

U.S. FISH AND WILDLIFE SERVICE

PUBLIC HEARING TO DISCUSS EIS ON RESIDENT
CANADA GOOSE MANAGEMENT

Held At:

Holiday Inn

80 Newtown Road

Danbury, Connecticut

May 21, 2002

1 7:00 O'CLOCK P.M.

2

3 MR. CASE: I think we'll go
4 ahead and get started. Welcome, my name is
5 Dave Case. I'm the facilitator
6 for the meeting tonight. As you all know the
7 purpose of this meeting is to take public
8 comment on the draft environmental impact
9 statement that the U.S. Fish and Wildlife
10 Service has developed in relation to the
11 overabundance of Canada geese.

12 The process we're going to go
13 through is pretty simple tonight and I'll
14 explain that in just one second. But first I
15 just want to recognize a few people that are
16 here also from the U.S. Fish and
17 Wildlife Service. Ron Kokel is a
18 wildlife biologist and he'll be giving a
19 brief presentation here momentarily. Diane
20 Pence (phonetic) is the Chief of the Division
21 of Migratory Birds in the Hadley
22 Massachusetts regional office of the
23 Fish and Wildlife Service. Mark Gore
24 is a bird biologist, in the
25 Hadley office; and David Demais (phonetic) is

1 the branch chief for permits in the Hadley
2 office.

3 The process we're going to
4 follow tonight is very straightforward, and for those of
5 you who may have been at the last meeting, it is very
6 similar. Ron Kokel will give a presentation
7 that summarizes the draft environmental
8 impact statement and what the recommended
9 alternative is. We'll then ask people to
10 come up, and as you came in
11 you received a card, we'll just go by the
12 order of the number of the card, and have you
13 come up front for two reasons; 1.) so
14 everybody can hear you; and second so that we
15 can make sure that we capture the
16 recording for the transcript. There'll be a
17 transcript of this meeting and all the others
18 that will be part of the official record.

19 If you could
20 state your name, spell your last name
21 for us so we get that correct,
22 where you're from and if you're
23 officially representing an organization what
24 that organization is.

25 I am going to pass around a

1 sign-up sheet, if you want to receive a copy
2 of the final environmental impact statement,
3 please sign up on this. If you received a
4 copy before and you signed up then
5 just note that here.
6 Check one of two things, either yes,
7 I received one before and I want to receive
8 another one; or no, I didn't receive it
9 before. We just want to make sure we don't
10 send you two copies because, as you know,
11 -- if you saw the first one, it's pretty
12 thick.

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MR. CASE:

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This is the eighth
meeting of eleven meetings that we're holding
around the country. The other meetings were
held in Dallas, Texas; Chicago, Illinois;
Waupun, Wisconsin; Franklin, Tennessee; the
Minneapolis area of Minnesota; Brookings,
South Dakota and last night in Richmond,
Virginia. We have three remaining meetings
after tonight. There'll be one tomorrow
night in North Brunswick, New Jersey, and
then in Denver, Colorado next week and,

1 finally, the last meeting is in Bellevue,
2 Washington, which is a suburb of Seattle.

3 I'd next like to introduce Ron
4 Kokel. Ron's a wildlife biologist with the
5 U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service and is the
6 primary author of the environmental impact
7 statement, and he'll give us a brief summary
8 of the statement. Ron.

9 MR. KOKEKEL: Thank you Dave.
10 Good evening everybody. Again, I am Ron
11 Kokel. I'm with the U.S. Fish and Wildlife
12 Service's Division of Migratory Bird
13 Management. I'm stationed in Arlington,
14 Virginia. And on behalf of our Director
15 Steve Williams, I'd like to welcome all of you
16 that are here tonight.

17 If I could get the lights.

18 As Dave indicated, this is the
19 eighth of eleven public meetings that are
20 being held across the country for the purpose
21 of developing public participation and input
22 into our process of developing an
23 environmental impact statement on resident
24 Canada geese.

25 The DEIS was developed in full

1 cooperation with the U.S. Department of
2 Agriculture's Wildlife Services.

3 First, why are we here? Well,
4 we're here to explain the environmental
5 impact statement, it's proposed action, and to
6 listen to your comments. The Draft
7 Environmental Impact Statement considers a
8 range of management alternatives for
9 addressing expanding populations of resident
10 geese. And, as such, our main purpose is
11 to listen to you and to invite your
12 comments on what our recommended actions are.

13 First, a brief explanation of
14 the National Environmental Policy Act; or
15 NEPA. NEPA requires completion of an EIS to
16 analyze environmental and socioeconomic
17 impacts that are associated with any Federal
18 significant action.

19 Second, NEPA also requires
20 public involvement including a scoping period
21 before the draft is issued and a comment
22 period after the draft.

23 We began this process in
24 August of 1999 when we published a notice
25 that announced our intent to prepare this

1 EIS. Then in February of 2000 we held nine
2 public scoping meeting across the U.S.,
3 designed to seek public input into this
4 process. Scoping ended in March of 2000.
5 One meeting was held here in Danbury.

6 In response to scoping we
7 received over 3000 comment and over 1250
8 people attended the nine public meetings.

9 What did we find out during
10 scoping? During scoping we found that the
11 top issues of concern were several things.
12 One, the property damage of conflicts caused
13 by resident geese. The methods of conflict
14 abatement. Sport hunting opportunities on
15 resident geese. The economic impacts caused
16 by resident geese. Human health and safety
17 concerns, and the impacts to the Canada geese
18 themselves.

19 NEPA also outlines a specific
20 format for an environmental impact statement.
21 There's a purpose or needs section; an
22 alternative section; an affected environment
23 section and environmental consequences
24 section.

25 What are we talking about when

1 we're talking about resident geese? In the
2 EIS we define resident geese as those geese
3 which nest within the lower 48 states in the
4 months of March, April, May or June or reside
5 within the lower 48 states in the months of
6 April, May, June, July or August.

7 The purpose of the EIS was
8 three-fold. One, was to evaluate alternative
9 strategies to reduce, manage and control
10 resident Canada goose populations in the U.S.
11 Two; to provide a regulatory mechanism that
12 would allow state and local agencies, other
13 Federal agencies and groups or individuals to
14 respond to damage complaints; and third, to
15 guide and direct resident Canada goose
16 population management activities in the U.S.

17 The need for the EIS was
18 two-fold. First, increasing resident Canada
19 goose populations coupled with growing
20 conflicts, damages and socioeconomic impacts
21 that they cause has resulted in a
22 reexamination of the Service's resident Canada
23 goose management.

24 The draft environmental impact
25 statement examines 7 management alternatives.

1 First alternative, alternative A, is no
2 action. That's the baseline to which
3 everything else is compared. Alternative B,
4 is non lethal control and management which
5 includes only non federally permitted
6 activities. Alternative C, is non lethal
7 control and management which includes some
8 federally permitted activities. Alternative
9 D, expanded hunting methods and
10 opportunities. Alternative E, integrated
11 depredation order
12 management. Alternative F, the proposed
13 action which we term State empowerment.
14 Alternative G, the general depredation order.

15 Under the first alternative,
16 the no action alternative, no additional
17 regulatory methods or strategies would be
18 authorized. We would continue the use of all
19 special hunting seasons on resident geese.
20 The issuance of depredation permits and the
21 issuance of any special Canada goose permits.

22 Under the second alternative,
23 the non lethal control and management which
24 includes non federally permitted activity, we
25 would cease all lethal control of resident

1 Canada geese and their eggs. Only non lethal
2 harassment techniques would be allowed. No
3 permits would be issued and all special
4 hunting seasons would be discontinued.

5 The third alternative, the
6 non lethal control and management which
7 includes federally permitted activities,
8 would cease all permitted lethal control of
9 resident Canada geese with several
10 exceptions. One, we would also promote
11 non lethal harassment techniques. There would
12 be no depredation or special Canada goose
13 permits issued. Egg addling would be allowed
14 with a Federal permit and special hunting
15 seasons would be continued.

16 The fourth alternative,
17 expanded hunting methods and opportunities.
18 Under this alternative we would provide new
19 regulatory options to increase the harvest of
20 resident Canada geese. We would authorize
21 additional hunting methods such as electronic
22 calls, unplugged guns, and expanded shooting
23 hours. The seasons could be operational
24 during September 1 to 15. They could be
25 experimental if approved during September 16

1 to 30 and they would have to be conducted
2 outside of any other open season.

3 The fifth alternative we
4 termed integrated depredation order
5 management. This alternative actually
6 consists of four different depredation
7 orders. There's an airport depredation
8 order; a nest and egg depredation order; an
9 agricultural depredation order and a public
10 health depredation order. Implementation of
11 each of these orders would be up to the
12 individual state wildlife agency. Special
13 hunting seasons would be continued and the
14 issuance of depredation permits and special
15 Canada goose permits would also be continued.

16 Under the airport depredation
17 order, we would authorize airports to
18 establish a program which would include
19 indirect and/or direct population control
20 strategies. The intent of this program would
21 be to significantly reduce resident goose
22 populations at airports. Management actions
23 would have to occur on the premises.

24 The second depredation order,
25 the nest and egg depredation order, would

1 allow the destruction of resident Canada
2 goose nest and eggs without a Federal permit.
3 The intent of this program would be to
4 stabilize existing resident goose breeding
5 populations.

6 The agricultural depredation
7 order would authorize land owners, operators
8 and tenants actively engaged in commercial
9 agriculture to conduct indirect and/or direct
10 control strategies on resident geese
11 depredating on agricultural crops. Again,
12 the management actions would have to occur on
13 the premises where the depredation was
14 occurring.

15 The fourth depredation order,
16 the public health depredation order, would
17 authorize state, county, municipal or local
18 public health officials to conduct indirect
19 and/or direct population control strategies
20 on geese when recommended by health officials
21 that there is a public health threat. Again,
22 management actions would have to occur on
23 premises.

24 The sixth alternative is our
25 proposed action, state empowerment. Under

1 this alternative we would establish a new
2 regulation which would authorize state
3 wildlife agencies or their authorized agents
4 to conduct or allow management activities on
5 resident goose populations. The intent of
6 this alternative would be to allow state
7 wildlife management agencies sufficient
8 flexibility to deal with the problems caused
9 by resident geese within their respective
10 state. Under this alternative we would
11 authorize indirect and/or direct population
12 control strategies such as aggressive
13 harassment techniques, nest and egg
14 destruction, gosling and adult trapping and
15 culling programs; and we would allow
16 implementation of any of the specific
17 depredation orders identified in
18 alternative E.

19 Additionally, during existing
20 special hunting seasons we would expand the
21 methods of take to increase our harvest, as I
22 explained under alternative D, such as
23 additional hunting methods, electronic calls,
24 unplugged guns, expanded shooting hours,
25 -- these seasons could be operational during

1 September 1 to 15, again they could be
2 experimental during September 16 to 30 and
3 they would have to be conducted outside of
4 other open seasons.

5 Additionally, we would
6 establish a conservation order which would
7 provide special expanded hunter
8 harvest opportunities during
9 a portion of the migratory bird treaty
10 closed period, that is August 1 to 31, and a
11 portion of the treaty open period, September 1
12 to 15. Again, under the conservation order
13 we would authorize additional hunting methods
14 and these seasons would have to be conducted
15 outside of any other open season.

16 Under the program the Service
17 would annually assess the impact and the
18 effectiveness of the program and there would
19 be a provision for possible suspension of
20 regulations, that is the conservation order
21 and/or the hunting season changes, when the
22 need was no longer present. We would also
23 continue all special and regular hunting
24 seasons. We would continue the issuance of
25 depredation and special Canada goose permits.

1 The only state requirements under the program
2 would be to annually monitor the spring
3 breeding population of resident geese and
4 annually report take under authorized
5 activities.

6 The last alternative we termed
7 a general depredation order. Under this
8 alternative we would allow any authorized
9 person to conduct management activities on
10 resident geese that are either posing a
11 threat to health and human safety or causing
12 property damage. This action would be
13 available between April 1 and August 31. It
14 would also provide expanded hunting
15 opportunities as identified under alternative
16 D. We would have continued
17 use of special and regular hunting seasons
18 and the issuance of depredation and special
19 Canada goose permits. Authorization for all
20 management activities under this alternative
21 would come directly from the U.S. Fish and
22 Wildlife Service.

23 We looked at two things under
24 the affected environment. We looked at the
25 biological environment and the socioeconomic

1 environment. Under the biological
2 environment we looked at the resident Canada
3 goose populations, water quality in wetlands,
4 vegetation and soils, wildlife habitat and
5 federally listed threatened and endangered
6 species.

7 Under the socioeconomic
8 environment we looked at the migratory bird
9 program which includes a sport hunting
10 program and a migratory bird permit program,
11 social values and considerations, economic
12 considerations including property damages
13 caused by resident geese, agricultural crop
14 problems, human health and safety issues and
15 the program cost.

16 The environmental consequences
17 section forms the scientific and the analytic
18 basis for comparison of all the different
19 alternatives. It analyzes the environmental
20 impacts of each alternative in relation to
21 those resource categories that I just went
22 over. And, again, the no action alternative
23 provides a baseline for all the analysis.

24 Under the no action we expect
25 Canada goose populations to continue the growth

1 that we are currently experiencing. In the
2 Atlantic Flyway we expect the population to
3 approach 1.6 million within 10 years. In the
4 Mississippi Flyway, 2 million in 10 years.
5 Central Flyway 1.3 million; and the Pacific
6 Flyway 450,000 within 10 years. We would
7 expect that there would be continued and
8 expanded goose distribution problems and
9 conflicts. There would be increased
10 workloads and continued impacts to property
11 safety and health.

12 Under our proposed action, we
13 expect there to be a reduction in Canada
14 goose populations, especially specific problem
15 areas. We expect increased hunting
16 opportunities; a significant reduction in
17 conflicts; decreased impacts to property
18 safety and health. While there would be some
19 initial workload increases, as the
20 populations decrease we believe that there
21 would be long-term workload decreases, and
22 above all the alternative would maintain
23 viable resident Canada goose populations.

24 Some of the recent modeling
25 that's been done suggests that in order to

1 reduce the 4 Flyways' populations from the
2 current level of about 3 and a half million
3 down to the Flyways' goals of 2.1 million
4 would require for 10 years one of these
5 options. Either the harvest of
6 an additional 480,000 geese annually. The
7 take of an additional 852,000 goslings
8 annually. The nest removal of 528,000 nests
9 annually or the combination of an additional
10 harvest of 240,000 geese annually and the
11 take of 320,000 goslings annually.

12 One of these
13 would have to occur each year for 10 years
14 over what is occurring
15 currently.

16 Thus, we believe the only way
17 to possibly obtain these kind of numbers is
18 to give states the flexibility to address the
19 problems within their respective state. To
20 address population reductions on the widest
21 number of available fronts. Since states
22 are the most informed and knowledgeable local
23 authorities on wildlife conflicts, the primary
24 responsibilities and decisions should be
25 placed with them.

1 What comes next? First is the
2 development of a new regulation to carry out
3 the proposed action. This should be
4 forthcoming soon. Second, is the public
5 comment period on the draft environmental
6 impact statement, and it ends May 30th; and,
7 third, is publication of a final
8 environmental impact statement. The
9 Service's record of decision and a final rule
10 which we anticipate for this fall.

11 As I just stated, the public
12 comment period is open until May 30th and
13 I think Dave has already outlined some of the
14 various methods that you can use to submit
15 your comments. These include any oral or
16 written comments that you may submit tonight
17 and any that you may subsequently send in to
18 us. The address is printed on the back of
19 the card that you received when you came here
20 tonight.

21 Additionally, we've set up an
22 electronic site where you can send e-mail
23 comments and access all of the other
24 pertinent information to the EIS process,
25 including the draft environmental impact

1 statement. And on behalf of the Service, I'd
2 like to thank all of you for attending the
3 meeting, in particular those who will submit
4 comments tonight.

5 Thank you.

6
7 MR. CASE: Thank you, Ron. As
8 I mentioned that's where we're going to take
9 public comment. When you come up if you
10 could state your name, spell your last name
11 for us, if you represent an organization let
12 us know what that is. Please speak
13 into the microphone so that we could record
14 it properly. There's lots of
15 microphones up there, the one with the
16 little round ball on the end of it is the one
17 to speak into. So with that I'd like to take
18 number 1. If you don't jump up, I'll just go
19 onto the next one. Okay?

20 A VOICE: (Inaudible).

21 MR. CASE: This one right
22 here, I'm sorry.

23 A VOICE: (Inaudible).

24 MR. CASE: I'm sorry.

25 A VOICE: That's all right.

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2

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MR. HANLEY:

4

Good evening and thank you. My name is Ray

5

Hanley (phonetic), Chairman of the Citizen's

6

Advisory Council, which is a group of

7

sportsmen's organizations. We meet on a

8

monthly basis up in Hartford and our task is

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to advise the Department of Environmental

10

Protection on items that pertain to the

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sportsmen of Connecticut. It's approximately

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24 organizations involved, comprising a little

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better than 2,000 people.

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First of all, I'd like to

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thank the organization for putting this on

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today and giving the public an opportunity to

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address this forum. The fact that you are

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here points out the fact that we do have a

19

problem with Canadian geese in Connecticut.

20

No big secret. It's been for a while. What

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we're concerned about is the solution to the

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problem we have that would be beneficial to

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most people and certainly to wildlife

24

population.

25

There was quite a bit of

1 information given us here this evening. I
2 certainly hope we don't have to take a test
3 on all of that because we wouldn't do too
4 well I'm afraid. But in regard to proposal G,
5 and I haven't quite honestly
6 had a chance to review this with the entire
7 council. I have spoken to some council
8 members but we've just gotten this
9 information last Tuesday evening, so the
10 opportunity to present it to the complete
11 board hasn't been available. But as I say, in
12 speaking with the people that I have been
13 able to deal with, it's been our feeling that
14 proposal G would be most beneficial to the
15 State of Connecticut. The broadening of some
16 of the seasons and so forth are certainly
17 something that we have to consider and
18 welcome. However, I believe a
19 letter has been issued from the DEP to your
20 director in regard to some reclarifications
21 about broadening the interpretations of some
22 of those lines. I know we have those and for
23 the sake of remedy I'm not going to go over
24 each and everyone of those here tonight, but
25 the Council feels that

1 proposal G would be the best interest on the
2 State of Connecticut at this time, and I
3 thank you for your time.

4 MR. CASE: Thank you.

5 All right. Number 2.

6 MS. FOGLER: My name is Mary
7 Fogler (phonetic) and I'm a private homeowner
8 and we live in Berlin on Silver Lake and I
9 really haven't gotten to review all the
10 different solutions but from listening to
11 what you said today, I'm a little confused
12 about giving all the authority to the State.
13 What would that leave the private homeowner?
14 What would their options be? Would our hands
15 be tied or would we have some
16 options to defend ourselves? And it's just a
17 terrible problem and I realize now how
18 massive it is. I hope that we can have a
19 combined effort with the homeowners and I
20 know that the airports -- I mean there are a
21 lot of different areas that have groups of
22 people concerned. But as a private homeowner
23 I don't know if F would be the answer. I
24 believe that was the one that gave all of the
25 problem over to the state. I'm hoping that

1 it would -- G, but does that -- private
2 homeowner and everybody else get the help we
3 need because it looks to me like you would
4 need professional help to solve some of these
5 problems. I don't know how to go shake an
6 egg and where we are the geese are on State
7 property which surrounds our home, and
8 at this point I think our hands are kind of
9 tied. We're not hunters and plus,
10
11 our problem starts in April and we have
12 geese that surround our home and they're
13 very, very noisy all night long. I mean it's
14 destroying our home environment and all our
15 neighbors are in the same situation. So
16 we're hoping to represent Silver Lake
17 -- tonight, and -- I'm not sure what the
18 solution is, but I hope that we can come up
19 with some combined effort so that we also can
20 take some steps to protect our homes and
21 property.

22 MR. CASE: Thank you.

23
24 If you have some specific questions
25 about what's possible or not possible you can

1 sure do that after the meeting.

2 Number 3.

3 Four.

4 Five.

5 MS. HUEBNER: Hi. Thanks.

6 I'm Linda Huebner, H-u-e-b-n-e-r. I'm
7 testifying here tonight on behalf of the --
8 over 84,000 members of the Humane Society of
9 the United States who live in New England.

10 First of all, we want to thank
11 you for having this hearing and allowing us
12 to come and testify, and I'll be submitting
13 written testimony as well either tonight or
14 by mail, whichever you prefer.

15 Overall, we wanted to state
16 that our members and constituents are very
17 concerned about the conflict issues between
18 humans and Canada geese as well. However,
19 they're interested in humane, environmentally
20 sound and lasting solutions such as hazing or
21 egg addling.

22 We feel that the public
23 expects the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service to
24 sort of take the lead in advocating
25 responsible approaches to solving problems

1 and providing the sound base of data from
2 which to make decisions, and we had hoped that
3 the draft environmental impact statement
4 would do that, and we feel that with some work
5 it possibly could. But at this point
6 we feel that it requires some substantial
7 revisions. First of all, the requirements
8 under NEPA -- we feel that it lacks the
9 readability or the accessibility to the lay
10 public that it's supposed to have.

11 Particularly, that it fails to provide sound
12 and understandable data from which people can
13 make decisions and draw conclusions and
14 inferences according to the different
15 programs that are put out there. In
16 particular, it fails to significantly address
17 concerns for the animal welfare and
18 protection communities which we have put out
19 to the agency under other proposals under
20 NEPA as well.

21 We also wanted to comment that
22 exactly what occurs under the different
23 lethal approaches in particular isn't
24 detailed thoroughly in the current draft
25 environmental impact statement, exclusive of

1 hunting. But specifically with respect to
2 past programs that involved round up and
3 slaughter operations or round up and gassing
4 operations. The details of those types of
5 things are not laid out in the document as it
6 exists, so we feel that the public has an
7 interest in knowing exactly what sorts of
8 things might happen under each of these
9 proposed plans.

10 Also, the stuff that you put
11 up here tonight about the different things
12 that would need to happen over a ten-year
13 time period -- the magnitude of this is just
14 unparalleled as far as we're concerned, and
15 it has domestic and international
16 implications that, in our opinion, are not
17 adequately addressed in the current document.
18 And as far as we're concerned there's also
19 nothing to suggest that even if this level of
20 lethal management were carried out, that the
21 conflicts that people are experiencing with
22 geese would necessarily be addressed. That,
23 for example, hunting opportunities would
24 assuage conflicts with geese in say
25 residential areas or business parks, that

1 sort of thing.

2 And, finally, the DIS does not
3 adequately describe the costs involved with
4 these programs. What it would cost state
5 agencies to administer these things or in the
6 case of the round up and slaughter operations
7 the economic costs of those as well. I think
8 they seem sort of simpler than they actually
9 are.

10 And it also fails to identify
11 some other things that have been going on
12 such as programs like Geese Peace where there
13 have been long-term egg addling operations
14 often done with the assistance of volunteers
15 that have been pretty successful. So we feel
16 that in order to meet the intended purpose,
17 the draft environmental impact statement
18 needs to be more detailed so it will openly
19 inform the public about the intended actions
20 and completely discuss those -- both the
21 controversial options that have been put out
22 there and also the humane alternatives.

23 Thank you.

24 MR. CASE: Thank you.

25 MS. HUEBNER: Would you like

1 written testimony tonight or shall I --

2 MR. CASE: Yes. Give it to
3 Mr. Kokel.

4 Thank you.

5 Number 6.

6 MR. PANARONI: Steve Panaroni,
7 P-a-n-a-r-o-n-i. I'm just an avid hunter,
8 been hunting for over 30 years and enjoy
9 hunting geese. Thank you guys for doing the
10 study. I think it's real important. From
11 what I've seen, without remembering a lot of
12 it, what this gentleman here had to say I
13 think alternative G, letting the state
14 control it is probably the best thing. But I
15 do have one concern: if we start doing a bunch
16 of this is are you guys going to keep
17 monitoring the situation, or who monitors the
18 population over the 10 years? Will it then
19 revert to the state or will they have some
20 Federal expertise as well?

21 MR. CASE: Thank you.

22 Number 7.

23 Eight.

24 MR. TORINO: Good evening. My
25 name is Chris Torino, T-o-r-i-n-o, from West

1 Hartford, Connecticut. I'm here representing
2 myself but I also sit on the same DEP
3 commission that Ray does who spoke first. So
4 I will just echo Ray's thoughts and agreeing
5 with option G and to break away from that for
6 a moment, I am also a hunter. I find it
7 amazing and I'd like to ask some of the
8 biologists what they think: I have to sit
9 in my duck stand in January and watch geese
10 fly from pond to pond to pond and we can't do
11 anything; can't shoot them. Now you just
12 said there's a big problem there. We better
13 get going on it and, you know, when people
14 like myself and this gentleman here who want
15 to shoot these geese and eat them. I mean, I
16 -- I have to say I -- on a rare occasion I
17 agree with the Humane Society, I think when
18 you wrap a bunch of them up and gas them or
19 slaughter them like that that's -- that's
20 ridiculous. I mean it's fair game, I think,
21 when it's one on one. You probably wouldn't
22 agree with me but anyway I think it's fair
23 game one on one and we eat everything that we
24 shoot and what we don't we give to our clubs.
25 So I wondered why, you know, what's the big

1 deal with that hunting period. I understand
2 the fall -- the migration from Canada, and I'm
3 not a biologist but we're talking January or
4 perhaps even extending it to February, in
5 this particular state above Route 95. You
6 can hunt below Route 95. Well that's great
7 if you can get down there early and you know
8 somebody, but the early September didn't work
9 for me. I got permission from a farmer and
10 it was blue skies everyday because the corn
11 isn't cut and there is no reason for the
12 geese to come there. Why should they when
13 the kids are feeding them in the parks and
14 stuff? And they're a beautiful bird for kids
15 to feed but if you want to solve the problem
16 you have to let the hunter have access to the
17 birds.

18 Another comment is how did you
19 handle the snow geese? I've had occasion to
20 hunt in Arkansas a couple of times and I'd
21 like to get a piece of the snow geese action
22 out there. Have you given that power back to
23 the states or are you guys still running that
24 program? Because that sounds like something,
25 you know, with the unlimited bag and all that.

1 And I've been, you know, I've tried hunting
2 in Canada this year and it's just as tough.
3 It depends on how many shots you have. If
4 the geese or the birds aren't there it's a
5 waste of time. We need to get our people in
6 when the birds are there. You know, again,
7 what's the big deal with January? You know,
8 it's after the migration as far as I'm
9 concerned so, you know, make it easier for us
10 to -- to help you folks, and if we can get
11 enough of the management going then we
12 perhaps could put at least a dent in the
13 problem. That's all I have to say.

14 MR. CASE: Thank you.

15 Number 9.

16 MR. BORAWSKI: Good evening.

17 John Borawski, B-o-r-a-w-s-k-i. I'm a member
18 of the Bloomfield, Connecticut Fish and Game
19 Club and a life member of the NRA and NAHC,
20 that's the North American Hunting Club. I'm
21 here to express my opinion that extended open
22 seasons on Connecticut resident geese. To me
23 it's a most cost-effective method to let the
24 sportsmen who generate revenue by purchasing
25 licenses and firearms and ammunition that go

1 back into the Fish and Wildlife Service
2 through taxes, that's the most cost-effective
3 method. I also agree with this gentleman,
4 number 8, about the Humane Society.
5 Something must die in order for me to eat it,
6 but to gas or trap it's not an appealing
7 method for me.

8 Thank you.

9 MR. CASE: Thank you.

10 Number 10.

11 MS. ALMY: Hi. I'm Jessica
12 Almy, that's A-l-m-y, and I'm from the Cape
13 Wildlife Center in West Barnstable,
14 Massachusetts. I want to agree with what
15 Linda Huebner had said previously. My major
16 concern about the DEIS is that it fails
17 to outline the specific methods by which
18 lethal control will be performed. However,
19 an equal concern is that the problem isn't well
20 defined in the document. The problem is
21 truly the human/goose conflicts or the
22 cultural carrying capacity and not the
23 overpopulation of geese which is the
24 biological or the ecological carry capacity.
25 Even if killing Canada geese would reduce

1 populations such an effective program would
2 fail to address the actual problem. We know
3 that when communities deal with deer-vehicle
4 collisions, effective programs integrate
5 changes in speed limits, driver education
6 programs and other sociological factors, not
7 simply biological controls. Likewise, to
8 address our Canada goose problem we must
9 undertake a broader approach than any of the
10 alternatives outlined in the DEIS.

11 Thank you.

12 MR. CASE: Thank you.

13 Number 11.

14 MR. SAMOR: Good evening. My
15 name is Alexander Samor, S-a-m-o-r. I live
16 in Southport, Connecticut. I'm speaking on
17 behalf of the Connecticut (inaudible)
18 Association. It's clear that the
19 population of Canada geese has grown in the
20 State of Connecticut to a point where these
21 magnificent birds have become nuisance and
22 the problem needs to be addressed as quickly
23 as possible. These birds have made a mess of
24 our parks and our golf courses and our
25 beaches and our waterways and we're in favor

1 of giving the State agency as much leeway as
2 possible to manage the population. It's
3 clear that the population needs to be reduced
4 to a point where it's in concert with the
5 environment and right now it's out of
6 control. It needs to be brought back into
7 concert with the environment. So we're in
8 favor of whether it be Alternative F or G the
9 broadest possible leeway to the
10 professionals. This is a biological problem.
11 The biologists ought to be empowered and the
12 state regulators ought to be empowered to do
13 what they deem appropriate to control the
14 situation and we're confident that the people
15 here will do an adequate job to accomplish
16 the goal.

17 Thank you.

18 MR. CASE: Thank you.

19 Is there anyone here this
20 evening that has not had a chance to speak
21 that would like to?

22 Okay. If not, then I'd like to
23 thank you for taking the time out of your
24 schedules to be here this evening. And thank
25 you for your concern for geese and for

1 wildlife. If you have additional
2 questions for any of the folks up here, please
3 feel free to come up and talk. And, again,
4 thanks for attending.

5 (Whereupon, the above
6 proceedings were adjourned at 7:45 o'clock
7 p.m.)

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CERTIFICATE

I hereby certify that the foregoing 36 pages are a transcription of an audiotape sound recording taken of the Public Hearing in the matter of: U.S. FISH AND WILDLIFE SERVICE, TO DISCUSS DRAFT EIS ON RESIDENT CANADA GOOSE MANAGEMENT, at the Holiday Inn, 80 Newtown Road, Danbury, Connecticut, on May 21, 2001.

I further certify that inaudible portions of the sound recording were indicated as "inaudible" in the transcript.

I further certify that the transcript was prepared by employees of the word processing department of The Cunningham Group, Inc., under my direction.

Margherita R. Cunningham
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