

Eskimo Walrus Commission

KAWERAK, INC.



Arctic Open-Water Meeting

March 6-8, 2012

Anchorage, Alaska

Eskimo Walrus Commission

Established in 1978, EWC represents 19 Alaska Native coastal communities in Bristol Bay, the Bering Straits, the Chukchi and Beaufort Seas to advocate for and represent Alaska Native concerns regarding federal management of the Pacific walrus. Through the Marine Mammal Protection Act's (MMPA) Section 119 "Cooperative Agreements in Alaska", EWC is authorized to co-manage subsistence uses of the Pacific walrus population in Alaska's coastal communities in cooperation with US Fish and Wildlife Service (FWS).



Current Conservation Issues

- Protect walrus habitat consistently from human & other activities (other than subsistence), e.g., disturbance from aircraft, offshore developments, commercial fishing, and UME that may affect walrus population.



Photo courtesy of Joel Garlich-Miller/FWS

- Minimize disturbances at terrestrial haulouts or at sea/ice pack to avoid major stampedes, mother-calf separation, walrus moving away from important feeding areas or major haulouts. (EWC passed **Resolution 2008-01 Minimize Disturbance of Hauled-Out Walrus**)

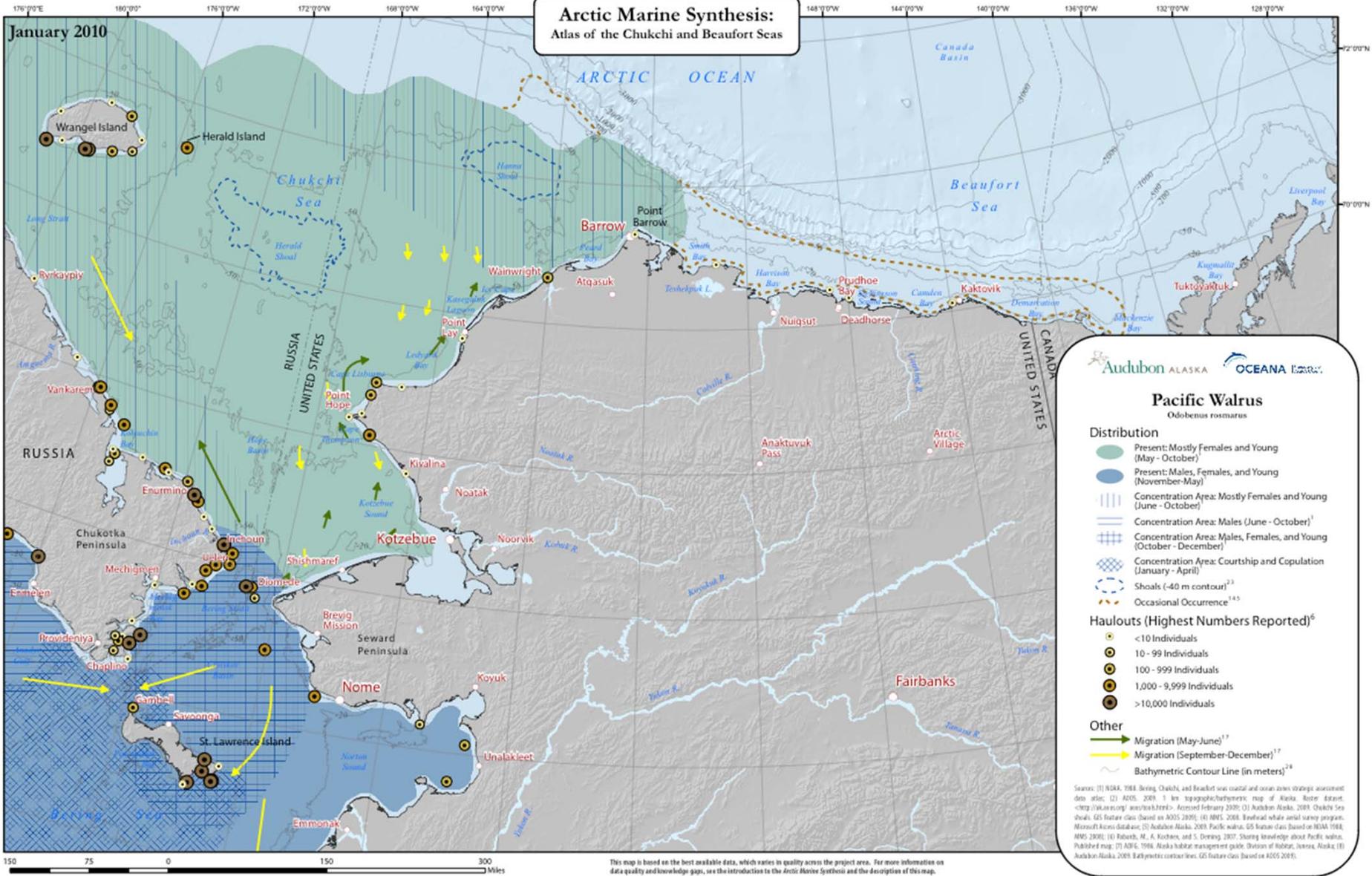
Neqniighvigput (Where We Get Our Food From)

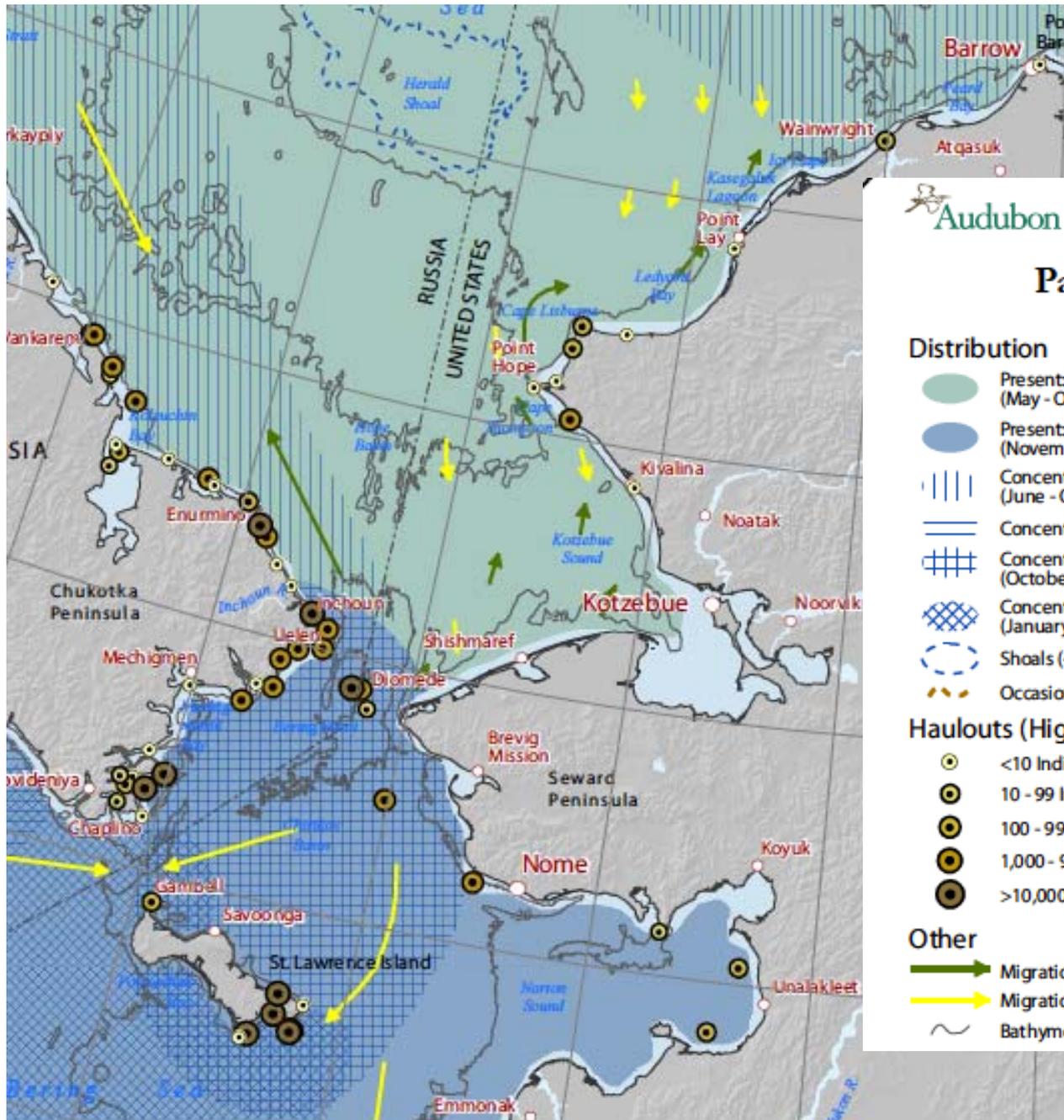
At 2003 Biomonitoring Workshop, EWC stated a need for ‘passing along knowledge across generations’ and to ‘preserve and share traditional knowledge of walrus subsistence to maintain strong culture in communities.’

As a result of this, a video was completed on ‘traditional & acceptable’ walrus hunting methods & practices. Two communities participated.



Edwin Noongwook & Bryan Rookok, Savoonga videographers at video training in Nome, 2005.





Pacific Walrus

Odobenus rosmarus

Distribution

- Present: Mostly Females and Young (May - October)¹
- Present: Males, Females, and Young (November-May)
- Concentration Area: Mostly Females and Young (June - October)¹
- Concentration Area: Males (June - October)¹
- Concentration Area: Males, Females, and Young (October - December)
- Concentration Area: Courtship and Copulation (January - April)¹
- Shoals (-40 m contour)^{2,3}
- Occasional Occurrence^{14,5}

Haulouts (Highest Numbers Reported)⁶

- <10 Individuals
- 10 - 99 Individuals
- 100 - 999 Individuals
- 1,000 - 9,999 Individuals
- >10,000 Individuals

Other

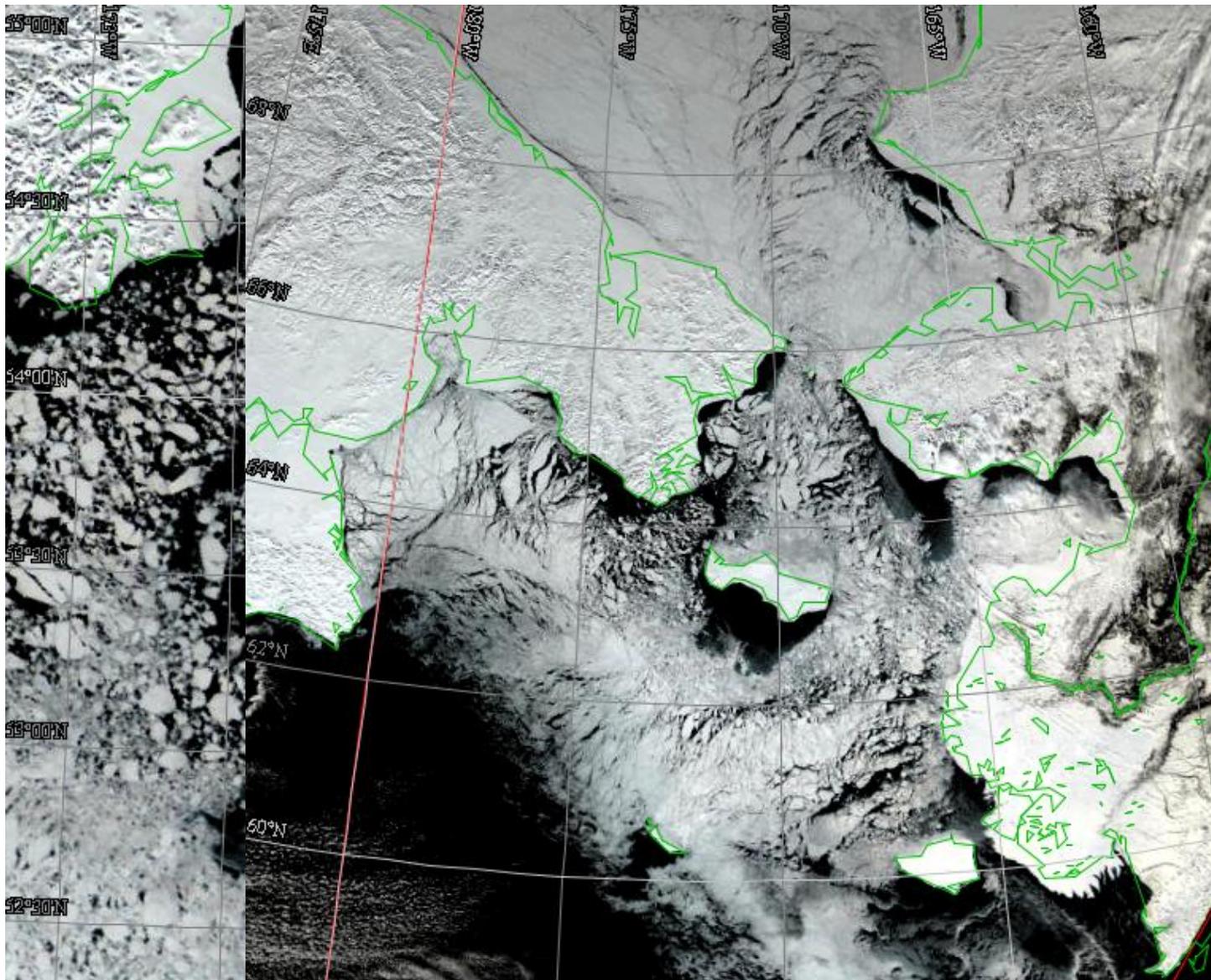
- Migration (May-June)¹⁷
- Migration (September-December)¹⁷
- Bathymetric Contour Line (in meters)^{2,8}

Haulout Activity on Little Diomedede



Photos courtesy of Etta Menadelook

Sea Ice For Walrus Outlook (SIWO) Project



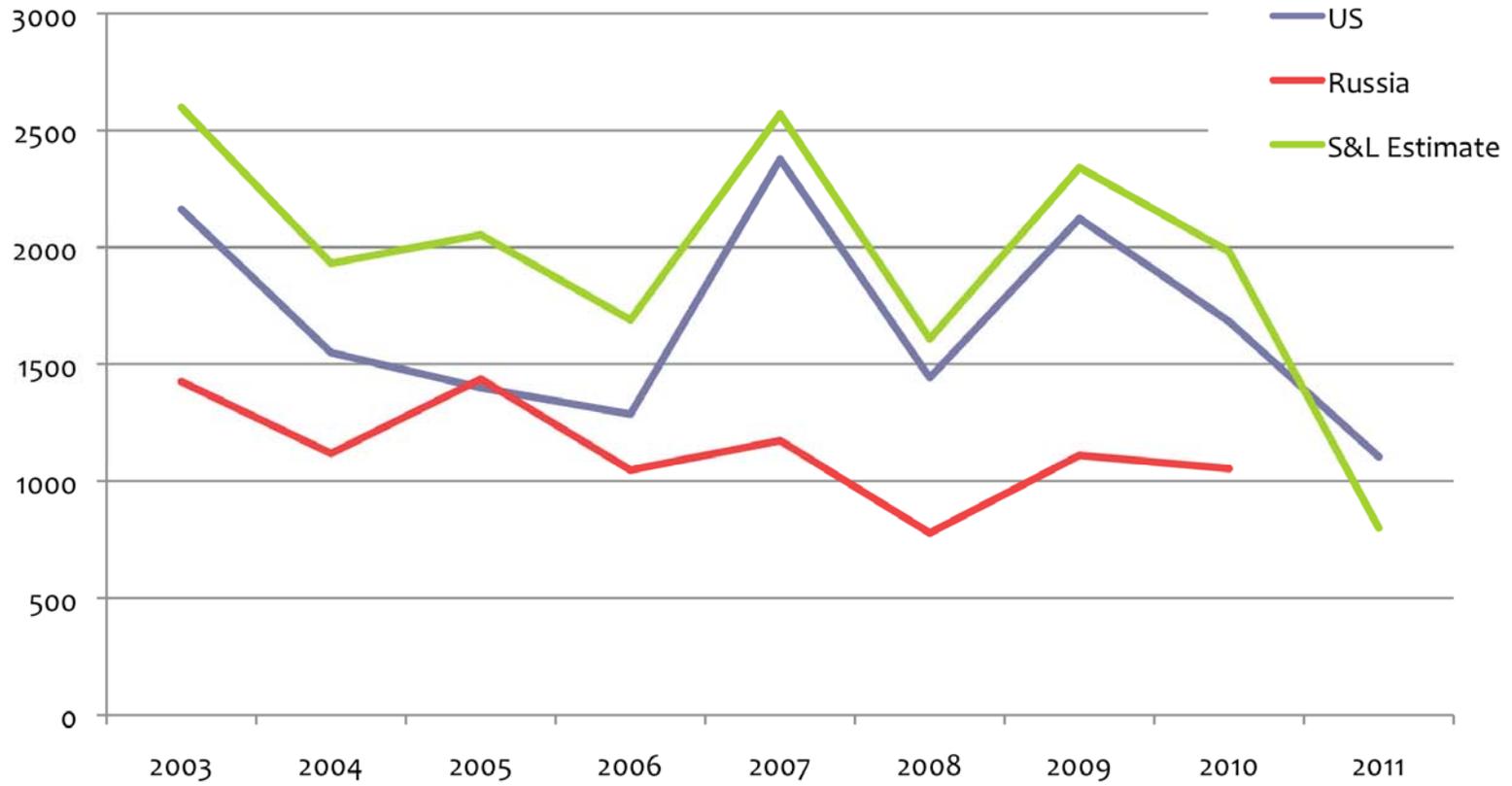
8 April 2011 - Paul Apangalook; local observer in Gambell

March 2011 Sea Ice Summary from Sivuqaq/Gambell

The ice pack [at Gambell] is different thus far compared to that of the past. It is generally agreed that it has a poorer quality, probably from mostly fluctuating temperatures; storms; and not fully developing, as it has before, into thicker ice. It is in all probability prone to rapid melting with the coming of warmer spring climates. The Siberian lead [between St. Lawrence Island and Siberia] has been open as well with the ice pack drifting beyond the horizon at least a couple of times. The shorefast ice was broken off from the *Qitelnguk*, *Devleghaq*, and *Aqeftapak* bays [along the north shore, around Cape Sivuqaq] around the first of the month of March and remains open to date.

Pacific Walrus Harvest Data

Source: USFWS



Marine Mammal Ordinances

Rules Enacted, Native Village of Gambell, July 17, 1940

ACT I. Hunting.

ACT II. Treating foreign people.

ACT III. Safety of dog-team.

ACT IV. Marriage.

ACT V. Cleanliness.

ACT VI. Liquor.

ACT VII. Smoking.

ACT VIII. Helping poor and sick people.

ACT IX. Curfew.

ACT X. Steady school attendance.

ACT XI. Drifter object.

ACT XII. To keep child from danger.

ACT XIII. [Untitled]

ACT XIV. Transferring teachers, nurses, and missionaries.

ACT XV. Swearing or angry words.

ACT XVI. Hunting ground.

ACT XVII. Trapping.

St Lawrence Island MMOs

Based on Traditional Management

ACT I. Hunting.

1. In hunting whole year round every boat must watch each other.
2. If one boat has trouble with their motor they should put a flag at the bow of the boat as a sign if they think that cannot run their motor. In calm weather they can decide by themselves.
3. Every boat must keep a fire filled extinguisher always in the boat.
4. Every engineer of motor must not smoke while operating the motor.
5. In chasing some walrus by boat, shooter must be careful in shooting first see if others are not on the way.
6. Every boat must try to keep away from others in going after some walrus.
7. **a) Every boat must kill no more than four large walrus and one small walrus at a time, unless a boat may be attack by herd of walrus. One can shoot at them in trying to escape. b) Every boat should kill four female with young and one extra baby walrus if its mother had sink. They should not try to rob the baby only.**
8. If any boat kill more than the law allows, one extra pair of tusks should go to the treasury as a fine. This penalty is for killing by an attack also if one or two extra is killed.
9. Every boat should not go after walrus that is among the ice, if they are sure that they are not certain about it, or if the food is not scarce. It is fair for the boat to leave the load if danger is happen.

Building Local Capacity in Research Efforts by Training Local People

Involve more hunters & communities in monitoring/reporting process by developing appropriate reporting protocols & community based conservation efforts., i.e., minimize disturbances at non-traditional or new haulouts.

Research other mortality to walrus population, e.g., disturbances from (a) development activities including oil/gas exploration or fishing industries, and (b) ship/aircraft transportation disturbances.



Mike Apatiki, TEK Advisor, Gambell

Traditional Knowledge of Native People of Chukotka About Walrus

Completed National Park Service's Beringia 3-year funded project final report:



- To lead into more discussions of bilateral research and walrus management programs.
- To benefit walrus conservation, education, and the continued relationship between walrus dependent communities in Chukotka and Alaska.

EWC Mission Statement

Encourage self regulation of walrus hunting and management of walrus stock by Alaska Natives who use and need walrus to survive.



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