







Multi-Agency Response to a Highly Pathogenic Avian Influenza Animal Emergency

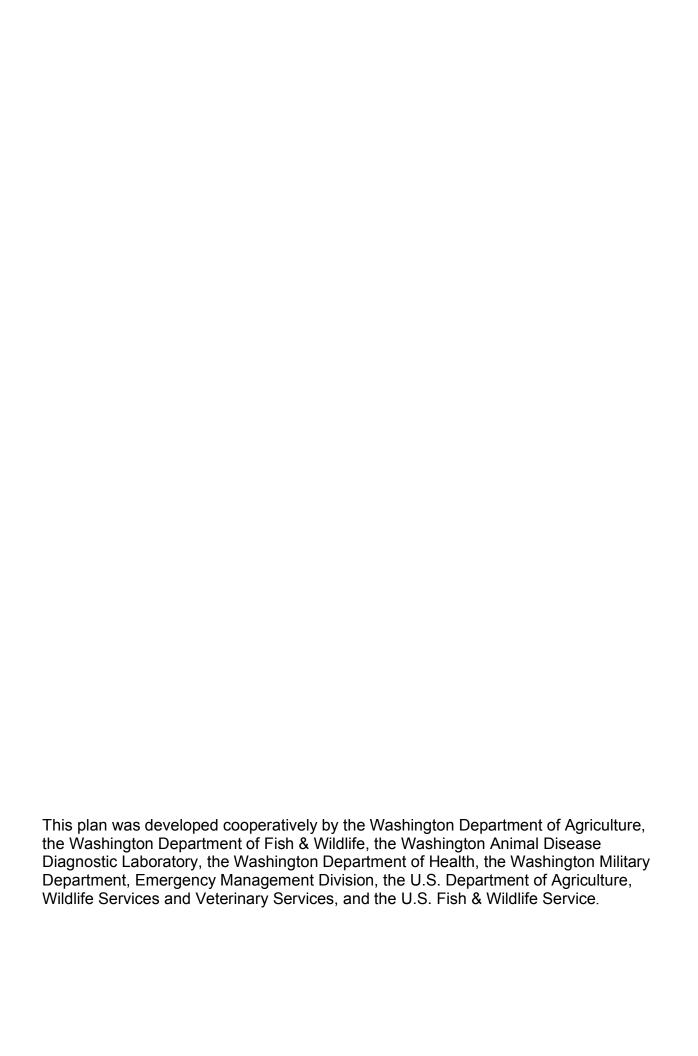


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1 Purpose

The purpose of this document is to provide an overview of the roles and responsibilities and lines of communication among local, state, and federal agencies that have responsibilities in a highly pathogenic avian influenza (HPAI) animal disease emergency.

Since it was identified in 1996, millions of domestic poultry in Asia, Europe and Africa have died or have been culled due to HPAI H5N1. Introduction of this virus into the U.S. poultry industry would be devastating. In addition to poultry, mortality from HPAI H5N1 has been reported in nearly 60 wild bird species worldwide. Human infection is not common and is primarily associated with close contact with infected domestic poultry.

However, since human cases of HPAI H5N1 were first identified in 1997, there has been increasing concern that this virus could mutate to create a strain capable of causing a pandemic in humans. Because of these concerns, an interagency workgroup of state and federal agencies with roles in a potential HPAI animal emergency was convened in late 2006. The workgroup agreed to develop an interagency plan to coordinate a response to an HPAI animal disease emergency in Washington. Since agency roles will differ depending on geographic location of the virus and affected species, this plan is scenario-based.

Two joint working groups were developed to help define the roles and responsibilities and risk communication issues: the Avian Emergency Workgroup and the Avian Emergency Workgroup Planning Subcommittee (see Attachments C and D). This document is the result of that work. We acknowledge the participation of the workgroup members, particularly the contributions of the Planning Subcommittee members.

2 SITUATION

- As of May 8, 2007, HPAI subtype H5N1 has not been detected in Washington.
- International regulations require that diagnostic facilities must report the discovery of HPAI subtypes H5 or H7 to the appropriate federal and state agencies immediately upon confirmation.
- As of April 30, 2007, there have been 291 human cases of avian influenza (H5N1) with 172 deaths occurring in countries other than the United States including the few episodes of apparent person to person transmission.
- Most cases have been associated with close contact with infected poultry. Rare cases of person-to-person transmission may have occurred. This coincides with the World Health Organization (WHO) pandemic alert phase 3.
- Millions of foreign domestic poultry have died or been culled during the current outbreak. Multiple wild bird mortality events have also been associated with this virus.

• The Washington Department of Fish and Wildlife (WDFW) has an avian health surveillance plan. The Washington Department of Agriculture (WSDA), Washington State Department of Health (WDOH), and other state and federal agencies have avian influenza response plans. WDOH also has a pandemic influenza response plan (see Attachment B for references to all plans).

3 Assumptions

- Avian influenza is an animal disease, not a human disease. However, there have been a limited number of human cases, most associated with close contact with infected poultry.
- Avian influenza could be introduced into Washington birds by several different routes including migrating birds, illegally imported infected birds or their products.
- Scientists are concerned that avian influenza could, through genetic reassortment or mutation, become a disease that is easily transmitted from human to humans, thus causing an influenza pandemic.
- Local, state and federal agencies must work together to send a clear, concise and correct public message concerning the possible effects of this animal disease.
- The report of a confirmed Asian-type HPAI H5N1 in Washington State will bring considerably more scrutiny and media attention at the national and international levels than if a non-Asian-type was found either in wild birds or poultry.

4 CONCEPT OF OPERATIONS

In the case of an HPAI diagnosis in a wild bird population, the WDFW, in cooperation with appropriate federal agencies, would be the primary agency for directing state activities.

In the case of an HPAI diagnosis in a domesticated bird population, WSDA, in cooperation with appropriate federal agencies, would be the primary agency for directing state activities.

In all cases of HPAI in birds, WDOH will serve in a support role to protect public health and safety and to provide accurate information to the public regarding human health risks.

The nature of this disease, which has the ability to spread from wildlife to domestic birds, will dictate who has the lead role in any response. In most cases Unified Command under the Incident Command System (ICS) will be established to allow input from local, state, and federal agencies that have the legal responsibility for the protection of animal and human health.

It is agreed that communication and cooperation among all agencies described in this document is the most important outcome.

4.1 Avian Emergency Workgroup

In the case of a confirmed positive test for HPAI H5N1 in a *wild bird* in any location in the Pacific Flyway, the Avian Emergency Workgroup will convene immediately by teleconference to assess the situation, to assure a standard message is shared with the general public, and to formulate technical recommendations for specific state redirection on established surveillance. These recommendations will be forwarded immediately to the Incident Command, if established, or to the agencies conducting surveillance. Membership of this group will consist of representatives of the following agencies:

- Washington State Department of Agriculture (WSDA);
- Washington Department of Fish and Wildlife (WDFW);
- Washington Military Department, Emergency Management Division (EMD);
- Washington State Department of Health (WDOH);
- U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS);
- U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA);
- Washington State University, Washington Animal Disease Diagnostic Laboratory (WADDL); and
- Communications Directors; WSDA, EMD, and WDFW.

WDFW is responsible for establishing the teleconference and is the lead state agency.

In the case of a confirmed positive test for HPAI H5N1 in *domestic poultry* in any location in the State of Washington, the Avian Emergency Workgroup will convene immediately by teleconference to formulate technical recommendations for specific state redirection on established surveillance. These recommendations will be forwarded immediately to the Incident Command, if established, or to the agencies conducting surveillance. Membership of this group will consist of representatives of the following agencies:

- Washington State Department of Agriculture (WSDA);
- Washington Department of Fish and Wildlife (WDFW);
- Washington Military Department, Emergency Management Division (EMD);
- · Washington State Department of Health (WDOH);
- U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS);
- U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA);
- Washington State University, Washington Animal Disease Diagnostic Laboratory (WADDL); and
- Communications Directors; WSDA, EMD, and WDFW

WSDA is responsible for establishing the teleconference and is the lead state.

5 ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES OF RESPONDING AGENCIES

5.1 Washington Department of Agriculture (WSDA)

The WSDA is the agency with primary responsibility for avian influenza control in domesticated fowl within the state of Washington.

Actions before HPAI is diagnosed in North America

- Beginning in June, 2006, collect samples from domestic and game bird flocks to test for both highly pathogenic AI (HPAI) and low pathogenicity AI (LPAI) subtypes H5 and H7 throughout Washington. Testing will follow the USDA surveillance plan for subtypes H5 and H7.
- Establish and implement a Biosecurity Training Program for Local Jurisdiction Response Personnel.
- Establish and publish response plans for Avian Influenza for both highly pathogenic AI (HPAI) and low pathogenicity AI (LPAI) subtypes H5 and H7 throughout Washington.
- Provide public information and education efforts directed at domestic bird owners, specifically on biosecurity topics, and ways to protect their birds from AI infection.
- Provide public information and education efforts directed at small or backyard flock owners about the importance of good biosecurity measures and symptoms to be aware of in the event of an infection of their flock.

Actions if HPAI is diagnosed in wild birds in North America

- If HPAI is discovered anywhere in the Pacific Flyway, appoint a representative to the Avian Emergency Workgroup that convenes to review surveillance guidelines (see Section 4.1).
- Increase public information and education efforts directed at domestic bird owners, specifically on biosecurity topics and ways to protect their birds from Al infection.
- Increase public information and education efforts directed at small or backyard flock owners about the importance of good biosecurity measures and symptoms to be aware of in the event of an infection of their flock.
- Evaluate the need to restrict traffic of animals, equipment, food, etc. arriving from other states or within specified areas in Washington.

Actions by WSDA if HPAI is diagnosed in domestic birds in Washington

 Activate Appendix B (State Animal Response Plan) of Emergency Support Function 11 (Agriculture and Natural Resources) to the Washington State Comprehensive Emergency Management Plan and Joint Incident Communications Plan (Attachment A of this plan).

- WSDA will determine the scope and level of initial response, initiate a task force, and establish an Incident Command, and request an Incident Management Team through the State Emergency Operations Center (EOC) which will transition into a Unified Command under ICS.
- Activate the Emergency Poultry Disease Plan (WSDA).
- WSDA will be the responsible agency and will request the assistance of the USDA Veterinary Services Area Veterinarian in Charge (AVIC) if needed.
- Communicate with and seek cooperation from the following agencies as needed for assistance in controlling the outbreak:
 - Washington Department of Fish and Wildlife (WDFW);
 - WSU, Washington Animal Disease Diagnostic Laboratory (WADDL);
 - Washington Military Department, Emergency Management Division (EMD);
 - Washington Department of Health (WDOH);
 - Washington State Police (WSP);
 - Washington Department of Transportation (WSDOT);
 - U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA);
 - U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS);
 - Affected Local Jurisdiction Department of Emergency Management (LDEM);
 - Affected Local Jurisdiction Department of Health (LDOH); and
 - Affected Local Law Enforcement Agencies (LLEA).
- Establish quarantine areas and issue quarantine orders for animals as needed and as determined by the Unified Command.
- Determine appropriate movement restrictions for domestic fowl, people, equipment, feeds, commodities, and conveyances in consultation with the appropriate agencies for those restrictions.
- Establish entry control points and operation procedures for each site.
- Establish disinfection stations as determined by the Unified Command.
- Strategically assign duties and areas of responsibility to state, deputy-state and federal veterinarians, members of the Washington Veterinary Reserve Corps, livestock inspectors, and animal health technicians as determined by the Unified Command.
- In consultation with the AVIC, the WDOH, and the Washington State Department of Labor and Industries (L&I), establish personal protective equipment requirements for people working in contaminated sites.
- Determine appropriate movement restrictions for domestic fowl, people, equipment, feeds, commodities, and conveyances.
- Coordinate any movement restrictions with the affected LDOH and for required stop movement orders for people.
- Prepare and coordinate information for dissemination to the public, producers, processors, and other concerned groups through the JIC and State EOC as approved by the Incident Command.

- Coordinate with the Washington State EOC, WSDOT, WSP, local jurisdictions, and other agencies as needed in locating staging areas outside of the quarantined area to support the Unified Command through the State EOC.
- Conduct AI disease assessments and other related activities to be able to coordinate state-level AI disease emergency response and recovery efforts.
- Identify contaminated feed, livestock, and agricultural products that must be destroyed and disposed of, or decontaminated.
- Identify and approve, with notification to the Washington Department of Ecology (WDOE), disposal sites for animal carcass and other contaminated material.
- Establish personnel and equipment decontamination/disinfection procedures for existing contamination sites as identified by the Incident Command.
- Coordinate with appropriate organizations through the State EOC for the deployment of inspectors and veterinarians for enhanced surveillance, response, and recovery.
- Coordinate with WSP, county, and local law enforcement for site security and related issues as identified by the Incident Command.
- Maintain ongoing Al surveillance of affected communities to rapidly identify and address disease-related problems.
- Reprioritize Al surveillance operations to maximize the surveillance of adjacent areas that could be impacted by the outbreak.

5.2 Washington Department of Fish and Wildlife (WDFW)

Actions before HPAI is diagnosed in North America

- In cooperation with USDA Wildlife Services and the USFWS, conduct surveillance for HPAI in hunter-killed migratory waterfowl, live waterfowl and shore birds, and environmental samples (e.g., feces) as defined under the Washington surveillance plan (WDFW 2006), the Pacific Flyway surveillance plan (Pacific Flyway Council, 2006), and the national HPAI surveillance plan (USDA, 2006).
- Collect, submit and investigate dead and sick wild birds determined to have suspicious signs or presenting clinical signs of HPAI as part of WDFW's standard procedure in monitoring wildlife health.
- Provide public media messages specific to HPAI in wild birds in Washington in conjunction with WSDA and WDOH to constituents of Washington's wildlife resource.

Actions if HPAI is diagnosed in wild birds North America

- Communicate, coordinate, and cooperate with state and federal agencies and other regulatory agencies in the event HPAI is identified in wild birds, domestic birds or humans to provide personnel resources and expertise in wildlife population and disease management in Washington.
- · Redirect resources to assist in the interagency response to a positive test.

- Establish Incident Command for agency response. Participate as an integral part of the Unified Command as required.
- Prepare and coordinate information for dissemination to the public, producers, processors, and other concerned groups through the JIC (Joint Information Center) and State EOC as approved by the Incident Command.
- Communicate with and seek cooperation from the following agencies for assistance in controlling the outbreak:
 - Washington Department of Agriculture (WSDA);
 - WSU, Washington Animal Disease Diagnostic Laboratory (WADDL);
 - Washington Military Department, Emergency Management Division (EMD);
 - Washington Department of Health (WDOH);
 - Washington State Police (WSP);
 - Washington Department of Transportation (WSDOT);
 - o U.S. Department of the Interior Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS);
 - U.S. Department of the Interior National Wildlife Health Center (NWHC);
 - Affected Local Jurisdiction Department of Emergency Management (LDEM);
 - Affected Local Jurisdiction Department of Health (LDOH); and
 - Affected Local Law Enforcement Agencies (LLEA).
- In conjunction with the State Veterinarian, establish quarantine areas and issue quarantine orders as needed as determined by the Incident Command.
- Conduct AI disease assessments and other related activities to be able to coordinate state-level AI disease emergency response and recovery efforts.
- Identify and approve, with notification to WDOE, disposal sites for animal carcass and other contaminated material. In cooperation and coordination with the WSDA State Veterinarian office, dispose of wild birds dying of HPAI via approved methods at identified animal carcass disposal sites.
- Establish personnel and equipment decontamination/disinfection procedures for existing contamination sites as identified by the Incident Command.
- Maintain ongoing Al surveillance of affected communities to rapidly identify and address disease-related problems.
- Reprioritize Al surveillance operations to maximize the surveillance of adjacent areas that could be impacted by the outbreak.
- If HPAI is discovered anywhere in the Pacific Flyway, appoint a representative to the working group that convenes to review surveillance guidelines (see Section 4.1).

5.3 Washington Animal Disease Diagnostic Lab (WADDL)

Actions before HPAI is diagnosed in North America

 Beginning in July, 2006, process samples from domestic and game bird flocks as well as wild bird populations for HPAI and LPAI subtypes H5 and H7 throughout Washington under the USDA HPAI and LPAI surveillance plan until mid 2007 (USDA, 2006).

Actions if HPAI is diagnosed in wild birds in North America

- Receive and perform real-time reverse transcriptase-polymerase chain reaction (RT-PCR) testing on surveillance and diagnostic samples from public agencies and private submitters. Samples will be submitted to WADDL Pullman receiving.
- Maintain lines of communication with submitters to ensure that proper samples and shipping conditions are observed.
- Maintain adequate testing staff to allow appropriate turn-around time on testing:
 - o Routine surveillance samples will be tested within 48 hours of receipt by WADDL.
 - Cases of suspicious deaths will be tested within 24 hours of receipt.
- Report results of RT-PCR tests and forward specimens to appropriate agencies as specified by the USDA procedure for AI virus testing. Results will be reported to agencies as soon as completed in the lab:
 - Negative results will be reported to the submitters as soon as confirmed.
 - Positive test results are considered presumptive and will be reported to the WSDA and the AVIC as directed by USDA-APHIS SOP Response to a Positive Laboratory Finding for HPAI.
 - All presumptive positive specimens will be forwarded to the National Veterinary Services Laboratories (NVSL) for confirmatory testing per NVSL SOP AVPR01510.02.
 - Confirmed positive results will be reported by NVSL officials to the State Veterinarian, USDA-AVIC, and WADDL. The State Veterinarian will report to the submitter.

Note: All testing is considered confidential, and WSU - WADDL will not release announcements on presumptive positive results to the media.

- As soon as HPAI has been diagnosed in wild birds in Washington, prepare for the possibility of HPAI in domestic birds:
 - Place additional orders for lab supplies to cover a surge.
 - Create a weekend duty roster schedule.
 - Arrange for weekend delivery of specimens.

Actions if HPAI is diagnosed in domestic birds in Washington

- Continue all activities from the previous phases.
- Order additional lab supplies, as needed.
- Implement weekend duty schedules, as needed.
- Transfer WSU staff from other departments to help receive and sort specimens as necessary.

5.4 Washington Department of Health (WDOH)

Actions before HPAI is diagnosed in North America

- Participate in Avian Emergency Workgroup update meetings and conference calls.
- Facilitate surveillance activities by referring reports of sick or dead birds to appropriate partner agencies.
- With L&I, provide recommendations for the protection of workers exposed to HPAI while conducting control and eradication activities in affected poultry flocks.
- With the L&I, provide recommendations for the protection of wildlife biologists and others exposed to HPAI while handling potentially affected wild birds.
- Develop and distribute recommendations for the use of antiviral medications.
- In coordination with the Strategic National Stockpile lead pharmacist, provide technical assistance as requested to local health jurisdictions in support of receipt, storage and distribution of antiviral medications.
- Monitor use, effectiveness, and adverse events related to antiviral medications
- Assist partner agencies in the development of protocols and procedures for employee health monitoring as related to avian influenza exposure, if needed.
- With partner agencies, exercise avian influenza response plans.
- With partner agencies, develop and share risk communication tools and strategies (see Attachment A).
- Assist WSDA in the establishment of and implementation of a Biosecurity Training Program for Local Jurisdiction Response Personnel.

Actions if HPAI is diagnosed in wild birds in North America

- Participate in Avian Emergency Workgroup update meetings and conference calls.
- Consult with the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) regarding the current virus strain and provide up-to-date information to partner agencies.
- Consult with wildlife agencies on human health risks associated with wild bird contact.
- With L&I, review worker protection guidelines for the protection of wildlife biologists and provide guidance based on the situation.
- Collaborate and participate with partner agencies on risk communication (see Attachment A).

Actions if HPAI is diagnosed in domestic birds in Washington

- Participate in Avian Emergency Workgroup update meetings and conference calls.
- Consult with the CDC regarding the current virus strain and provide up-to-date information to partner agencies.
- With L&I, review worker protection guidelines for the protection of workers conducting control and eradication activities in affected poultry flocks and provide guidance based on the situation.
- With partner agencies, exercise avian influenza response plans.

 Collaborate and participate in the JIC with partner agencies for risk communication (see Attachment A).

5.5 Washington Military Department

Actions before HPAI is diagnosed in North America

- Assist in developing response plans applicable to an Avian Health Emergency in coordination with WDOH, WSDA, WDFW, and their federal partners.
- Disseminate accurate public information, including the appropriate contact information for other agencies, in coordination with the JIC.

Actions if HPAI is diagnosed in wild birds in North America

- Implement Avian Health Emergency Plans in cooperation with the established Unified Command.
- Be prepared to activate the State EOC to support the Incident Command and impacted agencies as necessary.
- Continue disseminating accurate public information, including appropriate contact information for other agencies in coordination with the JIC.
- Provide resources as requested by the Unified Command and impacted agencies.
- Appoint a representative to the Avian Emergency Workgroup.

Actions if HPAI is diagnosed in domestic birds in Washington

- When WSDA implements ESF 11, Appendix B, (State Animal Response Plan), support the response through the State EOC.
- Coordinate resources as required to support the response to the animal health event.
- Implement the Avian Health Emergency Plans in cooperation with the established Unified Command.
- Continue disseminating accurate public information, including appropriate contact information for other agencies in coordination with the JIC.
- Provide resources as requested by the Incident Command and impacted agencies.
- Appoint a representative to the Avian Emergency Workgroup.

5.6 Local Health Jurisdictions

Actions before HPAI is diagnosed in North America

- Facilitate surveillance activities by referring reports of sick or dead birds to the appropriate partner agencies.
- Disseminate accurate public information, including the appropriate contact information, for other agencies in coordination with the JIC (Joint Information Center).

Actions if HPAI is diagnosed in wild birds in North America

- Implement Local Emergency Plans in cooperation with the established Incident Command.
- Continue disseminating accurate public information, including appropriate contact information, for other agencies in coordination with the JIC.
- Provide representation in the ICP established for the incident.
- Provide resources as requested by the Incident Command.

Actions if HPAI is diagnosed in domestic birds in Washington

- Implement Local Emergency Plans in cooperation with the established Incident Command.
- Continue disseminating accurate public information, including appropriate contact information for other agencies in coordination with the JIC.
- Provide representation in the ICP established for the incident.
- Provide resources as requested by the Incident Command.

5.7 Local Departments of Emergency Management (LDEM)

Actions before HPAI is diagnosed in North America

- Disseminate accurate public information, including the appropriate contact information, for other agencies in coordination with the JIC (Joint Information Center).
- Attend training opportunities and exercises with WSDA and USDA about animal health emergencies.

Actions if HPAI is diagnosed in wild birds in North America

- Implement Local Emergency Plans in cooperation with the established Incident Command.
- Continue disseminating accurate public information, including appropriate contact information, for other agencies in coordination with the JIC.
- Provide representation in the ICP (Incident Command Post) established for the incident.
- Provide resources as requested by the Incident Command.

Actions if HPAI is diagnosed in domestic birds in Washington

- Implement Local Emergency Plans in cooperation with the established Incident Command.
- Continue disseminating accurate public information, including appropriate contact information for other agencies in coordination with the JIC.
- Provide representation in the ICP established for the incident.
- Provide resources as requested by the Incident Command.

5.8 Local Law Enforcement Agencies (LLEA)

Actions before HPAI is diagnosed in North America

- Disseminate accurate public information, including the appropriate contact information, for other agencies in coordination with the JIC.
- Attend training opportunities and exercises with WSDA and USDA about animal health emergencies.

Actions if HPAI is diagnosed in wild birds in North America

- Implement Local Emergency Plans in cooperation with the established Incident Command.
- Continue disseminating accurate public information, including appropriate contact information, for other agencies in coordination with the JIC.
- Provide representation in the ICP established for the incident.
- Provide resources as requested by the Incident Command.

Actions if HPAI is diagnosed in domestic birds in Washington

- Implement Local Emergency Plans in cooperation with the established Incident Command.
- Provide initial road closure and perimeter control for identified isolation and quarantine areas as defined by the State Veterinarian, AVIC and Incident Command to control the spread of the disease.
- Develop long-term plan for traffic control to assist in responding to the Avian Health Emergency.
- Continue disseminating accurate public information, including appropriate contact information, for other agencies in coordination with the JIC.
- Provide representation in the ICP established for the incident.
- Provide resources as requested by the Incident Command.

5.9 USDA, Veterinary Services (USDA-VS)

Actions before HPAI is diagnosed in North America

- Provide current disease status information to states and other stakeholders including trade restrictions and animal movement requirements including:
 - Ongoing investigation of sick and dead poultry reports; and
 - Ongoing effort at international land ports and airports to prevent entry of foreign animal disease via animals or animal products.
- Provide information on appropriate biosecurity measures to the private sector, state, local, and tribal governments and help develop, support, and carry out surveillance programs.

- Sponsor research on influenza viruses with pandemic potential and on vaccines that might be effective in controlling them.
- Stockpile poultry vaccines for use during an HPAI outbreak.

Actions if HPAI is diagnosed in wild birds in North America

- If requested by WSDA or WDFW, USDA-VS will cooperate in establishing a Unified Command for the Avian Health Emergency.
- Provide support to the federal, state, and other stakeholder lead agencies.
- Partner with the USFWS, USDA Wildlife Services, and others to coordinate the
 federal government's surveillance strategy for the early detection of HPAI in wild
 migratory birds and other wildlife when appropriate. USDA Wildlife Services
 administers a National Wildlife Disease Surveillance and Emergency Response
 Program that is responsible for conducting daily surveillance on wildlife diseases,
 such as HPAI.

Actions if HPAI is diagnosed in domestic birds in Washington

- If requested by WSDA or WDFW, USDA-VS will cooperate in establishing a Unified Command for the Avian Health Emergency.
- Work with state partners to confirm the source/premises of the positive birds and the status of illness of the source birds.
- Prepare information for dissemination to the public, producers, processors, and other concerned groups through the JIC.
- Conduct response and investigation in accordance with the Emergency Poultry Disease Plan (WSDA).
- If the positive sample of interest was collected at slaughter, collect initial information necessary to track the conveyances used and confirm that no movements occurred out of the slaughter facility holding area.
- Communicate all information gathered to the USDA-VS Regional Office and Emergency Management office.
- Assist in disease eradication activities including quarantine, evaluation, slaughter, disposal, cleaning and disinfecting, epidemiology, trace-back, vector control, and transportation permitting arrangements.
- Consult with state and local authorities regarding eradication proceedings.
- Collect, analyze, and disseminate technical and logistical information.
- Provide response personnel, materiel, technical expertise, and funding for certain disease control and eradication activities.
- Provide diagnostic reference services and primary testing support, both prior to an outbreak and during an outbreak response.
- Define training requirements for casual employees or support agencies involved in eradication operations.
- The US Secretary may issue a declaration of extraordinary emergency, if warranted.
- Coordinate with state and local agencies to define quarantine and buffer zones.

- Deliver poultry vaccines from the USDA stockpile to requesting agencies, if use is approved.
- Prepare information for dissemination to the public, producers, processors, and other concerned groups through the JIC.
- Allocate funding for compensation to the owners of depopulated animals.
- Define restrictions on interstate commerce.

5.10 USDA, Wildlife Services (USDA-WS)

USDA Wildlife Services is an emergency response agency with broad legislative authority to assist local, state and federal agencies manage diseases. Wildlife Services works closely with the Washington Department of Fish and Wildlife to conduct and coordinate the multi-agency sampling strategy for the Pacific Flyway.

Actions before HPAI is diagnosed in North America

- In cooperation with WDFW and USFWS, conduct surveillance for HPAI in hunter-killed migratory waterfowl, live waterfowl and shore birds, and environmental samples (e.g. feces) as defined under the Washington surveillance plan (WDFW 2006), the Pacific Flyway surveillance plan (Pacific Flyway Council, 2006) and the national HPAI surveillance plan (USDA, 2006).
- Conduct the agency's own surveillance for HPAI in hunter-killed birds, live birds, and environmental samples.
- Establish a cooperative agreement with WDFW to help fund an early detection surveillance effort for monitoring wild birds.

Actions if HPAI is diagnosed in wild birds in North America or domestic birds in Washington

- Act as a resource for state and federal agencies by providing people to staff programs and to lend expertise. Wildlife Services assumes that once an outbreak is confirmed, funds will be made available through Congress to cover response activities.
- Work on both domestic and wild bird issues with the primary state and federal agencies that have the regulatory or management authority.
- If available, provide vehicles to accompany personnel dispatched to the outbreak event.
- Provide representation in the ICP established for the incident.
- If necessary, provide personnel to staff positions in the Incident Command.

5.11 U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS)

The USFWS is the principal federal agency responsible for conserving, protecting and enhancing migratory birds, fish, wildlife, and plants and their habitats for the continuing

benefit of the American people. The Service manages the National Wildlife Refuge System, which encompasses national wildlife refuges, thousands of small wetlands and other special management areas. It also operates national fish hatcheries, fishery resources offices and ecological services field stations.

The agency enforces federal wildlife laws, administers the Migratory Bird Treaty Act and Endangered Species Act, manages migratory bird populations, restores nationally significant fisheries, conserves and restores wildlife habitat such as wetlands, and helps foreign and Native American tribal governments with their conservation efforts. It also oversees the Federal Assistance program, which distributes hundreds of millions of dollars in excise taxes on fishing and hunting equipment to state fish and wildlife agencies.

Actions before HPAI is diagnosed in North America

- In cooperation with WDFW and USFWS, conduct surveillance for HPAI in hunter-killed migratory waterfowl, live waterfowl and shore birds, and environmental samples (e.g. feces) as defined under the Washington surveillance plan (WDFW 2007), the Pacific Flyway surveillance plan (Pacific Flyway Council, 2006) and the national HPAI surveillance plan (USDA, 2006).
- On National Wildlife Refuges, collect, submit and investigate dead and sick wild birds determined to have suspicious signs or presenting clinical signs of HPAI as part of our standard procedure in monitoring wildlife health.
- Provide public media messages specific to HPAI in wild birds in Washington in conjunction with WDFW, WSDA and WDOH to constituents of Washington's wildlife resource.

Actions if HPAI is diagnosed in wild birds in North America

- Communicate, coordinate, and cooperate with federal and state agencies to provide personnel resources and expertise in wildlife population and disease management in Washington.
- Redirect resources to assist in interagency response to a positive test.
- If HPAI is discovered anywhere in the Pacific Flyway, appoint a representative to the working group that convenes to review surveillance guidelines (see Section 4.1).
- Provide representation in the ICP established for the incident.
- In cooperation and coordination with the WDFW and the WSDA State Veterinarian
 office, dispose of wild birds dying of HPAI via approved methods at identified animal
 carcass disposal sites.
- Manage USFWS lands (refuges or hatcheries) that fall within containment zones in ways that protect human health, contain the disease, and maintain biosecurity.

5.12 USGS National Wildlife Health Center (NWHC)

The USGS National Wildlife Health Center (NWHC) is the lead agency within the Department of Interior under the Emergency Support Function #11 Agriculture and

Natural Resources. NWHC will provide technical assistance to determine the extent of the threat to the wildlife and develop recommendations to mitigate such threats. The role for NWHC includes:

- The USGS-NWHC will collaborate with state and federal agencies that have responsibilities to control the spread of animal influenza among animals. The role of the USGS-NWHC includes:
 - Assist in surveillance, field investigations, and other activities associated with wildlife morbidity and mortality.
 - o Provide laboratory and diagnostic capabilities for wildlife cases.
 - Assist WSDA and USDA to disseminate accurate information to public health agencies as it relates to wildlife health.

ATTACHMENT A: JOINT INCIDENT COMMUNICATIONS PLAN

The following plan involves the coordinated communication efforts of the Washington Department of Agriculture (WSDA), the Washington Department of Fish & Wildlife (WDFW), the Washington Military Department, Emergency Management Division (EMD), the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS), the U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA), and the Washington Department of Health (WDOH). In this document, the combined team is referred to as the Washington Avian Influenza Communications Team (WAICT).

The following plan is to be used as a framework for a communications response to an emergency under the National Incident Management System (NIMS). NIMS integrates effective practices in emergency preparedness and response into a comprehensive national framework for incident management.

Under the Incident Command System (ICS), a Joint Information Center (JIC) will be established. Under most circumstances, the public information officer (PIO) from the lead response agency will act as the lead PIO for the incident and will link with the JIC in order to support the incident command structure. In coordination with the Governor's Office and the JIC, the lead PIO represents and advises the Incident Command on all public information matters relating to management of the incident. The JIC handles on-scene media and public inquiries, emergency public information and warnings, rumor monitoring and response, media monitoring, and other functions to coordinate, clear with appropriate authorities, and disseminate accurate and timely information related to the incident, particularly regarding information on public health and safety, and protection.

I. THE ROLE OF COMMUNICATIONS STAFF AT WDFW /USFWS

In the event of a highly pathogenic H5N1 avian influenza detection in a wild bird in Washington, WDFW will take the lead. A joint group, including USDA, USFWS, WSDA, EMD, and WDOH communications staff, will actively communicate program activities to media; state, city, and county governments; stakeholders including hunters and bird-watchers; and the general public. This includes: maintaining the flow of information, providing liaison between wildlife agencies, mission areas, other state agencies and the mass communication media, state, and local governments, the public, and conducting operations from a Joint Information Center.

In the event that the size and scope of the operation overwhelms the WDFW Information Office, it will, with guidance from the Director - WDFW, in coordination with the State Emergency Operations Center, and in conjunction with the Governor's Office, establish a Joint Information Center at the State Emergency Operations Center or another location jointly approved by WDFW and EMD.

II. THE ROLE OF WSDA INFORMATION OFFICE

In the event of the first highly pathogenic H5N1 avian influenza detection in U.S. domestic birds, WSDA's Information Office, in coordination with other state and federal agencies, will be the lead on all communications activities associated with avian influenza in domestic birds. This includes maintaining the flow of information, providing liaison between USDA agencies, mission areas, other state agencies

and the mass communication media, state and local governments, and the public; and conducting operations from a JIC.

If the magnitude of the operation reaches proportions that impede the efficient functioning of the WSDA Information Office, The Director-WSDA operating in conjunction with the Governor's Office and in synchronization with the State Emergency Operations Center will establish a Joint Information Center at the State Emergency Operations Center, or a new site jointly approved by WSDA and EMD.

III. THE ROLE OF DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH OF COMMUNICATIONS AND PUBLIC HEALTH EMERGENCY PREPAREDNESS PROGRAM

In the event of the first human avian influenza case in the U.S., the WDOH and EMD, in coordination with the federal Centers for Disease Control and Prevention and Washington county health departments will be the lead on all communication activities associated with avian influenza as a human health issue.

In the event of human cases of avian influenza in Washington, WDOH will activate and operate a public health JIC.

WDOH will act as a liaison, coordinating and maintaining the flow of information between the state and federal agencies of the WSDA, USDA, WDFW and USFWS.

IV. OVERALL COMMUNICATIONS OBJECTIVES

- Provide transparent, accurate, timely, and consistent information.
- Maintain credibility and instill public confidence in the state's ability to respond to an outbreak.
- Minimize public fear.
- Address rumors, inaccuracies, and misperceptions as quickly as possible.
- Ensure state and federal agencies communicate consistent messages about H5N1 and the government response to it.

V. TARGET AUDIENCES

To recap, in the event of a presumptive positive highly pathogenic H5N1 avian influenza detection in **wild bird** populations, **WDFW** will take the lead. In the event of detection in **commercial or non-commercial poultry**, **WSDA** will take the lead. In the event of **human cases**, **WDOH** will take the lead. All three agencies in coordination with **EMD** will actively communicate program activities to federal, state, and local government partners; the news media; industry and other stakeholders; trading partners; other counterparts; and the general public.

A. General Public

To ensure public goodwill and reduce suspicion, fear, and anxiety; the general public must be kept informed. In addition to providing information through the media, the JIC will provide up-to-date information through a variety of information channels.

B. Governments

The joint communications team (WAICT) will work with public affairs representatives of federal, state, and local partners in the event of a detection. (Contact and notification of these agencies will be made at other levels independent of the communications team.)

C. Industry/Stakeholders

WAICT will work closely with the Incident Commander in contacting industry and stakeholder groups, including their public affairs representatives when possible, prior to publicly announcing actions that will impact those groups. These contacts will lend credibility to the project and garner support for the actions being taken. Industry and stakeholder groups also will be provided with related informational materials as they become available.

D. Media

All agencies will work to ensure that timely and accurate emergency information is provided to the media with sensitivity to deadlines. As a means to better manage media inquiries and demonstrate responsiveness and transparency, the JIC may schedule regular media briefings if intense interest and developments dictate the need.

VI. PRE-EVENT STAGING INFORMATIONAL MATERIALS

WAICT will have available informational materials, such as press releases, statements, advisories, talking points, fact sheets, and questions and answers prepared in advance by the mission area agencies that could be immediately issued during an emergency situation when H5N1 is detected in wild birds, in domestic birds, and/or in humans. The team will work closely with other agency public affairs staff to update these materials as additional information becomes available. The team will also distribute USDA-originated materials, such as public service announcements (PSAs), as appropriate and as time allows.

VII. EVENT - FIRST 48 HOURS

Scenario 1: First wild bird(s) tests positive for HPAI H5N1 in North America

Objectives

- Communicate actions the government is taking.
- Reassure the public that detection in birds does not signal a human pandemic.
- Reassure the public that avian influenza naturally resides in wild birds.
- Inform the public that routine hygiene precautions should be taken whenever interacting with wild birds and will provide protection from the disease.
- Prepare the public for the possibility of more bird/animal cases.
- Prepare the public for the possibility of human illness from direct contact with infected birds.

Key Issues

- Continued monitoring for disease in wild birds.
- Avian influenza naturally occurs in wild bird populations.

- Common-sense hygiene and safety precautions.
- Safety of commercial poultry.
- Safety of properly prepared game birds.

Public Messages

- The virus has not infected any human in the United States.
- The overwhelming majority of human illnesses in other countries have resulted from direct contact with infected birds, usually domestic poultry and not wild birds.
- The rare human-to-human cases have involved close contact with an infected person.
- Avian influenzas are natural and endemic in wild bird populations.
- Federal and state agencies including WDFW, USFWS, WSDA, USDA, and WDOH are working closely together to protect human health, the poultry industry, and wild birds against the disease.
 - We have increased monitoring in the region and areas where infected birds are likely to travel to ensure quick detection if there are additional outbreaks.
 - Experts currently believe that limiting opportunities for domestic poultry to come in contact with wild birds is a more effective disease management strategy than closing waterfowl seasons or otherwise restricting human contact with birds.
 - Should circumstances change, we are prepared to work with our state and federal counterparts and take prompt and appropriate measures including hunting restrictions and closing wild bird areas to public access if they are determined necessary and effective in protecting the health and safety of people and wild birds.
- Common-sense precautions that should always be taken when interacting with wild birds will also provide protection from the disease.
 - Avoid touching wild birds or their fecal material or any body fluids.
 - Use disposable or washable gloves when handling any equipment that comes in contact with wild birds. Wash hands thoroughly afterwards.
- Consuming both wild and domestic poultry is safe if cooked properly.

Stakeholder Messages (Hunters)

The following routine safety precautions, which hunters should take whenever handling game, will also provide protection from the virus.

- Wear rubber or disposable latex gloves while handling and cleaning game birds.
- Do not eat, drink, smoke or touch your face with the gloves while you are handling or cleaning game birds.
- Keep the game bird and its juices away from other foods.
- Thoroughly clean knives and all other equipments and surfaces that come in contact with the bird. After cleaning, use a solution of 3 tablespoons chlorine bleach in 1 quart of water (10% solution) to disinfect all contaminated surfaces.
- Wash your hands with soap and water for at least 20 seconds after handling bird, or with alcohol-based waterless hand cleaner if hands are not visibly soiled.

- Cook all game meat thoroughly (up to at least 165°F) to kill disease organisms and parasites. Use a food thermometer to ensure the inside of the bird has reached at least 165°F
- Report sick birds or dead birds by calling WDFW at 1-800-606-8768.
- WDFW and other agencies have veterinarians and a network of state wildlife biologists who can investigate a report of sick birds.

Stakeholder Messages (Birdwatchers)

As a general rule, people should observe wildlife and other wild birds from a distance to minimize possible exposure to any disease and disturbance to the animal. Also use the following common-sense safety precautions:

- Avoid touching wild birds and their fecal material. If there is contact with wild birds, do not rub eyes, eat, drink or smoke before washing hands with soap and water.
- Use disposable or washable gloves when handling or cleaning backyard feeders, bird baths, or other equipment. Wash hands thoroughly after handling.

Stakeholder Messages (Poultry Producers)

Protect your flocks and be vigilant in reporting signs of illness.

- Enhance biosecurity practices to prevent spread of the virus.
 - Permit only essential workers and vehicles to enter the farm to limit the chances of bringing the virus from an outside source.
 - Avoid visiting other poultry farms.
 - Disinfect shoes, clothes, hands, egg trays or flats, crates, vehicles and tires all of which can carry the virus.
 - Protect your flocks from contact with wild birds.
- Know the signs of avian flu in domestic birds.
 - Signs include respiratory problems, such as coughing and sneezing, watery diarrhea, swelling around the head, neck, and eyes, loss of appetite.
- Report sick birds by calling 1-800-606-3056.
 - WSDA will investigate any report of sick birds.

Tactics

Intergovernmental/stakeholder outreach:

- Inform WAICT members (WDFW, USFWS, WSDA, EMD, WDOH, and USDA-APHIS).
- If the infected wild bird is found in Washington, contact local government (county supervisors, city government if applicable) plus state and national representatives of region affected.
- Alert Washington sportsmen/conservation groups and bird-watching groups including Washington Hunter Association, Vancouver office of Ducks Unlimited, Wetland Joint Venture Coordinators.
- State legislative conference call or personal visits.
- Communicate with poultry industry groups and other identified stakeholders.

Media outreach:

If detection is made in Washington:

- Within one hour of a presumptive positive or confirmation of HPAI H5N1 in Washington, the joint communications team (WAICT) will issue a news release.
- Joint communications team will conduct news conference with other relevant officials to discuss animal and human health implications, actions being taken, guidance for the public.
- Establishing a media briefing schedule to ensure predictable, established lines of communication with reporters to provide updates on management of the outbreak.
- Distribute Q & A and fact sheet and post on Web site.
- Monitor media 24/7 to promptly correct misinformation.

If detection is made in North America, but not in Washington:

- USDA will assume a lead role, but WAICT and/or appropriate partner agencies will be ready to respond to media inquiries, including distribution of informational materials.
- WAICT may consider a media availability with relevant officials to discuss potential impact on Washington.

General public outreach:

- Reassure the public that a detection in birds does not signal a human pandemic.
- Distribute information containing key messages to print and broadcast media.
- Distribute information to hunters and other visitors to wild bird areas of regions affected.
- Post signage at wild bird areas or refuges in regions affected.

Scenario 2: First domestic bird(s) tests positive for HPAI H5N1 in the U.S./Washington Objectives

- Communicate actions the government is taking.
- Reassure the public that a detection in birds does not signal a human pandemic.
- Reassure the public that properly prepared poultry is safe to eat.
- Prepare the public for the possibility of more bird/animal cases.
- Prepare the public for the possibility of human illness from direct contact with infected birds.

Key Issues

- Effectiveness of surveillance
- Safety of commercial poultry
- Personal preparedness

Public Messages

The virus has not infected any human in the U.S.

• There is little evidence this virus is easily transmitted from person to person.

- Human illnesses in other countries have resulted from direct contact with infected birds.
- A detection in birds does not signal a human pandemic.

We are responding quickly and decisively to eradicate the virus.

- We have activated our response plan and a response team is on the scene/on the way.
- We will establish a quarantine to limit movement in the area.
- The birds will be humanely destroyed.
- The area will be disinfected and will not re-open until tests show the area is free of the virus.
- We have increased monitoring in the region to ensure quick detection if there are additional outbreaks.

Properly prepared eggs and poultry are safe to eat.

- Keep your hands, utensils, and surfaces clean.
- Cooking poultry to 165 degrees kills this virus and others.
- Any questions: call the USDA meat and poultry hotline 1-888-MP HOTLINE.

Safeguarding the food supply.

- USDA or state inspectors inspect all poultry products processed for public consumption.
- Retail stores sell only USDA or state inspected poultry.

Industry Messages (Producers)

Protect your flocks and be vigilant in reporting signs of illness.

- Enhance biosecurity practices to prevent spread of the virus.
 - Permit only essential workers and vehicles to enter the farm to limit the chances of bringing the virus from an outside source.
 - o Avoid visiting other poultry farms.
 - Disinfect shoes, clothes, hands, egg trays or flats, crates, vehicles and tires all of which can carry the virus.
 - Protect your flocks from contact with wild birds.
- Know the signs of avian flu.
 - Signs include respiratory problems, such as coughing and sneezing, watery diarrhea, swelling around the head, neck, and eyes, loss of appetite.
- Report sick birds by calling 1-800-606-3056.
 - o WSDA will investigate a report of sick birds.
- Be aware of the potential for AI infection in poultry workers and report suspicious cases to local public health agencies or physicians.

Tactics

Intergovernmental/stakeholder outreach:

If detection is made in Washington:

 Internal conference call with all state/federal partner agencies, including communications staff.

- Intergovernmental conference call with local/state governments (including governor's office, animal health, human health, homeland security, and natural resources).
- Stakeholder conference call with poultry industry groups and other identified stakeholders.
- Congressional conference call or personal visits.

Media outreach:

If detection is made in Washington:

- Conduct press conference with relevant officials to discuss animal and human health implications, actions being taken, guidance for the public.
- Issue news release.
- Issue media advisory listing available resources (b-roll videotape, still photos, Q and A, fact sheet, updated sound bytes via web).
- Establish media briefing schedule to ensure predictable, established lines of communication with reporters to provide updates on management of the outbreak.
- Distribute Q & A and fact sheets and post on shared Web site.
- Provide b-roll tapes upon request (Ames lab testing/inspectors at plant).
- Post still photos on shared Web site (lab testing/inspectors at processing plant).
- Offer updated sound bytes via Web site.
- Monitor media 24/7 to promptly correct misinformation.

If detection is made in North America, but not in Washington:

- USDA will assume a lead role, but WAICT and/or appropriate partner agencies will be ready to respond to media inquiries, including distribution of informational materials.
- WAICT may consider a media availability with relevant officials to discuss impact of detection on Washington.

General public outreach:

- Distribute PSAs containing key messages to radio stations.
- Launch shared public Web site.
- Post downloadable PSAs on shared Web site.
- Activate public hotline.
- Activate information dissemination channels to vulnerable populations or those who may have special information needs, including poultry workers, those for whom English is not their primary language, etc.

VIII. PUBLIC AFFAIRS ROLE

- In conjunction with the Governor's Office, the communications team (WAICT) will plan, develop, supervise if USDA is no longer in lead, and monitor communications activities related to the emergency, including:
 - Serve as a liaison with the public affairs staff of all impacted state and federal agencies.
 - Act as a liaison between any federal Incident Command JIC, the state public information officer(s), other federal agencies, stakeholder groups such as the poultry industry, hunters and bird-watchers, the public, and the media.

- Gather new and updated information regarding agency response/status of detection, verify facts and clear within proper channels.
- Arrange briefings and conference calls for the media.
- Coordinate and prepare the development of press releases, radio and television scripts, statements, advisories, talking points, Q&As, fact sheets, and other informational materials for external use related to the situation.
- o Respond to media and constituent gueries.
- Monitor media reports and be prepared to correct misinformation.

IX. PUBLIC AFFAIRS SUPPORT FROM FEDERAL AGENCIES

USDA Incident of Significance – detection/outbreak of highly pathogenic H5N1 in United States

Once a detection of highly pathogenic H5N1 avian influenza occurs in the United States, the USDA Office of Communications (OC) emergency response staff will work from USDA headquarters (HQ) and maintain, if warranted, a 24/7 JIC for emergency communications coordination. Public affairs staff members from the U.S. Departments of Interior, Health and Human Services and Homeland Security will be invited to support the USDA JIC. When the JIC is activated, OC will send a field public information officer (PIO) who will link back to the JIC in order to support the incident command structure.

Incident of National Significance

Should the President of the United States elevate a highly pathogenic H5N1 avian influenza outbreak to an incident of national significance, under the National Response Plan and NIMS, OC emergency response staff will continue to work from USDA headquarters (HQ) and maintain a 24/7 ready room for emergency communications coordination. OC will coordinate closely with WDOH and assign a public information officer (PIO) to support the WDOH JIC and incident command structure. The USDA PIO represents and advises the Incident Command on all public information matters relating to USDA and management of the incident. In a large-scale operation, the PIO serves as a field PIO with links to the JIC.

ATTACHMENT B: AGENCY SURVEILLANCE AND RESPONSE PLANS

Washington Military Department, Emergency Management Division. Washington State Comprehensive Emergency Plan.

Available at: www.emd.wa.gov

Emergency Support Function 11, Appendix B, State Animal Response Plan. Available at:

http://agr.wa.gov/FoodAnimal/AnimalHealth/docs/ESF 11 SARP2006.pdf.

Washington Department of Agriculture (WSDA). Emergency Poultry Disease Response Plan.

Available by contacting: WSDA Animal Services Division, 360-902-1878.

Washington Department of Fish and Wildlife (WDFW). 2007 Surveillance for early detection of highly pathogenic avian influenza (HPAI H5N1) in wild birds.

Available at: http://wdfw.wa.gov/wlm/avian_flu/ai_monitoring_plan.pdf.

Washington Department of Health (WDOH). Department of Health Avian Influenza Response Basic Plan, Appendix to the Washington Department of Health Comprehensive emergency Management Plan.

Available by contacting: Dorothy Tibbetts, 360-236-3361.

Washington Department of Health (WDOH). Department of Pandemic Influenza Response Plan, Annex to the Washington Department of Health Comprehensive emergency Management Plan.

Available by contacting: Dorothy Tibbetts, 360-236-3361.

Pacific Flyway Council. 2006. Surveillance for early detection of highly pathogenic avian influenza H5N1 in wild migratory birds: a strategy for the Pacific Flyway. Pacific Flyway Subcommittee.

Available at: http://pacificflyway.gov/Documents/AIS_plan.pdf.

U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA). 2006. Summary of the National Highly Pathogenic Avian Influenza (HPAI) Response Plan. Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service.

Available at:

http://www.aphis.usda.gov/newsroom/hot_issues/avian_influenza/contents/printable version/DraftSummaryNationalAlresponseplan.pdf.

U.S. Department of Agriculture, 2005. Standard Operating Procedures: Response to a Positive Laboratory Finding for HPAI, Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service.

Available by contacting: Dr John Grendon, USDA, 360-753-9430.

U.S. Department of Agriculture, 2005. Guidance for protecting workers against HPAI, Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service, Directive 6800.1.

Available by contacting: Dr John Grendon, USDA, 360-753-9430

Attachment C: Avian Emergency Workgroup

Dr Leonard Eldridge

State Veterinarian
Washington Department of Agriculture
360-902-1881
Ieldridge@agr.wa.gov

Dr. Terry McElwain

Dr. Tim Baszler WSU – WADDL 509-335-9696 tfm@vetmed.wsu.edu

Dr. Thomas J. Brignole

USDA – APHIS Veterinary Service 360-753-9430 Thomas.j.brignole@aphis.usda.gov

Brad Bortner

Chief, Pacific Region US Fish and Wildlife Service 503-231-6164 Brad.bortner@fws.gov

Jenny Hoskins

US Fish and Wildlife Service 503-231-6164

Jenny-hoskins@fws.gov

Fred Paveglio

US Fish and Wildlife Service 360-604-2558 Fred_paveglio@fws.gov

Jeanette Lomax

Washington Military Department, EMD 253-512-7055

J.Lomax@emd.wa.gov

Marcia Goldoft

Washington Department of Health 206-418-5433

Dr. Kristin Mansfield

Wildlife Veterinarian
Washington Department of Fish and
Wildlife
509-892-1001, x326
mansfkgm@dfw.wa.gov

Dr. Paul Kohrs

Washington Department of Agriculture 360-902-1835 pkohrs@agr.wa.gov

Dr. John H. Grendon

Emergency Coordinator - Veterinarian USDA – APHIS Veterinary Service 360-753-9430 John.H.Grendon@aphis.usda.gov

Don Kraege

Waterfowl Section Manager
Washington State Department of Fish and
Wildlife
360-902-2522
kraegdkk@dfw.wa.gov

Roger Woodruff

USDA- APHIS Wildlife Services 360-753-9884 Roger.a.woodruff@aphis.usda.gov

David Hodgeboom

Washington State Department of Agriculture 360-725-5508 dhodgeboom@agr.wa.gov

Dorothy Tibbetts

Washington Department of Health 360-236-3361 Dorothy.tibbetts@doh.wa.gov

Claudia Coles

Washington Department of Agriculture 360-902-1905

Public Information Officers

Jason Kelly

Director of Communications
Washington State Department of
Agriculture
360-902-1815
jkelly@agr.wa.gov

Margaret Ainscough

Public Affairs
Washington Department of Fish and
Wildlife
360-902-2171
ainscmea@dfw.wa.gov

Timothy Church

Pubic Information Officer
Washington Department of Health
360-236-4077
Timothy.Church@DOH.wa.gov

Charlie Powell

Pubic Information Officer WSU – WADDL 509-335-7073 cpowell@vetmed.wsu.edu

Robert Harper

Pubic Information Officer Washington Military Department, Emergency Management Division 253-512-7005 r.harper@emd.wa.gov

Joan Jewett

Public Information Officer US Fish and Wildlife Service 503-231-6211 Joan_jewett@fws.gov

Karen Eggert

Pubic Information Officer
U.S. Department of Agriculture
301-734-7280

Karen M Eggert@MD/APHIS/USDA.gov

ATTACHMENT D: AVIAN EMERGENCY WORKGROUP PLANNING SUBCOMMITTEE

Dr. Leonard Eldridge

State Veterinarian Washington Department of Agriculture 360-902-1881 leldridge@agr.wa.gov

Dr. John Grendon

Area Emergency Coordinator USDA, APHIS, Veterinary Services 360-753-9430 John.H.Grendon@aphis.usda.gov

Dr. Terry McElwain

Dr. Tim Baszler WSU – WADDL 509-335-9696 tfm@vetmed.wsu.edu

Dr. Paul Kohrs

Washington Department of Agriculture 360-902-1835 pkohrs@agr.wa.gov

Fred Paveglio

US Fish and Wildlife Service 360-604-2558 Fred.pavelio@fws.gov

Marcia Goldoft

Medical Epidemiologist Washington State Department of Health 206-418-5433 Marcia.goldoft@doh.wa.gov

Dr. Kristin Mansfield

State Wildlife Veterinarian Washington Dept of Fish & Wildlife 509-892-1001, x326 mansfkgm@dfw.wa.gov

Brad Bortner

Chief, Division of Migratory Birds & Habitat Programs
Pacific Region/California-Nevada
503-231-6164
brad_bortner@fws.gov

Claudia Coles

Washington Department of Agriculture 360-902-1905 ccoles@agr.wa.gov

Don Kraege

Waterfowl Section Manager
Washington State Department of Fish
and Wildlife
360-902-2522
kraegdkk@dfw.wa.gov

Dorothy Tibbetts

Zoonotic Disease Program
Washington Department of Health
360-236-3361
Dorothy.tibbetts@doh.wa.gov

Dr. Ron Wohrle

Zoonotic Disease Program Veterinarian Washington Department of Health 360-236-3369 Ron.wohrle@doh.wa.gov

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