

Northern  
Fur Seal  
Harvests, St.  
George  
Island, AK

August 7

2015

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Harvest report  
for the 2015  
Season  
7.7.2015-8.7.2  
015

## 2015 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 2015 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 2015 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 2015 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 7.7.2015 to 8.7.2015 with the first harvest taking place on July 7<sup>th</sup> and ending the harvest season on August 7<sup>th</sup>. A total of 61 Northern Fur seals were harvested during the 2015 season. Six harvests were conducted in the month period, with 2 being at the North, 3 being at East, and 1 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
07/07/15	North	Wind: S@15 Temp: 46	Start: 9:45am End: 11:30am	10
07/16/15	East	Wind: N@22 Temp: 47 (fog)	Start: 9:30am End: 10:50am	10
07/23/15	North	Wind: SW@15 Temp: 47 (Rain)	Start: 10:10am End: 11:00am	10
08/03/15	East	Wind: N@16 Temp: 47	Start: 9:25am End: 10:15am	8
08/05/15	Zapadni	Wind: N@10 Temp: 46 (fog/mist)	Start: 9:00am End: 11:05am	13
08/07/15	East	Wind: SE@16 Temp: 47 (fog/rain)	Start: 1:30pm End: 3:05pm	10

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, ?)

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 2015 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 2015 subsistence seal harvest.

**Entanglement:** No entanglements were encountered during the harvest season.

**Accidental Female Mortality:** No deaths of any female fur seals occurred during the 2015 subsistence harvest.

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

**Other Mortality:** No other fur seal mortality occurred.