



REVISED



United States Department of the Interior

FISH AND WILDLIFE SERVICE
Anchorage Fish & Wildlife Field Office
605 West 4th Avenue, Room G-61
Anchorage, Alaska 99501-2249



In reply, refer to:
AFWFO

Agenda Item B-5: U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service
March 30, 2009

Spectacled Eiders

- The Minerals Management Service has funded the continuation of the satellite tagging study begun last year to help us delineate marine habitat use. Last year, satellite tags were implanted in 45 spectacled eiders, and the effort will be duplicated in the coming field season, with birds from both the Yukon-Kuskokwim Delta and Arctic Coastal Plain being tagged and tracked.

Pacific Walrus

- No new information to report.

Northern Sea Otters

- The public comment period for the proposed rule to designate critical habitat for the southwest Alaska DPS of northern sea otters closed on February 17, 2009. We received 16 public comment submissions during that period, including one from the Council. We also received a request on January 30, 2009, to hold public hearings in a number of communities within the region. Public hearings must occur during an open public comment period however, and there wasn't enough time to make the necessary arrangements before February 17. The comment period will be re-opened later this year when the Economic Analysis is available for public review, during which time we will also accept additional comments on the proposed rule. We are making plans to hold one or more public hearings to allow individuals to submit comments verbally, as it has been pointed out to us that many residents of southwest Alaska are less comfortable with the written word. We anticipate the comment period will be re-opened some time around June 1, 2009, and will last for 30 days. The Service is under court order to deliver a final critical habitat designation to the Federal Register by October 1, 2009, and we have every expectation that we will meet this deadline.
- The southwest Alaska sea otter recovery team (SWAKSORT) met in November 2008, and does not have any additional meetings scheduled at this time. The team is working on compiling a draft plan by June 1, 2009, and the Service has contracted with a professional editor to do a thorough review of the draft plan prior to its submission to the Regional Director. Once the Service receives the plan from the team, we will make any necessary revisions and publish a notice of availability in the Federal Register.

Salmon Bycatch

- **Yukon River Salmon Management:** The Service remains concerned about the bycatch of Chinook salmon in the groundfish fisheries because of the increasing difficulty of meeting our



UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF JUSTICE
 FEDERAL BUREAU OF INVESTIGATION
 WASHINGTON, D. C. 20535



MEMORANDUM FOR THE DIRECTOR

DATE: 10/25/68
 SUBJECT: [Illegible]

TO: [Illegible]

[Illegible text block]

FROM: [Illegible]

[Illegible text block]

REFERENCE: [Illegible]

[Illegible text block]

[Illegible text block]

APPROVED: [Illegible]

[Illegible text block]

domestic agency responsibilities in Title VIII of ANILCA. The outlook for the upcoming 2009 fishing season appears to present greater challenges in providing for escapements and subsistence and aboriginal fishing opportunities than 2008. The 2009 Yukon River Chinook salmon outlook is for a below average to poor return. No directed commercial opportunity for Chinook salmon is anticipated. Managers are anticipating subsistence conservation measures will be implemented, beyond those used in 2008, to share available subsistence harvest and attempt to meet escapement goals. Alaskan subsistence and Canadian aboriginal harvest regulatory and voluntary restrictions are being developed cooperatively with stakeholders. All users are being asked what they can do to help get more Chinook salmon to the spawning grounds.

- All sixteen National Wildlife Refuges in Alaska were established in part for the purpose of conserving fish and wildlife populations in their natural diversity. The Service is also responsible to provide for the continuation of subsistence opportunities and uses for federally qualified fishermen on federal public waters. We recognize that NOAA Fisheries and the Alaska Department of Fish and Game, through the Council, are responsible for minimizing salmon bycatch. Ensuring decreased salmon bycatch would improve spawning ground natural diversity, increase the potential that salmon escapement targets are met, and decrease the time subsistence harvests are restricted for federally qualified fishermen.
- The Service believes that Chinook salmon bycatch in the BSAI must remain at or below 40,000 to allow for adequate in-river escapement, subsistence harvest, and Canadian border passage, while also providing for limited in-river commercial fishing opportunities.

Short-tailed Albatross

- The second batch of Short-tailed albatross chicks (n=15) were translocated from Torishima Island to Mukojima Island 300 km to the south during February. At last report, all 15 are healthy and are nearly identical in growth patterns to naturally-reared chicks on Torishima. This translocation is part of a 5-year effort to establish a new albatross breeding colony on a non-volcanic site. Establishing this “safe” colony will enhance the recovery of this species and is a pre-requisite to removing this species from the endangered species list. Japan and the U.S. have been investing about \$300K per year in implementing this recovery task, the highest priority recovery task for this species. There is currently no funding to carry out this operation for years 3-5.

Yellow-billed Loon

- Alaska’s newest candidate species as of March 24, 2009, when the Service made a “warranted but precluded” finding. This means that we have on hand sufficient information to compile a listing package, but lack the funds to do so. Endangered species listing funds are tightly controlled, and we must receive funds specifically for this purpose to proceed with a listing package. Yellow-billed loons exist at extremely low densities along the Aleutians, South-central and southeastern Alaska during the non-breeding season within about 20 nautical miles of the coast.

1st handout from Balogh



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domestic agency responsibilities in Title VIII of ANILCA. The outlook for the upcoming 2009 fishing season appears to present greater challenges in providing for escapements and subsistence and aboriginal fishing opportunities than 2008. The 2009 Yukon River Chinook salmon outlook is for a below average to poor return. No directed commercial opportunity for Chinook salmon is anticipated. Managers are anticipating subsistence conservation measures will be implemented, beyond those used in 2008, to share available subsistence harvest and attempt to meet escapement goals. Alaskan subsistence and Canadian aboriginal harvest regulatory and voluntary restrictions are being developed cooperatively with stakeholders. All users are being asked what they can do to help get more Chinook salmon to the spawning grounds.

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- **The Service maintains that in order for us to adequately achieve our trust resource management responsibilities under ANILCA, Chinook salmon bycatch in the BSAI must remain at or below 40,000.** This level of bycatch would allow for adequate in-river escapement, subsistence harvest, and Canadian border passage, while also providing for limited in-river commercial fishing opportunities.

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Yellow-billed Loon

Breeding Range



Wintering Range



Former Range

