



**The Subsistence Harvest of Northern Fur Seals
On
St. George Island in 2006**

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DISTRIBUTION LIST

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Michael T. Williams, NMFS

Traditional Council of St. George Island

Tribal Council, Aleut Community of St. Paul Island

METHODS

The 2006 subsistence fur seal harvest was conducted in accordance to 50 CFR §216 Subpart F on St. George Island.

The Tanam Amgi}naa (Island Sentinel) of the St. George Traditional Council Kayumixtax Eco-Office conducted the harvest monitoring for the 2006 subsistence fur seal harvest for the Aleut Community of St. George Island and in accordance with the Co-management Agreement between the National Marine Fisheries Service and the Aleut Communities of St. George. Within this context, management and activities were conducted under contract with the National Marine Fisheries Service. During the 2006 subsistence fur seal harvest information was collected on:

- a) the number of sub-adult male fur seals harvested,
- b) incidence of by-products and waste during the harvest process,
- c) the occurrence of males 124.5 cm or more in length,
- d) females seals killed or injured during the harvest operation,
- e) the number of seal deaths due to overheating,
- f) number of seals entangled in marine debris and the number of seals disentangled,
- g) evidence of oil contaminated seal pelts,
- h) other types of fur seal mortality,
- i) weather conditions at the time of the harvest,
- j) any other unusual conditions related to the harvest,
- k) research conducted during the harvest and visitors requesting to view or film the harvest.

RESULTS

Fur Seals Harvested

The 2006 subsistence fur seal harvest season on St. George Island was conducted in 11 harvests; the harvest season began on July 11, 2006. The final harvest took place on 8, August 2006. A total of 212 sub-adult male fur seals were taken for subsistence from 5 harvests at North and 6 at Zapadni. (Table 1).

Table 1: Dates, locations, weather, numbers of harvests and sub-adult male fur seals harvested at the locations for the 2006 Subsistence Fur Seal Harvest on St. George Island, Alaska.

| Date | Haul-out | Weather | Wind MPH | Temp F | Start Roundup | End Roundup | Harvested |
|--------------|----------|------------|----------|--------|---------------|-------------|------------|
| 7.11.2006 | Zapadni | Overcast | E 10 | 49 | 4:00PM | 5:00PM | 17 |
| 7.13.2006 | North | Overcast | SW 15 | 48 | 4:15PM | 5:00PM | 11 |
| 7.18.2006 | Zapadni | Overcast | N 5 | 51 | 6:05PM | 7:00PM | 23 |
| 7.22.2006 | North | Overcast | ENE 20 | 51 | 3:05PM | 3:40PM | 16 |
| 7.24.2006 | Zapadni | Light rain | N 15 | 48 | 11:30AM | 12:10PM | 11 |
| 7.26.2006 | North | Overcast | SSW 20 | 50 | 11:00AM | 11:45AM | 23 |
| 7.28.2006 | Zapadni | Drizzle | SW 20 | 47 | 11:15AM | 11:55AM | 21 |
| 7.31.2006 | North | Overcast | SW 20 | 48 | 10:40AM | 11:20AM | 14 |
| 8.03.2006 | Zapadni | Mist/Fog | 10 V | 48 | 11:00AM | 11:30AM | 24 |
| 8.07.2006 | Zapadni | Overcast | SE 15 | 50 | 5:30PM | 6:00PM | 30 |
| 8.08.2006 | North | Drizzle | SSW 20 | 50 | 3:00PM | 3:25PM | 22 |
| TOTAL | | | | | | | 212 |

By-products and Waste

An undocumented number of fur seal pelts, throats, teeth, and whiskers were taken for arts and crafts purposes during the 2006 subsistence fur seal harvest. No waste occurred on the harvest field under 50 CFR §216 Subpart F on St. George Island.

Males 124.5 cm or More in Length and Female Seals Killed or Struck

Precautions are taken to avoid the killing of males 124.5 cm or more in length and females, however it is difficult to accurately assess the length of every seal during the selection process and occasionally over-sized seals are taken. No male fur seals 124.5 cm or more in length were struck and/or killed and no adult female fur seals were struck and/or killed.

Heat Strokes

No deaths of any fur seal occurred due to heat stroke (over heating) during or as part of the 2006 subsistence fur seal harvest.

Entanglement

Two entangled male seals were observed during this year's subsistence fur seal harvest. Neither of the two entangled fur seals was contained in the round-up and were not disentangled.

Oil Contamination

No evidence of oil contamination on fur seals pelts of harvested animals during the subsistence fur seal harvest was observed.

Other Mortality

No other fur seal mortality occurred.

Anomalies

No anomalies occurred, although one seal harvested by Blake Malavansky from the 8.07.2006 harvest at Zapadni had a metal flipper tag bearing text and numbers: "RUSSIA, KAMNIRO # AB-O50", information was collected and forwarded to Michael Williams, NMFS.

Research

Two research projects were conducted in conjunction with the subsistence harvests; 50% of the upper canine teeth from each harvest were taken for the National Marine Mammal Laboratory (NMML) in Seattle, Washington to gather age related data from the harvested animals. Additionally, beginning with the July 26th harvest the St. George Traditional Council is permitted to collect upper canines and as a result 100% of snouts with upper canines intact were subsequently collected. Collections of canines were by Andrew Malavansky under Contract No. AB133FO5SE3O47 and by Gary Mercurief under permit # 782-1694 with NMFS. Additional research was conducted by Liz Wheeler on behalf of Frances Gulland under Scientific Research Permit No. 932-1489-07. This project aims to assess the risk of humans acquiring infectious diseases from northern fur seals by establishing the prevalence of exposure and infection of these seals with pathogens that can affect human health, an undetermined amount of tissue samples was collected from three harvests on the 11th, 13th and 18th of July 2006.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

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