

WALRUS HUNTING AT TOGIAK,  
BRISTOL BAY, SOUTHWEST ALASKA

**by**

James A. Fall, Molly Chythlook,  
Janet Schichnes, and Rick Sinnott<sup>1</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> Fall: Division of Subsistence, Anchorage  
Chythlook and Schichnes: Division of Subsistence, Dillingham  
Sinnott: Division of Wildlife Conservation, Anchorage

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Division of Subsistence  
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## ABSTRACT

The report provides an overview of historic and contemporary uses of Pacific walrus in the Bristol Bay region of southwest Alaska. It focuses on the community of Togiak (population 613) and its traditional use areas, including Round Island (**Yup'ik Qayaciq**, “place to go in a kayak”). As part of the Walrus Islands State Game Sanctuary, Round Island, a critical haul out site, has been closed to walrus hunting since 1960. In 1991, the Togiak Traditional Council submitted a proposal to the Alaska Board of Game to allow a limited hunt for **10** walrus on Round Island in October.

Hunting of walrus and other marine mammals in western Bristol Bay, including Round Island, by the Native people of the Togiak area over the last 2,500 years is documented by archaeological and ethnohistorical evidence. Until the late 1930s and early **1940s**, well-organized groups of hunters from Togiak traveled in kayaks to Round Island (the most reliable hunting location) and other islands armed with spears and harpoons to harvest walrus. These hunts were important contexts during which young men learned hunting skills and traditional values regarding the proper use and treatment of wildlife. Most parts of the walrus were used for food, raw materials, and sharing with inland villages. By the **1940s**, a shift to use of wooden boats, outboard motors, and **rifles** had occurred. Onshore hunting of walrus at Round Island and the other islands continued until the closure in 1960.

Another use of walrus which began in the early 19th century and has continued is the taking of walrus for their ivory for trade and sale. The report reviews information about such hunting in the Bristol Bay area, including documentation of cases in which wasteful harvests occurred. Several such incidents have occurred on Round Island.

Since 1960, Togiak residents have continued to hunt walrus for subsistence uses, but hunting methods have changed. The primary means of hunting now is from boats in open water. This results in a substantial loss of wounded and dead animals which often sink before they are retrieved. Togiak hunters do not like to hunt walrus in this manner, and one hunter referred to it as “hunting by accident.”

As in the past, some Togiak walrus hunters make limited use of Cape **Peirce**, a haul out to the west of the village in the Togiak National Wildlife Refuge. Since 1964, **USFWS** monitors have documented a total

of four **hunting** efforts by persons from Togiak at Cape **Peirce** for a harvest three animals. Cape **Peirce** is not a traditional hunting location for Togiak, and hunting there creates problems for several reasons, including its distance from the village, frequently rough seas, and sandy beach. Sand may render portions of a kill unusable.

Also, Togiak residents search beaches for washed-up carcasses of dead walrus, an activity called *mallussuq*. They salvage the walrus ivory and if the carcass is relatively fresh, some hide and blubber are salvaged for food. However, most carcasses are not usable for food because of their advanced state of decay.

Since 1988, the **USFWS** has operated a walrus ivory tagging program in nine communities in the Bristol Bay area. A total of 189 animals have been tagged since the program began. The vast majority have been found dead on the beach and the ivory retrieved; very few are kills immediately retrieved by hunters. Of the total, 50 walrus have been tagged in Togiak. Only three of these tagged walrus were killed and retrieved by Togiak hunters. The other 47 were beach finds.

Experienced hunters in Togiak report that the number of walrus harvested in the village is now much lower than in the past and is inadequate to meet village needs. Nevertheless, walrus hide, blubber, meat, flippers, kidneys, livers, and hearts remain valued foods in Togiak. Togiak hunters share their limited walrus harvests with some other villages, such as Manokotak.

Experienced walrus hunters in Togiak also report that they have noted a loss of some traditional values among some young people in the community. In part, they attribute this loss to restricted opportunities in hunt walrus at traditional haul out sites. Interest in harvesting and using walrus in accordance with traditional methods and values continues in Togiak, and is the basis for the proposal for a managed hunt submitted to the Board of Game. On November 3, 1991, the Board of Game voted to defer further consideration of Togiak's request until its spring 1993 meeting. The Board adopted a resolution urging further study of the management issues raised during the discussion of the proposal.

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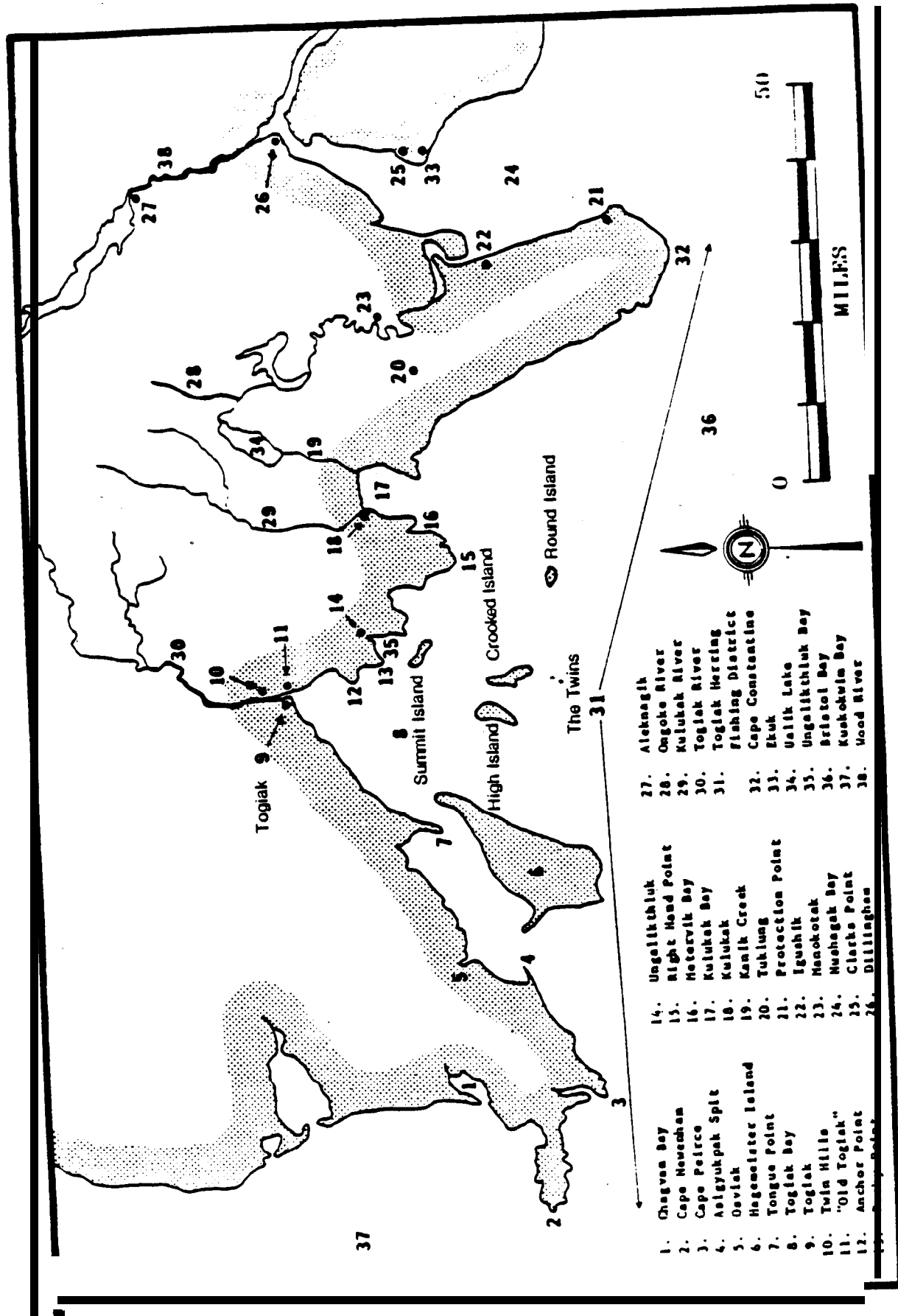
## INTRODUCTION

This report was prepared by the Division of Subsistence, Alaska Department of Fish and Game (ADF&G), to provide background information on the historic and contemporary uses of Pacific walrus (Central Yup'ik asveq; *Odobenus rosmarus divergens*) in the Bristol Bay region of southwest Alaska. The primary focus is on the community of Togiak and its traditional use areas, including Round Island (Fig. 1). Round Island is part of the Walrus Islands State Game Sanctuary and is presently closed by regulation to hunting, including subsistence hunting. During its meeting in Fairbanks in October and November 1991, the Alaska Board of Game considered a proposal submitted by the Togiak Traditional Council to reopen Round Island to limited subsistence walrus hunting. (See Appendix A for a copy of the proposal.) The information in this report was used in the Board's evaluation of this request. As explained in the postscript (below), on November 3, 1991, the Board voted to defer further consideration of Togiak's proposal until its spring 1993 meeting.

As the agency legally required to collect and present data about subsistence uses in Alaska, the Division of Subsistence has conducted research in the Bristol Bay region, including the village of Togiak, since 1980.<sup>1</sup> Much of the information in this report is based on interviews conducted with Togiak residents about walrus hunting, as well as other division research. On October 9, 1991, division staff interviewed several walrus hunters in Togiak. These interviews, conducted primarily in Yup'ik (the first language of most residents of the village and the only language of many), were recorded on audio tape. A synopsis in English appears in Appendix B. Unless otherwise noted, these interviews are the source of the information in this report.

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<sup>1</sup> For general overviews of subsistence uses in the Bristol Bay region, see Wright et al 1985 and Schroeder et al. 1987. For overviews of subsistence uses in Togiak, see Wright et al. 1985:32-40 and Wolfe et al. 1984.



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- |                       |                      |  |
|-----------------------|----------------------|--|
| 1. Chagva Bay         | 14. Ungelthluk       | 27. Aleknagik                          |
| 2. Cape Hovechan      | 15. Right Hand Point | 28. Ogoke River                        |
| 3. Cape Peirce        | 16. Metervik Bay     | 29. Kulukak River                      |
| 4. Asiguyupak Spit    | 17. Kulukak Bay      | 30. Togiak River                       |
| 5. Oevik              | 18. Kulukak          | 31. Togiak Herring<br>Fishing District |
| 6. Hagemetater Island | 19. Kanik Creek      | 32. Cape Constantine                   |
| 7. Tongue Point       | 20. Tuklung          | 33. Eluk                               |
| 8. Togiak Bay         | 21. Protection Point | 34. Unlik Lake                         |
| 9. Togiak             | 22. Igushik          | 35. Ungelthluk Bay                     |
| 10. Twin Hills        | 23. Manokotak        | 36. Bristol Bay                        |
| 11. "Old Togiak"      | 24. Hushagak Bay     | 37. Kuskokwim Bay                      |
| 12. Anchor Point      | 25. Clarks Point     | 38. Wood River                         |
|                       | 26. [unclear]        |  |

Figure 1. The Togiak Area, Western Bristol Bay, Southwest Alaska

## ISSUE BACKGROUND: REGULATIONS AND THE WALRUS ISLANDS STATE GAME SANCTUARY

### State and Federal Hunting Regulations

Prior to statehood, hunting of walrus was open to Alaska Native people throughout the species' range (Sease and Chapman **1988:31**). The State of Alaska had management authority for marine mammals, including walrus from 1960 until the passage of the federal Marine Mammals Protection Act (MMPA) in **1972**.<sup>2</sup> Under state management, regulatory actions were taken to protect the reduced walrus population, including limiting the number of female walrus killed and prohibiting all walrus hunting in Game Management Unit 17 (western Bristol Bay) to protect developing haul out areas (Lowry **1985:24**). In addition, the Walrus Islands State Game sanctuary was created by statute (see below).

Under the MMPA, responsibility for walrus management presently rests with the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS). Only Alaska Natives may harvest marine mammals. Other restrictions on the non-wasteful taking of marine mammals 'may' only be adopted if a population becomes depleted. Consequently, in 1972 walrus hunting was again allowed in those portions of Bristol Bay not within the Walrus Islands State Game Sanctuary. In 1976, the state applied for and regained jurisdiction over walrus. The next year, the Board of Game adopted regulations which established harvest quotas in certain areas (Lowry **1985:24**). Walrus hunting in GMU 17 (except the sanctuary) was allowed by permit only. Up to 50 permits were available in Togiak, Twin Hills, Manokotak, and Clark's Point. The people of Togiak subsequently filed suit in federal court, challenging the state's authority to restrict walrus hunting in this manner. In 1979, the court ruled that the MMPA required an Alaska Native exemption. Because the state maintained that its constitution barred it from implementing such an exemption, management authority reverted to the USFWS (**Langdon 1989:158**). This ruling did not reduce the state's authority to regulate access to its lands for hunting. The state regulation which closed the Walrus Islands Sanctuary to subsistence walrus hunting continued.

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<sup>2</sup> Information regarding state regulations for walrus hunting was derived Alaska State Hunting Regulations Summaries for 1968 to 1980 (ADF&G 1968 - 1980).

### The Walrus Islands State Game Sanctuary

Located in northern Bristol Bay, the Walrus Islands State Game Sanctuary consists of seven islands, including Black Rock (*Ingricuar*, “small island”), Crooked Island (*Nunalukaq*, “land big enough to live on awhile”), High Island (*Ingriqvak*, “big island”), Round Island (*Qayaciq*, “kayak place;” that is “place to go in a kayak”), Summit Island (*Qilkeq*, named after a person in a legend concerning the island), and the Twins (*Nunevragak*, “temporary camping place”),<sup>3</sup> and the waters within three miles of these islands.<sup>4</sup> Created by the Alaska Legislature in 1968 (AS 16.20.090-140), the primary purpose of the sanctuary is to protect the most important walrus haul out in North America. Other purposes include visitor use and scientific research. Public access to Round Island, by far the most important walrus haul out, is limited to the period May 1 - August 31, and is by permit only (5 AAC 92.066; ADF&G 1991). The Department maintains a field camp on Round Island during this period.

The legislation establishing the sanctuary does not specifically prohibit hunting. Subsistence uses are neither designated nor prohibited by the legislation. Regulations adopted by the Alaska Board of Game in 1968 and 1968, and incorporated into management plans adopted in 1976 and 1981, closed most of the sanctuary to all hunting. Presently, with the exception of the Twins and adjacent waters, all the islands within the sanctuary and the waters within one-half mile of each, are closed to hunting (ADF&G 1991 b:17). Additionally, discharge of firearms and disturbance of wildlife are prohibited on and within three miles of Round Island (ADF&G 1991 a:6).

### COMMUNITY BACKGROUND: TOGIAK

The community of Togiak is located on Togiak Bay, about two miles west of the mouth of the Togiak River in southwest Alaska. It is 67 miles west of Dillingham, the regional center of Bristol Bay, and

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<sup>3</sup> Molly Chythlook of the Division of Subsistence collected and translated these Yup'ik place names. She checked each with Togiak elder Herbert Lockuk Sr. on October 29, 1991. In 1818, the Russian explorer Korsakovskiy recorded the name of Round Island as “Kaiashikh” (VanStone 1988:37).

<sup>4</sup> The Department of Fish and Game presented a detailed report on the status and management of the Walrus Islands State Game Sanctuary during the meeting of the Alaska Board of Game in October 1990 (ADF&G 1999).

380 miles southwest of Anchorage, Alaska's largest city. Access to the village is primarily by small aircraft, and secondarily by boat. In 1990, Togiak had a population of 613 people in 151 households. In the same year, 87.3 percent of Togiak's population was Alaska Native, primarily Yup'ik Eskimo (Alaska Department of Labor **1991:76-77**). Many village residents trace their ancestry to the inhabitants of Old Togiak, located across the bay to the east of the present village, and to former villages located up the Togiak River or along the coast to the west, such as Osviak, now used only as seasonal camps (Wolfe et al. 1984:96).

Today, Togiak is dependent upon a mixed, subsistence - cash economy. Commercial fishing, mostly for salmon and herring, is a source of cash income. Other sources of income include employment with the schools, local, state, and federal governments, Native organizations, retail trade, and transportation and utilities (Social Science Research Associates **1991:122-123**). As in other Bristol Bay villages, cash incomes in Togiak vary considerably from year to year and are generally much lower than those of urban Alaska (Wolfe et al. **1984:229-239**).

Most of Togiak's households are highly dependent upon subsistence harvests of fish, wildlife, and plant resources. Major resources include salmon, other fish (Dolly Varden, smelt, herring), land mammals (caribou, moose, brown bear, small game, furbearers), birds, marine mammals (seals, walrus, sea lion), and wild plants (berries) (Wolfe et al. **1984:326-333**). The division has not conducted a household harvest survey in Togiak, so estimates of annual subsistence production in the village are not available. It is likely that harvest quantities and harvest composition resemble those of other nearby villages. In 1985, the village of Manokotak, 48 miles to the east of Togiak, harvested an average of 384.1 pounds of wild foods per person (usable weight). Of this, 35.2 percent was salmon, 24.8 percent was land mammals, 22.3 percent was other fish, 8.5 percent was marine mammals, and the rest was birds, marine invertebrates, and wild plants (Schichnes and Chythlook 1988:66).

## PREHISTORY AND HISTORICAL ETHNOGRAPHY

Marine mammals figure prominently in the archaeological record of the Bering Sea region, primarily in coastal sites (Dumond **1984:102**). Based upon investigations at the site of Old Togiak, Kowta

(1963:459) concluded that, "sea mammal hunting seems always to have been an important part of the economy at Togiak." Although seals appeared to be the primary marine mammal used, evidence of the use of walrus was uncovered in the form of walrus bone, **carved** ivory objects, and unworked ivory (Kowta 1963:156).

One archaeological site has been located on Round Island at the present **ADF&G** field camp. Only a surface inspection of the site has occurred. This investigation found evidence of at least 2,200 years of intermittent occupation of a major village with perhaps 25 house pits. The site was occupied until at least late prehistoric times, but just when it was abandoned as a year-round settlement is uncertain. Bird hunting and marine mammal hunting were undoubtedly taking place from this village. At nearby Summit Island, several large sites have been identified. These villages were occupied intermittently for at least 2,500 years. **Faunal** remains from sites tested in 1982 and 1985 included walrus, other sea mammals, and birds. There was positive evidence of marine mammal hunting in the form of toggle harpoon points. According to state archaeologist Robert Shaw, there is "irrefutable evidence that walrus hunting occurred as far back as 2,300 years ago in the Togiak area." A carved walrus ivory doll face, among other examples of high quality art, was recovered from one Summit Island site (Shaw 1986:7-8).

At the time of European and American exploration of the Bristol Bay area in the early nineteenth century, the lands bordering Togiak Bay were inhabited by the Central Yup'ik-speaking *Tuyuryarmiut* (*Togiagamiut*) (VanStone 1984:224; cf. Oswalt 1967:128). These people fished and hunted land mammals and birds. In contrast to the more inland oriented Eskimos of Bristol Bay, the *Tuyuryarmiut* also hunted seals and walrus, but they were not as dependent upon marine mammals as were the Eskimos further to the north (VanStone 1984:233; Oswalt 1967:128). According to VanStone (1967:128-1 29) "walrus hunting was an important activity in Nushagak Bay and surrounding area during the Russian period." In addition to hunting for food, walrus ivory was traded at the Russian America company post, Alexandrovski, on Nushagak Bay. Walrus were hunted off Hagemeister Island, among other places. The Russian-era trade in walrus ivory peaked from 1821-1842 (Sease and Chapman 1988:29). The Alegmiut Eskimos of Bristol Bay were known for their skill as ivory carvers (VanStone 1967:60, 129).

Captain James Cook sighted and named Round Island during his exploration of Bristol Bay in 1778. In June and July 1818, the Russian explorer Petr Korsakovskiy visited Summit Island and described the various islands in the Walrus Islands group. His Eskimo guides told him that many walrus and sea lions hauled out on these islands (VanStone 1988:38). They also reported that the people of the Togiak River traveled to these islands in “baydaras” (open skin boats)<sup>5</sup> to pick berries and had temporary shelters on them (Van Stone 1988:48). Korsakovskiy’s party also found “many dead walrus that had been killed and lay along the shore.” His guides removed the tusks from these animals but could not salvage the intestines for manufacturing rain gear because of the advanced state of decay (VanStone 1988:42).

In 1822, the Russian, explorer V.S. Khromchenko observed 11 baydarkas (kayaks) near Crooked Island (VanStone 1973:51). In August 1829, another Russian explorer, Ivan Vasilev wrote of the Togiak people that, “Their chief occupation is fishing and sealing; they take [bearded seal], belugas, and walrus” (VanStone 1988:99). In his report for the 1880 U.S. Census, Petroff (1884:72) noted that the coastal Eskimos of the Bristol Bay region hunted walrus but depended primarily on salmon. Petroff (1884:15) also reported small villages at “Ooallikh” (possibly Ungalikthuk) and “Kulluk” (Kulukak) between the Togiak River and Nushagak Bay, and wrote that, “The inhabitants of these settlements derive their sustenance from both sea and land, making long journeys in their kaiaks to islands and banks on the sea, the resort of the seal and the walrus” (cf. Elliott 1887:400). In 1883, Johann Jacobsen, a collector for a German museum, visited Togiak. He wrote that, “During the day of my stay the Eskimo from Togiak had caught seven seals and one walrus, an unusually large catch” (Jacobsen 1977:187).

Sease and Chapman (1988:29) note that while hunting of walrus by Native people of the Bering Sea region had occurred for thousands of years before the arrival of Europeans and Americans, “their catches may have been small in relation to all other mortality factors.” Throughout Alaska during the 19th century, walrus populations declined markedly, falling from perhaps 200,000 in the early 1800s to about 50,000 by 1900. Causes of the decline included commercial hunting for oil, hides, and ivory during the

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<sup>5</sup> According to current oral traditions pertaining to the early and mid 20th century, no open skin boats were used in Togiak Bay; only kayaks. Open skin boats of caribou hide were used for river travel by the Togiak River villages, but these were of temporary construction and not considered durable enough for sea travel.

period **1860 - 1880** (Lowry **1985:18**). In the Russian period, about 1,000 walrus per year were traded for their ivory from 1821 - 1842. These were mostly males taken in the southern Bering sea by Native hunters (Sease and Chapman **1988:29**). It appears that a primary cause of the later population decline was the killing of over 200,000 walrus for oil by Yankee whalers in the Bering Strait from 1869 - 1880. These were mostly female walrus. As a result of this kill and other factors, about two thirds of the human population of St. Lawrence Island died of starvation over the winter of 1878-79 (Sease and Chapman **1988:29**). Also, Alaska Natives and non-Native traders took walrus for their hides and ivory from 1880 - 1930, but there are little data about the size of these harvests. The decline continued into the late **1950s**, when both the Soviets and the state of Alaska passed protective measures (Sease and Chapman **1988:29, 31-32**).

By the late **1880s**, the large numbers of walrus observed by earlier explorers in Bristol Bay had suffered a severe decline as well. In his report in the 1890 census, Porter (**1893:226**) wrote that because of their low numbers, walrus “can no longer be looked upon as being of any commercial significance.” He also wrote of the people of the Togiak River that “they are splendid hunters, who have tons of walrus tusks as tokens of their prowess, without appreciating the value of this ivory” (Porter **1893:93**). Based on a visit in 1902, Osgood (**1904:49**) wrote that “a very limited number of walrus still occur about some of the small islands in Togiak Bay west of Nushagak.” He had been informed by the trader at Nushagak that **in recent** years he had obtained 9 to 15 walrus tusks each year from the people of the Togiak region.

#### WALRUS HUNTING IN THE EARLY TO MID TWENTIETH CENTURY

**Current oral traditions in Togiak concerning walrus distinguish between activities during the “kayak era,”** when hunting took place exclusively with skin boats, spears, and harpoons, and more recent times, when wooden boats (including sail boats), outboard motors, and rifles were more readily available. The transition between these periods for Togiak residents occurred sometime during the 1930s and **1940s**.<sup>6</sup>

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<sup>6</sup> In 1887, Elliott noted the use of “fire-arms of modern patterns and many old flint-lock muskets” by the Native people of the Nushagak area. In contrast, he also wrote that, “But a large number of those very primitive Eskimo, the Togiaks, just west and north of Nooshagak, use nothing at all in the chase other than the same antique bows and spears of a remote ancestry” (Elliott **1887:384**).



Walrus hunters draw a second contrast between hunting methods which were used before they lost access to Round Island in 1960, and those methods which have become most common since the closure.

### Use Areas

As noted above, non-Native observers in the 19th century documented walrus hunting in the Walrus Islands by Native people of the Togiak area. Correspondingly, oral traditions maintain that Round Island was a primary walrus harvesting site for Togiak people during the kayak era, and up until it was closed to access for hunting in 1960. The "Annual Survey of Native Foods," conducted for the Bureau of (Indian Affairs by a teacher at the Togiak school from 1958 until 1965, supports these oral reports (BIA n.d.). According to the report submitted for the period October 1, 1958 to September 30, 1959 (Appendix C), the Togiak people harvested **10,000<sup>7</sup>** pounds of walrus at Round Island during that year. The report states that 230 people and 124 "Native work dogs" were "dependent upon this supply" of foods summarized by the survey. The report not specify which resources were used for dog food, and in what amounts. None of the fiie subsequent annual reports, ail of which were submitted after the closure of GMU 17 and Round' Island to walrus hunting, contain any reference to walrus harvests or uses at **Togiak.<sup>8</sup>**

At Round Island, hunting for walrus occurred in a sheltered cove with a good rocky beach that was not covered during high tides. Places with sandy beaches were avoided, because sand is difficult to remove from walrus hide and portions of the kill might become unusable. High Island was another notable

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<sup>7</sup> The number of walrus harvested was not reported. This represents about 10 - 20 animals if conversion factors of 500 - 1,000 pounds edible weight per walrus are used. This would be 25 percent to 50 percent of a 2,000 pound male walrus. Estimates of the percentage of harvested walrus salvaged for food vary widely. In a study conducted by the Eskimo Walrus Commission (Lourie **1982**), the percentage of edible portions salvaged from individual walrus (n = 329) ranged from 100 percent to 2 percent. In three villages, salvage from the total walrus harvest ranged from 27.6 percent to 7.2 percent. Key respondents in Brevig Mission and Nome reported "full utilization" of the first walrus taken, 50 percent utilization of the second, and 25 percent utilization of the third (Conger and Magdanz **1990:8**). Generally, as the number of walrus harvested by particular communities or families increased, the percentage of the edible portions that are **salvaged** goes down (cf. Brooks **1954:73**).

<sup>8</sup> Additional research is necessary to determine the methods by which these harvest estimates were obtained. In the report for **1958/59**, marine mammals accounted for 67 percent of the harvest by weight. This is a much higher percentage than recorded in the 1970s and 1980s for other Bristol Bay communities. **in comparison with these later data, and present harvest patterns in Togiak, a harvest of 28,000 pounds of sea lion appears particularly high.** For the purposes of this report, the primary value of the **BIA** survey is documentation of the use of Round Island by Togiak residents as a source of walrus for food.

**site.** Elders recall that other islands now within the sanctuary were also used by walrus. When transportation was limited to kayaks, the hunters traveled directly to Round Island because it was the most reliable hunting location. After outboard motors became available and travel was faster, the hunters reportedly checked other islands closer to Togiak first, but continued to use Round Island as well. When using kayaks, hunting parties remained at least one night on Round Island, and longer **if** they were weathered in. Village elders do not believe that Round island was occupied year-round within the span of oral traditions. On the contrary, they maintain that it was used only for hunting, “out of respect for the animals (walrus).” In other words, the island was used for hunting in such a way as to disturb the walrus as little as necessary.

After outboard motors became available, **it** became possible to travel to Round Island in skiffs, complete a harvest, and return to the village in one day. A trip from Togiak to Round Island, the most distant of the group from Togiak, took about two hours in good weather. Because of rapidly changing weather, a one day trip was preferred over spending the night on the island and risking being weathered-in for a longer period of time.

Although walrus hunting mainly occurred on the islands during the **early** and mid twentieth century, they were sometimes taken elsewhere as well. As noted below, open sea hunting occurred in the waters around Togiak. Areas to the west of Hagemeister Island such as Cape Peirce might have been occasionally used by residents of Togiak, But because of its greater distance, less reliable weather, and sandy surface, it was rare for hunters from Togiak to travel to Cape Pierce for walrus (see below). Far more reliable and superior locations were closer to the village. Also, Cape Peirce was probably outside Togiak’s traditional territory, and was more regularly used by residents of other villages to the west of Togiak, such as Osviak, and villages from beyond Cape Newenham (e.g. Korsakovskiy in **VanStone** 1988).

### Huntina Methods

The preferred times for taking walrus were the spring and fall. Late fall after the first frost was an excellent time because of the absence of flies (Westcoast 1984). October was especially good because

walrus had gained fat content by then. According to elders, subsistence walrus hunting never occurred in the summer.

During the early and mid twentieth century, walrus hunting at Togiak was a highly organized **activity** done exclusively by men. Each man in the hunting party had an assigned task. Only the best marksmen (*nukalpiaq*, “good hunter”) were permitted to harpoon or shoot the walrus. This was true both before and after guns became available, because there are only limited places where a walrus can be harpooned or shot and killed quickly. Other men were only allowed to handle spears (see below); others were butchers and packers. Younger men served as “trainees” or apprentice hunters before they were acknowledged to possess the necessary skills to lead a hunt. They were primarily observers, carriers, and loaders.

One method of hunting walrus was from skin boats in open water using harpoons (*cavegneq*) with two attached floats made of **sealskin** pokes (*qerruinaq*). Only the experienced and fast harpooners were permitted attempt to strike the walrus. As the walrus made a motion called "*qakcilak*," suddenly diving and lifting their flippers, the harpooner struck the animal in the armpit where the skin is thinnest (T. Chythlook 1984).

When hunting on Round Island and other walrus haul outs, each skin boat approached the beach armed with sharp spears (*kapuutaq*). They beached their watercraft at either end of the group of walrus where the animals were most widely dispersed. According to Togiak elder Tom Chythlook, older and more sickly walrus with tougher hides and meat hauled out closest to the water. The hunters passed these by, approaching from below the younger, healthier animals on the higher rocks and cliffs.’ Using spears, certain hunters separated the choice animals from the old and the sick. They also herded the preferred animals to a convenient kill location. The walrus was shot at the *tunucukviggun*, the back of the head just above the neck. If the walrus was facing the hunter, it could be shot just below the jaw where the bullet could penetrate (T. Chythlook 1984). The number of walrus killed during each trip was limited by the capacity of the watercraft. Depending upon their size, up to five kayaks were needed to transport one walrus back to the village.

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<sup>9</sup> Other hunters say “plump,” healthy walrus regardless of age were harvested.

Next, the animals were butchered at the kill site. All the usable parts were stored in the boats for transport back to the village for further processing. It was essential that the walrus be treated in a proper manner called "*cakarpeknaki*," "with respect and not in a wasteful manner" (T. Chythlook 1984). Unusable parts were properly discarded so as to leave the butchering site as clean as possible.

These traditional walrus hunts provided a context in which young men learned hunting skills as well as nonwasteful, respectful treatment of the animals. As eider Tom Chythlook explained, "Each animal of both the land and the sea had rules for its care." Young hunters were taught these rules before they were encouraged to hunt on their own. Those who disobeyed the rules were labeled "*qanrucunailnuq*" ("one who does not listen to counsel") and were never respected as *nukalpiaq*.

### Harvest Quantities

In 1991, an experienced walrus hunter in Togiak estimated that prior to 1980, at least 10 walrus were harvested each year for food by Togiak hunters. As noted above, 10,000 pounds of walrus meat were harvested at Togiak in 1958-59. This represents about 10 - 20 animals if a relatively high salvage rate of 25 percent to 50 percent is assumed (see Footnote 5). The U.S. Bureau of Sport Fisheries and Wildlife estimated an annual harvest of 10 walrus by Bristol Bay communities in the 1960s<sup>10</sup> (Federal Field Committee 1968:303). Some other sources report higher estimates. For example, Buckley (1958:17) estimated an average of 50 walrus harvested by Togiak annually from 1950 to 1958, and an additional 35 shot and lost. Brooks (1954:74) estimated that about 75 walrus were harvested by Togiak in 1952. Both of these latter two estimates include animals that were killed primarily or solely for their ivory.

### Uses of Walrus

When the hunters arrived back in the village, they returned with the walrus already cut into blocks of hide, blubber, and meat called "*ikaq*." All the other usable parts were brought back as well (*cakuivkenaku*, "nothing left to waste") (Westcoast 1984). The catch was distributed among the hunters,

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<sup>10</sup> The published source for this number (Federal Field Committee 1988) does not specify the methods used to reach the estimate.

who in turn shared portions with their relatives. Even young “trainees” received shares of the kills directly. On the other hand, the hunting leaders had first claim to the walrus-tusks and certain choice parts such as the flippers, kidneys, and lungs. From this point on, the women assumed responsibility for the preparation of food and other products from the walrus harvest, as well as further distribution and sharing among households.

Much of the walrus was used for food, including the hide, fat, muscle tissue, flippers, head (including the brains) and various internal organs such as the heart, liver, kidneys, and lungs. Before electric freezers were available, the edible portions of the walrus were boiled in large containers, then cooled before storage for winter use as *kenirautirkelrit*, “stored, cooked food.” Before freeze-up, storage was in tundra pits called “*uqucilek*” where the foods remained cool. After freeze-up, the preserved foods were removed to caches and used throughout the winter to supplement freshly-caught foods and dried fish. Stored walrus could be eaten frozen, thawed, or half-thawed (T. Chythlook 1984).

Some walrus products were used for dog food at Togiak and other nearby villages. One elder from Kulukak does not recall the use of freshly killed walrus for dog food, although she reports that meat and hide from beach-salvaged animals was obtained for dogs. The hide from beached carcasses had “aged” and softened, making it easier for the dogs to chew. She reported that fresh walrus products were relatively scarce and too highly valued to use for dogs (Westcoast 1984; cf. Brooks 1954:88). According to a Togiak elder, walrus were never hunted mainly for dog food, although “scraps” from fresh walrus might be used for such a purpose. Another elder from Togiak (T. Chythlook 1984) provided a similar testimony. On the other hand, Josephson (1974:71) summarized data for uses of walrus in the Bering Sea region generally. She wrote that, “most of the walrus meat. . . was not valued for human consumption in most places, and was used for maintenance of dogs.” Evidently, a different pattern existed in the Togiak area villages.

In addition to food, parts of the walrus had other uses. The stomach, cleaned of its contents, was used as a drum cover (*cauyaq*). The stomachs were also used as containers for seal oil (*caqucayuk*). They were cleaned using an *uluq* (woman’s knife). After drying, the container was soaked in water to

soften **it** before being filled with seal blubber for rendering. These were stored in tundra pits and were shared **with** families living in inland villages up the Togiak River (N. Chythlook 1984).

Hunters returned with the walrus bladders (**nakacuk**) cleaned and inflated. They were used as containers for water while men were out hunting in kayaks (N. Chythlook 1984). The intestines of walrus and seals were inflated to dry and then sewn into rain gear. Stretched and cured hide was used as the soles of mukluks (Westcoast 1984).

As noted earlier, another use of walrus was the taking of ivory for trade and sale. At least in the **1950s**, several reports provide evidence that some hunters from Togiak were killing walrus primarily or solely for the tusks. According to Brooks (**1954:80**), "The ready market for both carved and raw ivory has induced the Eskimos of **Little** Diomedes, King Island, and Togiak to kill numbers of walrus for no other reason than to acquire ivory." He wrote that "the ivory-inspired depredation on summer walrus settlements in the Walrus Island group are well known throughout the region."<sup>11</sup> Kenyon (**1960:338**) visited Round Island in June 1958. He found 39 dead walruses on the beach. The tusks were gone from all but three, but only about 100 pounds of meat had been salvaged. According to a report from a Native person from Togiak, these walrus had been killed several weeks before by hunters from the village.

## CONTEMPORARY USES OF WALRUS, 1960 TO PRESENT

### Hunting Methods

In 1991, Togiak village officials estimated that there were about a dozen experienced walrus hunters in the community. All are men, and all are middle-aged or older. A list of hunters has been submitted to the Eskimo Walrus Commission.

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<sup>11</sup> Brooks participated in an aerial survey of the Walrus Islands with U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service personnel in July 1953 (Brooks **1954:2,82**). He does not state whether he visited Togiak or spoke with Native hunters. Nevertheless, he evidently concluded that the only reason for walrus hunting by the people of Togiak was to obtain ivory for sale (Brooks 1954:88). In recommending that a sanctuary be created in the Walrus Islands group, he wrote that "these walrus now suffer wasteful depredation by the Togiak Eskimos who actually benefit little from their wanton activity" (Brooks **1954:95**). No acknowledgement of Togiak's use of walrus for human food appears in this report. This contrasts with the testimonies of numerous Yup'ik elders from several Bristol Bay communities as well as recent research findings by the Division of Subsistence.

Presently, there are four sources of walrus for Togiak residents. These are 1) hunting hauled out walrus on land (the preferred traditional method); 2) hunting in open water (the most common hunting method today); 3) combing the beaches to salvage dead walrus which have washed ashore (*mallussuq*, “looking for a beached carcass”); and 4) receiving walrus products from other villages. Possibly a fiih distinctive method is hunting walrus in spring when they are occasionally located on ice floes while people are hunting for seals. Fall and spring continue to be the preferred times for hunting walrus, but walrus encountered opportunistically in the summer might be hunted as well because of the more limited opportunities to harvest walrus on land compared with the past.

If hunters sight walrus on islands other than Round Island, they are hunted. Such hunts continue to be highly organized and planned several days in advance. In contrast, hunting seal or other smaller game is “easier,” and can involve only one person. Each walrus hunt has an experienced leader.

Experienced walrus hunters at Togiak selectively target certain animals. They prefer larger male walrus with a smooth hide surface. They believe that “plump, healthy walrus” have smooth skins, while “skinny, sickly walrus” have a “lumpy hide surface.” Walrus are approached from the lee (downwind) side. It is said that walrus depend primarily on their sense of smell; thus hunters are able to approach quite closely, within five feet or less. When hunting on land, it is desirable to **kill** the animal quickly with a single shot. Depending on the number of boats involved and their size, up to three, perhaps four, walrus could be taken while hunting on land. Transportation options include pairs of 18’ skiffs, or one larger ‘Togiak **skiff**’ (a boat from 22’ to 28’ in length), with a smaller skiff in tow. An 18’ skiff can safely transport one walrus back to Togiak, depending upon the weather.

Because walrus are rarely encountered on the islands presently open to hunting, it is said that teaching these traditions regarding land hunting of walrus to the young have been disrupted. When people travel in the spring with their families and “happen upon” walrus, the young people observe the hunts then. Such encounters are so rare that they do not provide a reliable opportunity for teaching, however.

Most hunting of walrus by Togiak residents today takes place from boats in open water. Several skiffs go out together and search until a walrus is spotted. Then, they come together to attempt a kill. When hunting at sea, the walrus is shot to try to weaken it and then quickly harpooned for retrieval. If shot

to kill at once, the animal will sink quickly and be lost. Healthy, “plump” walrus tend to stay afloat longer than thinner, sickly ones. But, the harvest success rate in open water is low because, in the experience of Togiak hunters, all walrus **sink**.<sup>12</sup> Also, because of their size, walrus are difficult to handle in open water, especially when rough conditions suddenly arise. Even if harpooned quickly, they might be lost while towing as the heavy animals sink. In addition, older hunters say there are now fewer experienced, qualified hunters in the village, resulting in a higher rate of non-retrieval. For all these reasons, this is not the preferred method for taking walrus. One elder who has participated in such “modern” hunts, attributes success more to luck than use of traditional methods. He calls these methods “hunting by accident.” Nevertheless, he said, “Since there is no other choice and other island hunts don’t produce walrus, we take our chances at sea.”

Another option is to herd walrus encountered at sea to shallower’ water where they might be retrieved with more success. Walrus opportunistically encountered in Togiak Bay may be hunted in this manner. However, if chased for too long, the quality of the walrus meat declines greatly. “it’s like any land animal that’s been running for some time, and the meat becomes tough and strong tasting.”

After harpooning in open water, the walrus is towed with a long rope to a butchering area using two or more skiffs. Two skiffs are used to balance and hold the heavy animal until beached. Because of their size, it is difficult to keep a whole dead walrus afloat for long. On one of the Rock Islands (*Qikertaq*) closest to the village or a bay called *Meqeryaryaq* near Anchor Point are preferred butchering locations because they have rocky beaches and are accessible to people even during a low tide. Summit and Crooked Islands are good locations also. Whole dead walrus which are encountered in the open water are also towed to these spots.

### Harvest Quantities

Overall, the assessment of experienced hunters at Togiak seems to indicate that the number of walrus harvested by Togiak at present is much lower than in the past and is inadequate to meet the needs

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<sup>12</sup> Virtually all the walrus in Bristol Bay from late spring until at least early fall are males. According to Brooks (1954:70), “When killed, adult cows usually float, juveniles sink most of the time, and adult bulls almost invariably sink.”



of the village. As noted above, one hunter estimated that at least 10 walrus a year were being harvested prior to the closure of Round Island in 1980. In contrast, these hunters believe that the average harvest (not counting those salvaged when found dead on the beach) may now be about two walrus per year. Hunters note that with so many people in Togiak, it is hard to share meat from one walrus with all of them, or even just with those who have used walrus in the past. "One walrus is never enough," they say.

The best source of walrus harvest data are the tagging records maintained by the USFWS since 1988. Under federal regulations adopted in that year, individuals possessing walrus ivory taken since the passage of the MMPA in 1972 must have the ivory tagged by an authorized agent of the USFWS. This includes beach-found ivory as well as that from animals hunted and-killed. The USFWS has trained taggers in most Alaska villages which harvest walrus. Presently, there are tagging agents in seven Bristol Bay villages, including Togiak. Data collected include place of tagging, place of kill or discovery, date of recovery, and type of harvest (a kill, beach found, or found dead floating in the water). The place of residence of the harvester is not recorded.

As shown in Table 1, since the program began in 1988, a total of 189 walrus had been tagged in Bristol Bay communities, plus nearby Platinum and **Goodnews** Bay. The vast majority of these animals were found dead on the beach; very few were harvested directly by hunters. Of the 50 walrus tagged in Togiak, only three were direct kills by hunters. Two of these occurred in 1988, one near the village and the other at an undisclosed location. The other walrus was killed at Hagemeister Island in August 1991.

Another source of harvest data are household surveys conducted by the Division of Subsistence. Table 2 summarizes walrus harvest and use data collected during household harvest surveys in selected Bristol Bay communities. The division has not conducted comprehensive harvest surveys in Togiak or Twin Hills. For the remaining communities, the data suggest that the primary users of walrus are Aleknagik (21.2 percent of the households using), Clarks Point (41.2 percent), and Manokotak (35.2 percent). In the **1980s**, harvests of walrus were only reported on division surveys in Clarks Point, Dillingham, King Salmon, Manokotak, and Port Heiden. The data suggest that, overall, subsistence harvests of walrus in Bristol Bay

TABLE 1. NUMBER OF WALRUS TAGGED IN SELECTED SOUTHWEST ALASKA COMMUNITIES,  
1988 - 1991

Place	Year Killed or Found					Total	
	<u>1990</u>	1988	1988	<u>1989</u>	<u>1991</u>		<u>ukn</u>
Platinum	15	<b>4</b>	12	7	2	<b>1</b>	41
<b>Goodnews</b> Bay	0	<b>6</b>	4	2	0	<b>0</b>	12
Togiak	4	<b>6</b>	8	24	6	<b>2</b>	<b>50<sup>a</sup></b>
Manokotak	1	<b>2</b>	1	0	0	<b>0</b>	4
Dillingham	21	<b>1</b>	10	16	1	<b>0</b>	49
Clarks Point	15	<b>0</b>	1	0	11	<b>0</b>	27
King Salmon	0	<b>0</b>	0	1	1	<b>0</b>	2
Pilot Point	0	<b>0</b>	0	0	0	<b>0</b>	0
Port Heiden	4	<b>0</b>	0	0	0	<b>0</b>	4
Total	60	19	36	50	21	3	189

<sup>a</sup> Of the 50 tagged, 3 were harvested by hunters and 47 were found dead on the beach.

Source: USFWS 1991 (Note: data through October 2, 1991)

TABLE 2. HARVESTS AND USES OF WALRUS, BRISTOL BAY COMMUNITIES

Note: there are no harvest survey data for Togiak or Twin Hills.

<u>Community</u>	<u>Year</u>	No. of Surveyed <u>HHs (%)</u>	<u>Used</u>	Percent of Households that:				<u>Total # Harvested</u>
				<u>Hunted</u>	<u>Harvested</u>	Received	Gave	
Alegnagik	1988-9	38 (90%)	21.2	5.3	0	21.2	10.5	0
Clarks Point	1988-9	17(100%)	41.2	11.8	5.9	41.2	17.6	a
Dillingham	1984	153 (22%)	3.9	1.3	0.7	3.3	1.3	5 <sup>b</sup>
Egegik	1984	25 (60%)	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0
Ekwok	1987	29 (91%)	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0
King Salmon	1983	43 (35%)	2.3	NA	2.3	0.0	NA	3 <sup>b</sup>
Koliganek	1987	42 (88%)	2.4	0.0	0.0	2.4	2.4	0
Levelock	1988	27 (82%)	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0
Manokotak	1985	54 (92%)	35.2	9.3	1.9	33.3	14.8	1
Naknek	1983	52 (42%)	0.0	NA	0.0	0.0	NA	0
New Stuyahok	1987	40 (54%)	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0
Pilot Point	1987	17 (94%)	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0
Port Heiden	1987	37 (100%)	5.4	5.4	5.4	0.0	5.4	3 <sup>c</sup>
South Naknek	1983	21 (43%)	0.0	NA	0.0	0.0	NA	0
Ugashik	1987	5 (100%)	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0

a Although one household at Clarks Point harvested several walrus during the study year, the hunters declined to provide harvest data during the interview.

<sup>b</sup> Expanded harvests. Harvests reported by the sample were one walrus at Dillingham and one walrus at King Salmon.

<sup>c</sup> All three animals were salvaged from the beach near Port Heiden. Some fat, flippers, and the tusks were recovered. Walrus are not hunted at Port Heiden (Fall and Morris 1987:115).

Sources: Paige et al. 1991; Seitz 1991; Files, Division of Subsistence

are at present very low.<sup>13</sup> The extent to which the documented harvest would increase **if** data were available for Togiak is not precisely known.

A survey by the University of Alaska of 354 households in 21 Bristol Bay communities pertaining to a 12 month period in 1973-74 recorded a harvest of three walrus in the region, one by Clarks Point residents and two by residents of Manokotak. However, Togiak and Twin Hills were not included in this study (Gasbarro and Utermohie 1974).

### Harvest Areas

Marine mammal hunting areas from the early **1960s** through the early 1980s were mapped by the Division of Subsistence for Bristol Bay communities (ADF&G 1985). These maps indicate that residents of the communities of Togiak, Twin Hills, Manokotak, Aleknagik, **Dillingham**, and Clarks Point used portions of Bristol Bay between Cape Newenham and Cape **Constantine**<sup>14</sup> for marine mammal hunting, among other activities. Specific maps of walrus hunting areas are not available.

Presently, the Twins are the only islands within the sanctuary that are open to hunting: In the 1950s - **1970s**, North Twin Island was second to Round Island in numbers of hauled out walrus. As many as 1,000 have been observed, but the number has been extremely variable (Frost et al. **1983:260**). Togiak hunters report that they occasionally search these islands in the spring for walrus, but rarely see any. However, if walrus are sighted, they are hunted. Some hunters are under the mistaken impression that the Twins are, like the other islands, closed to hunting.

According to contemporary Togiak respondents, it is rare today for them to observe walrus hauled up on most islands within the sanctuary. At times, they see walrus on Crooked Island and, more rarely, Summit Island. They report that Round Island is the only reliable place where hauled-out walrus can be found today.

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<sup>13</sup> It should be noted that uses of other marine mammals, including several kinds of seals, sea lions, and **belukha**, are quite important in many Bristol Bay communities.

<sup>14</sup> The maps for Togiak, Twin Hills, Manokotak, and Clarks Point show use of all the waters around the seven islands within the sanctuary. Aleknagik mapped use of areas around Round Island and Summit Island only. Dillingham maps depict no subsistence uses on or near these islands.

Since 1976, **ADF&G** reports from staff on Round Island have documented seven incidents of illegal harvests or attempted harvests of walrus there. Most of these incidents involved residents of Togiak. The last such incident occurred in **1981**. Oral traditions in Togiak contain accounts of arrests of individuals who harvested walrus for food on Round Island in the early **1960s**.

Hagemeister Island is primarily a source of beached dead walrus for Togiak (see below). Within the last year, one man who owns a reindeer herd there has reported seeing two groups of hauled-out walrus on the island for the first time within recent memory.

**As noted** earlier, Cape Peirce is not within the traditional territory of Togiak walrus hunters. The senior walrus hunter at the community meeting on October 9 has never been to Cape Peirce. Nevertheless, limited hunting for walrus by Togiak hunters does occasionally occur at Cape Peirce at present. A major problem at Cape Peirce is its sandy beach. As stated above, sand is difficult to remove from the hide, blubber, and meat if they are exposed to it during butchering. Consequently, valuable portions of the kill may be rendered unusable. According to Togiak hunters, another problem is distance combined with weather and travelling conditions. In ideal weather, Cape Peirce may be reached in three or four hours. However, it may take up to six hours if the seas are especially rough. In addition, the haul-out location at Cape Peirce is only semi-sheltered, and receives strong waves when the wind picks up. Travelling with a fully loaded **skiff** back to Togiak is considered dangerous under these conditions. Consequently, this is not an annual hunting location for Togiak **residents**.<sup>15</sup>

Since 1985, the Togiak National Wildlife Refuge has maintained a file of reports by its personnel of “incidents of disturbance” of walrus at Cape Peirce. This includes any observations of human interactions with the animals. The refuge staffs a camp there, generally from May to early October.<sup>16</sup> Since **1985**, four observations have involved people known to be from Togiak. The first two occurred in September 1967. One was a kill of one animal by two hunters, one of whom was from Togiak and the other originally from

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<sup>15</sup> Discussions with **USFWS** personnel and Togiak officials have identified one Togiak individual who may be a fairly regular walrus hunter at Cape Peirce: that is, he may make an annual hunting trip there. This **individual's** parents were from Osviak and the Quinhagak area.

<sup>16</sup> **It should be noted that some hunting activity could occur after the USFWS technicians leave in October.** USMS personnel believe such harvests to be minimal (Archibeque personal communication, 1991).

Togiak and married into **Goodnews** Bay. Later that month, several Togiak hunters killed one walrus. In **1990**, a hunter from Togiak tried unsuccessfully to kill a walrus from his boat. The other observation was a kill of one walrus by two Togiak people in 1991 (USFWS n.d.).

According to the **USFWS** log books, another community which uses Cape Peirce is **Goodnews** Bay. Hunters from this village killed one walrus at Cape Peirce in 1985, two in 1987, and two in 1988. The largest single documented kill occurred in 1988, when **five** hunters from Clarks Point killed nine walrus at Cape Peirce, only five of which were removed from the beach. This incident resulted in a conviction on a wanton waste charge. The number of total documented kills by all hunters at Cape Peirce has ranged from none in **1986** to **12** in 1987 (USFWS n.d.).

Table 3 lists the locations of kills or salvagings of walrus which were tagged at Togiak, Manokotak, Dillingham, and Clarks Point since 1988. The data may give some indication of where people in the Bristol Bay area have searched for beached walrus and ivory, or have hunted. With 23 and 20 walrus respectively, Cape Peirce and Hagemeister Island are the most frequent source of the walrus ivory. Of the 50 animals tagged at Togiak, 20 were from Hagemeister Island, 9 from around the village itself, 5 from Osviak, and 4 from Cape Peirce. For the four tagging locations together, six walrus were reported found on islands within the Walrus Islands Sanctuary. All of these were tagged in Dillingham.

#### Salvaae of Beached Walrus

As evidenced by tagging records, Togiak residents comb the beaches searching for dead walrus which have washed ashore. As noted above, this activity is called *mallussuq* and occurs in combination with other subsistence activities such as seal hunting, sea duck hunting, and berry picking: People also try to locate *malluk* (a beached carcass) during the commercial herring and salmon seasons. They retrieve the ivory from these carcasses. Also, if a fresh beached walrus is found, parts are salvaged for subsistence use. But most carcasses are not usable for food. As explained by Togiak hunters, male walrus “sink like a heavy rock” if shot to kill instantly at sea. These animals do not wash ashore until they have “bloated-up with age.” By this time, most if not all of the carcass is inedible.

**TABLE 3. PLACE OF KILL OR SALVAGE OF WALRUS TAGGED IN SELECTED BRISTOL BAY COMMUNITIES**

<u>Location</u>	<u>Place of Taaaina</u>			<u>Clarks Point</u>	<u>Total</u>
	<u>Toaiak</u>	<u>Manokotak</u>	<u>Dillinaham</u>		
Togiak Area	9	2	6	0	17
Hagemeister Island	20	0	0	0	20
Cape Pierce	4	0	19	0	23
Asignpak	1	0	0	0	1
Osviak	5	0	0	0	5
Tongue Point	1	0	0	0	1
Cape Constantine	0	1	10	1	12
Nushagak Bay	0	1	0	b	1 (b)
Summit Island	0	0	1	0	1
Crooked Island	0	0	3	0	3
High Island	0	0	2	0	2
Protection Point	0	0	3	0	3
Picnic Beach	0	0	4	0	4
Nananachak Beach	0	0	1	0	1
Togiak NWR (a)	0	0	0	12	12
Clarks Point (b)	0	0	0	13	13
Unknown	10	0	0	1	11
Total	50 <sup>C</sup>	4	49	27	130

Source: **USFWS 1991** (Note: data through October 2, 1991)

a No more specific location given

b Some animals found along Nushagak Bay generally are included under Clarks Point.

<sup>c</sup> Of the 50 tagged walrus, 3 were harvested by hunters and **47** were found dead on the beach and salvaged.

A hunter recounted a story of a walrus he found “half buried in the sand” on Hagemeister Island. He salvaged portions of the animal “even though the meat was green in appearance and the hide and blubber very thin.” He remarked that, “Sometimes our desire for walrus meat and hide overrides the undesirable condition of the beached carcass.”

According to some, “semi-aged” walrus hide and flippers salvaged from beached walrus can be eaten, but not the meat from these same animals. One man said, “When I have a strong desire for walrus, I will take a chance on taking small portions home to eat.” On the other hand, it said that younger people will not eat such foods, although they enjoy fresh walrus a great deal. “Our younger generation will not eat aged and smelly walrus,” this man added.

In general, parts of a beached walrus will be used if the carcass has not rotted too badly. Botulism is a serious concern. To test the freshness of a beached walrus, a person will slit the hide with a knife to inspect its condition. If an oozing occurs, it means that the animal has deteriorated to a condition called “*qallatek*” and cannot be used. Overall, the assessment appears to be that beached walrus are poor substitutes for those that are taken fresh.

### Uses of Walrus

Today, the primary subsistence use of walrus in Togiak is for food. After a successful harvest (either a kill or discovery of an edible beached animal), walrus meat, hide, and blubber are distributed throughout **the village**. Because of the demand, the hunters themselves may retain relatively little from each animal. In addition to the meat, hide, flippers, and blubber, the lungs, kidneys, livers, and hearts are still used. Today, most of the meat is preserved in electric freezers.

Different rules pertain to *malluk*, walrus products salvaged from beached carcasses. In contrast to fresh walrus, which is distributed widely, the harvester of *malluk* cooks it at home and invites a few friends or relatives over for a meal. As noted above, *malluk* is handled with caution because of the possibility of food poisoning, and is usually not simply given away. Also, not everyone enjoys or appreciates an “aged product” such as *malluk*.



In contrast, fresh walrus hide and blubber are choice foods in Togiak. “My kids love eating walrus hide and will request their mother to cook it until crunchy,” one hunter explained. The hide is cooked with a layer of blubber attached, or else the hide will be too dry, “like a cracker.” Fresh walrus hide is boiled or aged for later use. Also, the hide and flippers from fresh walrus may be fermented to make **taaqaassaaq**. “Aged fermented walrus hide gets soft, juicy, and chewy. [It’s] a good snack” (J. Dyasuk, personal communication). A small amount of walrus blubber is rendered into oil, but seal blubber is by far a more important source of oil in Togiak today.

In contrast with the past, walrus stomachs are no longer used for containers or drum covers. Nor are rain coats made from walrus intestines any longer.

Ivory is also used from harvested or salvaged walrus. There are a few walrus ivory carvers in Togiak. There is interest in developing an ivory carving program in the village schools.

#### Distribution and **Exchange** of Walrus with Other Villages

The limited data available on this topic suggest that very little if any marine mammal products are presently received by Togiak residents from any other villages. To the contrary, Togiak appears to be a major supplier of marine mammal products for other Bristol Bay communities, as it was in the past. For example, according to preliminary results of a study conducted for the Minerals Management Service, no interviewed Togiak households received marine mammal products from other villages in 1989, but 58.3 percent received such foods from other Togiak families. In contrast, 20.8 percent of this sample gave-away marine mammal products to other Bristol Bay villages (data specifically about walrus are not available), and 20.8 percent received big game from these other communities (Social Science Research Associates 1991). No households in Manokotak reported sharing walrus with Togiak families in 1985, although one walrus was taken by a Manokotak hunter in that year (Schichnes and Chythlook **1988:77**). One elder in Togiak said that when people visit their relatives in villages to the west, such as **Goodnews** Bay and Platinum, they sometimes return with a small gift of walrus, “enough for a meal.”

Another important use of walrus for Togiak residents today is sharing with other communities. Togiak walrus hunters state that when they receive requests for walrus from other villages in the area, they

respond without any expectation of immediate exchange or trade. For example, 16 households in Manokotak (30 percent) in 1985 received gifts of walrus from friends and relatives living in Togiak (Schichnes and Chythlook 1988:78). Except for seal oil (received from Togiak by 22 Manokotak households), more families in Manokotak received walrus than any other resource from Togiak.

It is interesting to note that 41.4 percent of the households in Ekwok, 75.0 percent in New Stuyahok, and 71.4 percent from Koliganek, all inland villages on the Nushagak River, reported receiving gifts of seal oil or meat in 1987-8, with Togiak a major supplier. However, only one household in the three villages received walrus in that year (Schichnes and Chythlook 1991). This suggests that while sharing of marine mammal products between Togiak and the inland villages is very common, this sharing rarely involves walrus, perhaps because of the relative scarcity of this resource in Togiak's subsistence harvests today.

#### SUMMARY OF FINDINGS

Subsistence uses of walrus have a long history at Togiak, and in some other Bristol Bay villages. The oral traditions recounted by Togiak elders, and contemporary practices, suggest that hunting **hailed** out walrus in spring and especially in fall at locations such as Round Island were highly organized activities which supplied the village with highly valued subsistence **foods**.

Evidently, over the last several decades, an involuntary shift in walrus hunting methods has occurred at Togiak. When Round Island was closed to hunting, hunters had to shift to open water hunting methods and to the salvage of walrus hide and blubber from carcasses found dead on the beach. In contrast to onshore hunting, hunts in open water result in the loss of many animals due to sinking. Locating the animals is more problematic, hence walrus is a less reliable source of food at present than it was in the past.

Perhaps to compensate for lowered harvests and reduced hunting opportunities, it appears that substantial effort is made to comb beaches for walrus that can be salvaged for food and for ivory.

Although this **activity** does provide some hide and blubber when fresh carcasses are encountered, many, if not most, yield little food because of their advanced state of decay.

As noted above, walrus hunts on land were contexts during which traditional values were passed across generations. As told by one respondent, the rules governing hunting “were written only in the minds of hunters.” Young men had to demonstrate that they had learned these rules in order to earn the respect of senior hunters and the right to lead hunts themselves. Elders have noted a loss of these values among some young people who have “lost a firm grip on Yup’ik culture.”

Consistent with the elders’ concerns, and as noted above, the history of the use of walrus in Bristol Bay, as well as elsewhere in Alaska, contains examples of cases in which large numbers of animals were killed solely to obtain ivory for sale, resulting in waste of much or all of the edible portions of the walrus. This suggests that if subsistence hunting in critical habitat areas such as Round Island were to resume, appropriate management tools such as seasons, harvest quotas, and permitting procedures may be necessary to augment and support the traditional hunting rules of the Togiak people.

In part, older hunters at Togiak attribute the loss of some traditional skills and values to restricted opportunities to hunt walrus at traditional haul out sites. One man said, ‘There’s a few of us **“ex-trainees”** left from past traditional walrus hunts at Round Island, and since the closure of our traditional hunting site, we have no one specific and guaranteed harvest site to take our young men to train during the traditional walrus harvest seasons. . We do take our children now for them to observe our mishaps with walrus at sea, but this is just not true hunting. This is harassment to the point of kill, and many times the kill is not (even) retrieved.”

As a result of these changes, Togiak residents report that there are fewer walrus taken for subsistence use in Togiak than 30 to 40 years ago, although quantified data to demonstrate the scope of such a decline are not available. Reduced harvests have also resulted in less walrus to share with other villages in the Bristol Bay region, despite the fact that traditional networks for sharing other marine mammals products such as seal oil remain strong. On the other hand, interest in harvesting and using walrus in accordance with traditional methods and values continues in Togiak. This interest is the basis for the proposal to the Board of Game for a managed hunt on Round Island.

## POSTSCRIPT

The Board of Game discussed Togiak's proposal on November 3, 1991 during its meeting in Fairbanks. The Board decided to defer further consideration of the proposal until its spring 1993 meeting. Also, the Board passed a resolution citing the reasons for the deferral. The resolution also called for consideration of management concerns raised during the discussion of Togiak's request in a walrus conservation plan, and the formation of a task force to further examine these issues. The Board's resolution appears in Appendix D.

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**PROPOSAL 49** - 5 AAC 92.510.(13)(A). AREAS CLOSED TO HUNTING. Amend this subparagraph to provide the following:

1) 5 AAC 92.510 (13)(A) would be amended to provide a one month opening in October for subsistence walrus hunting. 2) The hunt would be limited to 10 bull walrus. 3) The hunt would be administered by the Togiak Traditional Council in cooperation with ADF&G.

**PROBLEM:** The closure of the Walrus Islands Stat8 Game Sanctuary to subsistence walrus hunting. The people of Togiak and other Native coastal communities have hunted marine mammals since time immemorial. Since the creation of the Sanctuary they have been denied access to an important traditional hunting area.

**WHAT WILL HAPPEN IF NOTHING IS DONE?** Continued erosion of our culture. Continuing difficulty exercising our rights preserved by the Marine Mammals Protection Act.

**WHO IS LIKELY TO BENEFIT?** Native village residents.

**WHO IS LIKELY TO SUFFER?** No one. The complete closure of Round Island to walrus hunting is not biologically justified. A carefully administered harvest would not adversely affect the walrus population. A hunt after the main haulout season would not adversely affect the recreational and scientific values of the Sanctuary.

**OTHER SOLUTIONS CONSIDERED?** None considered at this time.

PROPOSED BY: Togiak Traditional Council

(HQ-92-G-19)

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APPENDIX B: SYNOPSIS OF MEETING HELD IN TOGIAK,  
OCTOBER 9, 1991, TO DISCUSS WALRUS HUNTING

Translation and synopsis by Molly Chythlook  
Edited by James Fall  
Division of Subsistence, Alaska Department of Fish and Game  
October 18, 1991

Background: The Division of Subsistence requested that a meeting be **arranged with** individuals in Togiak who are familiar with walrus hunting, especially those who are knowledgeable about uses of Round Island. The purpose of the meeting was to gather background information for the Alaska Board of Game's discussion of Proposal No. 49, submitted by the Togiak Traditional Council, which would reopen Round Island to subsistence walrus hunting. The meeting was arranged by Frank Logusak, the mayor of Togiak. Mr. Logusak is also a member of the traditional council, the Togiak Fish and Game Advisory Committee, and Togiak's representative on the Eskimo Walrus Commission.

Togiak residents who were present at the meeting, which was held at the Togiak city off ice from about 10:30 a.m. to 12:15 p.m., were two brothers, Jack Kusak (**JK**) and David **Gusok** (DG), **Jack's** son Sam Kusak (SK) (former Togiak Mayor), Willie **Echuck** Sr (WE), his son Willie Jr. (**WEJ**), Frank Logusak (FL) (Tog. Mayor), and an elder, Herbert **Lockuk** (HL). From the Division of Subsistence were Jim Fall (JF) (regional program manager from Anchorage), Janet Schichnes (JS) (subsistence resource specialist, Dillingham), and Molly Chythlook (MC) (bilingual technician, Dillingham).

The discussion of conducted primarily in Yup'ik and recorded for later transcription and translation. Ms. Chythlook was the primary interviewer. She provided periodic English translations for the two non-Yup'ik speakers present.

The following is Ms. Chythlook's synopsis of the discussions. Sufficient time has not been available to prepare a complete translation, but summaries of the major points and responses are included. Unless otherwise noted, Ms. Chythlook asked the questions, which were from a list of topics developed before hand by the division staff. If a response is not prefaced by initials, it is a synopsis of a group response.

Preliminary (not recorded): JF gives overview of purpose of meeting in English.

MC: (translates) We are gathering information as background on the Togiak walrus proposal.

(HL): He became aware of his surroundings while living in Togiak, when villagers were hunting and harvesting walrus from Round Island using kayaks, when skiffs/boats and motors and airplanes were nonexistent. At the time, paddling by kayak was the only transportation used for hunting.

(HL) There were specific seasons to harvest walrus. Fall hunts would start after walrus gained fat content and they harvested the healthy and fat walrus only. Fall hunts were when blowflies were gone after first freeze. This month (October) is when hunts used to happen when flies stop laying maggots. Hunts never took place during summer months, as remembered by HL.

(HL) All hunts and harvests were planned and organized before leaving home. After guns became available they were used with care, conserving bullet use. Bow and arrows were used whenever possible to hunt sea birds instead of guns. This is the use that HL experienced.

**(Q)** WERE HUNTS DONE ON LAND ONLY OR WERE THEIR HUNTS AT SEA TOO?

(HL) Hunts were mainly on Islands such as Round Island and High Island. All islands used to be occupied by walrus before they were spooked away.

**(JK)** (Most) islands are no longer used (by walrus) for launch out places (e.g. as haul outs) on a regular bases. Once in a great while people will see walrus on Crooked Island. Round Island is the only place walrus still use today.

(DG) His first experiences with walrus hunting were with motorized boats and just as a crew member. Hunters would check other islands before going to Round Island as last resort when no walrus were found on other islands. This happened during my time but was not a traditional practice during kayak era. (In other words, when kayaks were used, hunters went directly to Round Island because of its reliability: after faster transportation was available, other islands could be checked out on the way to Round Island.)

**(Q)** WHAT QUALIFICATIONS WERE NEEDED TO JOIN WALRUS HUNTING PARTIES OR WERE THE HUNTS OPEN TO ANYBODY?

**(HL,JK,DG)** Hunts were not open for anybody to go. These were and are organized hunts. Only experienced hunters were assigned to harpoon, spear, shoot, and butcher. Ones who deliberately misused their hunting rules were left home and were never allowed to go.

(JK) When harvesting on land, only the experienced were handed guns, leaving out the young men, the "trainees", to observe.

Hunters harvested only what can be used.

Once back in the village, households were equally given food, even ones not included within the hunting party network.

Most of the Togiak households were given walrus. Catches would range right around 10 or so. All the harvested animal would be used, except at times the bottom portion could not be salvaged depending where it were harvested (sandy beach).

Harvests were also measured by amount or load each boat can safely return to village with.

When hunts were administered on land, walrus in the water were never shot.

**(Q)** WHEN HARVESTING WALRUS, WHICH ONES ARE TARGETED?

(DG,JK) Best of the walrus are targeted. The-experienced hunter knows which are frail and skinny. The healthy fat walrus have very smooth hide surface, versus the bumpy rough hide of a frail skinny walrus.

**(Q)** HOW WERE HUNTING PARTIES ORGANIZED?

Each hunting individual was assigned his duty before leaving for a hunt. All experienced individuals did their assigned task while the young men (trainees) were assigned to help load meat, hide, etc into kayak or boat.

In recent years, a pulley system was used to haul hide and meat from butchering site to the boat. One person was assigned to attach meat or hide to pulley and one to detach as rest pulled the system.

**(Q)** WHAT AREAS ARE (WERE) USED TO HARVEST WALRUS AT ROUND ISLAND?

There is a cove walrus use as haul out and that's the only use area for harvests.

The cove is sheltered and seldom gets rough. The tide doesn't cover the beach when it floods and it has good rocky beach.

When kayak were used for hunting the men would stay the night at Round Island and longer if they would get weathered in.

**(JK)** There is an old cabin site at Round Island where hunters used to stay when weathered in.

**(Q)** WAS ROUND ISLAND EVER USED FOR YEAR ROUND RESIDENCY?

(HL) No. As remembered by HL during kayak era, hunters spent more time at the island than they do now while hunting. Qayaq hunters had to overnight when on harvest trips and at times when on returns to retrieve their harvests on the island. We have not seen year round residents at Round Island. The islands were used by hunters only".

(HL) People never used Round Island for a pleasure camping site. Only hunters used it for their traditional hunting site. They limited their stay as much as possible on the island due respect for the animals, and could resume their normal existence, once left alone again.

**(Q)** HOW WERE THE WALRUS USED ONCE HARVESTED?

Once walrus were returned to village the women took care of the processing care and use. Men helped deliver the parts to households but the main preparation for use was up to the women.

The main purpose for harvesting and processing walrus were to supply the diet through out the winter just like drying fish for later use. Walrus were eaten not on a daily basis but were used like we use dried fish.

Every usable part was brought back to the village and the few unusable parts were properly discarded leaving the butchering area as clean as possible.

All hunts were so organized back then, that no man dared to break the traditional rules of hunting. The traditional rules were written only in the minds of hunters. Each young man was taught from early age the rules and laws of the land and sea hunts and in order to achieve and gain the respect as an experienced hunter he had to earn his respect.

Elders of today notice the changes of people's standards to the point where it seems our young people are groping, blinded by the western culture they cannot understand but try to abide by it, therefore losing their firm grip on the Yup'ik culture they need to establish first.

**(Q)** DID WALRUS HUNTS STILL TAKE PLACE EVEN AFTER ROUND ISLAND WAS CLOSED?

Hunts for walrus still happen except attempts are done in open sea. If walrus are sighted on other islands they are hunted. If walrus are sighted on ice floes while seal hunting during spring those are hunted also.

(Q) WHAT SEASONS WERE USED FOR WALRUS HUNTS?

Fall and spring used to be the main seasons but at present we hunt whenever walrus are sighted for it's seldom we see one we can hunt with an assurance of retrieving our kill.

If a fresh beached carcass is found, **parts** of this will be used. Most carcass are not usable for food. Walrus sink like a heavy rock if shot to instantly kill it at sea and these will not beach until they've **bloated**-up with age, so most beached carcasses have already deteriorated by the time they are washed up.

If walrus die of natural causes and later found beached, they are usually not edible. They are skinny with low fat and meat content.

(JK) He founded two sick walruses on Hagemeister two different times. The last walrus he found was half buried in sand. Parts of animal were brought home for home use even though the meat was green in appearance and hide and blubber very thin. "Some times our desire for walrus meat and hide over-rides the undesirable conditions of the beached carcass".

(Q) WHAT TECHNIQUES DO YOU USE WHEN HUNTING AT SEA?

When trying to harvest walrus at sea the animal is shot-up mainly to weaken it, then immediately harpooned to retrieve. If walrus is shot to kill instantly, it will sink like a rock before retrieval, but if it's shot to weaken only it will stay afloat long enough for retrieval. One has to know where not to shoot in order to assure its retrieval.

Once the walrus is harpooned, depending on its size it will be towed to area where it can be butchered using two or more skiffs. "Dead walrus are very heavy and hard to keep afloat while towing to the beach".

Success rate of harvest at sea is low due to size and weight of walrus (that is, they are too heavy to haul into boat after kill, and awkward to handle once killed in water), location of kill (too far off the beach to tow kill) and condition of the sea (water can get very rough in a short period). Walrus can be herded to shallow water but the meat no longer is edible after herding and chasing for some time. "It's like any land animal that's been running for some time, and the meat becomes tough and strong tasting".

After shooting to weaken walrus, they are harpooned using a long rope attached to a harpoon while end of the rope is held until the walrus is pulled close enough to kill. Using this technique, walrus are held even though the kill sinks. Two skiffs are used to balance and hold the heavy animal until beached. Healthy plump walrus will sometimes stay afloat after they've been killed. Walrus have an air bag on the side of neck and if the **airbag** is blown up it will also stay afloat until the bag empties of air. "This may be the **airbag** they use to help breath with while under water. This bag we call cauyaa ("its drum"). The bag used to be used for a drum cover, so that's why it's called cauyaa."

Since Togiak has many households, it's been hard to share with all of them, even those who have traditionally eaten walrus. One walrus is never enough. Since walrus hunting takes special-skills and there are very few experienced hunters left, this is another reason for a high percentage of non-retrieval during hunts by non experienced hunters.

'There's a few of us ex-trainees left from past traditional walrus hunts from Round Island and since closure of our traditional hunting site (Round Island), we have no one specific and guaranteed harvest site to take our young men to train during the traditional walrus harvest seasons.'

"We do take our children now for them to observe our mishaps with walrus at sea, but this is just not true hunting. This is harassment to the point of kill and many times the kill is not retrieved."

(INTERMISSION TO DO SYNOPSIS ENGLISH TRANSLATION)

(Q) REGARDING WALRUS HUNTING NOW, HOW AND WHERE ARE WALRUS HARVESTED?

(HL) Since the closure of Round Island, I have not hunted from there to date. I've gone with hunters who were hunting out at sea. Many a time we'd lose the walrus by sinking. As I mentioned before, it all depends on how hunters use the modern walrus hunting techniques mixed in with luck, and not because of traditional techniques in retrieval of a kill. Our ancestors never used to hunt walrus by accident, hoping they will harvest walrus, but knowing they will harvest by going to their traditional hunting site (Round Island) with assurance of seeing walrus for harvest, complete retrieval, and use.

(Q) THE RETRIEVAL OF THE KILL IS DETRIMENTALLY DIFFERENT AT SEA THAN **LAND**?

To hunt at sea is too unpredictable of retrieval of kill, therefore is like wasting a huge animal, but since there is no other choice and other island hunts don't produce walrus we take chances at sea. Few walrus used to haul out on other islands (Crooked and, seldom, Summit) but not anymore.

(JK) A larger percent are not retrieved if killed at sea. Once in awhile a semi-fresh walrus will be found beached and this will be butchered partially for home use. Semi-aged walrus hide and flippers are edible but not the meat.

(Q) DO PEOPLE GO MAINLY TO FIND BEACHED WALRUS?

Most beached walrus are found accidentally while traveling for other resources and if the beached walrus is fairly fresh, parts will be used. Since Round Island closed we've had to make the best of what becomes available. We have lost our traditional yearly food and walrus was our biggest game food available to us since other big game were scarce.

(Q) HOW ARE WALRUS HUNTS ORGANIZED NOW?

(JK) I haven't gone hunting for sometime now, but as far as I know only hunters who have an experienced person along usually go. Walrus hunting is not as easy as if one goes to hunt seal or other smaller game.

(FL) Last year some Togiak people went to Cape Peirce and heading the group was RN but they went after people managing Cape Peirce okayed their hunt. Cape Peirce harvests get sandy because of its sandy beach.

Once sand gets on the hide, blubber, and meat it's really hard to wash off (like trying to wash and eat sandy herring roe); a lot can go to waste if sand gets on them.

Walrus hide and meat harvested from Cape Peirce tend to be soft with no fiber (female walrus).'

(Q) WHY ARE THE HARVESTED WALRUS SOFT AT CAPE PEIRCE?

The walrus at Cape Peirce are mainly female (but see footnote one). Round Island has mostly male walrus and their meat and hide are firm.

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<sup>1</sup> Note that virtually all walrus which haul out at Cape Peirce are males.

(HL) I have not seen any female walrus killed and harvested from Round Island. As long as I can recall hunters from the past telling us, mainly males haul out at Round Island and females go separately to haul out in western areas.

(WE Sr.) When I'd go with hunting parties to Round Island, we'd go after first freeze and walrus have had a chance to fatten-up.

Starting in September, walrus start gaining their fat and by October they are fattened.

(WE) October is when men used to start hunting for walrus after they organized their hunting party. Upon returning each hunting party would get their equal share of the walrus and in turn these hunters would share their portion to relatives and friends. Even the young unmarried trainees received their equal share, thinking mainly of their parents' households.

The adult hunting leaders would get first choice on walrus tusks, then if there's some extras, then the younger men were given some.

(DG) Our transportation methods now are fast, dependable, and large, and we usually go with assurance of harvesting our kill. But it's seldom done especially if unexperienced walrus hunters are along with their guns. Kills are usually successful but many times we come home without our intended harvest and our desire for fresh a walrus meal unfulfilled.

(Q) WHEN LEAVING TO WALRUS HUNT, DO MANY SKIFFS GO?

A number of skiffs will go and search on their own until walrus are spotted. Then skiffs in that area will congregate for a kill. When skiffs start herding and chasing, shooting whenever one gets a chance, is when walrus will sink if instantly killed. If the killed walrus is retrieved, two to three will make a long tow line and tow the walrus. Using a long line for tow helps prevent loosing while in tow. Like we've stressed many times through out our conversation huntina at sea wastes walrus by sinking (emphasized) and it's not our traditional way for harvesting walrus. Hunts on land for walrus is what our ancestors did and that is the more sensible way to hunt (even) now.

(FL) The traditional Council members, when discussing use of walrus once harvested from Round Island, **said they** could possibly be used for elder **potlucks** and donate the tusks to local school to help promote education on carving.

Since attending the Eskimo Walrus Commission, and asking about the number of harvests in northern villages such as Gamble, Savoonga, and other villages, I've been told of harvests of up to 90 a person per year.

(FL) (Talks in English). FW has mentioned of up to 400 walrus harvested by northern villages and since our section is closed to hunting he feels our area provides northern villages with more walrus to kill. We have walrus handy to harvest here but we cannot even harvest some for our village.

(Q) (JF) HOW MANY WALRUS DOES TOGIK MANAGE TO HARVEST EACH YEAR?

(FL) One maybe two for the whole village. These are actual kills (that is, not beach retrievals).

(DG) When I count the village households, a harvest of ten walrus does not seem enough, but this will be better than what we've had to put-up with since closure of Round Island. Even one sure harvest on the first trip will be one **skiff** load and a sure meal for some households.

(WE) Harvests at Round Island could be organized like it used to be by harvesting as needed per trip and as weather permits. Even a group of hunters can butcher and handle just so many walrus in a limited time, so over-harvesting still does not make sense. Two and possibly three can be harvested at once. If two skiffs (Togiak skiffs) go to harvest, they would safely transport a two walrus harvest back.

(Q) WHY DID THE PROPOSAL MADE BY THE COUNCIL LIST 10 AS A LIMIT OF HARVEST DURING MONTH OF OCTOBER?.

(FL) We used ten as a predicted number knowing unpredictable weather changes during fall months. Weather permitting, any limited number can be harvested. If this proposal ever works to where it will be usable, I'd suggest all harvests and attempts be reported and recorded so all activities will be on paper. I don't ever want to hear officials say "They asked for this number even though they weren't going to make an attempt to reach their limit." With all **activities** recorded, any hunts and attempted hunts would be on record.

(Q) WHO IS GOING TO OVER SEE YOUR HUNTS AND HARVESTS, F&G OR ONES WORKING AS MANAGERS AT ROUND ISLAND?

(FL) Round Island personnel are gone from island by October. Fish and Wildlife Service has assigned two **RIT's**, me as one, and since we're both from Togiak and we have a good knowledge of who hunts and are trusted by locals, they can give us information concerning hunts from Round Island.

(DG) If Round Island hunts ever become a reality, all hunts before leaving need to be reported. This will perhaps control who goes and better manage what happens during hunt.

(FL) If the season started first of October until end of the month would probably give people enough time to harvest and it would be after blowfly season.

(Q) (JF) HOW WOULD YOU ORGANIZE YOUR OCTOBER HUNT? (GO TO ROUND ISLAND ONE TIME OR SEVERAL TIMES?)

(FL) All would depend on weather. In the past hunts we'd plan and organize days ahead **for the hunt**. After forming a group of hunters, the equipment to be used would be readied such as purchasing fuel for transportation (using 18' lund skiff). Depending on size of group, one or two skiffs are used. Total of four guys would man the skiffs.

If Round Island proposal becomes real to where we can hunt there, one commercial boat (22'-28' Togiak skiff) probably will be used with a lund in tow. Using larger boat may enable more hunters to go

(Q) (JF) HOW LONG WOULD IT TAKE TO REACH ROUND ISLAND DURING GOOD WEATHER?

(DG) Within two hours from Togiak.

(FL) Explaining Jim's first question concerning how many trips it would take to harvest (10?) walrus from RI and what his response was.

Hunting group is formed and ready themselves by planning to go first good available weather for sea travel and in the meantime other equipment is readied. Togiak skiff would be taken along with a lund to use for beach landing and loading larger boat with harvest.



(JK) Using larger boat will provide safe sea travel, larger capacity for transporting harvests, larger crew to **reduce** time spent on Round Island butchering and loading harvest and possibly lessen trips to Round Island for more harvests.

(FL) Translating some of his Yup'ik explanations.

The limit of 10 kills is not possible to transport within a day, but to harvest one or two walrus (at a time) and try to return (home) the same day would be their goal. **With** weather so unpredictable hunters would not take chances on over night trips for **harvesting** in fear of camping longer than planned due to sudden weather changes.

(FL) Depending on conditions of a hunting trip (weather, group and transportation size) three to four walrus could be harvested at one trip.

(DG) Walrus are larger than moose so we'd be lucky if two could be harvested on a day trip.

(Q) (JF) ONCE AT ROUND ISLAND, HOW ARE THE WALRUS APPROACHED?

(JK) Walrus are approached from their lee side. When approached from their lee side one can land a skiff right near them or even walk up to them. If approached from any other direction they'll get spooked and scabble towards water. Walrus are easily spooked but if they don't get your scent they'll stay.

(Q) (JF) HOW CLOSE COULD ONE GET TO THE WALRUS?

(DG) If approached on the lee side "you could get right to them" (Note: within five feet or less)

(Q) HOW GOOD IS THEIR EYE SIGHT?

(DG) Walrus have good eye sight but they seem to depend on their sense of smell more. You can approach walrus within their sight but will not move until they smell you.

(Q) (JF) JUST ONE SHOT KILLS A WALRUS?

(DG) An experienced hunter will use one shot to kill a walrus. 22 **magum** is usually used to kill walrus. Some will use a 22. There are only two places where one could aim to kill.

(Q) (JF) WHO IS IN CHARGED OF THE HUNT? WHO'S PERMITTED TO SHOOT THE WALRUS? ARE THEIR HELPERS?

(FL) Hunting group has a leader who is experienced walrus hunter. He was born 1950 but was never on Round Island to date. (Therefore, this age group has no hunting experience on Round Island.) Has been to High Island (**Ingriqvak**) at age 7 with grandparents and Tom Chythlook's (who owned a conversion boat -sail boat) hunting group. Walrus use to haul out on High Island in the 1950's and disappeared during 1960's and were completely gone before 1970. Once in awhile hunters will see walrus there.

(WE **sr.**) If Round Island becomes a reality, we need to include surrounding village residents by informing them and not leave them out.

(DG) We won't leave them out, but respect area villagers' right to Round Island.

(WE) Before area villagers go on Round Island hunts, they need to let person in charge here know of their planned hunt. Hunts will get out of control as well as harvests and non-wasteful use of harvests if (just) anyone is permitted to hunt on Round Island.

Now, there are careless hunters who will shoot anything that moves and wasteful hunts are heard of also, so rules and regulations that people can agree upon would have to be developed.

(HL) Communication is not a problem anymore, so informing us of planned hunts by area villagers wouldn't be a problem.

(Q) (JF) HOW MANY EXPERIENCED WALRUS HUNTERS ARE THERE NOW AT TOGIAK?

(FL) Has list of 12-13 hunters compiled for Eskimo Walrus Commission.

(Q) (JF) ARE HUNTERS MIDDLE AGED TO OLDER MEN?

(FL) List compiled has middle aged men (David **Gusok** is the youngest) to older men.

(Q) (JF) HAVE YOUNGER MEN BEEN LEARNING THE SKILLS OF HUNTING WALRUS AFTER ROUND ISLAND CLOSURE?

(FL) Teaching our young on a regular basis about traditional walrus hunting techniques has been disrupted since closure of Round Island. During spring travels with our families for other resources, we happen upon walrus. Our young will observe then. Walrus hunts now are so unpredictable we'll go for other resources as well.

(Q) (JF) BESIDES ROUND ISLAND, WHERE ARE OTHER HUNTING LOCATIONS FOR WALRUS WHERE ONE CAN HARVEST WALRUS NOW?

(FL) Cape Peirce, but as mentioned before, is not a traditional location because of its sandy beaches and its distance.

(Q) (JF) HOW LONG DOES IT TAKE TO REACH CAPE PEIRCE?

(DG) Three-four hours if weather permits but it can also take 5-6 hours (half a day) due to rough open sea around Cape Newenham. The walrus haul out location at Cape Peirce is semi-sheltered and gets on shore waves as soon as weather changes. Therefore is not an ideal location to harvest for subsistence use.

On-shore waves stir the sand, making it impossible to wash blood off butchered walrus before placing in boat. The bottom portion of beach butchered walrus goes to waste due to sand ingrained in the hide as well as pieces accidentally dropped on sand. "Sand is impossible to wash off hide, blubber and meat of walrus".

Cape Peirce is not the traditional hunting area for this area due to its geographical location, cost and time to make the trip, and restricted loads for safety. This is not a annual hunting location.

(Q) (JF), HOW ABOUT THE TWINS ?

(DG) Once in awhile and only during spring are walrus are seen at the Twins (*Nunevragak*). “Even though we see walrus at the Twins we don’t hunt them in fear of being prosecuted by Fish and Game.”

(MC) Points out that the Twins are open for walrus hunting.

(DG) We’ve been told otherwise and that we’d get prosecuted if we hunt on other islands. There is hardly any walrus on the islands. Hunters will visit all islands, weather permitting, and with no success so it’s not even worth traveling just in hopes of seeing one.

(Q) (JF) HOW ABOUT **HAGEMEISTER ISLAND** FOR WALRUS?

(JK) For the first time since he’s herded reindeer on the island, two groups of **haulouts** were sighted last year. One **haulout** was at western tip of the island and the other south east. These sightings were the first since I’ve started flying around the island checking on the herd.

(DG) Beached (dead) walrus are mainly sighted at Hagemeister and is where we get parts of beached walrus for home use if semi-fresh walrus were found.

(Q) (JF) ARE BEACHED WALRUS A GOOD SOURCE OF MEAT, HIDE, AND BLUBBER?

(FL) No. They are aged and not edible.

(DG) Semi-fresh ones (not bloated) walrus are partially edible, mainly the flippers and some hide. “When I have a strong desire for walrus, I will take a chance on taking small portions home to eat, but our younger generation will not eat aged and smelly walrus”.

(JK) Parts of a beached walrus will be consumed only if it’s not bloated, and to test the freshness of beached walrus, slit the hide using a knife to see if its inside has spoiled (*qallatek* = blubber and meat deteriorated to the point where it’ll ooze out if sliced). We’ll use what we can from beached walrus but by the time walrus are beached they are already bloated”. Walrus sink like rocks to the bottom when carelessly shot and won’t float back up until deteriorated and bloated. If the ocean water is warm they’ll bloat up sooner just, like a human body lost at sea.

There is a difference between a fresh killed walrus verses a beached one. A beached walrus cannot replace fresh walrus meat. “Would a walrus biologist eat an aged cow after it’s been in water for weeks and then beached after deterioration has started in place of a fresh cow?”

We take risks of developing food poisoning and stomach cramps by eating beached walrus.

(Q) (JF) DOES SKIN (HIDE) AND BLUBBER **LAST** LONGER (THAN MEAT) ON BEACHED WALRUS?

(DG) When we locate beached walrus we’ll only take parts of the hide and flippers. The meat and blubber, since walrus insides are so well enclosed, deteriorate, starting from the inside. It’s like aging meat and blubber in a warm tight container.

(Q) (JF) DO YOU BOIL THE HIDE (TO EAT IT)?

(DG) Beached walrus hide is only boiled. Fresh hide is boiled and aged for later use.

(Q) (JS) DO YOUNGER KIDS STILL HAVE A TASTE FOR WALRUS?

(DG) Younger kids still eat and love fresh walrus. "My kids love eating walrus hide and will request their mother to cook it until crunchy".

(Q) (JF) HOW ABOUT THE BLUBBER (HOW IS IT PREPARED)?

(DG) We cook the blubber still attached to the hide. The hide eaten without the blubber is dry. Some make rendered oil with walrus blubber, but this is seldom done. The blubber is not rendered as often as seal blubber.

(Q) (JF) DO YOU USE WALRUS TO TRADE WITH?

(DG, JK) We use walrus to share with whoever requests some. When other area villages want walrus we give without requesting (anything in) exchange or money.

JF. Notes that seal oil is used for "trading" (note: "trading" was a poor choice of words. "Sharing" more accurately describes this activity) with Nushagak villages.

**(DG,WE,JK)** The younger generation probably trade and even sell seal oil, but the older folks still mainly give and share resources.

(DG) Some receivers of resources will in turn give something in return, but it's not an expected thing. Even non coastal villages will request their desire for sea mammal products and they will be given without expectation of a pay back. "Us older folk who have been schooled by traditional practices still abide by them, but the younger generation schooled by western practices are different, stingy".

(Q) (JF) WHAT AGE GROUP OF WALRUS ARE HARVESTED, YOUNGER OR OLDER?

(DG) Larger walrus are targeted with smooth hide surface. The age of walrus now is not as important as the healthfulness of the animal. If the walrus is healthy it will be plump, showing smooth hide surface and a skinny sickly walrus will have a lumpy hide surface. Experienced walrus hunters know by sight conditions of the walrus and they in turn will harvest the choice ones.

(Q) (JF) WHAT (OTHER) PARTS OF THE WALRUS ARE USED FOR FOOD?

**(DG,JK)** Lungs, kidneys, livers, and hearts are used. Today's generation don't use the stomachs (for storage containers, drum covers) and intestines (for rain gear) like their ancestors did.

(Q) (JF) HOW IS WALRUS PRESERVED NOW, DRIED OR FROZEN?

**(DG,JK)** Mainly by freezing and some dried.

JF: speculates that walrus are shared on a larger scale.

Walrus today is widely shared and even the main hunters will end up with a lot less than other households.

(Q) (JF) HOW ARE THE WALRUS TUSKS GOING TO BE USED? ARE THERE CARVERS?

(FL) The Traditional Council made a suggestion to possibly use some walrus meat, hide etc. for elders **potlucks** as well as household uses, and to donate tusks to local school (Togiak) to help promote carving in school.

(DG) Some of the local villagers will probably be interested in tusk uses too. It doesn't take very large piece to create something by carving.

JS Explains that Subsistence **Division** are not the decision makers for this proposal. We are just collecting information as background for the proposal discussion by the Game Board.

JF Encourages that an village elder and another younger Togiak person go testify at Board meeting in Fairbanks

End of meeting.

Further discussion of the proposal occurred in the afternoon during the Togiak Advisory Committee meeting. See committee minutes.

ANNUAL SURVEY OF NATIVE FOODS

<u>KIND OF FOOD</u> List separately kinds used & specie when known	Give geographical name of place where fish and meats are taken, and method of taking.	Quantity gathered in village during year. (pounds)	Method of Preserving	On hand as of 10/1/59 (Pounds after pre-serving)
<b>1. FISH:</b>				
Dog Salmon	Togiak River	10,000	Dried	7,000
Red Salmon	" "	4,000	"	4,000
King Salmon	" "	2,456	"	2,407
Smelt	" "	9,700	"	1,252 00000
Trout	" "	3,000	"	1,000
<b>2. MEATS:</b>				
Moose	" "	3,000	"	50
Seals	Togiak Bay	40,000	"	3,000
Walrus	Round Island	10,000	"	5,500
Sea Lions	Togiak Bay	28,000	"	00000
<b>3. *WILD FRUITS &amp; VEG.:</b>				
Blackberries	Togiak Village	2,000	None	700
Blueberries	" "	500	Frozen	200
<b>4. OTHER FOODS: (Incl. fats &amp; oils)</b>				
Muskrats	Togiak River	600	Dried	00000
Ducks	" "	1,200	none	300
Geese	" "	2,000	none	400
<b>5. TOTAL</b>		<b>115,856</b>		<b>97,557</b>

6. Number of Native people dependent on this supply. 230
7. Number of Native work dogs dependent on this supply. 124
8. Comment on adequacy of supply - if Inadequate what could be done to increase, supply? (Use other side for comments if necessary.) Very Adequate, but natives state not as many Red Salmon up in Togiak Lake as previously.
9. What source of Native food will be available during the winter, e.g. reindeer, fish, etc. (Use other side for comments if necessary.) Smelt, Trout, Sea Lions,
10. Considering food on hand, the anticipated additional supply of Native foods to be obtained, and the normal purchases through the store, should the food supply be adequate for the coming winter? Adequate as most of the families have a good grub stake which they purchased through their canneries in summer.

\*Other than those raised in the garden.

Station: Togiak Reported by: Jack Anderson

Date of Report 1958, 7, 5, 90 covering period from Oct. 1, 3 0 1 9 57  
Make report in triplicate, send original and 1 copy to District Office who will forward the original on to the Area Office, Juneau; 6 retain 1 copy for your files.

APPENDIX D

RESOLUTION OF THE ALASKA BOARD OF GAME

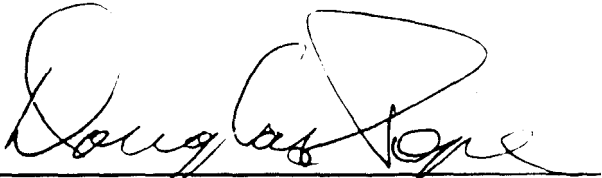
WHEREAS, the Alaska Board of Game has received a proposal from the people of Togiak to permit access to Round Island in the Walrus Islands State Game Sanctuary for the purposes of an annual limited walrus harvest,

WHEREAS, there are unresolved questions regarding the proposal concerning walrus disturbance, level and efficiency of walrus harvests in other areas of Bristol Bay, including the waters of the Walrus Islands State Game Sanctuary, and the methods and means of harvests,

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED:

1. That the Alaska Board of Game requests the U. S. Fish and Wildlife Service to include a comprehensive assessment of walrus management concerns in Bristol Bay in a walrus conservation plan which is now in draft form. Parties to this **assessment** should include the Alaska Department of Fish and Game, the Alaska Eskimo Walrus Commission, and representatives **of** appropriate Bristol Bay villages. Issues which should be addressed include effect of walrus disturbance on walrus haulouts, the level and efficiency of walrus harvests in Bristol Bay, and the methods **and means** for ensuring **minimal disturbance to walrus haulouts**; and
2. That the Alaska Board of Game requests the Alaska Department of Fish and Game to establish a taskforce, which **includes members** of ADFG, the people of Togiak and other villages in the Bristol Bay region, other wildlife biologists and members of the public, to identify and address the unresolved issues surrounding walrus **disturbance, as well as other issues the task force** may direct, and issue a **report to** the Board of Game for the Spring 1993 meeting: and
3. That the Alaska Board of Game will again consider the proposal of the people of Togiak at the Spring 1993 meeting.

DATED: November 3, 1991.

  
Douglas Pope, Chairman  
Alaska Board of Game

ADOPTED: 6 yes  
1 abstain