

**FEDERAL AID  
INTERIM PERFORMANCE REPORT**

ALASKA DEPARTMENT OF FISH AND GAME  
DIVISION OF WILDLIFE CONSERVATION  
PO Box 25526  
Juneau, AK 99802-5526

**STATE WILDLIFE GRANT (SWG)**

**STATE:** Alaska **GRANT AND SEGMENT NR.:** T-1-2

**PROJECT NR.:** 1.0

**WORK LOCATION:** Walrus Islands State Game Sanctuary

**PROJECT DURATION:** 1 July 2002 – 31 December 2006

**PROJECT REPORTING PERIOD:** 1 July 2002 – 30 June 2003

**PROJECT TITLE:** Walrus Islands Conservation Planning

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**Project Objectives:**

1. Track trends in the number of walrus using Bristol Bay (annually and seasonally) from 2002-2006.

**Job/Activity a:** Staff will count walrus hauled out on each beach or estimate their numbers daily from mid-May to mid-August each year.

**Job/Activity b:** Staff will collect “ground truth” information to evaluate accuracy of satellite imagery to count walrus during summer 2002.

**Job/Activity c:** ADF&G will provide shelter and support for USGS and USFWS research biologists in the collection of skin samples of walrus during summer 2002.

**Job/Activity d:** Staff will record all observations of anthropogenic disturbances by visitors, boat traffic, and air traffic.

2. With Federal, State, Native and other groups, develop cooperative conservation efforts from 2002-2006.

**Job/Activity a:** Staff will provide data for updating the Bristol Bay Walrus Conservation Plan

**Job/Activity b:** Staff will assist in developing and maintaining cooperative management of walrus in Bristol Bay with Federal, State, Native and other groups by June 30, 2006.

**Job/Activity c:** Staff will update cooperative management agreement between USFWS and ADF&G by March 2003.

**Summary of Project Accomplishments** (numbers correspond to project objectives/activities):

**NOTE: The following accomplishments refer to one field season of data May 14-August 11, 2002.**

1. a. Walrus hauled out on the east-side beaches of Round Island were counted on 90 consecutive days. The high count was of 3371 walrus on May 29, 2002.  
b. Satellite photos were taken successfully on May 17, June 17, July 10, and July 28. Staff collected “ground truth” information to evaluate accuracy satellite images though USFWS has yet to analyze the results.

- c. ADF&G provided shelter and support for 2 USGS and 1 USFWS research biologists. The USGS biologist collected approximately 50 skin samples of walrus to help delineate American/Russian populations and to investigate the validity of genetic population estimates.
- d. Staff recorded all observations of anthropogenic disturbances by visitors, boat traffic, and air traffic. Nine airplanes flew over the island causing several hundred walrus to abandon the haulout after all but one of these incidents.

**NOTE: The following accomplishments refer to interim reporting period of July 1, 2002 through June 30, 2003**

- 2. a. Staff provided data for updating the Bristol Bay Walrus Conservation Plan. A USFWS biologist is currently circulating a draft plan within USFWS for comment before sending it out to partner agencies.
- c. Changes to the walrus hunting season were approved by the Alaska Board of Game in March '03. Staff drafted a revised Cooperative Agreement to manage Round Island walrus during this reporting period.

**Project Costs:** Federal share \$46,037.25 + state share \$15,345.75 = total cost \$ 61,383

**Prepared By:** Colleen Matt, Lands & Public Services Coordinator

**Date:** September 8, 2003