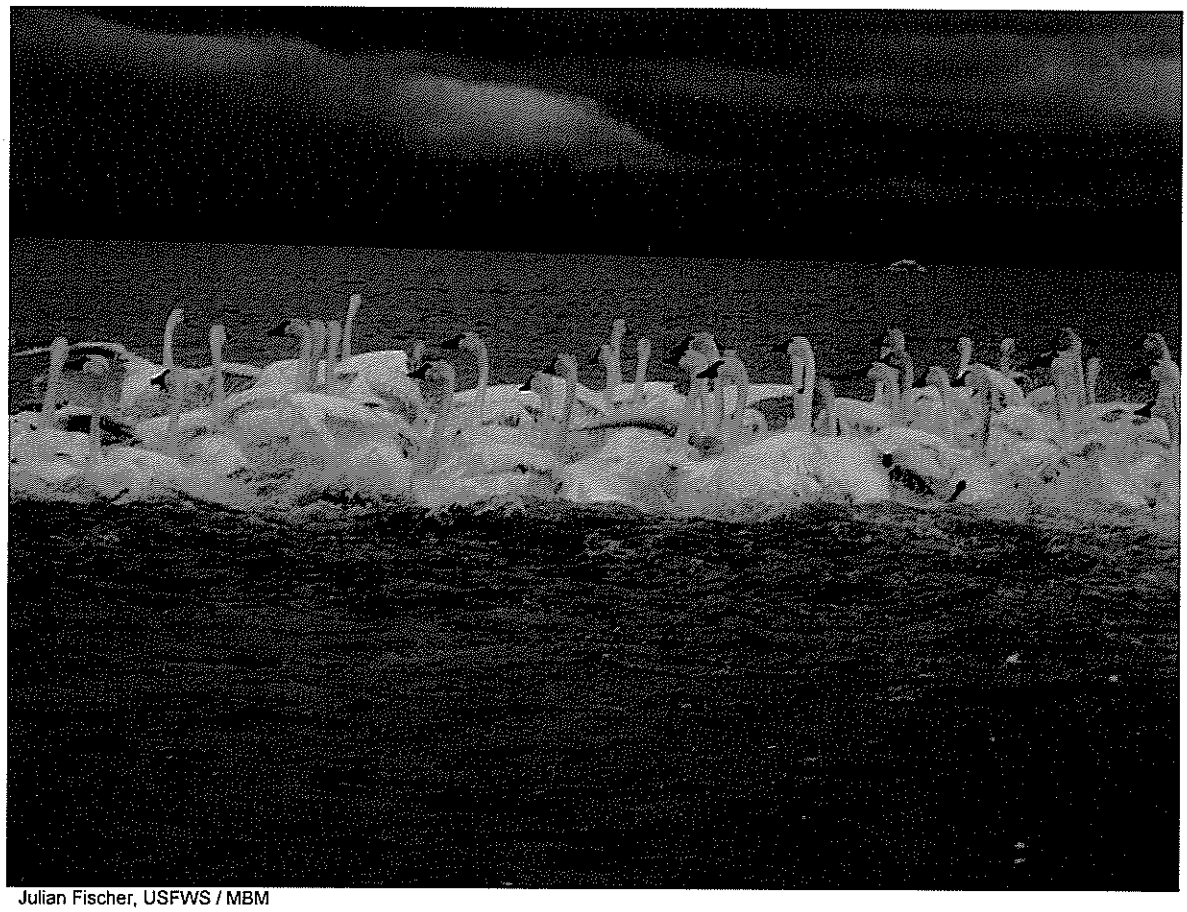
U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, Region 7

HPAI Preparedness and Communication Plan



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GLOSSARY OF ACRONYMS & ABBREVIATIONS

ADEC	Alaska Department of Environmental Conservation
ADFG	Aaska Department of Fish and Game
APHIS	Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service
DOI	Department of the Interior
FAO	Food and Agriculture Organization
FWS	Fish and Wildlife Service
HPAI	Highly Pathogenic Avian Influenza
IAP	Incident Action Plan
ICS	Incident Command System
IMT	Incident Management Team
JIC	Joint Information Center
NEPA	National Environmental Policy Act
NWHC	National Wildlife Health Center
PPE	Personal Protective Equipment
R7	Region 7, Alaska
USDA	United States Department of Agriculture
USGS	United States Geological Survey
WHO	World Health Organization

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

What is the danger of highly pathogenic avian influenza?

The Asian H5N1 strain of highly pathogenic avian influenza (HPAI), or bird flu, is primarily a disease of domestic poultry that is not native to, or currently present in, North America. However, outbreaks of HPAI in other parts of the world and the likelihood of continued spread, has heightened concern for Alaska.

Should HPAI be introduced to Alaska, potential exists to impact the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (Service) and National Wildlife Refuge (Refuge) lands. It is possible that there will be impacts to wildlife, primarily migratory birds. Further, humans could be exposed to and contract this illness by contact with infected birds, placing some Service employees and possibly Refuge users at risk. In addition, if the virus adapts so that sustained human to human transmission occurs, it is possible that the Service would be faced with participating, along with local, state and federal health officials, in controlling the spread of this agent among people.

What is in this Preparedness and Communication Plan?

The Region 7 HPAI Plan has two sections: the Preparedness and Communication section and the Response section. Preparedness provides the best opportunity to prevent the potential rapid spread of the disease. This Preparedness and Communication Plan recommends actions to be taken by the Service within Region 7. The Plan addresses two different circumstances. First, if the disease remains outside of North America, the primary goal is to conduct surveillance in wild birds, improve awareness and prepare Service staff for an eventual introduction of HPAI without great cost. Second, when HPAI is confirmed in North America or when migratory birds arrive from HPAI-affected areas, the goals are to provide information, increase coordination between agencies, and provide for appropriate action needed to protect Service employees.

What to do while Alaska remains HPAI-free.

An HPAI coordinator is designated for the Service in Region 7. The coordinator understands the background information and current situation of this disease and how it could affect resources particular to their area.

Communication with other agencies and entities is key to any HPAI-related activity. The HPAI coordinator has developed a region-specific list of appropriate state and local contacts. Background information including, the nature of the disease, what we know, what we don't know, actions we are taking, and actions employees can take, should be provided to all employees, especially those who handle migratory birds in the field or may be responding to morbidity and mortality events in wild birds. This plan will help the HPAI coordinator assess the potential of the disease to affect resources and human activities in their region and assist Refuge managers in decision making related to this issue.

What to do when HPAI occurs in North America or flyways from affected areas.

The HPAI coordinator and appropriate Region 7 management should evaluate the factors that determine the Region's susceptibility considering the circumstances specific to the location and situation. If HPAI is diagnosed in Alaska flyways, information should be provided to employees and the public on HPAI and how it is being monitored at the local and regional level.

An action flowchart is provided to determine when it is appropriate to institute the Service Response Plan that outlines actions to be taken if an HPAI outbreak occurs in the Region.

INTRODUCTION

BACKGROUND[1]

Historical and Scientific Information

The Asian H5N1 strain of highly pathogenic avian influenza (HPAI), or bird flu, is primarily a disease of domestic poultry that is not native to, or currently present in, North America. However, outbreaks of HPAI in Asia, the Middle East, Europe, and Africa, and the likelihood of continued spread to other parts of the world, have heightened concern in the United States. The Federal government response to HPAI is tiered from the Homeland Security Council's National Strategy for Pandemic Influenza (http://www.pandemicflu.gov/plan/). The Service's response is further tiered from the Department of the Interior Pandemic Influenza Preparedness and Response Plan may be at http://www.fws.gov/home/avianflu/.

Outbreaks of highly pathogenic avian influenza subtype H5N1 have been occurring in poultry in Southeast Asia since 2003. Wild birds, particularly waterfowl and shorebirds, commonly carry low pathogenic avian influenza viruses without harm. However, the Asian H5N1 HPAI virus has mutated and adapted to cause illness and death in domestic and wild birds, and has also affected a limited number of mammals, including humans. Worldwide, mortality from the virus has been detected in more than forty species of free-ranging birds including swans, ducks, geese, gulls, birds of prey, and some peridomestic species such as sparrows and corvids. See http://www.nwhc.usgs.gov/disease_information/avian_influenza/affected_species_chart.jsp. Over 200 million domestic birds in the affected countries have died or been culled in attempts to control the disease. In humans, the death rate from reported HPAI cases to date has been about 50%; however, case mortality in a pandemic has been projected in the U.S. National Strategy for Pandemic Influenza (2005) to be <2%.

The virus is spread among birds in fecal droppings, saliva, and nasal discharges. The virus is quite easily inactivated by disinfectants but can survive for long periods (a month or more) in cold water. HPAI has been detected in some apparently healthy wild birds. The role of migratory birds in the spread of the disease is likely, although human assisted movement of poultry or poultry products are also important transmission pathways. The impact of HPAI on wild bird populations is unknown. More clear is that HPAI poses a significant economic threat to domestic poultry and fowl operations and to human health.

If HPAI were identified in poultry or other domestic fowl in the United States, regulatory agencies (e.g., USDA APHIS) would respond with immediate culling of domestic birds within a predetermined radius of the case (the "infected zone"). Stepped-up surveillance, movement restrictions, and perhaps a zonal ring of vaccination of domestic birds, in facilities surrounding the outbreak would supplement disease control efforts. Although culling domestic birds to contain the spread of HPAI is considered an acceptable agriculture practice, culling of migratory birds is likely ineffective in disease control and would have unknown and potentially significant ecological consequences. Further, culling migratory birds is not recommended as an HPAI management action by the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO) or World Health Organization (WHO), the two leading international health authorities.

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[1] This plan was adopted for the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service Region 7 from the National Park Service's "Highly Pathogenic Avian Influenza in Wildlife Preparedness and Communication Plan": April 28, 2006

Most human cases have occurred from contact with infected poultry or contaminated surfaces. To date, transmission of H5N1 virus from person to person has been rare and spread has not continued beyond one person. However, because all influenza viruses are not genetically stable and have a tendency to change, scientists are concerned that the Asian H5N1 virus could one day be spread easily from one person to another. If the virus were able to infect people and spread easily from person to person, an influenza pandemic could begin.

Therefore, should HPAI be introduced in Alaska, potential exists to impact Service trust resources and Refuge lands. The most likely exposure will be to migratory birds. Further, humans can be exposed to and contract this illness by contact with birds, placing some Service employees and possibly Refuge users at risk. Additionally, if the virus adapts to achieve sustained human to human transmission, it is possible that the Service would be faced with participation, along with local, state and federal health officials, in controlling the spread of this agent among people.

Fish and Wildlife Service Management Considerations

In this plan Region 7 considers potential disease response actions before HPAI occurs in Alaska wildlife. This plan evaluates the following:

- Potential impact on regional resources, including actions recommended for disease control.
- Effects on migratory bird populations and their habitats. If an event occurs on a refuge, activities will be assessed in accordance with each Refuge's purpose and significance.
- Refuge subsistence users, in accordance with each refuge's purpose and significance.
- Maintenance of refuge employee and visitor health and safety.
- Loss to communities and the private sector from either animal destruction or travel restrictions.

PURPOSE OF THIS PLAN

The primary purpose of this plan is to identify HPAI preparedness and communication measures and to provide guidance and recommendations for their implementation. Most of the prevention responsibilities of the Federal government rest with United States Department of Agriculture, Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service (USDA APHIS), Department of Health and Human Services (HHS) and Department of the Interior. Within DOI, the Service can take some preventative measures and can prepare to respond and communicate with other agencies, our partners, employees, visitors, stakeholders, and communities.

Relationship with Policy and Compliance

This plan is not intended to establish or modify Service or individual Refuge policy. This plan should be considered guidance to management in Region 7. *The applicability of legal constraints and obligations, policy requirements, applicable definitions (such as impairment) and strategic management goals must be considered when planning actions.*

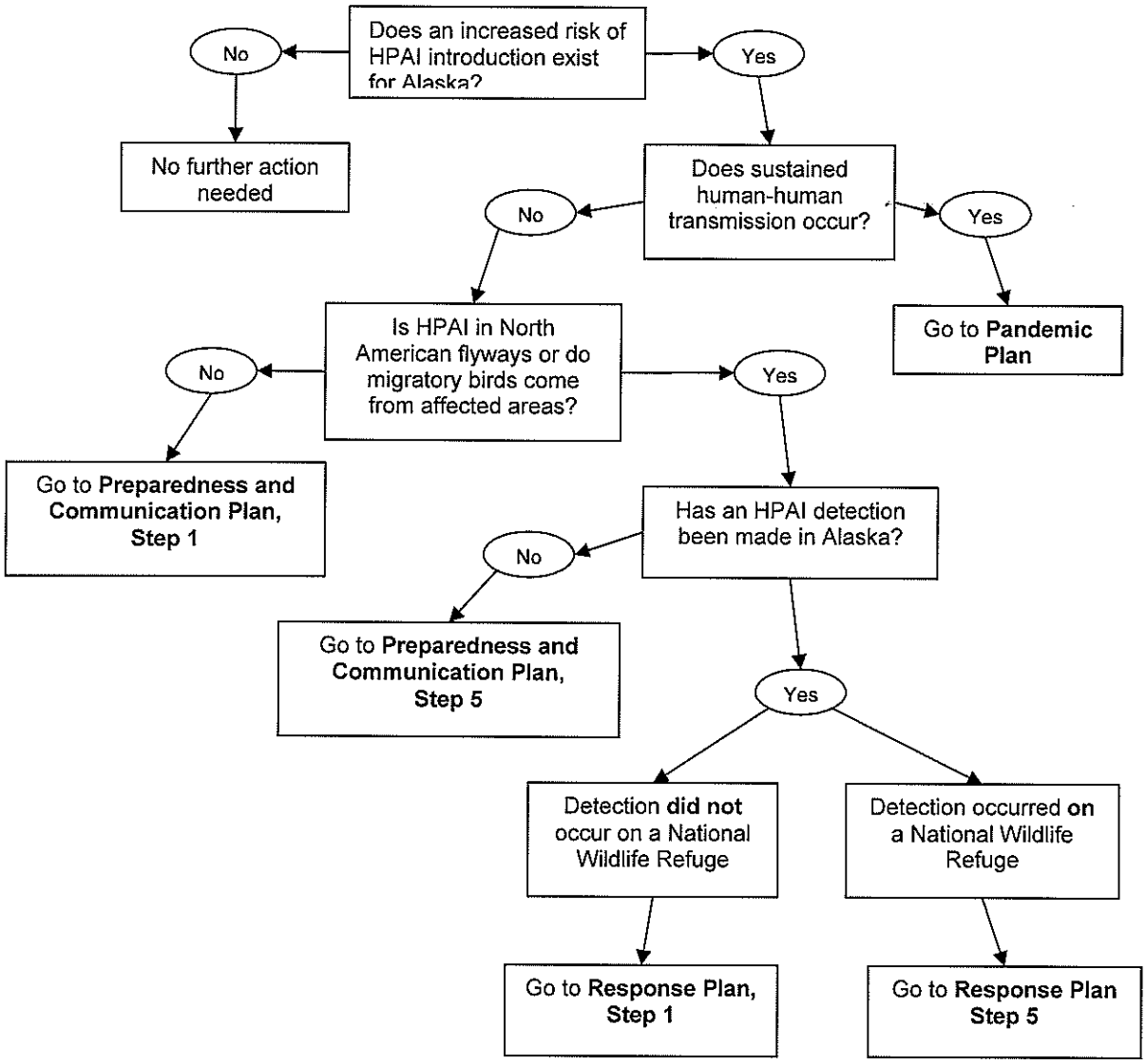
HOW TO USE THIS PLAN

To assist the Service's Region 7 address highly pathogenic avian influenza, two sets of plans have been developed. The Region 7 HPAI Plan includes a Preparedness and Communication

section and Response section. The DOI Pandemic Influenza Plan addresses the situation for when there is sustained human to human transmission. The decision tree below can be used to determine the appropriate level of action based on the current situation. Note that as long as an increased risk from HPAI occurs in Alaska, action should be taken starting with **Step 1 of the HPAI Plan Preparedness and Communication** section and continuing through the appropriate portion of the "plan" and "step" identified in the decision tree.

Information on the geographic distribution, species affected, impacts, and appropriate response to HPAI is dynamic and continues to change and expand. Updated information to support these plans will be posted on the Service's website at http://www.fws.gov/home/avianflu/.

Highly Pathogenic Avian Influenza Decision Tree. This decision tree indicates the Section of the Plan and Step at which each situation is addressed. Note that steps are progressive in the HPAI Plan Preparedness and Communication section and, regardless of current situation; if risk exists, action should begin at **Step 1 of the Preparedness and Communication** section of the HPAI Plan.



Recommended Actions

Actions to take now when North America and Alaska flyways are free of HPAI

STEP 1: Designate a regional avian influenza coordinator. Identify personnel for the Regional Incident Management Team.

Because of the potential rapid spread of HPAI, Region 7 should designate a regional HPAI coordinator who is knowledgeable about the disease and how it could affect resources and national wildlife refuge staff and users. The HPAI coordinator should ensure that Refuges and External Affairs are aware of significant changes to the HPAI situation.

The Regional HPAI coordinator should have a list of all Refuge Managers, Technical Species Experts, as well as public health and APHIS contacts for the region. The Regional HPAI coordinator should ensure that information provided by the Washington, D.C. office is distributed within the region.

STEP 2: Establish contact with cooperating agencies.

Initial contacts should be made immediately in order to establish lines of communication and coordination. Follow-up communication should be made periodically, particularly if there is a change in the current HPAI-free status of North America. Examples of topics for discussion are included in Table 1. Contacts for Interagency Avian Influenza Personnel (Appendix 2), Species Technical Experts (Appendix 3), Alaska State Wildlife personnel (Appendix 4), and Public Health and Safety Departments (Appendix 5) are included.

Table 1. Coordination and communication with other agencies and entities

Agency	Discussion Topics
Refuges, Field Office Units, Other DOI Agencies (National Wildlife Health Center; USGS)	• Share information and concerns • Share expertise (e.g., Regional HPAI Coordinator, Species Technical Experts) • Provide baseline information on affected species (e.g.., migration patterns) • Provide information about Refuge logistical and operational support functions • Implement Incident Management Team • Coordinate communication with states and other agencies
ADFG and other natural resource agencies	• Discuss available baseline information (e.g., migration patterns, congregation areas of high priority species, etc.) • Share avian surveillance plans and results • Identify major issues and concerns • Obtain necessary permits • Ask how these agencies propose to address wildlife issues
State Veterinarian and USDA APHIS, Area Veterinarian-In-Charge (AVIC)	• Reiterate that Service is concerned about the potential impact of HPAI on Refuge resources and about management requirements if the disease occurs in Alaska • Share the Service mission and willingness to cooperate. Provide technical expertise as requested • Share Service HPAI Preparedness and Communication Plan • Share Service contact information • Request information sharing as appropriate if a suspect case (or confirmed positive case) is reported in Alaska

Agency	Discussion Topics
State Public Health Department	• Share information about Service preparations and communications • Offer to cooperate in any state or community efforts should they become necessary • Share contact information for Service Risk Management and Public Health
Entities with shared boundaries: other federal agencies, state parks, tribes, and municipalities.	• Discuss available baseline information (e.g., migration patterns, congregation areas of high priority species, etc.) • Identify major issues and concerns • Share Service mission and willingness to cooperate. Provide technical expertise as requested • Share Service HPAI Preparedness and Communication Plan • Share avian surveillance plans and results • Ask how they would deal with wildlife concerns related to HPAI • Request information sharing as appropriate if a suspect case (or confirmed positive case) is reported in Alaska

STEP 3: Provide basic information to employees and have information available for the public.

General background information should be provided to all employees so that they are aware of the disease and its potential threat to agency resources and human health. They should also be made aware that Service has a HPAI Preparedness and Communication Plan as well as a Response Plan for migratory birds. The Department of the Interior and the Service also have developed plans for human pandemic planning and response. Specific categories of employees may require additional training or information (Table 2).

A template of sample information that could be provided to staff and refuge users who inquire about the disease is in Appendix 7. Methods of distribution can include email, hard copies posted on bulletin boards and sent to individual mailboxes, all-employee meetings, and service-wide electronic training events. A handout could be prepared so that it would be made available if members of the public inquire about the disease. Service-related information on HPAI and links to sites with more detailed information on HPAI is currently posted at the NWHC website and the Alaska Science Center website and will be updated as additional information becomes available.

Table 2. Information to provide to Service employees.

Employee category	Information provided
All personnel	• General information on disease and its potential threats to resources and human health • Contact information for HPAI coordinator and how to report unusual mortality events • HPAI safe work practices and health precautions (Appendix 9)
Natural resources staff	• Training on wildlife disease investigation and associated personal safety and PPE (Appendix 9) • Contact information for Service-wide Wildlife Health, Public Health, and Risk Management Programs

Employee category	Information provided
Refuge residents/staff	• Elevate awareness of the disease and the potential threat to refuge resources • Potential disease connections/affects on refuge operations • Service planning, surveillance, response and contact information • Travel guidance in case of affected areas

STEP 4: Evaluate the potential for the disease to affect refuge resources and users / visitors.

In coordination with appropriate Region 7 personnel and technical experts, the Regional HPAI coordinator should evaluate resources that may be affected. An assessment would consider factors that determine the susceptibility of Refuges to an HPAI outbreak. These factors include, but are not limited to, movement of migratory birds into the refuge from affected areas (e.g., via flyways), congregation of birds, and human factors. Some factors to consider in the assessment are included in Table 3.

For additional details regarding factors to consider, see the HPAI Situation Analysis Form (Appendix 11).

Table 3. Examples of factors to consider in an HPAI assessment.

Resource or activity	Comments
Migratory birds	Species present; concentrations of waterfowl or shorebirds; migration of birds from affected areas
Threatened and endangered species (T&E)	Potentially affected species
Employee information and training	See Step 3 and Step 6
Researchers and research projects	See Step 3 and Step 6
Volunteers	See Step 3 and Step 6
Agency sponsored foreign visitor or employee travel to or from foreign countries	See Step 3 and Step 6
Refuge Users/Visitors	See Step 3 and Step 6
Refuge Operational Activities	Enforcement, education, maintenance, resource operations, public information office
Recreational Activities	Hiking, trails, roads; feeding birds; falconry
Points of contact with responsible agencies or individuals	List of names and numbers

Additional actions to take when HPAI occurs in North America or when migratory birds arrive via flyways from affected areas

STEP 5: Assess the local circumstances in coordination with cooperating agencies.

In cooperation with appropriate Region 7 personnel, the Regional HPAI coordinator should contact Refuge managers and the appropriate cooperating agencies and evaluate their particular situation. Discussion topics may include planning efforts, surveillance activities, and jurisdictional issues should disease detection occur. Additional agencies and entities that have interaction or common borders with a refuge should also be contacted to confirm that they are aware of the disease threat and what they can do. These contacts will vary based on refuge location and operations.

Subsequent steps in the Preparedness and Communications Plan include wildlife disease surveillance and detection activities and other actions that potentially require increased employee involvement, increased interagency and public communication, and increased user/visitor management.

STEP 6: Working with cooperating agencies, provide information to employees and the public.

Provide updated information to employees and the public on what is being done regionally and at the refuge level to respond to the threat of HPAI if it should occur in Alaska, and what they can do to help protect refuges and themselves. Information on relative risk should be provided to help refuge staff, refuge users/visitors, and the general public in understanding disease risk to humans. Additional topics may be discussed with user groups previously identified. The list of contacts also may be broadened to include, for example, specialized use groups (Table 4).

Many methods can be used to communicate information about HPAI and preventing its spread. Target audiences include refuge staff, seasonal employees, refuge partners, permit holders, inholders, neighboring agencies, news media, and local communities. Methods of communication may include electronic mail, all-employee and employee group (e.g., law enforcement refresher) meetings, community meetings, postings and signage, hard copy mailings, personal contact, interpretive programs, faxes and websites.

Appendix 8 provides notification strategies and suggested information for use in handouts, press releases and public service announcements. Additional current information will be posted at http://alaska.fws.gov/media/avian_influenza/index.htm

Table 4. Additional user group contacts and discussion topics.

User group	Discussion topics
Employees	• Up-to-date information on refuge/resource risk status • Good hygiene reminders • Importance of surveillance efforts and reporting • Information on how to report dead and dying birds

User group	Discussion topics
Bird hunters	• Provide information on safe handling and preparation of harvested birds • Information on how to report dead and dying birds • Handouts from Service, state wildlife management and public health agencies
Research permit holders	• Assure that avian researchers are aware of the threat of HPAI and implement appropriate personal safety practices and measures to prevent diseases transmission • Maintain contact with researchers performing HPAI live bird surveillance
Volunteers	• If interaction with animals, ensure formal agreement as volunteer and provide training as appropriate
Human-use interests: • Operators/guides of tour groups • Communities	• Assure operators/guides that Service is aware of HPAI and its potential threat to refuge resources and human health.
All visitors and user groups	• Encourage reporting of wildlife mortality events, particularly in birds • Observe wildlife from a distance • Communicate relative risk (e.g., why PPE is required for staff despite low risk to others)

STEP 7: Implement preventative management actions to reduce the risk of HPAI.

Most of the HPAI prevention responsibilities of the Federal government rest with United States Department of Agriculture, Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service (USDA APHIS), the Department of Health and Human Services (HHS) and the Department of the Interior. Some preventative management actions to minimize the risk of introduction of HPAI into wild birds and to decrease the likelihood of spread from individual migratory birds to bird populations or humans are found in Table 5.

Table 5. Management actions to reduce the risk of HPAI on refuges.

Management objective	Action
Minimize interaction between domestic and wild birds.	• Enforce existing regulations or consider restrictions on falconry • Assist regulatory authorities (e.g., USDA) in enforcing movement restrictions on domestic birds or bird parts through refuges • Enact measures to avoid human movement of the virus between wild and domestic birds (e.g., by biologists handling birds)
Reduce artificial congregations of birds.	• Enforce existing, or enact new, regulations to prevent the feeding of birds (personal bird feeders may be exempted)

STEP 8: Surveillance and detection action implementation.

Highly pathogenic avian influenza H5N1 virus has caused mortality in over 40 species of free-ranging wild birds. While not all species infected will necessarily exhibit clinical disease, the current virus strain(s) have caused morbidity and mortality in a variety of avian species, particularly waterfowl and shorebirds. A list of affected species is available at http://www.nwhc.usgs.gov/disease_information/avian_influenza/affected_species_chart.jsp.

The systematic sampling for HPAI in live wild birds, hunter-killed birds, and of morbidity and mortality events in wild birds will play a critical role in the probability of detecting the virus if it is introduced by, or to, migratory birds in Alaska. It should be noted that the detection of an avian influenza virus is not of concern unless it is a highly pathogenic strain, specifically in this case the Asian H5N1 strain. Avian influenza viruses occur naturally in birds, particularly birds that live on and around water. Most of these viruses are of low pathogenicity and cause no harm to the host and no threat to other species.

Prioritizing Surveillance Actions

Priority species may be defined as those migrating in from areas where HPAI occurs, or that are of greatest risk of disease. A system for ranking priority species is presented in *"Sampling Protocol for Highly Pathogenic Asian H5N1 Avian Influenza In Migratory Birds In Alaska"*. All wild bird species with populations that utilize areas of both Alaska and Asia were identified. Species were scored based on five factors:

1) Proportion of the population occurring in Asia
2) Contact with a known 'hot spot' or source
3) Habitats used in Asia in context with exposure potential
4) Population size in Alaska
5) Ability to obtain a representative sample of sufficient size

The overall emphasis for this ranking system was based on opinions regarding the probability of individuals of each species contracting the virus in Asia and bringing it to Alaska during migration. Teams with expertise within each of four taxonomic groups (waterfowl, shorebirds, seabirds, passerines) were formed to develop species-specific sampling plans.

Surveillance Planning and Implementation

The three general types of surveillance are: *detection, assessment,* and *monitoring* of a disease entity. *Detection* surveillance is designed to find a disease agent, *assessment* surveillance seeks to define the prevalence and distribution of the disease agent and its hosts, and *monitoring* surveillance watches the course and progression of the disease and its response to management.

An objective of any disease surveillance plan is to ensure disease is detected early, rapidly, and accurately. Heightened awareness of potential disease outbreaks and simple routine activities such as periodic observation of wildlife resources or carcass surveys on a National Wildlife Refuge can alert managers early in a disease event. Protocols for sample collection, storage, transport and processing need to be comprehensive, unambiguous, and part of a field station's disease contingency plan.

"Sampling Protocol for Highly Pathogenic Asian H5N1 Avian Influenza In Migratory Birds In Alaska" identifies strategies for conducting early detection surveillance in wild migratory birds.

Service surveillance efforts for HPAI H5N1 will focus on three primary strategies:

- investigation of wild bird mortality
- live bird surveillance and hunter-killed bird surveillance

Actions necessary to plan and implement monitoring and surveillance for HPAI are summarized in Table 6.

Table 6. Components of HPAI surveillance and detection activities.

Action	Task
Regulatory compliance	• Comply with NEPA as necessary • Assure appropriate permits
Procure sampling/shipping materials	• Sampling gear, syringes, sample vials, etc • Carcass bags, shipping boxes, ice, and disinfectant • Personal Protective Equipment • Carcass transportation
Obtain necessary training for investigating avian mortality events	• Provided by the Service, other DOI bureaus or other cooperators
Obtain necessary employee health review	• Respirator use • Vaccination advisement • Availability of antiviral drugs
Identify laboratory for sample submission	• USGS National Wildlife Health Center • Other veterinary laboratories certified to conduct Asian H5N1 virus diagnostics (confirm with lab)
Identify priority species	• Lists will be developed by Flyway Councils and cooperating agencies • Bird species migrating from affected areas • Waterfowl and shorebirds • Bird species with high infection rates (currently unknown)
Reporting system	• Identify key contact individuals • Develop system for reporting sick or dead birds by employees, visitors, and residents
Respond to mortality events	• Communication of events • Evaluation of importance • Provide available trained staff • Prepare for transportation and logistics
Implement active surveillance and additional surveillance strategies	• As risk increases, seek out mortality events rather than passively awaiting reporting • Implement other surveillance strategies as needed on a site-specific basis

While awaiting diagnostic results from an HPAI-suspicious avian sampling event, interim actions may need to be taken (Table 7). Notification of the Regional HPAI Coordinator and Species Technical Experts should occur to ensure appropriate level of response and communication based on, for example, the DOI Pandemic Influenza Preparedness and Response Plan.

Table 7. Steps to take while awaiting HPAI diagnostic results.

Action	Task
Event investigation	• Document mortality event (e.g., location, species, age class, numbers) • Maintain surveillance of site • Collect carcasses and implement biosafety measures as instructed by experts contacted • Assess need for involvement/onsite consultation by subject matter experts • Indentify carcass disposal options
Consultation with other DOI regional and national programs and other agencies	• National Wildlife Health Center • Public health • Risk management • Public affairs • Directorate (based on assessment of risk) • Review National and Departmental Plans

Communication	• Provide site specific information for press releases (press releases will be made at a higher level—DOI or USDA)
	• Contact:
	  • State wildlife management agency
	  • State veterinarian's office
	  • State department of health
	  • USDA APHIS
	  • USGS

Human safety	• Provide educational information to visitors or local communities • Limit visitation to affected area if directed by experts contacted • Assess employee health risk and implement necessary actions

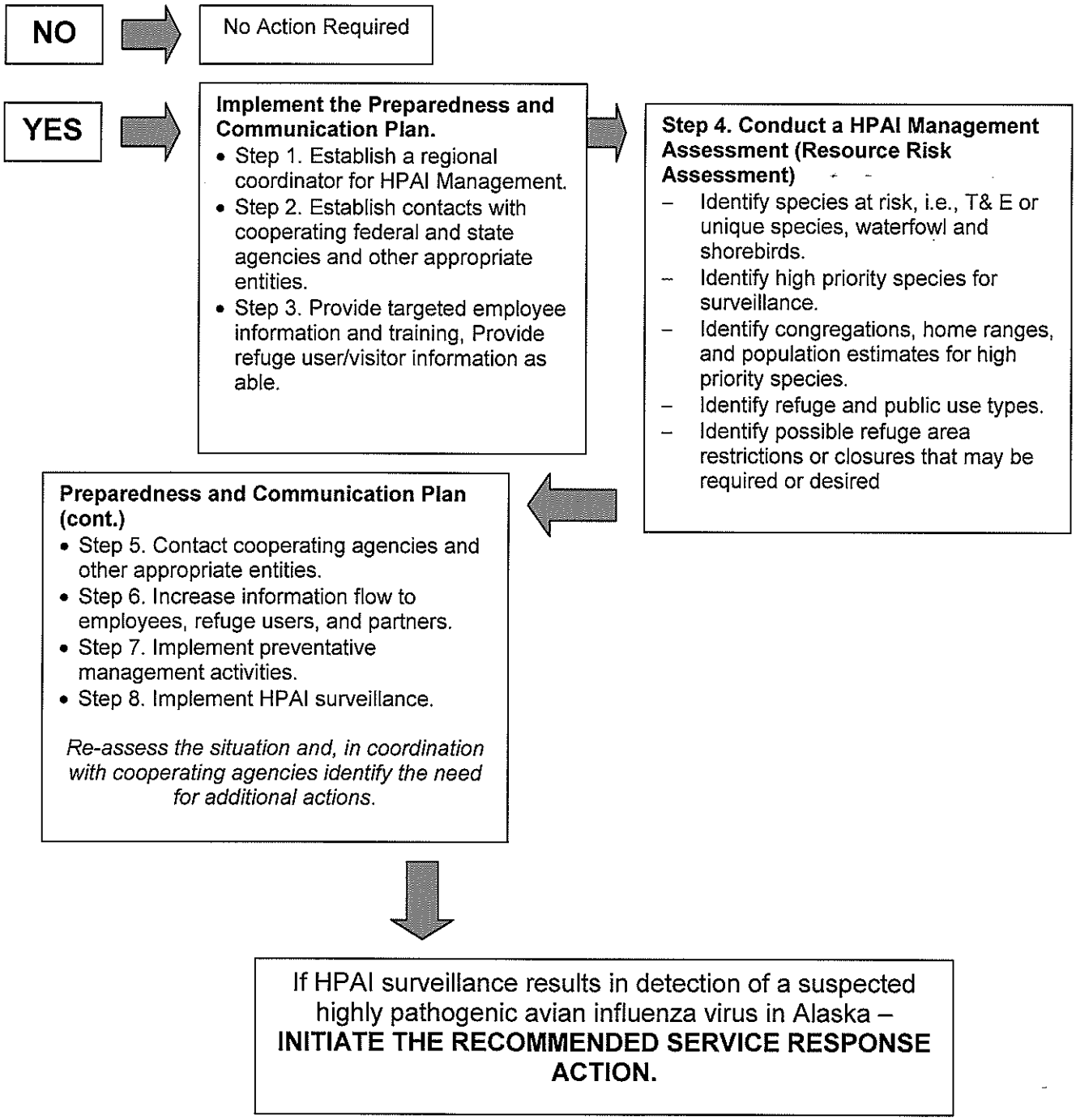
When To Move To The Response Plan

ACTION FLOWCHART for Moving Through the Preparedness and Communication Plan and Response Plan

- Action Flowcharts have been developed to assist or provide guidance to Regional Service management and the HPAI Coordinator in determining when or whether to move from the HPAI preparedness and communication planning stage to the HPAI response stage. This decision is based on the current situation in Region 7. The process starts with the **Preparedness and Communication Plan** which is a limited measured response designed to provide Service Managers and Project Leaders with the necessary information to identify concerns and implement appropriate management actions.

- Service Managers and Project Leaders should be advised that should a suspect or confirmed case of HPAI H5N1 be identified in Alaska, Region 7 may be required to go directly to implementing all or portions of the Region 7 HPAI Response Plan. In order to establish and maintain a measured response, communications between the Service and cooperators is essential.

Situation: A highly pathogenic avian influenza virus is identified that has **the potential to enter** Alaska from North American flyways or other migratory bird flyways.



Situation: Highly pathogenic avian influenza **is confirmed to be present** in North America or migratory birds **may arrive** in Alaska via an affected flyway.

- **Review the HPAI Management Assessment (developed in Step 4 of the Preparedness and Communication Plan) in light of the facts specific to the outbreak.**
  - Affected flyway
  - Proximity to Alaska/refuges
  - Consult with Species Technical Experts.
  - Cooperation with other agencies and their actions
  - Consider additional proactive refuge, public, and other agency information and education.

Preparedness and Communication Plan (cont.)

- Step 5. Contact cooperating agencies and other appropriate entities.
- Step 6. Increase information flow to employees, refuge users, and partners.
- Step 7. Implement preventative management activities.
- Step 8. Expand HPAI surveillance.

Re-assess the situation and, in coordination with cooperating agencies identify the need for additional actions.

If HPAI surveillance results in detection of a suspected highly pathogenic avian influenza virus in Alaska – **INITIATE THE RECOMMENDED SERVICE RESPONSE ACTION.**