

Pacific Walrus Haulout Advisory for Mariners Operating along the Chukchi Sea Coast



The U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service seeks your support and cooperation in minimizing disturbances to walrus herds resting along the Chukchi Sea coast of Alaska.

Due to low seasonal ice conditions there are currently large groups of walrus hauled out on the barrier island near the community of Point Lay and on the west side of Cape Lisburne, Alaska. The Point lay haulout is currently just north of the old village site. At Cape Lisburne walrus may occupy the beaches just west of the U.S. Air Force Long Range Radar Station airstrip or on the west side of the Lisburne Peninsula. Large concentrations of walrus can be expected to be encountered in the near shore waters in these areas. In addition, large groups of walrus may be encountered in the water as they move from Point Lay to offshore feeding areas and as they move south from Point Lay to Cape Lisburne. It is anticipated that walrus will continue to use the Point Lay and Cape Lisburne haulouts through October.

How to avoid disturbance of haulouts

- Remain a minimum of 5 miles offshore when transiting past Point Lay, as requested by the Native Village of Point Lay.
- Provide the following buffers while transiting past Cape Lisburne:
 - Vessels 50–100 feet in length should remain at least 1 nautical mile away from the coast
 - Vessels greater than 100 feet in length should remain at least 3 nautical miles away from the coast
- Refrain from anchoring within 3 miles of the coast.
- Maintain a one-mile buffer from walrus haulouts when servicing Point Lay or Cape Lisburne.

How to safely navigate with walrus in the water near your vessel:

- Avoid excessive speed or sudden changes in speed or direction.
- Reduce speed and maintain a minimum 805-m (0.5-mi) separation distance from the vessel to groups of walrus encountered in the water.
- Do not be operate in such a way as to separate members of a group of walrus from other members of the group.

The Marine Mammal Protection Act prohibits the TAKE of all marine mammal species in U.S. waters. TAKE is defined as "to harass, hunt, capture, or kill, or attempt to harass, hunt, capture, or kill any marine mammal." Harassment is defined in the MMPA as "any act of pursuit, torment, or annoyance which has the potential to injure a marine mammal or marine mammal

stock in the wild; or has the potential to disturb a marine mammal or marine mammal stock in the wild by causing disruption of behavioral patterns, including, but not limited to, migration, breathing, nursing, breeding, feeding, or sheltering".

Thank you for your cooperation.

To report incidences of disturbance or harassment, please contact:

U.S Fish and Wildlife Service
Division of Law Enforcement:
1011 E. Tudor Road
Anchorage Alaska 99503-6199
Toll free: 1-800-858-7621

For questions about walruses, please contact:

U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service
Marine Mammals Management Field Office
1011 E. Tudor Road
Anchorage Alaska 99503-6199
Toll free: 1-800-362-5148
<http://www.fws.gov/alaska/fisheries/mmm/>

August 2019