



Action Initiative Information

Cluster:	Ocean Products		
Initiative:	Develop a Sea Otter Management Program in Southeast Alaska		
Goal:	Develop an effective SE Alaska sea otter management plan for increased subsistence use by Alaska Natives.		
Champion:	Phil Doherty	sardfa@kpunet.net	225-2853
Team:	names	emails	phone

Meeting Summaries

Date:	Attendees:	Outcome:
12/20/12	CWG Monthly call-in	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Phil Doherty indicated that, unlike last winter, none of the stakeholder groups regarding sea otter management plan to meet this winter. • Phil indicated that he will remain in touch with Verena Gill (Wildlife Biologist, U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service) who, along with Sunny Rice (Marine Advisory Program, University of Alaska Fairbanks, Petersburg office) and Zachary Hoyt (Ph.D. Student, Fisheries Division, School of Fisheries and Ocean Sciences, University of Alaska Fairbanks) are tracking sea otters and their diets. This team will probably finish a report about this work by summer of 2013. • On September 12, 2012, Dan Ashe (Director of the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service) hosted a teleconference to address the definition of sea otter use and “significantly altered” for native tribes. He initially said that this work would be completed by January but the date has been pushed back until February (Phil noted that folks in the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service have been working on this issue for decades). • Phil spoke with contacts in AK Department of Fish and Game about sea otter management. However, there has been lots of staff turnover in the Douglas office so some inertia has been lost there.

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		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • According an article in the LA Times, the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service has lost its battle to manage sea otters in Southern California, which does not bode well for dive fisheries. • Southeast Alaska Regional Dive Fisheries Association has hired a consultant to serve as a lobbyist in Washington, DC. Phil asserted that officials in Washington, DC are aware of this issue with sea otters. • Julie Decker pointed out that this year is the 30-year anniversary of the Marine Mammal Protection Act. At the last Board meeting, UFA discussed requesting Senator Lisa Murkowski hold a briefing in the Senate Oceans Caucus to start a conversation about the problems associated with the Marine Mammal Protection Act. • Phil said that SARDFFA has not tried to sue the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service and has instead focused on pushing the State of Alaska to do something about this issue. • Stefanie Moreland (Special Assistant to the Governor for Fisheries, Oceans and Arctic policy) indicated that the Office of the Governor is aware of the sea otter issue. Stefanie said that she will follow up with the Alaska Department of Fish and Game regarding the timeline of the decision regarding the definition of “significantly altered”. • Phil said that he contacted tribal governments and corporations to try to collaborate to address this issue but that he has not been allowed to attend any of the tribal meetings. • Julie heard that Central Council of the Tlingit and Haida Indian Tribes of Alaska hired someone to work on a sea otter management plan. • Stefanie Moreland stated that she would try to get an update from Carrie Sykes with Central Council regarding their work on a sea otter management plan.
11/20/12	CWG Monthly call-in	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Phil Doherty met with the USFWS & wrote follow-up letter to meeting • The definition of “significantly altered” is to be worked on by the USFWS in 2013
5/30/12	CWG Monthly call-in	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The letter of support for the <i>Sea Otter Traditional Use Revitalization Project</i> was signed and sent out.
4/11/12	CWG Meeting #5 in Ketchikan	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Between January and March of 2012, members of the Sea Otter Task Force have met with the Alaska Board of Fisheries, the



		<p>Marine Mammal Commission, and the Federal Subsistence Board. Verna Gill (USFWS), Dr. Ginny Eckert (University of Alaska), and Phil Doherty (SARDFA) have put together a Power Point presentation updating the latest information on sea otters.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Central Council of Tlingit and Haida Tribes of Alaska and others are working with Rep. Young regarding changes to laws regarding existing management plans, definitions of “traditional” sea otter products and sales of pelts, and enforcement issues. • Rep. Peggy Wilson introduced HJR 26 Sea Otter Management in the House of Representatives. The resolution urges the federal agencies to work with the Alaska Department of Fish and Game, Southeast Alaska Native leaders, and other interested parties to establish strategies and plans for the sustainable management of the reintroduced sea otter population of Southeast Alaska. The resolution passed the House and is now on the Senate side. • Tlingit and Haida Central Council has hired Myrna Gardner to develop a draft sea otter management plan with co-management options, and will hold a check and balance assessment five years after a plan is put into place. They are working with the tribes for local management, and are working to increase pelt production (more artists, more training, more tanning and sewing capacity, etc.). They have spoken with USFS Regional Forester, and although they claim no jurisdiction, they may soon hold a “sea otter conference”. • Southeast Alaska Regional Dive Fishery Association (SARDFA) is in negotiations with the Sitka Science Center to hire a summer intern to work on compiling sea otter information in SE AK. At this time the details of what the intern would work on has not been decided.
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Initiative Action Plan Update		
Activity 1:	Establish a working Task Force to develop a sea otter management plan for SE Alaska.	Activity Date:

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	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Sea Otter Task Force established. 	1/12
Activity 2:	Support clarifying the definition or changing regulation to allow Alaska Native people the traditional right to make further use of subsistence sea otter catches.	Activity Date:
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The letter of support for the Sea Otter Traditional Use Revitalization Project was signed and sent out. Met with Dan Ashe (Director of the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service) on September 12, 2012 via teleconference to address the definition of sea otter use and “significantly altered” for native tribes. Southeast Alaska Regional Dive Fisheries Association has hired a consultant to serve as a lobbyist in Washington, DC. Phil asserted that officials in Washington, DC are aware of this issue with sea otters. 	5/12 9/12/12 12/12
Activity 3:	Develop an effective sea otter management plan to allow increased subsistence take of sea otters by Alaska Native people.	Activity Date:
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Tlingit and Haida Central Council has hired Myrna Gardner to develop a draft sea otter management plan with co-management options Rep. Peggy Wilson has introduced HJR 26 Sea Otter Management in the House of Representatives. The resolution urges the federal agencies to work with the Alaska Department of Fish and Game, Southeast Alaska Native leaders, and other interested parties to establish strategies and plans for the sustainable management of the reintroduced sea otter population of Southeast Alaska. Phil spoke with contacts in AK Department of Fish and Game about sea otter management. Phil said that he contacted tribal governments and corporations to try to collaborate to address this issue but that he has not been allowed to attend any of the tribal meetings. 	4/12 4/12 12/12 12/12
Activity 4:	Support continued University of Alaska and USFWS research on SE Alaska sea otters.	Activity Date:
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Phil has remained in touch with Verena Gill (Wildlife Biologist, U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service) who, along with Sunny Rice (Marine Advisory Program, University of Alaska Fairbanks, Petersburg office) and Zachary Hoyt (Ph.D. Student, Fisheries Division, School of Fisheries and Ocean Sciences, University of Alaska Fairbanks) are 	12/12

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tracking sea otters and their diets. This team will probably finish a report about this work by summer of 2013.	
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Other Informational Items	