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VOLUME I

ALASKA MIGRATORY BIRD CO-MANAGEMENT COUNCIL

WINTER MEETING

DILLINGHAM, ALASKA

SEPTEMBER 24, 2008

Members Present:

- Ron Clarke, Alaska Department of Fish and Game, Chair
- Herman Squartsoff, Kodiak Area Native Association
- Doug Alcorn, U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service
- Sandy Tahbone, Kawerak, Incorporated
- Mike Pederson, North Slope Borough
- Molly Chythlook, Bristol Bay Native Association
- Peter Devine, Aleutian/Pribilof Islands
- Sky Starkey, Association of Village Council Presidents
- Joeneal Hicks, Copper River Native Association
- Fred Armstrong, Executive Director
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P R O C E E D I N G S

(Dillingham, Alaska - 9/24/2008)

(On record - 9:00 a.m.)

CHAIRMAN CLARK: I'd like to call this meeting of the Co-Management Council to order. Thank you all for coming this morning. As is traditional with these meetings, we'll begin, please, with a moment of silence.

(Moment of silence)

CHAIRMAN CLARK: Thank you very much. We do have a recording system with us this morning. The PA did not get to town, so I would ask the Council members and any members of the audience that have comments for the Council to please speak up and speak clearly and we'll get it all on the record.

Let's move on to seating of alternates. Fred, go ahead.

MR. ARMSTRONG: Mr. Chair. We have a letter from North Slope appointing Mike Pederson as the alternate for Taqulik and received an email from Myron Naneng to seat Sky Starkey as an alternate.

MR. ALCORN: I so move.

MR. HICKS: Second.

CHAIRMAN CLARK: Any objections.

(No comments)

CHAIRMAN CLARK: Seeing none, we'll seat those alternates officially for today. Let's have a roll call and establish a quorum here. Fred, you've got the list. If you'd go down that, please.

MR. ARMSTRONG: Association of Village Council Presidents.

MR. STARKEY: Here.

MR. ARMSTRONG: Bristol Bay Native Association.

1 MS. CHYTHLOOK: Here.
2
3 MR. ARMSTRONG: Chugach Regional
4 Resource Commission.
5
6 (No response)
7
8 MR. ARMSTRONG: Copper River Native
9 Association.
10
11 MR. HICKS: Here.
12
13 MR. ARMSTRONG: Kawerak.
14
15 MS. TAHBONE: Here.
16
17 MR. ARMSTRONG: Southeast Alaska
18 Inter-tribal Fish and Wildlife Commission.
19
20 (No response)
21
22 MR. ARMSTRONG: Aleutian/Pribilof
23 Island Association.
24
25 MR. DEVINE: Here.
26
27 MR. ARMSTRONG: Sun'aq Tribe of Kodiak.
28
29 MR. SQUARTSOFF: Here.
30
31 MR. ARMSTRONG: Maniilaq Association.
32
33 (No response)
34
35 MR. ARMSTRONG: North Slope Borough.
36
37 MR. PEDERSON: Here.
38
39 MR. ARMSTRONG: Tanana Chiefs
40 Conference.
41
42 (No response)
43
44 MR. ARMSTRONG: Alaska Department of
45 Fish and Game.
46
47 CHAIRMAN CLARKE: Here.
48
49 MR. ARMSTRONG: U.S. Fish and Wildlife
50 Service.

1 MR. ALCORN: Here.
2
3 MR. ARMSTRONG: You have a quorum, Mr.
4 Chair.
5
6 CHAIRMAN CLARKE: Thank you, Fred. For
7 everybody's benefit, let's go around the table and
8 introduce the Council members and once we've done that
9 if we could have everyone in the audience please state
10 your name and your affiliation for the record. Let's
11 start with Mike from North Slope Borough.
12
13 MR. PEDERSON: Mike Pederson. I'm the
14 subsistence resource coordinator for the Department of
15 Wildlife Management, Barrow.
16
17 MR. DEVINE: Peter Devine,
18 Aleutian/Pribilof Island Association rep.
19
20 MR. HICKS: Joeneal Hicks, Copper
21 River.
22
23 MR. STARKEY: Sky Starkey, Association
24 of Village Council Presidents.
25
26 MR. ARMSTRONG: Fred Armstrong,
27 executive director for the Council.
28
29 CHAIRMAN CLARK: My name is Ron Clark.
30 I'm assistant director of the Wildlife Conservation
31 Division at the Alaska Department of Fish and Game.
32
33 MR. ALCORN: I'm Doug Alcorn. I'm the
34 assistant regional director for migratory birds in
35 State programs for the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service
36 in Anchorage representing the Federal government.
37
38 MR. SQUARTSOFF: Herman Squartsoff,
39 Sun'aq Tribe, Kodiak Region. I live in the village of
40 Ouzinkie.
41
42 MS. TAHBONE: Sandy Tahbone. I'm with
43 Kawerak.
44
45 MS. CHYTHLOOK: Molly Chythlook with
46 BBNA.
47
48 MR. OATES: I'm Russ Oates with U.S.
49 Fish and Wildlife Service, Division of Migratory Bird
50 Management, Anchorage.

1 MR. OSTRAND: Bill Ostrand. I am Staff
2 to the Council.

3
4 MR. ABRAHAM: Peter Abraham,
5 refuge information from Togiak. U.S. Fish and
6 Wildlife.

7
8 MR. DYASUK: John Dyasuk.

9
10 MR. ANDERSEN: Ralph Andersen, BBNA.

11
12 MR. ROTHE: Tom Rothe, Department of
13 Fish and Game.

14
15 MS. BROWN: Wennona Brown, subsistence
16 coordinator for the Yukon Flats Fish, Kanuti and Arctic
17 National Wildlife Refuges, Fairbanks.

18
19 MR. BACON: Joshua Bacon, North Slope
20 Borough, Department of Wildlife Management.

21
22 MR. BALES: Brad Bales, Oregon
23 Department of Fish and Wildlife and within hours of
24 becoming chair of the Pacific Flyway Study Committee.

25
26 MS. NAVES: Liliana Naves, Division of
27 Subsistence of Fish and Game in Anchorage.

28
29 MR. LEDBERG: Paul Ledberg, U.S. Fish
30 and Wildlife Service, Togiak.

31
32 CHAIRMAN CLARK: Thank you all very
33 much. We're very happy to have Ralph Andersen,
34 president of BBNA, with us this morning. I understand
35 you have a greeting for the Council, sir.

36
37 MR. ANDERSEN: Thank you, Mr. Chairman.
38 I'm the CEO at Bristol Bay Native Association. A
39 couple weeks ago the Anchorage Daily News made me the
40 president of BBNC. You just made me president of BBNA.
41 I guess I'm doing okay for myself.

42
43 First, welcome all of you to
44 Dillingham. Welcome to our region. I hope that your
45 stay here is enjoyable and productive. If there's
46 anything you need from Staff or any kind of support
47 that you need, let Molly know and we'll make sure it's
48 provided to you. I hope you enjoyed your meal last
49 night, the potluck. I was able to stop in for just a
50 short time. I was baby-sitting my granddaughter who's

1 staying with us for a little bit.

2

3 Thinking of where we've come, the
4 distance that we've covered in the past 10 years or so
5 when me and Sky and a few other people gathered at
6 Girdwood, at Alyeska Resort, when we started mapping
7 out the plan for the Alaska Migratory Bird
8 Co-Management Council. I think the thing that really
9 stuck with me from that meeting, aside from all the
10 business we took care of and setting goals and
11 standards and policies for the group to work toward,
12 was a friend of ours from Fort Yukon, who has passed
13 away, he got up and walked out. He said I'm from a
14 village and I come here and I came to Anchorage and I'm
15 in a village again. I want to go and do some shopping.
16 I want to go and see the city. But before he left he
17 made sure that we had his confidence in doing the
18 things that we were doing.

19

20 The distance that we've traveled in 10
21 years has made a lot of progress. I recall Mimi Hogan
22 10 years ago was really one of the spark plugs behind
23 organizing the group when we were the Native Migratory
24 Bird Working Group under RuralCap. So we've seen the
25 changes or at least I've seen the changes that have
26 occurred, not only in trying to streamline the process
27 but really trying our best to implement a concept that
28 a lot of people have a hard time understanding, co-
29 management.

30

31 The message is we don't want to run it.
32 We want to have a voice. It's not co-management if the
33 State, the Feds and regulatory agencies are making
34 decisions on their own. It's not co-management. I
35 think that message has come across and has been
36 received very well by the whole Council. The progress
37 that we've made toward achieving that is really evident
38 in just the membership here. We might disagree on
39 certain things, but that's democracy. I mean we're
40 able to discuss and we're able to deliberate and we're
41 able to reach consensus on things.

42

43 That was one of the things we spent a
44 lot of time doing early on when we were organizing.
45 Trying to establish procedures that were really vetted
46 by the people that are most affected. I'm sure that
47 whole process has not changed because it took a lot of
48 work with me and Charlie Brower and Myron Naneng and
49 Mr. Smith from Tanana Chiefs. I mean we spent a lot of
50 time really finessing that whole process and I think

1 what we came up with was really acceptable.

2

3 The issue of harvest surveys is going
4 to be with us forever because we really need to keep
5 track. We need to demonstrate that our 2 percent use,
6 our small percentage of use of subsistence migratory
7 bird hunting during a six-month period isn't causing a
8 great harm to our wildlife populations. The way that
9 we want to continue is just proceeding the way we are.
10 Just making sure that our surveys are as accurate as
11 possible because that really justifies our continued
12 use of the hunt or continued use of migratory birds.
13 While we may disagree about some of the questions that
14 are asked or some of the processes involved in
15 conducting those surveys, the result is really what
16 we're after, I think. The numbers or the harvest
17 numbers, the numbers of hunters.

18

19 Something that I've done here at BBNA
20 since I've been CEO now for going on four years is that
21 I've incorporated into our annual priorities that I
22 carry with me to Washington, D.C. is including
23 sufficient funding for the Alaska Migratory Bird
24 Co-Management Council. Years ago, worked with Fred and
25 others. Early on we put together like a \$2.1 million
26 budget request and we're still chasing that money
27 because I think that in order for us to really be
28 effective and to develop the programs and really
29 implement the treaty methods, we really need funding to
30 do it because we don't have the funding here.

31

32 There's some organizations and the non-
33 profits in rural Alaska that are fortunate to have
34 funding for migratory bird biologist and have a program
35 dedicated to that effort. We don't. There are other
36 regions in the same situation. In fact, we incorporate
37 our migratory bird effort into our subsistence program,
38 which helps offset some of the costs, but we're not
39 able to really do the kinds of things that are set out
40 in the amendments. I think continuing to work toward
41 that together, I mean it really takes us working
42 together to achieve that. I think that's one of the
43 things we need to continue doing.

44

45 The other items I'd like to mention, in
46 my discussions yesterday or just recently with our
47 director of community services, the department that
48 works directly with our tribes, every spring, March or
49 February, we organize a presidents and administrators
50 workshop where we invite all 31 tribal presidents and

1 their village administrators into BBNA. We offer
2 training, IRS, just essential service training. One of
3 the things we'd like to do this year is discuss co-
4 management, the concept of co-management. I'm not sure
5 how this is really going to formulate.

6
7 What I'd like to do, part of it anyway,
8 it really should be a celebration of what we've
9 accomplished. I mean we've come a long way in
10 subsistence co-management, subsistence fishing co-
11 management. We've come a long way in migratory bird
12 co-management. We've come a long way in Bristol Bay
13 anyway of walrus subsistence hunting co-management.
14 The North Slope, I know the AWC has been a co-manager
15 of the spring and fall whale hunts up there for
16 decades. So it's trying to bring together these
17 organizations to really discuss co-management and the
18 hopes and dreams and what we can celebrate and the
19 direction we need to take in order to further our
20 subsistence priorities.

21
22 So don't be surprised, Fred, if you get
23 an invitation from us. Of course, invite the whole
24 Council. But I think that's something we all -- I mean
25 there comes a point, I think, when criticism is
26 effective. There's also a point where celebration is
27 effective, where we really need to pat ourselves on the
28 back and take a look at how far we've come. Sometimes
29 we get into these silos of work and don't come above
30 the clouds to look what's up, what's above the clouds
31 and how we fit in to the whole scheme of things.
32 That's what I'd really like to accomplish is something
33 like that.

34
35 Again, welcome to Bristol Bay. Welcome
36 to BBNA. Welcome to Dillingham and I hope you have a
37 very productive meeting.

38
39 CHAIRMAN CLARK: Thank you.

40
41 MR. SQUARTSOFF: Thank you, Ralph.

42
43 CHAIRMAN CLARK: With that, we need to
44 approve the agenda before we go much further. Before
45 we do that, I want to make note of the welcome potluck
46 we had last night and especially again extend thanks to
47 Molly and everybody that helped put that together.

48
49 In talking to some of the women that
50 were serving us last night I learned that they do a lot

1 of this sort of catering and providing food and the
2 money they earn is all being set aside for a future
3 community center. I've got an envelope here and I'll
4 start it around. If you're so inclined, I hope you'll
5 join me in putting something in the envelope and we'll
6 make a contribution to their community center fund. It
7 was a great welcome and it's a good cause, so let me
8 circulate that. If members of the audience want to
9 pitch in, by all means, you're certainly welcome to do
10 that, but we want to show our appreciation for a great
11 welcome potluck last night.

12
13 MR. ANDERSEN: By the way, Mr.
14 Chairman, Bristol Bay has the best potluck in the
15 state.

16
17 MS. TAHBONE: I beg to differ. Bering
18 Straits has the best potluck in the state.

19
20 CHAIRMAN CLARK: This is that democracy
21 bit where people may disagree on details. Well, let's
22 move on and approve our agenda. I know there are a
23 couple of changes that people have wanted to make, but
24 if we could have a motion on the floor, we'll open it
25 up.

26
27 MR. ALCORN: So moved.

28
29 MR. STARKEY: Second.

30
31 CHAIRMAN CLARK: Okay, got it on the
32 floor. Member Alcorn.

33
34 MR. ALCORN: Mr. Chair. I'd like to
35 add one item, Item D under new business. I would like
36 to brief the Council on Section VII of the Endangered
37 Species Act consultation process that we will be
38 involved in for the 2009 season.

39
40 CHAIRMAN CLARK: Okay. Any other
41 amendments. Fred.

42
43 MR. ARMSTRONG: Mr. Chair. I'd like to
44 add Bill Ostrand to give the Council an update on the
45 National EIS and its potential impact on Alaska.

46
47 CHAIRMAN CLARK: I would suggest that
48 we add that as Item E under new business. Any other
49 agenda changes. I've got a couple I'd like to offer.
50 One, I think prior to our discussion of Harvest Survey

1 Committee recommendations it would be useful to have a
2 budget outlook report, so I'd like to move Item A under
3 new business, the fiscal report by Fred Armstrong, up
4 to between items 9 and 10 above old business, just to
5 give the Council a good grip on the budget situation.

6

7 The second item, I would propose that
8 we take up the executive director evaluation after old
9 business and new business, so move that down to Item F
10 under new business.

11

12 MR. SQUARTSOFF: Mr. Chair. That was
13 10 down to F?

14

15 CHAIRMAN CLARK: Yes. Are there any
16 other suggestions. Member Starkey.

17

18 MR. STARKEY: Mr. Chair. I'm not
19 completely certain whether it would be more appropriate
20 in old business or new business, but I would like to
21 add an agenda item to discuss. Federal and State Duck
22 Stamps and Federal license requirement and State
23 hunting license requirement.

24

25 MR. HICKS: C, old business.

26

27 MR. STARKEY: I think I agree with what
28 Joeneal just said, old business, Item C.

29

30 CHAIRMAN CLARK: Add that as Item C
31 under old business, Federal/State Duck Stamp and
32 license. Member Tahbone.

33

34 MS. TAHBONE: I'm just wondering,
35 shouldn't it be under new business? Old business we
36 just carry forward and we would keep carrying it
37 forward, so it would show up under old business.

38

39 CHAIRMAN CLARK: Point well taken.
40 Let's put it under new business and add that as Item F
41 and move the evaluation to Item G. Any other agenda
42 change requests.

43

44 (No comments)

45

46 CHAIRMAN CLARK: Seeing none, are there
47 any objections to the adopting the agenda as amended.

48

49 (No comments)

50

1 CHAIRMAN CLARK: Seeing none, we will
2 proceed on that schedule. Item No. 7, the approval of
3 the April 4th and 5th, 2008 action items, which can be
4 found at Tab 1 in your notebook. Take a moment to
5 review those quickly. The Chair would entertain a
6 motion to approve those action items. Mr. Ostrand, you
7 have a comment.

8
9 MR. OSTRAND: Fred was just calling me,
10 but I would point out that there is a second set of
11 action items behind Tab 2 for our summer meeting.

12
13 CHAIRMAN CLARK: The Chair would
14 entertain a motion to adopt the action items for April
15 4th and 5th, 2008 and also for June 24th, 2008.

16
17 MR. SQUARTSOFF: So moved.

18
19 MS. TAHBONE: Second.

20
21 CHAIRMAN CLARK: Any discussion, any
22 questions, any comments, any input from our guests.

23
24 (No comments)

25
26 CHAIRMAN CLARK: Seeing none. Any
27 objection to the motion.

28
29 (No objection)

30
31 CHAIRMAN CLARK: With no objection, the
32 motion carries. At this time, we'd like to open the
33 floor to any members of the public who would like to
34 address the Council on whatever topic they would see
35 fit. Are there any members of the public that would
36 like to speak at this time.

37
38 (No comments)

39
40 CHAIRMAN CLARK: Seeing none. We'll
41 move ahead. There is another opportunity for public
42 comments later in the meeting. Let's move on to
43 regional reports and get updates from all the regions.
44 Member Squartsoff.

45
46 MR. SQUARTSOFF: Yeah, Mr. Chair. I
47 don't have a whole lot, but we're going to have our
48 fall regional meeting here on Tuesday, the 30th, and
49 there's not a whole lot of concerns. We're still
50 waiting for stuff to come back from Bill on that one

1 proposal I put in a couple years ago. I guess we're
2 waiting on the solicitor or something. So whenever we
3 find out something like that we'll move back on getting
4 a proposal going.

5

6 CHAIRMAN CLARK: Which proposal was
7 that?

8

9 MR. SQUARTSOFF: It was the one we were
10 thinking of using something similar to the SHARC card
11 for registering and all that. I think Bill found
12 something that might be a little better. So hopefully
13 the solicitor goes our way and we'll be able to do it.
14 Thank you.

15

16 CHAIRMAN CLARK: Thank you. Let's
17 continue around the table. Member Tahbone, do you have
18 a report to pass along.

19

20 MS. TAHBONE: Sure do. Our weather
21 this spring and summer was very erratic, more so than
22 usual. We had a very cool summer. We had frost
23 conditions in July and we were up in the 80's in July.
24 We had frozen mud puddles in August and we were in the
25 60's in August, so it was all -- we had a relatively
26 late breakup. This is the first year in many years we
27 had some good ice, but then we also had blizzards. So
28 our weather is very unpredictable.

29

30 Overall, I requested reports from our
31 villages. Everybody is still pretty busy, but the
32 overall picture of the birds this year, it was a good
33 year. The birds are late with their migration back
34 south. We're about a month off schedule right now.
35 The ducks are flocking up. The cranes have started
36 flying and we're seeing more activity with the swans
37 and the geese, but they're like a month off of
38 schedule.

39

40 The concerns that the council has, they
41 would like more outreach regarding bird die-offs.
42 There hasn't been any reported this year, but the
43 previous year there were concerns. Of course,
44 contamination issues with both birds and eggs. There
45 is concern with the elders. They requested more
46 outreach regarding the avian influenza issue. They're
47 still not comfortable eating birds, so we'd like to try
48 to have that addressed.

49

50 Again, the Duck Stamp and license is

1 still an issue in our region. I'm glad Sky brought it
2 up and it's on the agenda. Regarding the birds of
3 concern, the Yellow-billed Loon closed to harvest, we
4 would like to see money set aside so we can do work
5 within our region so we can address that issue.

6
7 Fuel costs are very high and it looks
8 like that's not going to change. It's really playing a
9 role in our hunters' ability to harvest, so I think
10 we'll probably see an impact on that. Probably be
11 reported at this all meeting. We're scheduled to have
12 a meeting November 17th. The council would like to
13 request Staff to provide a comprehensive report on the
14 Yellow-billed Loon to our council at this next meeting;
15 the population, the EIS, just what the plans are and
16 how we can work to address the
17 issues in the best possible way.

18
19 Again, the funding continues to be an
20 issue, our inability to carry out the mandates of our
21 contract. We would like to see the Service try to
22 coordinate as much as possible all programs within the
23 Migratory Bird. Whatever programs to try to coordinate
24 funding efforts to try to address our needs.

25
26 I believe that's it except for -- the
27 last concern is increased enforcement. We really would
28 like to make sure we have a good handle on that. What
29 effort, if any, is going to be put within our region
30 regarding the harvest of "illegal" birds. I'm not sure
31 how or who we need to be talking to to make sure that
32 the reporting of harvest is not going to result in
33 increased enforcement. That's always been an issue.
34 When we ask our hunters to report their harvest, we
35 expect them to provide their true harvest that reflects
36 our subsistence take and we want to ensure that when we
37 say these numbers will not be used for enforcement that
38 we're telling them. We want their trust to continue
39 with our harvest survey effort. So I'm not sure how we
40 should go about dealing with it or who we need to set
41 up a meeting with to ensure that the reporting of
42 harvest of Yellow-billed Loons will not result in
43 increased enforcement in our region. That concludes my
44 report.

45
46 CHAIRMAN CLARK: Thank you. Speaking
47 for the State, Council members and others have never
48 been shy about getting a hold of me about enforcement
49 questions and I welcome that and I'm always open to
50 figure out what's going on. We had a couple of calls

1 earlier in the year. People thought hunters were being
2 harassed and it turned out it was troopers looking for
3 a lost hunter. So in some cases it might be just a
4 simple communication thing like that.

5
6 As far as using harvest data to guide
7 enforcement efforts, I'd be real interested to hear any
8 kind of report that that's going on because it
9 certainly isn't from the State side. I can't speak for
10 the Federal side of things certainly. I think our
11 greatest ally is talking to each other. So, by all
12 means, get a hold of me or somebody at the State if you
13 have questions that pertain to the State enforcement
14 efforts.

15
16 Mr. Oates.

17
18 MR. OATES: I have a couple questions.

19
20 MR. ALCORN: Introduce yourself.

21
22 CHAIRMAN CLARK: Mr. Oates, would you
23 just state your name for the record.

24
25 MR. OATES: I'm Russ Oates with the
26 Fish and Wildlife Service. You were asking about more
27 outreach on things like bird die-offs and contaminates.
28 Are you talking about region-specific information for
29 your region?

30
31 MS. TAHBONE: We spoke with Kim Trust
32 and she's going to be working with us, but, again,
33 there's that funding issue. Again, what I stated, it
34 would be nice if the Service could look at their total
35 budgets, look at their total bird programs and see how
36 we can maybe pull money from different areas within the
37 Service's budget to start providing some of this
38 outreach.

39
40 MR. OATES: You also mentioned you're
41 interested in more detailed information on Yellow-
42 billed Loons. Are you talking about somebody coming to
43 the region and talking to folks about the population
44 status?

45
46 MS. TAHBONE: Yes, I think it's really
47 important that since the outreach hasn't been provided
48 on the birds and exactly what the status is so they
49 have a full understanding of those numbers. You made
50 several comments yesterday regarding whether Common or

1 Yellow and I'm not sure what kind of studies these
2 folks have done in our region regarding Yellow-billed
3 Loons. So I think just to have someone who has the
4 knowledge from the Service or from the State so there
5 can be an exchange of information and we could possibly
6 come up with some ideas.

7

8 MR. OATES: Is there a particular venue
9 where that would be appropriate?

10

11 MS. TAHBONE: It would be at our
12 November 17 Regional Council meeting.

13

14 MR. OATES: I'd like to visit with you
15 some more about that.

16 MS. TAHBONE: We'll make a formal
17 invitation through Fred.

18

19 CHAIRMAN CLARK: Thank you, Mr. Oates.
20 Fred.

21

22 MR. ARMSTRONG: Thank you, Mr. Chair.
23 One thing that occurred to me when you mentioned law
24 enforcement. North Slope makes an effort to invite law
25 enforcement agents to their meeting every time they
26 have one and develop a relationship with them. So I
27 know there's Mike, I can't recall his last name, that's
28 stationed in Nome that perhaps you can.....

29

30 MR. ALCORN: Mike Wade.

31

32 MR. ARMSTRONG: Mike Wade. Perhaps
33 start inviting him to your meeting. That's one way of
34 developing a relationship with them guys. It may help
35 out.

36

37 CHAIRMAN CLARK: Member Alcorn.

38

39 MR. ALCORN: Thank you, Mr. Chairman.
40 Sandy, regarding your statement about using harvest
41 survey information to increase law enforcement. We've
42 had a number of discussions with our law enforcement
43 people and we've made that point; that for us to obtain
44 accurate data, accurate estimates of harvest so that we
45 in this Council can do our business in recommending
46 regulations that effectively manage that, that we're
47 not supportive of using that information to focus
48 enforcement efforts. So we have not shared harvest
49 survey data specific to villages with law enforcement.
50 We consider that confidential and we only present that

1 information once we have collectively vetted it and
2 then it's made public. That's what information law
3 enforcement does get, but they do look at that.

4
5 My hope and my desire is that we
6 collectively begin to perceive our law enforcement
7 agents as well as state troopers as a tool to manage.
8 The tool being when we collectively agree to close a
9 species and we have hunters that are violating the
10 regulation, willingly violating, then I hope the
11 regional representatives are just as supportive of
12 stopping illegal harvest as would be our law
13 enforcement agents and I see the law enforcement agents
14 as a tool to reach our objectives. That's the way I've
15 approached it. We have not used survey information to
16 focus efforts.

17
18 MS. TAHBONE: I understand that. The
19 problem that comes up
20 is when we hear what's going on in other areas, other
21 subsistence resources, with birds in other areas. That
22 may be our wishes, but it's been brought to attention
23 in our region that law enforcement doesn't necessarily
24 feel that way and it's not necessarily their practice.
25 So I just wanted to express the concerns of our Council
26 regarding law enforcement.

27
28 CHAIRMAN CLARK: Thank you. We run
29 into this in other areas at the State level. One
30 example that comes to mind is with Dall sheep where
31 sometimes the reporting units are so small that the
32 data that are made available to the public, if somebody
33 knows how to use it and how to go into the GIS system
34 and figure it out, they can drill down and discover
35 where the big rams are being taken. We've amended our
36 reporting and recording protocols accordingly. It got
37 to the point where the successful hunters were becoming
38 reluctant to report as they're required when they took
39 sheep because that went into this database and
40 inadvertently it was becoming available to others.
41 Well, we've fixed that now.

42
43 Like I said yesterday, a lot of
44 wildlife management is informed by new information and
45 we're always adapting things, so it's really important
46 when you do run into something that concerns you to let
47 us know and chances are we'll be able to address it.
48 I'm always happy to hear reports from the regions. If
49 you've got anything that concerns you, by all means,
50 let us know.

1 Anything else, Member Tahbone.

2

3 MS. TAHBONE: No.

4

5 CHAIRMAN CLARK: Member Chythlook.

6

7 MS. CHYTHLOOK: Welcome to Dillingham
8 again. I'm sorry about the weather, but this is what
9 our weather has been it seems like all summer. We're
10 heading into fall before we've even had a warm, sunny
11 summer. We haven't had our fall regional meetings.
12 We're planning one for November. We just couldn't fit
13 it into the calendar. We were hoping to have one
14 before this meeting, but we just couldn't fit it into
15 our BBNA schedule because we have the 17 communities
16 surveys ongoing still. We have 13 of the 17
17 communities pretty well completed. We still have four
18 outstanding.

19

20 Ever since I've been in this Council
21 I've reported the BBNA communities we survey, but we
22 also have Togiak Refuge people that survey four
23 communities and they're here today, so I want to invite
24 them to give us a little report on their survey project
25 right after me if that would be okay. Because we
26 haven't had our regional fall meeting and I didn't get
27 a report from our communities, Frank and myself have
28 just done a phone survey to see how the hunt has been
29 going.

30

31 Like Sandy said, our season has been
32 like two to three weeks behind. Talking to the elders
33 from different areas, Togiak, Nushagak and even here,
34 the elders have remembered in the late '50s, '60s, they
35 keep telling us that this is normal. Not the weather,
36 not the no-sun weather, but the weather itself
37 historically used to be like this with the late spring
38 and early fall, winter. We've already had frosts here.
39 We have gotten so used to having nice weather, warmer
40 weather, especially during the summer, that I think
41 we've gotten spoiled by it. The migration for the
42 younger generation hunters report that the migration,
43 of course, is like two, three weeks late. Not just the
44 birds, but the eggging and everything else has been two,
45 three weeks late, including berries.

46

47 I guess the only concerns that we've
48 heard from our villages west of us is the Cackling
49 Geese overrunning the berry patches, like the
50 blackberry patches. They're coming in and eating the

1 berries and leaving a lot of droppings around the berry
2 patches and that's been a concern any time there's any
3 droppings. Before the bird flu scare people didn't
4 mind picking around the droppings, but especially if
5 it's been raining, people are kind of concerned about
6 even picking around by the geese droppings. Because I
7 guess the Cacklers have been protected as well as the
8 eggs, maybe there's an increase in the west, but I
9 haven't heard of any increases in complaints about the
10 Cacklers on this side, the Nushagak communities and
11 even here in Dillingham. It's been mainly in Platinum,
12 in their survey community, so maybe they'll have
13 something about that.

14
15 But when we have our regional meeting,
16 if there's been any concerns from the communities, we
17 make sure that appropriate people are invited to our
18 regional meeting and Togiak Refuge has been very
19 cooperative, including our State ADF&G people, in
20 giving us information. I want to thank the Togiak
21 Refuge right now for being so understanding to the
22 communities, especially with the Duck Stamp issue we've
23 been having. It's in the books, it's in the
24 regulations, but I think we're all waiting to see
25 what's going to happen with that Duck Stamp issue.
26 People are not happy with it, but they're coping with
27 the issue.

28
29 So, if it's okay, I'd like to have
30 Togiak Refuge people that survey Manokotak, Togiak,
31 Quinhagak and I think it's three or four villages over
32 there. If they could give us a report from their
33 survey projects over there.

34
35 CHAIRMAN CLARK: By all means.
36 Gentlemen, please join us. Once again, would you state
37 your names for the record, please.

38
39 MR. DYASUK: My name is John Dyasuk and
40 I'm a refuge interpreter and I supervise the RIT's.
41 One of the tasks that we have is doing the waterfowl
42 surveys in the Togiak Refuge. Togiak Refuge is
43 composed of two sections. The Y-K Delta is composed of
44 three villages; Platinum, Goodnews and Quinhagak.
45 Bristol Bay side is Togiak, Twin Hills and Manokotak.
46 When we do the surveys, we try to make sure that we
47 survey those six villages.

48
49 Since this is the first time we had to
50 report, we didn't really prepare anything because we

1 have never been asked to report before. So Pete and I
2 are going to be talking about something kind of
3 informal. Years before that we have worked with that
4 Ted Krieg a lot. He works for the Subsistence
5 Division. Those are the ones that we normally turn all
6 the information over to the State side where they count
7 the numbers and make sure the numbers correlate on
8 Bristol Bay side and Y-K Delta side. Ted is the one
9 that normally has the information.

10

11 The thing that we normally observe from
12 our side are the uses of the villages. Pete and I
13 normally talk about what had changed, what changes has
14 happened in the villages. Over time we see the users
15 and the hunters begin to group together. Before that
16 it used to be to a point where everybody could normally
17 hunt. As we see the fuel price going up, the people
18 begin to plan what they're going to be taking and what
19 time they're going to be going out. I'm going to be
20 brief because Pete is from Togiak village and I'm going
21 to give him time to talk about Togiak and Twin Hills.
22 I'll talk about what John has been doing on the
23 Quinhagak side and the other two villages that are one
24 of our poorest ones.

25

26 Sometimes when we talk about certain
27 things in the villages, we do outreach the same time we
28 do surveys. That's part of our main task, is to do
29 outreach. If a certain species are having a problem,
30 the numbers are low, those are the ones that we
31 disperse to the villages. Most of our task is going to
32 attend meetings like this. What you guys have
33 presented here, we are the ones that disperse to the
34 villages. So whatever you guys say here, those are the
35 ones that we'll be mentioning to the villages. If they
36 have any concerns within Togiak Refuge, they'll be the
37 ones to say we want to attend the next time or they
38 give us information what the uses are and we will
39 forward those to refuge manager.

40

41 So far we have not seen any kind of
42 change except the survey that we do. One thing we
43 notice is also each time we mention a certain species
44 being low, I don't like to name a certain village, they
45 stop reporting. Like sometimes when we mention the
46 Emperor Geese is low, that is the lowest time that we
47 get information back from the user group, even though
48 we know they're very close to the sanctuary. They
49 normally don't report the take and how many they have
50 taken knowing that they've been told that certain

1 species we don't like to see them really take, but they
2 still need to report it.

3

4 I'll give that to Pete so that he can
5 talk a little bit about Togiak itself and what he has
6 observed in our refuge.

7

8 MR. ABRAHAM: My name is Pete Abraham
9 and I'm from Togiak and I'm a refuge information
10 technician. I try to answer all the questions I'm
11 asked because I'm in the middle; the public, the
12 villages and the office. I get attacked sometimes from
13 both directions.

14

15 I have done this survey for about two
16 years now. In the springtime, when the season is open,
17 we get law enforcement over there. Throughout the
18 winter, I get in with all the hunters and people, old
19 folks over there, but as soon as the law enforcement
20 comes around giving a citation to somebody, my name is
21 mud. I mean I get attacked by old folks and
22 everything, but I'm used to it.

23

24 Anyway, the people are very cooperative
25 with what I'm doing. You need to make them understand
26 what is the purpose of the survey. Before that they
27 didn't know. There was always some suspicion from the
28 older folks sometimes. Are you going to use this
29 against us later on.

30

31 John and I and the rest of the RIT's,
32 we try to explain what we're doing. Johnny had a big
33 fight. He was in hot water most of the time. He says
34 I'm going to quit, I'm going to quit. The more they
35 understand, the more they work with us. The people
36 that used to argue with me, right now they're working
37 with me, they help me out.

38

39 There's always some concerns in the
40 villages or in the regions. For instance, the Duck
41 Stamp. Under the State, if you're over 60, you don't
42 need a Duck Stamp. But under the Federal, you have to
43 have a Duck Stamp. That's a concern right there. I
44 explain to them the best I can so they can understand
45 and that worked for us.

46

47 I'm originally from Nelson Island.
48 That's where they really go after ducks and geese.
49 That's their major food. Unlike on the Bristol Bay
50 side, when you weigh the percentage, are a lot less

1 than Y-K area. The hunters in Bristol Bay are not like
2 20 years ago. They're less. In the reporting and the
3 surveys, you'll notice the birds in the springtime are
4 less and a lot less in the fall time.

5
6 When the cost of living has been going
7 up, especially like fuel and gas, a lot of hunters
8 share the cost of hunting, gas. It's still costly to
9 go after ducks and geese. If the price of gas goes
10 down, I guess the numbers will rise up again. I don't
11 know.

12
13 The last thing I'd like to say is I
14 keep in contact with most of the villages, from Bristol
15 Bay all the way to Y-K. When I have a question or
16 wondering, I have friends all over the place. They
17 give me information. Like the Emperor Geese. When you
18 notice the graph is almost steady, even though the
19 factors -- there's many factors of the Emperor Geese
20 problem. They don't trap white fox like they used to
21 anymore. That's one factor. They don't trap the minks
22 like they used to. They don't trap the foxes like they
23 used to. The weather, the feed and then, of course, us
24 people. So you wonder if these factors are the
25 problem, how come the graph is steady.

26
27 So I started asking questions in Nelson
28 Island, Quinhagak, up to Hooper Bay, randomly. How
29 many Emperors did you get last spring because that's
30 one of the most prized geese. Oh, I got 15. When I go
31 down to Toksook Bay, how many Emperors did you get,
32 just a ballpark. Twenty. Some guys go, well, I don't
33 know, I didn't hunt. I didn't go after them. Unh-unh,
34 your neighbor over there was telling me your freezer is
35 full of that. Or when you talk about the Emperor Geese
36 to the kids, this is an endangered species here, young
37 boys say, hey, my dad's got 20 of them things in the
38 freezer.

39
40 So you wonder about the graph. I mean
41 that's a steady graph. A lot of these people don't
42 report, like Johnny says, because they think it will be
43 used against them.

44
45 We need to go out there and educate.
46 Not the hunters, but the school-age kids. Those are
47 the future hunters right there. Those are affected,
48 the kids, in later years. You know how I learned? We
49 used to have trash in the Togiak River because the
50 campers leave everything behind. Well, I tried to tell

1 them, hey, you shouldn't leave all the trash behind you
2 because this is our river, keep it clean. Not
3 effective. No nothing. So I start telling the kids.
4 The kids remind their uncles, the kids remind their
5 grandmothers, hey, let's take the trash home so we can
6 keep the rivers clean today. Alcohol and drug abuse.
7 You can't teach an old dog new tricks. Well, start off
8 with the young kids. Those are the future people.

9

10 I'll turn it over to John here.

11

12 MR. DYASUK: The one thing people are
13 talking about, we have a leeway because we don't have
14 to do what regular surveyors are doing. Like yesterday
15 we were talking about survey forms. We use the survey
16 forms the way they are, but the thing we do is that we
17 work with the village councils and get their okay. As
18 long as we get their okay, we don't have to use the
19 permission slips. When RIT's are working with the
20 villages, there's no charge. That's one of the things
21 that's a plus for the refuge. It's very cost-
22 effective. We share certain things. We just don't go
23 out and do a survey, we educate.

24

25 Often times we come by and don't use
26 the surveys, but we also don't wait for the council to
27 act as well. When we don't wait for the council to
28 act, we use the permission slips as a backup until the
29 village council okays that we do a survey. We rely
30 heavily on the village councils to do the okay for us
31 to work with the villages.

32

33 Once we've done that, then we're able
34 to gather information from the villages. Once we get
35 that, oftentimes when we've combined everything from
36 the spring, the summer and the fall, in the month of
37 October is when everybody is all done, that's when we
38 get all the information back. One thing I noticed over
39 time is that the number has not really changed, the
40 take has not really changed using the Togiak Refuge.
41 Although the hunters may dwindle, the numbers of the
42 take have not really dwindled yet.

43

44 There's a number of hunters, but they
45 share a lot. On the other side, other hunters will
46 hunt only on the weekends, but they work throughout the
47 week. Those are the ones we normally see the take is
48 higher than the ones that don't have much to hunt with,
49 the ones that are grouped together. When you work with
50 the group together that is composed of five hunters,

1 the hunters on that group will report among each other
2 and we get the information from those hunters and the
3 weekend hunter. In Quinhagak, they normally go further
4 away from their village. The uses from Platinum, we
5 see the numbers of Emperor Geese are the ones that are
6 taken there within our refuge.

7
8 The one thing that probably Molly wants
9 to hear is how we gather information from the villages.
10 It's one of the things we have done over time. We've
11 become comfortable with the villages that we know and
12 oftentimes what John does, an RIT from Quinhagak that
13 does the surveys over there, he consistently surveys
14 the same group together all the time where they become
15 comfortable and oftentimes that is working. We get
16 information back from those people that assist in
17 surveys over time, not the ones that are outside.
18 Sometimes we include others. If John says that this
19 person is a high hunter, then he will include that
20 person. That's when we get a lot more information back.

21
22
23 Sometimes John has the discretion where
24 to survey, what area of the village, and that's become
25 very effective for us to gather the information that we
26 need to know. We'd like to have within our own village
27 the discretion of how we need to gather information
28 from our villages. That's one of the things I'd like
29 to say, to stress, that we'd like to have leeway in our
30 refuge. Thank you.

31
32 CHAIRMAN CLARK: Any questions. Member
33 Alcorn.

34
35 MR. ALCORN: Just a comment. Pete, you
36 mention that John is sometimes frustrated and ready to
37 quit and I would just implore both of you not to quit
38 because it's the work that you do and others like you
39 that are out there doing the surveys, you're really the
40 voice for this Council. You two gentlemen and the
41 others that do the work that you do, you do things that
42 we can't do. We just can't go out there and have that
43 same level of trust that you can build by being out
44 there with the hunters. That's something that is an
45 important, important, important cog in this big wheel
46 that we can co-management.

47
48 If I can just instill any sense of the
49 value that I have and I'm sure that all of us would
50 place on the RIT's and the others, people that are not

1 RIT's that are still doing these surveys and still
2 carrying the message, you're the emissary for this
3 Co-Management Council. Without you, this would not
4 succeed.

5
6 Ralph, I think, was correct, that it's
7 taken 10 years to get us here and it's probably going
8 to take 10 or 20 or 30 more years to educate a new
9 generation of hunters how important this co-management
10 process is. I think it's a long-term investment that
11 we're making here and it will go beyond our careers
12 because the people are going to be here and the birds
13 are going to be here, God willing, and that's our job.
14 So hang in there. I'm off my soapbox.

15
16 I would like to ask a question. Is
17 there anything the Council can do to make your jobs
18 better? I think John suggested to give you some
19 liberties in how you conduct your surveys. Is that the
20 one thing you see that is empowering you to get your
21 job done better?

22
23 MR. DYASUK: I think if we work with
24 the State really closely together, I think we can
25 accomplish more. I know that Molly has worked with the
26 State before and Ted's maybe the one that we work with
27 a lot. We'd like to see the input from Ted as well on
28 how we can do better, how we can gather information a
29 lot better than we are doing right now. From our
30 standpoint, we'd never see what we need to do if we
31 don't have evaluations from somebody else. We'd like
32 to see them. Somebody evaluating what we are doing and
33 how we can perfect how we do things. Also give us an
34 idea how we could better ourselves by doing that.

35
36 I know that sometimes when we get
37 reviews from the villages sometimes they give us a
38 negative review and then we try to perfect that the
39 next time around. But we were not prepared to make a
40 report, otherwise we'd have gathered some information
41 from our counterparts to the total number of birds that
42 are taken in our refuge. This is the first time we've
43 been asked to report, so this is informal. I want to
44 thank you for inviting us. The next time around we'd
45 like to make sure it's a formal report.

46
47 CHAIRMAN CLARK: Member Tahbone.

48
49 MS. TAHBONE: I have one question.
50 Have you seen an increase with non-Natives hunting?

1 Would the definition of indigenous, you know, non-
2 Natives qualify as being indigenous? I was just
3 wondering if you have seen an increase of non-Natives
4 in the surveys.

5
6 MR. DYASUK: That's one thing that
7 we've been wrestling with when a hunter that moves to
8 the villages, especially Aleknagik, where I reside now.
9 We see people that go out and hunt, but sometimes when
10 they want to go out they ask a lot of questions if
11 they're allowed to go out and participate as a hunter
12 within the villages.

13
14 In the village of Togiak, some younger
15 people that their parents have moved back to the
16 villages again, sometimes they're not really a good
17 hunter, but they participate in hunting like everybody
18 else. A lot of times they rely on the person that is
19 taking them out. That's the one thing we see. Their
20 effort is there, but they're not getting as much. But
21 when they become used to the area, then they become
22 regular hunters like everybody else by the time they
23 are a community member. So they are participating like
24 everybody else where they share a lot of their catch
25 with other people.

26
27 Sometimes, as a provider that came from
28 a different village, they have more resource. So by
29 having that sometimes the resource is taken and the
30 activity is a lot higher. Like he will be
31 participating in one hunt and also participating in
32 another hunt again. Sometimes he goes out two or three
33 times, more times than the local hunter would be.
34 Sometimes we see, like anything else, human effort. If
35 they came home and it's all brand-new for them, they're
36 really excited. So the one thing that we see is that
37 it's an excitement. They want to participate like
38 everybody else. At the same time, we see them as
39 trying to catch up with what they missed before.

40
41 Also, the one thing we also noticed is
42 they have less impact. Socially, because they're busy,
43 they're not involved in other things. The community
44 may have a problem with that. We see that social
45 activity different from the one that is actually the
46 one from the village have not really been exposed to a
47 different culture, he's still used to the same methods
48 that he's been used to all the time. The one from the
49 village have social problems. The one that came home
50 from another village or from a different region have

1 more excitement going for them so that social problem
2 he may face are brand new and able to participate like
3 everybody else. The person that moved to another
4 community have more effort to see and do new tasks that
5 is required like everybody else. They're excited.
6 That's one thing that
7 we see.

8
9 As Pete had mentioned, he's originally
10 from Y-K Delta area, I know that when he first came to
11 our region he was excited, but later on fall in like
12 everybody else. Other social problems may set in.
13 That is one thing we normally see. When you're new to
14 the region, you're anxious to become part of the
15 community, but part of that community is to share.
16 When a person is excited to be part of the community,
17 that's one thing that we see from new people that come
18 in. They may be excited at the very beginning and
19 clumsy, but we see the effort escalate to where they
20 become regular hunters later on. Did that answer your
21 question?

22
23 MS. TAHBONE: Yeah, part of our purpose
24 was not to
25 increase our harvest and my question was regarding non-
26 Natives.

27
28 MR. DYASUK: The non-Natives is the
29 ones that oftentimes ask a lot of questions but
30 participate, but clumsy, like I have said. It didn't
31 change anything. I don't think they're hunting more.
32 A lot of times one thing we noticed also in our village
33 is they're participating a lot more because they're
34 able to afford it. One person that is struggling hard
35 decides, well, I'm going to turn my attention to
36 something else. Sometimes the only thing that we see
37 is when resources are close by that's the one they go
38 after. If it's too far and effort is too great, then
39 very few people could hunt at a certain distance.
40 Those are the ones that would go out -- in our region
41 we have Chagvan Bay, which is actually a sanctuary in
42 our region. Chagvan Bay is where the birds land in the
43 spring and also Nanvak Bay. They're probably 30 miles.
44 They're too far away for a person that is not working.
45 They aren't going to go that far. So the effort is
46 only to other sites in the bay itself.

47
48 A person that is working and is from a
49 different area, but if a person happens to be non-
50 Native and then that person will say I'll help out, so

1 they can go out 30 miles away and that effort in that
2 region is used. It didn't make any change because that
3 person that says if they can go that far, I'm going to
4 concentrate on something else. That's one thing we see
5 that is different when you participate as a hunter as
6 well. Pete and I participate in the regular hunts like
7 everybody else.

8
9 Sometimes when we see certain species
10 of birds, sometimes when Pete is talking about I've
11 seen the Yellow-billed Loon, they're so few, we won't
12 be hunting it. Oftentimes effort from Togiak is almost
13 50 miles from the village. A village member is not
14 going to go for the Yellow-billed Loon if there's only
15 a few left of that species. People use common sense.
16 If they're going to spend \$80 worth of fuel, that bird
17 is not worth \$80 to take. So the effort is only in the
18 bay itself and where other ducks they could take.

19
20 The one you were asking about, non-
21 Native, that would be the one that would be excited to
22 take it. Even though we don't talk about race, we
23 don't see that, but they're part of the community
24 numbers just like everybody else. Everyone is the same
25 as everybody else. I hope I answered your question.

26
27 MS. TAHBONE: You did. We were just
28 looking at it from up in our region too because it was
29 a question that was brought up when we were looking at
30 that definition to see if there would be an impact. So
31 I was just curious what you guys were seeing in this
32 area. Thank you.

33
34 CHAIRMAN CLARK: Thanks, Member
35 Tahbone.

36
37 MR. ABRAHAM: Excuse me. If I remember
38 right, if a white person is accepted in the village and
39 married to a local lady there, I think the white person
40 qualifies to hunt except for certain species, like
41 seals or sea mammals.

42
43 MS. TAHBONE: With the migratory birds,
44 if you're a resident of the community in the area where
45 the definitions are if it's.....

46
47 MR. ALCORN: Generally included area.

48
49 MR. SQUARTSOFF: Subsistence harvest
50 area.

1 MS. TAHBONE: Then race doesn't matter.
2 You don't have to be married to a Native. But for sea
3 mammals it's Native only.

4
5 MR. ABRAHAM: Quyana.

6
7 CHAIRMAN CLARK: Thank you very much.
8

9 MR. SQUARTSOFF: Hold on, got one more.
10 Pete, I'd like you to keep encouraging the outreach
11 you're doing with the young, teaching them, but also
12 don't discourage the elders that have been doing their
13 traditional harvesting and gathering they've been doing
14 that's passed on from generation to generation, where
15 we got labelled with this word subsistence. Don't
16 discourage them either. They're doing something
17 they've always done and what they were taught to do.

18
19 MR. ABRAHAM: Yeah. Quyana.

20
21 CHAIRMAN CLARK: Member Starkey.

22
23 MR. STARKEY: This issue of Duck Stamps
24 and State licenses that you mentioned earlier, people's
25 resistance to that, do you feel like that could
26 potentially hurt your ability to communicate with
27 people? For example, if enforcement starts to come out
28 to Goodnews Bay or Togiak and arrest hunters or not
29 arrest but give citations to hunters because they don't
30 have State licenses or Duck Stamps, how would that
31 affect your work?

32
33 MR. ABRAHAM: It doesn't really affect
34 our work. We need to educate the public about the
35 background of the Duck Stamp. Of course, a lot of the
36 people don't visualize or realize how important the
37 Duck Stamp is. I think I suggested to my office one
38 time we needed to take a few elders and a few young
39 people and give them a tour just to explain why the
40 Duck Stamp is working. Still there is grumbling from
41 here to there because of low income. Why should you
42 have a Duck Stamp because you cannot afford it. Just a
43 minor, mild thing that up in Y-K was a big thing a
44 couple years ago. In our region over there, there's
45 hardly any complaints about it.

46
47 CHAIRMAN CLARK: I would just echo what
48 a number of others have said, the work with the young
49 people is so important. The future of waterfowl isn't
50 going to be assured by any big government agency or big

1 council. It's going to be assured one kid at a time.
2 I applaud you both for the work you're doing. Thank
3 you very much.

4

5 MR. ABRAHAM: Thank you.

6

7 CHAIRMAN CLARK: Let's take a 10 minute
8 break and resume with regional reports at 20 minutes to
9 11:00.

10

11 (off record - 10:30 a.m.)

12

13 (On record - 10:45 a.m.)

14

15 CHAIRMAN CLARK: It's 10:45. Let's
16 resume, please. We were in the midst of regional
17 reports and working our way around the table. Mike,
18 are you ready to talk to us.

19

20 MR. PEDERSON: I passed out a revised
21 Yellow-billed Loon report. You guys received our April
22 1 or 2 report, but we went back and looked at the
23 surveys and other stuff that we did, so we revised the
24 number from I think 14 to 9 and this report was
25 presented at the SRC committee.

26

27 Our regional meeting was held in
28 Nuiqsut in mid August. We did talk about migratory
29 birds. I did talk about the Pacific Flyway and SRC
30 meetings there. We also talked about issues relating
31 to Duck Stamps, hunting licenses. The one good thing
32 that we heard from that meeting was the Black Brant
33 regulation that we did last year. It seemed to have
34 worked well for the residents of Wainwright. We heard
35 a concern from Point Lay they wanted to be included in
36 part of that regulation. They do hunt Black Brants
37 there as well, but in Wainwright it was more so for the
38 cultural and traditional use related to the Blanket
39 Toss Festival.

40

41 We also had an update about migratory
42 bird research that we're complete doing on the North
43 Slope. Most of it was related to Snow Geese. Other
44 than that, I'd like to reserve the right to continue my
45 regional report after Item D under new business.

46

47 CHAIRMAN CLARK: Without objection,
48 that will be fine. Any questions for Member Pederson.

49

50 (No comments)

1 CHAIRMAN CLARK: Seeing none. Member
2 Devine, would you like to give your report.

3
4 MR. DEVINE: Thank you, Mr. Chair. I
5 don't have too much to report. Like everyone else, the
6 season is way behind. The berries suffered. We can't
7 do a bison count because the alders still have leaves
8 on them, so that count was way down. They're going to
9 fly again, but I don't think it's going to affect the
10 hunt.

11
12 I got a call from this lady from
13 Washington State University in June or July. They're
14 working on a stranding book and I believe it wasn't
15 only for birds, but it was for marine mammals also. I
16 gave her Fred's number and that this would be a good
17 place to give the book to everybody so it could go out
18 to all the regions and have all the current contact
19 information.

20
21 This trainer thing. I was surprised to
22 see who they had on there to train as a representative
23 for Aleut Marine Mammal Commission. I was appointed by
24 my tribe to be the Sand Point representative in
25 December or actually it was last August. December we
26 had a meeting and we haven't had one since and that
27 concerns me because this person is taking on a new
28 role. She's getting phased into the Aleut Marine
29 Mammal Commission and they're so busy.

30
31 Well, the six years I've been there,
32 King Cove has never participated in a regional
33 management body meeting even though we send out notices
34 a week ahead of time. They have two different tribes
35 over there, two corporations, so that's four different
36 places the information is getting to and they're not
37 participating and that concerns me. I don't know if we
38 can work with APIA to see if we can get someone else in
39 there to take this on.

40
41 I know our environmental department has
42 been really helpful with doing the Aleut marine mammal
43 surveys, but it's a pretty simple form. It's all on
44 one page, really simple, so they've got a really good
45 track record on that.

46
47 I think that was about it. We haven't
48 had our fall meeting yet. I was going to do that after
49 I got back to see if there was any new birds of concern
50 to put on the list, you know, and tell hunters to watch

1 out for. As with everyone else, the older hunters
2 aren't participating any more. I'm fortunate enough to
3 have a few nephews that like to come and borrow my gun
4 and go out and gather for me and some other elders.
5 The age group is getting younger.

6
7 We have culture camp in Sand Point.
8 Next year is going to be our 10th year. That's a good
9 place for us to pass on to the younger generation on
10 what's happening. We have Fish and Wildlife Service.
11 They come out and they do the plant life and the tide
12 pools and all that and then we try to incorporate
13 whatever we can in our region into what they're
14 teaching. Like Mr. Abraham said, the young ones are
15 the ones to teach. They're so quick. I mean we
16 started a dance group like nine years ago. It's just
17 amazing. I mean they absorb it like a sponge, you
18 know. The younger we can teach them, I think the
19 better off we'll be. So I would like to encourage
20 people to keep talking with kids because, like someone
21 said, those are our future hunters. Thank you.

22
23 CHAIRMAN CLARK: Thank you, Member
24 Devine. Dr. Naves, do you have a question. Could you
25 come up to the desk and state your name for the record.
26

27 DR. NAVES: I'm Liliana Naves. I work
28 for the Division of Subsistence in Anchorage and I'd
29 like to answer Peter's concern about the names on this
30 list for the training. I would like to excuse not
31 having Peter's name there. It was myself who put this
32 list together. It's a tentative list. We have name
33 one, name two and the idea is to list two people from
34 each region. Dale came to my mind first because Fish
35 and Game is working with AMMC this year to do the
36 survey on the Aleutians and Dale (ph) is working as
37 coordinator for that project. But would like to see
38 when this training happened that you have more
39 involvement of other groups in the Aleutians. I had in
40 my mind I had to talk in this meeting to Peter because
41 for Sand Point now we don't have a surveyor at Sand
42 Point and you have had difficulties in doing the survey
43 in Sand Point as I talked to you over there this year.
44 I would like to talk to you if we can figure out a
45 surveyor for Sand Point, so we were looking forward to
46 have people from APIA in this training.

47
48 CHAIRMAN CLARK: Thank you for the
49 clarification. Any questions for Member Devine.
50

1 (No comments)

2

3 CHAIRMAN CLARK: Seeing none. Member
4 Hicks.

5

6 MR. HICKS: Thank you, Mr. Chair. We
7 held our meeting in early spring. We haven't had a
8 fall meeting as of yet. I understand the harvest in
9 the Copper River area has been very, very low. Weather
10 probably being a big factor in it. I've been unable to
11 attend the past two meetings for various reasons, let's
12 say, and one of them being is not being notified soon
13 enough, I guess. No finger pointing or nothing like
14 that, but I just know that spring meeting I was
15 notified a little too late for me to make plans to
16 attend. And then I was not even aware there was a June
17 special meeting. So I don't know what happened there.

18

19 Anyway, at our regional meeting in the
20 summertime there were several concerns expressed there
21 that I'd like to talk about a little bit. That has to
22 do with the harvest survey. One of the concerns that
23 they wanted me to take back to this Council was that
24 the birds nested in our survey that we've done the past
25 several years or so seems to be overstated. For
26 example, Cheesh-Na Tribal Council has been the primary
27 contractor with these surveys and we know pretty much
28 what is taken. Like for instance let's say it's
29 Mallards, geese or whatever, and we know what's put on
30 the particular survey, but when we get back the survey
31 after it's sent in and it comes back to us, it includes
32 things like sea gulls, Arctic Terns or whatever and
33 that's not even harvested. I don't know how it gets on
34 our survey as such. And when we report, let's say
35 we've got six Mallards, the survey comes back as 25
36 Mallards or something like that. It's really being
37 overstated on the particular survey. They wanted me to
38 bring that to this Council and say those numbers are
39 incorrect.

40

41 The other thing they wanted me to also
42 say was that on the survey forms they identify, I don't
43 know, 50 different species of birds on the particular
44 form. It has the pictures on it and all that. But the
45 thing is, in the Interior 75 percent of those birds are
46 not harvested in the Interior. They're more so coastal
47 birds. They want to know why is that included on this
48 particular form. It just makes it more confusing.
49 Like, for instance, the owl or something like that.
50 That's not a harvestable bird that we eat or use in

1 subsistence. It might be for ceremonial type stuff, so
2 why is it on the survey is the question that they are
3 asking.

4
5 Another thing that they wanted also to
6 say is that there are eight communities in the AHTNA
7 region that are considered eligible under the migratory
8 bird program. There are also about eight more other
9 communities that are considered ineligible and there is
10 a concern expressed that these other communities are
11 harvesting birds unlawfully. Is that the way to say
12 it? And they would like law enforcement or more
13 education be implemented. In other words, they're
14 saying those communities -- like there's a community
15 next to Mentasta, it's called North Slana, it's like 20
16 miles a part, but they're using Mentasta as an excuse
17 for them to harvest birds is what I'm saying. The
18 number of harvesting by them is growing and they're not
19 permitted to do so. It's a concern to them and they
20 would like to express that.

21
22 The other thing that they'd also like
23 to express is that -- again, I have to refer to
24 Mentasta. The number of people who harvest birds are
25 not harvesting birds from Mentasta area, but rather
26 from the Tetlin Wildlife Refuge in Tok. Rather, I
27 should say would fall under the Tanana or Mike Smith's
28 area. So there is a lot of under-reporting in that
29 regard and I don't know how to approach that.

30
31 They've also discussed that on our
32 particular funding is that they would like to see more
33 awareness and education of use of that money. Other
34 than that, we're just pretty much preparing for the
35 Board of Fish meeting that's going to be held in
36 Cordova. Questions.

37
38 CHAIRMAN CLARK: Any questions. Dr.
39 Naves.

40
41 DR. NAVES: Liliana Naves again from
42 Fish and Game. Joe, we need to sit together and see
43 how the survey has been done on your region as I'm now
44 starting to analyze that for 2007. I don't know how to
45 treat the data that comes from Copper River because
46 apparently it is a bit different from the original
47 survey protocol. I just recently found a letter that
48 was sent with the survey materials for you for this '07
49 survey. It seems that you were doing a harvest survey
50 certification, so you need to clarify that this would

1 explain, for instance, why the numbers you are
2 reporting appears as inflated later. If you are
3 reporting the total harvest on your region, but we
4 don't know that what spanned that harvest to the total
5 number of people. So that may be the reason for which
6 the numbers are larger than you were expecting.

7
8 So this again points towards the need
9 for training and having a standard method of survey
10 that is used because frequently when we're analyzing
11 the data we don't know how the data was collected in
12 the region. We tend to treat the data as we supposed
13 the data was collected, but sometimes we cannot put all
14 the pieces together. So we should sit together later
15 and you explain me how data was collected in your
16 region and I'll make sure that the data is reflected in
17 the best possible way. Thank you.

18
19 CHAIRMAN CLARK: Thank you. Fred.

20
21 MR. ARMSTRONG: Thank you, Mr. Chair.
22 The issue of the owls on the list, at the onset of the
23 program we asked each of the regions to come back with
24 a list of birds that they think they would harvest and
25 the Interior rep at the time indicated that someone
26 from the region wanted owls to be put on there in case
27 there's a serious shortage or something. Someone might
28 be stranded and the only thing they see is an owl, so
29 they wanted to make sure that it would be legal if they
30 shot that and that's the history of that.

31
32 As for the notification of the
33 meetings, we're trying to work on that and sending
34 notification to two other people in the region will
35 hopefully help out. We're sorry about you not being
36 adequately notified, but we're working on it.

37
38 MR. ALCORN: Mr. Chair.

39
40 CHAIRMAN CLARK: Member Alcorn.

41
42 MR. ALCORN: Before Sky goes, I'm going
43 to offer a motion when we finish regional reports. A
44 number of questions have been asked here and rather
45 than just have the answers come out in sort of an ad
46 hoc way. It seems to me that maybe -- I think some of
47 these questions are substantive. All of them are.
48 Some of them are more substantive than others, I think.
49 I think the best way to address that would be to ask
50 Staff to pull from the minutes what those questions are

1 or ask the regional representatives to submit those
2 questions and then ask Staff to develop a report, a
3 response to that and vet it to the Council because
4 those questions I think do need to be addressed and
5 should be answered. I'm not making a motion now, but I
6 will after.

7
8 CHAIRMAN CLARK: Thank you. I think
9 that's a useful approach. I don't want any of these
10 questions or concerns to fall through the cracks. So
11 if we can memorialize them in writing and respond to
12 them more formally, I think that would be useful.

13
14 Anything else for Member Hicks.

15
16 (No comments)

17
18 CHAIRMAN CLARK: Member Starkey.

19
20 MR. STARKEY: Thank you, Mr. Chair. As
21 most of you probably heard in the news or through other
22 sources, it was a difficult year for people throughout
23 rural Alaska because of the increase in cost of living
24 largely due to fuel costs. In addition to that,
25 there's been a significant decline in king salmon
26 harvest, particularly along the Lower Yukon. That
27 combined with the weather and other resource issues has
28 probably made the harvest of migratory birds this year
29 and maybe next year even more important for many
30 villages on the Delta and has reduced the amount of
31 income that many people have to meet the standard cost
32 of living, which highlights the region's consistent
33 concern over the period of time that we've been meeting
34 as a Council in regards to people purchasing Duck
35 Stamps and hunting licenses.

36
37 There seems to be an increased verbal
38 emphasis at least on the part of the Federal managers
39 to seek a greater enforcement presence or threat, I
40 guess perhaps is appropriate, in regards to the issue
41 of Duck Stamps and licenses, as evidenced perhaps by
42 the calendar that came out.

43
44 I suppose that one thing that people
45 are concerned about is the statements on the calendar
46 that informed people about the need to have these Duck
47 Stamps and State licenses in their possession when
48 they're out. It may be a good practice and something
49 you might want to talk about in terms of vetting the
50 calendar and such things before they come out so as not

1 to cause such question and concern.

2

3 In any event, the Duck Stamp issues and
4 the license requirements are of concern, as is the
5 concern that AVCP has consistently reported that a fall
6 season does not seem to, and some agencies use, be
7 protected as a subsistence season under the treaties as
8 opposed to gathering in spring and summer.

9

10 So those are some major policy issues
11 that are of concern and will be discussed, I'm sure,
12 more at the annual convention in the region in Bethel
13 on October 6th through the 8th. But, again, this year
14 being what it was economically and with salmon being a
15 less harvestable resource this year, birds become even
16 a greater focus of what people are -- particularly
17 people on the coast and up in the Yukon Delta area.

18

19 So that's the report. Thank you.

20

21 CHAIRMAN CLARK: Thank you. Any
22 questions for Member Starkey. Member Alcorn.

23

24 MR. ALCORN: I have a question for Sky.
25 Myron, in our spring meeting, made a statement that
26 caught me a little bit by surprise in that he mentioned
27 that the WCC had not met in the past year and that he
28 was of the opinion that it was the Fish and Wildlife
29 Service's responsibility to coordinate that and to
30 establish that meeting. I'm wondering if that's still
31 the sentiment of the region or if there are plans to
32 bring the WCC together and have that discussion, have
33 that meeting.

34

35 MR. STARKEY: I can't answer that
36 question right now, but I assume that will be one of
37 the issues that will be discussed on the 6th and 7th
38 and I will write and reply to that concern at that
39 point in time.

40

41 There's also a new refuge manager out
42 in the region, Gene Peltola, Jr., who is Yu'pik and was
43 raised in the region as a good hunter, so that may
44 help.

45

46 CHAIRMAN CLARK: Any other questions
47 for Member Starkey.

48

49 (No comments)

50

1 CHAIRMAN CLARK: Seeing none, thank you
2 very much for your regional reports. Member Alcorn.

3
4 MR. ALCORN: I'd like to move that the
5 Council ask Staff to develop a response to the
6 questions that have been expressed in all these
7 regional reports.

8
9 MR. SQUARTSOFF: Second.

10
11 CHAIRMAN CLARK: It's been moved and
12 seconded. Any discussion. Fred.

13
14 MR. ARMSTRONG: I'm just curious, once
15 we look into these questions and respond to them, do
16 you want them back as soon as -- or wait until the next
17 meeting?

18
19 CHAIRMAN CLARK: Member Alcorn.

20
21 MR. ALCORN: I would leave it up to
22 discussion of the Council. My motion is just to make
23 sure that we don't allow these questions just to
24 languish. If Council feels that a response in the
25 spring meeting is sufficient, that's fine with me.

26
27 CHAIRMAN CLARK: Member Tahbone.

28
29 MS. TAHBONE: I would recommend that
30 they be treated as a directive to Staff and as soon as
31 they're able to, they would find answers and email us
32 as soon as they could.

33
34 MR. ALCORN: So you'd rather have
35 timely responses.

36
37 MS. TAHBONE: Yeah. I mean we're going
38 to be meeting next month, so it would be nice if our
39 concerns were addressed before our meeting.

40
41 CHAIRMAN CLARK: My own opinion, the
42 sooner the better to get the answers out would be fine
43 and certainly we'd want a written record of that to be
44 presented as part of the Council packet for the spring
45 meeting so we know what was said. It seems to be
46 certainly something we could deal with and vet through
47 the Council and get responses out in a timely fashion.
48 Member Chythlook.

49
50 MS. CHYTHLOOK: You answered my

1 question. If it will be in the Council packet, that's
2 good.

3

4 CHAIRMAN CLARK: Mr. Oates, you had a
5 comment? No. Okay. Bill.

6

7 MR. OSTRAND: I just wanted to inform
8 the Council Joe will be putting together the transcript
9 and I can pull the questions together. Joe usually
10 gets me the transcript within a few weeks. He seems to
11 be busy and he's not going to commit to when he can do
12 that.

13

14 REPORTER: I will try within 10 work
15 days.

16

17 CHAIRMAN CLARK: Any other discussion.
18 Are you ready for the question. Is there any
19 objection.

20

21 (No objections)

22

23 CHAIRMAN CLARK: Seeing none, the
24 motion carries. Thank you very much. Member Alcorn.

25

26 MR. ALCORN: Thank you, Mr. Chair. One
27 more motion I would like to make and that is that it's
28 my observation that we see those of you that are here
29 regularly at meeting. We also see regular absences of
30 folks that are not here and I would like to move that
31 the Council ask the Chair to send a letter to each of
32 the representatives, not just the regions but the
33 agencies, number one, complimenting them and thanking
34 them for their participation in the co-management
35 process and then, third, encouraging regular
36 attendance and regional representation, agency
37 representation on this Council. I see that as a
38 critical need for this process to continue to move
39 forward and make progress.

40

41 CHAIRMAN CLARK: Is there a second.

42

43 MR. HICKS: Second.

44

45 CHAIRMAN CLARK: It's been moved and
46 seconded. Any discussion. Dr. Naves.

47

48 DR. NAVES: Lilliana Naves from Fish and
49 Game. Regarding the regional reports, I understand
50 that they are in the transcripts of the meeting, but

1 I'd like to suggest it would be interesting to have a
2 sort of a summary report for every region that would be
3 part of the annual report of the survey results. I
4 think that would provide a bit of a contest to
5 understand why harvest numbers go up or down. As part
6 of this idea, we could have the regional
7 representatives providing this report as a summary,
8 let's say one page, and that would be part of the
9 report. I think you are all looking forward to have
10 the report for the previous years and to have the
11 annual report as a routine. So I think it would be
12 interesting to have context to understand why those
13 numbers vary or don't. Thank you.

14
15 CHAIRMAN CLARK: Thank you. Any other
16 discussion. I guess I would make one minor point of
17 clarification. Unless I get really busy between now
18 and the time I hand the gavel off tomorrow, this Chair
19 is probably not going to get these letters written, so
20 it would fall to the incoming Chair, the representative
21 of the Federal arm here, if that's acceptable to
22 everybody. It certainly is to me. Member Chythlook.

23
24 MS. CHYTHLOOK: I just have maybe a
25 request to Liliana. We're busy with this project and
26 we're also busy with other projects, especially those
27 of us that are working, so it would be helpful if she
28 would probably send us an email with her request when
29 that appropriate time comes so we'll be reminded.
30 Thanks.

31
32 CHAIRMAN CLARK: Dr. Naves.

33
34 MS. TAHBONE: Mr. Chairman. We're out
35 of order. This is under the previous -- under a
36 previous motion.

37
38 CHAIRMAN CLARK: You're right. We'll
39 take that up in a moment. Don't move. Let's deal with
40 this motion. Thank you. Any further discussion on the
41 motion that's before us.

42
43 (No comments)

44
45 CHAIRMAN CLARK: Ready for the
46 question. Any objections.

47
48 (No objections)

49
50 CHAIRMAN CLARK: Seeing none, the

1 motion carries. Now we can go back up the agenda.
2 Member Tahbone.

3
4 MS. TAHBONE: I know you're just
5 pulling these stunts today just because you're going to
6 be handing the gavel over tomorrow. So no slacking.

7
8 (Laughter)

9
10 CHAIRMAN CLARK: If you remember Member
11 Chythlook's question, Dr. Naves, please.

12
13 DR. NAVES: Liliana Naves, Fish and
14 Game. It was a suggestion, if you think it was a good
15 idea to have a summary of regional report together with
16 the annual report. I think it's open to discussion.
17 It's not that I'm requesting that or expecting that to
18 happen. I'm suggesting we discuss that. Thank you.

19
20 MS. CHYTHLOOK: Okay.

21
22 CHAIRMAN CLARK: Thanks. Member
23 Devine.

24
25 MR. DEVINE: Thank you, Mr. Chair. I
26 think that's a pretty reasonable request. It should be
27 no problem for us to write up a one-page report for our
28 region. That way we can see who's participating in our
29 regional management body, you know. We could just
30 summarize on what was discussed and then we could see
31 right at the meeting what the concerns are instead of
32 waiting until the spring or the fall meeting to see it
33 on paper instead of just coming in and giving oral
34 reports. I think that's an excellent idea.

35
36 CHAIRMAN CLARK: It sounds like
37 something we need to follow through on. Any other
38 comments, discussion.

39
40 (No comments)

41
42 CHAIRMAN CLARK: We'll move on to old
43 business then.

44
45 MR. SQUARTSOFF: What about number 10?

46
47 CHAIRMAN CLARK: Oh, I'm sorry. I've
48 got my arrows all over the place. We did move that
49 item up the agenda for Fred's fiscal report for the
50 2009 budget. Mr. Armstrong, if you would.

1 MR. ARMSTRONG: Thank you, Mr. Chair.
2 Each year I'm asked to provide a budget for -- you're
3 going into the new fiscal year. I haven't developed
4 one for 2009, but I imagine it's going to be very
5 similar to this year simply because national elections
6 are taking place and we normally operate under a
7 continued resolution, which means that all budgets are
8 flat or there's no increase.

9
10 The handout on the top is \$727,198.
11 That's pretty much the amount of money I'm given to
12 operate for the year 2008. There are basically three
13 issues we deal with. One is the salaries of my staff,
14 the other one is a co-management grant agreements and
15 the third is the harvest surveys. Those are three
16 areas that pretty much take up the brunt of the budget.
17 You'll note that in travel we have \$50,000. That was
18 because my supervisor, Doug Alcorn, had provided us
19 some money for travel to the regions to attend each
20 year regional meetings and become more involved at that
21 level. The contracts stay the same. They change when
22 we rotate the regions, so the numbers will change or
23 the regions will change.

24
25 We do an exercise every year toward the
26 end of the fiscal year. It's a lot of coordination
27 within the migratory birds State programs we identify
28 some funds we could use toward funding our grant
29 agreements and these grant agreements are basically
30 your small grants that are used to operate and have at
31 least two meetings a year and providing adequate notice
32 so local people can have a say in your process.

33
34 We were lucky to forward \$135,000
35 towards that effort of funding the grant agreements,
36 which helps offset our annual cost. When you add the
37 727 and 135, you basically come out with about 900,000
38 that we had towards this year.

39
40 You'll note that at the last page
41 Maniilaq and Tanana Chiefs didn't sign a grant
42 agreement, so those funds were re-obligated and used to
43 offset costs within the entire migratory bird State
44 programs.

45
46 Any questions as I go along? This
47 basically is the same every year.

48
49 MS. TAHBONE: So you're saying that
50 both Maniilaq and Tanana Chiefs didn't sign an '08?

1 MR. ARMSTRONG: That's correct.

2

3 MS. TAHBONE: And Kawerak gave up money
4 and that was supposed to go to Tanana Chiefs?

5

6 MR. ARMSTRONG: That's correct.

7

8 MS. TAHBONE: So why wasn't that money
9 offered back to us? I had specifically requested that.

10

11 MR. ARMSTRONG: I don't unilaterally
12 change the grants. That basically I leave to the
13 Native caucus. That's how we've operated in the past.
14 When your predecessor gave 10,000 to TCC, that was in a
15 Council meeting. That wasn't done offhand. If I was
16 going to do any transfer of any monies, I'd rather get
17 the permission of this Council because you guys are the
18 ones that determine how much each region is to get and
19 I don't want to second-guess anybody.

20

21 MS. TAHBONE: So what's the process I
22 needed to use then when I requested if there was any
23 additional monies that weren't spent from other
24 regions, what process am I supposed to use to request a
25 modification to increase our budget.

26

27 MR. ARMSTRONG: You can ask for a
28 Native caucus and take a look at the budget figures
29 again. If you guys want to reallocate, that's
30 perfectly fine with me. The 220,000 we try to reserve
31 for the regions to operate.

32

33 CHAIRMAN CLARK: Member Alcorn.

34

35 MR. ALCORN: Thank you. I think
36 there's something that Sandy probably needs to be
37 understood by the Council and it's a function of
38 timing. We have a deadline to obligate money for grant
39 agreements and contracts. I'm thinking it's about the
40 middle of July. During the course of the fiscal year,
41 we're in the process of trying to obtain signatures to
42 the grant agreements for the regional work and many
43 times we don't get a response from some of our regional
44 partners until late in the fiscal year, summertime, but
45 we finally conclude that we're not going to get a
46 signed agreement; that there's not a willingness to
47 sign the grant agreement.

48

49 So the money, sometimes when it's made
50 available or we know that it's not going to be signed

1 or accepted, it's too late to modify or sign a new
2 grant agreement. I don't know what the timing was this
3 year regarding the 21,000 and the 18,000 or whatever it
4 was, but that's always an issue for us. So what
5 complicates this is it's a function of being able to
6 process the paperwork by certain deadlines and to make
7 those changes. So the approval going through the
8 Council is a process as well as the administrative
9 process that we have internally within the Fish and
10 Wildlife Service.

11

12 CHAIRMAN CLARK: Member Tahbone.

13

14 MS. TAHBONE: When we receive the
15 notification from the contracting officer, there's a
16 time frame set within that offer, if you will. If we
17 were to stick to that offer, I don't think we would
18 have a problem with knowing if or when an agreement
19 will be put in place and I think we should stick to
20 that time frame. At Kawerak, we make sure we get our
21 contract back to the Service at the time that's
22 specified in that offer and I think every region should
23 also stick to that time frame. So if there is going to
24 be money, we could make use of it. You know, how many
25 times have we heard we need the money out there and we
26 do need the money out there.

27

28 CHAIRMAN CLARK: Member Squartsoff.

29

30 MR. SQUARTSOFF: Yeah, Mr. Chair. To
31 go along with Sandy about this time frame thing, at
32 that time, once this time frame is up, if somebody else
33 needs additional funds, they should be able to amend
34 the contract at that time. I recall doing that in the
35 past with ours where you can do an amendment on it
36 instead of having to redo the whole thing.

37

38 CHAIRMAN CLARK: Member Alcorn.

39

40 MR. ALCORN: Thank you, Mr. Chairman.
41 That raises a really important issue, Sandy, and I
42 appreciate your comment. I think if there is regional
43 agreement to that policy, then that's a very effective
44 way to manage how we obligate money in a timely way.
45 That raises the issue of representation on this Council
46 for regions when, in fact, no meetings have been
47 conducted and it begs the question are you truly
48 representing the region. Is the representative truly
49 representing the region when they have not conducted
50 any regional AMBCC committee meetings and that is a

1 particularly troublesome issue for the Fish and
2 Wildlife Service when we are contacted, one example, by
3 Congressman Young's office with a complaint from the
4 public that representation is not occurring in a
5 particular region.

6
7 So we have been very liberal in our
8 offer of the money in an attempt to encourage that
9 those regional meetings occur, but if this Council
10 wants to stick to that creative policy that says there
11 is a certain window of opportunity here, I would say
12 that's a good policy because that does encourage the
13 regional representatives to participate and to
14 participate in a timely way. What that doesn't address
15 is whether or not the amount that's available is
16 considered sufficient to do the work and that's been
17 the argument in the past.

18
19 I'm not sure that addresses that
20 particular issue, but it certainly would help Fred in
21 his administration of this process and the Staff's
22 administration of this process to actually get these
23 agreements in place. But let me wrap this up. I'm
24 sorry to ramble. I think it's essential that we
25 continue the discussion about regional representation
26 when there are no meetings that are occurring. To
27 establish that policy, I think we have to have the
28 second component of that discussion.

29
30 CHAIRMAN CLARK: Member Tahbone.

31
32 MS. TAHBONE: The letter that will be
33 sent to the regional thanking them for participation,
34 also addressing the lack of participation. Maybe that
35 issue can also be raised, the implications of them not
36 participating within the process.

37
38 CHAIRMAN CLARK: That's a good
39 suggestion. Fred.

40
41 MR. ARMSTRONG: Once our contract and
42 grants office send out the grants for signatures, yes,
43 there is a time frame and they've been very liberal in
44 trying to wait for the grantee to get the required
45 signatures and sent back. We send out repeated notices
46 to the region to please get the grants signed and start
47 implementing the requirements. A lot of times it's an
48 effort where we don't prevail. There's a new
49 requirement that Donna will speak to and that's the
50 audit requirements on each of the grants. We're really

1 being forced to ramp up deliverables. Meeting notices,
2 adequate representation and stuff like that are going
3 to be seriously looked at from now on. It's a timely
4 discussion.

5

6

CHAIRMAN CLARK: Member Tahbone.

7

8

MS. TAHBONE: What frustrates me is,
9 for instance, our '09, you know, all it's covering is
10 meeting and a little bit of -- all our salaries are all
11 in kind. It doesn't speak to any outreach effort.
12 When we're trying to put a meaningful program together
13 and I see what's before us, it's really frustrating to
14 know that those funds could have been made available to
15 enhance our current program and the effort that we put
16 forward to try to put together a meaningful program.
17 We're fortunate that Kawerak does have the ability to
18 provide in kind. If not, I don't know where we'd be.
19 So it really would be helpful if we could stick to the
20 letter and there was a real short turnaround point when
21 we received our '09 and when they were expected back.
22 I come to find out that was just kind of a push to try
23 to get them back, so it was obvious it wasn't going to
24 be enforced. I don't know if that's playing into it at
25 all that they know year after year they can get them in
26 whenever they want, that money is still going to be
27 sitting there. So I think the policy needs to be
28 changed.

29

30

MR. ARMSTRONG: Can I respond?

31

32

CHAIRMAN CLARK: Sure.

33

34

MR. ARMSTRONG: The short turnaround
35 was really to take advantage of the '08 funds to fund
36 '09 grants. That's the reason why we tried to have a
37 short turnaround. As Doug indicated, we do have
38 timelines when we can write grants and get them in
39 place before the deadline is up. We don't run the
40 deadlines. The contracting grants office does that.
41 So that's why we have a short turnaround. We really
42 appreciate the regions when they comply with that
43 because it helps the Council a lot by offsetting the
44 cost. Otherwise we go into every fiscal year in the
45 red, so to speak, because we just don't have enough
46 funds.

47

48

CHAIRMAN CLARK: Thank you. Member

49 Starkey.

50

1 MR. STARKEY: In looking at the funds
2 and the grants, the way they're distributed across, is
3 that something we're going to talk about in our caucus?
4 Is that the way that works out? I don't understand the
5 formula, I guess.

6
7 CHAIRMAN CLARK: Fred and then Sandy.

8
9 MR. ARMSTRONG: Yeah, that's normally
10 how the Native caucus. If they want changes, then they
11 can go into caucus, make the changes, come back into
12 session and through a motion direct the changes to us
13 so we can make them. That's pretty much how we operate
14 with the grants.

15
16 The survey contracts on the other hand
17 are different. It's a coordinated effort between
18 different agencies to try to identify as close as
19 possible the cost of implementing a regional survey.

20
21 CHAIRMAN CLARK: Member Tahbone.

22
23 MS. TAHBONE: Yeah, just note that that
24 doesn't reflect -- the amount that you have here
25 doesn't reflect our '08 amount that we received because
26 of the reduction we took for Tanana. So we didn't
27 receive 31,200.

28
29 MR. ARMSTRONG: I remember that coming
30 into this.

31
32 MR. STARKEY: What is the actual
33 figure?

34
35 MR. ALCORN: It's \$10,000 less.

36
37 MR. ARMSTRONG: When Austin was on,
38 Kawerak was getting 31,000 and when TCC requested
39 additional funds, Kawerak offered \$10,000 to them, so
40 that's how we made the change. That was done in a
41 Council meeting.

42
43 MS. DEWHURST: This handout was going
44 to be later, but since we're talking about funding I
45 thought it would be better to hand it out right now.

46
47 CHAIRMAN CLARK: Thanks, Donna. Member
48 Squartsoff.

49
50 MR. SQUARTSOFF: I recommend we move on

1 and we can bring this up in our Native caucus. Thank
2 you.

3

4 CHAIRMAN CLARK: If that's acceptable,
5 we'll move ahead. Any other questions for Fred.

6

7 MS. TAHBONE: I had a question
8 regarding Staff time. Were we going to look at our '09
9 at all? You said it's going to be basically the same.

10

11 MR. ARMSTRONG: With regard to.....

12

13 CHAIRMAN CLARK: Member Alcorn, go
14 ahead.

15

16 MR. ALCORN: With the continuing
17 resolution, the budget mandate that we get is to
18 conduct operations at the same level as last year. So
19 presumably no change would occur with the continuing
20 resolution.

21

22 MS. TAHBONE: So how much.....

23

24 MR. ARMSTRONG: I was going to respond
25 to that.

26

27 CHAIRMAN CLARK: Fred.

28

29 MR. ARMSTRONG: The issue of Staff time
30 on the grants, we had a lot of discussion at the onset
31 of the program and the guidance that was given us was
32 that we weren't supposed to allocate Staff time, but we
33 thought that was inappropriate, so we tried to
34 negotiate some sort of language and I think we ended up
35 agreeing that at least 5 percent the regional
36 coordinator could charge to the grant. That's how that
37 came about. And you're right, it's so -- I feel for
38 all of the regions because all the time money spent is
39 really in-kind contributions and we don't take into
40 consideration any direct costs. A lot of the regions
41 are doing this on their own goodwill and that's not
42 right. Every region should be able to charge
43 administrative dollars to implement the program.
44 That's what we were left with.

45

46 CHAIRMAN CLARK: Member Chythlook.

47

48 MS. CHYTHLOOK: Under your travel, does
49 that include -- this is not only travel to regional
50 meetings. This is your overall travel wherever you go,

1 flyway or anywhere else?

2

3 MR. ARMSTRONG: That's correct.

4

5 MS. CHYTHLOOK: Thanks.

6

7 CHAIRMAN CLARK: Any other questions,
8 comments, on matters pertaining to the budget. Member
9 Tahbone.

10

11 MS. TAHBONE: So are we going to have a
12 Native caucus on this subject or what's our.....

13

14 MR. SQUARTSOFF: I've got it written
15 down to bring it up in our caucus.

16

17 CHAIRMAN CLARK: Comments, discussion,
18 questions.

19

20 MS. TAHBONE: Mr. Chair.

21

22 CHAIRMAN CLARK: Member Tahbone.

23

24 MS. TAHBONE: So what I'm understanding
25 is this will be the same budget for '09.

26

27 MR. ARMSTRONG: Pretty much, yes.
28 Sometimes we have a continuing resolution for one
29 month, two months, then they give us a percentage of
30 how much we can expend. Basically we just expect the
31 budget to be flat. It seems last year basically there
32 was no increases.

33

34 CHAIRMAN CLARK: Member Alcorn.

35

36 MR. ALCORN: Thank you, Mr. Chairman.
37 Without going into a lot of detail, I think it's
38 important for the Council to know that we are somewhat
39 at the mercy of my colleague who manages the refuge
40 program and the refuge budget. The way we get our
41 money, it comes with earmarks for basically categories.
42 We call them sub-activities. Fred's budget is
43 supported predominantly with 1261 sub-activity funds,
44 which are funds that come from Washington and go
45 through the regional refuge chief, not my program, and
46 I negotiate with him every year to get that money.
47 It's within his management and control. This is almost
48 -- you could characterize it as a soft money budget.
49 This is not my base funds. At least approximately 600-
50 some-odd-thousand dollars are not my base funds. Those

1 are always subject to our ability to negotiate an
2 allotment with the refuge manager.

3

4 CHAIRMAN CLARK: Member Starkey.

5

6 MR. STARKEY: The budget reflects
7 salary and benefits for four employees and then there's
8 mandatory trainings, discretionary trainings and travel
9 for Fred, Donna and Bill. Is there a fourth employee?

10

11 MR. ARMSTRONG: I keep on the roster,
12 even though it's not funded, the harvest survey
13 coordinator position. Can't take that off, otherwise
14 they'd lose their position. So it just reflects that.
15 The mandatory training, we're required to provide
16 training in ethics, internet security. There's a lot
17 of required training. And then the discretionary is
18 based on what Donna and Bill would like to have
19 training for the fiscal year.

20

21 MR. STARKEY: Does that budget that
22 reflects mandatory and discretionary trainings include
23 travel cost to those trainings?

24

25 MR. ARMSTRONG: Those are approximate
26 travel costs, yeah.

27

28 MR. STARKEY: So, with a travel budget
29 of 15,000, what's that for?

30

31 MR. ARMSTRONG: That was basically what
32 Doug gave me out of their budget to spend toward Staff
33 attending regional meetings, to become more involved at
34 the regional level, because he wanted us to have a
35 presence in each of the regional meetings that are
36 held.

37

38 CHAIRMAN CLARK: Member Tahbone.

39

40 MS. TAHBONE: Yeah, we show the
41 possible savings out of our '08 dollars. Was
42 everything expended out of these categories for '08
43 that was budgeted or what are we looking at as far as
44 savings regarding the 727,198 amount?

45

46 CHAIRMAN CLARK: Fred.

47

48 MR. ARMSTRONG: Again, like I
49 indicated, we normally go into a fiscal year in the red
50 and savings are really next to nothing. It's very

1 hard. I'm at the will of a lot of people to have this
2 money annually. Like Doug said, 643,000 is earmarked
3 for refuges, but he negotiates with the refuge chief to
4 actually just give me the funds to -- we do the work --
5 our justification is that we do the surveys on the
6 refuges and a lot of the funds go towards that and
7 expenses.

8

9 CHAIRMAN CLARK: Member Starkey.

10

11 MR. STARKEY: That's where I'm getting
12 confused on budgeting. You just said a lot of your
13 funding goes because you're doing surveys on the
14 refuges, but I thought I just heard in the report from
15 Togiak Refuge that they do a separate survey and it's
16 budgeted separately.

17

18 MR. ARMSTRONG: No, we provide them
19 with.....

20

21 MR. STARKEY: But they're using a
22 separate survey protocol. They were asking for
23 discretion to use a separate survey protocol or did I
24 miss that? Is that something that I missed? What am I
25 missing?

26

27 CHAIRMAN CLARK: Member Squartsoff.

28

29 MR. SQUARTSOFF: Yeah, Mr. Chair. What
30 I heard them saying is they wanted a different way of
31 doing it, not any other funding or anything. Just a
32 different source of material or whatever way they were
33 wanting to do the survey than the way we have it set
34 up.

35

36 MR. ALCORN: It's not a duplicate
37 survey.

38

39 MR. ARMSTRONG: We still give them
40 money to do the surveys.

41

42 CHAIRMAN CLARK: Member Tahbone.

43

44 MS. TAHBONE: I heard them say it was
45 cheaper because they use the tribal council permission
46 versus individual household permission.

47

48 MR. SQUARTSOFF: Ask them, they're
49 sitting right there.

50

1 CHAIRMAN CLARK: Member Chythlook.

2

3 MS. CHYTHLOOK: With Togiak, when
4 they're not funded, I think a few times the refuge
5 themselves funded the surveys so they won't be skipping
6 a year and I don't know if that's still ongoing or not.
7 No?

8

9 CHAIRMAN CLARK: Any other discussion,
10 comments, questions.

11

12 (No comments)

13

14 CHAIRMAN CLARK: Seeing none, thank
15 you, Fred. We'll move to old business assuming I've
16 got my arrows right. Let's hear from Member Pederson
17 on the Pacific Flyway Council and the Service
18 Regulations Committee report. Mike, the floor is
19 yours.

20

21 MR. PEDERSON: After the last AMBCC
22 meeting the Chair appointed me to represent the AMBCC
23 at the SRC and Pacific Flyway Council meetings. I
24 attended, along with Patty Schwalenberg. Staff support
25 was Fred, Doug and Russ and Tom Rothe and went to the
26 Pacific Flyway Council meeting.

27

28 I provided a report on the cultural and
29 traditional use of Yellow-billed Loons at both the PFC
30 and at SRC meetings. We also talked about new
31 regulations for our region. It was the Yellow-billed
32 Loons. After our April 1 meeting, we met with the
33 Service and talked about how to word our regulation, so
34 we changed the word caught to entangled and I think
35 that worked well.

36

37 I was expecting big debates at these
38 meetings, but they didn't occur mostly because I think
39 in the previous meetings things were vetted out. We
40 also talked about the Yakutat harvest of Tern eggs.
41 There was nobody at that meeting, so Patty took it upon
42 herself with Fred and also with Russ to describe the
43 Yakutat Tern egg hunting proposal. That was also
44 passed, but there were some issues that were added
45 about monitoring the harvest and stuff like that.

46

47 They were good meetings. I couldn't
48 believe all the bird species that people talk about
49 down that way. Some birds that I didn't even know
50 about. I was asking Tom about one of them and he

1 showed me a picture of this weird bird. But, anyway,
2 they were good meetings.

3
4 I think it's important for the Council
5 to go to these meetings because sometimes we sit here
6 and all we do is argue with Doug and we argue with Fred
7 and we argue with Tom and Russ and Bill. At these
8 meetings, I was really surprised that -- you know, they
9 really do work for us on our behalf. We might not see,
10 you know, these types of meetings here, but down that
11 way they really do work on our behalf. The first time
12 that I've been to these meetings I was just really
13 surprised. Basically I always thought of them as being
14 our enemies because we argue so much with them, but at
15 these other meetings they're working on our behalf and
16 I really appreciate that.

17
18 The Pacific Flyway Council, they're a
19 group of people who are really good and they've been
20 supporting our proposals coming from here for several
21 years. They take them to the SRC. You know, I think
22 the process works well. I think we should thank them
23 and especially the people at the PFC because when
24 they're talking about some of our stuff, some of their
25 people have no idea what we talk about. So Fred gave a
26 presentation on the AMBCC process and subsistence uses.
27 I gave one on traditional loons and Patty talked a
28 little bit about the Arctic Tern eggs. These people
29 too, they also bring the science along and talk about
30 those issues that we normally don't discuss.

31
32 I don't have anything else to add, but
33 going down south in July was a lot of fun. I'd like to
34 thank Fred for all his help in teaching me the ropes of
35 the processes down that way at both of the meetings.
36 It was nice and sunny for us. Thanks.

37
38 CHAIRMAN CLARK: Any questions. Member
39 Squartsoff.

40
41 MR. SQUARTSOFF: Yeah, Mr. Chair. I
42 commend you for going down there. I went down there
43 four, five years in a row. Like I encourage in our
44 caucuses for other people to go and I'm glad you did.
45 You can see the difference on how they work for us down
46 there and everything. I encourage everybody on the
47 Council. Joe has been down there. Austin used to go
48 down with Ralph. Anybody else, like Sandy, if you get
49 a chance, try to go down and represent us down there.
50 It's well worth it to see how Bill and Russ and Tom and

1 all of them work for us down there. It's unbelievable.
2 They do a good job. Brad and them, they really support
3 us down there.

4

5 Fred, did you get that new committee
6 squared away down there, the Shorebird Committee. You
7 did a presentation to them?

8

9 CHAIRMAN CLARK: Fred.

10

11 MR. ARMSTRONG: If I may, Mr. Chair.
12 The PowerPoint presentation I gave was directed towards
13 the non-game group. Education is going to be ongoing
14 because people rotate in and out. I'd like to say one
15 thing about Mike's attendance at
16 these meetings. I think he didn't stress enough about
17 what he did. There's a lot of people unsettled about
18 the Yellow-billed Loon and its use and by him being
19 there and giving the presentation and showing slides of
20 their dance regalia really cleared up any issues they
21 had and, quite frankly, it helped us really move the
22 issue rather quickly.

23

24 Yeah, there is a concerted effort by
25 everybody to take the Council's recommendations and try
26 to move them forward. It's Russ and Tom. The Pacific
27 Flyway has been really supportive and we compliment
28 them for their effort. Yeah, the more Council
29 members that could attend, I really would encourage
30 that because it shows you the process of how it starts
31 here and ends up is really something that is really
32 good.

33

34 CHAIRMAN CLARK: Member Tahbone.

35

36 MS. TAHBONE: Yeah, I was curious when
37 you said the science that's presented there is
38 different. Can you give any kind of specifics?

39

40 MR. PEDERSON: I mean like when we were
41 talking about the tern harvest for Yakutat. Russ had
42 to give the biological opinion of the status of the
43 population and stuff like that. Sometimes that's
44 things we don't see at this level. And if it was done
45 at this level, I just don't remember it, but I remember
46 it really good from down there just because they were
47 there on our behalf giving the biological opinion that
48 the Service had regarding these species.

49

50 CHAIRMAN CLARK: Mr. Rothe.

1 MR. ROTHE: Tom Rothe with Fish and
2 Game. I just wanted to comment and kind of echo what
3 Fred and Mike have said. The presence of Co-Management
4 Council members is really, really important because a
5 lot of these folks still have a very crude view of what
6 subsistence really is, how people live in rural Alaska.
7 Every time you meet those folks face to face and teach
8 them some stuff, they learn pretty quickly.

9
10 Fred did his subsistence one on one and
11 Mike's Yellow-billed Loon example was perfect for
12 traditional uses of birds. Patty was talking with
13 people in the halls and talking about terns and stuff.
14 All of that was really important. I know a lot of our
15 business down there for a whole week is really boring,
16 especially if it's not birds from your region, but if
17 you look at that as service to the Council and
18 representing this group in a much bigger context, it is
19 really helpful.

20
21 The other thing I wanted to mention is
22 for four years the Pacific Flyway Council has been
23 asking for some harvest data. I know we've been going
24 around and around with how good it is and what we
25 should do with it. After this Council kind of gave us
26 the go-ahead we put together what we call the interim
27 report. This collected all the 2004, '05 and '06 data
28 that we had and put it in a report for everybody. It
29 says be careful, don't look to much at any particular
30 number in here, we're still crunching and stuff, but I
31 think everybody went, wow, look at all this stuff we
32 have. In the future, I think they're really going to
33 appreciate what we're doing with the harvest survey.

34
35 Again, some goofy example, this guy
36 from Wyoming for some reason is just interested in non-
37 game bird harvest, so he can flip to the egg harvest in
38 Yukon Flats Refuge. They're not all wrapped around the
39 axle about the size of the harvest for the most part,
40 but just the fact that they're first getting a look at
41 what people are taking and how to use it.

42
43 Anyway, this report is out there just
44 so you know. So far we've got lots of pats on the back
45 for releasing it.

46
47 CHAIRMAN CLARK: Anymore comments. Mr.
48 Oates.

49
50 MR. OATES: Russ Oates, Fish and

1 Wildlife Service. At the risk of piling on a little
2 bit here. I just want to say I agree
3 with what Tom said about the value of the presence of
4 Council members at these meetings. I think this first
5 was obvious to me back in the old days when we loaded
6 up the Waterfowl Conservation Committee from the Yukon
7 Delta and hauled them down there and had them meet face
8 to face with the farmers that were having problems with
9 too many geese when we were having problems with too
10 few geese up here. The communication that occurred
11 there and the understanding that was developed there by
12 both sides of the issue sharing their concerns was
13 incredible in terms of a gulf that was spanned and
14 giving people understanding of each other's problems
15 and helping to get some of the level of anxiety that
16 was in the south and in the north ratcheted down.

17
18 So I would say it's been truly valuable
19 to have folks like Mike come down and he expressed
20 himself really well with the group there and they could
21 really relate, these folks that have never been to
22 Alaska, many of them.

23
24 I'll just make one small point about
25 Mike's comment about thinking we, the Agency people,
26 were enemies and arguing all the time and I think what
27 we endeavor to do in our discussions, I'll characterize
28 it that way, is try to get on the same page, I guess,
29 with the science and the biology. When we're able to
30 do that, when we're able to work together and reach
31 agreement, it puts us, the Agency representatives, in a
32 much better position to advocate for the regulations
33 down in the flyway. The fact that we did the hard work
34 and had the hard discussions here, that really puts us
35 in a good position to go down there and advocate with
36 folks that don't understand as much about subsistence.
37 So that's kind of how we got there. Thank you.

38
39 CHAIRMAN CLARK: Thank you, Mr. Oates.
40 Mr. Bales, you had something to add.

41
42 MR. BALES: Brad Bales, Oregon
43 Department of Fish and Wildlife. I just wanted to show
44 appreciation about Mike's comments about the flyway.
45 We do appreciate the process and working with the
46 groups. I know personally and professionally over the
47 last 15 years attending these types of meetings, mostly
48 with the WCC, I appreciate the efforts and the
49 discussions we have on subsistence harvest. A lot of
50 discussion about the importance of the members of this

1 group participating in the Flyway Council level.

2

3 There's also a very strong commitment
4 from the Council itself to have representation here.
5 Ron Anglin has been at some of these meetings
6 previously. We are going through rotation in the
7 Council and Dave Brittell from Washington Department of
8 Fish and Wildlife will be attending these meetings in
9 the future. He had some prior hunting commitments, as
10 did Ron, so they kind of send me to kind of represent
11 both the Study Committee and Council kind of at the
12 last minute, but there is a strong commitment and that
13 rotation we're going through and we look forward to
14 working with this group.

15

16 CHAIRMAN CLARK: Thank you. Fred.

17

18 MR. ARMSTRONG: Not to belabor things
19 anymore, but one key component of this whole process is
20 the work that's done in the
21 background. I need to recognize my Staff and the work
22 they do to put PowerPoints together, the resource
23 papers together and have them ready for our use in the
24 Council and use for distribution is really appreciated,
25 so a lot of kudos goes to them.

26

27 CHAIRMAN CLARK: Thank you. Member
28 Tahbone, then Member Chythlook.

29

30 MS. TAHBONE: Does somebody else pay
31 for our representation on there or does it come out of
32 the same budget? Does the Council have a travel
33 budget.

34

35 MR. ALCORN: You're looking at it.

36

37 MS. TAHBONE: I see three names. I
38 don't see a line item for Council -- or am I missing
39 it.

40

41 CHAIRMAN CLARK: We're pretty much left
42 to our own devices. Member Squartsoff.

43

44 MR. SQUARTSOFF: Yeah, Mr. Chair. No,
45 it comes out of your contract with your region, your
46 funding there.

47

48 CHAIRMAN CLARK: Member Chythlook.

49

50 MS. CHYTHLOOK: I guess I've got a

1 comment/question. And I guess this is coming from when
2 I used to work for Subsistence and still am. I'm a
3 subsistence harvester and processor and user. I guess
4 the Flyway Council sees what the subsistence harvesters
5 harvest, the list of birds that we harvest, but then I
6 keep hearing that the people down there don't
7 understand subsistence.
8 What part of subsistence don't they understand? Is it
9 the processing and how we took it and the culture of
10 it? It seems like when they look at the list and see
11 what birds we use for subsistence, that would probably
12 be good enough. So what part of subsistence don't they
13 understand?

14
15 CHAIRMAN CLARK: Mr. Rothe, do you want
16 to make a comment to that.

17
18 MR. ROTHE: Well, I think they have a
19 pretty good general idea the folks here are living off
20 the land with a lot of diverse kind of birds. You have
21 to appreciate in the Lower 48, first of all, none of
22 their people get to hunt things like shorebirds,
23 seabirds and stuff. Those are not hunted. And in some
24 cases, like in California, they have shorebirds like
25 Snowy Plovers that are endangered species. So it just
26 looks weird for them to get a harvest survey report
27 that says a bunch of people in Kotzebue ate these
28 things and meanwhile, back home, they're desperately
29 trying to protect these small populations of birds
30 there.

31
32 I just think they really appreciate
33 understanding more of what's going on here. Russ and I
34 and Brad are very clear about the status of resources.
35 If we have lots of these birds, it's not a problem for
36 people to use them. I think they understand the
37 subsistence economy, the subsistence cultures in a
38 general way. It's just when all the details come
39 together they go holy cow. We never thought about
40 people eating these birds. And co-managing is
41 something that doesn't happen much in the Lower 48
42 either.

43
44 CHAIRMAN CLARK: Member Alcorn.

45
46 MR. ALCORN: Thank you, Mr. Chairman.
47 Molly, I'll give you one example of how I began to
48 appreciate subsistence and the use of the birds and how
49 it relates to me. Fred and I years ago attended a
50 meeting at Kawerak. It was a regional meeting and a

1 gentleman from Savoonga was there and he said I can
2 harvest a goose or I can go pay \$70 for a turkey and I
3 thought to myself \$70 for a turkey is more than I would
4 be willing to pay even in Anchorage. I could relate to
5 what \$70 was and I could relate to what we do at
6 Thanksgiving. For him to relate it to having a goose
7 for Thanksgiving as opposed to having to go buy a
8 turkey, that put it in relative terms that I
9 understood. I think people in the Lower 48 probably
10 don't appreciate that turkeys cost \$70 or even \$100 now
11 out in the villages as opposed to us being able to go
12 to Safeway and buy one for 30 or 20. That was my
13 experience and it was kind of an epiphany I had.

14

15 CHAIRMAN CLARK: Any other comments.

16

17 (No comments)

18

19 CHAIRMAN CLARK: Just to wrap up, what
20 Member Alcorn says there points up the value of being
21 at the Flyway Council meetings. I don't want to short-
22 sell the power of presentations. Mike's presentation
23 on Yellow-billed Loons was superb. I hear back as the
24 Alaska representative to the Pacific Flyway Council, I
25 hear from my colleagues who are sitting members on the
26 Council from other states and that made a huge
27 impression and clarified a lot of things for them.

28

29 But just these casual conversations in
30 between meetings, during breaks. You put a bunch of
31 duck and goose hunters in a room together, they're
32 going to talk and that level of understanding of the
33 subsistence lifestyle in Alaska is enormously valuable.
34 Fred mentioned it, it is going to be an ongoing
35 education process and it's something I hope all the
36 Council members will seriously consider participating
37 in because that one-on-one contact with members of the
38 Council, members of the Study Committee, members of the
39 non-game group, is going to be enormously valuable.

40

41 Alaska, to a lot of those folks, is
42 exotic by itself and the concept that people are living
43 to a large extent off of wild fish and game is like
44 from another planet to a lot of folks down there. It's
45 just not in their daily comprehension of life in
46 general. It really helps to sit down with a flesh and
47 blood human being and talk and understand things. That
48 level of contact will do nothing but improve things for
49 this Council and for subsistence in Alaska.

50

1 Again, I want to thank Mike and
2 everybody else who participates in those meetings down
3 there and encourage you all to think seriously about
4 doing the same.

5
6 Is there any other discussion on that
7 topic. It's about 10 minutes after noon. I would just
8 say it's the Chair's intent that we wrap up about 4:00
9 o'clock today. We'll finish up tomorrow then. There
10 is a follow-up to last night's potluck.
11 Member Chythlook is going to host us at her home
12 tonight and Member Squartsoff is cooking. So we need
13 to be wrapped up by 4:00 to let him get to his very
14 important duties. So my intent is to go until about
15 4:00 o'clock today and we'll convene again
16 tomorrow morning and wrap up whatever needs to be
17 finished.

18
19 Member Chythlook.

20
21 MS. CHYTHLOOK: You're all welcome, but
22 I'd kind of like to get a head count of who might be
23 coming. I know there are some of you that are leaving.
24 Who won't be there.

25
26 CHAIRMAN CLARK: With that, let's stand
27 down for lunch and
28 reconvene at 1:15.

29
30 (Off record - 12:09 p.m.)

31
32 (On record - 1:26 p.m.)

33
34 CHAIRMAN CLARK: Come back to order
35 with the Alaska Migratory Bird Co-Management Council
36 and continue old business. Next on the agenda is the
37 Harvest Survey Committee report and recommendations on
38 the annual survey methodology and cost. Donna Dewhurst
39 is going to present the committee's recommendations at
40 this time. Donna.

41
42 MS. DEWHURST: Tab 3 in our books.

43
44 CHAIRMAN CLARK: Tab 3 everybody.

45
46 MS. DEWHURST: Since we went over this
47 in detail yesterday, I'm going to try to keep it
48 shorter and sweeter and if we have questions or more
49 discussion, we can go from there.

50

1 The first recommendation was Yellow-
2 billed Loons. Concern about the harvest that's been
3 reported in Bering Straits, Norton Sound, and how to
4 deal with that given that loons may be listed or
5 proposed for listing here soon, Yellow-billed Loons.
6 It was a three-tiered approach the committee
7 recommended. The first aspect was to do a detailed
8 harvest assessment concentrating on the two villages
9 that reported taking Yellow-billed Loons similar to
10 what we did in the North Slope or have done in the
11 North Slope with the endangered eiders and try to do a
12 complete household survey of villages involved. More
13 concentration on identification, more explanation, that
14 sort of thing.

15
16 Then tie in an ethnographic study that
17 would look at if, indeed, they were saying they took
18 Yellow-billed Loons, what are they using them for. Is
19 it food, is it ceremonial, is it a combination of both,
20 how important are they to them.

21
22 The third aspect was some sort of an
23 outreach strategy like Sandy talked about. It probably
24 would involve meetings where we discuss the biology and
25 why we're concerned and probably some ID and things
26 like that.

27
28 So a three-tiered approach was the
29 recommendation. I guess what we need from the Council
30 would be to either endorse or not endorse the committee
31 recommendation.

32
33 CHAIRMAN CLARK: I think at this point
34 we need a motion to adopt recommendations individually
35 as we go through them. I think recommendation two is
36 going to require some significant discussion. For now,
37 the Chair would entertain a motion to adopt the Harvest
38 Survey Committee's recommendation number one.

39
40 MR. HICKS: I so move.

41
42 MR. DEVINE: Second.

43
44 CHAIRMAN CLARK: It's been moved and
45 seconded. Is there any further discussion. I think we
46 went around most of the questions yesterday during the
47 work session. Does anybody have any further concerns
48 or questions on recommendation number one.

49
50 Member Tahbone.

1 MS. TAHBONE: I would just like to
2 request that Staff ensure that the Bering
3 Straits/Norton Sound Migratory Bird Council has -- I
4 can't think of the word, I'm too full from lunch, but
5 our involvement in the process regarding planning,
6 methodology, that we're involved.

7
8 MS. DEWHURST: You can be fully assured
9 we will do nothing on our own on this. We will be very
10 involved.

11
12 MS. TAHBONE: Thank you.

13
14 CHAIRMAN CLARK: Member Alcorn.

15
16 MR. ALCORN: When this recommendation
17 came out, did you all discuss potential costs,
18 ballpark? We asked that question yesterday. It's a
19 ballpark between, say, 10 and 20, 20 and 30, 30 and 40?

20
21 MS. DEWHURST: Five to 30 was what was
22 mentioned, but that's a huge bracket. Basically we
23 don't know.

24
25 CHAIRMAN CLARK: Any other questions,
26 comments. As a point of information for me, do we need
27 to adopt some kind of a budget amendment for this to
28 cover this thing? If we adopt this recommendation, it
29 says we're going to do some stuff. Do we need to
30 identify specifically how we're going to pay for that?
31 Doug.

32
33 MR. ALCORN: Well, I guess I don't have
34 a real good answer for that right now, Mr. Chairman.
35 Like I mentioned yesterday, any time we adopt a
36 strategy that comes at a cost. Unless there's money
37 forthcoming that I'm not aware of, that cost has to
38 come out of my base budget. Fred's base you just saw.
39 Every dollar is accounted for.

40
41 So that leaves me with one other place
42 to go and that's Russ's budget, to cannibalize that.
43 He mentioned yesterday we're looking at -- we're
44 basically managing by attrition. We have five or six
45 vacant positions, just as we do in the AMBCC office and
46 that's what we've used to survive on, but he has
47 intentions of filling some or all of those positions.
48 What monies he is saving in salary he has to hold for
49 paying for a move. The Department of Interior, when
50 you hire someone within the Fish and Wildlife Service,

1 you pay for their move. We're not given extra money
2 for that. We have to manage through salary savings.
3 So we fill those positions later on in the fiscal year.

4
5 With a caveat of trying to find money
6 to cover this, there may be ways to find efficiencies,
7 but I just don't know. I'll support it, but the caveat
8 is it's going to have to be affordable.

9
10 CHAIRMAN CLARK: Ms. Dewhurst, then
11 Member Tahbone.

12
13 MS. DEWHURST: Just to reiterate what
14 we discussed yesterday, the two ways that are most
15 likely to be involved with funding is, one, if we
16 decide to do a training year next year, primarily a
17 training year. That would free up money from the
18 harvest survey to do this specific project for one
19 year. The other thing is Karen Lang has said there is
20 a possibility of money from Ecological Services to
21 contribute toward the project. So those are two ways
22 that are feasible to fund it. At least for next year.
23 I'm not guaranteeing past that.

24
25 CHAIRMAN CLARK: I want to make sure
26 we're fully expressing the wishes of the Council but
27 also acknowledging that there is a cost involved and we
28 need to figure out how to cover that.

29
30 Mr. Ostrand and then Member Tahbone.

31
32 MR. OSTRAND: In my discussion with
33 Karen Lang, she mentioned the possibility of getting
34 money would be enhanced if the Council would made a
35 recommendation. I'd also remind the Council that what
36 they do is make recommendations. They don't commit
37 money. If there were no money available, the
38 endorsement of the Co-Management Council would be a
39 plus in pursuing grant money from some other source.

40
41 CHAIRMAN CLARK: Yeah, I think I can
42 speak for the Council that we'd certainly be willing to
43 provide whatever written or other support for the
44 search for funds to do this or other work. The Council
45 has been pretty clear in the past on what it wants
46 accomplished and we certainly would step up to
47 participate in whatever, provide support materials for
48 grants or funding. Member Tahbone.

49
50 MS. TAHBONE: Donna covered it. Just

1 the two areas that were identified yesterday,
2 ecological services and harvest money.

3

4 CHAIRMAN CLARK: Thank you for putting
5 that on the record. Member Alcorn.

6

7 MR. ALCORN: One other option, and I'm
8 looking at Russ, within the Division of Migratory Bird
9 Management National, there's a survey monitoring and
10 assessment money and I think 70 percent of that goes to
11 non-game species, is that not right?

12

13 MR. OATES: 75 percent.

14

15 MR. ALCORN: 75 percent. And that's an
16 option we could pursue. We could develop a proposal.
17 I don't know exactly when that's decided on, but it's a
18 fluid pot of money that goes to whatever region within
19 the Fish and Wildlife Service has a demonstrated need
20 and I think this is a really good one for that
21 particular program. So we'll pursue that.

22

23 CHAIRMAN CLARK: Great. Well, it
24 sounds as though there are some likely prospects for
25 funding and certainly a worthwhile project to pursue.
26 I think with those caveats the Council can, with
27 confidence, go forward and express its intent on this
28 recommendation.

29

30 Is there any other discussion,
31 questions.

32

33 (No comments)

34

35 CHAIRMAN CLARK: Are you ready for the
36 question. Are there any objections.

37

38 (No objections)

39

40 CHAIRMAN CLARK: Seeing none.
41 Recommendation number 1 of the Subsistence Harvest
42 Survey Committee has been adopted. Ms. Dewhurst, I
43 think just for the sake of expediency, let's take these
44 out of order and go to recommendation number 3 and then
45 follow up with number 2.

46

47 MS. DEWHURST: It's an easy one. Just
48 that the Harvest Survey Committee get back together
49 right away, early October, to decide -- once
50 recommendation number 2 is which scenario, then the

1 meeting in early October would be how it could be
2 implemented. So that is where the committee would get
3 back together and say do we need a training year. So
4 recommendation 3 is simply for a meeting in early
5 October of the committee again to figure out
6 implementation.

7

8 MR. SQUARTSOFF: So moved.

9

10 MS. TAHBONE: Second.

11

12 CHAIRMAN CLARK: It's been moved and
13 seconded to adopt recommendation number 3. Is there
14 any discussion, questions. Member Tahbone.

15

16 MS. TAHBONE: How much trouble would it
17 be to flesh out what we adopted in June out of this
18 report and to get it into just one a little more
19 readable so we know exactly what -- would it be too
20 much to do?

21

22 CHAIRMAN CLARK: Mr. Ostrand.

23

24 MR. OSTRAND: In your binder there is a
25 summary that Lilly put together behind tab 5. It's
26 just the bullets on what we adopted.

27

28 MS. TAHBONE: So this is what I can
29 present versus this?

30

31 MR. OSTRAND: Yes.

32

33 MS. TAHBONE: Thank you.

34

35 CHAIRMAN CLARK: Any other questions,
36 discussion.

37

38 (No comments)

39

40 CHAIRMAN CLARK: Are you ready for the
41 question. Are there any objections.

42

43 (No objections)

44

45 CHAIRMAN CLARK: Seeing none, the
46 Council has adopted Subsistence Harvest Survey
47 Committee recommendation number 3. Ms. Dewhurst, would
48 you go back to recommendation number 2, please.

49

50 MS. DEWHURST: Number 2 is looking at

1 the different rotation schedules and the recommendation
2 of the committee was scenario 5 would best fit the
3 informational needs given that it includes Y-K Delta
4 and North Slope every year. But then the committee
5 said they also acknowledge budgetary concerns and if
6 there was no way money could be found to do number 5,
7 they could settle for number 6, which the only real
8 difference is that Y-K Delta and North Slope would be
9 done ever other year, be put into the rotation. So
10 that's the only primary difference, with Y-K being the
11 big money chunk that's involved. So the recommendation
12 is number 5 is our first choice. If money won't work,
13 then number 6.

14

15 CHAIRMAN CLARK: Mr. Rothe.

16

17 MR. ROTHE: I mentioned to the Council
18 yesterday that I had more information on this. If I
19 could get a minute or two to get everybody up to speed
20 on that.

21

22 CHAIRMAN CLARK: Yes, I think that's
23 appropriate at this time.

24

25 MR. ROTHE: I'll try to make it real
26 quick because this is a shot in the dark, but I think
27 we've got a good shot at getting some money. The
28 Coastal Impact Assessment Program comes out of a piece
29 of Federal legislation in 2005, the Energy Policy Act
30 of '05, and it charges Minerals Management Service with
31 taking congressional funding and giving it to coastal
32 states that are producing oil and gas offshore.
33 There's only six states that qualify; Alabama,
34 Mississippi, Louisiana, Texas, California and Alaska.
35 They're making available \$250,000,000 a year for a wide
36 variety of things that communities can do on the coast.

37

38 Essentially it's got a few different
39 kinds of uses. You can use it for conservation
40 protection or restoration of coastal areas, you can use
41 it for mitigating damage to fish and wildlife and
42 natural resources, planning assistance, administrative
43 costs of complying with the program, implementing
44 Federally-approved marine, coastal or other
45 conservation management plans and mitigating impacts of
46 other Continental Shelf activities through funding
47 onshore infrastructure projects and public service
48 needs. So there's a huge spectrum. You can get
49 dumpsters for oil waste or you can do a trail or you
50 could do a harvest survey on coastal resources. I

1 think we can justify that harvest surveys of coastal
2 birds would fit into one of these primary authorized
3 uses.

4

5 Bottom line on the financing is the
6 State's got \$2.5 million in the bank from the first two
7 fiscal years. Some of that money has been passed out
8 and we expect more. I mentioned a general allocation
9 scheme where 65 percent goes to State initiated
10 projects, 35 percent goes directly to coastal
11 communities and governments.

12

13 So, in Alaska's case, for this FY '07
14 and '08 allocation, 850,000 goes directly to
15 communities and the State's sitting on 1.5 million.
16 Just so you know who the players are, the biggest
17 winner in the game is the North Slope Borough. No
18 surprise because they're producing oil. Their
19 allocation is 276,000. Northwest Arctic Borough at
20 235,000. Anchorage at 138,000. Interestingly enough,
21 since you don't produce oil in the Bristol Bay area,
22 you guys get \$665.

23

24 CHAIRMAN CLARK: Congratulations.

25

26 MS. CHYTHLOOK: To do what?

27

28 MR. ALCORN: Oil exploration.

29

30 MR. ROTHE: Anyway, it kind of frames
31 out the idea that this is getting divvied up, trying to
32 mitigate the impacts of oil production offshore. So
33 far the state has a final plan, but it's very general
34 and it identifies some preliminary project themes. For
35 example, North Slope is going to look at acoustic
36 impacts on whales, which would be a high priority for
37 them.

38

39 As I mentioned, there's three chunks of
40 money there and I think what we're prepared to do is
41 put in proposals for the Fish and Game or the State
42 government share that, which is about 35 percent of the
43 total enchilada. I think in just our brief, informal
44 discussions, if the Council is okay with this, we'd
45 like to draft up a specific proposal and see if we can
46 get the Yellow-billed Loon project funded. That would
47 be a perfect short-term dedicated project with a
48 coastal resource.

49

50 And then put another one in to try to

1 bite off a chunk of the deficit on the major harvest
2 survey project itself. It doesn't hurt. Right now we
3 think proposals are due in October. So if you guys say
4 go for it, we'll work with the Harvest Survey Committee
5 and everybody and Fred will cobble this up.

6

7 The other part of it, I don't know if
8 -- like Taqulik is the contact for this program in
9 North Slope Borough. I don't know if you want to.....

10

11 MR. PEDERSON: It's the mayor's office.
12 When we've been told about this program, we were told
13 that whatever we decided to do it had to be related to
14 offshore, I mean marine mammals. We couldn't use it to
15 do anything related to issues that we were dealing with
16 on land.

17

18 MR. ROTHE: I don't know how much the
19 local governments are going to want to -- they'll
20 probably have their own ideas on how they want to spend
21 this money because it's such a broad set of options
22 that they can spend. The third part, 30 percent, is
23 going to be an open, competitive process. Anybody can
24 put in for it and that would be another shot that we
25 could go for. I think being a little flippant here,
26 some of the goofy projects I've seen come up so far, I
27 think we could be really competitive if we really
28 emphasize the coastal habitat importance of birds and
29 subsistence of waterfowl, shorebirds. So I think we
30 could write a real solid proposal on that.

31

32 So that's the story right now. Like I
33 said, there's \$2.5 million in the bank sort of and the
34 State is sitting on 1.5. The next allocation is coming
35 up pretty soon. It's going to be a fairly rich
36 program. I'm fairly comfortable we could make a good
37 play for it for the full 2010 harvest survey.

38

39 CHAIRMAN CLARK: Member Squartsoff.

40

41 MR. SQUARTSOFF: Mr. Chair. Tom, is
42 this every year or just a one-shot deal or what?

43

44 MR. ROTHE: This is the first
45 allocation, so they kind of got behind the curve, so
46 they rolled up the 2007 and 2008 together, but the 2009
47 money is going to have to be decided here I presume in
48 the next few months or so.

49

50 MR. SQUARTSOFF: But it's going to be

1 ongoing every year though, so that will give us a good
2 shot of getting this help on a survey every year then.

3

4 MR. ROTHE: Right.

5

6 MR. SQUARTSOFF: I mean you can't go
7 wrong in trying to find other funding sources like
8 that, you know. I mean a shot in the arm if we get a
9 chance to get it. There's nothing wrong with that I
10 don't think. It can't hurt anything anyway.

11

12 CHAIRMAN CLARK: Thanks, Tom.

13

14 MR. DEVINE: I have a question for Tom.

15

16 CHAIRMAN CLARK: Member Devine.

17

18 MR. DEVINE: Thanks, Mr. Chair. So
19 what's needed of the Council? Are you going to need a
20 resolution from the Council so that we could seek these
21 funds or just direction?

22

23 MR. ROTHE: I don't need any formal
24 encouragement. You guys just say go for it and we'll
25 draft something and run it past here. I think we're
26 going to have to jump pretty quickly in the next week
27 or so.

28

29 MR. ALCORN: It seems to me that would
30 be part of the motion to whatever option we approve.

31

32 CHAIRMAN CLARK: I believe so. We
33 need a motion on the floor to move ahead.

34

35 MR. SQUARTSOFF: Mr. Chair. Do you
36 guys want to caucus before we get into the motion?

37

38 CHAIRMAN CLARK: I was going to ask,
39 did you want to do that prior to making a motion or do
40 we want to have a motion on the floor.

41

42 MR. SQUARTSOFF: I think it would be a
43 little easier if we went to caucus first. So, if you
44 don't mind, Mr. Chair, I'd like to ask for a caucus.

45

46 CHAIRMAN CLARK: At 10 minutes to 1:00
47 o'clock we'll stand down for Native caucus and
48 reconvene when you're ready. Thanks.

49

50 (Off record - 1:50)

1 (On record - 3:30)

2

3 CHAIRMAN CLARK: It's 3:30, we're going
4 to reconvene the meeting of the Alaska Migratory Bird
5 Co-Management Council. We were on old business under
6 Harvest Survey Committee report and recommendations on
7 annual survey methodology and costs. We were pending a
8 motion on Harvest Survey Committee's recommendation
9 number 2 and paused to have a caucus. Is there an
10 outcome from that, Member Pederson?

11

12 MR. PEDERSON: I'd like to make a
13 motion to adopt scenario number 5 in recommendation
14 number 2.

15

16 MR. HICKS: Second.

17

18 CHAIRMAN CLARK: Moved and seconded
19 that we adopt recommendation number 2 in scenario
20 number 5. I think discussion prior to this has made it
21 pretty clear that the Council wants to be on record as
22 supporting the pursuit of additional funding to support
23 scenario number 5 or to support a survey effort we
24 think is adequate. I don't think that needs to be a
25 part of the motion and I think everybody understands it
26 and as long as it's on the record, I think that is an
27 important part of the motion. If somebody thinks
28 otherwise -- Member Alcorn.

29

30 MR. ALCORN: A question to the maker of
31 the motion. Mike, would you be willing to amend the
32 motion to say that if that what we'll call soft money
33 is not forthcoming, we would revert back to option 6.

34

35 MR. PEDERSON: Yeah.

36

37 CHAIRMAN CLARK: Is that agreeable to
38 the second. Member Tahbone.

39

40 MS. TAHBONE: My understanding out of
41 our caucuses the motion that was made by Mike
42 recommends scenario number 5, but we would be agreeable
43 to an amendment to that motion, not that the maker of
44 the motion amends the motion.

45

46 MR. ALCORN: I'll offer an amendment
47 then that if we're unsuccessful obtaining soft money,
48 then we would revert to option 6, which is the \$432,598
49 option. I would offer that as a friendly amendment.

50

1 CHAIRMAN CLARK: There is an amendment
2 on the floor. Is there a second.
3
4 MR. HICKS: I'll second that amendment.
5
6 CHAIRMAN CLARK: Is there any
7 discussion on the amendment. Member Starkey.
8
9 MR. STARKEY: Clarification on the
10 motion. What does soft money mean?
11
12 CHAIRMAN CLARK: Member Alcorn.
13
14 MR. ALCORN: Soft money is money we
15 would try to compete for through grants.
16
17 MR. STARKEY: I guess I would not be in
18 favor of the amendment then because I would think if we
19 would be looking more broadly at all sources of revenue
20 on the surveys.
21
22 CHAIRMAN CLARK: I think in my mind
23 that's what we're doing. We're agreeing to pursue
24 funding wherever we might find it, but the fact that it
25 isn't in hand yet. I think that's what Member Alcorn
26 was referring to as soft money. Member Alcorn, Member
27 Squartsoff, then Member Hicks.
28
29 MR. ALCORN: Just a point of
30 clarification, Sky. When I talk about soft money, it's
31 as opposed to base money. What we refer to as base
32 money is the money that I've got that I count on coming
33 in to my budget annually and I'm not willing to support
34 a motion that would take nearly 100,000 extra dollars
35 over the 410 that we have. I wouldn't support that.
36
37 CHAIRMAN CLARK: Member Starkey.
38
39 MR. STARKEY: I would prefer that the
40 amendment be broader so that there would be a
41 possibility of looking at a further appropriation even.
42 There's no harm in asking. So that's why I would
43 prefer that the amendment be modified to just seek
44 additional funding rather than soft.
45
46 CHAIRMAN CLARK: Member Alcorn.
47
48 MR. ALCORN: That's fine.
49
50 CHAIRMAN CLARK: Yeah, I think as

1 broadly as possible. We should be seeking any
2 alternate source of funds that we can get our hands on.
3 Member Squartsoff and then Member Hicks.

4
5 MR. SQUARTSOFF: My smoked salmon is
6 what I had up in the air, peeling back the skin.
7 Sorry.

8
9 CHAIRMAN CLARK: So noted. Member
10 Hicks.

11
12 MR. HICKS: I just wanted to make clear
13 that scenario 5 is the only alternative that I see
14 should be pursued at this time. If scenario 6 were to
15 take place, it would only take place if all other
16 options have been exhausted. I want to make that clear
17 from my opinion.

18
19 MR. ALCORN: That's my understanding of
20 the motion.

21
22 CHAIRMAN CLARK: I think I can speak
23 for the whole council that we agree on that, that we
24 should vigorously pursue alternate funding. Scenario 5
25 is an embodiment of what this Council thinks is an
26 adequate survey method and I think we're all agreed
27 that we'll pursue whatever it takes to fund that
28 appropriately.

29
30 MS. TAHBONE: Question on the
31 amendment.

32
33 CHAIRMAN CLARK: Ready for the question
34 on the amendment. Is there any objection.

35
36 (No objections)

37
38 CHAIRMAN CLARK: Seeing none, the
39 motion is amended. Any further discussion on the main
40 motion.

41
42 (No comments)

43
44 MS. TAHBONE: Question on the main
45 motion.

46
47 CHAIRMAN CLARK: Question on the main
48 motion. Is there any objection.

49
50 (No objections)

1 CHAIRMAN CLARK: Seeing none, the main
2 motion carries. Thank you very much. I believe that
3 completes the Harvest Survey Committee report item.
4 Next on the list we'll move down to new business. The
5 first item in new business, the potential 2010
6 conservation and management initiatives. Mr. Oates,
7 are you prepared, and Mr. Bales.

8
9 MR. OATES: Thank you, Mr. Chairman.
10 In the past we've used this time slot to kind of review
11 the status of some species that are of particular
12 interest to the group. We'd like to do that again.
13 Normally you get a duet of Tom and Russ show. This
14 time we decided to expand our talent and now it's the
15 Tom and Russ and Brad show. Hopefully this will be
16 enlightening and not too devastatingly monotonous.

17
18 CHAIRMAN CLARK: You have the floor,
19 gentlemen.

20
21 MR. ROTHE: I guess I'll kick it off
22 with kind of a review of the goose populations that
23 we've been keeping track of more closely and I'll do
24 that with Brad. I think it's good to have
25 Brad here to give us the southern wintering ground
26 perspectives and he can share the management issues
27 that they have down there.
28 I'll highlight the population status and any kind of
29 Alaska stuff and Brad can comment on the southern
30 range.

31
32 I think the goose population we're most
33 concerned with and have been for a long time is Emperor
34 Geese. They don't leave Alaska, of course; winter in
35 the Aleutians and nest mostly in the Y-K Delta region.

36
37 This is our annual graph of status
38 based on the spring aerial survey and you can see the
39 Emperor Geese have never really gotten a grip on
40 population increase. There's a few things that are
41 going on. It looks like at least in the main Y-K Delta
42 breeding grounds that there is some increase in the
43 adult breeding pairs and the total geese, which are
44 probably mostly adults, but it hasn't translated into
45 producing more young to increase the populations. So
46 this is an example of Emperor Geese just not being able
47 to be productive enough to get over the hurdle.

48
49 This is just a graph of the spring and
50 fall surveys since the '80s and the one that counts

1 that we track as the population index are the red bars,
2 which is the spring survey. I think that's most
3 representative. Again, you can see the line kind of
4 bounces up and down a little bit, but is never really
5 taken off.

6

7 The Y-K Goose Plan and our Flyway
8 Management Plans all say we're not going to consider a
9 hunting season until we get to an average of 80,000
10 birds and we're not getting there.

11

12 So, in summary, the main concerns about
13 Emperor Geese is that we're below our goal and have
14 been and they're not increasing. We know that birds
15 and eggs continue to be harvested in some areas despite
16 the fact that the seasons have been closed since 1986
17 and subsistence seasons have not been opened. It's
18 just a matter of some areas, some villages in
19 particular, that we keep getting information about
20 continuing harvest, so that's more outreach. The
21 enforcement folks have made those areas priorities to
22 try and get that harvest eliminated.

23

24 The other thing with Emperor Geese,
25 like I said, they're not very productive, so when they
26 go to the Aleutians to winter, the survival of first
27 year birds is not very good compared to other birds
28 that go to California. So, with Emperor Geese, we
29 always have to keep in mind that they're not as
30 productive as Canada Geese or White-fronted Geese.

31

32 Anything else, Russ?

33

34 MS. TAHBONE: So what kind of outreach
35 efforts are you guys doing regarding Emperor?

36

37 MR. ROTHE: Mostly the Yukon Delta
38 Refuge has done a lot of work. RIT's go to villages
39 and constantly tell people not to take these birds.
40 They've been featured on the bird calendar, but I'm not
41 aware of other stuff that's going on. Russ.

42

43 MR. OATES: I have a position in the
44 Division of Migratory Bird Management that is an
45 outreach position. It started out in the non-game shop
46 and when I started as division chief about a year ago,
47 I made a decision to convert that position to division
48 wide, so that person is taking on waterfowl outreach
49 responsibilities as well. Her assignment is to work
50 with and develop an outreach program that has Emperor

1 Geese as one of its primary focuses.

2

3 We want to work with the different
4 regions and the refuges and all the regions that these
5 birds go to and we're still in the concept stage, but
6 we're going to use the Emperor Goose Management Plan as
7 kind of a basis and that plan was revised by a
8 subcommittee of the Technical Committee of this body.
9 It had representation on it from, I believe, Kawerak,
10 AVCP, Bristol Bay and.....

11

12 MR. ROTHE: The Aleutians.

13

14 MR. OATES: Yeah, I think the
15 Aleutians. I think your group was on it, too, Peter.
16 But that plan was revised by that group and approved
17 and sent through the Pacific Flyway and approved there
18 and there's provisions in there for outreach. We're in
19 the early stages, but we're going to try to get a
20 better outreach effort going that involves regional
21 input into the messages and things like that. We're
22 not totally off the ground, but that's where we want to
23 go with this. It hasn't happened yet, but we're
24 working on it.

25

26 MS. TAHBONE: So it's a consensus of
27 you three that 80,000 population is a realistic number
28 for Emperors?

29

30 MR. OATES: You mean the current
31 status?

32

33 MS. TAHBONE: Yeah, to get to 80,000.

34

35 MR. OATES: That's the minimum level at
36 which.....

37

38 MS. TAHBONE: Based on the first part.
39 Is that what it's based on?

40

41 MR. OATES: Well, the first bar was a
42 survey that was done in 1964 and it was believed to be
43 a minimum estimate. It was done by my division and one
44 of our most experienced survey pilots did that and that
45 did not even include the entire range and that was the
46 estimate at that point. The flyway, back before this
47 body was organized, got together and talked about what
48 would be an approach to Emperor Goose conservation and
49 that kind of came to a head in 1986 when the fall
50 hunting season was closed. I guess when this body came

1 into being, the subsistence season was closed as well.

2

3

4 The flyway got together and they
5 developed a harvest strategy I guess you'd call it that
6 had population goals. The population goal being -- was
7 it 150,000 as the goal? But there were bars set,
8 benchmarks set where the three year spring survey
9 average, which we've reviewed in the process of
10 revising this plan with the Emperor Subcommittee of the
11 Technical Committee of the Co-Management Council. We
12 reviewed the different surveys that we do and
13 determined that that spring survey probably remained
14 the best measure of the population. We took those
15 benchmarks that had been set years ago and reviewed
16 them as well and concurred that those were the
17 benchmarks we wanted to stick with. I forgot what the
18 -- 150,000 was the population objective. All hunting
19 was supposed to be closed at, what, 90,000 or what was
20 that?

21

22 MR. ROTHE: Eighty.

23

24 MR. OATES: I'm talking about
25 reopening. No, that's.....

26

27 MR. ROTHE: Sixty thousand.

28

29 MR. OATES: Yeah, all hunting closed
30 when the three year spring average was 60,000. And
31 then to ensure that the population was well on its way
32 to recovery, before we'd consider reopening the season
33 we set that at 90,000 once we got them going in the
34 right direction. As you can see, they've pretty much
35 just kind of rocked along.

36

37 So, yeah, I guess the idea behind this
38 is if we all work together. We'd like to have enough
39 birds that we could have allowable take by subsistence
40 hunters and ideally enough so that the fall hunters
41 could take some as well. That's our objective.

42

43 CHAIRMAN CLARK: Go ahead.

44

45 MR. DEVINE: Peter Devine here. I've
46 stressed for the last two years that everything is
47 anywhere from two to four weeks behind. Has the
48 timeline that you guys do the survey changed to reflect
49 these changes?

50

1 MR. OATES: What initiates the survey
2 is we communicate with folks at the Yukon Delta Refuge
3 and we find out where the open water is on the coast
4 because we fly out of Bethel and we go over to the
5 point at which the open water is on the coast and we
6 work from there all the way down the range of where the
7 birds are staging in the spring. So that's basically
8 how we do it. We try to adapt to what the water
9 conditions are in a given year and where the birds are.

10
11 MR. DEVINE: Is that a grid-type
12 survey.....

13
14 MR. OATES: No.

15
16 MR. DEVINE:or is it just flying
17 along the coast?

18
19 MR. OATES: I'm sorry, it's not a grid,
20 it's flying along the coast. A lot of our surveys --
21 when our surveys are over terrestrial habitats, over
22 wetlands, we typically -- unless it's a specialized
23 survey like some of the loon surveys we do, we
24 typically fly straight line transects as a sample of a
25 wetlands. When it's a marine-based type survey over
26 water areas like that, unless it's a specialized survey
27 for widely dispersed species, if we're looking for
28 flock species we fly the coast and visually try to
29 locate the flocks and then we go in for a good count on
30 them. It's a different approach.

31
32 MR. DEVINE: I have one more question.

33
34 CHAIRMAN CLARK: Go ahead.

35
36 MR. DEVINE: When we do the sea otter
37 survey, we have an inside guy and an outside guy. The
38 only ones that are counted are the ones that are on the
39 inside. The ones on the outside aren't counted because
40 it's outside of the survey, but they are noted. Does
41 that happen with the bird survey?

42
43 MR. OATES: We count from both sides of
44 the aircraft, but typically we put the most experienced
45 observer on the side where most of the birds are. In
46 other words, if the most experienced observer at the
47 time is on the right-hand side, the pilot will direct
48 the plane so that the larger flock is on the right-hand
49 side because typically the more experienced observer
50 has the better ability to estimate larger flock sizes.

1 MR. ROTHE: Does it fly backwards?
2
3 MR. OATES: Yes, have reverse on our
4 new airplanes. No, the pilot just maneuvers around to
5 get the birds in the most advantageous position.
6
7 CHAIRMAN CLARK: Member Tahbone.
8
9 MS. TAHBONE: Are you guys looking at
10 any new technology?
11
12 MR. OATES: Mostly in our age ratio
13 survey that we do in the fall we fly in the fall as
14 well and one of the things we get from that survey is
15 aerial photos of the flocks to get the number of young
16 produced, the fledged, basically the dark-headed ones
17 are the young of the year. We've been experimenting
18 with -- we switched over from film photography to
19 digital, but that's about all the new technology that
20 we've done.
21
22 MS. TAHBONE: Well, because we just had
23 Google Earth visit us recently, not me, but in our
24 region and a comment that was made was when did they
25 take these pictures because they're just white. I
26 mean, you know, it's just like -- I mean, you know, if
27 you could get Google Earth involved kind of a deal and
28 you could -- I was just wondering if.....
29
30 MR. OATES: When they come out with
31 Google Emperor, we'll sign up.
32
33 CHAIRMAN CLARK: Member Squartsoff.
34
35 MR. SQUARTSOFF: Yeah, Russ. I was
36 kind of curious in 1990 and '04, the difference between
37 the fall and spring surveys. Is that because of the
38 inexperienced and experienced observers? That's a
39 pretty big fluctuation between the two.
40
41 MR. OATES: I really can't address the
42 one differences and the fall surveys are typically
43 higher because they include the production of the young
44 of the year.
45
46 MR. SQUARTSOFF: But I mean you're
47 talking quite a few thousands.
48
49 MR. OATES: I mean there is variation.
50 There is variation.

1 MR. SQUARTSOFF: Where all the other
2 ones are fairly close.

3
4 MR. OATES: Sometimes we don't get it
5 just right, which is one of the reasons we go with a
6 three-year running average.

7
8 MR. SQUARTSOFF: Right.

9
10 MR. OATES: Hopefully we can get it
11 right two out of three years, hopefully. We try really
12 hard every year to get it right, but we know we don't
13 always succeed.

14
15 MR. SQUARTSOFF: I was just kind of
16 curious because the difference between them two and all
17 the other years are fairly close.

18
19 MR. OATES: I can't remember what
20 happened in 1990. I can't remember what happened last
21 week actually.

22
23 MR. SQUARTSOFF: Doug, a replacement.

24
25 (Laughter)

26
27 CHAIRMAN CLARK: Any further questions.

28
29 (No comments)

30
31 CHAIRMAN CLARK: Onto Black Brant.

32
33 MR. ROTHE: The next set of goose
34 populations we share with Lower Pacific Flyway and
35 Russia and Canada. At the July flyway meeting, we have
36 committee meetings on each of the goose populations and
37 there were a number of issues that came up that we
38 wanted to make sure the Co-Management Council was aware
39 of and talked with AVCP about some of these issues. We
40 don't have any
41 specific thoughts or recommendations right now, but we
42 want to make sure you understand things are changing
43 with some of these populations. Brad will comment a
44 little bit more, too, about Washington, Oregon,
45 California situations.

46
47 The Brant have been a concern because
48 over the long term they haven't shown any major
49 increases or decreases, probably a
50 slight decline over a long time, but they're holding

1 their own. We found ourselves in the last couple of
2 years in an unusual situation where the winter counts
3 and the breeding ground counts on the Y-K Delta have
4 gone different directions.

5
6 January of 2008 is the last count and
7 it was 147,000 birds, which seemed to be a pretty good
8 deal. That's a pretty decent number for Brant. That
9 was the good news until the birds came up and they
10 encountered a late spring. Typically, about 80 percent
11 of the Black Brant population breeds in the Y-K Delta
12 in five big colonies. That middle top graph shows the
13 number of nests or breeding pairs that are on those
14 five major colonies. You can see a big downturn this
15 last spring.

16
17 So we found ourselves in this weird
18 situation where our management plan sets the harvest
19 based on the January count, which was high, but we knew
20 the birds were not going to produce this year in the Y-
21 K Delta and it put us really in a dilemma with two
22 sets of data going in different directions, as I said.

23
24 In addition to that, there's some other
25 weird stuff going on. We've seen a growing number of
26 Brant that just stay at Cold Bay all winter. It used
27 to be just a couple thousand birds and it went to
28 10,000, 15,000, as high as 20.

29
30 MR. OATES: Forty. It was over 40,000.

31
32 MR. ROTHE: We have no idea why they
33 wouldn't go south. Most of those birds should be going
34 to Mexico. But when you have 40,000 birds, that's a
35 third of the population staying in Izembek Lagoon
36 making a living here in the winter. There's some
37 thought that maybe that puts a lot of stress on them
38 and they're not productive during the following nesting
39 season. We just don't really understand it. It's a
40 whole different situation when you have that many birds
41 staying north. So there are a couple of projects that
42 they're starting to look at what's going on with those
43 birds that stay in Izembek.

44
45 MR. OATES: Excuse me just a second.
46 One thing of interest, as many of you know, Dr. James
47 Sedinger has been working in the Tutakoke Brant colony
48 for over 30 years and he's got a number of the birds
49 marked. One of the questions we have is how can the
50 colonies be going down like this and the population be

1 stable or increasing and one of the things he's found
2 is the adult brant have a high survival rate. In fact,
3 it's among the very highest survival rate recorded for
4 geese. He's been looking at the ages based on the
5 taggings of the birds that he's done at the Tutakoke
6 colony and the average age of the nesting brant on that
7 colony is 10 years old. That's how these populations,
8 we believe, have been able to sustain in the light of
9 this bad production. They're having this high
10 survival. Obviously that can't go on forever, so we've
11 got to do some things to improve productivity on the
12 colonies.

13

14 MR. ROTHE: That means basically that
15 the adults are not getting shot during hunting season
16 or subsistence hunting, but there's not enough
17 youngsters to put new blood in the system and get
18 things perking again. That's the real key problem.

19

20 So in terms of harvest management, that
21 puts us in this really weird situation where you'll
22 remember in 2005 the January count really dropped and
23 our management plan says we've got to cut back hunting,
24 so all the state implemented restrictions in their fall
25 seasons. California and Alaska cut the season in half,
26 and Washington. There were some restrictions that the
27 Co-Management Council adopted for the Y-K Delta as
28 well. No hunting of any birds in the colony areas and
29 that kind of stuff.

30

31 You can see the January count in 2008
32 now is going up. It's really high. Our management
33 plan says, okay, liberalize, more, but we know there's
34 a breeding pattern this year pretty much and we're
35 going to regret the idea if we open harvest up too
36 much.

37

38 MR. ALCORN: Tom, can I ask you a
39 question about that particular issue. Isn't it the
40 prerogative of the management council to be
41 conservative knowing sort of the fact that underlines
42 the mechanics of whether you have a liberal or
43 conservative season knowing that there's little or no
44 recruitment into the adult population because of the
45 issues affecting the nesting grounds? Doesn't the
46 management council have the prerogative of taking that
47 into consideration regardless of what the management
48 plan says?

49

50 MR. ROTHE: You mean the Flyway

1 Council?

2

3

MR. ALCORN: The Flyway Council.

4

5

MR. ROTHE: I'm glad you asked that, Doug. Our harvest strategy, like I said, is based on the January count. Where we are now is over 135,000, what we call moderate, but still would allow us to essentially double our harvest if we wanted to. Well, in July at the Flyway meeting, Washington, Oregon and California decided not to take the hunting because they knew the breeding population was hit pretty hard. So they just did not choose to change their regulations. We were real concerned about that, so that's kind of where the discussion went.

16

17

MR. BALES: Tom, if I might, at this point. The coastal states knew there was some other factors we should consider that aren't in the current harvest strategy, but I think at this point it brings up some other questions about how valid is the current harvest strategy and should we be reviewing it and updating it and factoring in some of these other considerations in an overall decision at the flyway level. We're basically talking in the Lower 48, Washington, Oregon and California.

27

28

We have had some further discussions since, but it brings up some issues that we'll also talk about with Cacklers and White-fronts, is working closely with this group and in particular the AVCP and maybe some of the North Slope folks on brant and trying to come up with a new consensus on how we look at harvest strategy, updating the current one we have. We deem this as a very high priority over the next year and want to encourage -- we don't have any specific ideas and I think a lot of this is on purpose because there are partners here we want to consult with and start bringing everybody's ideas together and start on the process this winter as much as possible.

41

42

MR. ROTHE: I think our plan is about -- what is it, '99, 2000? So our plan is eight, nine years old. If you notice, all these numbers are tied to the January count. We thought that was the most useful measure of what was going on with brant. The only time the breeding colonies come into effect is if we find ourselves with half the birds we had on the colonies and a low count. We knew we were going to be in deep trouble and that's where the closed hunting

1 scenario would come in. But that's the only time that
2 we actually have used the colony numbers to make a
3 decision and now we're realizing maybe that's not the
4 best
5 way to go. As Brad said, the opportunity to talk with
6 AVCP, North Slope Borough, our major constituencies in
7 this, and I think we need to find a better way to do
8 business on this one.

9
10 These are the same things that are in
11 the Y-K Goose Plan by the way, too, but we haven't had
12 a Goose Plan update in several years either.

13
14 Western High Arctic Brant. I think we
15 mentioned this before. This is just a small population
16 of nests in the very far north of Canada. They pass
17 through Alaska and they go to Puget Sound near Seattle
18 and near Vancouver, British Columbia. And they're
19 chugging along. It's a real small group of birds.
20 Washington state and British Columbia have reduced
21 their hunting to make sure these birds don't get into
22 trouble. But they are in the mix when they come around
23 the North Slope and end up at Izembek and spend fall
24 here.

25
26 So the main brant issues is they're
27 still below their objective and we think this next
28 January count is probably going to drop us further away
29 from the goal. We've got fox predation. I need to
30 talk about that a little bit.

31
32 A couple years ago, based on James
33 Sedinger's analysis that production was the problem, we
34 started a fox initiative on the Y-K Delta. USGS had
35 some research interests. The refuge was doing fox
36 control to protect Spectacled Eiders on Kigigak Island
37 and had looked at some limited control on another brant
38 colony. Fish and Game, Ducks Unlimited contributed
39 money to trap foxes at Tutakoke River. So we got a
40 bunch of parts where we all kind of generally agreed
41 that when there's lots of foxes and it looks like the
42 brant colony is going to get nailed badly, then we
43 should go in there and trap them out and try to produce
44 more brant.

45
46 The only problem is that you've got DU,
47 university, a couple agencies involved, AVCP and we're
48 all kind of just -- we don't quite ever act together
49 yet, so one thing we want to do this fall is get
50 together, define who is doing what and see what we've

1 got for money and try to continue on trapping foxes
2 where it looks like they're going to cause problems for
3 brant. I think we can do that. It might be October or
4 November by the time we get all parties on board.

5
6 Ducks Unlimited has found some private
7 donors that love brant and they hunt in California and
8 they put up \$20,000 a year for five years to go do it.
9 So what we do then is work with USGS to actually do the
10 trapping and we need to look for local trappers if we
11 can. Jim Sedinger comes in with the university crew
12 and monitors the effects. He counts nests and sees how
13 we did. I think it's a really good program. Over the
14 long term it could really help get brant out of the
15 hole and going again.

16
17 The Harvest Survey Program is
18 developing. We're really glad we have North Slope data
19 now, but we don't know that much about subsistence
20 harvest in Canada. There hasn't been a harvest survey
21 in Mexico for quite a few years, so we need to keep an
22 eye on that.

23
24 Some places like Puget Sound and
25 Washington, they want to accumulate more brant, but
26 there's lots of disturbance and other things going on,
27 so it's kind of hard to get the brant to stay where you
28 want them, but there's goals to try and protect them
29 here and there.

30
31 I should mention too that every once in
32 a while in Mexico where most of the birds winter there
33 are proposals to either do salt farms, big resorts, all
34 sorts of stuff kind of right on top of where the brant
35 spend the winter in the major lagoons there, so we're
36 always alert to proposals that might disturb brant or
37 damage eel grass there.

38
39 Okay. Cackling Geese. Brad's
40 favorite. Brad kind of rants about this slide.

41
42 MR. BALES: Very dated.

43
44 MR. ROTHE: We told you on a number of
45 occasions they all used to go to California and now you
46 can forget it. There are hardly any Cacklers in
47 California. They're all in Oregon and Washington. The
48 red dots are places where banded birds have been
49 recovered. That generally outlines the main area where
50 the Cackling Goose population is.

1 We have a goal of 250,000 in the Goose
2 Management Plan and the Flyway Plan. We're not there
3 yet. We're still below 200,000. There's some other
4 things going on. This is our estimate from the
5 breeding grounds that are projected into a fall
6 population estimate. You can see there's been an
7 upswing here the last few years. The main deal there
8 is that over the long term we have concurred with
9 additional Cackler harvest in Washington and Oregon
10 because they have crop damage problems that Brad will
11 talk about. So we increased our harvest after 1994
12 when the population got big enough to do some hunting
13 on it.

14
15 Here's the bag limits that we had. It
16 went from two birds a day to four birds a day. I guess
17 that probably resulted in a little too much harvest, so
18 we corrected it again. The last few years the flyways
19 had a two-bird limit.

20
21 California, the purple bars there,
22 again, they don't have any Cacklers. That reflects
23 their Canada Goose bag limit for small geese, which are
24 different birds. So they're not blasting Cacklers,
25 they're shooting other kinds of geese.

26
27 Anyway, the point is we got together
28 when the Cacklers started to go down again. Nobody
29 wanted to go there. Oregon and Washington and
30 everybody adjusted their bag limits down to two and so
31 now we're seeing that little up tick, starting to see
32 some improvement and we'll probably hang in there and
33 see what happens here.

34
35 So they are below the goal. We know
36 all the birds have not piled into Washington and Oregon
37 for a long time, so it's their problem and not
38 California's problem. There's a lot of pressure from
39 the agricultural community in Washington and Oregon to
40 control crop damage from these birds. Ultimately, with
41 Cacklers and all the other geese that are in the
42 Willamette Valley and lower Columbia River there may be
43 some carrying capacity problems with just being able to
44 maintain all those birds in one region. I think I'll
45 let Brad exponentiate on that a little bit
46 more.

47
48 MR. BALES: Basically in western Oregon
49 and the Willamette Valley we've always had restrictive
50 hunting seasons for Canada Geese and that was primarily

1 because of the Dusky Canada Goose from the Copper River
2 Delta, wintered just in the Willamette Valley and that
3 has been going on. We've dealt with a lot of
4 depredation issues with rye grass farmers and other
5 folks on a variety of things and things that kind of
6 stabilized, but the
7 Cackler coming into the Willamette Valley and stopping
8 going to California put a whole new wrinkle into things
9 and, in some cases, the Cackler management is really a
10 higher priority that we're trying to deal with,
11 especially trying to balance out the needs of the
12 subsistence harvest, dealing with crop depredation and
13 protecting all these different goose populations.

14
15 So that has put a real wrinkle into our
16 management and things have gotten more difficult with
17 the need to increase the Cackler population to meet
18 population goals. We have taken steps in our sport
19 harvest. Right now our hunters -- Cacklers are a very
20 sought-after harvested bird because they're easier to
21 identify than some of the other species. They're in
22 very high numbers and they're a wide distribution
23 around the Valley, so they are very highly sought
24 after. So we're not very popular with some of our
25 hunters when we cut the bag limit in half, but we also
26 recognize that we need to meet the population goals to
27 help with the subsistence harvest here, too. So that's
28 kind of an ongoing process.

29
30 I think an important component, and I
31 would want to encourage continued dialogue, is that
32 folks from the Y-K Delta and the farming community
33 exchanged communications, they met with each other.
34 The WCC has been down in the Willamette Valley at
35 least, I think, twice that I can think of, maybe three
36 times. Representatives from the Oregon Farm Bureau and
37 the Washington Farm Bureau have come up to Bethel for
38 meetings and stuff and having that dialogue.

39
40 I'll freely admit there's huge cultural
41 differences, different priorities, but it's been a
42 really good thing, so people understand where we're
43 coming. It was a very hard thing for the Oregon Farm
44 Bureau to come on the side of the natural resource
45 agencies and reducing the Cackler bag limit and trying
46 to reach that 250,000. In fact, I was very surprised
47 they did that, but I think again that was because of
48 the dialogue and meeting face to face and trying to
49 understand everybody's needs. So I think that's an
50 important component that we need to continue with and

1 we'll continue to work with that.

2

3 There are some issues with habitat on
4 the wintering grounds because of increasing costs of
5 farming and different things. We're seeing some
6 changes to different types of crops, like berries and
7 things, which aren't conducive to goose wintering
8 habitat, but it's ways that farming communities can
9 make more money and don't have to worry about goose
10 depredation.

11

12 Another interesting thing that just
13 happened this last winter is with the ethanol boom.
14 Many farmers across the nation put in corn all of a
15 sudden and that caused a huge glut in corn and that
16 dropped prices, but at the same time all of a sudden
17 there was a wheat shortage, so there's big money in
18 that.

19

20 Well, some of the Willamette Valley
21 farmers took advantage of that situation and they had
22 it just about the right timing and we had 150-175,000
23 acres of rye grass field that was good goose wintering
24 habitat that was converted to wheat. So when the birds
25 arrive this fall, they're going to find just wheat
26 stubble fields and they're not going to find the normal
27 grass fields that they've been wintering on in past
28 years. It's kind of a different twist and it wasn't
29 related just to geese depredation, it was just the
30 market prices for these different crops. So we are
31 seeing different dynamics with the wintering crop
32 depredation issues down there and just what kind of
33 crops are grown.

34

35 Again, we can control some of that. We
36 can work with some of the farmers, but we do need to
37 keep up the dialogue and make sure that both the users
38 on the subsistence side and the farmers that are trying
39 to take some of the hit from the crop depredation
40 issues that they're understanding and you guys are
41 talking. We need to continue that. That's a really
42 important thing.

43

44 MR. ROTHE: This is a really good
45 example of having Farm Bureau people come up and go to
46 Chevak. They all of a sudden understand where
47 subsistence hunters are coming from when they see life
48 in the village and the prices in the store and all
49 that.

50

1 MR. ALCORN: A question to Brad about
2 the migration route. They used to go to California.
3 They started for the last decade going to the
4 Willamette Valley because of the rye grass farmers. If
5 they're no longer planting rye grass, is there any
6 thought that those birds might start pursuing grass to
7 the south again, back in the Sacramento Valley?
8

9 MR. BALES: We don't really know. Part
10 of the problem is that we don't really know what caused
11 the shift in the first place. We can speculate, but it
12 happened in a very short time period, over like two to
13 three years and very rapidly, but there's no smoking
14 gun that tells us exactly why that shift occurred.
15 Likewise, we have places in California that were
16 traditionally Cackler habitat areas and even some of
17 the State Agency folks are saying we can't have better
18 use for this. We don't have Cacklers anymore. Can we
19 switch it to some other type of habitat and there's
20 some, well, let's wait, maybe we'll start getting some
21 back and stuff. We don't want to destroy that and lose
22 any opportunity.
23

24 So it is an interesting question. I
25 would say anything is possible, but we didn't really
26 have an idea what caused this shift to begin with.
27 There are still quite a bit of acreage left that's not
28 into wheat fields and stuff and how long that may last,
29 you know, economics can change rather quickly.
30

31 MR. ROTHE: There's a number of things
32 that happened. There was some habitat changes in the
33 Klamath Basin, which was the major stopover, right on
34 the Oregon/California border. You never really think
35 about going to the store and the stuff you buy, like
36 corn and wheat, being a goose issue. Remember, there's
37 a rice shortage in the world right now. California
38 Central Valley is just loaded up with rice. That's
39 fine for White-fronted Geese and Snow Geese and birds
40 that can get along on leftover rice seeds, but for
41 green grazers there's really not that much pasture land
42 or wheat in the Central Valley, so it could create some
43 problems.
44

45 MR. OATES: Just to give a little
46 different perspective, your question, what are the odds
47 of them going back to California. I had a discussion
48 about this with Bob Trost, the Pacific Flyway
49 representative, who for many years was the Division of
50 Migratory Bird Management's Washington goose person,

1 and based on his experience observing the Canada Goose
2 populations on the east coast, I think what he would
3 say very likely it's never happened before. Once a
4 wintering range has retracted to the north, it's never
5 gone back. So it would be counter to what our
6 experience has been with Canada Goose populations on
7 the east coast.

8

9 MR. ALCORN: A follow-up question then.
10 If we don't have a documented record of them ever
11 expanding their range, I realize it's hypothetical and
12 speculation, but the other option is that the
13 population just begins to wane because they don't have
14 wintering habitat, right? If they're not going to move
15 south, they're going to starve themselves out or be
16 eating along the roadside, I guess, along the highway
17 in Willamette Valley.

18

19 MR. OATES: Canada Geese demonstrated
20 quite an ability to adapt to urban situations, as we
21 all have learned. Whether or not Cacklers can do it
22 remains to be seen. Brad may want to have a different
23 twist on that.

24

25 MR. BALES: No, I would agree, they are
26 very adaptable. In fact, we have very large numbers of
27 Cacklers wintering within some of our city limits;
28 within the state capital, within the Portland metro
29 area and just small parks. It's been quite surprising
30 to me to watch them move to some of these urban
31 settings and be -- basically you've got the freeway,
32 you've got a small strip of grass and they're right
33 there and taking advantage of every piece of green food
34 they can.

35

36 MR. ROTHE: This is not unprecedented
37 either. It's kind of interesting, way back in the '60s
38 and '70s when the Dusky Goose was the main management
39 concern, the Service bought a bunch of refuges in the
40 Willamette Valley and put those into green grass crops
41 to hold geese. Then the Valley changed too into
42 actually producing more grazing land use. What that
43 did is it short-stopped the Taverners and Lesser Canada
44 Geese from going to California. They used to go south
45 too. By the time you reached the late '70s there's
46 already a bunch of birds that short-stopped into the
47 Willamette Valley and set up a core. So what they're
48 dealing with is basically all the subspecies of Canada
49 Geese from Alaska and western Canada Geese. It's a
50 mess.

1 This is a picture, you can't see it
2 very well, but there's Cacklers from here to the
3 horizon almost. You can see the white cheeks. All
4 those dark bands are just solid bunches of birds. You
5 can imagine what the farmer thinks when they swoop in
6 on him.

7

8 CHAIRMAN CLARK: Member Devine.

9

10 MR. DEVINE: I have a question for
11 Brad. Is there any kind of a program -- I know Ducks
12 Unlimited goes after wetlands, but is there any kind of
13 program set to where not everybody is going to convert
14 their farm to corn or to higher-paying crops?

15

16 MR. BALES: There isn't anything
17 specific right now. We've had some discussions looking
18 at different types of easement programs and, of course,
19 you have to come up with a funding source and things
20 like that. So we have approached that and we do have a
21 Goose Depredation Plan that was completed several years
22 ago trying to balance out some of these things and
23 those types of programs are listed in there, but it's
24 been extremely difficult to get any additional funding
25 from Congress. We got a little bit of help for a
26 couple years, but it has long since gone away and we
27 haven't gotten any support for any aspect of the Goose
28 Depredation Plan at this time. Some of the Wetland
29 Preserve Program and things have been included.

30

31 Kind of on an interesting note, there's
32 some speculation that some of the enhancement of
33 wetlands in the Willamette Valley over the last 10 to
34 20 years may have been conducive in holding more geese.
35 The Willamette Valley traditionally, when geese were
36 migrating south, during the early fall was fairly dry.
37 There weren't any large bodies or reservoirs or big
38 bodies of water anywhere. That has changed now and
39 that may be something that's attracting those birds.
40 Once they stay for a little bit and there's green food
41 everywhere, they're saying, hey, we don't need to go
42 further south. They're very adaptable that way.

43

44 CHAIRMAN CLARK: Okay.

45

46 MR. ROTHE: Russ hasn't seen this, but
47 I put Aleutian Geese in here because you'll see this
48 theme now for a couple populations that we get into
49 trouble at some point in history and then we work our
50 butts off trying to get populations restored and

1 eventually we get too many and we get blamed for it.
2 The Aleutian Goose, of course, is an amazing recovery
3 story since the 1960s when they were an endangered
4 species and struggled along. The Fish and Wildlife
5 Service removed foxes from the breeding islands.
6 California and Oregon and other folks stopped hunting.
7 Canada Goose hunting was closed in Unit 10 to get these
8 birds going.

9
10 Then all of a sudden they took off.
11 They were de-listed and as soon as the flyway took over
12 normal management, look what happened to that.

13
14 MR. OATES: Oh, give me a break.

15
16 MR. ROTHE: No, they live on the
17 Aleutian Islands and without the foxes there they're
18 producing like crazy. There's hardly any hunting in
19 Alaska. There's not that many people in the islands
20 and they certainly don't come through any area near
21 Anchorage or Juneau or anywhere where we shoot birds.
22 They just pour into California's Central Valley where
23 they have been protected. In springtime, they kind of
24 do a loop around. They go out into the northwest
25 California coast near Arcata and that's an area of
26 pastureland, sheep farmers, cattle farmers, dairy
27 farmers, so you can guess what's coming next, right.
28 A hundred thousand Aleutian Geese on the pastures.
29 Brad.

30
31 MR. BALES: Yeah, this is another
32 population we haven't really -- the subsistence part
33 hasn't been an issue, but the states of Oregon and
34 California have taken some framework changes trying to
35 increase liberalization as much as possible, but I
36 think even with the very liberal seasons we have
37 primarily in California, we're really not making a dent
38 in this population. We did, as a flyway, set the
39 population objective at 60,000 kind of in light of we
40 didn't want to create a bunch of new depredation
41 problems, but apparently Aleutians can't read and they
42 just went on and doubled the population and they're way
43 over the 60,000. I don't know how we'll ever bring it
44 back down.

45
46 Again, primarily most of them are in
47 California, but we are starting to see some shifts and,
48 of course, kind of like with Cacklers it makes me
49 extremely nervous when the shift might stop that we may
50 get a bunch more of those birds in Oregon. Primarily

1 we've had a small segment of the population from the
2 Semidi Islands. Birds have traditionally wintered on
3 the north coast of Oregon, but we're starting to see
4 some of the birds from the Aleutian chain that
5 traditionally went on down to California. They're
6 short stopping and staying in Tillamook County
7 primarily and not going farther south. So it was a
8 couple thousand birds and it was 4,000 birds and then
9 6,000 birds, so it's not as rapid as the Cackler shift,
10 but there are still a small percentage of the birds
11 that aren't going down there, so that is creating some
12 additional concerns and we do have quite a bit of
13 available habitat for geese on the south coast also.
14 So those are some things we're taking a close look at.
15 We're trying to increase harvest, but I think this is a
16 goose population that's growing so fast it's going to
17 be hard for us to catch up with it.

18
19 MR. ROTHE: The Semidi Islands for a
20 long time only had about 150 birds at the most and they
21 spent the winter in the central Oregon coast, but now
22 these western Aleutian birds from Buldir and the other
23 islands are now sticking, so you've got a couple
24 thousand other Aleutian Geese on top of them, so we
25 can't keep track of the Semidi birds anymore.

26
27 There was a successful marking program
28 this summer, so they did collar some Semidi birds and
29 that will help Brad figure out where the heck those few
30 birds are in the big mix he's dealing with right now.

31
32 MR. BALES: In conjunction with that
33 too, we're also doing some genetic work. There's
34 conjecture that since a lot of the pairing occurs on
35 wintering grounds, that some of the Semidi birds may be
36 pairing up with the western Aleutians, so we may have
37 some genetic flux. The bottom line is, what we
38 considered Semidi birds, in a few years that may not
39 even exist, so we are trying to do some genetic work to
40 try to work with that. I appreciate the Service has
41 come up with some funding to help us answer some of
42 those questions.

43
44 MR. ALCORN: Can you tell these birds
45 side by side, a Cackler from an Aleutian, so if they
46 begin to mix say up around the Columbia where a lot of
47 the Cacklers are, can the average person spot the
48 difference between the two?

49
50 MR. BALES: I think with some training

1 between Cacklers and Aleutians, yes. On the Semidi
2 birds, which are considered Aleutians also, compared to
3 the western Aleutians, there are some differences and
4 things, but I think it maybe takes a little bit more
5 highly trained people that have been familiar with it,
6 but it's much more difficult.

7
8 MR. ROTHE: The Aleutians generally
9 have a lighter breast. The Cacklers have a coppery,
10 darker breast to them, and the Aleutians, if you're
11 lucky, you can see the big, white neck ring on them.
12 That's pretty decent.

13
14 The Y-K Goose Plan, of course, laid out
15 the procedures for reducing harvest on White-fronted
16 Geese in the 1980s. Because they're more dispersed in
17 the Y-K Delta they tend to breed more successfully.
18 Hunting pressure during subsistence seasons is not
19 focused on them that much. Let me put it this way.
20 All the Cacklers nest mostly within 20 miles of the Y-K
21 coast, so when you have those villages out there they
22 can hunt Cacklers pretty effectively.

23
24 With White-fronts spread all over the
25 delta fewer hunters have access to all those birds, so
26 the White-front population got a chance to take off and
27 we've never caught up to them. We've all liberalized
28 hunting several times now. Subsistence harvest has
29 been coming up and, as you can see, we aren't really
30 putting a dent in them. We're more than double of what
31 our goal is.

32
33 A cautionary thing is we have this
34 little population of Tulle White-fronted Geese that
35 breeds in the Susitna Valley. They look similar, but
36 there's only maybe 10,000 birds there, so we need to
37 protect them. They'll move out earlier, they just went
38 through Oregon, and they'll get to California first.
39 When the general California season opens up in October,
40 they're mixed up with all these other Pacific White-
41 fronts. So it's something we need to take care of and
42 make sure Tullies don't get hit in the mix here.

43
44 Our harvest strategy, which was
45 developed maybe back in 1999 in conjunction with the Y-
46 K Goose Plan, said just to be careful back then we're
47 not going to harvest more than 15 percent of the
48 average population for that year. Now we realize,
49 well, 15 percent means that the population could
50 increase at 5 to 10 percent a year on top of that

1 anyway because they're just going like crazy. What we
2 want to do is revisit our White-fronted Goose harvest
3 strategy with AVCP and the Bristol Bay region
4 contributes a pretty good bunch of these birds too. We
5 need to rethink this. We can't have this population
6 get totally off the charts.

7
8 The last bullet is we're seeing crop
9 depredation complaints in Brad's country, in Klamath
10 Basin and in California, too. So do you want to
11 explain that one, Brad.

12
13 MR. BALES: You're really painting me
14 with depredation here.

15
16 (Laughter)

17
18 MR. BALES: In the Klamath Basin we've
19 initiated some special hunts, but they're somewhat
20 conservative because of the concern about Tulle White-
21 fronted Geese. Again, I think it's -- and there's some
22 speculation, we don't know why, but we're seeing an
23 earlier spring migration out of California into the
24 Klamath Basin at a time when I mean habitat conditions
25 in the Klamath Basin aren't all that well. I mean
26 we're seeing White-fronted Geese that are basically
27 feeding on little grass clumps in people's driveways
28 and things looking for any kind of green food.

29
30 There's some speculation on how they
31 deal with the rice management in the California area
32 now because they have to water up earlier. They can't
33 burn their fields and get them prepared for the next
34 season, they have to flood them out. Maybe what
35 available food is left is not accessible to birds as
36 water gets too deep. Again, we don't know for certain,
37 but that seems reasonable. If they're running out of
38 food, they're heading north earlier.

39
40 So we're trying to deal with some of
41 those. I think the biggest issue and one of the things
42 I really want to stress, kind of like with the Brant
43 harvest strategy. This is one of the management
44 issues, a major thing for us, we want to start dialogue
45 with AVCP as soon as possible this winter and this
46 coming spring and we want to focus on coming up with
47 some new information and sharing ideas on how we deal
48 with some of these things.

49
50 For example, we were ready to

1 liberalize on harvest of White-fronts this year, but
2 with the agreement we have in the Y-K Delta, California
3 looked at the situation, that's where most of the
4 harvest could occur. We're up against that limit now
5 and so rather than violate the agreement we have on the
6 Y-K Delta Goose Plan California backed off. We need to
7 have some dialogue. We need to work on this. It's a
8 very important priority for this flyway.

9

10 CHAIRMAN CLARK: Is that a WCC function
11 or does that come in?

12

13 MR. BALES: Yes, that would be the
14 group we've dealt with on that.

15

16 CHAIRMAN CLARK: Those meetings are
17 called by AVCP or who controls how that meeting
18 schedule works? Sorry to show my ignorance here.

19

20 MR. BALES: I would defer to someone
21 else.

22

23 MR. ROTHE: It depends on who feels the
24 need to go first, but usually the refuge manager would
25 call Myron and say we have to have our annual meeting
26 and it's really important. So whoever kicks it off, we
27 work together and develop an agenda and invite the
28 southern folks up.

29

30 MR. BALES: And it has been about three
31 years since we've had a meeting with the WCC.

32

33 CHAIRMAN CLARK: Member Starkey, do you
34 have a plan in the works to have a WCC meeting in the
35 next 12 months or so?

36

37 MR. STARKEY: I would think the WCC
38 would be meeting during the convention on the 6th.

39

40 CHAIRMAN CLARK: When?

41

42 MR. STARKEY: October 6th is the annual
43 convention and the WCC members I assume will be there.
44 That's part of the agenda.

45

46 CHAIRMAN CLARK: Great. That sounds
47 like a discussion that needs to happen here. Before we
48 go on, we're a little bit past 4:30. I stated my
49 intent earlier to go until 4:00. What's your pleasure?
50 Do we want to finish this presentation, pause it for

1 now and let Member Squartsoff prepare our dinner?

2

3 MR. ROTHE: We're almost done with
4 geese and you wouldn't want to deny yourself the
5 pleasure of hearing Russ talk about ducks and loons.

6

7 CHAIRMAN CLARK: If that's acceptable,
8 let's charge through and finish it up.

9

10 MR. PEDERSON: Speak a little faster
11 though.

12

13 CHAIRMAN CLARK: Member Devine.

14

15 MR. DEVINE: I have a question for Tom.
16 You said there was some tagging or branding on the
17 Aleutian Geese. Was anything done out in Simeonof?

18

19 MR. ROTHE: No, it was just that little
20 population on the Semidi Islands that we really needed
21 to find out where they go, so that's the only bunch of
22 birds that got marked this year.

23

24 MR. DEVINE: Okay. Where I was going
25 with this is because in '05 I found like 7,000 of those
26 things flying through between Korovin and Popof. It's
27 growing.

28

29 MR. ROTHE: We've talked about mid-
30 continent geese the last couple of years, but our
31 concern has eased off a little bit. These are birds
32 that come from Northwest Alaska, Interior Alaska and
33 the North Slope. This is the fall index from
34 Saskatchewan, Alberta where they all gather up in one
35 spot in the fall. In the early 2000s we met with the
36 Central Flyway, the Mississippi Flyway. They all share
37 those birds and the Canadians. We were looking at a
38 population decline, but our management plan back in
39 here said we had lots of birds, so let's try a little
40 more harvest. Well, we tried that. That didn't work
41 too well. They started to go down, so the harvest
42 regulations got tightened up and now we're back on kind
43 of an upswing. The population is doing pretty well.
44 You can see the Alaska breeding have been kind of flat
45 for a long time, so we're hoping that nothing bad
46 happens. It looks like everything is okay for now.
47 We've got a little bit of an up-tick there in '07.

48

49 We wanted to briefly mention the
50 Wrangell Island Snow Geese. Some of the regions,

1 particularly St. Lawrence, the Kawerak area and Y-K
2 Delta do harvest some Snow Geese, not a lot. In spring
3 and fall the birds are going back and forth to Russia.
4 You can see them at the mouth of the Yukon and certain
5 other places. This population is going up. It's done
6 really well because of mild spring weather in the
7 arctic. This is maybe a global warming thing. I don't
8 know. Usually Snow Geese do well for a year or two and
9 then they get knocked down because there's a cold
10 spring and they just kind of bounce. Well, they aren't
11 bouncing down anymore. They're going up at a pretty
12 good clip. The colony on the Ikpikpuk River on the
13 North Slope that sprung up is also growing at a pretty
14 good rate too.

15
16 The only reason I bring this up is if
17 you happen to notice some of the regulations proposals
18 coming out of the Lower 48 states, we're going to be
19 looking at increasing the harvest of White Geese,
20 including some of these. We've had a very good
21 relationship with the Russians, but we do want to be
22 careful that we don't overharvest this population.
23 It's a small one that is subject to decline if the
24 weather goes bad.

25
26 In California, Washington, Oregon,
27 Idaho, places like that, you actually have Snow Geese
28 coming from western Canada and they all smush together
29 and Ross's Geese coming out of the Central Arctic of
30 Canada. So, collectively, we have a million White
31 Geese in the Lower 48 states of the flyway. Again,
32 that's just a tremendous number of birds, so the timing
33 is really good to increase the harvest of White Geese
34 overall. You'll see those higher bag limits and other
35 regulations on White Geese, but that doesn't
36 necessarily mean that we want to hit the Wrangell
37 Island birds too hard. So that's another success
38 story, I guess, where we didn't actually do anything,
39 but we got more and more geese.

40
41 MR. BALES: I would just add real
42 quickly that in the states where we have Wrangell
43 Island birds either migrating or wintering that the bag
44 limit liberalizations were less than in other states
45 that don't.

46
47 MR. ROTHE: Okay, Russell.

48
49 MR. OATES: Sorry, being from North
50 Carolina talking fast doesn't come natural to me, but

1 I'll do my best.

2

3 (Laughter)

4

5 MR. OATES: I want to talk to you a
6 little bit about some of the duck species that we have
7 a great deal of interest in at this point. I think
8 everybody is familiar with the Steller's Eider and the
9 majority of the birds breed in arctic Russia. We have
10 a small breeding population believed to be numbering in
11 the hundreds on the North Slope and historically there
12 were birds breeding on the Yukon-Kuskokwim Delta. The
13 molting and wintering areas are along the southern tip
14 of the Kamchatka, the Commander Islands and then the
15 bulk of the birds on the Alaska Peninsula.

16

17 MS. CHYTHLOOK: Russ.

18

19 MR. OATES: Yes.

20

21 MS. CHYTHLOOK: Where do the birds
22 breed? Do they breed on islands or just mainland?

23

24 MR. OATES: On the mainland. They may
25 breed on islands in some areas, but the majority that
26 we know about -- probably Mike and Joshua could tell
27 you better, but the majority that we know about in
28 terms of breeding now breed actually in the vicinity of
29 Barrow and kind of wetland type areas, often near
30 lakes. If you want to characterize that a little more
31 cleanly, Mike or Joshua, you're welcome to do that.

32

33 MR. PEDERSON: They nest on the tundra,
34 but it's real hard to see them because they're really
35 camouflaged with the tundra and they're small and their
36 eggs are kind of small. In Barrow, you can just take a
37 drive down the road and walk a little ways on the
38 tundra and you'll probably see a nest.

39

40 MR. OATES: But we count the birds and
41 what we believe is a less than adequate survey, but
42 it's the only way we have really of having the birds in
43 one spot that we can count and that's in the springtime
44 when they're staging in the nearshore waters of the
45 Yukon Delta and Southwest Alaska in the Bristol Bay
46 area and these concentrations are actual plottings of
47 concentrations of birds that we counted.

48

49 We've been doing this survey since 1992
50 and we had a period there where it was just steadily

1 declining. It appears to have leveled out now pretty
2 much. We had a couple years there where we couldn't
3 get the survey in because of inclement weather. I
4 think we had some years where we had funding problems,
5 but we did get one done in 2008. This is a combination
6 of Russian breeding birds and U.S. breeding birds and
7 the vast majority of these birds that we count in this
8 survey in the spring are Russian birds.

9
10 Oh, I forgot to mention, we do have
11 some concerns. 2008 was a breeding year. They don't
12 breed every year in Alaska and 2008 was a breeding year
13 and some shooting of these birds occurred and Doug
14 Alcorn has got a special item on the agenda to discuss
15 this issue. He'll be talking about that a little
16 later.

17
18 I'll talk a little bit about Spectacled
19 Eiders now. They also breed in arctic Russia. The
20 majority of the birds do. Somewhere in the vicinity of
21 maybe 15,000 breed on the North Slope of Alaska and
22 some less than that breed in the coastal zone of the
23 Yukon Delta. They molt in Piered Bay and Ledger Bay
24 and also in Norton Sound on the Alaska side of the pond
25 there. The wintering area is just south of St.
26 Lawrence Island.

27
28 You can see this white patch is what is
29 currently believed to be the historical breeding range
30 in Alaska and there's been a contraction in the
31 breeding range.

32
33 We do a number of different surveys to
34 monitor these populations on the North Slope and this
35 is the grid I think Peter was referring to. Our
36 standard normal terrestrial type surveys are done by
37 flying straight line transects and this is just a
38 representation of kind of an average year. We do
39 extend additional survey work in the Teshekpuk Lake
40 area because of the interest in oil development in that
41 area. So the population on the North Slope based on
42 that survey we believe to be relatively stable. I
43 don't think we've got a significant trend there.

44
45 On the Yukon-Kuskokwim Delta the
46 Spectacled Eiders are much more concentrated in a much
47 smaller area and we survey that by counting the nests
48 and a sample of the nesting area in the coastal zone
49 there. We've been doing that survey since 1985. This
50 graph shows a long-term, gradual decline there. The

1 good news is, if you look at a sampling of recent
2 years, it appears that they've done a little better in
3 recent years on the Kuskokwim Delta.

4
5 Just a couple other species we're
6 interested in. These are graphs. We're just kind of
7 establishing a baseline here. King Eiders and Common
8 Eiders, these species breed far over into Canada, as
9 well as on the North Slope of Alaska, but at this point
10 in time our funding permits us pretty much to only
11 count the breeding birds on the North Slope of Alaska.
12 On the left here, King Eider survey, this survey has
13 been done since basically 1993. The timing was off the
14 first year we did the Eider survey in 1992, so most of
15 the males had left the females at that point. When
16 we're flying around in an airplane, we can't see the
17 female, we can see the male. So our survey really
18 basically started in '93. As far as the birds that
19 breed on the North Slope, they look like they're
20 hanging in there pretty well.

21
22 Common Eiders. This is a breeding
23 survey. They principally on the North Slope nest on
24 the Barrier Islands, so this is a Barrier Island type
25 survey. It appears that the pairs of Common Eiders
26 nesting on the Barrier Islands of the North Slope are
27 hanging in there pretty well, too. So we think at
28 least for North Slope breeding birds -- although
29 there's some current concerns for the continental
30 breeding populations of both species, it appears as far
31 as the North Slope goes we're not in too bad a shape
32 right now.

33
34 A species I want to mention briefly,
35 Black Scoters, and these are the principal breeding
36 areas of Black Scoters that winter in the Pacific.
37 This is actually the majority of Pacific wintering
38 Black Scoters nest in these areas of Alaska and the
39 darker shades in each of these different areas
40 represent the higher density nesting areas and we
41 sample those more intensively with our breeding
42 surveys.

43
44 We've only been doing these surveys for
45 a while. We had a sample in 1992 when we actually
46 began consistently doing a survey to establish a
47 baseline to enable us to monitor these populations and
48 we've only got a few years of data here. It's not
49 really enough to draw any conclusions about trend. If
50 you split them out by regions, this is all regions in

1 -- the upper right-hand corner is the Yukon Delta where
2 probably more nests there than anywhere else. The
3 other area where a lot of Black Scoters nest is in the
4 Bristol Bay area. There's a few that nest on the
5 Seward Peninsula as well. Again, not too much can be
6 drawn as far as conclusions from this.

7
8 Continentially, based on continent-wide
9 surveys, we believe that Black Scoters have probably
10 declined by about 50 percent in the last 30 to 40
11 years. If you look at the overall, one might conclude
12 that they may have declined in Alaska as well. We're
13 just, as I said, trying to get a baseline going on
14 Black Scoters.

15
16 I just want to talk briefly about
17 loons. As everybody knows here, the U.S. Fish and
18 Wildlife Service is giving consideration.....

19
20 MS. TAHBONE: Mr. Chairman. Excuse me.
21 Do you think we might be able to stop here and pick
22 this up in the morning?

23
24 MR. OATES: I've got maybe two more
25 slides.

26
27 MS. TAHBONE: Two more? I have a whole
28 ton of questions for Yellow-billed Loons. I'm just
29 teasing.

30
31 MR. OATES: Okay. Well, we can do the
32 questions tomorrow if you want to.

33
34 Anyway, the Yellow-billed Loon is being
35 considered for listing under the Endangered Species Act
36 and we're expecting a decision from the director of the
37 Fish and Wildlife Service in late winter after the
38 first of the year sometime. In Alaska, we believe
39 there's somewhere in the neighborhood of 4000
40 Yellow-billed Loons, most of which are believed to be
41 on the North Slope.

42
43 We've done surveys on the North Slope
44 for quite a while. You can see the high concentration
45 area for Yellow-billed Loons west of Teshekpuk Lake.
46 The other area that's important for nesting Yellow-
47 billed Loons in Alaska is on the north side of the
48 Seward Peninsula. We completed a survey there in 2006
49 and 2007 and there's somewhere in the neighborhood of
50 450 loons there, contrary to what our earlier belief

1 was. Actually, that's not necessarily contrary, but we
2 didn't really know, but we've got a couple of surveys
3 done there now. So we have concluded there's at least
4 400 or more Yellow-billed Loons that regularly breed on
5 the north side of the Seward Peninsula.

6
7 This is the data from the North Slope
8 and I apologize for all the different lines that are
9 imposed on this, but we've taken some fairly
10 conservative looks at the dataset to inform the folks
11 that have to make the decisions about whether or not to
12 list the species. Instead of explaining what all these
13 lines are, I'll just say that our conclusion was at
14 this point there's little or no trend at all in the
15 Yellow-billed Loons on the North Slope.

16
17 I just briefly want to mention Red-
18 throated Loons, another species that appears to have
19 taken some declines through the '80s, into the '90s,
20 early 2000. In recent years, they appear to have
21 popped back up again. This is everywhere except the
22 North Slope, this graph to the right. The graph to the
23 left shows a little different picture, but
24 unfortunately in this one this is a combination of
25 Pacific and Red-throated Loon populations, so there's
26 not a whole lot that can be concluded from that.

27
28 One of the problems is our surveys were
29 designed not specifically for loons and we found that a
30 different survey technique is a little bit better.
31 However, with the longer-term data sets we feel like we
32 can get some feel for what's going on, but the surveys
33 were not specifically designed for loons, so they're
34 not perfect.

35
36 Anyway, that's all I had and I
37 apologize if I talked too slow or didn't talk fast well
38 enough, but I'll try to answer any questions that I can
39 with whatever time people feel they can continue to
40 sit.

41
42 CHAIRMAN CLARK: Seeing no questions
43 now, I think we'll recess until tomorrow. You guys
44 will be around tomorrow as well?

45
46 MR. OATES: Yes.

47
48 MR. ROTHE: No, we're out of here.

49
50 MR. BALES: They'll remember us as the

1 three that delayed dinner.

2

3 MR. ALCORN: Donna, Bill, Russ, me and
4 Fred are on Flight 264 out of here at 4:00 p.m.
5 tomorrow afternoon.

6

7 MR. OATES: Okay. If you have
8 additional questions.....

9

10 MS. TAHBONE: Yeah.

11

12 MR. OATES: I can talk to you tonight
13 as well. Whatever.

14

15 CHAIRMAN CLARK: Thank you very much.
16 With that, I think we'll stand in adjournment until
17 tomorrow. Again, thank you very much for your
18 donations to the youth center and we'll see you at
19 Molly's for dinner tonight. We'll stand in adjournment
20 until 9:00 o'clock tomorrow morning.

21

22 (Off record - 4:55 p.m.)

23

24 (PROCEEDINGS TO BE CONTINUED)

