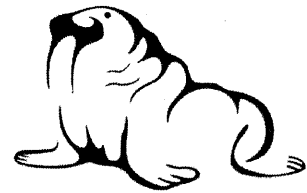


Eskimo Walrus Commission

Quarterly Report 04/01/18-06/31/18

Cooperative Agreement Award F14AC01135



Eskimo Walrus Commission

"To protect the pacific walrus population."

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Eskimo Walrus Commission (EWC) represents 19 walrus hunting coastal communities in Western and Northern Alaska. Due to budget constraints, EWC currently employs 1 staff position (Director) to maintain daily office operations.

The following are EWC administrative activities to date:

- Continues to provide walrus ivory brochures to the general public and meets with an ivory ban working group to protect the rights of Alaska Natives to carve and sell legitimate walrus ivory arts and crafts. Testified April 3 on SJR4 sponsored by Sen. Olson that "urges Congress to exempt legally obtained walrus, mammoth, & mastodon ivory" from the current ivory ban.
- Worked with USFWS on a draft 2018 Cooperative Agreement, revised budget to add additional funds, finalized the documents and electronically forwarded to USFWS. (Agreement award pending).
- Assisted Jenna Malek, Co-management Fellow/Marine Mammal Commission (MMC) on the 1-yr. "Co-Management" project funded by North Pacific Research Board through MMC "to identify characteristics of, and impediments to, effective co-management" (EWC, Aleut Community of St. Paul, and Aleut Marine Mammal Commission are part of the review process). Ms. Malek traveled to Utqiaqvik during spring to meet with AEWG and to Gambell/Savoonga with EWC Director to interview hunters/community members willing to share their co-management experiences.
- Traveled to Gambell/Savoonga April 4-5 with USFWS for spring walrus hunter and TMMAC meetings.
- Attended IPCoMM full board meetings in Anchorage April 11-12 on various co-management issues (polar bear & harbor seal), financial updates, & election of new EC members, e.g., EWC director.
- Attended Marine Mammal Commission's annual meeting in Seattle on May 29-31 to hear reports on Northwest Pacific marine mammal concerns, research activities, etc. & informally met with Patrick Lemons.
- Provided an update on EWC activity to monthly Kawerak staff meeting on May 25.
- Worked with Strategies 360 on draft EWC brochure, provided numerous edits/shared with supervisor & Kawerak's communication contact who made minor edits to final draft. Have 500 copies available for distribution.
- Worked with UAA program to reschedule internship for summer 2019 due to late advertisement.
- Worked with Kawerak administration on compact funds & received \$8000+ to use for Director's salary, fringe & travel expenses.
- Worked extensively with NFWF's program office on Native Village of Gambell's funds on final financial reports & final payment to hold joint meeting of tribal marine mammal advisory councils.

On-going Tasks:

- Continue to work with USFWS and Kawerak leadership to resolve yearly cooperative agreement budget deficit and to financially stabilize EWC by seeking other funding sources.
- Continue to respond to inquiries on marine mammal strandings in Nome area with MAP-UAF and Kawerak Subsistence program including harmful algal bloom, saxitoxin, issues, etc. and climate change challenges.
- Remain proactive in discussions/meetings on increased vessel traffic in the Arctic through AMMC, AWSC, and other forums to discuss impacts to walrus and hunting activities.
- Continue to communicate with the Native Villages of Gambell and Savoonga to seek multi-year funds to discuss capacity building for the local management structure and the potential expansion of the Tribal Marine Mammal Ordinances
- Contact other marine mammal commissions to coordinate EWC attendance at their annual meetings and communicate with EWC Commissioners on potential issues for EWC to further collaborate.
- Continue working with Strategies 360 on EWC website, Facebook posts, and additional media training.

Significant Impacts to the Region

EWC continues to inform local hunters and communities on ivory ban and other issues of concern that will or can impact the food security of subsistence users, and advocate for protecting the livelihood of Alaska Native residents and artists who rely on marine mammal product such as walrus ivory.

Conclusion

EWC is committed to be actively involved in co-management activities related to the Pacific walrus, including seeking adequate funds to incorporate the full interests of Alaska Natives to self-manage. Communicate more with federal agencies and other organizations on potential research opportunities for EWC member communities, and remain an effective organization in a changing political, environmental, and social Arctic environment.



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