

**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 2004 – 30 June 2005

**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:**

**Objective 1** (Note: Because the data collection period overlaps the reporting period the accomplishments for Objective 1 refer to one field season of data collection from May 4 to August 11, 2004.)

- a. Walrus haulout surveys were conducted each day during this period (98 surveys). The high count was 3,500 walruses on May 6, 2004 with a daily mean count of 548.5 walruses.
- b. During summer of 2004, Round Island staff observed and recorded satellite transmitter-tagged animals hauled out on the island. The animals had been tagged by USGS and USFWS research biologists in the sea ice west of Round Island prior to the reporting period.

- c. ADF&G provided shelter and support for one USFWS technician who assisted with haulout monitoring.
- d. Staff observed 38 incidents of anthropogenic disturbances to walruses (by visitors, boat traffic and air traffic) and 2 natural disturbance events. One helicopter entered the sanctuary without authorization resulting in disturbance to 22 walruses and the remainder of the anthropogenic disturbances were minor and resulted from authorized activities. Two natural disturbance events resulted from rock falls and/or sea bird activity.

**Objective 2**

- a. Staff provided data to USFWS management biologists for updating the Bristol Bay Walrus Conservation Plan. The USFWS continues to work on the draft and will send to partner agencies after their internal consultation.
- b. Staff and partner agencies finalized a revised Cooperative Agreement to manage the Round Island traditional walrus hunt in 2003. Staff continue meeting and discussing hunt-related issues and other Bristol Bay walrus management issues with partner entities during several annual meetings and as necessary.
- c. A Memorandum of Agreement for managing and staffing the summer program at Round Island was updated in 2003.

**Project Costs** (includes indirect costs):

**Stewardship Investment items:** None

**Total costs:** Federal share \$44,577.75 + state share \$14,859.25 = total cost \$59,437

**Prepared By:** Joe Meehan, Lands & Refuges Program Coordinator

**Date:** August 31, 2005