Appendix H

Protocol for Collecting Information on Dead Spectacled and Steller's Eiders

Introduction

The United States Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS) needs to document mortality of threatened species whenever possible. Fish and Wildlife Service programs that use this information include Endangered Species, Environmental Contaminants, Conservation Planning Assistance (to aid in recovery plans and implementation), and Law Enforcement (for enforcing the Endangered Species Act and other wildlife-related laws), in addition to numerous related research programs. Every dead spectacled and Steller's eider can aid in its species recovery by providing information on eiders found dead.

In the past, this protocol covered handling and transport of injured or sick eiders. Because of avian flu concerns, we cannot currently transport injured or ill eiders for rehabilitation, so we can no longer provide instructions or a protocol for handling them. To minimize your risk, we recommend that you do not contact or handle wild birds that appear to be ill or injured.

Due to concerns about contracting avian influenza from handling bird carcasses, please make sure that you have proper personal protective equipment (PPE) and training prior to observing carcasses. Do not collect or handle carcasses. Protect yourself from fluids and feces by using impermeable gloves, safety glasses, and a mask if necessary when going near (not touching) a bird to assist in determining sex and making observations of the bird(s).

Reporting

Report all dead spectacled and Steller's eiders as soon as possible. If there is no reason to suspect that the bird(s) died as the result of any illegal activity, you should attempt to contact the following people, in the order listed, until you reach someone.

1. Angela Matz, USFWS, Fairbanks: (907) 456-0442 work
2. Ted Swem, USFWS, Fairbanks: (907) 456-0441 work
3. Anchorage Fish and Wildlife Field Office, USFWS, Anchorage: (800) 272-4174 toll free, (907) 271-2888 work
4. Robert Suydam, North Slope Borough Department of Wildlife Management, Barrow: (907) 852-0350

<u>If you encounter any dead spectacled or Steller's eiders that you suspect may have died as a result of an illegal act such as shooting, a Service Law Enforcement Officer should be notified immediately.</u> <u>Ensure that one of the individuals in the above list is also contacted in these instances.</u>

You should be prepared to report any observations and/or knowledge you might have regarding the incident, and you may be provided with additional instructions regarding proper custodial handling techniques, which will allow a Special Agent to follow-up with an investigation into the incident.

USFWS, Office of Law Enforcement:

Fairbanks: (877) 535-1795 toll-free, (907) 456-2335, (907) 456-2356 fax

Nome: (907) 443-2479, (907) 443-2938 fax

Anchorage: (800) 858-7621 toll-free, (907) 271-2828, (907) 271-2827 fax

Regional Office, Anchorage: (907) 786-3311, (907) 786-3313 fax

Juneau Office: (907) 586-7545, (907) 586-7574 Fax

Your report should include:

1. Species, age, sex, and number of birds, date, time and location (latitude and longitude and area name).
2. Suspected cause of death.
3. Circumstances under which found.
4. If known, the names of witnesses or suspects, and a description of any vehicles or boats involved (but, non-law enforcement individuals are not expected to conduct investigations or obtain information that is not readily available).

If a camera is available, photograph birds and other evidence such as shotgun shells or casings, and persons and vehicles involved. Note photo date, time, and location. You should put all this information, plus any additional details you think important (such as location of nearest power line), in a short written narrative.