**Annual Report: Alaska Inventory and Monitoring funded projects FY16**

**Due 1 October 2017 and minimum of annually thereafter or when project is complete.**

**All reports, data, and any other products should be uploaded to ServCat.**

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| **1. Station**:  Alaska Maritime | **2. Org Code (FBMS)**:  FF07RAM000 | **3. Amount Received**:  $20,000 |
| **4. I&M WBS code**:  FXRS126107IMDb1 | **5. PRIMR Survey ID**:  FF07RAM000-035 | **6. ServCat reference #:**  [#76351](https://ecos.fws.gov/ServCat/Reference/Profile/76351) |
| **7. Project Title**:  *AMNWR nearshore boat survey database* | | |
| **8a. Project Officer**:  Heather Renner | **8b. Phone**:  907-226-4623 | **8c. email**:  Heather\_Renner@fws.gov |

Project Goal:

Nearshore boat surveys have been conducted intermittently at numerous Alaska Maritime National Wildlife Refuge sites since the 1970’s and are the primary method for collecting basic inventory data and monitoring populations in these remote regions. Data from these surveys are vital for describing distribution and abundance of Refuge trust resources and inform a variety of management decisions. Currently, however, these survey data are difficult to access and use effectively because they languish in disparate formats (electronic and paper) and multiple locations (local computers to filing cabinets).

Our objective is to consolidate and enter all nearshore boat survey data into the Refuge’s existing population database. This entails updating the existing population database to accommodate all information included in nearshore boat survey datasets, finding and standardizing all nearshore boat survey data from various locations and formats, and entering datasets into the database. The end product of this project will be a population database populated with the Refuge’s nearshore boat survey data. Work will begin in October 2017 and continue over the course of the 2017-2018 fiscal year. The final product and final report will be completed and submitted to the I&M Branch by September 2018.

Project Status:

Funds are being used to pay the salary for a Refuge biologist to conduct this work. Although this project was originally planned to begin in October 2017 as outlined in the proposal, work began earlier due to staff availability.

In May 2017, Refuge biologists and the Refuge database manager discussed the specifics of the nearshore boat survey data and how best to incorporate them into the existing population database. Due to some ongoing technical issues, it was decided to temporarily enter the boat survey data into a separate Access database, which will allow work on this project to continue at present and which can be added to the existing population database at a later date. From June-September 2017, progress was made on discovering, organizing, and entering datasets. A comprehensive list of all existing nearshore boat survey datasets was compiled by querying Refuge staff and searching through hundreds of historic data files and reports. Datasets were organized by the Refuge’s five geographic units and data entry began for surveys from the largest and most complex unit, the Aleutian Islands Unit. Data were entered into a standardized Excel file format that will be imported into the Access database. To minimize data entry errors, all data were double-entered and proofed using a software program that compares multiple files. As of September 2017, data entry is completed for boat surveys from 2004-2015 in the Aleutian Islands Unit.

Remaining funds were carried over for work in FY18. Plans for FY18 include completion of data entry, importing proofed Excel files into the Access database, and if time/money allows, combining the boat survey database into the larger population database.

Final Report Summary (when applicable):

N/A