Eskimo Walrus Commission
Quarterly Report 10/01/18-12/31/18
Cooperative Agreement Award F14AC01135

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 (some related to Agreement objectives):

- Provided EWC activities update to Kawerak’s Natural Resource Committee members meeting in Nome on October 9, 2018.
- Attended Arctic Marine Mammal Coalition and AWSC meetings October 18 for updates on research/waterway activities.
- Held EWC’s annual meeting with USFWS on Oct.25-26 in Anchorage, coordinated roomconference room at 2 Anchorage hotels, arranged travel for EWC members to attend, and conducted other administrative tasks associated with meeting. Elections were held with following results: Ch. Charlie Brower (1 yr.), VC Jacob Martin (2 yr.), and SEATS A, B, C Stephen Schaefer, Enoch Otoollik, and Kenneth Kingekut. Next Annual Meeting proposed for week of Nov. 3, 2019 with location TBD. (Met Objectives 7.2 and 7.4)
- Attended Marine Mammal Commission’s Co-Management Review Committee meeting in Anchorage on Nov. 8-9 to discuss draft report of the review work to be completed in March 2019.
- Attended ICC Alaska board and strategic plan discussions in Anchorage on Nov. 13-16 and ICC Executive Committee’s regular meeting/International Strategic Planning sessions Dec. 3-7 to develop a plan based on the Utqiagvik Declaration 2018 to enhance ICC’s “capacity to bring forward and advocate on behalf of a collective circumpolar Inuit voice”.
- Attended IPCoMM’s annual board meeting in Anchorage on Dec. 10-12 to approve financial reports, heard update reports from USFWS and NMFS on current/future work, MMC’s Co-management review project, on ESA rulingmak process addressing Sec. 4 & 8 with a final rule to be completed early 2019, and from Sen. Sullivan’s staff of internship opportunities, on “ivory act” out of Senate, but not expected to move on until next Congress, and of the Senator looking into possible amendments to MMA, IPCoMM members also heard from Miriam Jorgensen and Dana Goodson of U of AZ and Udall Foundation of shared services draft survey to review and discussed draft component costs of base operations for marine mammal commissions to use. EWC VC Jacob Martin and Orlin Golloger (young hunter) attended the IPCoMM meeting as part of Oak project objective.
- Met with USFWS & Foraker throughout the months to plan Tribal Marine Mammal Ordinance workshop on St. Lawrence Island in January 2019 with Advisory Committee to review/update existing ordinances, review proposed changes, and future funding opportunities. (Objective 7.9)

On-going Tasks:

- Continue working with USFWS to resolve yearly cooperative agreement budget deficit to financially stabilize EWC. Ongoing task by staff to seek other funding sources.
- Continue responding to inquiries on marine mammal issues with MAP-UAF and Kawerak Subsistence program including marine mammal carcass coastal surveys, harmful algal bloom, saxitoxin, and climate related challenges.
- Remain proactive in discussions/meetings on increased vessel traffic in the Arctic in other forums to discuss impacts to walrus and harvesting activities.
- Continue communicating with Native Villages of Gambell and Savoonga to seek multi-year funds to discuss capacity building for the local management structure and potential expansion of the Tribal Marine Mammal Ordinances in other member communities.
- 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.
- Communicate with Strategies 360 on EWC website, Facebook posts, and additional media training.

Significant Impacts to the Region

EWC conducts outreach/education 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 products such as walrus ivory.

Conclusion

EWC is committed to remain involved in co-management activities related to the Pacific walrus and continue seeking adequate funds to incorporate the full interests of Alaska Natives to self-manage. Increase communications 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.
Eskimo Walrus Commission Quarterly Report 07/01/18-09/30/18
Cooperative Agreement Award F14AC01135

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 with information on walrus ivory facts.
- Received Cooperative Agreement 2018-19 electronic award notification from USFWS on August 8, 2018 for $170,500 that includes salary/fringe for 1 staff, annual meeting for Commissioners, and a meeting on St. Lawrence Island with Tribal Marine Mammal Ordinance Advisory members in early January 2019.
- Arranged for Claire Pywell/Strategies 360 to travel to Nome on July 12-13 to provide training on use of WordPress for updating website and other media instructions, e.g., Facebook work. Mailed/distributed EWC brochure to all members including Kawerak and at various meetings.
- Met telephonically with Peter Neidilch/National Park Service in early August on Year 2 project plans to move forward with revised scope and timeline.
- Traveled with USFWS to Wainwright on August 27-28 for community walrus meetings and to provide updates on EWC walrus related projects and administrative work.
- Attended IPCCOMM’s Executive Board meeting in Anchorage on Sept. 11-12 to follow-up on action items from April board meeting in Anchorage.
- Provided an update on EWC’s activity/program report to Kawerak’s Natural Resources committee meeting in Nome on October 9.
- Worked with UAA program to request an extension from Oak for 2019 summer internship for June-July timeframe and start advertisement to recruit 2 students in January 2019.
- Attended Arctic Marine Mammal Advisory/Waterways Safety Committee meeting Oct. 18/Anchorage on vessel traffic and Arctic research updates.
- Worked with EWC Chair and USFWS to confirm EWC 40th annual meeting dates for Oct. 25-26, contacted Hilton Garden Inn to reserve meeting space and other hotel for lodging, contacted all Commission members confirming attendance, made travel/hotel/per diem, etc. arrangements (Specialist). Next annual meeting scheduled for week of November 3, 2019.

On-going Tasks:

- Continue working with USFWS and Kawerak leadership to resolve yearly cooperative agreement budget deficit and 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 marine mammal carcass coastal surveys, harmful algal bloom, saxitoxin, issues, unusual reports, and climate related 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 harvesting 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 in other member communities.
- 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 conducts outreach/education 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 products such as walrus ivory.

Conclusion
EWC is committed to be actively involved in co-management activities related to the Pacific walrus and continue seeking adequate funds to incorporate the full interests of Alaska Natives to self-manage. Increase communications 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.