Arctic Waterways Safety Committee

http://www.arcticwaterways.org/

Workshop on Strategies and Communication Protocols to Mitigate Impacts of Research Vessels on Alaska Native Subsistence Hunts in the High Arctic

Anchorage, December 10-11, 2015
Given the importance of the marine environment of the High Arctic Region (US waters including and north of St. Lawrence Island in the western Arctic) to the local residents and regional governing bodies, State of Alaska, and Federal government, increasing efforts have been directed at better understanding how climate change and global warming affect the large marine ecosystems of the Bering Strait and the Chukchi and Beaufort Seas. This increased interest in the marine ecosystem of the High Arctic has resulted in increased vessel traffic, including vessels that conduct marine research. As has been well established by both traditional knowledge and western science, vessel noise and other forms of disturbance to wildlife have the potential to adversely impact subsistence hunting, as well as populations of living marine resources. Federal law requires that Federally-permitted or funded research programs mitigate this potential interaction to reduce to acceptable levels impacts to wildlife and indigenous food security.
The objective of the workshop is to facilitate collaboration between representatives of coastal subsistence communities and the Federal research community (including international), for the purpose of developing a protocol that sets forth: 1) procedures for communicating and obtaining feedback on potential impacts of research being conducted in the marine ecosystem of the High Arctic, including dates and methodology; 2) where there is a potential for adverse impacts to the availability of marine mammal resources for subsistence taking, or the safety of maritime hunting activities, appropriate processes to ensure Principal Investigators meet directly and work collaboratively with leaders of marine mammal hunter groups and affected communities on voyage times and routes relative to marine mammal subsistence hunting areas and seasons; and 3) appropriate processes to enable Principal Investigators to communicate research results back to local community members.
The mission of the Arctic Waterways Safety Committee is to implement lawful best practices to ensure a safe, efficient, and predictable operating environment for all Arctic waterway users.
Organizational Structure

Officers

Willie Goodwin  
Chairman

James Boyer  
Vice Chair

Jack Omelak  
Treasurer

Wendie Schaeffer  
Secretary

Subsistence Hunters

Willie Goodwin  
Alaska Beluga Whale Committee

Harry Brower  
*George Noongwook  
Alaska Eskimo Whaling Commission

John Goodwin  
Alaska Ice Seal Committee

Jack Omelak  
*Charles Brower  
Alaska Nanuq Commission

Vera Metcalf  
*Charles Brower  
Eskimo Walrus Commission

Industry

David George, Shell  
Oil and Gas

Greg Pavellas, Crowley  
Jim Dwight, Bowhead  
Tug & Barge

TBD  
Regional Economic Development

TBD  
Commercial Fishing

TBD  
Tourism

Other

Mayor Denise Michels  
City of Nome

Wendie Schaeffer  
Northwest Arctic Borough

Paul Fuhs  
North Slope Borough

Austin Ahmasuk, Kawerak  
Regional Tribal Organization

James Boyer  
Alaska Marine Pilots

Sub-Committees & Chairmanship

**Subsistence**: Harry Brower, Jr.  
**Standards of Lightering and Barge Operations**: Jim Dwight & Greg Pavellas  
**Science**: Dr. Martin Robards  
**Infrastructure**: Paul Fuhs & Denise Michels

Ex-Officio Observers


* Alternates
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December 10 & 11, 2015
Dena’ina Center, Anchorage, AK

Additional details will be sent soon

Please contact Candace Nachman (Candace.Nachman@noaa.gov) and Jenny Evans (jennykevans@gmail.com) with questions
Dear Colleague: We wish to invite you to join us as an Observer at the Arctic Waterways Safety Committee’s (AWSC) and National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration’s (NOAA) “Workshop on Strategies and Communication Protocols to Mitigate Impacts of Research Vessels on Alaska Native Subsistence Hunts in the High Arctic”, to be held at the Dena’ina Center, Anchorage, AK, 10-11 December 2015.

...For these reasons, we are inviting a limited number of experts from Marine Mammal Hunter Organizations, regional governments and local representatives, NOAA, BOEM, NSF, the USCG, UAF, the Navy, and the arctic marine research community to attend the Workshop as Participants and key discussants. Invitations have been sent separately to these Participants. To ensure broad representation of all stakeholder organizations and groups, we are extending this invitation to a limited number of additional individuals with important expertise and experience to participate in the meeting as Observers...

Willie Goodwin, Chair, Arctic Waterways Safety Committee Harry Brower, Jr., Chair AWSC Subsistence Subcommittee Martin Robards, PhD, Chair AWSC Science Subcommittee Douglas DeMaster, PhD, Director, NOAA Alaska Fisheries Science Center