

Pribilof Islands Collaborative Steering Committee Meeting
September 8, 2004 10:00AM teleconference
Planning Workgroup for next PIC Meeting on Northern Fur Seals
and Steering Committee meeting
Agenda and meeting summary

NOTE: Action items are highlighted in yellow

**NEXT STEERING COMMITTEE MEETING: Thursday, September 16, 10:00AM
Alaska time**

Present: Max Malavansky, Jr., Andy Malavansky, Meg King, Evie Witten, Bruce Robson, Debbie Lestenkof, Heather McCarty, Karen Pletnikoff, Ed Luttrell, Karin Holser, Claire LeClair (notetaking).

Discussion Outline

1. Agenda for Planning session for next PIC meeting on Northern fur seals:
 - Review notes from subgroup
 - Refine meeting elements as needed
 - Discuss/draft list of expert participants to invite and what data/information we would like to request they provide.
 - Planning logistics:
 - Make September 22nd the target date to decide if possible to hold PIC fur seal meeting Nov 3-5?
 - Evie/Claire/Denise to coordinate: 1) drafting list/obtaining copies of publications PIC participants will review in preparation for the meeting; 2) inviting expert participants (not taken up)
 - Decision re: weekly or bi-weekly meetings (not taken up)
2. Agenda for Steering Committee meeting:
 - E. Luttrell briefed group on Industry meeting
 - Review/Revise Funding Letters
 - Funding for PIC approved by APIA
 - Resolve budget/funding issues (not taken up)
 - Review August meeting expenses (not taken up)
 - Review and update fundraising plan (not taken up)

1. Planning session for PIC northern fur seal meeting:

Those present read through the notes the work group at the St. Paul meeting developed and discussed:

- Timing of the next meeting was discussed as it is tentatively scheduled for November 3-5, but there are concerns that this is not realistic. The week of February 21st was also identified at the St. Paul meeting as a backup. It was also suggested that the PIC should consider the meeting to coincide with January Marine Science Symposium in Anchorage. It was noted that last year the PIC tried meeting at that time, but it presented many challenges due to other meetings scheduled to coincide with the science symposium.

- Suggested target date to make this decision was 9/22, but that too may be too soon as key individuals at agencies are out.
- The group discussed what should be expected from agencies, as it may not be realistic to expect government experts to make recommendations, and should ask them instead for ‘educated opinions’ and to be willing to discuss those opinions.
 - Evie organized science experts for January 2004 meeting and found that most will tell us if they are not the ones to help answer particular questions and will also point out who in the science community should be asked instead.
 - It was suggested that the PIC may need a panel of scientists to help determine who we tap for what information to be presented at our meetings. After further discussion this “advisory panel” was described as 2 or 3 people.
 - In some ways, through informal discussions, PIC already has a ‘science panel’ through its connections and networks.
 - If it is determined that a more formal process is needed, PIC must agree on how we choose the advisory panel (and experts).
 - Letting the Steering Committee choose the experts could work if all perspectives participate in the discussions.
 - Some are certain that a science panel will be needed eventually and there are people who would like to help this way, select three who everyone can agree on, invite them to planning sessions now rather than form a separate group.

PIC northern fur seal meeting goals, objectives, elements, possible presenters and discussion

Meeting goal: Bring us to a common understanding of northern fur seal status, conservation needs, and information gaps, and identify potential conservation actions for future evaluation.

Objectives:

- Understand potential interactions and overlap between northern fur seal and fisheries (throughout year, by NFS age, sex and rookery, by fishery type)
- Understand how fisheries do or do not have a cumulative impact on fur seals
- Evaluate an overall research plan for NFS
- Understand NFS conservation plan
- Develop initial/draft proposals for conservation actions

Suggested meeting elements/topics, and draft list of possible expert participants

1. Foraging and migration patterns of NFS by age, sex and rookery (Rolf Ream)
2. Comparison of Pribilof populations and rookery characteristics (e.g., position relative to shelf, forage populations, etc.) with other Bering Sea populations and rookeries (Rolf Ream and Vladimir Burkonof on contract with NMFS has knowledge/experience with Commander Islands population and Russian research)
3. What fisheries exist (target spp., gear and boat type, by-catch rates and spp), and how fisheries occur in eastern Bering Sea over space and time – profile since 1970s, and trends in fish stocks over last 40 years. (Go to Doug Demaster first and he will delegate to his appropriate staff, e.g. Lowell Fritz, **Heather will call to find out if/when Demaster can respond**)

4. “Flowers” and “weeds”/junk food hypothesis/ nutritional value of forage (Maybe Andrew Trite or Alan Springer. Also, Lowell Fritz (and Sara Hinkley(?) have a new paper on the ‘junk food hypothesis.’
 5. History and current status of incidental marine mammal take by Bering Sea and North Pacific fisheries (e.g., high seas squid & drift net fisheries) (Go to Jim Balsiger first and he will delegate to his appropriate staff, e.g. K. Brix and Bridget Mansfield)
 6. Oceanographic & climate trends in North Pacific (A. Springer, Pacific Marine Environmental Lab, might be someone at Auke Bay Lab working on Chum salmon).
 7. Effects of climate change on oceanographic processes and species groups (George Hunt, Alan Springer, G. Kruse, growth and maturity of Pollock in Bering Sea in relation to climate/temperature change – who else?) It was noted that G. Hunt not keen on integrating concerns of local communities.
 8. Evening panel discussion on how we get to ecosystem management from initial analysis of important areas....Panel to address what is ecosystem management. There are people with ecosystem expertise at NMFS (Pat Livingston) and also a lot of people in academia, not necessarily with emphasis on North Pacific. Concerns about “advocacy science.” Need to make sure there is agreement on who presents this topic. University may be interested in co-sponsoring a public presentation on Ecosystem Management but concern raised about making the presentation public. Suggested that the following morning have experts/panelists attend PIC meeting.
- B. Robson suggested that experts can utilize presentations they have already prepared for other meetings or events, which could made developing materials for the fur seal meeting easier.
 - Bruce answered questions about satellite tracking of fur seals: goes back to 1992, not comprehensive for whole species since you can’t sample a high percentage of individuals. However, able to make some general observations from the sat-tracking, which then needs to be field tested in a more comprehensive fashion.
 - Outcome of discussions need to be what data is not available but is needed (e.g., gaps), and next steps or strategies to obtain.
- Evie will clean up the outline for the fur seal meeting goals and elements to incorporate these discussions as well as names of experts and questions to address.
- It was expressed that most of the topics outlined have information that can be readily accessible.
 - Yes, however, some topics have a better data set than others, and the concern was raised about taking small amounts of information and making big conclusions. *PIC needs to make sure a process is agreed upon and followed that addresses this.*
 - Alternate concern was also raised about not moving forward, and that need to decide when there is enough information to make a decision.
 - *There is a difference of opinion within the collaborative on how much and which data is enough. It’s important to acknowledge the difference exists and begin to articulate exactly what is the difference, as that is unclear.*

Ed Luttrell joined the teleconference and gave a report, from his perspective, on the meeting the fishing industry representatives held Tuesday to discuss continuing their involvement in the PIC. Ed had three items to report:

1. All sectors are going to check in with their respective groups about whether to stay involved in the PIC. In the meantime, the Groundfish Forum, through Ed, will stay involved in the PIC. Question asked of Ed: will industry representatives report to their groups the process that the PIC went through to respond to concerns about the letter Paul Koberstein sent to NMFS and the Council? Ed responded that this would be part of the discussion.
2. The November meeting date is not realistic – too soon. Do not want to see quality of meeting affected by trying to do too much too soon.
3. There are general concerns about the funding letters and about the research needs list compiled by NMFS.

Review funding request letters.

- Funding needs list circulated at August meeting different than one provided for attachment to the draft letters. Cannot change this document without consulting NMFS, however.
- The NMFS research plan was put together prior to December, 2003 NPFMC Fur Seal Committee meeting so it has been around awhile. Is it only item #8 that is causing concern?
- Need to address request to include tribal organization's request for funding their co-management activities. Tribal organizations have been sending these requests for funding to congressional delegation since December, 2003 with no response to date. St. George asking for \$800,000 and St. Paul asking for \$1.6million.
- At meeting in St. Paul group talked about keeping research needs and facilities needs separate, but NMFS research needs list includes both.
- Facilities needed in order to conduct research though, as it's been years (decades) without upgrades to these facilities.
- Some duplication between NMFS research needs and tribal organization's funding requests for co-management activities.
- Heather, Debbie, Karin and Claire will work out these details and provide a new draft for review by next steering committee meeting.

APIA Funding Support

Karen Pletnikoff asks about routing for the \$2,500 that APIA is contributing to the PIC.

Meg will get with her contact information for SWAMC.