort to being here. Especially Bob coming all the
18 way from Oregon. I ran into him in the airport
19 yesterday and he got bumped off one flight they
20 cancelled and he was sitting there on standby and the
21 next one I was sitting on the plane thinking Bob's
22 going to make it on this flight no problem, you know.
23 There was probably about 60, 80 empty seats and people
24 were straggling in and pretty soon it was full. Oh,
25 Bob ain't making it on this one.

26

27 But I appreciate you all coming down
28 and we do have a great group right here and it seems to
29 be working real well. I've been here with them ever
30 since they started. It's been tough at times and good
31 at times. I enjoyed chairing this meeting here too
32 because it was a lot easier than the first one I
33 chaired. Some of you might remember. It was on an
34 April Fool's Day too, I think. Thank you.

35

36 Next item agenda is passing the gavel
37 over to the State. Catch, Ron. Here you go. That's
38 not bad. He's just stepping on line here on the
39 Council and he gets to chair it right away. We'll
40 break him in in the right way. Thank you, Ron.

41

42 MR. CLARKE: In at the deep end, I
43 guess. The first item we need to deal with here or the
44 last item we need to deal with is date and place of
45 next meeting. I will defer to people with lots more
46 experience on this than I have, which is everyone in
47 the room. The next meeting is Anchorage and that works
48 for me.

49

50 MR. SQUARTSOFF: We're thinking Cold

1 Bay.

2

3 CHAIRMAN CLARKE: Fair enough. Arctic
4 Village maybe. Doug.

5

6 MR. ALCORN: Mr. Chairman. We have
7 calendars. It looks like we have May and June of 2008
8 in the binder. I have a calendar for March. I don't
9 have one for April. But we typically meet early April
10 if I'm not mistaken. April 2nd is always our
11 traditional start date of the subsistence spring
12 season. I don't know if that forms a problem with
13 anybody here that may hunt. The 2nd and 3rd, that's a
14 Wednesday, Thursday. That would work for me.

15

16 CHAIRMAN CLARKE: I would entertain a
17 motion for April 2nd and 3rd.

18

19 MR. DEVINE: So moved.

20

21 MR. SQUARTSOFF: Second.

22

23 CHAIRMAN CLARKE: It's been moved and
24 seconded that we hold our next meeting April 2nd and
25 3rd in Anchorage. Any discussion.

26

27 MR. SQUARTSOFF: Mr. Chair. Yeah, I'd
28 like to discuss -- it all depends on what we have on
29 the agenda if there's any items that we really need to
30 discuss, I suggest that we go back into our workshop
31 mode, please. Thank you.

32

33 MR. ALCORN: I was going to offer that.
34 We typically have a -- Monday is a travel day, Tuesday
35 is a workshop day. Spring meetings are typically those
36 that have the most discussion because of the regulation
37 setting meeting that we have, so I would recommend that
38 we do set aside Tuesday for the workshop, Wednesday and
39 Thursday for the actual meeting.

40

41 CHAIRMAN CLARKE: Is that acceptable to
42 the maker of the motion and the second?

43

44 MR. DEVINE: Yes.

45

46 MR. SQUARTSOFF: Yes.

47

48 CHAIRMAN CLARKE: Is there any further
49 discussion.

50

1 (No comments)

2

3 CHAIRMAN CLARKE: Seeing none. Is
4 there any objection to that motion.

5

6 (No comments)

7

8 CHAIRMAN CLARKE: We have one comment.
9 Tom.

10

11 MR. ROTHE: Just information-wise. For
12 those of you that are representatives to the Flyway
13 Councils, the Pacific Flyway technical meetings start
14 the week of March 10th on the Oregon coast and the
15 Flyway Council, I believe, is probably going to be
16 March 25th. Where is it, Bob?

17

18 MR. TROST: I want to say Dallas this
19 year.

20

21 MR. ROTHE: The week of the 24th is the
22 North American Wildlife Conference and the Council
23 usually meets like the second day of that or somewhere
24 in there.

25

26 CHAIRMAN CLARKE: Thank you, Tom. Bob,
27 have you got that location in hand?

28

29 MR. TROST: I may have. I believe it
30 will actually be on March 25th. For those who will be
31 attending the Service Regulation Committee meeting is
32 late in the season and will probably be on July 23rd
33 (away from microphone).

34

35 CHAIRMAN CLARKE: And where will that
36 meeting be?

37

38 MR. SMITH: That's in D.C.

39

40 MR. TROST: (Away from microphone)

41

42 CHAIRMAN CLARKE: Thanks. Anybody have
43 any other items for the good of the order. I have one
44 final item before we entertain a move for adjournment.
45 I sent an email out earlier. I did indeed bring my
46 trained falcon with me and anyone interested in how a
47 Peregrine catches or doesn't catch ducks, I'll be back
48 to Cramer's Field about 6:00 o'clock. There's a little
49 parking area back by the Cramer's Dairy Barn. It says
50 Cramer's Dairy on the roof, you can't miss it. If you

1 want to come along, you're all welcome to come watch.
2 I guarantee nothing. It's right down the road. It's
3 maybe half a mile at most. I guarantee nothing. I
4 have no idea what's going to happen every time I turn
5 the bird loose. You never know what's going to happen,
6 but there are ducks around. The falcon has been flying
7 well and I'd love to have you all come along. It's a
8 lot of fun.

9

10 With that, I would entertain a move to
11 adjourn.

12

13 MR. SQUARTSOFF: So moved.

14

15 MS. HEPA: Second.

16

17 CHAIRMAN CLARKE: Any objection. We'll
18 stand adjourned until our next meeting on the 1st, 2nd
19 and 3rd of April.

20

21 (Off record)

22

23 (END OF PROCEEDINGS)

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C E R T I F I C A T E

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