

ICE SEAL COMMITTEE DECLARATION

As declared by the Inupiat of the North Slope of Alaska; the Inupiat of the Northwest Arctic; the Inupiat/St. Lawrence Island Yupik/Central Yupik of the Bering Strait Region; the Yup'ik/Cup'ik of the Yukon-Kuskokwim; and the Yup'ik/Aleuts of Bristol Bay

on the occasion of the 7th Annual Meeting of the Ice Seal Committee, January 24-25, 2013 in Anchorage, Alaska

Recalling the vision and commitment of Charles Brower, Charles Johnson, Molly Chythlook, Edward Mark, Sandra Tahbone and other Alaska Natives to promote the sustainable harvest of ice seals (i.e. ringed seal (*Phoca hispida*), bearded seal (*Erignathus barbatus*), ribbon seal (*Histriphoca fasciata*), and spotted seal (*Phoca largha*);

Recognizing the need to remind ourselves and the world that the continuation of customary aboriginal subsistence hunting of ice seals is essential to our cultural, traditional, and nutritional well-being;

Mindful of resolutions and agreements adopted at previous Ice Seal Committee meetings;

Recognizing with Gratitude, the work of the past and current Ice Seal Committee members, support staff, and technical advisors;

Encouraged that members of the Ice Seal Committee have committed to addressing the challenges and priorities set out since the establishment of the ISC in 2003;

Recognizing that global climate change is a serious threat to the sustainability of ice seal populations and their sea-ice habitat;

Mindful that ringed and bearded seals in Alaska are now listed as a threatened species under the Endangered Species Act as a result of foreseeable future habitat loss; and that the aboriginal harvest of ice seals is not a significant factor in the determination of the listing;

Mindful that effective co-management agreements should be based upon the best available scientific data and traditional ecological knowledge;

Reminding ourselves that after seven years, the Ice Seal Committee co-management agreement has been successful;

Understanding that the Alaska Indigenous harvest of ice seals has been conservative and not over-harvested;

Attentive to the need to be prudent and wise in the conservation of ice seal populations;

Having Participated actively in the discussions at the 7th Annual Meeting of the Ice Seal Committee, and considered the recommendations of the Technical Advisors;

HEREBY:

Thank the host of the 7th Annual Meeting of the Ice Seal Committee, the North Slope Borough Department of Wildlife Management;

Direct the federal government of the United States of America to take action to address the root causes of climate change that are leading to the decline of the sea-ice habitat that ice seals and other marine mammals depend upon;

Direct the federal government of the United States of America to make assurances that the listing of ringed and bearded seals as threatened under the Endangered Species Act will not place additional disproportionate impacts on the Alaska Native people who rely on ice seals for subsistence purposes in their traditional hunting practices as previous listings have done before;

Direct the National Marine Fisheries Service to consult with the Ice Seal Committee and the affected Alaska Native Tribal Governments on activities relating to this listing with other countries' federal governments and to report to the Ice Seal Committee of their activities;

Acknowledge that the harvest levels of ice seals may need to be re-evaluated based on the best available science and further consultations according to the Ice Seal Management Plan and within the signed Co-Management Agreement between the Ice Seal Committee and the National Marine Fisheries Service;

Mandate that the Ice Seal Committee be informed of law enforcement activities regarding ice seals now that ice seals are being listed as threatened under the ESA;

Thank and Urge the Technical Advisors to continue ice seal research off the coast of Alaska, Russia and Canada to better understand the population dynamics and future trends of the shared ice seal population;

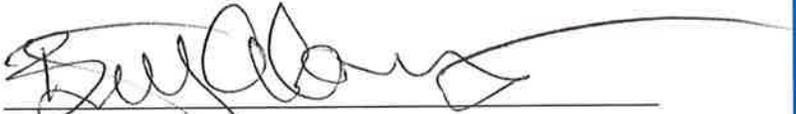
Urge the United States federal government to recognize and support the Ice Seal Committee now that ice seals are listed as threatened and to allow the aboriginal harvest to continue in order to sustain our cultural and nutritional needs;

The Ice Seal Committee hereby affirms that the Ice Seal Committee Declaration was unanimously passed by the Ice Seal Committee at the 7th Annual Meeting on January 25, 2013.

On behalf of the Inupiat of the Arctic Slope:



Harry Brower, Jr., Barrow



Billy Adams, Barrow

On behalf of the Inupiat of the Northwest Arctic:



John Goodwin, Sr., Kotzebue



Isabelle Booth, Kivalina

On behalf of the Inupiat/St. Lawrence Island Yupik/Central Yupik of the Bering Strait Region:



Charles Menadelook, Little Diomed



Brandon Ahmasuk, Nome

On behalf of the Yup'ik/Cup'ik of the Yukon-Kuskokwim:



Albert Simon, Hooper Bay



Tim Andrew, Bethel

On behalf of the Yup'ik/Aleuts of Bristol Bay:



Helen Aderman, Dillingham



Frank Logusak, Sr., Togiak