U.S. FISH AND WILDLIFE SERVICE PUBLIC MEETING

ON RESIDENT CANADA GOOSE POPULATIONS

7:00 p.m.
Thursday, May 30, 2002
Bellevue, Washington

LISA R. MICHAUD, CSR
TERESA BURT & ASSOCIATES
12819 S E 38th Street, #13
Bellevue, Washington 98006
(425) 644-5991
APPEARANCES

PHIL T. SENG
Meeting Facilitator
DJ Case & Associates
607 Lincolnway West
Mishawaka, Indiana 46544

ROBERT E. TROST, Ph.D
Pacific Flyway Representative
U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service
Division of Migratory Bird Management
911 N.E. 11th Avenue
Portland, Oregon 97232-4181
MR. SENG: I guess we'll go ahead and get started. Good evening and welcome to tonight's meeting on resident Canada goose management. My name is Phil Seng and I'll be the facilitator for tonight's meeting.

The purpose of the meeting is to take public comments on the Draft Environmental Impact Statement that the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service has prepared on management of resident Canada geese. I'd like to thank all of you for coming out on such a beautiful evening to make comments tonight.

This is the last of 11 public meetings that have been held around the country on this issue. We started out on April 1st in Dallas, Texas. We had a meeting in Palatine, Illinois, which is a suburb of Chicago. From there we went to Waupun, Wisconsin; Franklin, Tennessee; Bloomington, Minnesota; Brookings, South Dakota; Richmond, Virginia; Danbury, Connecticut; North Brunswick, New Jersey; and last night in Denver, and finishing up of course here tonight in Bellevue.
I’d like to recognize a couple of people in the audience, Brad Bortner there in the back, Region 1 Migratory Bird Coordinator. Don Kraege, who is the state waterfowl biologist with the State of Washington. And Brad Bales next to him, who is the waterfowl biologist for the State of Oregon.

The procedure tonight is very straightforward. We’ll have a brief slide presentation by Dr. Robert Trost, who is the Pacific Flyway Representative for the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service on the draft EIS. And then we’ll open up the presentation to your comments, which is obviously the main reason we’re here.

When you came in, you should have received a numbered card like this. If you intend to make public comment, you’ll need one of these cards. We’ll take them in order, so card No. 1 gets to make the first comment, and we’ll go through as many cards as we handed out.

If you choose not to make public comment, when I call your number, if you would please just say pass so we can move on. If you do wish to make comments, please come to the microphone here
in the front for two reasons. First, so that
everyone can hear what you have to say,
and also so that Lisa, our court reporter,
can capture everything you have to say and make
sure that we don't get it wrong.

When you come to the mic, if you would
please state your name and spell your name unless
it's immediately obvious how to spell it. If
you're representing an organization, please state
what that is, and also if, would you tell us where
you're from.

I'd like to mention that the
format of this meeting is designed for the service
to take your comments. It's not set up as a
debate format. So please keep that in mind. If
you have questions of clarification about what was
covered in the presentation, Bob can choose to take
those, but it's not designed to be a discussion
format.

I'm going to be passing around a signup
sheet. If you would, please, sign it so we know
who was here tonight. Also there are
two check boxes below where you sign your name. If you received a copy of the draft Environmental Impact Statement, then you're on the Service's mailing list and you will get a copy of the final EIS when it becomes available. So check that box if you have received a copy so we don't get you on there twice, so you don't receive two copies.

If you did not receive a copy of the draft and you would like a copy of the final, there's another check box that indicates that to make sure you'll get a copy when the final is available.

And my job as meeting facilitator is to make sure that everyone has a chance to speak, so I apologize in advance if I need to cut someone off or ask you to hurry along your comments.

Again, the main reason is to make sure you all have a chance to speak. With this amount of people, it shouldn't be a problem, but I reserve the right to do that in advance in case I need to. So with that, I'd like to introduce Dr. Robert Trost, and he’ll give us a brief presentation on the Draft Environmental Impact Statement.
MR. TROST: Thank you, Phil, and good evening ladies and gentlemen. Again, my name is Bob Trost and I'm the Pacific Flyway Representative for the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, Division of Migratory Bird Management. I'm stationed in Portland, Oregon. And on behalf of our director, Steve Williams, I'd like to welcome all of you to this public meeting, and we certainly are pleased and appreciate the time and effort you have put in to coming here tonight to make comments on this draft EIS.

As Phil has already indicated, this is the 11th of 11 public meetings. It's true Washington definitely does think from east to west and we're last on the totem pole as is often the case, but nevertheless, an important part of this whole issue, and we hope that you do become involved in all sorts of these types of things.

We're here tonight for the purpose of inviting public participation and input into our process and in developing the final environmental impact statement for how we're going to manage residence Canada geese.

This Draft Environment Impact Statement was developed with the full cooperation of the U.S.
Department of Agriculture's Wildlife Services.

Why are we here? Well, that's a broad question obviously, but my small part of the answer tonight is we're here to explain the Draft Environmental Impact Statement, its proposed action, and to listen to your comments. The Draft Environmental Impact Statement considers a range of management alternatives for addressing expanding populations of locally breeding Canada geese. As such we are here to listen to you and to invite your comments on the Service's recommended management of these birds.

First, a brief explanation of NEPA, the National Environmental Policy Act. NEPA requires completion of an environmental impact statement to analyze environmental and socioeconomic impacts associated with significant actions.

NEPA requires public involvement including a scoping period before the Draft Environmental Impact Statement and a comment period after the Draft Environmental Impact Statement.

We began this process on August 19th, 1999, and we published a federal register notice that announced our intent to prepare this environmental
impact statement. Then in February of 2000 we held nine public scoping meetings designed to seek public input into this process. The scoping period ended in March of 2000, and some of you may have been here at the previously held scoping meeting. In response to the scoping, we received over 3000 comments and over 1,250 people attended the nine public hearings.

Top concerns that people identified at the scoping sessions were: Property damage and conflicts, methods of conflict abatement, sport hunting opportunities, economic impacts, human health and safety concerns, and the impacts of proposed actions to Canada geese.

Basically the NEPA outline mandates a specific format for an environmental impact statement. This is to include a purpose and need, a section on possible alternative actions, a description of the affected environment, and an assessment of what the proposed environmental consequences might be of the various alternatives considered.

Probably one of the first questions that comes to mind are what exactly are resident Canada
geese? We have chosen to define them for purposes of this environmental impact statement as those geese nesting within the lower 48 states in the months of March, April, May, or June, or residing within the lower 48 states in the months of April, May, June, July, or August.

Now to the purpose and needs section of the draft: the purpose of the EIS is to evaluate alternative strategies to reduce, manage, and control resident Canada goose populations in the United States. And, two, provide a regulatory mechanism that allows state and local agencies and other federal agencies and groups and individuals to respond to damage complaints or damages themselves. And, three, to guide and direct resident Canada goose population management activities within the United States.

The need we think is fairly straightforward. Basically what we're faced with is a situation where we have increasing numbers of resident Canada geese throughout the United States. In conjunction with these increasing numbers, we have growing conflicts, damages, and socioeconomic impacts of these growing populations. And this has led to a reexamination of the Service's
resident Canada goose management program.

And these are the alternatives that we took from the public scoping meetings as possible ways in which to approach addressing these questions and problems:

Basically what we’re going to talk about is seven alternatives. The Draft Environment Impact Statement examines seven management alternatives. Alternative A is a no action alternative. Not change anything that we’re currently doing at present. Alternative B is non-lethal control and management. Basically we would limit our activities to non-lethal control and management activities, things that currently do not require a permit to be undertaken.

Alternative C would be non-lethal control and management and would include those activities which presently are permitted with a permit. Alternative D would be to expand hunting methods and opportunities.

Alternative E would be a series of integrated depredation control orders. Alternative F is the state empowerment option and it is at present our preferred alternative in this Draft Environmental Impact Statement. And
Alternative G is the general depredation order.

I'm now going to talk about these in a little more detail, and I hope that -- several of you are already familiar with these alternatives -- but hopefully if not, this will give you a basis for some of your thinking on this.

The Alternative A is the no action. And basically under the no action alternative, no additional regulatory methods or strategies will be authorized. We would continue to use special hunting seasons. We would issue depredation permits, and we would issue special Canada goose permits.

Alternative B, non-lethal management and non-permitted activities. Under the second alternative, the non-lethal management in the above, we would again cease all lethal control of resident Canada geese and their eggs. We would use only non-lethal harassment techniques. We would not require any permits for these activities, and we would discontinue the use of special hunting seasons.

Under Alternative C, the non-lethal management including permit activities, we would
cease all permitted lethal control of resident
Canada geese. We would promote non-lethal
harassment techniques. We would not issue a
depredation or special Canada goose permits. We
would allow egg addling with a permit, and we
would continue the use of special hunting seasons.

Under Alternative D, we would provide new
regulatory options to increase the harvest of
Resident Canada Geese. We would authorize
additional hunting methods such as electronic
calls, unplugged shotguns, and expanded shooting
hours.

We would make such methods available or
operational during the September 1st to 15th
seasons. We would make use of such alternatives
experimental between the periods September 16th to
the 30th, and we would have a provision that said
that these particular techniques would only be
employed outside of other open seasons or other
migratory game birds.

Under Alternative E, we would have a series
of depredation orders, first of which would be one
for airport depredations. We would also have a
nest and egg depredation order. We would also
have an agriculture depredation order. We would
have a public health depredation order.

    We would leave, for the most part, the
implementation of these depredation orders up to
the state wildlife agencies. We would consider --
or we would continue the use of special hunting
seasons, and we would issue depredation permits
and special Canada goose permits. We would
continue to issue these as we currently do.

    Under Alternative E, the airport depredation
order, we would authorize airports to establish
and implement a program including indirect and or
direct population control strategies.
The intent of this program is to significantly
reduce goose populations at airports. We would
mandate that such management
actions must occur on the premises.

    Under Alternative E, a nest
and egg depredation order, we would allow the
destruction of resident Canada goose nests and
eggs without a permit. And the intent of this
program would be to attempt to stabilize breeding
populations of Canada geese, particularly within
urban or suburban areas.

    By an agricultural depredation order, we
would authorize land owners, operators, and
tenants actively engaged in commercial agriculture
to conduct indirect and/or direct control
strategies on geese depredating agricultural
crops. Again, we would mandate that such actions
would have to occur on the premises.

On the public
health depredation order, we would authorize
states, counties, municipalities, or local public
health officials to conduct indirect and/or direct
control strategies on geese when recommended by
health officials, and where there is a clear and
public health threat. Again, we would mandate
that such actions would occur on the premises where
the problem was.

Under Alternative F, the state empowerment,
this is our preferred Alternative. We would
establish a new regulation authorizing state
wildlife agencies or their agents to
conduct or allow the management activities of
resident Canada goose populations.

Our intent would be to allow state wildlife
agencies sufficient flexibility to deal with
problems caused by resident geese within their
respective states.

In this regard we would authorize indirect
or direct population control strategies such as aggressive harassment, nest and egg destruction, gosling and adult trapping, and culling programs. We would allow implementation of any of the specific depredation orders included under Alternative E.

In addition, during existing special hunting seasons, we would expand methods of take to increase hunter harvest. We would authorize additional hunting methods such as electronic calls, unplugged guns, and we would expand shooting hours. We would make such changes operational during the September 1st to 15th period. And we would make such changes experimental during the periods of September 16th, to 30th. Again, such special Canada goose seasons must be conducted outside of the regular waterfowl hunting seasons.

Under the conservation order, we would provide special expanded harvest opportunities during a portion of the treaty that is presently closed between August 1st and 31st and the open period September 1st to 15th.

During this time we would authorize
additional hunting methods such as electronic
calls, unplugged guns, and expanded shooting
hours, and we would also allow liberalized bag
limits. Again, these must be conducted outside of
regular seasons.

The Service would annually assess the impact
and effectiveness of this program. The provision
for possible suspension of these special
regulations, the conservation order, or changes to
the regular season structure is there and would be
probably altered if there was no longer a need
present for their use.

Under this alternative as well we would
continue, of course, all special and regular
hunting seasons. We would continue to issue
depredation and special Canada goose permits, and
the state would be required to annually monitor
the spring breeding population of the Canada geese
within its state. And it would also be required
to report the take that occurred under these
authorized activities.

Under the last alternative considered was
one of a general depredation order. And here we
would allow any authorized person to conduct
management activities on resident geese either
posing a threat to health and human safety or
caus[ing] damage. Such a depredation order would be
available to all between April 1st and August
31st.

This would as well provide for expanded
hunting opportunities. It would allow for the
continued used of special and regular hunting
seasons, and the issuance of depredation and
special Canada goose permits. And it would allow
for the authorization of all management activities
to come directly from the state rather than the
federal government.

A little bit about the affected environment:
For impacts under the biological environment,
these are the things we looked at: We looked at
potential impacts on resident Canada goose
populations, water quality and wetlands,
vegetation and soils, wildlife habitat, and
federally listed threatened and endangered
species.

Under the socioeconomic environment, we
looked at migratory bird program management
aspects, the sport hunting program, and the
migratory bird permit program. We took a look at
social values and considerations. And under
economic considerations, we considered property
damage and damage to agricultural crops.

Obviously too, we considered human health and
safety, and the cost of the program itself or
program administration.

The environmental consequences section then,
attempts to pull these things together, and
basically it forms the scientific and analytic
basis for comparing the alternatives. It analyzes
the environmental impacts of each alternative in
relation to the resource categories. The no
action alternative provides the baseline for all
of our analysis.

Under the no action alternative, we would
expect that the populations of resident Canada
geese would continue to grow. We predict that in
the Atlantic Flyway, approximately 1.6 million
resident Canada geese would exist within the
ten-year time frame. Within the Mississippi
Flyway, approximately 2 million additional Canada
geese will exist within a ten-year time frame.
Within the Central Flyway, 1.3 million, and within
the Pacific Flyway, 450,000 resident Canada geese
should exist in the next ten years without action.

We expect this type of population growth
will lead to continued and expanded goose
distribution problems and increasing numbers of
conflicts with other human uses.

We also anticipate that this growth will
lead to increased workloads for a variety of
different folks, both public and private. And we
expect that this growth would lead to continued
impacts of the type we've witnessed on property,
safety, and human health.

Under the preferred alternative, the state
empowerment, environmental consequences, we expect
to achieve a reduction in populations especially
in problem areas. We would expect to have, as a
result of the preferred alternative, increased
hunting opportunities. We would also expect a
significant reduction in the number of conflicts.
We expect decreased impacts to property, safety,
and human health.

We expect workloads to increase
somewhat initially, but over the long term, we expect
workload problems to decline. And we expect that
under this alternative we will maintain viable
resident Canada goose populations.

The results of some recent population
modeling that we have done suggest that to reduce
the four Flyways' population from its currently estimated 3.5 million down to approximately 2.1 million, under the preferred alternative, will take about ten years.

We hope to achieve this or we believe this would be achieved by increasing the harvest by 480,000 geese annually. We also expect that we would be taking an additional 852,000 goslings annually, and would be removing over a half a million nests annually to make this reduction work, the combination of additional harvest of 240,000 geese annually and 320,000 goslings annually.

Our conclusions then: we believe there is only one way to attain these numbers, and that is to give states the flexibility to address these problems within their respective states. To allow us or those states to address population reductions on a wide number of available fronts.

And since states are the most informed and knowledgeable local authorities on wildlife conflicts, the primary responsibilities and the decisions for the programs should be placed with states and local governments.

What comes next? First would be the
development of a new regulation to carry out the proposed action. This should be forthcoming in May. Today is the last day for public comments on this Draft Environmental Impact Statement. And, third, we expect the publication of the final Environmental Impact Statement, a record of decision on what the final determination is, and the final rule sometime during the fall of 2002.

As I stated, today is the last day for public comments. I'm sure that if you feel smitten with insight here that you would care to share with us and get it in the mail to us shortly, those comments would be considered, recognizing that this public hearing is not conducted until the date of the closing period, but I encourage any of you so inclined to send your comments in.

I think that Phil will review some of the ways in which you can comment besides commenting here at this meeting. And of course should you chose to, oral or written comments may be submitted tonight as well.

The address should be printed on the back of the card you received when you arrived here tonight. And additionally, we have set up an
electronic site where you can email comments and
access other information pertinent to this EIS
process, and I think Phil will be filling you in
on what that is as well.

And so, on behalf of the Fish and Wildlife
Service, I would like to thank all of you for
attending the meeting, and particularly thanks to
those of you who are going to comment,
either orally or in writing later. Thanks again.

MR. SENG: Thanks, Bob. Now, for the
important part of the meeting, to hear what you
have to say. I would just like to again mention,
we'll go in order. When I call your number, if
you don't want to comment, please just say
pass so we can go on.

And Bob mentioned about the address on the
back. The email. I would encourage you to use
the email address if you're going to make comments

As most of you know, because of the 9/11
situation and the Anthrax issue in Washington,
mail going into Washington D.C. has not been as
timely as it might otherwise be, so the email is
the way to go if you choose to do that.

   Again, when you come to the mic, you have to
stand pretty close to the mic for it to pick up,
so I ask you to do that. State your full name,
spell your name unless it's immediately obvious,
and any organization you represent, if you're
formally representing them tonight, and where
you're from. So without further ado, card No.
1.

   MS. WATHNE: My name is Lisa Wathne,
spelled W-A-T-H-N-E. I'm the director of the
Pacific Northwest Regional Office of the Humane
Society of the United States. And if I could just
ask my question first before I give my
comments.

   On the slide where you showed the numbers of
geese, goslings, and nests that were going to need
to be removed and harvested over the next ten
years to meet the goal, is that an increase in
harvest, or is that the total desired harvest?

   MR. TROST: It's an increase, and I
apologize because I don't believe that was clear.
The total numbers that we anticipate include those
that are currently taken plus those under the new
regulations.

And we do anticipate that there would be about 240,000 geese harvested annually that are not currently harvested, and that the implementation of the preferred alternative would result in the taking of about 320,000 goslings more than are currently taken.

MS. WATHNE: Okay, thanks. Again, I'm with the Humane Society of the United States with the Pacific Northwest Regional Office. We cover the states of Washington and Oregon. And our Wildlife and Habitat Protection Division has already provided our organization's official comments regarding the Draft Environmental Impact Statement, but I wanted to come here tonight just to offer some comments I think more specific to our region.

And I'd say that in my opinion, one of the most striking points about this document, about the EIS, is that it does not provide information on exactly what is involved or what is going to occur or occurs under the various lethal control plans that are mentioned except for hunting, of course. That's obvious.

But except for hunting, the lethal control
options are only alluded to, they're not described. And this does not leave an opportunity for an average member of the public who is reading this document and who cares about geese to grasp the nature of the roundups. And the roundups and gassing that is part of these options are a very real and a probably very necessary option for the plan that you've proposed.

Last year many of us in the Puget Sound area and a good number of the people sitting in this room watched one of these roundups performed by the United States Department of Agriculture.

We watched geese be baited with food into pens, roughly grabbed and shoved into gas chambers where, according to my organization's veterinarians, there is a very good chance that many of them suffocated to death rather than humanely dying through the gassing process as was intended.

In many instances geese were rounded up and killed in areas where non-lethal methods had not been employed, and where egg oiling had either not taken place or had been done inadequately. And as a consequence, hundreds of the birds that were rounded up and killed were goslings who never had
to be born to begin with. Their lives could have been prevented and their, what we consider cruel and unnecessary deaths could have been prevented.

And at one point in your presentation you talked about the social values and considerations that were taken into consideration for your plan. And I would suggest that if most people knew truly what was meant by lethal option and had the chance to watch any of those roundups, the social considerations that you are thinking about would be skewed in a very different way.

I think -- I know that people would be outraged by what I saw and what a number of us in this room saw last year.

Thousands of birds suffered needlessly in the gas chambers but USDA, you know, declares that once again this year there's going to be more slaughters, the same number of birds as last year.

I personally find it a remarkable circumstance of wildlife management that neither the federal nor the state governments seems to be capable or willing to help people resolve conflicts with wildlife without killing. And I say this as somebody that has a degree in biology. From day one when I began my studies, that seemed
a remarkable fact to me.

Simply put, in our opinion there's no justification for killing when non-lethal and humane alternatives are available and have proven to be successful. More than a dozen communities throughout the country engage in comprehensive, non-lethal goose management programs using community-based resources.

These approaches offer the only realistic solutions to the problems people experience with Canada geese and they deserve to be given a chance to work in other locations. Our office stands ready to help in this area with that.

We have been effectively shut out of the process here, mostly by the United States Department of Agriculture, but your agency has made the permitting process -- I should say your agency's permitting process is extremely cumbersome and not conducive to helping people who want to help.

The Pacific Northwest Regional Office of the Humane Society of the United States challenges you, the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service to forgo killing and to opt for more effective and responsible approaches to Canada geese. Thank

MS. BRAGDON: My name is Katherine Bragdon, and that's K-A-T-H-R-I-N-E, Bragdon, B-R-A-G-D-O-N. No affiliation today. I urge you to avoid any plan that would increase hunting opportunities and to use roundups as a means to decrease the Canada goose population. As Lisa Wathne had mentioned, there are many methods for reducing the number of geese that are community-based, effective, humane, and economical.

For instance, in Seattle the Humane Society of the United States trained 60 volunteers to addle eggs last year. There were more volunteers than there were opportunities to addle. Meanwhile, the opposite was true for the federal agents, who had more nests than they could effectively handle.

The result, a taxpayer-funded roundup of geese who should have never been born. It made no sense to not take advantage of the outpouring of support for a humane solution and then to go forward with an undeniably cruel, unnecessary, and ultimately an unsuccessful plan given the killing that they are again going to be doing this year.
It's just astounding.

Including the community in an opportunity like this is a win-win situation. While it not only addresses the perceived problem, it also saves money and educates people about our natural environment that is currently being decimated by development, overlogging, pollution, et cetera.

As a society, we must all become involved in protecting our natural resources which play a central role in the health of human and nonhuman inhabitants.

Community activities like these that are based on humane and scientific solutions as well as tolerance can provide a vehicle for this needed participation. Again, I urge you to develop a plan that is humane and effective and does not include any unnecessary gassing of Canada geese.

Thank you for the opportunity to speak tonight.

MR. SENG: Thank you. Card 3?

MR. METZ: My name is Dr. Stewart Metz. That's S-T-E-W-A-R-T, M-E-T-Z. I live in Bellevue. I'm speaking for myself, but I've been an internist for the last 30 years, and I'd like to address the health issues involved with the Canada geese. I'd like to read this if I could.
"Any of the proposals to killing thousands
of Canada geese when based principally upon health
concerns is predicated upon two assumptions:

"No. 1, that both feces of Canada geese and
the nearby bodies of water contain high titers of
human pathogens such as coliform bacteria, which
can be attributed to the geese. And 2, if the
feces in the water are contaminated, they have led
and will lead to human disease.

"To my knowledge, neither of these
postulates has been proven to be true. What are
the facts?

"Two recent studies of Canada goose feces by
Rosco, et al and Converse, et al and carried out
by the National Wildlife Health Center and New
Jersey Division of Fish and Wildlife. The major
findings can be summarized as follows:

"No. 1, they looked specifically in Canada
goose feces for serotype 0157:H7, the form of
e. coli best documented to be a pathogen for
humans. It was not found.

"No. 2, they looked for salmonella,
shigella, campylobacter, and Yersinia. These
bacteria were not found in this and other studies
as well. They looked for listeria species. While
it was found in occasional samples, many of the isolates were not pathogenic, i.e., were not disease causing. And even where listeria was found in geese, it was usually found in domestic, not Canada geese.

"Similarly species of parasites and protozoa were found, but their pathogenicity was not established. I am unaware of any outbreaks of protozoal disease shown to be due to Canada geese. Converse concluded in these studies that, quote, 'The low frequency of positive cultures indicates that the risk to humans of disease through contact with Canada goose feces appeared to be minimal,' close quote.

"Similarly Roscoe concluded that, quote, 'Canada geese do not pose a significant source of environmental contamination,' and quote, 'That no human disease outbreaks have been directly linked to exposure to goose feces.'

"Surely we haven't forgotten the lesson of the Northwest resort which was shut down recently due to repeatedly high titers of coliforms in the spa water. It was ultimately determined that the cause of the contamination was the bathers themselves, not the wildlife."
"Conversely, I would conclude by calling your attention to the recent so-called Henhouse Inspection Bill designed to prevent infection of eggs by salmonella enteritidis, an undeniable cause of epidemics of potentially fatal human gastroenteritis merely by the non-lethal measure of examining the hen houses and the hens therein.

"Yet our Legislature in their wisdom did not pass this bill. If we do not take steps to prevent diseases using simple and effective measures requiring no killing of animals, I maintain that is unresponsive, inconsistent, disingenuous, and even hypocritical to consider sacrificing living creatures whose role in disease causation is far less certain.

"In the 21st Century, I would hope that we could demand facts before we end innocent lives."

Thank you for letting me speak. (Applause.)

MR. SENG: Thank you. Card No. 4.

Pass.

MR. SENG: 5.

SPEAKER: I'd like to pass, but I do have a comment or question.

MR. SENG: Can you come to the mic.

MS. WINESTEIN: My name is Diane
Winestein and I'm here as a citizen. My question is, I'd like to know what an unplugged gun is, not knowing much about guns. I would also like to know how the comments are going to be used, if we're just going through the motions and you've already made a decision. I'd like specifically to know how the comments are going to be used.

MR. TROST: First, the easy question, more probably the easier of the two. Federal law requires that those folks hunting migratory birds hunt with a gun that's not capable of holding more than three shells. Most shotguns will hold five or more. And, therefore, they're plugged.

An unplugged shotgun means that they would not be required in any special seasons to have a plug in their gun. And many hunters feel that they could kill more birds on a given occasion if they had the use of the additional shells, so that's what that refers to.

The other part is, no, we're not going through the motions. We're soliciting comments on the alternatives. We will go back, we will consolidate all of those comments, review them, take a look at how they come out as far as -- it's not really a numbers thing, but about the salient
arguments that are made about and what seems to be the most prevailing public sentiments across the country.

And we will attempt to select the preferred alternative which may not be what we currently would indicate in the final. And when the final comes out, we will make a decision which will be heavily influenced by the comments we've received on the draft. Does that answer your question?

MR. SENG: Card 6.

MR. VARDEN: My name is Bob Varden, that's V-A-R-D-E-N. I'm a Humane Society United States volunteer. I live in Seattle, and I understand that the Humane Society of the United States has offered on different occasions to have their volunteers oil and addle eggs and to train their volunteers to do this in a professional way, and has not been met with very receptive reception on the part of the USDA and your agency.

And I'd just like to have your comments on why this is so. And we have hundreds of volunteers who are ready and who will be professionally trained to do this, so I'd just like to have your comments on that, please.

MR. SENG: Is that a Fish and Wildlife
Service issue or USDA?

MR. TROST: It's primarily USDA.

MR. SENG: Do you want to respond?

MR. TROST: My response is going to be, it's not something that's within the context of the Draft Environmental Impact Statement. There are representatives here from the different agencies, and if you'd like, we will probably be willing to discuss this with you after the meeting. But it really has no bearing on the Draft Environmental Impact Statement.

MR. SENG: Card 7.

MS. MORRIS: My name is Yolanda, Y-O-L-A-N-D-A, Morris. No affiliation. I just wanted to state for the record that I oppose any use of inhumane and lethal controls. And my second point was going to be what Bob just touched upon, which you guys can't really do anything about, but just accepting the help of the many volunteers that are willing to help with the more humane methods of population control. Thanks.

MR. SENG: Card 8.

Welfare Society. I'm also representing the 40,000 members we represent throughout the State of Washington.

PAWS operates the largest wildlife rehabilitation hospital in Washington. Members of the public frequently bring injured and often Canada geese, which we rehabilitate and return to the wild. It is because of community interest in the well-being of Canada geese that we feel strongly about the proposed EIS.

On a hot, sunny day last summer, PAWS staff and volunteers spent the entire day in Greenlake Park handing out information on Canada geese. Hundreds of people walked past and took our information. The majority gave us comments as they walked and jogged by.

Well over 90 percent of these people expressed their outrage that wildlife are being killed in their park. They acknowledge that goose poop is a nuisance and some questioned the health and safety aspects.

However, when informed that there are alternatives to killing the geese, they were outraged that the authorities weren't trying harder to use these methods. They questioned why
there weren't more signs in the park asking people not to feed the geese. They wondered why authorities aren't working with local groups to addle more eggs. They wondered why park management isn't landscaping to discourage geese from congregating in well used areas.

I've also been meeting with residents who live along Lake Washington and have geese coming into their yards. These people live in million dollar homes and their yards are beautifully manicured. They don't want their lawns messed with goose poop, but they've expressed that they don't want the geese killed.

Many residents are trying repellants and utilizing fences and hedges to keep the geese out. They're encouraged to hear that population numbers can be controlled by addling. They also wonder why addling isn't taking place to any large extent and why authorities are not working with community groups and residents to try these humane methods.

The community does not want increased gassing or hunting of geese. The community is willing to work with authorities on humane geese management. Thank you.

MR. SENG: Card 9.
SPEAKER: Pass.

MR. SENG: 10.

MS. HANAN: Janet Hanan, H-A-N-A-N, Bellingham, Washington. I'm not affiliated. I too am vehemently opposed to any plans that call for a lethal solution to the Canadian geese issue. I'm especially horrified at the numbers that were presented tonight.

Surely you know that killing, short of total genocide, is never a successful method of population control. I grew up hearing the adage from hunters and if you know any hunters, you may have heard this as well: The more you kill, the more you get.

I want to share with you my experiences. I live in a golf course community on Lake Whatcom in the northwest corner of Washington State. We had 80 geese rounded up and gassed last year to the horror of 95 percent of the community.

The reason, too much goose feces on the golf course. Now less than a year later there are again an estimated 80 geese around the golf course. I rest my case. Killing doesn't not work.

Furthermore, attempts to justify lethal
schemes with unsubstantiated allegations that the
goose feces is a health threat are bogus and
irresponsible. In Whatcom County there have been
studies conducted to determine Lake Whatcom's
condition. Dr. Mark Le Pay, an internationally
known water toxicologist and public health expert
has recently found that contaminants to the lake
are not related to goose feces.

For example, the unacceptable levels of
PCPs, and I quote from his report, "Suggest
logging residues of treated lumber as a continuing
source of water pollution and the abundance of
other pollutants were found to exceed permissible
levels," but he attributed them to,
"Insufficiently processed human waste."

I just want to add that this is a new world
after September 11th. Life is precious.

(Applause.)

MR. SENG: Card 11.

MS. TANNER: Ann Tanner, T-A-N-N-E-R,
from Mount Vernon. I just wanted to make a very
short comment. I, like many -- most people here
are totally opposed to lethal methods of
controlling goose population, and I would urge you
to only consider methods of non-lethal control and
take into account all the volunteers who are
willing to help you do that. Thank you.


MS. TAYLOR: I'm Debby, D-E-B-B-Y,
Taylor, T-A-Y-L-O-R, and I'm from Shoreline,
Washington and I'm unaffiliated. I agree with
everyone so far that I support the geese basically
and would like to see non-lethal methods and
addling used.

I consider the whole goose mess, basically
man has made it and man has enhanced it, and I
think we're looking at extreme measures of dealing
with it and I think we need to be more
compassionate, and we can also be practical at the
same time in dealing with this and we have the
potential for many volunteers helping with this.
And that's basically what I have to say.

MR. SENG: Thank you. Card 15.

MS. CHILCOAT: My name is Chelsea,
C-H-E-L-S-E-A, Chilcoat, C-H-I-L-C-O-A-T, and I'm
going to be pretty brief because most of what I
wanted to say has already been said, but I am incredibly opposed to using lethal methods for geese population control. There are plenty of alternatives such as egg addling that the public is willing to participate in that will not only increase the value for life and teach people respect for the environment, but also get the community involved in issues like this. So please go in favor of the non-lethal methods. Thank you.

MR. SENG: Thank you. Card 16.

MR. MOSS: Bill Moss, M-O-S-S. I'd like to really object to the presentation and how slanted it was all the way down to this is the one we're really pushing. This one is the huge one here. This one we're really going to itemize and we're really pushing this one.

There's no form of objectivity in that at all, which is a huge uphill battle to fight an agency out of control, and who's going to turn it over to other individual agencies who are
themselves out of control, lining their pockets
obviously with federal money and keeping
themselves very busy at this control issue.

But anyway, if this was Panda Bears, if it
was Panda Bears, what, are we going to stuff them
in there and gas them? I don't think so. But
what's the difference? Is it kind of a speciesist
thing? It's animals we don't like.

Where did this come from? Whose idea was
it? We're going to kill a bunch of stuff. This
is a real problem. We got an agency here and
we've got to do something with it. We can kill
some stuff and we can be all puffed up and we can
make presentations all over the place and we can
take input. Thank you very much.

And we can be heavily influenced by that,
I'm sure. I saw a lot of our heavy influence on
your presentation. But anyway, I wanted to -- I
was going to talk about Oz and the people behind
the curtain and the people looking for a heart and
some courage, and what was the other?

THE AUDIENCE: A brain.

MR. MOSS: A brain, and I was going to
expose you as the guy that Toto pulled back, pay
no attention to the guy behind the curtains who's
like manipulating everything. Right, but I thought...

What I want to do is talk about the kids. And what kind of influence is that on the kids that are coming up? And I wanted to say one word: Mylar. Mirrored Mylar. What kid can get himself a gas chamber? CO₂ is just really hard to come by. Any kid can lay his hands on some Mylar and make a little fence of Mylar that flutters in the breeze and distracts as many geese as can be killed in a day.

But maybe they would like to model themselves more directly after you and you could help them along by using means that they could get their hands on more readily than CO₂. Want to invest heavily in CO₂. Think about the kids. Think about yourself when you were a kid.


MR. WATSON: My name is Larry Watson from Bellevue, Washington. Most of what's been said tonight I agree with. I would like to just say that I don't agree with lethal, using any lethal means, and as people have expressed before me.

And what I don't understand is it seems to
me you're taking the most economically high cost method of doing what you're trying to do. I think we all realize that there may be a problem, but you've gotten all kinds of offers from people to help you free of charge. And, furthermore, I don't understand why you want to use our tax money to kill something that we created as human beings. Thank you.

THE AUDIENCE: (Applause.)

MR. SENG: Card 19.

MR. KOSTURA: My name is Dan is Kostura, K-O-S-T-U-R-A. And actually I wish to submit my comments in writing, but I feel it's been unclear as to when the deadline is to submit these comments. Is there a definitive date we should do this by?

MR. TROST: The official date is today, May 3rd.

MR. KOSTURA: I know.

MR. TROST: And in recognition of the fact that the public hearing is tonight, they'll generally take them postmarked within a week.

MR. KOSTURA: Okay. And will that apply for email as well?

MR. TROST: Yes.
MR. KOSTURA: Thank you.


Covington is right next to Kent. I'm basically just going to read the written statement that I submitted earlier, and then I have a few off-the-cuff comments that sort of occurred to me while I was sitting here listening to other folks.

I would like to offer my comments regarding your agency's Resident Canada Goose Management Draft Environmental Impact Statement. I'm opposed to increased hunting and the encouragement of wholesale roundup and gassing of geese as a wildlife management technique.

Non-lethal methods have been demonstrated to be more effective and are obviously more humane. For example, the organization, Geese Peace in Fairfax County, Virginia, in your agency's own backyard, has clearly demonstrated the effectiveness of egg addling and occasional habitat modification.

Why does a volunteer organization show more creative thinking than highly paid government bureaucrats? I am sick and tired, damn sick and
tired of the attitude that the solution to every
perceived animal or human/wildlife conflict is to
just start killing wildlife.

Humane, non-lethal methods do exist and have
been successful. Use them. Remember, the title
of your agency is the Division of Migratory Bird
Management. Not Division of Migratory Bird
Extermination.

Now my impromptu comments that sort of
occurred to me. I guess the first one is, really
how bad is goose poop or bird poop anyway? I mean
several times in my life I've been hit by bird
poop. About five years ago maybe, it was even
less than that, maybe it was a few years ago, I
was walking my dogs and some bird pooped on my
shirt.

Okay. I didn't think I was in any need of
immediate medical aid or run to the emergency room
at the hospital. And just about a month ago I had
a bird poop on my head. I wasn't worried about my
imminent demise. I went and wiped the damn thing
off.

Okay. The next thing, I think the hunting
approach is kind of absurd. There are places
where you can hunt and there are places where
there might be too many geese. They're not the same place. The geese are probably regarded as being in too large numbers maybe in waterfront community geese.

You're going to go out there and start shooting away from your shotgun 50 yards from people's houses. That's just plain stupid. The other approach, gassing the geese, okay, you know, you damn well have to know that the public is against this because the times that the gassing of geese has been used, the agencies that have been doing it have tried to do it in secret.

They would not announce where it's going to be and they would do everything possible to hide the fact they were doing it. So you know that the public is appalled by this and is going to be opposed to it. And there's going to be demonstrations, at least I hope there are, because if there are, I'm going to be there.

The final thing is an analogy. Basically there's too many geese, the question is what do you do about it? That's kind of like let's say you decided your family was too big for the house. Maybe you were thinking you have too many kids. What do you do? Do you use birth control,
analogous to egg addling, or you just let the kids
be born and decide to machine gun them. That's
the analogy. Thank you.

THE AUDIENCE: (Applause.)

MR. SENG: 21.

MR. DEERING: My name is Frank Deering, D-E-E-R-I-N-G, like the animal deer. And
I just want to say that I oppose any lethal method
to manage the populations of Canada geese.
And I was very struck by your
presentation that the only one of the benefits of
your Alternative F were increased hunting
opportunities. I can't say that that speaks
anywhere near to me, thank you.

MR. SENG: Thank you. Card 22.

MS. DEERING: Beverly Deering,
D-E-E-R-I-N-G. I too am totally opposed to any
kind of lethal method of control of Canada geese
or, in other words, killing. I am in favor of
your Alternative B, non-lethal methods with the
addition of egg addling. Any kind of alternatives
for killing geese are not humane and not
acceptable.

I just wanted to mention that I had heard on
public radio within the last month that there was
some report -- and I'm sorry, I don't have the facts about who it was -- but that the population of Canada geese in this area had actually decreased. So I'm afraid that I do question the accuracy of the population figures.

I highly resent the spending of tax dollars for killing of wildlife, which I love. I was heartbroken last year by the implementation of your Alternative A which the plan calls no action, which means the mass killing of geese, so that now a park where I regularly walk has -- the population is so reduced that when I go there I usually don't see any geese.

I feel it's not the action of a civilized society to inhumanely kill innocent animals when their presence is an inconvenience to some. It's really time to find more humane ways to deal with these conflicts rather than these quick and dirty solutions. Thanks.

THE AUDIENCE: (Applause.)


MR. BALES: My name is Brad Bales, B-A-L-E-S, and I'm the Migratory Game Bird Coordinator for the Oregon Department of Fish and Wildlife in Portland, and I have statement from
our agency. I'm also here representing the Pacific Flyway Council, made up of ten western states. I have a brief statement.

There were two letters submitted by both the Pacific Flyway Council and the Oregon Department of Fish and Wildlife that should have been received in the Arlington office by now.

Just to hit the basic highlights beginning with the Pacific Flyway Council. The Council believes programs to manage resident goose issues including depredation should be coordinated among all flyway member states. Accordingly, they cannot concur with the Service's selection of Alternative F, state empowerment, as the preferred alternative currently outlined in the environmental impact statement.

Overabundant resident geese are a nationwide concern and the Service must maintain a leadership role in partnerships with all states to implement effective management solutions.

However, the Council does support the options listed under Alternative F pertaining to depredation and conversation orders. These options would give states substantial flexibility to address resident goose problems.
The Oregon Department of Fish and Wildlife in a similar vein would support Alternative F under conditions that, one, the Service maintain a leadership role and partnership with all states to implement effective management solutions to deal with resident Canada goose issues.

Two, dedicated federal funding to the states' reduced depredation management programs. And lastly, the management flexibility that is outlined in the orders under Alternative F must be streamlined to become an effective and easy to use system. Again, the Department conditionally supports Alternative F under these conditions.

With that, thank you.


MS. PARRAO: I am Edith Parrao, P-A-R-R-A-O, and I'm from Olympia. And I always watch the geese when I am going in the park by the Nisqually wetland refuge. And they're such beautiful birds and they mate for life and go through a mourning period when one of their
partner dies. And they're such good parents with their goslings, and I just don't think they should be gassed. Thank you.

MR. SENG: Thank you. Card 27.

MS. SKINNER: I'm Rebecca Skinner and I'm from Seattle. And I'm just going to read the letter that I sent over a month ago to the Division of Migratory Bird Management which I haven't received any response, so...

"Recently I observed three Canada geese and a flock of goslings. These geese reminded me that springtime weather has arrived in Seattle.

"I am writing because I am concerned about the future of Canada geese and the lethal methods of dealing with humane wildlife conflicts. The geese I see along Lake Washington or Lake Union in Seattle are a friendly reminder of why I moved to Seattle.

I enjoy observing wildlife and do not want their livelihood threatened because of public misconceptions regarding threats to public health and safety via goose feces.

Many people in the northwest are interested in community-based programs to help resolve problems with geese humanely. I'm asking the U.S.
Fish and Wildlife Service and the United States Department of Agriculture to support community-based programs that deal with geese humanely.

Last summer I spent many evenings on the shore of Lake Washington observing geese who establish long-term bonds and create tightly knit family units. One of the most interesting experiences I had while sitting with the geese involved a transient who told me he had names for all the geese. He told me they return every year to the same shore to rest.

Please let the geese rest in peace and stop the lethal methods of gassing geese in order to control population. There are many problems with the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service's plan to kill large numbers of birds, including the fact that the USDA officials mistakenly kill ducks and other wildlife in the process of gassing geese. Thank you for taking the time to hear my concerns regarding lethal methods of controlling wildlife. I hope you have the opportunity to enjoy the outdoors this summer and spend time with wildlife in your home state. Thank you.

MR. PENNINGTON: My name is Nancy Pennington, P-E-N-N-I-N-G-T-O-N. I was just going to -- I'm from Seattle -- say that there don't appear to be a lot of hunters here, but the gentleman before the last woman, I believe, works for the USDA.

MR. SENG: State waterfowl biologist.

MR. PENNINGTON: State. And this is a public hearing, which means private citizens can comment. Is this appropriate for him to be commenting?

MR. TROST: (Nodding head.)

MR. PENNINGTON: It is. I have a couple of questions. One is, in your presentation there was a lot made of health and safety in regard to the geese. Dr. Metz and a couple of other people have addressed safety issues -- the health issue which I think has been established is non-existent. There are no threats to public health from the geese.

The question I have is, what is the safety threat?

MR. TROST: The most often used example is collisions with aircraft at airports. And there are documented fatalities associated --
MR. PENNINGTON: So airports?

MR. TROST: At airports, yes.

MR. PENNINGTON: Okay. That's a safety issue?

MR. TROST: Yes.

MR. PENNINGTON: Okay. I just wanted to make one comment. I concur with everything that everybody has said except the gentleman from Oregon, that I'm opposed to all lethal methods for all the reasons that everybody has stated, but one I think is really important is that our children are being taught that the way to deal with any problem is to kill it.

I don't believe that your department has given a fair chance to alternative methods. And I'd also like to point out as someone else did, that these people are sneaking around in the dead of night to gas the geese. They want the children in the parks to see what happens. If they are doing a decent and honorable thing, they can do it in broad daylight.

THE AUDIENCE: (Applause.)

MR. PENNINGTON: I also wonder why you don't take advantage, there is a room full of volunteers willing to go out and addle eggs to
stop the birth of too many birds. Why don't you
use it?

Obviously the USDA can't get to every spot
to addle every egg. We are willing and ready to
go. Why are the permits being denied? This just
doesn't make any sense. And I thank you for
listening to my comments.


MR. MORAN: I'm Jamie Moran,
M-O-R-A-N, of Seattle. I oppose lethal management
methods--management, quote, unquote. While
Alternative C is very good in that it encourages
and I encourage egg addling, it does allow for
inhumane special hunting, and, therefore, is
flawed. Thank you.


SPEAKER: Pass.

MR. SENG: 31.

MS. BAKER: Karen Baker, Redmond. I
pretty much agree with everything that's been said
by everyone else. It's just unacceptable to spend
our tax dollars to murder hundreds of thousands of
animals. And in this day and age, it's just
ridiculous. There's much better things that we
can be doing with our tax dollars.
And in addition to egg addling, I'm sure there's some other means of birth control that can be devised. I believe I read somewhere that there's things that can be put in feed to give to birds to keep them from reproducing, so something like that could probably be useful.

But going out and killing hundreds of thousands of birds is just totally unacceptable, and I don't like my tax money being used for it.

MR. SENG: Thank you. 32.

MS. GRUBB: My name is Eunice Grubb, spelled E-U-N-I-C-E. And like others here I'm an advocate for the humane treatment of all animals. I'd like to quote the philosopher or naturalist, Immanuel Kant, who has said that the moral character of a man can be judged by the way he treats animals.

By extension, our governments, our communities can also be judged, their moral character can also be judged by the way it or we treat the animals in our communities. The cruel roundup and gassing of these innocent animals is truly inhumane and unacceptable.

Non-lethal methods of hunting and gassing are also not acceptable. If they must be removed,
killing, killing, killing is not, should not be
the way of our lives today. Thank you.

THE AUDIENCE: (Applause.)

MR. SENG: Thank you. Card 33.

MR. KINNEY: My name is Les Kinney, K-I-N-N-E-Y. I was out at Marymoore Park a week
and a half ago, and a V-pattern of geese flew
overhead, and there was probably 30 or 40 geese,
and it was absolutely gorgeous. And the thought
of shooting or gassing those geese is just
appalling to me. Please look at alternatives to
killing to manage the geese population. Thank
you.

THE AUDIENCE: (Applause.)

MR. SENG: Thank you. Card 34.

MS. DUNSMORE: Hello, my name is Terry Dunsmore, D-U-N-S-M-O-R-E. Everyone here has
spoken so eloquently about being opposed to the
goose kill and I am also completely opposed to it.
But I do have a question for you.

You mentioned some social value studies that
were done, and I'm interested in how the studies
were conducted. Were they outcome studies, where
I might get copies of those, and what the outcomes
of those outcome studies were. Can someone speak
to that or answer that question?

MR. TROST: I'm not sure that I referred to specific studies, however, I would refer you to the Draft Environmental Impact Statement itself for a complete source of references and discussions on that topic.

Have you a copy of that?

MS. DUNSMORE: I don't. I have requested it on the thing they sent around, but it said -- it was under socioeconomic environment. You said this is part of the DEIS.

MR. TROST: Right. Those factors were considered, but I don't know that specific -- environmental impact studies and NEPA law does not require that new studies be done, but that you take into account all the available information and existing studies.

So when we do an environmental impact statement, regardless of the subject, we do not go out and commission specific studies on that issue.

MS. DUNSMORE: So it might be based on old studies?

MR. TROST: Yes.

MS. DUNSMORE: Sometimes maybe very old studies like 20-year-old, like public opinion
from 20 years ago or something?

MR. TROST: There may be some of that in there as well.

MS. DUNSMORE: Okay. Thank you.

MR. SENG: Thank you. Card 35.

MR. JOHNSON: My name is Wayne Johnson from the Northwest Animal Rights Network. And I am a clinical psychologist and have been for the last 32 years. So I hope you'll permit me to say that gassing one of the these magnificent birds let alone another 320,000 is insane.

I want to look at this from the point of view of an animal rights activist. It's obvious from what's been said here that we like these geese. That they're very special animals, but I hope that we would be as consistent with Panda Bears or pigs or any other of God's living creatures.

Now, we've been talking about this issue for a long time here in the Northwest, sir. In the mid 1980s they told us that the way to deal with it was translocation. So they rounded these geese up, translocated them to eastern Washington and western Idaho.

After we got the hunting tags back, we found
out about 50 percent of the animals that had been
translocated were dead. So translocation along
with the goslings that died in transit during a
rainstorm that year meant more dead geese.

Then you tried addling, but addling wasn't
enough, and the numbers of geese killed went up.
The result of the conversation on addling meant
more dead geese. You asked us to submit testimony
and come to community forums. We did, and the
answer was more dead geese. The Humane Society of
the United States proposed community-based
solutions, and the answer was more dead geese.

Simply tonight, Dr. Metz argued from the
information that Converse and his colleagues have
done in Ithaca and New Jersey showing that you've
not even close to met -- despite the disingenuous
comment about airports -- not even close to met
the tough standard of the Migratory Bird Treaty
Act. Airports have their own permitting process.
The fact is that Sea-Tac has a permit, the Renton
Airport has a permit.

The health considerations are around lakes,
around golf courses, pooping has become a capital
crime, and that's insane. And so I'm under no
illusion that the fix is in, that the option will
be taken and that hundreds of thousands of geese are going to be killed.

No matter how many times we use a rational forum, the only answer to this particular problem is massive civil disobedience. The only thing, the only thing that is going to stop more dead geese is for enough citizens to say no.

Now, from the point of view of an animal rights activist, do we have the numbers now? No, we don't. We don't have the numbers now. But there are a growing number of people that will walk around Greenlake and not see any geese or very few geese.

And there are a growing number of people who will realize what killing geese actually means, that I believe that you're going to have a fight on your hands.

Last summer we were able to round up, no pun intended, a few citizens that cared enough to engage in civil disobedience. This year maybe we'll have a few more. The results are going to be more dead geese.

But ultimately I believe, from an animal rights perspective, that enough people will finally say enough, that it is going to be more
and more difficult for the U.S. Fish and Wildlife
and the paid killers and pimps in the USDA to kill
these geese. Thank you.

THE AUDIENCE: (Applause.)

MR. SENG: Card 36.

SPEAKER: Pass.

MR. SENG: 37.

MS. HARTMAN: My name is Kristi
any particular affiliation, though my husband,
Brad, and I are here as Washington State voters
and we are also Lake Washington waterfront
property owners and have been since 1998 and I
also lived in Lake Union for three years prior to
that. And we came on kind of short notice
tonight, so I apologize for the dress. We're not
particularly appropriate.

And I would like to thank the animal rights
organizations that are here tonight for keeping us
posted on issues that, while we might not agree
with everything they always have to say, it does
give us the opportunity to educate ourselves about
these issues.

I jotted down some notes and it kind of
brings back a timeline that goes back to last
spring when we first were made aware of the geese
issue here in Washington and management issues
about how we should deal with their population.

And the first thing that I wanted to mention
was that I used to work with Judge Marsha Peckman
when she was a juvenile court judge, and so I paid
attention to her decision as to whether or not to
let the geese killings go forward.

And I was really surprised at how that
turned out, very surprised and disappointed. And
I guess the thing that surprised me the most was
that the burden of proof seemed to be on the wrong
end.

And from the very beginning I had been
surprised that if this is a federal issue, that it
seems like the will of the people of Washington
State have largely been ignored. I want to stick
to my timeline, so I'm going to come back to that.

And after Judge Peckman's decision happened,
I heard about the Gasworks Park roundup. I read
it in the paper and it just seemed to be sort of,
I don't know, overblown. I couldn't imagine that
something as horrible as that would happen here in
Seattle.

And I contacted the reporter whose article I
read and said did this really happen? And I talked to other people who said yes. In fact, I found out there was a pickup truck that had been revamped to be a gas chamber, so geese were loaded into the back where they couldn't even stand up in the back and they were gassed.

And I did also hear about the suffocation issues, where -- I mean we're talking hot summer days. This was like in July or August and the temperatures in the 70s and 80s and it was so hot outside, I can't imagine geese being loaded up in there waiting for the rest of them to be led in weren't horribly suffering.

I find that just awful to bear. As a result of that, I contacted local officials. It's been since last summer, as I mentioned, so I don't recall all of the people that I wrote directly, but I recall I wrote at least four or five letters, and I did receive some responses, both my email.

And the thing that I remember the most about the responses was, yes, they remembered the judge's decision, and, yes, they were saddened by this as well, but they had to do something about the goose populations. They had to address the
citizens' concerns about health and safety, and so what could be done.

However, the thing that just shocked them was that they had no idea about the gas chamber issue. They didn't realize that this was the method which the management was intending to handle the problem.

So I was surprised to learn that these officials didn't realize directly how this was going to be run. I did somehow land myself on the mailing list and I did last summer receive a copy. I must have been one of the early ones that got this big fat report in the mail, and I read every bit of it, cover to cover.

It's a subject that really interests me, primarily because I had heard about the egg addling. And I thought that sounds like a great idea. No harm to the geese, and lessen the population. All these good things.

And I also heard about tactics which involved landscaping projects, letting the fronts of the grass grow up near the lake edge to discourage geese from gathering there. Numerous stuff and so I wanted to see if any of this was included in report.
And as the first gal that spoke from the Humane Society mentioned, the thing that was very disturbing about the report, that there was nothing really specifically mentioned about how they were going to lethally manage the geese. It was all in there about lethal management, but I didn't really see anything about how it was going to happen.

And mind you, this came after I read the articles at Gasworks and the gassing, so I went, hmm, no wonder the officials didn't really know what was going to happen, because if they were reading this environmental impact statement and saying, yes, okay this looks fine, how were they to know to object?

It bothers me that there were large groups of volunteers that I also read about through the summer papers that were learning how to addle eggs and do all of that, and I read about the people that would train dogs to scare the geese off. And there were all these various community groups. I was so proud of all the community support that was there to obviously support the geese population, but also support and address the issue of eradication or, you know, move them out, do
But I really was proud of our community in doing that. And something that this reminds me of is, that it seems that the USDA is constantly taking the easy way out for management. It made me drive to Olympia about the Lake Hole trap issue when the Washington Citizen Initiative was in danger of being overturned and all of that stuff.

But the comments that happened back when I went to that hearing were again USDA comments that basically said they didn't want to deal with the issue in a way that wasn't quick and easy no matter the cost to the taxpayers or the taxpayers' will in wanting to look at alternative solutions.

I just wanted to conclude by saying how much I support and my neighbors support non-lethal methods of managing these geese, and would really encourage you to consider and work with the community organizations that have voiced their opinions and their support of non-lethal methods.

They're here and Washington State is a place where we'll work with you. We have lots of hands to help. And I hope that you would utilize those hands to enact our will of wanting non-lethal methods of management. That's all. Thank you
very much for your time and consideration.

THE AUDIENCE: (Applause.)

MR. SENG: Thank you. Is there anyone holding a card higher than 37, any latecomers holding a card?

THE AUDIENCE: (No response.)

MR. SENG: Okay. Then I would like to remind you that the signup sheets are on the back table now. If you wish to receive a copy of the final EIS, please signup so you'll get a copy in the mail. I'd like to thank you very much for taking time out on such a beautiful evening to come share your comments with us. And I declare this meeting adjourned. Have a safe trip home.

(Meeting adjourned 8:45 p.m.)