

Final Report

FOR:

**SUPPORT FOR THE ICE SEAL COMMITTEE, 2017-2018 TO SUPPORT NMFS
PRIORITIES FOR 2017-2018**

NOAA Grant Number # NA17NMF4390129

Reporting Period: 08/01/2017 – 07/31/18

Award Period: 08/01/07 – 07/31/18

Submitted by:

Ice Seal Committee

Submitted to:

National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration
Grants Management Division

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October 9, 2018

Final Report for Grant #NA17NMF4390129

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FINAL REPORT

**SUPPORT FOR THE ICE SEAL COMMITTEE, NMFS MARINE MAMMAL CO-MANAGEMENT
PRIORITIES FOR 2017-2018**

Submitted: October 9, 2018

NOAA Grant Award: # NA17NMF4390129

Amount of Grant: \$41,153.00

**Project Title: Support for the Ice Seal Committee, NMFS Marine Mammal Co-
Management Priorities for 2017 - 2018**

**Grantee: Ice Seal Committee, administered by the North Slope Borough
Department of Wildlife Management (NSB DWM)**

Award Period: August 1, 2017 – July 31, 2018

Period Covered by this Report: August 1, 2017 – July 31, 2018

October 9, 2018

Project #1

Support for the Ice Seal Committee, NMFS MARINE MAMMAL CO-MANAGEMENT PRIORITIES FOR 2017-2018

The North Slope Borough received the grant and it was appropriated in October 2107.

During the first reporting period August 1, 2017 to January 31, 2017 no funds were expended. Although no funds were spent the annual Co-Management meeting along with the Ice Seal Committee meeting dates were set to happen prior to the ending of the grant award. The ISC was also informed of the recent research activities being done by the NSB, State and Federal agencies and or partners. Also the ISC Chair, Billy Adams was active in discussions with different organizations pertaining to Marine Mammal Protection and issues effecting the Arctic wildlife and Inuit food security. One issue discussed was the concern of shipping traffic in the Arctic and the effects they can have on the natural resources and how to keep them protected.

During the second reporting period February 1, 2018 – July 31, 2018 the ISC met via teleconference. The ISC approved and adopted the final financial and performance reports for the August 1, 2106 – July 31, 2017 Grant # NA16NMF4390124. They also approved and adopted the financial and progress report for the August 1, 2017 - July 31, 2018 Grant # NA17NMF4390129. There was discussion on a report “Sustainability of the subsistence harvest of ringed, bearded, spotted and ribbon seals in Alaska”. The ISC decided not to adopt this report unless the concerns they identified were addressed then they would reconsider adopting it at the annual meeting. After discussion of the FY 2018 Alaska Native Organization Co-Management funding Program it was decided that the Executive Manager would put together a proposal with input from the ISC.

The annual meeting of the ISC Committee and the Ice Seal Co-Management met in Anchorage on May 22-24, 2018. Attachments for those meetings were submitted in the August 30, 2018 Project Progress Report.

Carla SimsKayotuk from Kaktovik was introduced as the new Executive Manager. Also introduced at this meeting: Emerson Moto from Deering as the new Maniilaq Association Representative, Cyrus Harris as the new Hunter Representative replacing the previous Chair John Goodwin, Billy Adams as the new Regional Representative and Joseph Leavitt as the new Hunter Representative for the North Slope Region.

Ice Seal Co-Management Committee

Brandon Ahmasuk of Kawerak, Inc region was selected to Chair this meeting.

An update on the court decision and listings of the bearded and ringed seals was given by Jon Kurland. He requested input from the ISC on the designation process of their critical habitat. Also discussed was a fact sheet of bearded and ringed seals to be given out to hunters and community members.

Shawn Carey discussed the funding for the ISC and his concern that the grant was not being used to its full potential and funding research projects, which was also done the same the year before. Possible projects were discussed for what could be funded in the next year's funding.

The 2018-2019 Action Plan, provided by the National Marine Fisheries Service (NMFS), to promote the conservation of Alaska Ice Seal population and the co-management of subsistence uses of ice seals in Alaska was discussed. It will be used to help assist the ISC and other partners in what their responsibilities are and to help identify what ISC needs to do to fill in the gaps.

The National Marine Mammal Laboratory (NMML) updated the ISC on their research on ice seals and the Arctic Waterways Safety Committee. Setting up buffer zones to protect the subsistence hunting and that no impacts happen.

Ice Seal Committee Annual Meeting

The Chair, Billy Adams gave his report on the meetings he attended throughout the year pertaining to ice seals and sharing his knowledge to these meetings on ice seals. The Executive manager also gave a report on activities relating to ISC. The main issues were the stranding's and court decisions on ice seals.

NOAA's Federal Program Officer provided an update on funding, research and projects that ISC can apply for and encouraged the full board to participate in the proposal process.

Reports were given by each regional and hunter representative. They discussed harvest of ice seals, weather, and the lack of ice in each of their areas. Research updates were given by the local, state and federal partners and no ISC funds were utilized in these projects.

The Programmatic Environmental Impact Statement for the Marine Mammal Health and Stranding Response Program was discussed and asked to consider it for the release of the rehabilitated ice seals. Although the Northern Pinniped Unusual Mortality Event is closed out the hunters are still concerned that nothing was found to be the cause which is concerning to the subsistence communities. They also reported on the stranding and or out of habitat of ice seal from December 2017 to May 2018. There was a discussion on how the Ice Seal Management Plan and the Ice Seal Action Plan 2018-2019 will intertwine.

On-going revisions to the ISC website, administered by the NSB DWM, are happening as the ISC is notified that : new or revised documents or updated information is available.

www.north-slope.org/departments/wildlife-management/co-management-organizations/ice-seal-committee

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