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RESOLUTION 2017 – 09

A RESOLUTION AUTHORIZING AND SUPPORTING THE ICE SEAL COMMITTEE, THE NATIONAL MARINE FISHERIES SERVICE, AND THE BRISTOL BAY NATIVE ASSOCIATION TO PREPARE A PROPOSAL TO CONDUCT A TOGIAK BAY SATELLITE TAGGING OF THE BEARDED SEALS RESIDING IN TOGIAK BAY, ALASKA.

WHEREAS, Traditional Village of Togiak is a federally recognized; and

WHEREAS, the Traditional Council of Togiak (Council) is the governing body for the Traditional Village of Togiak that represents the interests of its tribal membership; and

WHEREAS, there is concern about a lack of data on the population of bearded seals that reside within the Togiak Bay.

WHEREAS, there is currently and has been customary and traditional harvesting and sharing (subsistence) of these bearded seals by local subsistence hunters who reside in Togiak and Bristol Bay tribal members; and

WHEREAS, since 1995, the Togiak Bay bearded seals have been known by local Togiak Bay tribal hunters, the seals have moved towards Cape Peirce/Cape Newenham towards Goodnews Bay area, due to the seasonal Northern Bristol Bay Yellowfin Sole Trawl Fishery (NBBYSTF); and

WHEREAS, the Togiak Traditional Council and the Bristol Bay tribal members have a heavy dependence of all near-shore marine mammals such as seals and walrus and the yellow fin sole trawl fishery takes place along the migratory path of these species including the bearded seals; and

WHEREAS, the bearded seal is still an important ice seal traditional Native diet and it's fragile marine feeding habitat may have been destroyed by the trawl fishery fleet in Bristol Bay; and

WHEREAS, the NBBTA is also along the migratory route of herring and of caplin, which is an important forage fish species for Bearded Seals; and

WHEREAS, since the National Marine Fisheries Service has re-instated the Bearded Seal as an Endangered Species Act (ESA) Listing due to sea ice habitat changes from climate change, there is a need to track the Togiak Bay bearded seal migration movements; and

WHEREAS, there is concern for the conservation of the Bearded Seal stock so the tribal community of Togiak can continue to subsistence harvest bearded seals; and

WHEREAS, due to the Bearded Seal decline issue and the affect it's having on the Togiak Bay Alaska Native residents traditional subsistence livelihood; and


WHEREAS, the Ice Seal Committee, and Bristol Bay Native Association are both non-profit Native organizations serving the communities in the Bristol Bay region and both employs a Natural Resources Department with a capable staff to work with collaborators, and agency marine mammal managers to prepare proposal for Bearded Seal Research Studies in the Togiak Bay, Alaska area; and

WHEREAS, it is the federal agency, the National Marine Fisheries Services (NMFS) responsibility as a statewide Marine Mammal co-manager to find out why there is a decline in the Togiak Bay bearded seal habitat areas.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED THAT the Togiak Traditional Council authorize and support the Ice Seal Committee, the National Marine Fisheries Service, Arctic Marine Mammal Program-ADF&G-Fairbanks, and the Bristol Bay Native Association to seek funding to conduct a bearded seal satellite tracking research project to monitor the long term movements of the Togiak Bay area Bearded seals.

APPROVED AND ADOPTED this 19th day of April 2017. With a vote of:

7 : For 0 : Against 0 : Abstain 0 : Excused



Jimmy Goopchiak President,
Traditional Council of Togiak



ATTEST: Marie Paul Secretary
Traditional Council of Togiak