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**UNITED STATES FISH AND WILDLIFE SERVICE  
DIVISION OF MIGRATORY BIRD MANAGEMENT,  
DEPARTMENT OF INTERIOR  
1849 C STREET NORTHWEST  
WASHINGTON, D.C. 20240**

IN RE:       Public hearing to discuss draft EIS on resident  
                  Canada goose management.

Monday, May 20, 2002 7 p.m. Comfort Inn Conference Center;  
3200 West Broad Street; Richmond, Virginia

**APPREARANCES:**

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3

DAVID J. CASE

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8

RON KOKEL

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Divisions of Migratory Bird Management

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Arlington, Virginia

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Claudia Smith

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Beverly Bagley

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Bonnie Barrett

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Robert Ellis

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John Hadidian

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David Feld

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Billy Stevenson

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Dennis Dionisi

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Butch Ammon

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Dr. Herb Sorensen

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Norm Kubala

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Nelson Ray

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Charles Kramer

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1           MR. CASE:                   My name is Dave Case, I'd like to  
2 welcome you to the meeting here tonight. As you know, the purpose of  
3 this meeting is to take public input on the draft environmental impact  
4 statement that the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service has developed in  
5 relation to the resident Canada goose overabundance. I'll describe in just  
6 a second the process we're going to go through.

7           First, I'd like to introduce a few people. Ron Kokel is with the  
8 Fish and Wildlife Service sitting up front and he will be giving a  
9 presentation here briefly; Scott Johnston, with the U.S. Fish and Wildlife  
10 Service of the Migratory Bird Management at the Regional Office in  
11 Massachusetts. Gary Costanza, and a number of people from the  
12 Virginia Department of Game and Inland Fisheries are here: Bob Ellis,  
13 David Norris, Tom Midrowski and Ken Perry.

14           With U.S.D.A. Wildlife Services, I'd like to introduce two people.  
15 Mark Lowry is the State Director here in Richmond and Dave Reinhold,  
16 of the Environmental Compliance Office in Washington.

17           The process we're to follow is pretty straightforward. As you first  
18 came in you all received a card that has a number on the back. There's  
19 information on the front that has a mailing address or an e-mail address if  
20 you'd like to make comments by e-mail or snail mail you can send those  
21 to that address. Be sure that you do that by May 30<sup>th</sup> because that's the  
22 closing date for comments. What we're going to do is there will be a  
23 brief presentation about the draft environmental impact statement and the  
24 background behind it by Ron, a slide presentation. Then we'll have folks  
25 come up who would like to make public comment. We'll set up a

1 microphone here in the front. We'd ask that you do come up to the  
2 microphone, first so that we can hear you and secondly so that you're  
3 close enough so that our court reporter, Mr. Howard, will be able to read  
4 your lips and make sure that he gets everything down correctly. When  
5 you come up, if you could state your name and spell your last name for  
6 us if you could so that we get it correct. If you represent an organization  
7 officially then let us know that and where you're from.

8         The way we've set up the meeting is a chance to get input from all  
9 of you. It's really not a forum for debate. And so if there are questions  
10 of clarification, we can try and handle those after the meeting. I do  
11 apologize in advance, there are a lot of people here tonight. We want to  
12 make sure that we give everyone an opportunity to be able to speak. So  
13 if anyone goes a little bit too long, I may kind of hurry you along, but in  
14 most cases it's not a problem. So, with that, I'd like to introduce Ron  
15 Kokel, Wildlife Biologist with U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service who is  
16 going to give a presentation on the draft environmental impact statement.

17         Before Ron starts talking, however, there is a sign-up sheet I'm  
18 going to pass around. If you would like to receive a copy of the final  
19 environmental impact statement via the mail then sign up on this. If you  
20 want to receive a copy, be sure to sign up. There are two places to check.  
21 If you have already received a copy of the first one, then note that, so that  
22 we don't send you two copies. If you've never received one, then note  
23 that on here. There's a place here to check either way. So I'll start these  
24 around, you just make sure that you pass it on after you signed up, we'd  
25 sure appreciate it, Ron.

1           MR. KOKEL:           Thank you, Dave. Good evening  
2 everybody. Again, I'm Ron Kokel, I'm with the U.S. Fish and Wildlife  
3 Service, Division of Migratory Bird Management stationed in Arlington,  
4 Virginia. And, on behalf of our director, Steve Williams, I'd like to  
5 welcome all of you to this meeting tonight, and, if I could get the first  
6 slide and the lights.

7           This is the seventh of eleven public meetings that are being held  
8 across the country for the purpose of inviting public participation into our  
9 process of developing an environmental impact statement or an EIS for  
10 resident Canada goose management. This EIS was developed in full  
11 cooperation with Wildlife Services, which is in the Department of  
12 Agriculture.

13           Why are we here? We're here to explain the draft environmental  
14 impact statement, its proposed action and to listen to your comments.  
15 The draft considers a range of management alternatives for addressing  
16 expanding populations of resident Canada geese. And, as such, really  
17 what we're here to do is to listen to you and seek your comments on what  
18 our proposed action is.

19           First, a little bit about the National Environmental Policy Act, or  
20 NEPA. NEPA requires completion of an environmental impact statement  
21 to analyze environmental and socioeconomic impacts that are associated  
22 with any federal significant action. NEPA also requires public  
23 involvement, holding its scoping period before the draft is issued and a  
24 comment period after the draft is issued.

25           We began this process in August of 1999 when we published a

1 notice that announced our intent to prepare this draft. Then in February  
2 of 2000, we held nine public scoping meetings across the U.S., one of  
3 which was held here in Richmond, for the purpose of seeking public  
4 input into the process. Scoping ended in March of 2000. In response to  
5 the scoping we received over 3,000 public comments and over 1,250  
6 people attending the nine public scoping meetings.

7           What did we find in scoping? Well scoping indicated that the top  
8 issues were: property damage and conflicts caused by resident Canada  
9 geese; the methods of conflict abatement; sport hunting opportunities on  
10 resident geese; the economic impacts caused by resident geese; human  
11 health and safety concerns; and, the impacts of the Canada geese  
12 themselves.

13           NEPA also outlines a specific format for environmental impact  
14 statements. There is a purpose and need section, an alternative section,  
15 the affected environment section, and environmental consequences.

16           Well, what are resident Canada geese? In the draft environmental  
17 impact statement, we define resident Canada geese as those geese that  
18 nest within the lower 48 states in the months of March, April, May or  
19 June, or reside within the lower 48 states in the months of April, May,  
20 June, July or August.

21           The purpose of the EIS is threefold. One is to evaluate alternative  
22 strategies to reduce, manage and control resident goose populations in the  
23 U.S. Secondly, to provide a regulatory mechanism that would allow  
24 states, local agencies, other Federal agencies, or groups or individuals to  
25 respond to Canada geese damage complaints or damages. And thirdly, is

1 to guide and direct resident Canada goose population management  
2 activities in the U.S.

3 The need is twofold. One, is increasing resident Canada goose  
4 populations, coupled with growing conflicts, damages, and  
5 socioeconomic impacts have caused a re-examination of the Service's  
6 resident Canada goose management.

7 The DEIS examines seven management alternatives. Alternative  
8 A, is no action; that's the baseline to which everything else is compared.  
9 Alternative B, is a non-lethal control and management, which includes  
10 only those non-federally permitted activities. Alternative C, is a non-  
11 lethal control and management alternative, which includes federally,  
12 permitted activities. Alternative D, is expanded hunting methods and  
13 opportunities. Alternative E, we term integrated degradation order  
14 management. Alternative F, is the proposed action, which we term state  
15 empowerment. And, alternative G, is a general degradation order.

16 Under the no action alternative, or alternative A, there would be no  
17 additional regulatory methods or strategies authorized. When we  
18 continue to use some all-special hunting seasons, the issuance of  
19 individual degradation permits, and the issuance of any special Canada  
20 goose permits.

21 On the second alternative, alternative B, non-lethal control and  
22 management, which is only those non-federally permitted activities,  
23 again, we would cease all lethal control of resident Canada geese and  
24 their eggs. Only non-lethal harassment techniques would be allowed.  
25 No permits would be issued. And all special hunting seasons for resident

1 geese would be discontinued.

2 Under alternative C, the third alternative, non-lethal control and  
3 management, which includes federally permitted activities, we would  
4 again cease all permitted lethal control of resident Canada geese with one  
5 exception. We would promote non-lethal harassment techniques.

6 There'd be no depredation or special Canada goose permits issued, egg  
7 addling or nest removal would be allowed with a federal permit but  
8 special hunting seasons would also be continued.

9 The fourth alternative is expanding hunting methods and  
10 opportunities. Under this alternative we would provide new regulatory  
11 options to increase the harvest of resident geese. We would authorize  
12 additional hunting methods such as electronic calls, unplugged guns and  
13 expanded shooting hours, geese seasons could be operational during  
14 September 1 to 15. They could be experimental during September 16 to  
15 30, but they would have to be conducted outside of any other open  
16 season.

17 Alternative E is termed integrated depredation order management.  
18 This alternative actually consists of four depredation orders. One is an  
19 airport depredation order, one is a nest and egg degradation order, there's  
20 an agricultural depredation order and a public health depredation order.  
21 Implementation of any of these orders would be up to the individual state  
22 law and agency. Special hunting seasons would be continued and the  
23 issuance of depredation permits and special handling goods permits  
24 would also be continued.

25 The airport depredation order would authorize airports to establish

1 and implement a program, which would include either indirect and/or  
2 direct population control strategies. The intent of the program would be  
3 to significantly reduce goose populations at airports. The management  
4 actions would have to occur on the premises.

5 The nest and egg depredation order would allow the destruction of  
6 resident Canada goose nests and eggs without a federal permit. The  
7 intent of the program here would be to stabilize Canada geese breeding  
8 populations.

9 The agricultural depredation order would authorize landowners,  
10 operators and tenants actively engaged in commercial agriculture to  
11 conduct indirect and/or direct population control strategies on geese,  
12 which are depredating on agricultural crops. Again, the management  
13 actions would have to occur on the depredation premises.

14 And the last depredation order would be a public health  
15 depredation order, which would authorize state, county, municipal or  
16 local public health officials to conduct indirect and/or direct control  
17 strategies on geese when recommend by health officials that there's a  
18 public health threat. Again, the management actions would have to occur  
19 on the premises.

20 The sixth alternative is our proposed action, termed state  
21 empowerment. Under this alternative, we would establish a new  
22 regulation, which would authorize state wildlife agencies or their  
23 authorized agents to conduct or allow management activities on resident  
24 goose populations. The intent of this program would be to allow state  
25 wildlife agencies sufficient flexibility to deal with problems caused by

1 resident geese within their respective state. We would authorize indirect  
2 and/or direct population control strategies such as aggressive harassment,  
3 nest and egg destruction, gosling and adult trapping and culling  
4 programs. It would allow implementation of any of the specific  
5 depredation orders, which were talked about under alternative E.

6 In addition, during existing special hunting seasons, we would  
7 expand the methods of take to increase hunter harvest, as I explained  
8 under alternative D. These would include things like additional hunting  
9 methods, such as electronic calls, unplugged guns, expanded shooting  
10 hours. Again, they could be operational during September 1 to 15. They  
11 could be experimental during September 16 to 30, but they would have to  
12 be conducted outside of other open seasons.

13 In addition, we would establish a conservation order, which would  
14 provide special expanded hunting opportunities during the course of the  
15 treaty close period. That is, August 1 to 31 and a portion of the treaty  
16 open period, September 1 to 15. These would authorize additional  
17 hunting methods, again, such as electronic calls, unplugged guns,  
18 expanded shooting hours, liberalized bag limits, and they again would  
19 have to be conducted outside of other open seasons.

20 Under the program, the Service would annually assess the impact  
21 and the effectiveness of the program. And there would be a provision for  
22 possible suspension of the regulations, that is, the conservation order  
23 and/or the regular hunting season changes when the need is no longer  
24 present.

25 In addition, we would continue all special and regular hunting

1 seasons. We would continue the issuance of depredation and special  
2 Canada goose permits. The only state requirements under the program  
3 would be to annually monitor the spring population and to annually  
4 report take under authorized activities.

5           The last alternative is the general depredation order, alternative G.  
6 We'd allow any authorized person to conduct management activities on  
7 resident geese when posing a threat to health and human safety or  
8 causing damage. It would be available between April 1<sup>st</sup> and August 31.  
9 It would provide special expanded hunting opportunities like under  
10 alternative D. We would continue to use both special and regular hunting  
11 seasons and the issuance of depredation of special Canada goose permits.

12           In addition, the authorization for all management activities under  
13 this program would come directly from the U.S. Fish and Wildlife  
14 Service.

15           Under the affected environment, we looked at two things. We  
16 looked at biological environment; we looked at the socioeconomic  
17 environment. Under the biological environment, we looked at the  
18 resident Canada goose populations, we looked at water quality in  
19 wetlands, vegetation and soils, wildlife habitat and federally listed  
20 threatened and endangered species.

21           Under the socioeconomic environment, we looked at the migratory  
22 bird permit program and sport-hunting program. We looked at social  
23 values and considerations. We looked at economic considerations, which  
24 include property damages and agricultural crop damages, human health  
25 and safety issues and program costs.

1           The environmental consequence section forms the scientific and  
2 the analytical basis for a comparison for all of the different alternatives.  
3 They analyzed the environmental impacts for each alternative in relation  
4 to the resource categories that I just went over. And, again, the no action  
5 alternative is the baseline for all the analysis.

6           Thus, under no action, what we would expect to happen is that  
7 goose populations would continue to grow. In the Atlantic Flyway, we  
8 would expect the population to approach 1.6 million within ten years. In  
9 the Mississippi Flyway, 2 million in ten years; Central Flyway, 1.3  
10 million within ten years; and the Pacific Flyway, 450 thousand in ten  
11 years. We would expect continued and expanded goose distribution  
12 problems and conflicts. We would expect workloads to increase and  
13 there'd be continued impacts for property safety and health by resident  
14 geese.

15           Under our proposed action state empowerment, we expect to see a  
16 reduction in populations, especially in specific problem areas. We would  
17 expect increased hunting opportunities, a significant reduction in goose  
18 conflicts, decreased impacts to property safety and health. While there  
19 would be some initial workload increases, we think that long term as the  
20 populations decrease, the workloads would also decrease. And lastly, it  
21 would maintain viable resident Canada goose populations within the  
22 states and within the flyways.

23           Some of the recent modeling that has been done suggests that in  
24 order to reduce the current four flyways population from about 3.5  
25 million, where it is about now, to the flyway's established objectives of

1 2.1 million, would require, annually, for ten years: the harvest of an  
2 additional 480 thousand geese; the take of an additional 852 thousand  
3 goslings; the nest removal of 528 thousand nests and/or a combination of  
4 an additional harvest of 240 thousand geese; and a take of 320 thousand  
5 goslings annually. Each one of these would have to occur each year for  
6 ten years.

7 In conclusion, what we believe is the only way to possibly obtain  
8 these kind of numbers is to give states the flexibility to address the  
9 problems within their respective state, to address population reductions  
10 on a wide number of available fronts. And logically, since the states are  
11 the most informed and knowledgeable local authorities on wildlife  
12 conflicts in their states, primary responsibilities and decisions of the  
13 program should be placed with them.

14 What comes next? First is the development of a new regulation to  
15 carry out the proposed action. This should be forthcoming. Second is  
16 the public comment period on the draft environmental impact statement  
17 closes May 30<sup>th</sup>, which Dave already indicated. And third, is the  
18 publication of a final EIS, a record of decision and a final rule, which we  
19 anticipate for this fall.

20 Dave already outlined some of the various methods that you can  
21 use to comment. These include any comments that you submit tonight,  
22 and any subsequent written comments that you may send in. As he  
23 indicated, the address is printed on the back of the card that you got when  
24 you arrived. And additionally, we have an electronic site set up where  
25 you can access not only the draft environment impact statement but the

1 news release, the federal register notices, and you can submit comments  
2 to the site.

3 And on behalf of the Fish and Wildlife Service, I would like to  
4 thank everybody that came tonight and in particular those of you that  
5 might provide comments.

6 MR. CASE: Thanks, Ron. As I mentioned, we're  
7 going to go ahead and open it up for public comment. If you could come  
8 up to the microphone and state your name and spell your last name for  
9 us, where you are from and if you are officially representing an  
10 organization let us know that. And, again, I do apologize in advance if I  
11 have to ask anybody to hurry along. With that we'll just jump right in,  
12 number one?

13 MS. SMITH: My name is Claudia Smith. I reside at  
14 18311 Possum Point Road, Dumfries, which is in Prince William  
15 County. For nearly fifty years I've lived on White Oak Creek and for  
16 many, many years I enjoyed very much looking forward to the fall and  
17 seeing the geese come in and watching them during the winter. Now,  
18 they're not such a great picture coming in the fall because they've  
19 become really problematic for all of us that live there.

20 I would encourage you to go with alternative F, giving the states  
21 the option to do many more things than can be done now because I think  
22 the state's hands are tied. And I would hope that this would give the state  
23 a little more, by way of being able to rid us of some of these problems.

24 We have rural safety problems, we've seen school buses that had  
25 to stop and children being hurt when they had to, the bus had to stop for

1 geese. We've seen vehicles hit geese. We've seen them leave a lot of  
2 mess every place.

3 The defecation is unimaginable in areas by the docks and by the  
4 shores of the creek. And it's gotten to be more of a problem with each  
5 passing year. And in the last four or five years it's gotten to the point of  
6 being just unbearable. We'd like to get rid of some of them and hope that  
7 the state would allow us to be able to deal a little bit more. So, I would  
8 certainly appreciate to go with option F. Thank you.

9 MR. CASE: Thank you. Number two?

10 MS. BAGLEY: Good evening ladies and gentlemen. I  
11 am Beverly Bagley, the wife of Floyd Bagley who served as a delegate in  
12 the House of Delegates for ten years. We have resided in Dumfries on  
13 Possum Point Road for over forty years. During the past few years, we  
14 as property owners, and taxpayers, seem to have no rights. We have been  
15 faced with the devastating and contaminating problems that officials  
16 seem not to be able to fix.

17 I would like to read a letter I wrote to Nancy Perry, Humane  
18 Society of America on March 7, 2000, which will sort of sum up my  
19 problem:

20 Dear Mrs. Perry,

21 Enclosed is a recent *Freelance Star* article entitled "Geese a  
22 Fine Feathered Mess." And number one, "Wildlife Pests in the  
23 Old Dominion." This article is most comprehensive and tells it as  
24 it is. Whether you believe it or not, it is very well written and very  
25 true. We along Possum Point Road have been shad upon for years.

1 Our docks and sidewalks are covered with goose droppings and  
2 our lawns are stripped of grass and covered with droppings.

3 Recent articles have mentioned that the goose brain is small  
4 and limited and geese are not very bright. They will sit on  
5 artificial eggs for a long time. Also, chase them out of your yard  
6 and they return in five minutes. In one of my many articles and  
7 letters you mentioned the beauty of these geese. In my judgement,  
8 they are most ugly creatures on earth. You also mentioned the  
9 music in their honking. Dear Lord, how can anyone enjoy such  
10 racket, you ought to try a bag full for a buck. Many areas are  
11 really suffering.

12 How would you like to engage in the sport on your only day  
13 off and then have to slip and slide through goose manure. Think  
14 about that. The beaches at Montclair, as well as other beaches,  
15 parks, the lakes, the rivers are being contaminated. It also creates  
16 other serious health problems, 300,000 in the state of Virginia are  
17 very damaging. Many other states have the same problem.

18 One of my friends reported taking a tour of the Northern  
19 Virginia Community College. On their return after walking the  
20 campus, all had to stop at the door to flush off their shoes with a  
21 water hose. Your decisions and court actions allow these ugly,  
22 dirty creatures more rights than we property owners, sick, sick,  
23 sick.” And that’s the end of the letter, “Very Sincerely, Beverly  
24 Bagley.”

25 The Migratory Bird Treaty Act of 1918 must be amended or

1 modified. In 1918 there were no residential geese, only the word  
2 migratory is contained in the act. In my interpretation of this act, the  
3 residential goose problem absolutely does not apply. In closing, maybe  
4 we should corral a few hundred of these contaminating, useless creatures  
5 on Nancy Perry's front lawn. Would she still welcome them with open  
6 arms while slipping and sliding in their green droppings? Thank you  
7 very much you all for listening to my cries for help and relief. Good  
8 evening.

9 MR. CASE: Thank you. Number three, number four,  
10 oh I'm sorry. If you don't jump up, I'll just go on to the next number, so,  
11 I apologize for that.

12 MS. BARRETT: My name is Bonnie Barrett and I live in  
13 Colonial Heights, Virginia. I don't favor state empowerment. I've seen  
14 what often happens when the state gets involved, communities are not  
15 interested in being educated. They want the state officials to come in and  
16 give them power to kill. The case of Bucky the beaver is a perfect  
17 example. The West End Manor Civic Association had them come in,  
18 Bucky was gone. I favor non-lethal methods and I sympathize with these  
19 people, they have a problem, but I really think that you should try and  
20 resolve the issue with non-violence. Animals do have rights too. Thank  
21 you.

22 MR. CASE: Thank you, number four, five, seven,  
23 eight?

24 MR. ELLIS: My name is Robert Ellis, E-l-l-i-s. I'm  
25 the Assistant Director of the Wildlife Division. I represent the Virginia

1 Department of Game and Inland Fisheries. I will read some excerpts  
2 from our letter that will be sent in as written comments before May 30<sup>th</sup>.

3 “The Department appreciates the opportunity to comment on the  
4 draft environmental impact statement. We also agree that there is a need  
5 to identify and coordinate the strategies needed to manage resident goose  
6 populations. In addition, we believe the administrative process currently  
7 associated with permitting management actions is burdensome to the  
8 public and state wildlife agencies.

9 Given the nearly nationwide problem of overabundant resident  
10 geese, we believe a nationwide solution where the federal government  
11 serves in the lead roles is warranted. As such, we do not concur with the  
12 Service that alternative F, state empowerment, should be the preferred  
13 alternative. We recognize that alternative G, the general depredation  
14 order, with amendments and clarifications I’ll outline in a minute,  
15 including, in addition of the conservation order, be implemented.

16 We believe this would be the most efficient, flexible alternative for  
17 managing resident Canada goose populations. Alternative G frames the  
18 issue on a nationwide scale and transfers authority for action directly to  
19 the affected agency or individual. In addition, alternative G still provides  
20 for state empowerment, since states can be more restrictive as they so  
21 desire and they will still have the option of taking special permit.

22 We recognize alternative G, as I said, with the following additions  
23 and comments. One, the requirement that a non-lethal harassment  
24 program certified by USDA Wildlife Services be implemented  
25 concurrently with the general depredation order is not acceptable. We’re

1 not aware of any Wildlife Services certification program that is currently  
2 in place or how it would be implemented.

3         Secondly, the general depredation order is limited to the premises  
4 where the problem is occurring. We recommend that the scope of the  
5 general depredation order be expanded to include a case in properties as  
6 long as landowner permission is obtained.

7         Thirdly, we agree with the Service that expanded hunting  
8 opportunities are warranted to help reduce resident goose populations.  
9 The regulation changes proposed in alternative G do not go far enough,  
10 however. We recommend implementation of a conservation order for  
11 Canada geese be included in alternative G. Specifically, a conservation  
12 order to allow for the take of Canada geese from August 1 to September  
13 15<sup>th</sup> with no bag limits, unplugged guns, use of electronic calls and  
14 expanded shooting hours.

15         In addition, we believe that consideration should be given to  
16 expanding the conservation order from March 11<sup>th</sup> to the end of  
17 September in areas with operational September seasons on an  
18 experimental basis, as long as minimal impacts to minor Canada goose  
19 populations can be demonstrated.

20         September seasons have proven to be very effective for harvesting  
21 resident geese and allowing take during March through May. This would  
22 allow for effective removal of nesting pairs and some adult flocks that  
23 can cause significant problems at that time of the year.

24         We're also disappointed that baiting was eliminated from  
25 consideration in the draft EIS. We recommended methods of take

1 allowed under the conservation order to include the ability to hunt  
2 resident geese during the August 1 through September 15<sup>th</sup> period over  
3 manipulated agricultural crops as is currently legal for hunting doves.

4 And finally, we are concerned that reporting requirements under  
5 alternative G would either require a permit or be very difficult to enforce.  
6 We recommend that there be no reporting requirement for agencies or  
7 individuals who take action in accordance with the TTO but require only  
8 that records be kept for three years of any action that was taken.

9 Thank you for your consideration of our comments.

10 MR. CASE: Thank you, number nine, ten, eleven,  
11 twelve?

12 MR. HADIDIAN: Good evening. I'm John Hadidian, H-a-  
13 d-i-d-i-a-n, I'm representing the Humane Society of the United States.  
14 I'd like to applaud you for your effort in creating this draft environmental  
15 impact statement, something that's long overdue that a comprehensive  
16 overview and consideration be given to this issue. Had we done this back  
17 in 1985, perhaps it wouldn't, none of the conflict and controversy over  
18 this would be evident because goose populations would have been at a  
19 level where more of an INS strategies might have affected that.

20 We have concerns over this document and its proposed alternative,  
21 or its preferred alternative as well as the other alternatives that are  
22 proposed and we will do some commenting on those in detail which we  
23 will send in, submit to you in written form.

24 For the purposes of this meeting, I would simply wish to draw  
25 attention to some basic considerations that we feel are of primary

1 importance in regard to considering this document. We had submitted  
2 scoping comments, during which we had asked Fish and Wildlife Service  
3 to consider adding to the list of alternatives or strategies that would be  
4 employed a research effort and more information to be collected. We  
5 have great concerns over the information that is presented in this  
6 document. And I would simply note one example where we think that  
7 perhaps some superfluous information has been included which could be  
8 a problem for people trying to interpret the meaning of the  
9 documentation. And that would be the table that shows whooping crane  
10 distribution of sightings from 1943 to 1949. Things like that are perhaps  
11 not necessary in order to convey succinctly and clearly the information  
12 on resident Canada geese and the significance to the public.

13 We'd also ask for a bigger effort in public education. We do not  
14 see any cause in this documentation for further outreach to the public and  
15 further awareness and a greater effort to make the general public more  
16 knowledgeable about this issue. We think that it's very, very important  
17 and we think it's of critical importance that the public understands the  
18 magnitude of the legal controls that are being proposed as well as the  
19 demographic segments of the goose populations that are being targeted.  
20 We don't think the general public is ready to accept the death of 852,000  
21 or however many goslings per year as a means of relieving the problem.  
22 We hope that people have more humane feelings than that.

23 And finally, we'd ask for, but did not see it in here, a closer look at  
24 what are emerging as very vital alternatives strategically. And those are  
25 community-based programs in which the communities themselves

1 undertake the effort that is required to comprehensively manage the  
2 Canada goose problems.

3 Sometimes, and we admit this, those programs will involve  
4 lethality, and we see and acknowledge that. We don't agree with it but  
5 we understand it because it is being promulgated. We have called in the  
6 past for programs where geese are being killed to be followed by  
7 concerted efforts to apply non lethal strategies as well as to use our  
8 augmenting programs and following of birds as ways to ensure that the  
9 future doesn't involve a current and repetitive cycle.

10 We have not seen this used anywhere in this country and we would  
11 hope to do so. The community-based programs, in fact, this is a good  
12 audience to be discussing this, have their strongest proponent and their  
13 strongest component here, in Virginia, the Northern Virginia based  
14 group. Geese Peace, which has a national presence now and is working  
15 towards comprehensive, integrated and we believe to be humane  
16 approaches and strategies to resolving conflicts between communities  
17 and Canada geese.

18 So those would be our principal concerns here, we thank you for  
19 the opportunity to comment and we look forward to far more substantive  
20 comments in our written material. Thank you.

21 MR. CASE: Thank you, number 13? Has everybody  
22 who wanted to sign up on the sign-up sheet to receive a copy, had a  
23 chance? Okay, if you haven't, raise your hand, I'll make sure you get a  
24 copy. Go ahead.

25 MR. FELD: I'm David Feld and it's F-e-l-d. I am

1 with Geese Peace and we're in Northern Virginia. A non-profit group  
2 interested in building better communities through humane non-lethal  
3 approach to solving wildlife problems. I'd like, also, to commend the  
4 U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service for taking on this very difficult problem of  
5 solving the Canada goose nuisance. And it is a problem in communities.  
6 It was a problem in my community several years ago. It's not a problem  
7 any more. But, I think that people will find that there are solutions that  
8 are community-building solutions as opposed to community-destruction  
9 solutions. I think your EIS needs to emphasize more the impact on  
10 communities, whether it's a small lake community or a larger community  
11 like in Northern Virginia's like we have, of lethal approaches that are  
12 done and that cause controversy in those communities. That controversy  
13 is debilitating to the community, even if the geese problem appears to be  
14 solved for one season, the season comes back and it never goes away.

15         There are ways to solve the Canada goose problems in  
16 communities. We have had several demonstration programs in Northern  
17 Virginia. We're doing demonstration programs in Delaware and New  
18 York State and in Boston and in North Carolina and all of them have  
19 been successful. What we need is an easier way to handle eggs. The  
20 permitting process needs to be reduced.

21         When we first began our program, we made an offer to the U.S.  
22 Fish and Wildlife Service to automate the permitting process free. That  
23 was turned down because we thought that would simplify the ability for  
24 people to get permits for the eggs and then also to report to the  
25 communities and also report back to the Division of Wildlife Service.

1 We think that you need to consider more the effect of molt migration.  
2 There have been studies done in New York State and in Michigan that  
3 when eggs are destroyed or nests destroyed, through natural oil, and  
4 they're done appropriately and with, after two weeks of being in the nest  
5 that in fact many of those birds actually go on a molt migration. They  
6 leave town, they leave town and into Canada and we need more study,  
7 more research on that.

8 Your EIS needs to also consider, as I said before, the impacts on  
9 communities and how that is debilitating to the community's health from  
10 a point of leadership and a point of being able to do other types of  
11 activities within that community because people stop talking to each  
12 other.

13 The fact that in order to do a round-up in communities is going to  
14 have a minimum impact on the numbers of birds that you are saying is a  
15 problem in this country. That impact on communities is far greater than  
16 any benefit you even think that you're going to get from doing those  
17 types of round-ups.

18 The fact that a round-up has to occur without public information,  
19 without people knowing about it, means that there's something  
20 happening that, if people did know about it, it would cause a problem in  
21 that community. So, we will be presenting other comments to you that  
22 will be more specific in terms of detail. But, I want to emphasize that  
23 we've got full confidence in our state wildlife agencies, not only in  
24 Virginia, but in other states that we've worked with to manage these  
25 programs. You should simplify, I emphasize again, the permitting

1 process and you should consider molt migration and also consider the  
2 impact on communities that the lethal solutions have in terms of them  
3 being able to contain the controversy that will develop in those  
4 communities. Thank you.

5 MR. CASE: Thank you. Number fourteen, fifteen,  
6 sixteen, seventeen, eighteen, nineteen, twenty?

7 MR. STEVENSON: Thank you for coming to Richmond. I'm  
8 Billy Stevenson, I live at 13, 18356 Hewlett Road; Beaverdam, Virginia.  
9 And I just would like to suggest that as part of alternative F, your  
10 proposed alternative, that you determine the cost of administering the  
11 program that you're delegating responsibility to the state and that you'll  
12 also provide funding. Thank you.

13 MR. CASE: Thank you. Twenty-one, twenty-two?

14 MR. DIONISI: Good evening. My name is Dennis  
15 Dionisi, it's D-i-o-n-i-s-i and I'm with a company called EBI Flight  
16 Control. And we are a manufacturer of the repellent for Canada geese.  
17 It's one of the non-lethal ways that you put together with an integrated  
18 program as David Feld has said. It's a whole, integrated approach where  
19 you have to do the egg, you have to do habitat modification. There's  
20 border collies and use of our product. And I've been out there for like a  
21 year and a half and I've seen so many great results when you do an  
22 integrated approach of non-lethal methods of controlling Canada geese  
23 and it works. So I just wanted to make that statement. Thank you.

24 MR. CASE: Thank you. Twenty-three, twenty-four?

25 MR. AMMON: How you doing? My name is Butch

1 Ammon, last name is A-m-m-o-n. I'm not really prepared, just want to  
2 just state my piece. I'm not affiliated, I guess, I'm retired from the Coast  
3 Guard, if that matters. But, uh, as far as all the things with the Canadian  
4 geese, I just wanted to kind of let it be known that I kind of prefer the  
5 option D, with the expanded efforts. Because, not only am I kind of  
6 interested with the hunting opportunities, I'm also a sportsman, I'm a  
7 golfer. I've come home with goose poop all over my golf shoes and a  
8 very angry wife. And I've had to confront geese on a regular basis, on a  
9 tee-off box and the goose wouldn't even let me tee-up the ball. I was  
10 standing there with a seven iron going "come on" trying to chase the  
11 goose off so I could continue my course and to play golf. So the geese  
12 are, I mean, you know, yeah, they're wonderful creatures, they're  
13 everywhere, they're everywhere. They're all over the golf courses and  
14 it's, you know. So I was just sitting there thinking. Well, just this year I  
15 got my Virginia hunting license and I'm thinking well, maybe I could try  
16 my hand, you know, and very selectively and ethically kind of weed out a  
17 certain, you know a certain Canada goose. So, I'm not just, only one, get  
18 the whole thing. I would just say I support your option D. Thank you.

19 MR. CASE: Thank you, twenty-five?

20 MR. SORENSEN: My name is Dr. Herb Sorenson, S-o-r-e-  
21 n-s-e-n and I'm from Midlothian, Virginia. First of all, I'd like to take  
22 this opportunity to thank the Service for sending me this draft. It was  
23 very well written and I must compliment the authors and the work that  
24 went into this. There's very good information there.

25 My concern with the resident Canada goose, not the migratory

1 Canada goose, I must say originally I'm from Canada, feel partly to  
2 blame for these darn resident Canada geese being here. But, it's a health  
3 problem that I'm concerned about. And on your slide there were the  
4 human health and safety concerns. In this booklet it describes that a  
5 well-fed resident Canada goose defecates every three to four minutes.  
6 That's a lot of feces. I've seen it on our lake, when the ice had frozen  
7 over and the geese were walking on the ice, there are just piles and piles  
8 of feces on the ice, which eventually went into the water. Again, my  
9 main concern is the health of the people of this state. Imagine salmonella  
10 on an increase of seventeen percent a year on the Canada goose  
11 population that we're going to see disease. Abdominal, intestinal  
12 problems become predominant in this state. I'm all for the alternative G.  
13 Thank you very much for your time.

14 MR. CASE: Thank you. Twenty-six.

15 MR. KUBALA: The only written thing I have is number  
16 twenty-six. I'm Norm K-u-b-a-l-a. I live in Ashland, Virginia and I'm  
17 an everyday goose hunter. I would definitely support your proposed  
18 action which I believe was amendment F. The State of Virginia has some  
19 excellent managing people, the folks behind me, Gary Constanzo and  
20 Bob Ellis are really high-quality, top-notch people. I did pick up the  
21 tone when Bob Ellis was up here a few minutes ago. I think reading  
22 between the lines kind of indicates that the state has some real financial  
23 restrictions and that might be why they appeared not to be advocating the  
24 state actions, state control.

25 As an everyday goose hunter, I hunt with several fellas. We, over

1 the last several years, have hunted really basically three counties in  
2 Virginia. That would be Hanover, Louisa, and Caroline. And as far as  
3 being able to control the goose population and resident geese in the area  
4 that we've hunt, we have done it. The last year or two, we're not doing  
5 hunts, every goose that we harvest is eaten by someone. We make a real  
6 effort to make sure that that happens. We have found though that in  
7 some of the places that three or four years ago we'd be started off hunting  
8 where there were just geese everywhere, very few now. We go in the  
9 early part of September, we have a couple of hunts there, and then hunt  
10 there later on during that September season and there are just not nearly  
11 the geese now that there were a couple of years ago.

12 One of the things that I'd like to see with the expanded hunting  
13 opportunities would be not the season in August, because obviously it's  
14 too blasted hot in Virginia in August to really enjoy any kind of goose  
15 hunting opportunities. I would like to see it after the season closes,  
16 which normally is February 15. Extend it, go beyond that period for the  
17 resident geese, I believe after the migratory birds are gone.

18 Another thing that I would like to see, and this may sound a little  
19 ridiculous, but I would come to these meetings for several years and  
20 some of the agricultural folks will get up here and they'll say that well,  
21 "the geese are just eating all our crops. We've got a tremendous control  
22 problem." But when it comes time to try to get permission to hunt these  
23 places, it isn't there. My phone number is area code 804-798-7200, and  
24 if folks have a problem with Canada geese around and it's legal hunting  
25 areas, call me, because we can travel. And, we are responsible, we're not

1 just a bunch of cowboys that shoot up the air. We just, we enjoy our  
2 goose hunting and we'd like to have expanded opportunities. Thank you.

3 CROWD COMMENT: What's that number again?

4 MR. KUBALA: 804-798-7200, and again, my name is  
5 Norm Kubala. And I hope some fellas coming after me say the same  
6 thing, thank you.

7 MR. CASE: Twenty-seven-

8 CROWD COMMENT: That was good.

9 MR. CASE: Twenty-eight.

10 MR. RAY: Well, I'm not too prepared either. My  
11 name is Nelson Ray, 8104 Cove Road; Richmond, Virginia. I've been  
12 hunting most of my life, back to the late sixties. I started hunting with  
13 Norm Years. I'm also very happy to say that I'm retired but at the same  
14 time, I think our Virginia Game Department has done a fantastic job on  
15 game control in the State of Virginia. I'd like to see the goose problem  
16 put back to the state so they can control it, along with the finances that's  
17 required to control it well. I don't think these boys have got enough  
18 personnel probably to do what needs to be done, I'm not sure the federal  
19 government does. I do know the people that's been up here calling for  
20 more studies. I think you can study something to death. I'm in a  
21 situation, I have a mother that's in her mid-eighties living down on Lake  
22 Gaston. I'm afraid that the geese might even kill her. Yaw'll can laugh  
23 if you want to. She gets upset because they come up in the yard, eat the  
24 grass, eats the flowers. She goes out there and tries to run them back into  
25 the lake, she slips in the goose poop. Now if she breaks a leg, you guys

1 going to be coming after me because I'm not one that's going to let this  
2 happen. And I would very much like to see this put back into the state's  
3 hands. They can control the localities, I believe, much better than the  
4 federal government can. They know the problem, but they also need  
5 finances. There again, my name's not Norm, but I hunt with him, we'll  
6 do what we can to help you.

7 MR. CASE: Thank you, twenty-nine, thirty, thirty-  
8 one.

9 MR. KRAMER: Charles Kramer, with a "K", Colonial  
10 Heights. I hope that if this is laid upon the Commonwealth to manage  
11 that Mr. Ellis and his associates give some special attention to the River  
12 James as it passes through the city. That is a health issue and it might  
13 examine the river further west to see if there are any hunting  
14 opportunities that might be expanded there.

15 MR. CASE: Thank you, thirty-one, thirty-two, thirty-  
16 three, thirty-four, thirty-five, thirty-six, anyone with a number under 40  
17 that has not had a chance? Okay.

18 MR. WINSTON: - my name is Calvin Winston from  
19 Richmond and I own a piece of property on a lake and the geese have  
20 taken it over. They're past a hundred in number and they don't migrate,  
21 they just stay there the year around. And what rights do I have to get rid  
22 of 'em? And each year there's an increase. Can you give me an answer?

23 MR. CASE: Well, if we can talk afterwards, we can  
24 sure talk about what your options are individually.

25 MR. WINSTON: Anyway, it's a health problem, there's a

1 real problem with their droppings. It's a real problem. If you bring a  
2 hundred on there or more than a hundred, they leave their droppings so  
3 you can't use it. And I'd like to find out from you what rights I have to  
4 do something about it.

5 MR. CASE: Okay, come up afterwards and I can talk  
6 to you about that. Thank you.

7 MR. DURESQI: Jim Duresqi, D-u-r-e-s-q-i. I think the  
8 greatest need that we have is more education. We have so many young  
9 women, men bring their children to the lake and feed the geese, so the  
10 geese keep coming back. The need to be educated like the doctor said,  
11 about the health dangers to their children and to all of us from the geese  
12 droppings.

13 MR. CASE: Thank you.

14 MR. TROUTMAN: Thank you for coming to Richmond. My  
15 name is Cliff Troutman, T-r-o-u-t, like the fish, -m-a-n. I've lived at  
16 4900 Riverside Drive for the last thirty-plus years. So, I've had the  
17 opportunity to observe first-hand in the immediate vicinities of River  
18 Ridge in Richmond and we have, I think, potentially, a health problem. I  
19 think we might have one now as well as I, just at wading in the river.  
20 Years ago, I used to drink out of it with no ill effects for twenty years,  
21 and I don't do that any more. So, I get spots on my body from wading in  
22 the river that I didn't used to get twenty plus years ago. And, of course,  
23 we don't have the degree of pollution that we've had expressed at  
24 Possum Point. But it is a national problem because I've heard some  
25 sayings in downtown Detroit, D.C. and St. Louis, Chattanooga, could go

1 on and on. You guys have a larger picture.

2 One thing we need to address is the urban areas where we can't go  
3 hunting. I know that hunting does a great job and we need to have more  
4 of that. But even deer will come into the city when the season opens.  
5 Usually they come in one day before the season opens and leave one day  
6 after the season closes. So, they learn, whether they're deer or geese,  
7 they learn and they learn fast. So we need to have some type of programs  
8 to address the urban areas, whether it's addling of the eggs or using nets  
9 or what-have-you to collect the geese. Also, for those that are concerned  
10 about all those dead geese out there, you have to remember what was  
11 presented earlier, we have the Virginia "Venison for the Hungry" deer  
12 hunters. As mentioned earlier about the turning over the geese to the  
13 people that need food. We have lots of people that need food and that's  
14 one use that the geese could be put to. But, most importantly, we have to  
15 look at it as a pest problem, like a bunch of cockroaches, use that kind of  
16 perspective, then I think we have success. Thank you.

17 MR. CASE: Thank you. Number forty, forty-one,  
18 forty-two?

19 MR. STEVENSON: I'm Brad Stevenson, I live in Deer End,  
20 Virginia. I'd like to say that I'm a geese hunter and I love the sport of  
21 hunting. I'd like to first say that all this non-lethal talk that includes  
22 oiling and addling of eggs, that's bull-crap to me. I mean you can oil or  
23 addle an egg, that's the same as killing a gosling as far as I'm concerned.  
24 There's no real difference between breaking an egg and shooting goose,  
25 it's dead either way. At least, then one got to live for another couple

1 months.

2 As far as legalizing electronic calls and some of these methods.  
3 These aren't snow geese, they're not destroying their habitat, just yet, I  
4 mean they are problems, but they're not that big of a problem. I don't  
5 wish to see the sport of waterfowl hunting or Canada geese hunting,  
6 taken to that level where the art of calling is lost for the easy, quick fix,  
7 easy electronic call. And, I really would like to see that removed from  
8 the possible options. As far as legalizing increased hunting opportunities  
9 in general. I'd only wish to see that legalized in the rural areas of  
10 Virginia because as the hunter from Ashland said, the place that I hunt,  
11 the geese are under control. They're game hunted and they're controlled.  
12 The geese that are out of control are the geese living where they can't be  
13 hunted or where landowners won't allow them to be hunted. And, by  
14 increasing the goose season, that's not going to affect those geese. Those  
15 geese go to their areas because they're not hunted and they're going to  
16 stay in those areas because they're not hunted. So, I think a separate  
17 plan, two separate plans need to be drawn up, for the rural geese and for  
18 other geese and they need to be kept separate. If you're going to oil or  
19 addle eggs, keep it in the cities, don't bring it out to the country. With  
20 that said, also, I'm a very honest waterfowl hunter, my phone number is  
21 804-449-6343.

22 MR. CASE: Thank you, number forty-three.

23 UNIDENTIFIED: I just want to say that I don't think the  
24 automatic calls should be used yet. I think regular calling should be the  
25 way to go. I don't think someone who gets their hunting license should

1 just come out and set automatic calling and start shooting. I do say that  
2 they should make the time to kill the birds a little longer into the evening  
3 because birds aren't really flying until the evening anyway, because  
4 they're sitting on these reservations or places where they can't be hunted.  
5 And they don't start flying until late in the evening. And, like all of the  
6 other hunters said, most of the places that we hunt, they're fine. It's just  
7 the places that, you know, that you can't get to, or I think some of the  
8 farmers should be let known that maybe they should let hunters on their  
9 property during that time of year and it'll keep this stuff off. Because a  
10 flag just stuck in the field, they're not doing it. And that's pretty much  
11 what I have to say. I don't know about - I mean I would like to take it  
12 upon myself, but I just think we should just maybe run through season  
13 and hunting time during the day because you go out there in the day and  
14 four fifty eight you've gotta' pack up. And the birds are still flying. So,  
15 if we're worried about the residential birds, we should let us hunt a little  
16 longer, maybe until dark, you know, and stuff like that. And also, I do  
17 hunting for free, if you want me to hunt on your property.

18 CROWD COMMENT: Very glad to hear that, can we have your  
19 number?

20 MR. CASE: Thank you, forty-four.

21 MR. LONG: My name is Shawn Long, it's L-o-n-g.  
22 I've lived in Eastern Henrico all my life. Grew up on the James River.  
23 Back when we first started out on the river and everything, you didn't see  
24 a whole lot of birds. Now it's gotten to the point where if you're taking a  
25 boat down the river you gotta slow down, you've gotta' let the geese get

1 out of your way. I'll go along with what Adam said. I don't believe in  
2 using electronic calls because it takes all, you know, everything away  
3 from the avid hunter who wants to go out and call. You just get some Joe  
4 Blow out here with an electronic call and a twelve gauge or a ten gauge  
5 in its hands who's never done it before -- it kind of gets dangerous.  
6 You've got a lot of places that the geese retreat to. Places like [?] Island,  
7 places like that. I think they ought to have special permits. We can go  
8 out and do something with the geese. There's a lot of places down  
9 through Varina and Charles City that the geese populations have just  
10 exploded in the last few years and we just need to try to do something to  
11 get them under control. I don't believe in the addling of the eggs and  
12 everything like that. Like he said, a goose egg is still a goose. I'd like to  
13 see the expanded seasons. It's kind of like what happened with the snow  
14 geese population, how that flared up in no time. And now they still can't  
15 get that under control. With the numbers that are on the papers, 227,000-  
16 estimated, what's that going to turn into this year once all the goslings are  
17 around and they grow up?

18 I'd just like to see extended seasons and not doing the addling of  
19 the eggs. Thank you.

20 MR. CASE: Thank you, forty-six, forty-seven.

21 MR. LOHR: I'm Bob Lohr, I live in Midlothian, that's  
22 L-o-h-r. I've got a place on Lake Gaston and that is my problem. I have  
23 grandchildren and I cannot go out down there this year for the first time  
24 in twenty-some years because of the goose droppings. It was just  
25 horrendous. It took us two hours each day to shovel it up before we

1 could let the kids out. So, whatever yaw'll decide, I hope you give these  
2 individual homeowners, you know, of property, not just commercial  
3 farmers and all an opportunity to take care of this problem.

4 I think extending the late goose season, residential goose season  
5 would help because that's where I intend to take care of them this year.  
6 Thank you.

7 MR. CASE: Thank you, number forty-eight, forty-  
8 nine, fifty?

9 MR. NUCKOLS: I'm Troy Nuckols, N-u-c-k-o-l-s,  
10 Richmond, Virginia. I also agree with the gentleman who stood up here  
11 about the ethical hunting stuff. I also say that in January or February  
12 when all of the geese have gone, we should use electronic calls to try to  
13 lure them off the reservations in case you don't want to hunt there and  
14 use bait to try to get them off. That way we can try to get them off and  
15 we don't have to ask permission. And about getting a Virginia State  
16 hunting license, you have to take a class to train yourself before they  
17 issue it if you haven't done it before. That said, I've been hunting for  
18 years, and my boss can give you a good reference as to how careful I am.  
19 My number is 804-740-9661 if anybody wants to.

20 MR. CASE: Thank you. Fifty-one, fifty-two, fifty-  
21 three, fifty-four, fifty-five?

22 MR. MORTELL: Good evening, I'd like to thank you all  
23 for coming to Richmond to give us a chance to say what we need to say.  
24 My name is Mike Mortell from Midlothian, Virginia. My comments are  
25 twofold. As a resident of the county, I'm concerned with the geese in the

1 area. I live in the primary water supply for Chesterfield County -- Swift  
2 Creek Reservoir, located in-between Brandermill and Woodlake. There's  
3 a large population of resident geese that have been residing there for  
4 years and they've multiplied over the years to the point where they're  
5 almost out of control now. You can't walk anywhere on the public  
6 walking trails without stepping in goose droppings. You can't play on  
7 the local golf course without having problems with it. And something  
8 needs to be looked at as far as the urban areas and need to do something  
9 with the geese.

10 Also, as a hunter, I hunt mainly in the Hopewell, Colonial Heights  
11 area on the Appomattox River in close proximity to Fort Lee. I also hunt  
12 in Albemarle and Louisa and Chesterfield. The goose numbers that we  
13 see on a daily occasion and I hunt three days a week, mostly in the late  
14 season, December, January and February, we see between five-hundred  
15 to a thousand geese every single day. We don't get a chance to get a shot  
16 at 'em due to the restricted hunting times ending a half-hour before  
17 sunset. Most of the geese do not fly until after we've had to pack up,  
18 pick the decoys up and start heading back in the boat.

19 I'd also like to see the bag limit increase east of 95. I don't get  
20 many chances to go west of 95 where we have very liberal bag limits,  
21 four or five geese a day per person. East of 95 limits it to one. There's  
22 lots of days when we could harvest many more geese, but my partner and  
23 I, most mornings by 7:30, 8:00 we're having to each pack up and go  
24 home because we each have our goose limit, and the day's over. So, I'd  
25 like to see some liberalization done with that.

1 I'd also like to go along with this gentleman and stay away from  
2 electronic calls. I don't believe that's the way to go. Hunting has a lot to  
3 do with tradition and heritage and there is an art to calling and I don't  
4 think that electronic calls are the way to go. I think the liberal bag limits  
5 and getting more people involved in the sport is the way to deal with this  
6 problem.

7 MR. CASE: Thank you. Is there anyone who has not  
8 had a chance to speak this evening that would like to? I think we've  
9 gone through all of our numbers. Okay. Oh, no, there's fifty-six.

10 MS. HAMBRICK: My name is Linda Hambrick and I live at  
11 8765 Riverside Drive on the James River inside the city limits. So,  
12 unfortunately, I can't call you. But, it is a very serious problem. Our  
13 property goes down to the James River. We'd like to use the front  
14 property to entertain, just to go down and watch the river. We like to  
15 canoe on the rocks. We used to go sit on the rocks, we can't do that  
16 anymore because there's so much defecation all over the rocks in the  
17 river, all over our front yard. And when they pull up the grass, they pull  
18 it up by the roots, so they kill the grass as well. So, I'd really like for  
19 something, quickly, to be done to help us, the urban property owners, so  
20 that we can deal with this problem.

21 MR. CASE: Thank you.

22 MR. WHITE: My name is Ralph White. I'm the  
23 Manager of the James River Park system in natural area along the James  
24 River, the seven miles of the fall line. My name is spelled W-h-i-t-e.  
25 My concern is that we develop a strategy that is suitable for an urban

1 setting. Discharging firearms is not. I'm not opposed to it, it's just not  
2 appropriate for the area that I manage. We've begun to try other routes.  
3 We have engaged the services of the Department of Agriculture and  
4 addle eggs and we got fifty-five nests in one mile from Huguenot Bridge  
5 to the Pony Pasture Rapids, excluding the north shore and excluding the  
6 eastern tip of Williamson Island. So, we'd estimate somewhere between  
7 seventy-five and a hundred nests in one mile and we have seven miles.  
8 This is a very large population of geese and this is growing at a very  
9 rapid rate. We've tried habitat management to limit the amount of turf  
10 and we have begun to apply chemicals. All of this is labor intensive, it's  
11 expensive to buy chemicals and it is expensive in staff time as well as it  
12 involves a great deal of coordination of volunteer work. I think it's a  
13 good thing to do that, I believe in volunteers. But it is clearly a money  
14 problem for me as a manager of the park. And, I would like to suggest,  
15 although it might not be popular in this community, an urban  
16 management strategy that I don't believe was presented in your draft EIS.  
17 And that is to harvest the geese using licensed trappers during the  
18 summertime. Have them humanely killed and then sold only at the  
19 fanciest restaurants in downtown Richmond. This, then, creates a  
20 financial incentive. It becomes self-supporting. There need be no tax  
21 dollars to pay for trappers and it has a limited season. Obviously, this is  
22 only for resident geese and only for those that would be inside the urban  
23 area and the trapping would take place only at the crack of dawn when  
24 there are very few visitors in the park. And there are many isolated areas,  
25 we do this on purpose, there are many isolated areas that are difficult for

1 the general public to get to where geese do gather.

2 So, using the power of profits, using the power of capitalization  
3 which is what drives us as a community, as a nation, I think that we can  
4 affect control within the confines of an urban setting like Richmond.

5 Thank you.

6 MR. CASE: Thank you. Any other people that did  
7 not have a chance to comment that would like to?

8 MR. LEWIS: My name is Greg Lewis, L-e-w-i-s. I  
9 live in Mathews County, it's on the Chesapeake Bay. I do not know the  
10 city, I do not come to a city except for meetings like this. I am an avid  
11 hunter. I would not come to a city to hunt, to kill birds. I'm sorry that  
12 you're slipping on the mess that they're leaving. I do think that you  
13 could put a dye or something like that in the waters that these birds are  
14 swimming through. Like an orange dye or something like that, if those  
15 birds should fly into Matthews County, I will, no doubt, aim for them  
16 first. I would be willing to come and mark your birds for you. My phone  
17 number is 804-725-7191.

18 MR. CASE: Thank you. Anybody else?

19 MR. THORNHILL: No more phone numbers, my name is  
20 Vince Thornhill, that's T-h-o-r-n-h-i-l-l. I live at 2701 Thirlough Drive  
21 in Richmond and its in Bon Air 23235. I would only like to add support  
22 to the, Bob Ellis and these guys on the state side of this thing in terms of  
23 the proposal. But, I would also like to see some studies done, particularly  
24 for the urban issues where they're dealing with birds in Northern Virginia  
25 that we talked about. I think a lot of those things are in ponds and lakes

1 around the communities surrounded where it's a logistical problem to go  
2 in hunting and some of these other issues. I've read up on what they're  
3 doing and I understand what they're doing and I can appreciate it because  
4 it is a difficult situation. What I would like to see added to the proposal  
5 is some kind of moratorium on feeding waterfowl, period. Be it duck, a  
6 goose, whatever. Because I do believe that in the winter months when  
7 the grasses have gone dormant- And some of these folks that are  
8 allowing the grass around the ponds to grow up and become less of a  
9 food source, that as the weather gets cold and the birds flock up you will  
10 have more movement if you do not have an artificial source of food.  
11 Thank you.

12 MR. CASE: Thank you. Are there any further  
13 comments from anybody that has not had a chance to comment? If not,  
14 then, on behalf of the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, I'd like to thank  
15 you for taking the time out of your evening and your concern for wildlife  
16 resources and we'll adjourn the meeting.

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**PROCEEDINGS CONCLUDED**