Northern Fur Seal Harvests, St. George Island, AK

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Harvest report for the 2014 Season 7.7.2014-8.8.2014

2014 Northern Fur Seal Subsistence Harvest

INTRODUCTION

Laqux, northern fur seal (*callorhinus ursinus)* is an important customary traditional food for the Unangan of St. George Island, Alaska. Together, the Traditional Council of St. George along with the U.S. National Marine Fisheries Service coordinated, monitored, and managed the subsistence harvest of northern fur seals to safeguard their existence. The 2014 subsistence fur seal harvest was conducted in accordance to 50 CFR §216 Subpart F on St. George Island.

METHODS

The Island Sentinel of the St. George Traditional Council Kayumixtax Eco-Office monitored the 2014 subsistence fur seal harvest for the Aleut Community of St. George Island and in accordance with the Co-management Agreement between the National Marine Fisheries Service and the Aleut Community of St. George. Within this context, management and activities were conducted under a cooperative agreement with the National Marine Fisheries Service. During the 2014 subsistence fur seal harvest information was collected on:

a) the number of sub-adult male fur seals harvested

b) incidence of by-products and waste during the harvest process

c) the occurrence of older male seals judged to be 124.5 cm or more in length

d) female seals killed or injured during the harvest operation

e) the number of seal deaths due to overheating

f) number of seals entangled in marine debris and the number of seals disentangled

g) evidence of oil contaminated seal pelts

h) other types of fur seal mortality

i) weather conditions at the time of the harvest

j) any other unusual conditions related to the harvest

k) Research conducted during the harvest, and visitors requesting to view or film the harvest

RESULTS

Harvests season was open 7.7.2014 to 8.8.2014 with the first harvest taking place on July 7th and ending the harvest season on August 8th. A total of 104 Northern Fur seals were harvested during the 2014 season. Nine harvests were conducted in the month period, with 5 being at the North haul out the other 4 being at Zapadni.

Table 1: Dates, locations, weather, harvest time and number of Sub-adult males harvested.

Date of Harvest	Rookery	Weather	Time of Harvest	# of seals harvested
07/07/14	North	Wind: NE@6 Temp: 48°F	Start: 8:50am End: 10:53am	9
07/09/14	Zapadni	Wind: W@9 Temp: 46°F	Start: 8:15am End: 10:15am	6
07/11/14	North	Wind: NNW@9 Temp: 46°F	Start: 8:10am End: 10:10am	10
07/17/14	Zapadni	Wind: N@10 Temp: 46°F	Start: 8:15am End: 10:38am	11
07/21/14	North	Wind: SW@6 Temp: 48°F	Start: 8:30am End: 10:05am	12
07/24/14	Zapadni	Wind: NNW@10 Temp: 46°F	Start: 9:05am End: 10:50am	12
8/04/14	North	Wind: N@13 Temp: 48°	Start: 11:30am End: 2:30pm	13/1 (female)
8/06/14	Zapadni	Wind: S@23 G33 Temp: 54°F	Start: 11:30am End: 2:30pm	12
08/08/14	North	Wind: Calm Temp: 47°F	Start: 11:00am End: 1:30pm	18
Total	9 Harvests	Average Temp: 48°F	Average Duration: 135 minutes	103 + 1 female

Table 2: Shows the dates and serial numbers on the documented tags and the rookery where the seal with tags were discovered.

Tag	Rookery	Date	Tagged Flipper(L, R, B, ?)
1878E	**North**	7-11-2014	B
1974E	**Zapadni**	7-17-2014	B

Note: Tagged animals were not captured or weighed. However they were let out of the groups to ensure no harm was done to them.

No tagged seals were harvested during the 2014 season.

Additional Information

-**Research**

Additional research was done with the seal harvests including sampling for the National Marine Mammal Laboratory

100% of the upper canine of each harvested Sub-adult male was collected, bagged and tagged.

100% of nasal swabs were taken and frozen in the stand up freezer located at the Eco Office.

Heat Strokes: No deaths of any fur seal occurred due to heat stroke during the 2014 subsistence seal harvest.

Entanglement: No entanglements were encountered during the harvest season.

Accidental Female Mortality: 1 female fur seal was accidentally clubbed during the 2014 subsistence harvest on August 4th at Zapadni.

Oil Contamination: No oil contamination was encountered on any of the harvested animals.

Other Mortality: No other fur seal mortality occurred.