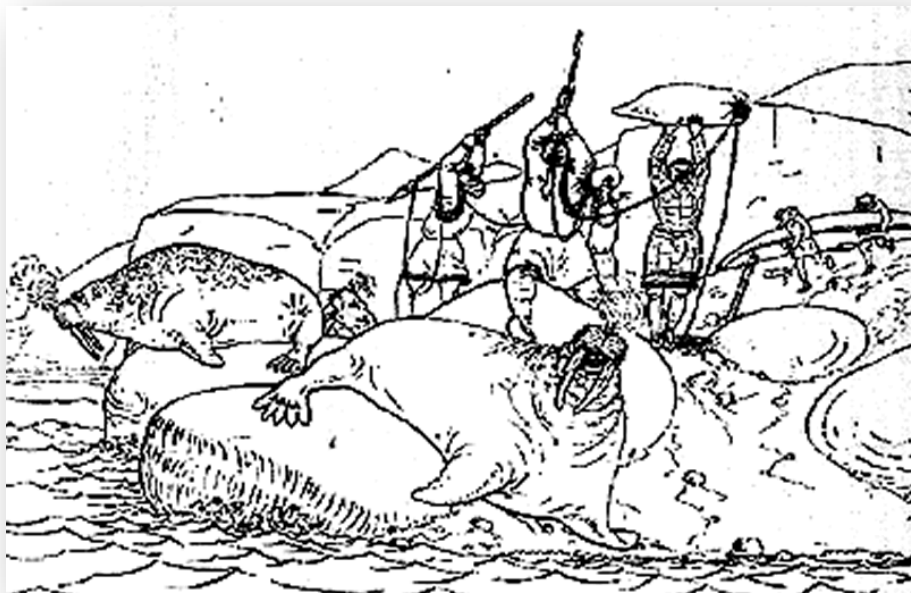


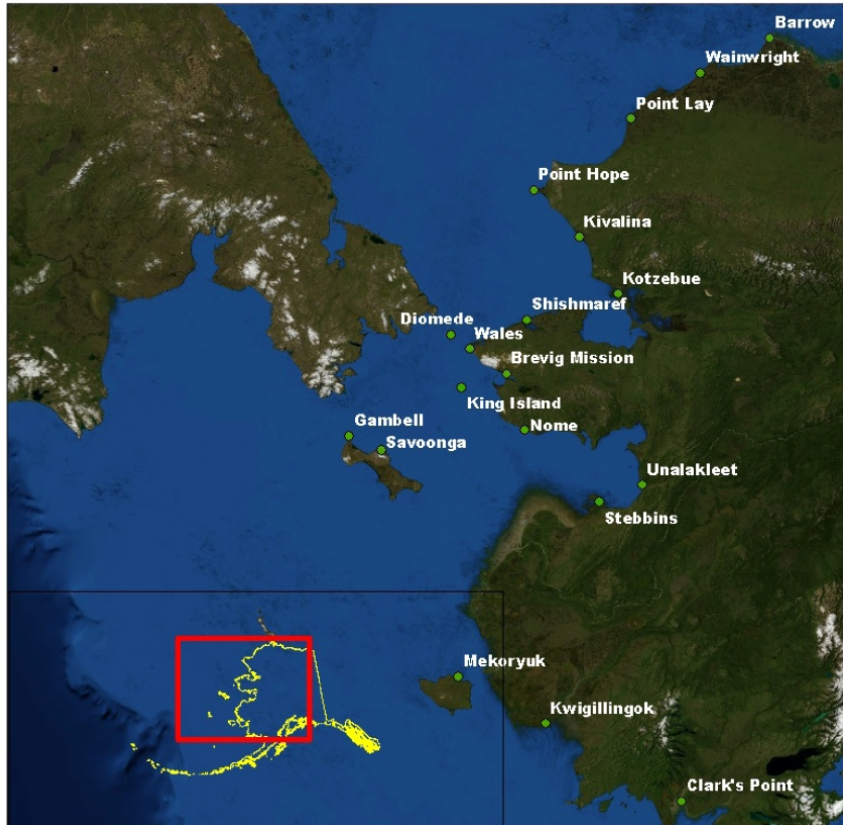
**1<sup>st</sup> Pan-Arctic Climate Outlook Forum  
Ottawa, Canada  
May 15-16, 2018**

Drawing by Henry Elliott, 1874



**Vera K. Metcalf  
Eskimo Walrus Commission**

# EWC Member Communities



The Eskimo Walrus Commission (EWC) formed in 1978, is a recognized statewide Alaska Native organization which existed long before the Marine Mammal Protection Act (MMPA) was amended. EWC currently represents a large, widespread area of 19 coastal walrus-hunting communities in western, southwestern, and northern communities. Through a Cooperative Agreement with US Fish and Wildlife Service (Service), EWC is involved in the conservation of Pacific walrus, advocates for co-management activities, and represents Alaska Native organizations, tribes, and communities' views, concerns, and opinions concerning the federal agency's management of walrus.

# Walrus Harvest Disaster

Gambell Meat Drying Rack

June 21, 2012



July 13, 2013



Photos: Martin Robards



THE STATE  
*of* **ALASKA**  
GOVERNOR SEAN PARNELL

## Department of Commerce, Community, and Economic Development

DIVISION OF COMMUNITY AND REGIONAL AFFAIRS

550 West Seventh Avenue, Suite 1640

Anchorage, Alaska 99501

Main: 907.269.4501/907.269.4581

Programs fax: 907.269.4539

### Situational Briefing Outline

### St. Lawrence Island Economic Disaster

November 2013

August 30, 2013, Juneau, Alaska – In response to a historically low walrus harvest, Governor Sean Parnell declared an economic disaster for the residents of Saint Lawrence Island. Extreme ice and wind conditions reduced the 2013 harvest to 36 percent of the prior ten-year average.

“Miserable weather and thick, almost unnavigable sea ice have led to a walrus shortage on remote St. Lawrence Island.

Savoonga and Gambell, the two villages on the island located smack dab in the middle of the Bering Strait, took in a paltry 184 walrus, or less than 20 percent of their 10-year average. The two communities typically bring in more than 1,200 walruses.

While walrus serves as a major food store for the communities -- racks full of drying meat are common throughout the region -- they also serve as a major economic driver.” (*Anchorage Daily News*, August 2013)



# ANCHORAGE DAILY NEWS

Rural Alaska

Prevailing southwest winds kept pushing the thick sea ice toward the island this spring, making it difficult for the 36 walrus crews to get their boats out to sea. Coupled with miserable, wet winter storms, Ungott said the packed ice kept his crew from venturing much farther than one or two miles from the island. Prime walrus hunting is six or seven miles offshore, he said.

George Noongwook had a similar experience in Savoonga, population 670, which is about 40 miles southeast of Gambell. Noongwook, a hunter and chairman of the Alaska Eskimo Whaling Commission, only killed one walrus this season. He typically takes in a dozen or more.

"Some years it's bad, but it's not this bad," he said.

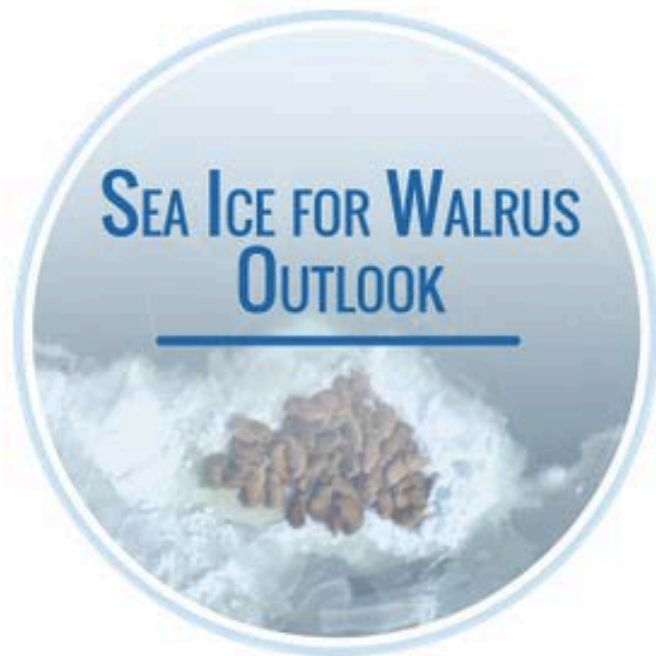
Noongwook said the community is looking for other food sources -- such as seals, sea birds, eggs and fishing for halibut and salmon -- to supplement the loss in walrus.

"You just have to go with the flow, I guess," he said. "We can't do anything about it. (The season) is over and done with."

This year Savoonga landed four bowhead whales, another food option, though two additional strikes were counted as losses. Noongwook said while those lost whales sometimes sink, usually hunters are able to salvage them a day or two later when float up. This year, the mass of sea ice kept that from happening. (*Alaska Daily News*, August 2013)

The Sea Ice for Walrus Outlook (SIWO) is a resource for Alaska Native subsistence hunters, coastal communities, and others interested in sea ice and walrus. The SIWO provides weekly reports from April through June with information on weather and sea ice conditions relevant to walrus in the northern Bering Sea and southern Chukchi Sea regions of Alaska.

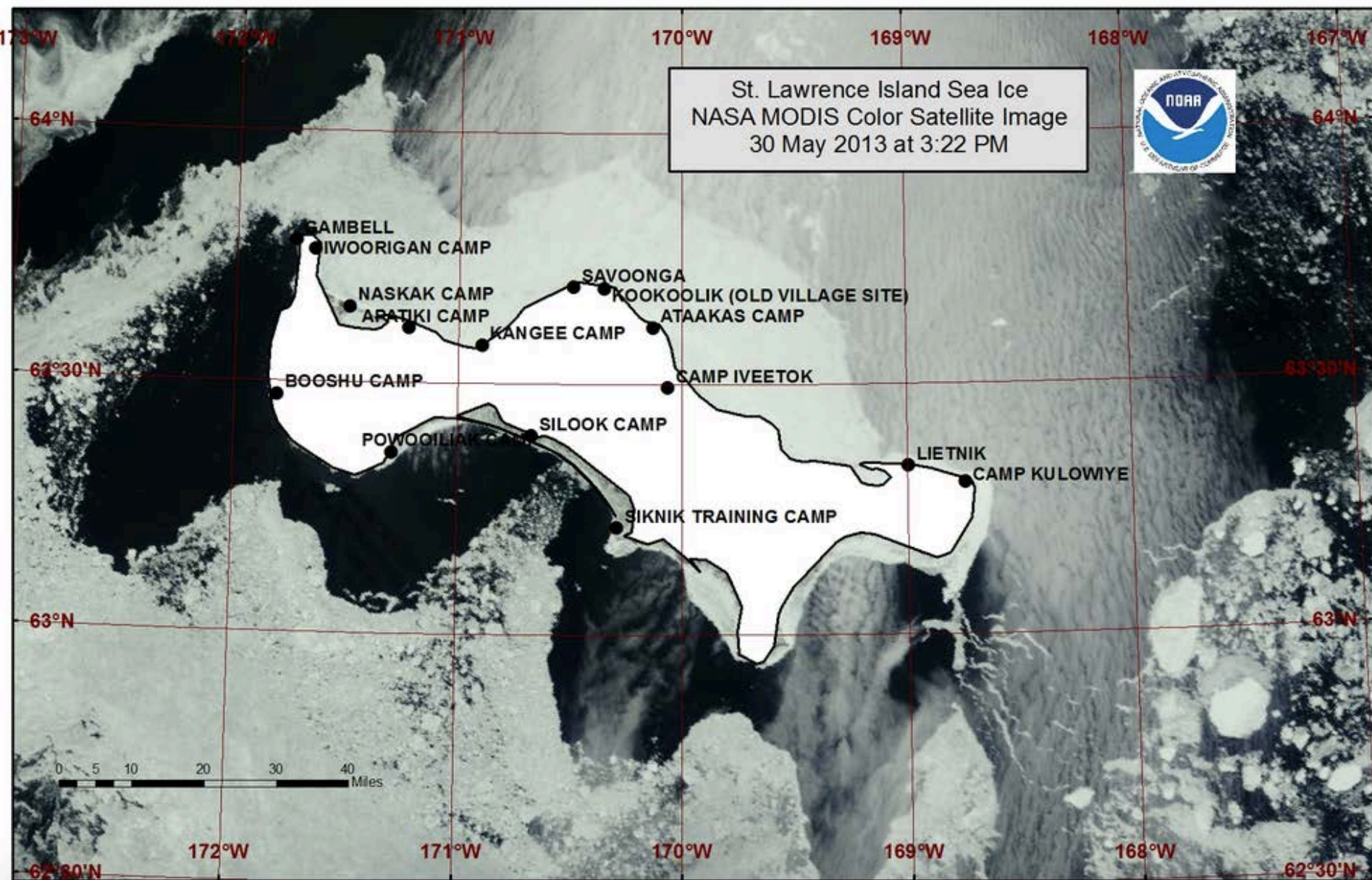
The Outlooks are produced with information on weather and sea ice conditions provided by the National Weather Service - Alaska Region and Alaska Native sea ice experts. SIWO partners include the Eskimo Walrus Commission, the Arctic Research Consortium of the U.S. (ARCUS), and scientists at the National Weather Service and the University of Alaska Fairbanks. Funding for SIWO is provided to ARCUS by the National Science Foundation's Division of Arctic Sciences (PLR-1304316). SIWO is considered a contribution to the Study of Environmental Arctic Change (SEARCH).



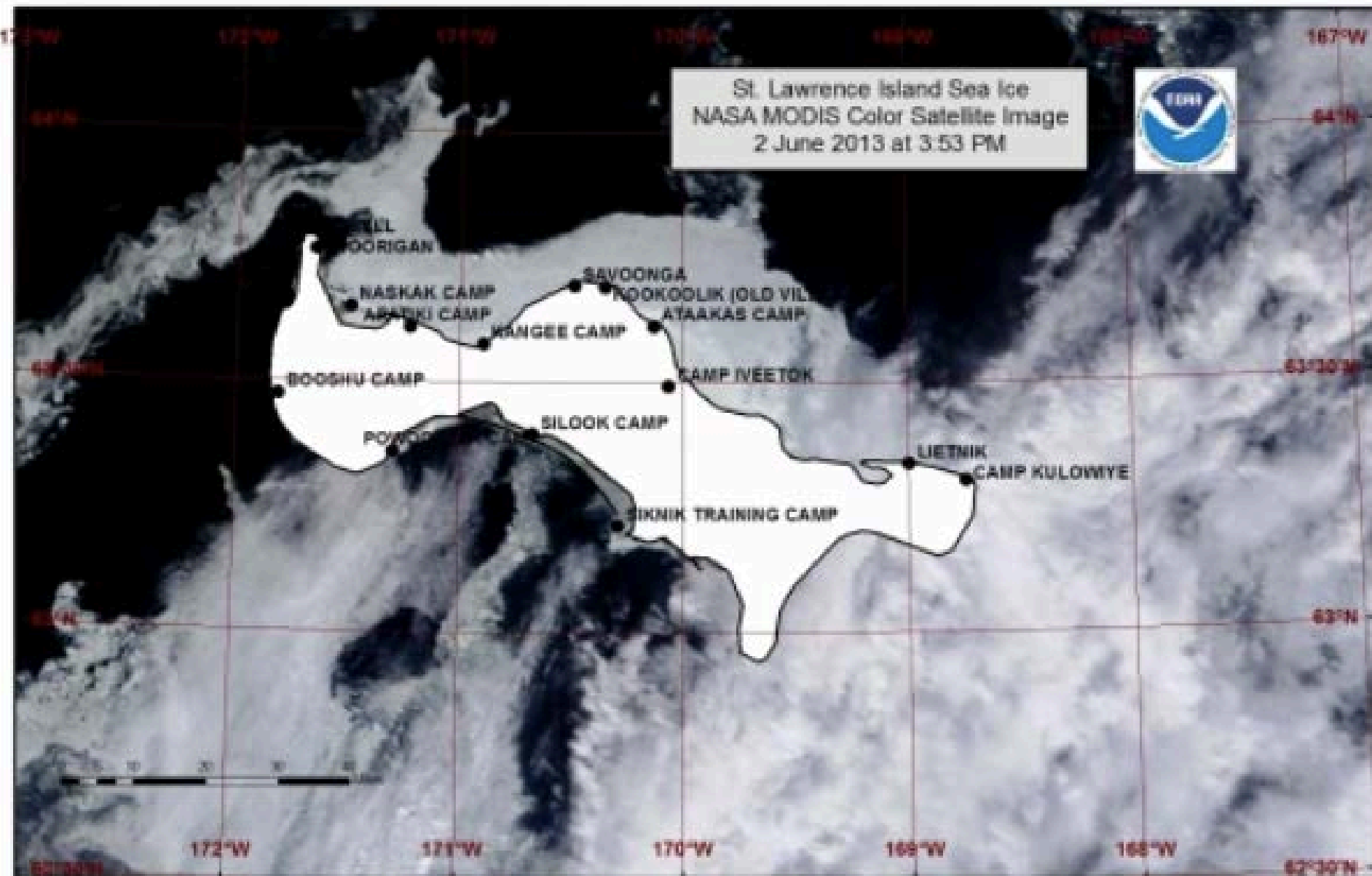
**Eskimo Walrus Commission**

*"To protect the pacific walrus population."*





St. Lawrence Island Sea Ice  
NASA MODIS Color Satellite Image  
2 June 2013 at 3:53 PM







# Weekly Outlook

Date: 27 April 2018

*Click the name of each community below to view more frequently updated and detailed information from the National Weather Service*

## Observations from Savoonga

26 April 2018 – Aqef Waghiyi

Nobody's been going boating for a while. Bad weather, windy. First from the north now from the south. If the weather is good maybe tomorrow people will go out boating. No ice in sight.

## Observations from Gambell

26 April 2018 – Clarence Irrigoo, Jr.

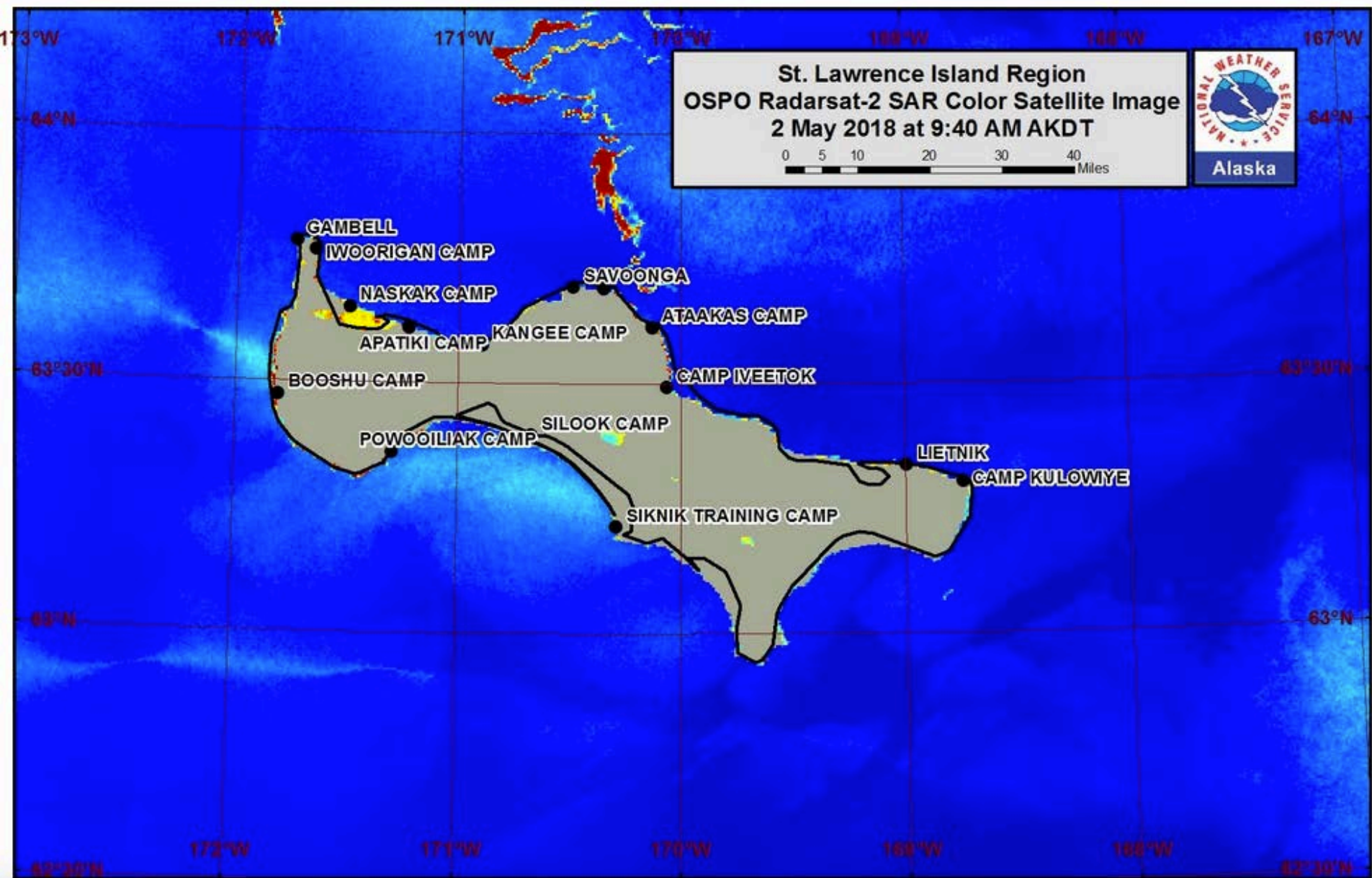
Yesterday boats went out and caught some walrus about 10-15 miles NE of Gambell.

Shorefast ice extends up to 1.5 nm northwest of the coast from Wales to Shishmaref. Beyond the shorefast ice is 20 to 30 nm of open pack ice, then very close pack ice with vast to giant floes beyond that.

## Diomedes

Very open pack ice surrounds Diomedes Island with medium to big floes.









©Clarence Irrigoo Jr.

**04 28 2018**

Photographs courtesy of Scott Toolie





Eskimo Walrus Commission

"To protect the pacific walrus population."

“They say to us, never give up on the hunting areas out there. Whatever my have happened to us, whether it be an accident or almost being killed, we mustn’t be discouraged. It is where our food comes from.”

Winfred James, Sr.



**Igamsiqayuvikamsi!**



# **EWC Mission Statement**

To protect the Pacific walrus population



Eskimo Walrus Commission  
Kawerak, Inc.,  
PO Box 948, Nome, AK 99762