Contributions to Understandings of Food Security in the Bering Strait Region of Alaska

Kawerak, Inc.

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Ongoing and New Challenges to Food Security in the Bering Strait Region

- Increasing vessel traffic through the Strait
- Offshore oil and gas exploration/development
- Potential northward expansion of industrial fisheries
- Climate change
- Offshore gold dredging in the Nome and Port Clarence region
Ship traffic through the Bering Strait
Oct 2012 – Oct 2013
Offshore oil and gas development and exploration

Open for development

The federal government has approved oil and natural gas development off Alaska’s northwest shore.
Northward expansion of trawl fisheries
Erosion along the shore at the village of Shishmaref.

Climate Change

Permafrost melting and erosion along a Seward Peninsula River.
Gold dredging in Norton Sound and its potential expansion.
Some of our ongoing and completed projects

- Traditional Knowledge of Non-Salmon Fish (complete)
- Diomede Knowledge of Walrus (99% complete)
- Indigenous Knowledge and Use of Ocean Currents (99% complete)
- Community-Based Documentation of Ice Seals and Walrus (99% complete)
- Traditional Knowledge of Salmon (ongoing)
- Knowledge, Beliefs and Experiences of the Supernatural Environment (ongoing)
Project: Community-based Documentation of Ice Seals and Walrus
Deterioration in ice conditions have led to an expansion of hunting areas.
Map atlas product:
Seal and Walrus Harvest and Habitat Areas for Nine Bering Strait Region Communities
Project: Indigenous Knowledge and Use of Ocean Currents in the Bering Strait
Product: Ocean Currents and other Marine Features Map and Guide
Food Security in the Bering Strait

• Is impacted by many outside forces
• Is crucial for healthy, strong, sustainable communities
• Can be positively impacted by local, state, federal and international regulation and policy making
• Is connected to the food security of the whole Arctic, and the rest of the world

Indigenous values and knowledge related to food security need to be given more consideration

The more I read about the way U.S. and other countries are planning to use this northern routing, it’s as if we don’t exist. [We need to] show the world how important the ocean is for us here.

- Ice Seal and Walrus expert
Quyanna (thank you) for your time!

**Ice Seal/Walrus Project staff:**
- Lily Ray Gadamus (ISWP research lead)
- Meghan Topkok
- Freida Moon-Kimoktoak
- Lisa Ellanna-Strickling
- Helen Pootoogooluk
- Edwina Krier
- Maggie Kowchee
- Jotilda Noongwook
- Ruby Booshu
- Serena Walker
- Paul Nagaruk
- Johnny Anasogak
- Carrie Takak
- Nicholas Lupsin
- Vincent Matthias
- George Noongwook
- Robert Soolook

**Partners:**
- Eskimo Walrus Commission
- Oceana
- Ice Seal Committee

**Ocean Currents project staff:**
- Meghan Topkok
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- Yury Khokhlov
- Anastasia Yarzutkina
- Freida Moon-Kimoktoak
- Helen Pootoogooluk
- Maggie Kowchee
- Lucy Iyatunguk
- Edwin Weyiouanna
- Gene Angnaboogok
- Robert Soolook

**Other participants:**
- Debra Seetook
- Rueben Oxereok
- Jessie Ongtowasruk
- Johnny Pootoogooluk
- Seth Danielson
- Rebecca Woodgate
- Fred Tocktoo
- Guy Martin
- Dennis Litoyka
- Andrei Stepanov
- Anatoly Kochnev
Quyanna to local experts from both projects:

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• Oak Foundation
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• National Fish and Wildlife Foundation (funding provided by Shell)
• National Park Service, Beringian Shared Heritage Program
• Kawerak, Inc. (Administration and Wellness Program)

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Local greens preserved in seal oil.