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1 until later in the winter, and it seems to be tender, and these
2 whooping cranes have to catch these blue crabs. And if they
3 catch a large one, they have to smash it. And they grab it and
4 they smash it with their beak into several parts, and the chick
5 is standing there waiting to be fed.

6 And the chicks have a call, called a food begging
7 call, or a weeping call, and it sounds like this, "whoop,
8 whoop," and you can hear it for quite a distance. And this is
9 telling the parent whooping cranes, "I'm hungry, I need food,
10 please get a blue crab for me," or a whatever.

11 And this family remains intact through the winter,
12 and the parents are lavishing care on their chick, if
13 conditions are normal. And in the spring, they even migrate
14 back together, together, but the chick, of course, leaves its
15 parents as they begin the new breeding cycle.

16 But the strange thing that happened in, not only in
17 the year of 2008-2009, during that drought, many whooping crane
18 juveniles were observed without their parents, wandering around
19 the National Aransas Refuge. And as Dr. Chavez will report in
20 his testimony, if there's a food scarcity, the number one
21 concern of the crane pair is to survive themselves. That's
22 number one. Number two, if there's enough food, the chick can
23 survive.

24 And it appears from the evidence that, actually
25 Dr. Chavez has observed this happening, that the parents, if

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1 there's a food scarcity, will hoard the food for themselves,
2 and the chick leaves the parents searching for food elsewhere.
3 So the family situation is broken up during that type of
4 stress.
5 BY MR. BLACKBURN:
6 Q. Now, before I get any further in your testimony, I want to
7 ask you about your experience with a bird named Tex, and kind
8 of your role in the, I guess the development of breeding, I
9 guess captive breeding programs. Could you explain that?
10 A. Well, a grave concern of ours is the genetics of the
11 whooping cranes. Because they were reduced to just 15 birds,
12 and DNA evidence suggests that they were reduced to actually
13 only three reproductively active females.
14 Q. And that's back --
15 A. Back in 1940s. And so geneticists predicted that this
16 population can never survive, because of inbreeding. And it
17 appears that this population must have been very genetically
18 healthy during, when it was reduced to such few birds, because
19 the population has been fairly robust. But back in the 1960s,
20 they were, before they started collecting eggs, there were only
21 two birds in captivity. They were both wounded in the wild and
22 taken to the San Antonio Zoo. And they only produced a single
23 offspring, after producing many, many eggs and many failures.
24 And the zoo director wanted to make sure that that offspring
25 survived, so he raised it in his home. And it became