

**U.S.-Russia Agreement on Cooperation in the Field of Environmental Protection
Area V: Protection of Nature and the Organization of Reserves
Project 02.05-61 Marine Mammals**

**Protocol of the Seventh U.S.-Russia Sea Otter Workshop
Monterey, California
November 14-16, 2000**

The Seventh U.S.-Russia Sea Otter Workshop was held at the Monterey Institute of International Studies, Monterey, California, United States in the period November 14-16, 2000.

Attending from the United States: Harriet Allen, Jack Ames, Trevor Arnold, Bryant Austin, Debbie Benham, James L. Bodkin, Douglas M. Burn, Linda R. Comerci, Patricia Conrad, Jim Curland, W. Jackson Davis, Angela M. Doroff, George G. Esslinger, James E. Estes, Ellen Faurot-Daniels, Dolly Garza, Leah Gerber, Forrest Gomez, Frances Gulland, Krista Hanni, Michael Harris, Jim Harvey, Jack Hawkes, Lianna Jack, Michelle Jeffries, Steven Jeffries, David A. Jessup, Andrew Johnson, Mike Kenner, Tom Kieckhefer, Kim A. Kloecker, Laura Kovalek, Shawn Larson, Inger Marie Laursen, Thomas R. Loughlin, Cindy Lowry, James Mattison, Karl Mayer, Rosa H. Meehan, Ann Melli, Chuck Mohr, Daniel H. Monson, Michael J. Murray, Teri Nicholson, Margaret Roberts, Gregory S. Sanders, Julie A. Schwartz, Steve Shimek, Michelle Staedler, Julie Stewart, Richard Takak, M. Tim Tinker, Glenn R. VanBlaricom, Kenneth Vicknair, Peter B. Ward, Laura Yeates, Linda Yingling

Attending from the Russian Federation: Alexander M. Burdin, Vladimir N. Burkanov, Sergei I. Kornev, Viktor S. Nikulin, Ilya N. Shevchenko, Nadezhda P. Zimenko

Attending from Japan: Kaoru Hattori

The meeting was opened by Glenn VanBlaricom who was joined by Alexander Burdin and Michelle Staedler in welcoming participants to the workshop and in expressing gratitude to the meeting organizers and organizations contributing financial support to the workshop.

The attendance of a sea otter specialist from Japan was welcomed.

The group paused to remember those who have lost their lives at sea.

Kaoru Hattori reported on a preliminary survey of sea otters at the southern end of the Kurile chain.

Sergei Kornev described the results of a sea otter count in Southern Kamchatka and the Kurile Islands in summer 2000.

Viktor Nikulin presented the results of a sea otter survey in the Commander Islands in 2000.

Ilya Shevchenko addressed the abundance and distribution of sea otters at Medniy Island in the period 1988-1995.

Glenn VanBlaricom reported on declining populations of mammalian carnivores in coastal marine waters of the North Pacific Rim.

Daniel Monson addressed the demographics of an Aleutian Island sea otter population.

Angela Doroff reported on declining sea otter population trends in the Aleutian Archipelago based on aerial surveys.

Angela Doroff described aerial surveys of sea otters in the North Alaska Peninsula.

Richard Takak noted ice effects on sea otters in Bristol Bay, Alaska.

Gregory Sanders presented information on the southern sea otter translocation program.

Steve Shimek described the efforts of The Otter Project as a new tool in funding sea otter research in California.

Margaret Roberts described the history of the Alaska Sea Otter and Steller Sea Lion Commission and their involvement in co-management activities.

Dolly Garza addressed the local management of sea otters in Alaska.

Steven Jeffries and Harriet Allen reported on a state recovery plan for sea otters in Washington.

David Jessup addressed the status of the southern sea otter and the connection with marine ecosystem health.

Patricia Conrad provided an update on protozoal brain infections in harbor seals and sea otters.

Julie Schwartz presented a preliminary characterization of the sea otter immune system in free-ranging southern sea otters.

Laura Yeates made a presentation on thermal lability in the southern sea otter.

Shawn Larson addressed microsatellite and MtDNA sequence variation within and among remnant, source, and translocated sea otter populations

Linda Comerci and Lianna Jack described quantification of genetic variation among sea otters using mitochondrial and nuclear DNA (microsatellites).

Julie Schwartz described the biological effects of petroleum oil in American mink and presented a model for the study of environmental contaminant exposure in sea otters.

Linda Comerci addressed tissue concentrations of elemental and organochlorine compounds in sea otters in Alaska.

Lianna Jack described the sea otter bio-sampling program in Alaska and addressed sea otter mortality in Orca Inlet of Prince William Sound, Alaska.

Karl Mayer presented information on the abundance and distribution of *Corynosoma enhydri* and *Profilocollis spp. (Acanthocephala)* in the southern sea otter.

Jim Curland described the work of Friends of the Sea Otter.

Jackson Davis presented information on global warming and the decline of the southern sea otter.

James Bodkin described the diving behavior of sea otters in southeast Alaska.

James Bodkin and Kim Kloecker described sea otter research at Glacier Bay National Park, Alaska.

Nadezhda Zimenko addressed the feeding ecology of sea otters on the Commander Islands, Russia.

Douglas Burn described efforts to define sea otter habitat in the Aleutian Islands.

Tim Tinker briefed participants on efforts to assess potential population impacts associated with translocations of sea otters from south of Pt. Conception, California, using a spatially explicit population model.

Krista Hanni addressed baseline health values and juvenile survival in California sea otters.

Leah Gerber cited disease impacts on California sea otter demography.

Glenn VanBlaricom described trophic linkages among sea otters and bivalve prey in Prince William Sound, Alaska, in the aftermath of the Exxon Valdez oil spill.

James Estes presented information on the precipitous decline of sea otter populations across the Aleutian Archipelago.

Proposed Collaborative Activities:

The two sides consider to be of priority interest:

- Coordinated efforts in sea otter necropsy and carcass collection in the Commander Islands and Aleutian Islands
- Support for continued sea otter survey, monitoring, and data collection at the Commander Islands for comparison with the Aleutian Islands, where the resident sea otter population has undergone a drastic decline in recent years
- Efforts to study killer whale predation on sea otters, their abundance, distribution, and diet in the Aleutian chain and Commander Islands; seek collaboration with the U.S. National Marine Fisheries Service
- Dialogue with scientists studying other marine mammals of the North Pacific, and seek to hold a multi-disciplinary meeting to discuss marine mammal declines in the North Pacific

- To measure and monitor sea otter prey in conjunction with foraging behaviors

Joint proposals:

1. Calibrate U.S. and Russian sea otter tooth aging techniques and provide for exchange of tooth collections.

U.S. side proposes:

1. To invite 1-2 Russian specialists to the U.S. for familiarization with necropsy/pathology techniques.
2. To invite 1-2 Russian specialists to California for participation in sea otter foraging, telemetry, and dive behavior studies.

Russian side proposes:

1. To invite one U.S. specialist to visit Russian museums with sea otter collections to gather genetic samples from materials collected in the early 19th century.
2. To invite 3-4 U.S. specialists to participate in joint research of benthic communities at the Commander Islands.
3. To hold the Eighth U.S.-Russia Sea Otter Workshop in Russia in 2002, and to invite the participation of sea otter specialists from Canada, Japan, Mexico and Native communities.

Signed 16 November 2000 in English and Russian, both texts being identical and equally authentic.

For the U.S. Side

For the Russian Side

Rosa H. Meehan
U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service

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