



U.S. FISH AND WILDLIFE SERVICE

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News

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Conservation Plan for Alaska-Chukotka Polar Bears Approved

At the 5th meeting of the U.S.-Russia Polar Bear Commission, which concluded today, Commissioners approved development of a Conservation Management Plan for the shared Alaska-Chukotka polar bear population. The Conservation Management Plan identifies important habitats, high priority research activities, and traditional ecological knowledge studies necessary to provide information for the sound management of the shared population.

Federal Commissioners Geoffrey Haskett, Regional Director of the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Services' Alaska Region, and Amirkhan Amirkhanov, Deputy Head of the Federal Supervisory Natural Resources Management Service, described the activities of the Commission as an example of one of the best working relationships and collaborative partnerships between the two countries. Native Commissioners Jack Omelak, Executive Director of the Alaska Nanuuq Commission and Sergey Kavry, Representative of the indigenous people of Chukotka Autonomous District observed that the activities of the Commission will help ensure the future conservation of the polar bear and the preservation of Native peoples' culture.

The 5th meeting of the Commission was held June 5-7 2013, at the Arctic and Antarctic Research Institute in St. Petersburg, Russian Federation. Participants included federal, state, and Native representatives from the United States and Russian Federation. The goal of the meeting was to continue to implement the Bilateral Treaty for the Alaska-Chukotka polar bear population, which inhabits the Bering and Chukchi seas and is shared between the two countries. The treaty between Native and government representatives of the U.S. and Russia was signed in 2000 due to the need for coordinated management of the shared Alaska-Chukotka polar bear population that inhabits the Chukchi and northern Bering seas.

For more information about the treaty and Commission, please visit
<http://alaska.fws.gov/fisheries/mmm/polarbear/bilateral.htm>

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