



**UNITED STATES OF AMERICA  
DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR  
FISH AND WILDLIFE SERVICE  
ENDANGERED SPECIES PROGRAM**

**TELEPHONIC INTERVIEW Time (4:10)**

**YELLOW-BILLED LOON (HOST – SARAH LEON WITH KAREN LAING)**

This transcript was produced from audio provided by FWS Endangered Species Program

**P R O C E E D I N G S**

(Music plays.)

MS. LEON: Hello there, this is Sarah Leon for the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service and I'm on the phone today with Karen Laing, Fish and Wildlife Biologist at the Fairbanks Fish and Wildlife Field Office. Hi Karen, would you mind talking to us a little today about the Yellow-billed Loon?

MS. LAING: Sure.

MS. LEON: All right. And what can you tell us about this species?

MS. LAING: Well, the Yellow-billed Loon is really a fascinating bird. The Loons breed around the Arctic Coast, almost all around the world. They're in Northern Canada, Northern Alaska, Northern Siberia and possibly in Western Russia up in the Arctic, at least they used to be nesting there. And yet they winter in a very wide area south of the Arctic. So, they are found in incredibly low densities. In other words, there's just like one or two of them for miles and miles but they could be in Southeast Alaska or British Columbia in the water off shore. They could be off shore all the way off the southern coast of Alaska, all the way the Aleutians and then they winter all the way down to the Yellow Sea which is the waters between China and Korea and Japan. And then also off the coast of Norway and the Northern British Isles.

So, they have a very widespread area that they live.

MS. LEON: All right. And I understand that this species is actually warranted for being listed as either threatened or endangered, but it's been precluded. So, what's it going to

take to recover this species or at least keep it from becoming a listed species?

MS. LAING: Well, we're working hard with our partners in the Alaska native communities where a subsistence harvest occurred. And right now we're working closely with folks in a place called St. Lawrence Island which is a fascinating place, very remote, off the coast of Alaska, between Russia and Alaska. There are two villages there of people who hunt all kinds of birds and marine mammals and we've been working with them and they're forming some migratory bird committees actually because they want to be involved in management of birds in their area. They're very important to them. And we're working with them to make sure that we all agree on, for example, identification of different kinds of Loons and so that we understand when we're looking at harvest what kind of birds are being taken and then to make sure that the Yellow-billed Loon is not taken in subsistence harvest.

MS. LEON: Okay. Great. So, it sounds like you've mentioned one partner already. Are there any other key cooperators involved in this species recovery that you'd like to mention?

MS. LAING: We're also working with other agencies, both local and state and Federal on the Yellow-billed Loon.

The National Park Service is actually doing some special survey of Loons of their land on Stewart Peninsula in Alaska. The BLM, Bureau of Land Management, has been active in northern Alaska where they have the national petroleum reserve and the North-slop Yellow-billed Loons nest in the NPRA and so the BLM is very active in implementing conservation measures there, particularly around areas of oil development.

The State of Alaska has also been an important partner both concerning subsistence harvest and management of the Loons.

The North Slope Bureau has also been involved. Another partner we have is Conoco-Phillips which has some oil development in areas both just outside the NPRA and inside the NPRA and they have been doing surveys for Yellow-billed Loons for many years since that development began in order to make sure their implementation of conservation measures are effective. So, they're another partner helping us learn about Loons and conserve them.

MS. LEON: Well, thank you so much, Karen, for taking some time out of your day to tell us a little about the Yellow-billed Loon.

MS. LAING: Sure.

MS. LEON: This is Sarah Leon for the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service. Thanks for listening.