

Notice to Visitors of St. Paul Island

On St. Paul Island the Fur Seal Rookeries are administered by the U.S. Secretary of Commerce in partnership with the Tribal Government of St. Paul for the purpose of conserving, managing, and protecting the Northern Fur Seal species and habitat. It is essential to the well being of the species that the rookeries and haul-out areas are protected from human disturbance. Undue disturbance of the seals causes mortality, particularly to the pups, and tends to drive the animals away from their breeding area which are critical to the survival of the species.

All fur seal rookeries and haul-out areas are closed from June 1 to October 15 annually to all persons except those authorized by the National Marine Fisheries Service (NMFS). No person without written authorization from a NMFS official shall approach any fur seal rookery or haul-out area nor pass beyond any posted sign forbidding passage. Individuals or groups interested in more information on access to these restricted areas should contact the Tribal Government of St. Paul's Ecosystem Conversation Office (ECO) at 546-3230/3231 or NMFS in Anchorage at 907-271-3024.

Visitors accompanied by a NMFS/Tribal authorized local tour guide may view the fur seal rookeries from designated areas. Independent wildlife researchers, professional photographers and others not affiliated with the tour group must obtain an access permit at the ECO office before visiting the viewing blinds or any other restricted area.

Observation blinds are located at Reef and Little Zapadni Rookeries for viewing the seals. All persons must remain within the blind. It is prohibited to pass beyond the blind or to approach the rookery. The fur seal is an extremely ferocious animal and will not hesitate to attack anyone who approaches too closely. The blinds were not only designed for the protection of the animals, but also for the safety of those viewing them.

The Tribal Government of St. Paul conducts an annual subsistence fur seal harvest from late June to early August. Permits to observe the subsistence seal harvest must be obtained before attending the harvest. Permits are available at the ECO Office at 546-3234. All visitors observing the subsistence seal harvest do so at their own risk. Visitors must maintain a sufficient distance from the sealing operation, as directed by a Tribal representative, to prevent interference with the sealing crew.

Signs are posted at all fur seal rookeries and haul-outs. The fur seal rookeries and haul-outs are monitored and patrolled by the Tribal Government of St. Paul and National Marine Fisheries Service. Anyone caught trespassing beyond the posted signs or on the fur seal rookeries or haul-outs may face legal persecution. In addition, under the Marine Mammal Protection Act, it is always unlawful to disturb, harass, injure or attempt to disturb any marine mammal. All regulations are strictly enforced.

NOTICE

Federal Regulations Regarding Collection of Marine Mammal Bones and Teeth on the Pribilof Islands

Federal Regulation (50 CFR 216.26) state the following:

- Any bones, teeth or ivory of any dead marine mammal may be collected from the beach or from land within ¼ mile of the ocean. The term *ocean* includes bays and estuaries.
- Marine mammal parts so collected may be retained if registered within 30 days with an agent of the National Marine Fisheries Service.

A National Marine Fisheries Service (NMFS) representative is available from 8:00 AM to 5:00 PM each weekday at the Tribal Government of St. Paul's Ecosystem Conversation Office or may be contacted at 546-3234 for further information and to register parts.

***NOTE** Skeletal or other parts from an endangered species of marine mammal **CANNOT be collected under this regulation**. Collection of bones and other parts from an endangered species is a violation of Federal Law (50 CFR 222.21). Because Stellar Sea Lions and most of the large whales which was ashore on the Pribilof Islands are endangered, teeth, vertebrae, ribs or skeletal parts should not be removed from the beach unless the collector is knowledgeable concerning the species to which the parts belong.

Walrus, Polar bear and sea otter species are under the jurisdiction of the US Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS) and special regulations apply to the collection and possession of parts from these animals. For further information and details, please contact the Tribal Government of St. Paul's Ecosystem Conservation Office at 546-3234.

ALEUT COMMUNITY OF ST. PAUL
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