

Taking a tern for the worse?

When do we raise a red
flag for *O. aleuticus*?

Contributors



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Aleutian tern fast facts

- What's in a name?



Photo: Martin Renner

Aleutian tern fast facts

Distribution

Colony characteristics

Wintering location

Info gaps



Worldwide distribution



Distribution map from BirdLife International / IUCN

Historic distribution in Alaska

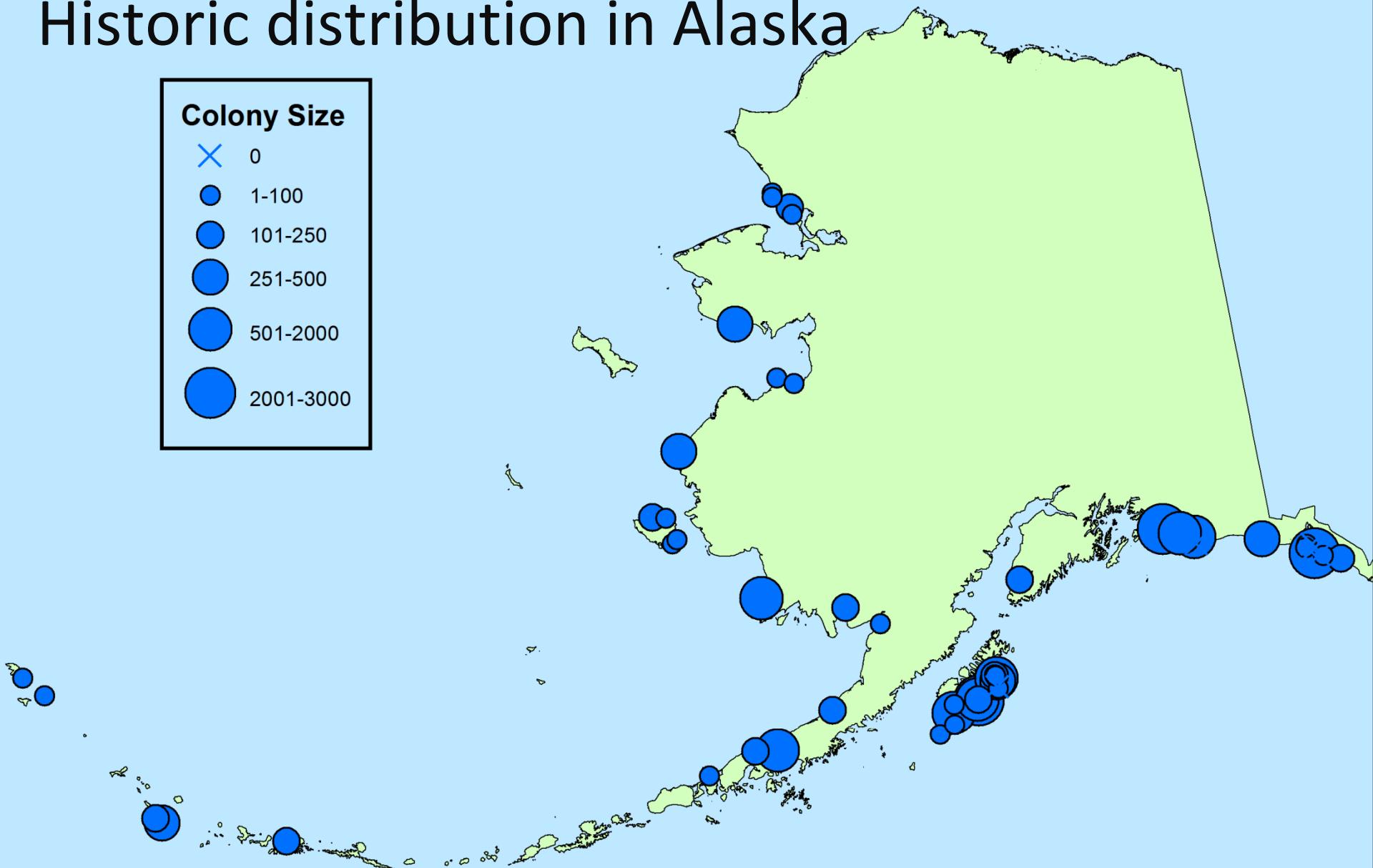
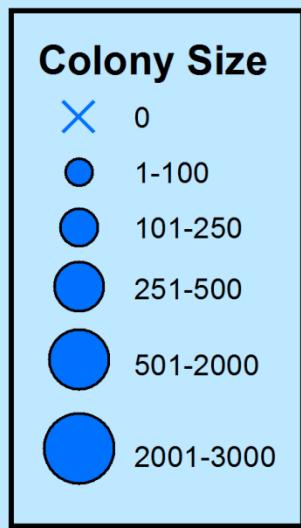


Photo: Martin Renner

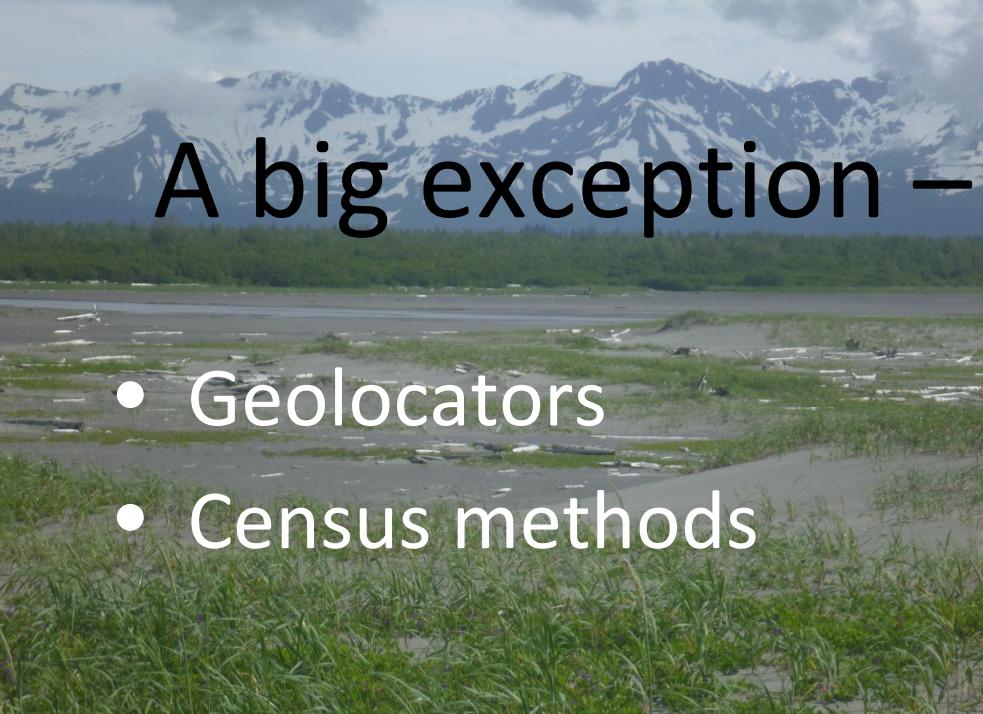
A white tern in flight against a blue sky.

Why are so few studying
Aleutian terns?

Photos by Jeff Frederick

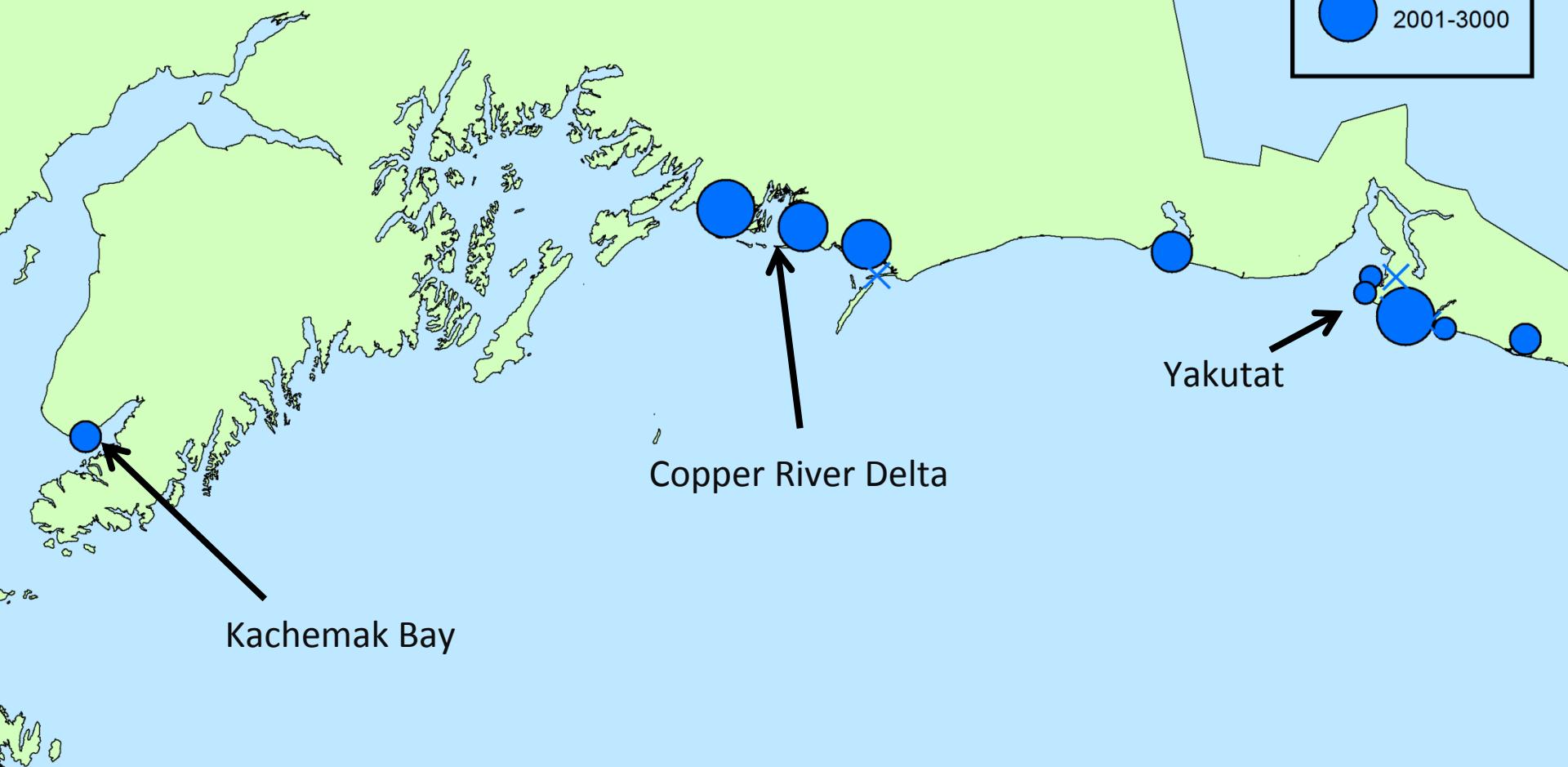
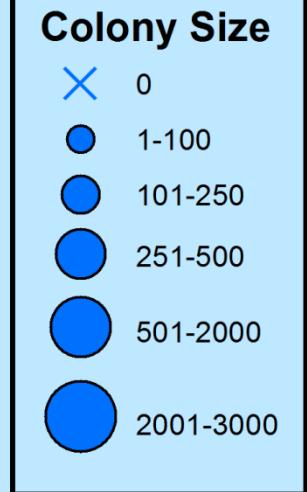
A big exception – USFS/UAS study

- Geolocators
- Census methods



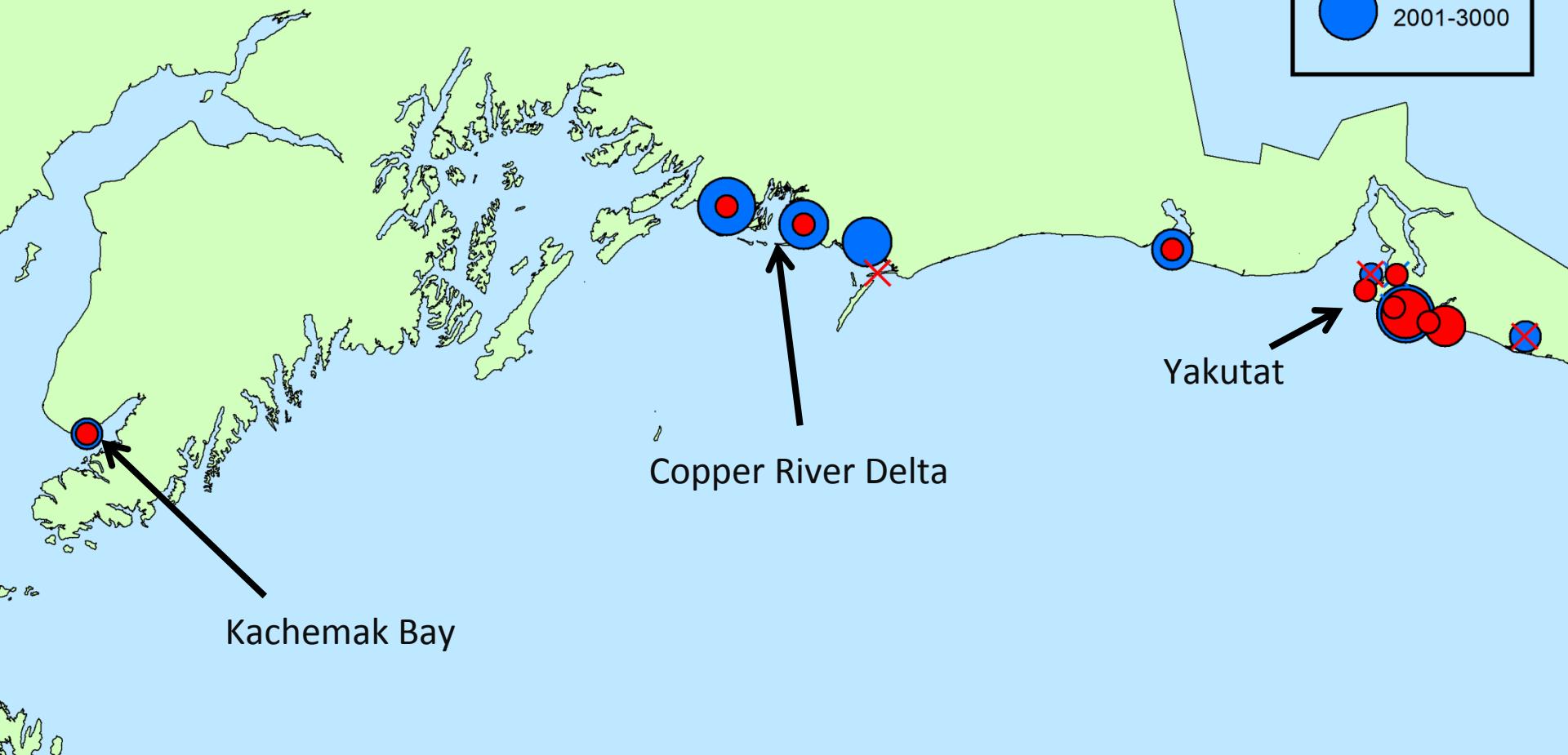
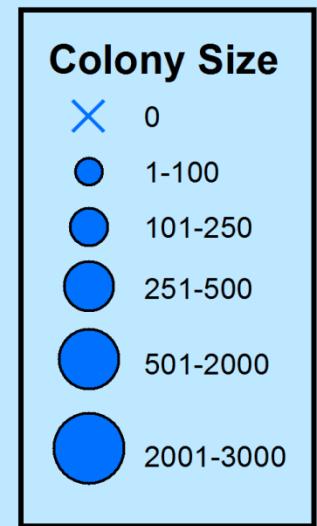
Gulf of Alaska

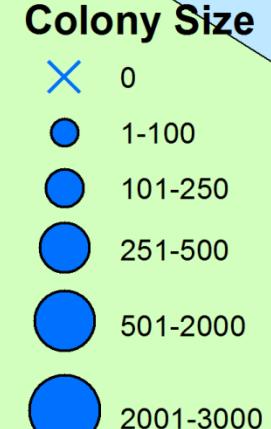
Historic colonies
(pre-1995)



Gulf of Alaska

Red shows
recent counts





Yakutat Area



Black Sand Spit Colony

1980 3000

2008 1500

2009 pres. through early June, abandoned by early July, no est.

2010 500

2011 500 (early abandonment, no successful breeding)

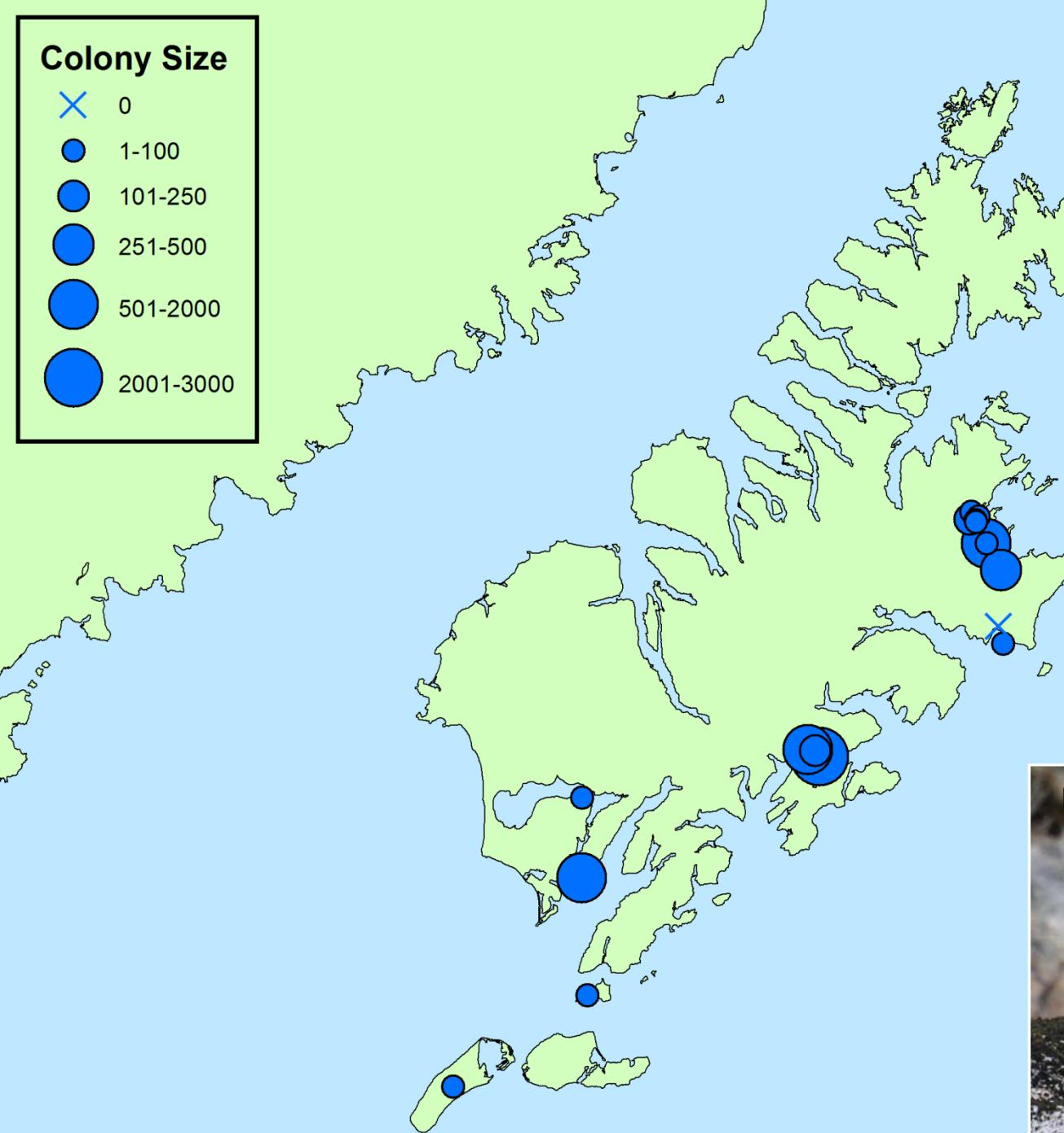
2012 850 birds in mid June, no presence after mid June

Colony Size

- X 0
- 1-100
- 101-250
- 251-500
- 501-2000
- 2001-3000

Kodiak

Historic colonies (pre-1995)

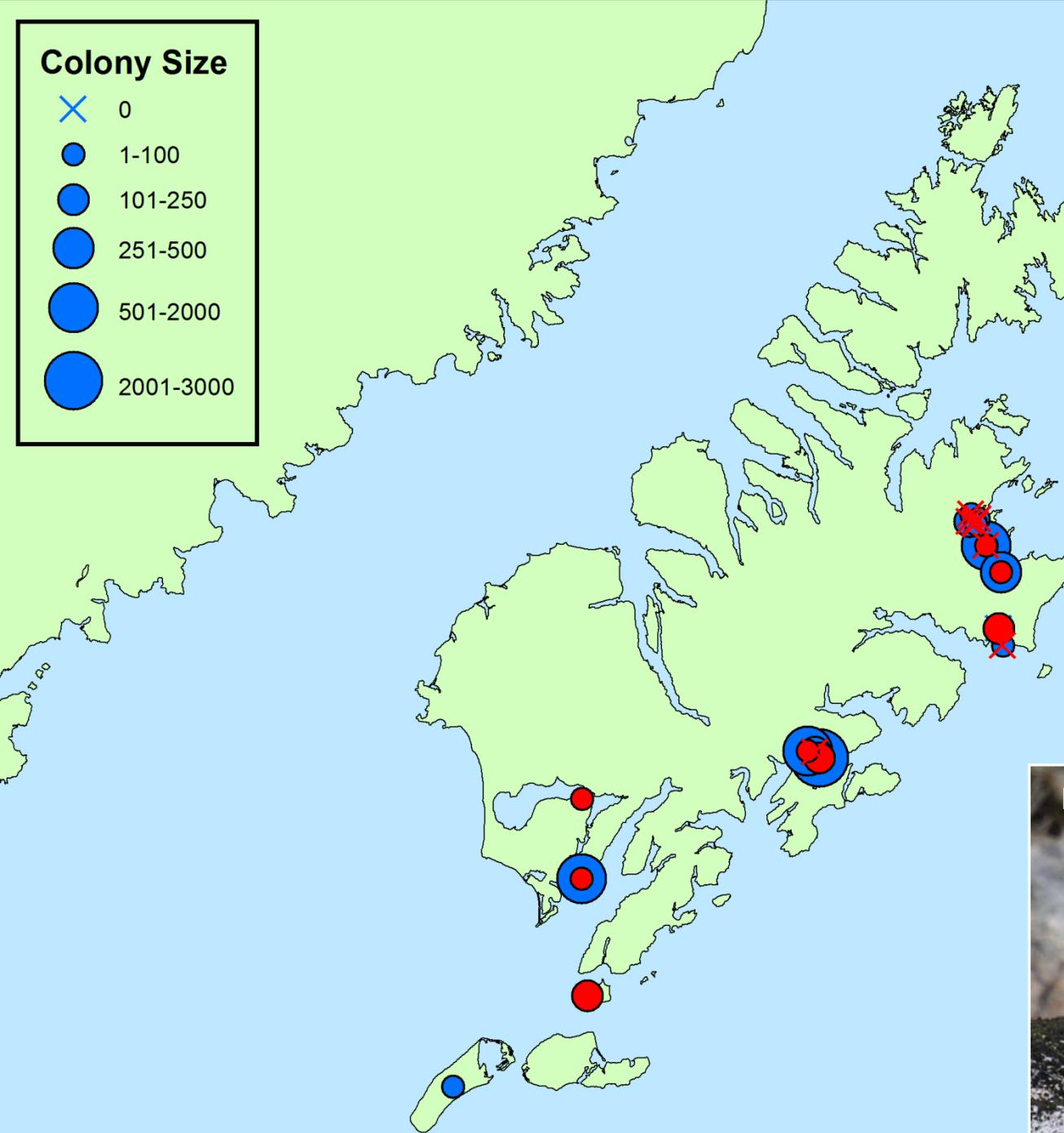


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Kodiak

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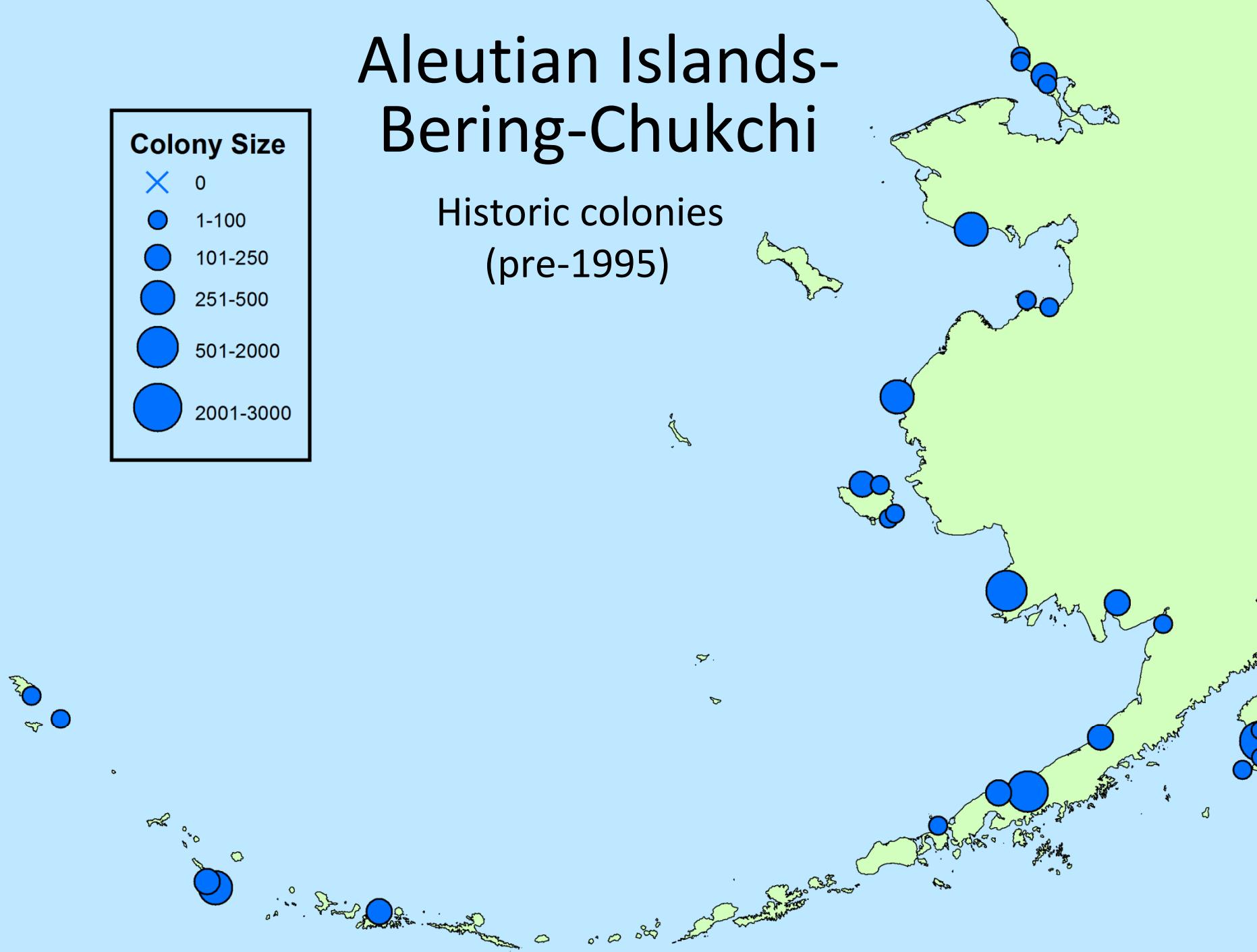


Aleutian Islands- Bering-Chukchi

Historic colonies
(pre-1995)

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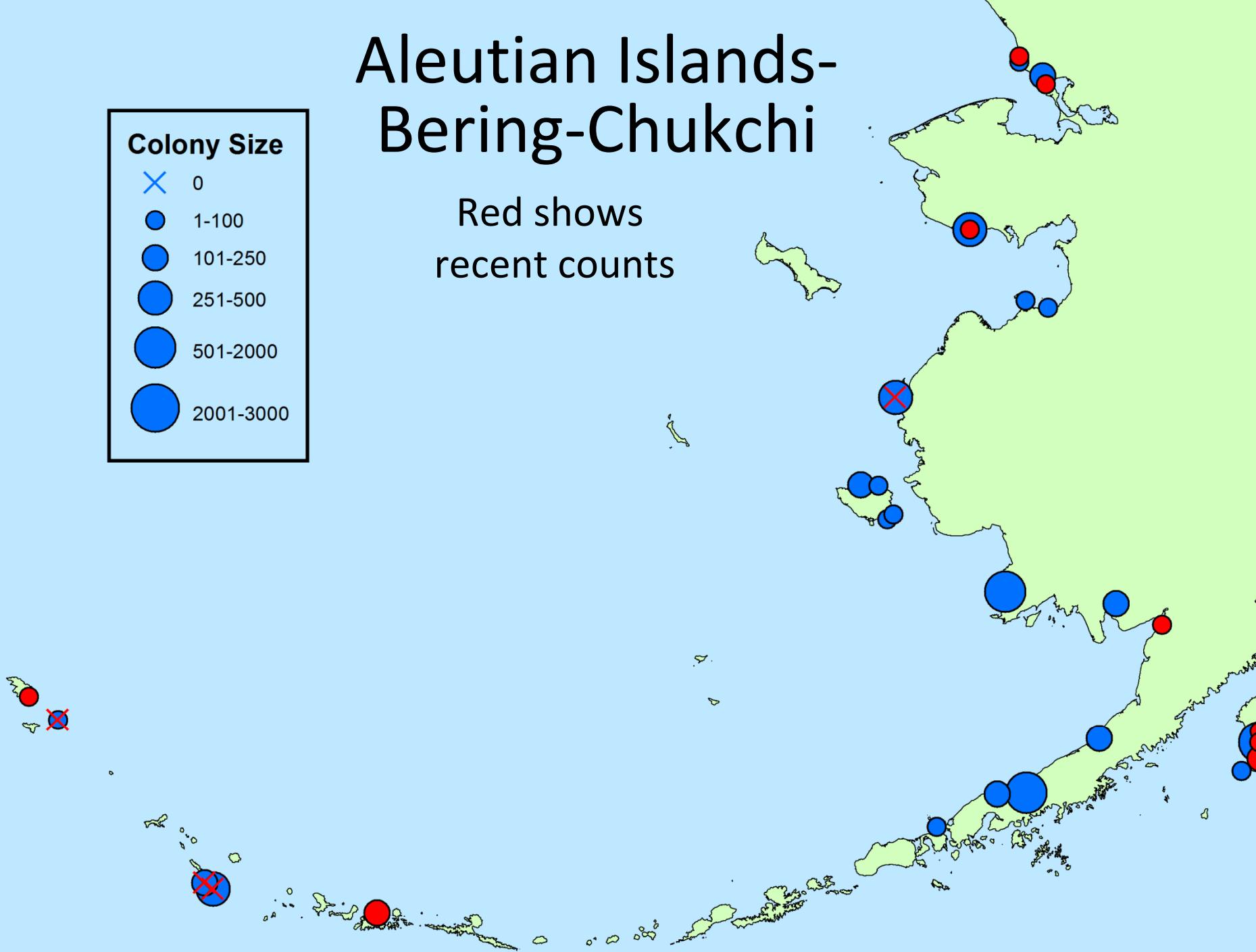


Aleutian Islands- Bering-Chukchi

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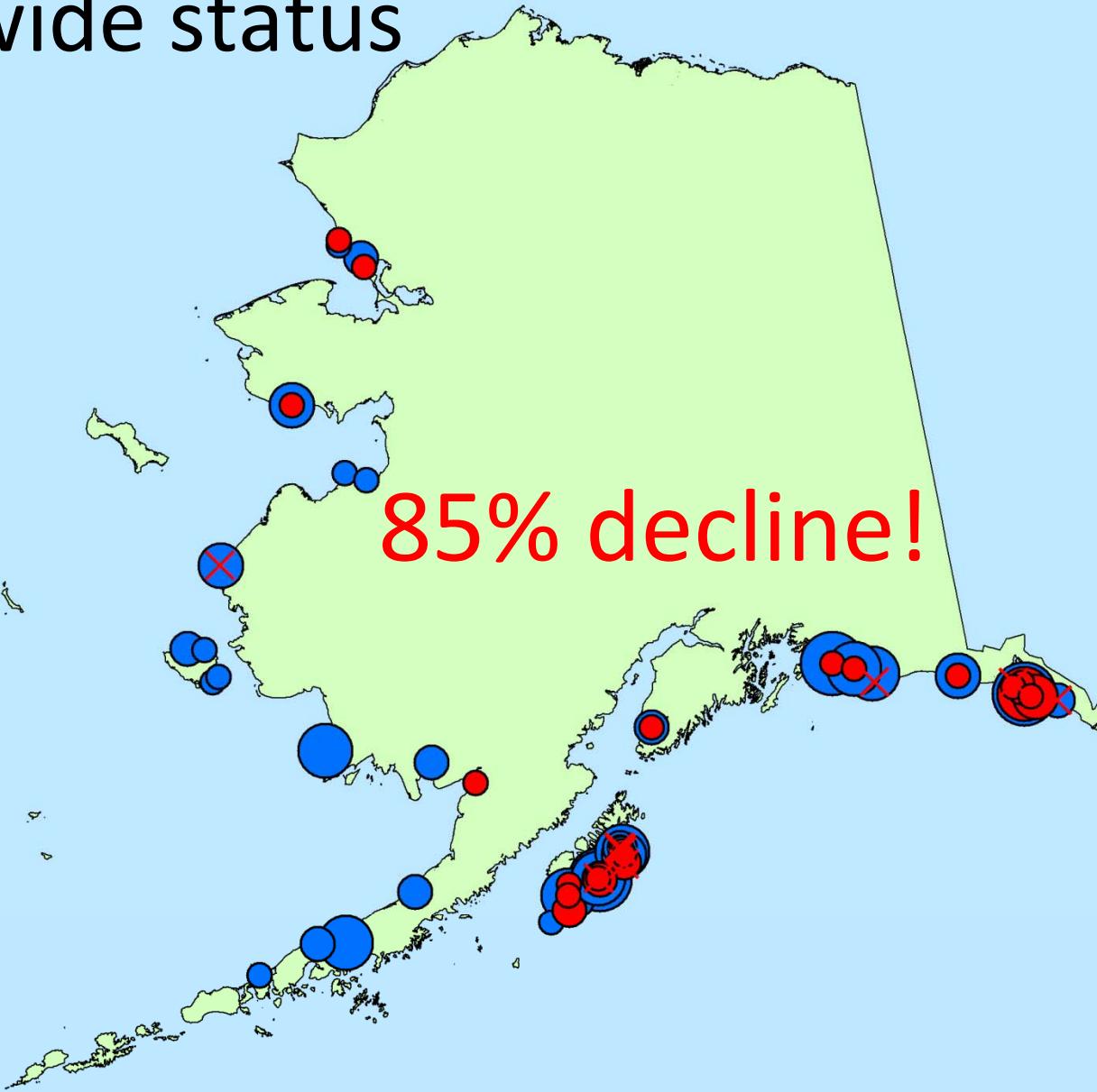
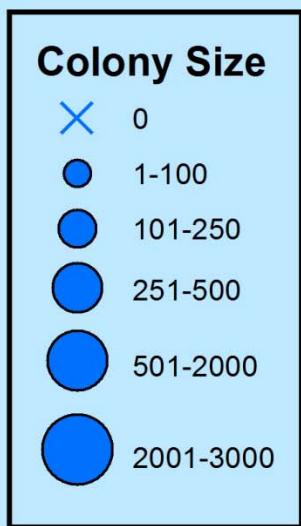
Historic and recent Aleutian Tern colony counts

Excluding areas not censused since 1995, mostly Bering Sea and Controller Bay

| | Recent count | % total | change since 1995 |
|------------------|--------------|---------|-------------------|
| Chukchi Sea | 22 | 1 | -83% |
| Bering Sea | 200 | 8 | -79% |
| Aleutian Islands | 250 | 10 | -67% |
| Kodiak | 418 | 16 | -94% |
| Gulf of AK | 1649* | 65 | -77% |
| Total | 2539 | | -85% |

*Yakutat accounts for 80% of Gulf of AK and 54% of AK total

Current statewide status

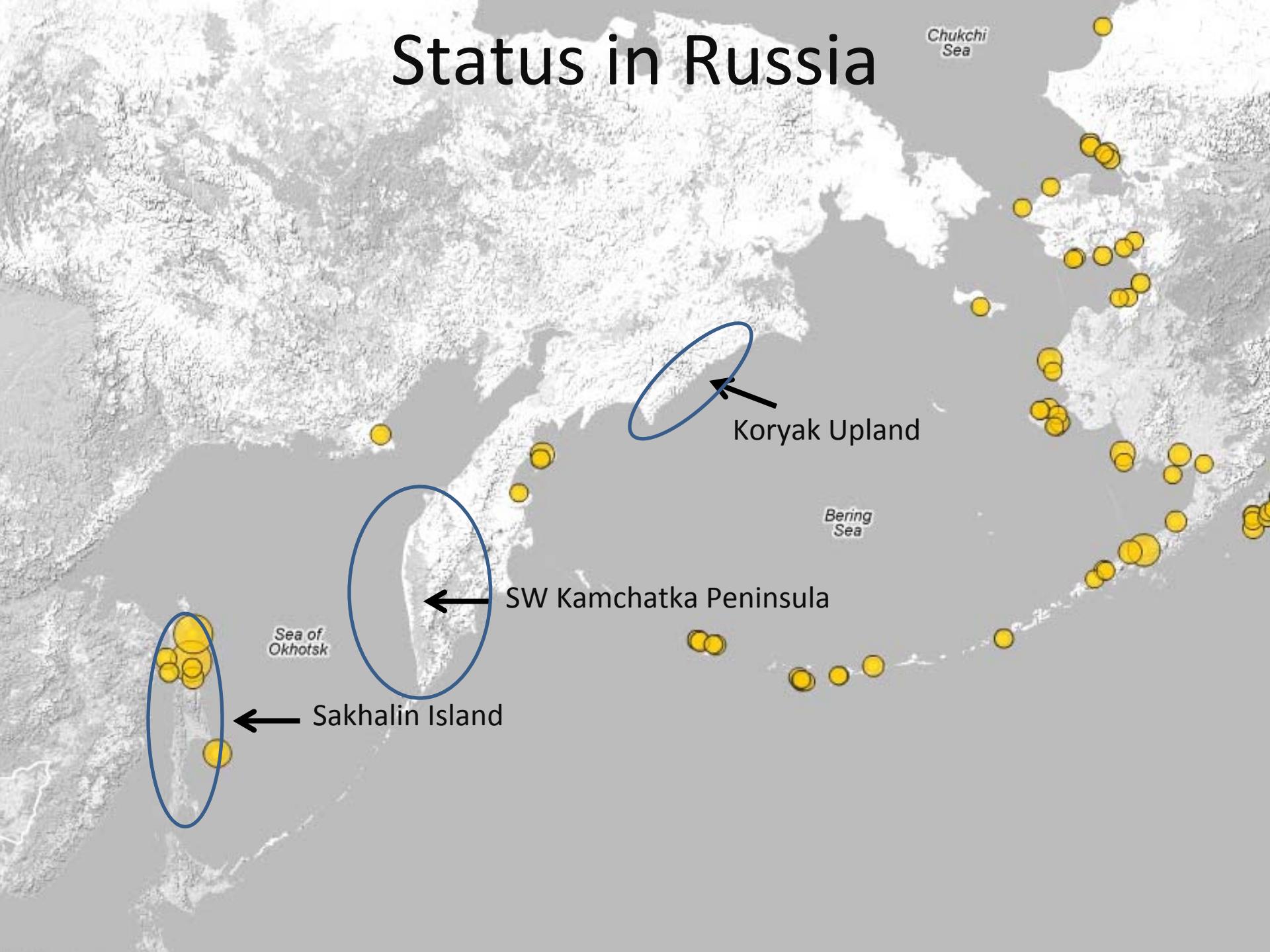


So what's up?

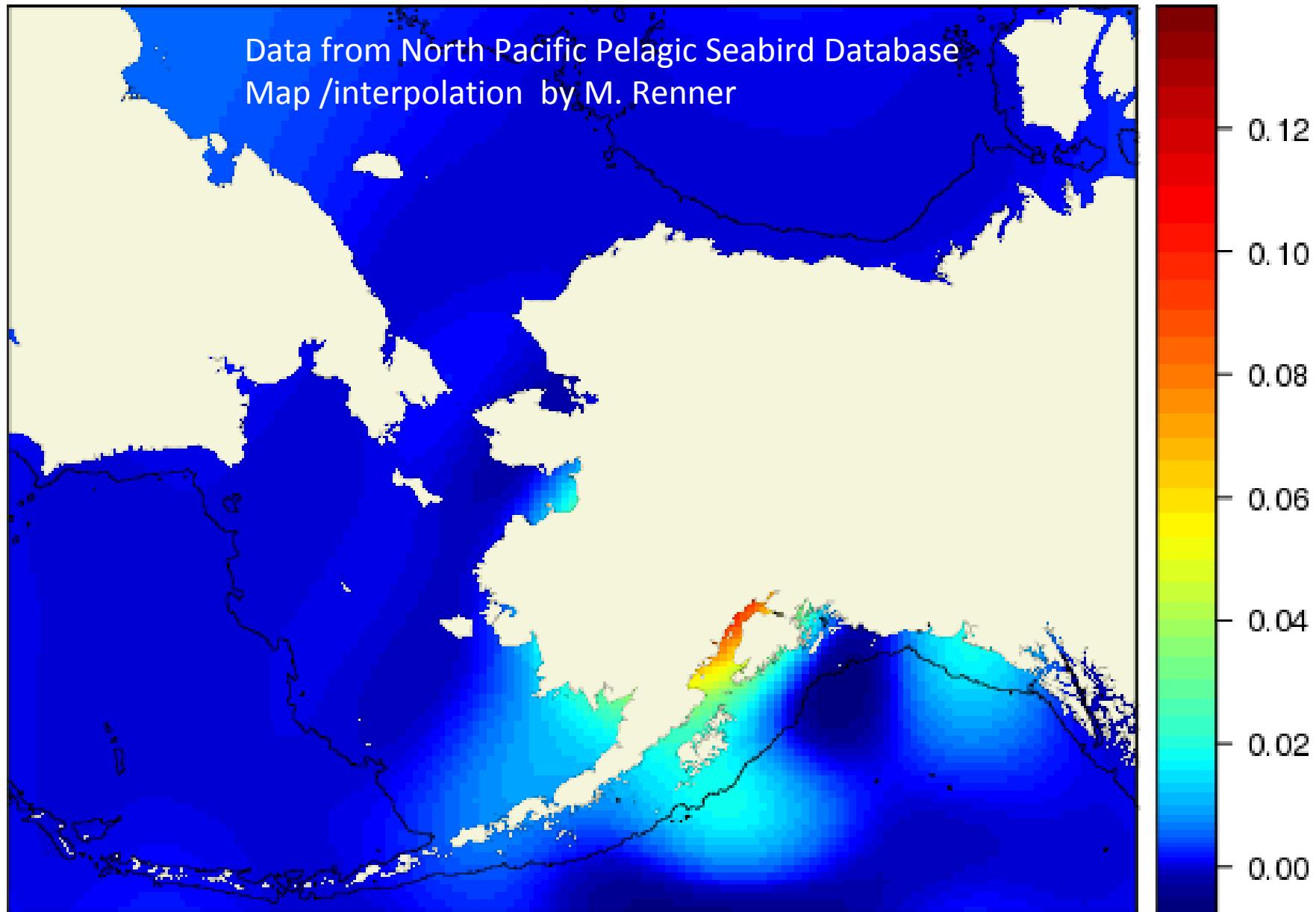


Photo: Martin Renner

Status in Russia



Aleutian Tern At-Sea Observations



Compare to Arctic tern

- Breeding grounds
- Wintering grounds
- Both apparently declining in AK



Photo: Martin Renner



Photo: Jeff Frederick



Photo: Martin Renner

Conclusions



*Some evidence for 85% decline statewide

Lots of caveats on the data

Apparently increasing in Russia



*Single statewide coast survey could answer many Q's

*Need for multi-agency support