

**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

WORK LOCATION: Walrus Islands State Game Sanctuary

PROJECT DURATION: 1 July 2002 – 31 December 2006

PROJECT REPORTING PERIOD: 1 July 2003 – 30 June 2004

PROJECT TITLE: Walrus Islands Conservation Planning

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:

NOTE: The following accomplishments refer to one field season of data May 14-August 11, 2003.

1. a. Walrus hauled out on the east-side beaches of Round Island were counted on 98 consecutive days. The high count was 3,487 walruses on August 1, 2003.
b. Satellite telemetry tags were deployed on seven animals and they were tracked throughout 2003.
c. ADF&G provided shelter and support for one USGS and one USFWS research biologists in May 2003. The USGS biologist collected 19 skin samples of walruses 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. Several commercial boats strayed just inside the 3-mile restricted area around Round Island but no disturbance to walrus was noted. Inadvertent disturbances by sanctuary visitors and staff were minimal.

NOTE: The following accomplishments refer to interim reporting period of July 1, 2003 through June 30, 2004

- 2. a. Staff provided data for updating the Bristol Bay Walrus Conservation Plan. A USFWS biologist continues to work on the draft and will send to partner agencies after their internal consultation.
- b-c. While staff and partner agencies finalized a revised Cooperative Agreement to manage the Round Island walrus hunt, local hunters did not utilize the newly created hunt period in fall of 2003.

Project Costs (includes indirect costs):

Federal share \$ 52,432.63 + state share \$ 17,477.55 = total cost \$ 69,910.18

Prepared By: Colleen Matt, Lands & Public Services Coordinator

Date: August 30, 2004