



ALASKA NATIVE HARBOR SEAL COMMISSION

FDMS Docket number {NOAA-NMFS-2011-0284}
National Marine Fisheries (NMFS), National Oceanic and Atmospheric
Administration (NOAA) Marine Mammals: Alaska Harbor Seals
Alaska Native Harbor Seal Commission (ANHSC) Comment on NOAA's Advanced
Notice of Public Rule making (ANPR)

BOARD OF DIRECTORS

May 7th 2013

ANHSC Mission Statement is as follows:

**Speridon "Mitch"
Simeonoff Sr.
Chairman
Kodiak Region**

To ensure that harbor seals remain an essential, cultural and nutritional way of life and to promote the health of harbor seals in order to carry forward the cultural, nutritional and spiritual traditions of Alaska Natives.

**Lillian Elvsaas
Vice Chairman
Cook Inlet Region**

The ANHSC will continue to protect the seal; as it is a vital part of our indigenous survival.

**Helen Aderman
Secretary
Bristol Bay MMC**

It is imperative for Alaska Natives to continue our ancient marine mammal hunting practices. It provides us with the nutritional needs that keep us healthy and spiritually strong. Harbor seals play a crucial role in the culture and diet of many Alaska Natives. The seal oil and meat provide high amounts of iron and other important nutrients. According to current research, the seal's blubber contains elements that act as antibiotics and antioxidants in the human body.

**Harold Martin
Southeast Region**

**Raymond Sensmeier
Yakutat Tlingit Tribe**

Studies indicate that vessel presence and/or approach can cause frequent flushing of seals from ice floes, separation of mothers and pups, and prolonged exposure in cold water which can have energetic consequences for pups.

**John Boone
Chugach Region**

**Bruce Foster
Aleutian/Pribilof**

**Joni Bryant
Executive Director**

The ANHSC also supports the findings and publication of Jansen, J. K., J. L. Bengtson, P. L. Boveng, S. P. Dahle, and J. Ver Hoef. 2006. Disturbance of harbor seals by cruise ships in Disenchantment Bay, Alaska: an investigation at three spatial and temporal scales. AFSC Processed Report 2006-02. 75 p. Alaska

The Alaska Native Harbor Seal Commission request that the National Marine Fisheries Service adopt regulations through the Federal Rule-Making Process, that Cruise Ships (over 60 feet) including Charter Boats carrying passengers for hire, be restricted from Bancas Point on a straight line to the opposite side of Disenchantment Bay to Calahonda Creek on the mainland; and

All ships mentioned above shall be required to stay at least five hundred meters from the outside edge of the ice flow while entering into the Northern portion of Yakutat Bay; in order to avoid harassing mother seals and their pups; and that this closure will be effective only from May 1st to July 15th of each year, in order to protect the declining species located in the Northern portion of Disenchantment Bay.

Respectfully,

Speridon Simeonoff Sr.

ANHSC Chairman

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Conserving and sustaining the harbor seal for our cultural well-being

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