



NEWS RELEASE

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**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
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**TOGIAC AREA MAN SENTENCED TO PRISON FOR WASTING WALRUS, ILLEGALLY
TRANSPORTING TUSKS AND FIREARMS VIOLATIONS**

Anchorage, Alaska – U.S. Attorney Karen L. Loeffler announced today that Togiak area resident Jessie Anariak, age 50, was sentenced by the Hon. Sharon L. Gleason, United States District Court Judge, to a term of 15 months imprisonment for his actions arising from the illegal take of a walrus on Round Island in May, 2011.

Anariak, along with codefendant Sixty Arkanakyak, was indicted in December, 2012. The indictment alleged that on May 9, 2011, Anariak and Arkanakyak, departed from the village of Togiak, Alaska in a Lund skiff. After leaving Togiak, the men are alleged to have motored to and beached the skiff on Round Island, an island located within the Walrus Islands State Game Sanctuary and accessible to the public only by permit. In December, 2012, Arkanakyak plead guilty to the illegal taking of a walrus from Round Island, as well as being a felon in possession of a firearm. He was later sentenced in August, 2013, by the Hon. Sharon L. Gleason to a term of 30 months imprisonment.

The indictment alleges that while on the beach, Arkanakyak and Anariak approached a herd of walrus which were hauled out on the beach. Both men, armed with .12 gauge shotguns, began shooting walrus and wounded approximately five. The herd stampeded and four wounded walrus escaped into the sea. Arkanakyak and Anariak then corralled one walrus against a cliff on the beach and shot it in the head with their shotguns until it died. The men then hacked the tusks off the walrus's skull and returned to their skiff without taking any of the meat or anything else from the killed walrus. Arkanakyak and Anariak then departed Round Island, taking the tusks with them and leaving the walrus on the beach to waste in violation of the Lacey Act, the Marine Mammal Protection Act and the Conspiracy statute. At sentencing, Anariak received credit for time already served in federal and state custody, which amounted to over a year.

The U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service Office of Law Enforcement, and Refuge Law Enforcement investigated this case with the assistance of the Alaska Wildlife Troopers.

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