

1998 Working Group Protocol Area V "Protection of Nature and the Organization of Reserves" of the U.S.-Russia Agreement on Cooperation in the Field of Protection of the Environment and Natural Resources

In December 1997 American and Russian participants in Area V met in Moscow to review exchanges carried out in 1996-1997 and agree on activities for 1998. The following Work Plan was adopted (NOTE: Wherever possible, principal participating U.S. and Russian agencies/organizations are indicated for each exchange):

Project 02.05-11, Conservation of Wild Species of Fauna
The work of this Project is carried out under five Activities:

Activity 02.05-1101, Implementation of the U.S.-Russia Convention Concerning the Conservation of Migratory Birds and Their Environment

This Activity coordinates implementation of the bilateral Convention between the United States and U.S.S.R. (Russia) Concerning the Conservation of Migratory Birds and Their Environment (1976), and promotes the protection and study of the more than 200 species listed in the Appendix to the Convention.

During the first half of 1998 the two sides will publish the 1987-1992 Joint Statement on Implementation. (MBM; VNIIPRIRODA)

Four Russian specialists will visit the U.S. in the 4th quarter of 1998 for one week to take part in a meeting to review the list and nomenclature of bird species included in the Appendix to the Convention, discuss procedures for adopting changes to the Appendix, and begin compiling information to be used in the next Joint Statement, covering the Years 1993-1998. (MBM; VNIIPRIRODA)

Activity 02.05-1102, The Study and Conservation of Cranes, Raptors and Other Rare Birds

This Activity seeks to establish and maintain stable reproducing populations of rare and endangered species of birds, both in the wild and in captivity.

I. Cranes:

One Russian specialist will visit the U.S. in March 1998 for ten days for consultations with the International Crane Foundation (Wisconsin) and Milwaukee Public Museum.

One-two American specialists will visit Russia in the 2nd quarter of 1998 for up to 4 weeks to continue efforts to restore the western population of the Siberian crane. They will bring up to ten Siberian crane eggs from the International Crane Foundation for incubation at the Oka State Nature Reserve and will take part in chick rearing and release into the wild in West Siberia.

II. Raptors: One American specialist from the Milwaukee Public Museum will visit Moscow for ten days in June 1998 to take part in a release of peregrine falcons under a special program to reintroduce this species into urban areas.

2. One American specialist will visit the southern tip (Cape Lopatka) of the Kamchatka Peninsula in September-October 1998 for three weeks to survey birds of prey migrating along the Pacific flyway. (RRTAC)

Activity 02.05-1103, The Study and Conservation of Polar Bears

This Activity coordinates implementation of the U.S.-Russia Agreement on the Conservation and Management of the Alaska-Chukotka Polar Bear Population, and promotes research on the biology and seasonal movements of polar bears.

Seven Russian and fourteen American specialists will meet on Orcas Island, Washington February 9-13, 1998 to negotiate a bilateral Agreement on the Conservation and Management of the Alaska-Chukotka Polar Bear Population. (R7; MINPRIRODA)

Three American specialists will visit Moscow in the 4th quarter of 1998 to complete plans and coordinate logistical aspects of a series of aerial surveys on Wrangel Island (four weeks in March- April 1999) to estimate the number of maternity dens. (MMM; VNIIPRIRODA)

(Activity 02.05-1104 has been redesignated as Project 02.05-51)

Activity 02.05-1105, Cooperation among Zoos in Captive Breeding of Rare and Endangered Animals

This Activity fosters cooperation among zoos of both countries to preserve genetic diversity of rare and endangered animals raised and maintained in captivity.

In 1998 the two sides will continue to exchange and disseminate information on research conducted in zoos of both countries. Animal transfers will be carried out in strict compliance with the provisions of the Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species of Wild Fauna and Flora (CITES). The species to be studied or exchanged and participating zoos are: CHINESE ALLIGATOR: New York Zoological Society and Moscow Zoo

PALLAS CAT: Brookfield Zoo (Chicago) and Moscow Zoo

GALAPAGOS TORTOISE: Brookfield Zoo and Moscow Zoo

DHOLE: San Diego Zoo and Moscow Zoo

SWAN GOOSE: San Diego Zoo and Moscow Zoo

GORILLA: San Diego Zoo and Moscow Zoo

BONGO: San Diego Zoo and Moscow Zoo

As the Moscow Zoo constructs and prepares to open an Aquarium and an Insectarium in 1998, consultations will be conducted with three U.S. facilities: Henry Doorly Zoo (Omaha), Cincinnati Zoo, and National Aquarium (Baltimore).

Activity 02.05-1106, Conservation and Management of Marine Birds

This Activity is the means by which the U.S.-Russia Marine Bird Working Group coordinates joint seabird and shorebird studies.

Four Russian specialists from Sakhalin Island will visit Alaska in April 1998 for one week to attend a workshop on study design, field protocols, data analysis and management for marine bird shoreline population surveys and seabird colony censuses. In June-July 1998, three specialists from Sakhalin will conduct marine bird population surveys in Alaska for two weeks. (MBM-7)

One Russian specialist will visit Alaska in April 1998 for one week to work on the organization of a new U.S.-Russia Beringian shorebird database and atlas. (MBM-7; MINPRIRODA)

Two Russian specialists will visit Alaska during April-July 1998 for three months to continue long-term comparative field studies at Lake Clark National Park on the distribution, behavior and genetic characteristics of surfbirds and great knots. Work will also continue on producing a bilingual bibliography and database of published and unpublished literature about shorebirds of the North Pacific. (ASC; MUS)

Throughout the year American and Russian specialists will continue work on development of the Beringian seabird and sea duck bibliographic database, and on the Beringian seabird colony catalog. Visits of specialists will be arranged as necessary. (MBM-7)

Project 02.05-21, Aleutian Chain Biodiversity

This Project studies the natural features and fauna/flora species common to the national wildlife refuges of Southeastern Alaska, the Alaska Peninsula and the Aleutian Islands (U.S.), and the nature reserves of Northeastern Russia, the Kamchatka Peninsula and the Commander Islands (Russia). Many of the exchanges conducted under Activities 02.05-1101, -1102, -1106 and -7102 also promote the goals of Project 02.05-21.

Two American specialists will visit Kamchatka in the 3rd quarter of 1998 for two weeks to provide technical assistance in connection with the release of captive-bred Aleutian Canada geese in the Kuril Islands as part of an ongoing project to reintroduce this species into its former range in northeastern Asia. (MBM-7)

Project 02.05-31, Cooperation in Wildlife Trade and Law Enforcement

This project assists enforcement officials in the U.S. and Russia to address the problems of international wildlife commerce, with particular attention to the Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species of Fauna and Flora, or CITES.

Three American forensic specialists will visit Russia during the 2nd half of 1998 for ten days for consultations with the Russian Interagency Ichthyological Commission on identification of different types of caviar in connection with the April 1, 1998 listing of all the world's sturgeon species as threatened or endangered under the CITES Convention. (LE)

Four American specialists will visit the Russian Far East in the 3rd quarter of 1998 for up to two weeks to conduct a law enforcement training workshop on such topics as monitoring of wildlife trade, Customs inspection, veterinary procedures, and identification/tracking of suspects in illegal activities. (LE)

The two sides will work on preparation of a Russian-English reference guide on species identification and CITES regulations for Customs inspectors. (LE, OMA, OSA; MINPRIRODA)

Project 02.05-41, Ecosystem Biodiversity

The work of this Project is carried out under three Activities:

Activity 02.05-4101, Biosphere Reserves

This Activity provides for monitoring of the natural processes in paired biosphere reserves of both countries, and facilitates exchange and sharing of data through the Man and the Biosphere information MABFlora, MABFauna, ACCESS and Biomass systems.

The two sides will share information and produce a joint report on invasive species of plants in biosphere reserves. This will be accomplished through: comparison of electronic lists of vascular plants in the U.S. and Russia, application of MABFlora databases to grassland and rangeland ecosystems in both countries, and use of GIS technology to document highly invasive species. (BRD; IEE)

MABFauna databases will be completed in 1998 for eight biosphere reserves: Astrakhanskiy, Voronezhskiy, Kavkazskiy, Laplandskiy, Okskiy, Pechoro-Ilinskiy, Prioksko-Terrasniy and Cherniye Zemli. (BRD; IEE)

Three American specialists will visit Russia in the 2nd half of 1998 for up to two weeks for a training workshop on web page development, MABFauna/Flora methodologies and management of local computer stations. The addition of new biosphere reserves east of the Ural Mountains will also be discussed. (BRD; IEE)

Activity 02.05-4102, Arid Ecosystems

This Activity promotes the study and conservation of critical arid land areas, and develops methods for combatting the processes of desertification and loss of water resources.

The following topics are under consideration for cooperation in 1998 and beyond: organizing comparative studies in paired protected areas in arid zones in both countries, identifying the ecological impact of the rising level of the Caspian Sea on arid ecosystems of Kalmykia, and conducting research on the status of the saiga antelope in Kalmykia. A plan of exchanges will be agreed upon through correspondence. (IEE)

Activity 02.05-4103, Mountain Ecosystems

This Activity promotes the study and conservation of mountain territories and the unique biodiversity of mountain ecosystems. Two American specialists will travel to Russia in June 1998 for two weeks to survey areas for cooperative forest and watershed monitoring in Tsentralno-Lesnoi Biosphere Reserve. (BRD; IEE)

Project 02.05-51, Protected Natural Areas

This Project was created by mutual agreement at the December 1997 Area V Working Group meeting. Its work will be carried out under two Activities:

Activity 02.05-5101, Cooperation in Wildlife Conservation among U.S. Refuges and Russian Nature Reserves

This Activity provides for the comparative study of refuges and nature reserves, including internal processes and external factors affecting them, with emphasis on protection of rare and endangered species of fauna and flora.

Six American specialists will visit Russia in July 1998 for two weeks for familiarization with the management and problems of nature reserves in Krasnoyarsk Oblast and the Sayan Mountains of southern Siberia. (REF; MINPRIRODY)

To gain a better understanding of day-to-day operations in refuges and reserves in both countries, the two sides will inaugurate a program of long-term (one month or more) exchanges of specialists from protected areas of the U.S. and Russia. The first such exchange, with the participation of one American and one Russian, will take place in the 2nd half of 1998.

Ten Russian specialists will visit the U.S. in September 1998 for two weeks to take part in a Fire Ecology and Management seminar and field tour with American colleagues in Idaho and Montana. (FWS, USFS; MINPRIRODA)

Activity 02.05-5102, Conservation Education

This Activity enhances public awareness of and commitment to the need to conserve wild species of fauna and flora and their habitats while encouraging sustainable natural resource development practices.

Ten Russian specialists will visit the U.S. in August 1998 for two weeks to take part in a workshop on the design, production, and installation of interpretive exhibits for protected area visitor centers. (REF, R1; MINPRIRODA, LESKHOZ)

A major photo exhibit on protected natural areas of Russia, organized by the "Zapovedniks" Environmental Education Center in Moscow, will be displayed at visitor centers in one or two U.S. wildlife refuges in the summer of 1998.

Project 02.05-61, Marine Mammals

This Project carries out cooperative research on the biology, ecology and population dynamics of marine mammal species shared by both countries, leading to the development of methods for the management and protection of these animals.

Harbor Seals

One Russian specialist will visit the U.S. in August 1998 for three weeks to take part in the capture, deployment of approximately 50 radio transmitters, and tracking of the movements and haulout patterns of harbor seals in the Gulf of Alaska. (NMML; Magadan TINRO)

Northern Fur Seals

One Russian specialist will visit the National Marine Mammal Laboratory in Seattle in the 4th quarter of 1998 for three weeks to analyze data obtained from time-depth recorders and other telemetry data, as well as population trend, mortality and reproductive rate data obtained at Russian fur seal rookeries. (NMML; Kamchatka TINRO)

Steller Sea Lions

One Russian specialist will visit Alaska in June-July 1998 for three weeks to participate in shipboard studies of sea lion pups and juveniles and conduct prey (fish) assessment surveys at rookeries in the Aleutian Islands and Gulf of Alaska. (NMML; TINRO)

One Russian specialist will visit Alaska in the 3rd quarter of 1998 for two weeks for joint work on techniques for underwater capture and marking/tagging of free-ranging juvenile Steller sea lions in southeastern Alaska waters. (ADF&G; KAMCHATRYBVOD)

Walrus

Three-four Russian specialists will visit Alaska in the 3rd quarter of 1998 to attend a joint workshop in Nome on walrus harvest monitoring. Topics will include: overview of the process and monitoring of walrus harvests in both countries, presentation of U.S. and Russian harvest data for 1992-1997, and development of recommendations for improving and coordinating harvest monitoring efforts. (MMM; VNIRO)

Sea Otters

Two Russian specialists will visit the U.S. in February-March 1998 for one month to take part in capture, tagging and subsequent research on sea otters at the Monterey Bay Aquarium in California. (Kamchatka TINRO)

Two American specialists will visit Russia in the 2nd or 3rd quarter of 1998 for two weeks to take part in aerial surveys and mortality studies of sea otters along the Kamchatka Peninsula and northern Kuril Islands. (MMM; Kamchatka TINRO)

Two Russian specialists will visit Alaska in the 2nd quarter of 1998 to participate in a classroom and laboratory training session on field necropsy techniques for sea otters. (MMM; KAMCHATRYBVOD)

During 1998 the Russian side will transfer to the U.S. sea otter kidneys and livers for contaminant analysis by American specialists. (MMM; KAMCHATRYBVOD)

Whales

By mutual agreement the two sides have created a subgroup of the Project 02.05-61 Marine Mammal Working Group to be called "Conservation and Management of Cetacean Populations Utilized in Aboriginal Whaling," whose purpose is to review research and management of gray and bowhead whales taken by the native peoples of Alaska and Chukotka in accordance with International Whaling Commission (IWC) regulations. Subgroup membership will be determined by the U.S. and Russian IWC Commissioners. (SWFC; RAS/FEB)

To assess the extent of genetic (DNA) variability in bowhead whales, tissue samples will be collected in waters off Chukotka from approximately 25 bowhead whales (both subsistence taken and free ranging) over a five-year period by native organizations of Chukotka in consultation with the Union of Marine Mammal Hunters. (SWFC, NSB/DWM; RAS/FEB)

To track and document the movements of bowhead whales off Chukotka and determine the extent to which they enter Alaskan waters, the two sides will cooperate in a five-year project whereby native hunters of Chukotka will deploy satellite-linked radio tags from small boats. (SWFC, NSB/DWM; RAS/FEB)

Project 02.05-71, Animal and Plant Ecology

The work of this Project is carried out under six Activities:

Activity 02.05-7101, Conservation of Rare and Endangered Species of Plants and Comparative Studies of North American and Eurasian Flora

This Activity promotes cooperation among botanical gardens and arboreta in both countries, including exchanges of seeds and other plant materials endemic to each country for propagation and growing, and organization of joint botanical research and collecting expeditions.

In 1998, three American specialists will visit Russia for two weeks for discussions on creation of computer databases with the Main Botanical Garden (Moscow) and field work in the Ural Mountains and southern Siberia.

Activity 02.05-7102, Northern Migratory Waterfowl

This Activity determines the nesting areas, migratory routes, wintering grounds, productivity and adaptation to environmental changes of geese, ducks and other waterfowl species, with particular emphasis on areas subject to human disturbance.

The Russian side will continue to monitor the status of and band with metal leg bands approximately 1,000 Wrangel Island snow geese. (MINPRIRODA)

One or two Russian specialists may visit the National Bird Banding Laboratory (Laurel, Maryland) in the 4th quarter of 1998 for two weeks to update Russia's computer database for banded waterfowl and songbirds. (BRD; RAS)

Activity 02.05-7103, Holarctic Mammals

This Activity studies the systematics and zoogeography of mammals of the holarctic, examines problems of gene pool conservation in those species, and evaluates genetic variability in populations.

One Russian specialist will visit the Smithsonian Institution in Washington, D.C. in the 4th quarter of 1998 to complete work on standardization of American and Russian computer habitat mapping techniques and prepare portions of the joint Atlas of Holarctic Mammals for publication on laser discs. (NMNH; IEE)

Activity 02.05-7104, Chemical Senses and Communication in Animals

This Activity investigates the functions and mechanisms of taste and smell. Areas of research include general ecology, physiology, immunology, endocrinology, biochemistry, carbohydrate chemistry, nutrition, behavior and genetics.

One Russian scientist will visit Monell Chemical Senses Center in the 1st quarter of 1998 for three months to continue joint behavioral and neuroanatomical studies of animal sensitivity to environmental chemicals. (Monell; IEE)

Activity 02.05-7105, Application of Contemporary Technology in Ecological Studies of Large Mammals

This Activity develops joint methods for the collection and processing of remotely-sensed data in radar deposition, integrated processing of satellite data from telemetry and multi-deposition environmental remote sensing, and creation of data base structures and models for ecological studies of large mammals in arctic environments.

Two Russian specialists will visit Alaska in the 1st quarter of 1998 for two months to analyze satellite image data collected during 1997, construct temporal GIS databases of sea ice concentration and ice types, and prepare joint reports. (ASC; IEE)

Activity 02.05-7106, Wildlife Health and Disease

Wildlife in the U.S. and Russia share many common diseases of microbial, parasitic, and chemical origin. Migrations and translocations of certain species create conditions for the transfer of diseases between the two countries. This Activity provides for cooperation in wildlife health research and disease prevention.

Two Russian specialists will visit the U.S. National Wildlife Health Center (Madison, Wisconsin) during 1998 for two weeks to determine the extent of lead poisoning in samples of waterfowl killed in European Russia during the hunting season. (NWHC; VNIIPRIRODA)

Up to four American specialists will visit Moscow in October 1998 for up to ten days to take part in a seminar/training workshop for Russian veterinary and CITES officials on exotic diseases of wildlife (NWHC, LE; VNIIPRIRODA)

Project 02.05-81, Ichthyology and Aquaculture

The purposes of this Project are to improve fisheries management, increase productivity through intensive fish culture, restore fishery resources, and study and exchange information on the physiology, nutrition, diseases, genetics, and reproductive biotechnology of fish of mutual interest.

Eleven Russian specialists will visit the U.S. Pacific Northwest in the 2nd quarter of 1998 for two weeks for familiarization with hatchery production of coho, chinook, steelhead and sockeye salmon. (FWS, WDFW, ODFW; GLAVRYBVOD, SAKHALINRYBVOD, KAMCHATRYBVOD, OKHOTSKRYBVOD, Kamchatka TINRO, Magadan TINRO, IBPN)

Approximately 15-18 American and Canadian specialists will visit Russia in July 1998 for one week to take part in a U.S.-Russia Symposium on Aquaculture and Fish Health, to be held at the All-Russian Research Institute of Freshwater Fisheries in Rybnoe. (BRD Leetown Science Center; VNIRO)

12-15 American specialists will visit the Russian Far East in September 1998 for ten days to take part in a bilateral Workshop on Interaction of Wild and Hatchery-Produced Salmon. (FWS, ODFW, WDFW, Wild Salmon Center; GLAVRYBVOD, KAMCHATRYBVOD, SAKHALINRYBVOD, OKHOTSKRYBVOD, TINRO, Kamchatka TINRO, Magadan TINRO)

Six Russian specialists will visit the U.S. in September 1998 for two weeks for familiarization with thermal marking, law enforcement measures and applications of the Geographic Information System (GIS) to salmon in the Pacific Northwest. (FWS, WDFW, ODFW; KAMCHATRYBVOD, SAKHALINRYBVOD)

Four American specialists will visit the Russian Far East in the 3rd quarter of 1998 for joint salmon trapping/spawning escapement studies, and for work on genetic and population components of interaction of wild and hatchery-produced salmon. (FWS, WDFW, ODFW; KAMCHATRYBVOD, OKHOTSKRYBVOD, SAKHALINRYBVOD)

Two Russian specialists from the Buryat Institute of Biology in Ulan-Ude will visit Ashland, Wisconsin in the 3rd quarter of 1998 for one month to examine fresh specimens of lake herring collected in trawls and gill nets from Lake Superior. The objectives are to

determine (1) the accuracy of using parasites as markers of stock structure, and (2) infection rates of known pathogenic parasites for Lake Superior lake herring and Baikal omul. (GLSC)

Under an ongoing project to study and conserve steelhead salmon and other native fish species and their habitats on the Kamchatka Peninsula, scientists and volunteers from the the Wild Salmon Center (Washington, Oregon) and Moscow State University will conduct a total of 11 weeks of expeditionary field work on Kamchatka during 1998 to collect and analyze samples and data.

Project 02.05-91, Ecology and Dynamics of Arctic Marine Ecosystems

This Project, abbreviated "BERPAC," studies the status and dynamics of Arctic marine ecosystems, including their assimilative capacity, biological indicators of ocean pollution, and effects of human-caused disturbances, in order to establish scientific bases for predicting major ecological, geochemical and geophysical processes in the Bering and Chukchi Seas.

One American specialist will visit Moscow in May-June 1998 for one week for consultations with the Russian side on completion of the processing and analysis of all data from the September 1993 BERPAC expedition.

Six Russian specialists will visit the U.S. in the 4th quarter of 1998 for one week to complete the editing and finalize for publication the text of a joint monograph presenting the scientific results of the September 1993 BERPAC expedition. (BRD; RAS)

List of Acronyms and Abbreviations

ADF&G ASC

BRD

FWS

GLAVRYBVOD

GLSC

IBPN

IEE

KAMCHATRYBVOD

Kamchatka TINRO

LE

LESKHOZ

Magadan TINRO

MBM

MBM-7

MINPRIRODA

Monell

MMM

MUS

NSB/DWM

NMFS

NMML

NMNH

NWHC

ODFW

OKHOTSKRYBVOD

OMA

OSA

R1

R7

RAS

RAS/FEB

REF

RRTAC

SAKHALINRYBVOD

SWFC

TINRO

USFS

VNIIPRIRODA

VNIRO

WDFW

Alaska Department of Fish and Game

BRD Alaska Biological Science Center, Anchorage

Biological Resources Division of U.S. Geological Survey

U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service

Main Fisheries Directorate, Moscow

BRD Great Lakes Science Center, Ann Arbor

Institute of the Biological Problems of the North, Magadan

Institute of Ecology and Evolution, RAS, Moscow

Kamchatka Fisheries Agency

Kamchatka Federal Fisheries Research Institute

FWS Division of Law Enforcement

Russian Federal Forestry Service

Okhotsk Federal Fisheries Research Institute

FWS Migratory Bird Management

Region 7 FWS Migratory Bird Management, Anchorage

Russian Ministry of Environmental Protection and Natural Resources

Monell Chemical Senses Center, Philadelphia

FWS Marine Mammals Management (Alaska)

Museum of Natural History of Moscow State University

North Slope Borough Dep't of Wildlife Management, Alaska

U.S. National Marine Fisheries Service

NMFS National Marine Mammal Laboratory, Seattle

Smithsonian National Museum of Natural History, Wash., DC

BRD National Wildlife Health Center, Madison, WI

Oregon Department of Fish and Wildlife

Okhotsk Sea Fisheries Agency, Magadan

FWS Office of Management Authority

FWS Office of Scientific Authority

FWS Region 1 (CA, ID, WA, OR, NV, HI)

FWS Region 7 (AK)

Russian Academy of Sciences

Far East Branch of Russian Academy of Sciences

FWS Division of Refuges

BRD Raptor Research and Technical Assistance Center, Idaho

Sakhalin Fisheries Agency

NMFS Southwest Fisheries Center, La Jolla

Russian Pacific Federal Fisheries Research Institute, Vladivostok

U.S. Forest Service

Russian Federal Wildlife Research Institute, Moscow

Russian Federal Fisheries Research Institute, Moscow

Washington Department of Fish and Wildlife