



ICE SEAL COMMITTEE BOARD MEETING

MINUTES

May 23-24, 2018

Dimond Center Hotel – 700 E Dimond Blvd, Anchorage, AK 99515

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1. Call to Order:

At 9:01 by Billy Adams

2. Invocation:

3. Roll Call (Establish a Quorum 7 Members)

- Billy Adams NSB
- Joe Leavitt NSB
- Brandon Ahmasuk Kawerak
- Chuck Menadelook Kawerak
- Emerson Moto Manilaq
- Cyrus Harris Manilaq
- Helen Aderman BBNA
- Sam Gosuk BBNA
- Jennifer Hooper AVCP
- Albert Simon AVCP

Quorum Established

4. Introductions were made

5. Welcome remarks were made

6. Approval of Agenda:

Joe moved to move item 10 of the agenda to 14 and item 9 to 18 for the purpose of the visitors to get their presentations completed before leaving.

7. Approve Minutes from Previous Meeting:

Hellen moved to table both June 7-9, 2017 and March 20, 2018 via Teleconference. Seconded by Joe and questions called by Albert. Motion passes.

40 **8. Chairman’s and Executive Manager’s Report**

41

42 Chairman - Billy:

43 looking for more projects, more commutations between everyone. He traveled to Edmonton
44 Wildlife (see tab 8) report from this summit; world reports: although ice is not like it used to
45 be the seals are healthy: we have to adapt our hunting to the changing time; there is more
46 traffic (vessels) out on the waters

47

48 Brandon:

49 Water Way Meeting: discussed extending the buffer zone around communities; comments
50 made from the Representatives from the Tourist Industry made them uncomfortable:
51 basically said this is just a gentlemen’s agreement that they would go where they wanted and
52 locals should move out of their way (upsetting); more traffic in waters, big concerns of what
53 this could mean.

54

55 Hellen:

56 is there a handout for this Waterways meeting- education for the safety of protection our
57 animals, showing buffer zones, concerned about walrus, travel boats getting too close to
58 where walrus are and where seal pups are.

59

60 Billy:

61 no regulations of the vessels, what they can do; pamphlets: When is a good time for tourist to
62 come in, when is it not a good time, watch for nesting time, migration time? Conflict of
63 Avoidance: helps Whalers

64

65 Mike:

66 no written report; tagging reports, slow for a while on ISC, Proposes April 16 for NMFS

67

68 **9. Executive Session:**

69 Moved by Joe to go into executive Session, 2nd by Cyrus, Questions called by Albert.

70 Motion passes

71

72 **10. New Business:**

73 a. Programmatic Environmental Impact Statement for the Marine Mammal Health and
74 Stranding Response Program (consider the Policy for release of rehabilitated ices seals)

75 i. National Marine Fisheries Service

76 Brandon:

77 reports they are still getting reports of hairless seals even though the gov’t close
78 UME. Seals Move

79

80 ii. Alaska Sea Life Center

81 Ring Seal: finding parasite lung worm

82 Dr. Woodie:

83 Interested to see if the hairless seals being found also have the lung worm.

84

85 Raphaela: lung worms might be in the older seals

86 Put in the PEIS that those in the area need to be notified about the release of
87 rehabilitated seals: June 1st deadline
88 *need more bodies in office
89 *set up teleconference before Deadline to see what kind of comments to submit.

90
91 June 1st www.regulations.gov/docket?D=NOAA-NMFS_2018-0036
92 *pass on the link to ISC about the Stranding, agents to notify

93
94 **b. Northern Pinniped Unusual Mortality Event UME Close-Out**

95 Could be ice, killer whales: why higher numbers of seals being seen already; high
96 numbers but it could be more reporting what they see

97
98 **9. Financial and Grants Progress:**

99 thanks for progress reports

100

101 **14. Regional and Hunter Representative Reports**

102 AVCP - Bethel Area Jennifer and Albert:

103 Spots on the inside's yellow/green; South Nelson area catching halibut early – should be in
104 June, very early spring, warm winter; not much hunting in winter because of ice- think in
105 mid-March Ice took off early. Unable to get what they needed... Bearded seals/Ring seals.
106 Seeing different things: herring, birds. New: Flooding in spring time – never seen this before.
107 Ice took several boats. There was persistent south warm wind. Elder reports- Ice in Ocean up
108 until end of June, now it is open in May. The ice comes in and goes out fast.

109

110 BBNA - Helen:

111 Did not do the fall surveys- due to high winds could not go out/ also not seeing seals, not
112 seeing herring fish which the seals eat.

113

114 BBNA - Sam:

115 saw herring roe close to area, 1st time early opening and lots of wind both ways. Trolls
116 getting lots of by-products herring/roe 5 million pounds is too much. If they are not allowed
117 to spawn how will the food grow? The ice went our fast. No seals around. The fat in the seals
118 got thin and they sink. On the 1st of May 1 seal was caught with no hair. Did not see spotted
119 seals but saw ring seals, lots of them. There is a teacher who shows the students how to
120 process the seal and how to make harpoons, “Subsistence Class” the students really like this.
121 Would like to see in writing what to do when a seal is caught with no fur, who to contact?

122

123 Kawerak - Brandon:

124 Busy with mining going into critical seal habitat area. No Ice. The timing of hunting is
125 getting faster-shorter time, have to go far for walrus hunting: 150 miles one way but not for
126 seals. The ice is coming later and leaving sooner, couple hairless seals this year. The seal
127 pups move to shore after the sea ice moves out. There were reports of both ring and spotted
128 seals being seen up to 60 miles upriver following the fish. Updating the critical area's for
129 seals needs to be looked at.

130

131

132 Kawerak - Chuck:
133 First time ever no ice, the ice disappeared real fast, it looked like it melted. Seals may be bald
134 because they are spending too much time in fresh water.
135

136 Manilaq - Emerson:
137 The community was concerned about the bearded seals being listed as endangered and that
138 there would be a limit put on hunting. Same: ice going out early, ice getting thinner. Last
139 year we only had 2 days to hunt.
140

141 Manilaq - Cyrus:
142 Language needs to be laid out for everyone to understand the listing like the endangered list
143 not effecting subsistence. Hunting was early due to the ice conditions and no ice.
144

145 Peter and group could be added into next year's agenda under reports that Cyrus helped with
146 checking Ice thickness, salinity among other things.
147

148 NSB - Joe:
149 The southeast winds are acting like the prevailing winds. Young ice and hardly any currents,
150 hunting time is limited. Lots of seals are seen around Barrow. The ice formed in November
151 not very much multi-layer ice. The ice doesn't like to come back, 1st year ice likes to be
152 broken up by tides.
153

154 NSB - Billy:
155 Ring seals are seen from November year round and bearded seals June and July.
156

11. Research:

- 158 **a. Alaska Dept. of Fish & Game: Lori: discussion on a hand out**
159 Tags do not represent the whole seal population
160

17. Executive Session

162 ISC Members Only at 4:39 pm Helen moved to go into executive session, 2nd by Joe and
163 Brandon and questions called by Albert. Back to regular session at 5:39pm
164

165 Break until morning of the 24th
166

11. Research:

- 168 **a. National Marine Mammal Laboratory: Peter Boveng**
169 Discussed handout; NOAA temporary 1 year funds; Ikaagvik Sikukun handout #11b2
170 discussed.
171

172 *not comfortable with infrared to count polar bears; sometimes it doesn't pick up bears
173 resting but has no problem with active bears
174

175 Michael Cameron: see handout 11b3: discussed

176 Raphaella: see if local hunters in that area noticed a difference in what they were harvesting,
177 see if they saw the same thing.

178 **Hand out 11b4: discussed; ISC members saying that there are young bearded seals**
179 **in the rivers**

180

181 **b. NSB Dept. of Wildlife management: Raphaela: discussed molting, the closing the**
182 **UME- federal funding: Formal rollout of the closing of UME finding will be contacting**
183 **ISC, published in June of this year. Fact sheet will become available.**

184

185 **13. Old Business:**

186 **a. Sustainability of Subsistence Ice Seal Hunting: The Subsistence harvest of ringed,**
187 **bearded, spotted, and ribbon seals in Alaska is sustainable**

188 **Lori: see tab 5**

189 **Motions to adopt and Co-Author by Albert, 2nd by Joe, Questions called for by Chuck,**
190 **Motion passes May 24, 2018**

191

192 **15. Recommendations form the Ice Seal Co-Management Committee:**

193 **a. Ice Seal Management Plan: Discussed on Tuesday at Co-management**
194 **Better communication**

195 **Move in a positive direction**

196 **Meet more: training**

197 **1st step training judicial for the ISC to get the committee strong again**

198 **Management Plan: sample like Bristol Bay's plan**

199

200 **16. Closing Comments:**

201 **Brandon: likes the meeting at Dimond, better.**

202

203 **Chuck: thanks: ISC come to its own by Development Plan, need one; worked with Sea**
204 **life Center for training for disaster; formal training workshop; ISC should apply for their own**
205 **grants to stand on their own, stronger; testing water for toxins, it's getting warmer for toxins,**
206 **researched and dismissed; educate tourist on why we request what we request and be less**
207 **inclined to go where we hunt; better coordination between scientist and communities.**

208

209 **Emerson: thankful to NSB for coming, informative; need to get the President to believe in**
210 **Global Warming, first time at Deering open water, lots of erosion.**

211

212 **Helen: thankful for NSB help in this committee; global warming, walrus: disturbed form**
213 **food being disturbed; USFW should sample these things; trap bearded seals why they are not**
214 **where they should be**

215

216 **Sam: learned a lot, happy there are researchers to help our concerns on seals; concerned**
217 **about the effects of the travels on the ocean bottom, ships effect this; walrus habitat is**
218 **changing, place where we hunt has moved to further away; look into herring changes that are**
219 **happening; goal plan; communication together.**

220

221 **Cyrus: thanks NSB to get here; regional reports: fall storms 2 big ones, bad ones this last**
222 **year, ocean side to lagoon, 1st time seeing this and waiting to see what it will look like after**

223 the thaw; all little seals fall time, adult seals come in fall, all different areas but all common
224 concerns.

225

226 Albert: thankful, subsistence way of life

227 Jennifer: shipping traffic, region is concerned about the lack of disaster plan, it is a matter
228 of when it will happen; willing to help executive manager: positive move; appreciation of all
229 the work Mike has done, deep appreciation.

230

231 Joe: basic human right to subsist; would like to see workshops, training; get own
232 grants to stand alone like AEWG; need to do what we can to keep it where our kids and
233 grandkids are living off the land; look to see ISC stand alone; doesn't want to see quota on
234 other animals; outreach is important, education to others makes a difference; don't give up,
235 keep subsistence going.

236

237 Billy: we know how to manage our animals because of who we are, spiritual
238 relationship tied to it; thanks to committee, researchers, work to do: planning to do while
239 fresh.

240

241 **19: Time and Place of nest meeting**

242

243 Jan, Feb for main meeting, funding in Oct to Sept, send minutes out right away= make plans,
244 recommendations for workshops, teleconferences.

245

246 Workshops; look for grantor funding for training, in 3 or 4 months call everyone about nest
247 meeting before January, spend 2 or 3 days together

248

249 No meetings Downtown Anchorage, everyone prefers a place like Dimond easier on parking
250 and eating, Look at having a meeting in a Village

251

252 Look at Grant Date Proposal for 2019

253

254 TBA Time and place of nest meeting

255

256 Moved by Cyrus, 2nd by Albert and Questions by Chuck; passed at 4:05pm