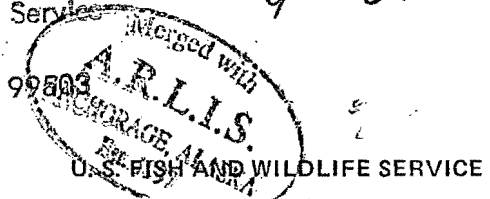


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# memorandum



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(RE)

TO: Robert Jones, Project Field Supervisor

FROM: Charles H. Adsit, Realty Specialist

DATE: June 27, 1980

SUBJECT: 1980 Walrus Harvest Monitoring Project, Wales, Alaska

During the period from May 15, 1980 through June 7, 1980 I was temporarily assigned as a field biologist at Wales, Alaska for the purpose of monitoring the harvest of the Pacific Walrus.

This memorandum is prepared for the purpose of briefly summarizing the experiences and observations during that period.

On May 15, 1980 I departed Anchorage via Wein Airlines, upon arrival at Nome I was met by Robert Leedy of the Nome field station and Carl Akwinona of Kawerak, Inc. who was the field representative under contract for this project.

At Nome I picked up field supplies from Robert Leedy and flew with Carl Akwinona to Wales via Foster Airways.

We arrived at Wales about 1800 hours and were met by Pete Sereadlook who was to provide room and board during my stay.

After checking in at Pete Sereadlook's establishment, Carl Akwinona briefly introduced me to the mayor and town council. We then met with the boat captains and outlined the project.

On May 16, 1980 Carl Akwinona advised me that Thomas Oxereok, Jr. had been hired for thirty (30) days as field assistant. Carl Akwinona then departed Wales.

After Carl Akwinona's departure I met with Thomas Oxereok, Jr. and we went over the general program.

Briefly it may be mentioned that the winds at Wales have been reportedly almost constant from the north for two to three months this spring. This accounts for the heavy snow drifts in and around the village. Recently the winds have shifted around to the south having the effect of holding the sea ice in against the land. Generally it is not feasible for Wales hunters to go out during periods of south winds. Towards the latter part of May winds shifted to the north, however, they were fairly stiff but the sea



ice had gradually started moving out. By May 25, 1980 the surf was moving sufficiently to start breaking out the shore ice. This enabled the boats to leave and beach directly from shore. On May 26, 1980 the first specimens were brought in and most of the hunting days thereafter were limited by the extent of the winds, the direction of the winds and how rough the seas were. Most of the ice, when it did finally go out, went so far out that successful crews were extending their hunts to the vicinity of Fairway Rock and the Diomedes. The hazards of extending the hunting forays to this extent is that the winds and seas could build up quite rapidly and endanger the small hunting boats.

Carl Akwinona again arrived on May 20, 1980 and reviewed the situation.

Robert Jones and William Overway arrived on May 25, 1980 and reviewed the situation.

On the afternoon of June 6, 1980 William Overway arrived and we closed up the field station and he flew me into Nome.

On June 7, 1980 I returned to Anchorage via Alaska Airlines.

The following are a few comments and suggestions regarding my experience at the Wales field station:

1. At the time of departure from Anchorage we were unaware that room and board were to be provided. Accordingly we took a substantial food supply and other items of gear that ultimately proved to be substantially more than needed all of the food and miscellaneous supplies were left with the Sereadlooks. In the future it would be helpful to have a better idea of the room and board arrangements prior to departure for a field station.
2. During the period at the station it may be noted that it was somewhat awkward in planning the station operation apparently resulting from dual management, namely by the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service and Kewarek, Inc. I would suggest that management of all field station activities be placed under control of the project field supervisor.
3. Because of the nature and conditions of harvesting, it is almost impossible to be certain of the reliability and identification of the specimens obtained. I would like to suggest in this type of survey that field stations not be used. I believe that the survey could be modified and improved by using one of the Service's own boats and crew to conduct the survey with the hiring of a native crew to do the actual harvesting. From my understanding of the situation I believe that the Service boat could escort the native crew to within about a mile of the ice

pack where the walrus are on ice flows<sup>2</sup>. The native crew could do the actual killing and the service biologist could do the on-site sampling. This would insure that the harvesting would be done on the ice ("Nunivook") which would minimize losses and insure the reliability and identification of the specimens.

SUMMARY OF SAMPLE COLLECTIONS:

Specimens: 68 Total

Sex: 37 Male, 31 Female

Teeth: 67 pairs

Repros: 2

Stomachs: 10

*Charles H. Adams*

