

ALASKA BELUGA WHALE NEWSLETTER

Photo by Madison Kosma under NMFS ESA/MMPA Permit No. 24334a

The Alaska Beluga Whale Committee (ABWC) was formed in 1988 to maintain healthy populations of beluga whales in Alaskan waters, provide for adequate subsistence harvest of beluga whales, and protect hunting privileges for Alaskan subsistence hunters. The membership of the ABWC is made up of representatives from approximately 30 communities that harvest belugas in the following regions: North Slope, Chukchi Sea, Kotzebue Sound, Yukon Delta, Kuskokwim, and Bristol Bay. The North Slope Borough (NSB), Alaska Department of Fish and Game (ADF&G), and NOAA National Marine Fisheries Service (NMFS) are also members. Since 1999, ABWC has shared the management responsibilities for belugas in western and northern Alaska with NMFS. With funding from NMFS and others, the ABWC collects data necessary for the successful management of beluga whales, including harvest data, stock structure and distribution, estimates of population abundance, beluga health, and general biology. ABWC also develops management plans for stocks (populations) of belugas.

In Memory of Tom Gray, ABWC Chairman 2017-2026



On January 8th, 2026, Tom Gray died suddenly at his home in White Mountain. Tom died after a day of doing what he loved - hunting with his family. I lost a best friend and one of the most hardworking, dedicated people I have known. The Alaska Beluga Whale Committee lost its Chairman and Alaska lost a long-term champion for subsistence and good management of subsistence resources. Tom was a powerful voice for subsistence hunting and beluga conservation. He kept in touch with so many people. He had the art of listening but also sticking to his guns. It is a rare gift. I talked with Tom by phone just hours before he died. As usual, he was thinking about his family, his reindeer, and belugas.

Tom came to his first ABWC meeting in 2009 as a delegate from Council. He asked a lot of questions and gave his ideas about what was important for belugas. It was the first time the ABWC had a report about beluga harvest data from the Nome area. The ABWC delegates elected Tom as their Vice Chairman in 2014 and in 2017 he became the Chairman. Tom served as ABWC Chairman until he died. He was a strong spokesman for subsistence hunters managing their own resources. He didn't just talk about "co-management" – he worked hard to make it really happen.

At Tom's very first meeting, he volunteered to help satellite-tag belugas. He went for tagger training in Bristol Bay, and in 2012 he and his son Hunter put tags on the first two belugas ever satellite tagged in Norton Sound. Tom didn't need a big expedition, a lot of boats, special equipment, or a team of scientists to help him. He just used his beluga subsistence net, his knowledge about belugas and his determination. In 2014, Tom and his wife BeeJay tagged two more belugas and, in 2016, another. The 2016 tag lasted longer than any other Alaska beluga tag. Tom's crew members weren't always excited about tagging and releasing a beluga instead of putting it in the freezer – but he knew how important it was to get the information about where belugas spent their time and migrated. At Stebbins, in 2019, Tom helped to train other subsistence



Tom Gray was Chairman of the ABWC for 8 years. He passed away January 8th, 2026. In the bottom photo, he is seen with a beluga he helped tag between Stebbins and Kotlik in 2019. You can see a map of where this beluga traveled on page 9. Photo taken under NMFS ESA/MMPA Permit No. 18890.



Tom Gray, center front, at the 2024 ABWC meeting in Anchorage.

hunters to tag a beluga. He thought tagging was so important that he spent his own money to buy a new boat and motor that he could use for the tagging project.

Tom wasn't afraid to change his mind. When he joined ABWC, he thought that Alaska belugas were all one big population. He didn't believe what the scientists told him about different stocks in different regions, so he was determined to put tags on and show how belugas really moved around. When tagged whales stayed in separate areas, and spent the winters in different areas, he put that together with studies about beluga DNA and realized there were different beluga populations and that hunters in each region had to look after their own belugas.

Tom often said he "wasn't a scientist," but he worked harder than anyone I know to understand what the scientists told him about their methods and results. This was often new and innovative science – things like beluga genetics and aerial survey methods – that even some of the other scientists didn't always understand. He spent hours talking with different people about complicated analyses of Eastern Bering Sea beluga surveys, or the different kinds of DNA and what we could learn using different methods. He was a strong believer in the power of combining traditional knowledge with knowledge from research conducted by scientists. Tom often told ABWC delegates "Without information we can't make informed decisions. We live in changing times; we need to understand our resource." Tom was willing to say and do the hard things, even if it wasn't popular. He spoke up to the government, to scientists, and to his fellow hunters to say what was important. He wanted to do the right thing to make sure belugas were still around to hunt and enjoy in the future. He was always looking for answers to help us make better decisions in the future.

To quote Tom: "What are we doing for the future of our Native people and for our cultural heritage of harvesting belugas? The beluga whales we see in our ocean are our responsibility. We need to take care of them for our kids, grandkids, and our people's future. We need to do this for ourselves, not wait for someone else to do it. It is easy to be unhappy about other people telling us what to do, but if we don't want others telling us how to manage our subsistence resources, we need to do it ourselves. The most important thing isn't the freezer. It is keeping belugas healthy and abundant and respecting the resource."

Tom gave so much of his time and energy to the ABWC. He was usually trying to understand something new about belugas, look out for the interests of beluga subsistence hunters, make sure beluga populations were healthy, or find better ways for hunters and scientists to work together.

We have all lost a strong leader and a good friend. We will miss him.

- Kathy Frost, ABWC Secretary 1988-2024

Tom Gray was one of the most passionate, curious, and dedicated people I have ever met. There wasn't a stronger, more informed advocate for the sustainable use of belugas than Tom. Thanks to Tom and his family for all the contributions they have made to the ABWC and to Alaska.

- Robert Suydam, ABWC Lifetime Member

Tom really poured his life into ABWC and representing his people. He was a really strong voice for conserving beluga for future generations. It will be hard to find another leader like him willing to step up.

- Jesse Rogers, ABWC Member-at-large and Dillingham delegate

Message from the Vice-Chairman



It is an honor to serve as the acting Chairman of the Alaska Beluga Whale Committee. I am grateful for the trust placed in me and deeply respectful of the strong foundation built by Tom and others who have guided the ABWC over the decades.

The ABWC has long stood as an example of how cooperation, local knowledge, and shared responsibility can sustain both our subsistence traditions and healthy beluga populations. Through careful self-regulation, thoughtful management planning, and consistent collaboration, the Committee has shown that our communities are capable stewards of this important resource.

As we look ahead, I am committed to continuing this work together—listening, learning, and strengthening partnerships to ensure beluga whales remain available for future generations. I look forward to working with all of you as we carry the mission of the ABWC forward.

Please take a moment to check out the new ABWC website at alaskabelugawhalecommittee.com (or scan the QR code), and let us know what how we can improve the site.



- Leonard Barger, ABWC Vice-Chairman

Thank You to Outgoing Secretary Kathy Frost



Kathy Frost, with Robert Suydam, receiving an award upon her retirement.

As one of the founding members of the ABWC, Kathy Frost was instrumental in shaping the organization into what it is today. In 1988, she and fellow co-founder Marie Adams-Carroll spent a great deal of time "arguing" about what the ABWC should look like. Kathy persuaded Marie and other founding members that the scientists should be voting members of the ABWC, with the exception that scientists would not vote on issues related to hunting. Having hunters and scientists working together and all voting on issues related to beluga conservation best represented the concept of co-management.

Kathy was not only instrumental in the creation of the ABWC, she was also vitally important to its functioning. She served as the ABWC Secretary from 1988 to 2025 and helped with many aspects of the Committee including organizing the annual meetings, collecting scientific data on belugas, encouraging scientists to publish their data and use plain language (not scientific jargon) when talking to the ABWC, helping to secure funding, assisting with the drafting of multiple management plans, and diligently collecting annual harvest data, along with many other projects.

Over the past decade, Kathy worked especially closely with ABWC Chair Tom Gray, who recently passed away. Together, they formed the backbone of the Committee, working seamlessly to support its mission and membership. The ABWC would not be what it is today without their tireless dedication, collaboration, and shared commitment.

The Alaska Beluga Whale Committee extends its deep gratitude to Kathy for her nearly four decades of dedicated service as Secretary of the ABWC. Kathy gave generously and enthusiastically of her time and expertise in support of the Committee's mission to conserve beluga populations for future generations of subsistence hunters. As a lifetime member of the ABWC, Kathy continues to support the Committee, generously offering her deep historical knowledge and insight. Thank you, Kathy, for all you have done and for all you continue to give.

- Robert Suydam, ABWC Lifetime Member

Beluga Stock Structure and Harvest

Belugas in Alaska do not all belong to the same population or "stock." Belugas in different populations summer and winter in different places. Understanding what population is being harvested in different regions is important to ensure that all populations remain healthy and abundant, so future generations can engage in subsistence. ABWC has taken a leading role in understanding the stock structure and distribution of belugas in Alaska and has sponsored both genetic and tagging studies. Differences in mitochondrial DNA led to the identification of five genetically distinct stocks in Alaska and one in Russia. Satellite tagging studies support these differences and show that belugas in each stock summer and winter in separate areas. The five Alaskan stocks are named after their summer ranges and are known as the 1) Cook Inlet, 2) Bristol Bay, 3) eastern Bering Sea, 4) eastern Chukchi Sea, and 5) Beaufort Sea stocks.



This map shows the summer ranges of various beluga stocks.

Recent work by ABWC suggests that there was another stock in Kotzebue Sound that is now depleted.

Belugas are also harvested in Kuskokwim Bay; we are not yet sure what stock these belugas belong to.

Determining stock structure is a primary research goal of ABWC and work is ongoing.

Beluga Harvest

Knowing how many belugas are harvested is important for management and documenting subsistence need. Beluga harvests are sustainable for the Beaufort Sea, Chukchi Sea, Eastern Bering Sea and Bristol Bay stocks. There are currently no abundance estimates for the belugas in Kotzebue Sound and it is unknown which stock Kuskokwim belugas belong to. Better struck and lost information is needed for all areas.

How Does the ABWC Collect Harvest Data?

The main source of harvest information is the hunters themselves. ABWC delegates fill out harvest reports (page 11) for their communities, providing the information needed to document subsistence need and to ensure that harvests are sustainable.

Annual Harvest (2020-2025)

Harvests that are less than about 2.5% of the population size are considered to be sustainable.

	2020	2021	2022	2023	2024	2025	Average per year	Estimated Population	Percent of Population
Beaufort Sea	51	35	67	51	24	76	51	46,315	0.11%
Chukchi Sea	6	65	58	28	38	58	54	13,305	0.41%
Kotzebue	7	28	27	16	6	3	17	?	?
Eastern Bering Sea	245	230	213	188	180	163	244	13,313	1.83%
Kuskokwim	13	23	20	21	15	12	20	?	?
Bristol Bay	14	14	22	13	18	18	20	1,669	1.19%

Beluga Harvest by Community (2021-2025)

Eastern Bering Sea	2021	2022	2023	2024	2025
Brevig Mission	nd	7	1	0	0
Elim	25	14	15	12	20
Golovin	4	2	1	1	0
Koyuk	3	4	6	11	7
Nome/Council	3	9	9	5	5
Saint Michael	0	2	6	3	1
Shalktoolik	22	35	15	20	19
Stebbins	9	13	15	15	9
Unalakleet	4	4	8	3	5
White Mountain	2	0	0	0	0
Alakanuk	18	6	9	5	6
Chevak	8	2	4	12	12
Emmonak	13	7	19	14	20
Hooper Bay	34	24	13	25	11
Kotlik	22	22	17	4	15
Marshall	3	3	2	2	3
Mountain Village	9	1	7	5	nd
Nunam Iqua	5	3	5	3	nd
Pilot Station	2	2	3	1	3
Pitka's Point	6	2	1	1	nd
Saint Mary	7	5	2	2	4
Scammon Bay	29	45	28	36	21
Russian Mission	2	1	2	0	2
Total	230	213	188	180	163

Bristol Bay	2021	2022	2023	2024	2025
Aleknagik	2	4	0	3	3
Clark's Point/Ekuk	0	1	2	3	2
Dillingham	3	7	6	4	7
Egegik	0	0	0	0	nd
Igiugig	0	1	0	1	nd
Iliamna	2	2	0	2	nd
Levelock	0	1	1	1	0
Manokotak	4	2	4	4	5
Naknek/King Salmon	2	2	0	0	0
New Stuyahok	nd	1	nd	nd	1
Non-local hunters	1	nd	nd	nd	nd
Nushagak	nd	1	0	nd	nd
Togiak	0	0	0	nd	0
Total	14	22	13	18	18

Beaufort Sea	2021	2022	2023	2024	2025
Barrow	12	14	16	5	13
Diomedede	0	0	0	0	0
Kaktovik	3	2	2	1	0
Kivalina	0	0	0	1	0
Point Hope	20	51	32	17	63
Other	nd	nd	1	nd	nd
Total	35	67	51	24	76

Chukchi Sea	2021	2022	2023	2024	2025
Point Lay	15	7	11	38	23
Wainwright	50	51	17	0	35
Total	65	58	28	38	58

Kotzebue	2021	2022	2023	2024	2025
Buckland	1	3	1	0	0
Deering	1	1	0	0	1
Kivalina	3	12	7	0	0
Kotzebue	17	9	4	6	2
Noatak	4	1	4	0	0
Shishmaref	2	1	0	0	0
Total	28	27	16	6	3

Kuskokwim	2021	2022	2023	2024	2025
Eek	nd	0	1	1	nd
Goodnews	0	0	0	0	nd
Kipnuk/Kwethluk	nd	0	2	nd	nd
Kongiganak	1	1	nd	nd	1
Kwigillingok	1	1	1	nd	nd
Newtok	nd	2	nd	nd	nd
Nightmute	nd	nd	nd	nd	nd
Platinum	0	0	0	0	0
Quinhagak	3	3	3	2	2
Toksook Bay	13	9	12	10	9
Tuntutuliak	0	nd	nd	nd	nd
Tununak/Mekoryuk	5	2	2	2	nd
Total	23	18	21	15	12

Shaded boxes are estimates based on average of other years.
nd = no data

Beluga Plans

Beluga plans are meant to outline principles by which ABWC members will manage beluga whales in order to maintain healthy populations so that subsistence harvests remain sustainable well into the future. Beluga plans are an important part of the co-management model, in which hunters, researchers, and government agencies work together to conserve belugas, their habitat, and the traditional beluga whale hunt.

Statewide

A state-wide Beluga Whale Plan for Alaska was first adopted by the Beluga Whale Committee in 1995. It was re-certified by 34 communities in 2016-2018. It was created in response to concerns by beluga hunters and researchers about the potential for outside regulation, and the effects of increased boat traffic, ice entrapments, and environmental contaminants.

The goals of the plan are as follows:

- To maintain healthy populations of beluga whales in Alaskan waters.
- Provide for adequate subsistence harvest of beluga whales and protect hunting privileges for Alaskan subsistence hunters.
- To maintain a healthy beluga whale resource for subsistence use and public enjoyment by future generations.
- Encourage the safe and efficient harvest, processing, and use of beluga whales and reduce the number of struck-and-lost whales through regional management plans.
- Ensure that belugas are used as fully as possible in a non-wasteful manner.
- Obtain accurate harvest information and biological samples from each region in order to provide information needed to make sound management decisions.
- Educate and promote understanding about beluga issues among users, resource manager, and other interested groups.
- Obtain biological information and traditional knowledge necessary for sound management and conservation of beluga whales.
- Oversee enforcement of regional management plans and hunting guidelines, and promote enforcement of habitat protection laws, in order to maintain healthy populations of beluga whales for future generations and to ensure future hunting opportunities for the subsistence users.

Kotzebue Sound

A Tribal Kotzebue Sound Beluga Plan was adopted in 2020-2022 by the communities of Buckland, Deering, Kivalina, Kotzebue, and Noatak. The goal of the plan is to “Restore the Kotzebue Sound beluga population to a healthy level to provide for a sustainable beluga subsistence harvest throughout Kotzebue Sound in the future.” The plan encourages no hunting in June or July, no hunting of females with calves, no use of nets, and no hunting in “safe zones” in Selawik Lake, Kobuk Lake, Goodhope Bay, Kiwalik Lagoon, and Eschscholtz Bay.

Eastern Bering Sea

In 2023, the ABWC worked with Tribal Councils and local delegates from Norton Sound and the Yukon River Delta to draft a plan for Eastern Bering Sea belugas. The plan encourages hunters to keep the harvest below 2.4% of the estimated population, reduce the harvest of large females and females with calves, and reduce struck and lost numbers. The plan has not yet been ratified.

For more information and to read the complete plans, visit alaskabelugawhalecommittee.com/abwc-stock-management-plans or scan the QR code.



Update on Kotzebue Sound Belugas

Belugas were once plentiful in Kotzebue Sound. More than 1,000 belugas returned to Kotzebue Sound annually and beluga hunting was a central part of the subsistence culture. Beluga harvest in the northern part of Kotzebue Sound collapsed prior to the 1970s. After the mid-1970s, beluga hunting mainly occurred in southern Kotzebue Sound, at Elephant Point. Data collected between 1977 and 1984 suggests that the beluga harvest was variable but large, averaging 84 whales per year during 1977-1983 (maximum of 154 in 1982). The harvest collapsed in 1984 and has yet to recover. Since 1990, harvest has averaged 15 per year (<10/year in 23 of the last 30 years; ABWC unpubl. data).

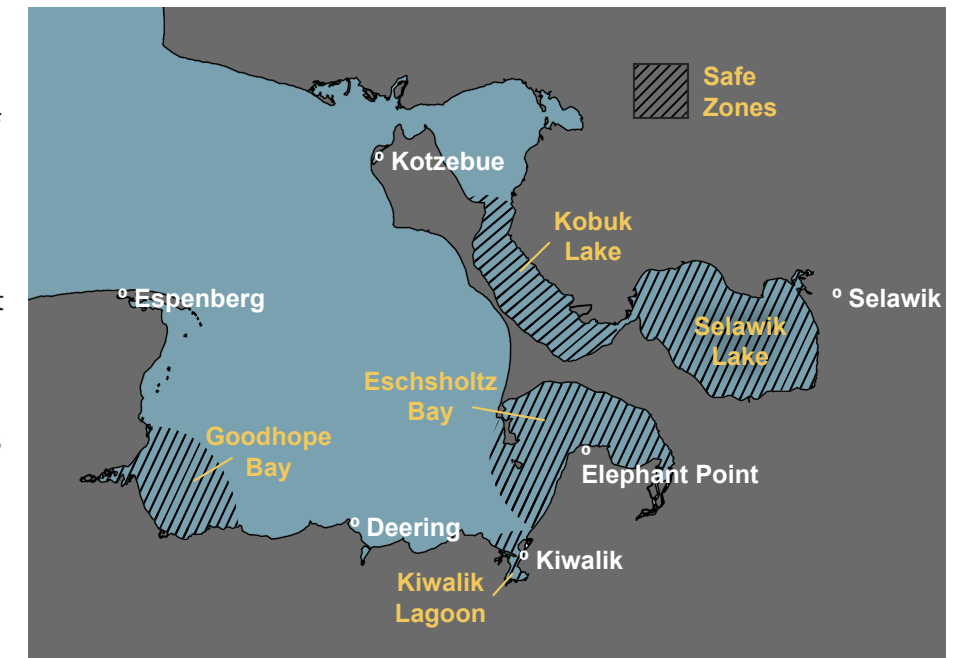
Genetics data show that a unique population of belugas frequented Kotzebue Sound prior to the collapse. Since 1984, it appears that sometimes there are belugas from other populations in Kotzebue Sound. Belugas harvested during high harvest years in 1996 and 2007 were from a different population, likely the Beaufort Sea population.

Attempts to recover the Kotzebue beluga population have been spearheaded locally by beluga hunters in Kotzebue Sound. These attempts began in the late-1990s and a Regional Beluga Plan for Kotzebue Sound was first proposed in 2001. A draft plan was completed in 2016 and revised in 2017, 2018, and 2020. The final plan, *Tribal Kotzebue Sound Beluga Plan*, encourages no hunting in June or July (when belugas from the Kotzebue Sound population are traditionally present), no hunting of females with calves, no use of nets, and no hunting in safe zones in Selawik and Kobuk lakes, Goodhope Bay, Kiwalik Lagoon, and Eschscholtz Bay.

By 2022, this plan had been signed by the communities of Buckland, Deering, Kivalina, Kotzebue, and Noatak. In spite of the plan being signed, many hunters did not follow the plan. Seeking a way forward, ABWC approached NOAA for help. NOAA did not recognize belugas in Kotzebue Sound as being a distinct population. In 2024, ABWC requested NOAA consider giving belugas in Kotzebue Sound stock status. This request is currently under consideration by NOAA.

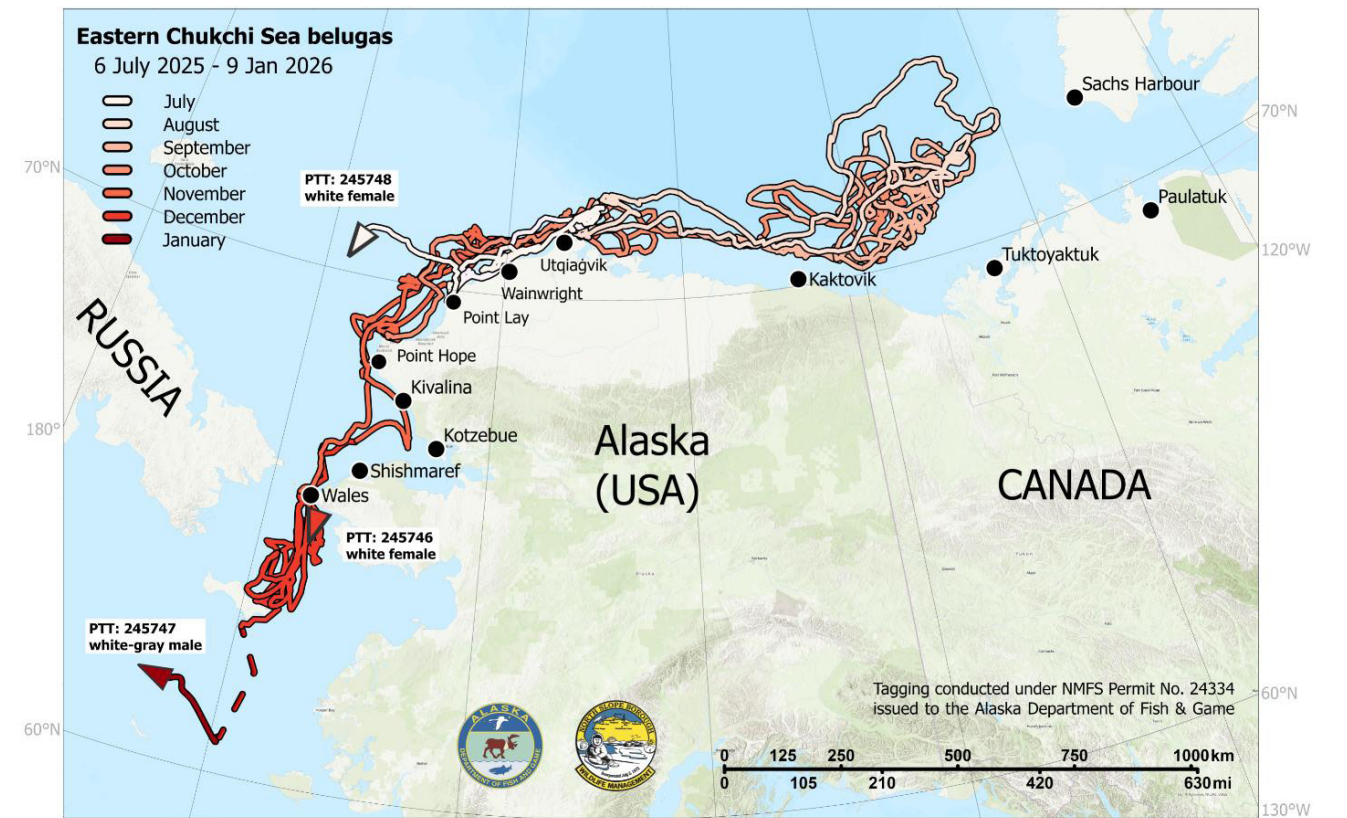
In December, 2025, the ABWC passed a motion to designate Kotzebue Sound belugas as a Demographically Independent Population (DIP) and a separate and unique stock. The recognition of the population as a DIP by NOAA is the next necessary step in designation as a separate stock.

For more information on the history of Kotzebue Sound Belugas and to see the latest updates, visit www.alaskabelugawhalecommittee.com/kotzebue-beluga-stock, or scan the QR code.



This map shows the “safe zones” in Kotzebue Sound, where hunting is discouraged according to the Tribal Kotzebue Sound Beluga Plan.





ABWC Beluga Studies

Beluga Tagging

Tagging is one method for learning about beluga movements, distribution, and behavior. Data from tagged belugas helps us understand stock structure, plan aerial surveys, and correct aerial counts for belugas that are diving and cannot be seen as planes pass overhead. ABWC has supported the tagging of all stocks of belugas in Alaska.

In the summer of 2025, three belugas were tagged by NSB DWM and the Native Village of Point Lay. One tag is still transmitting as of January, 2026.

ABWC is planning to tag belugas from the Eastern Bering Sea stock in Norton Sound in 2026. Tagging in Norton Sound is one of the main science priorities of ABWC.

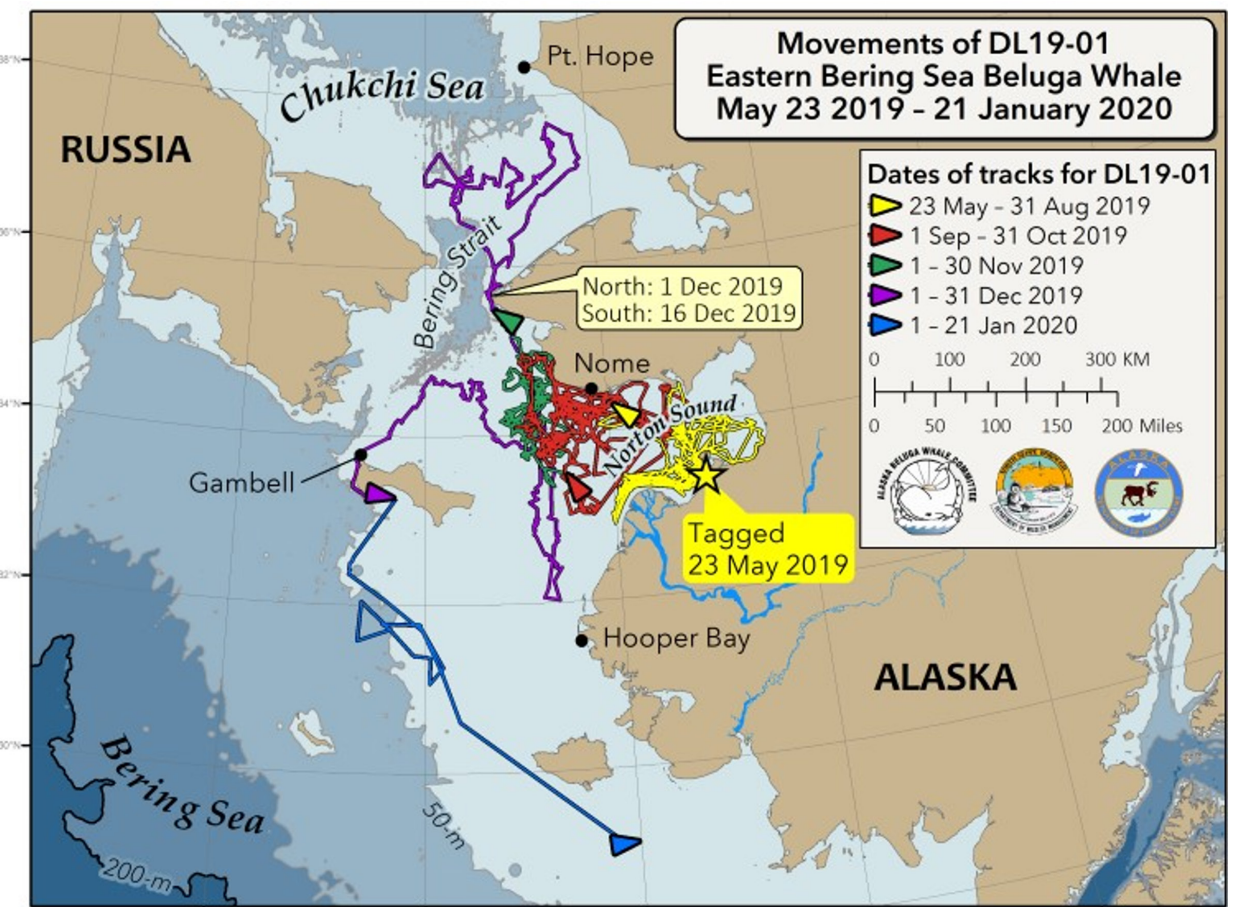
Genetic Studies

Genetic studies help to distinguish beluga stocks (populations). Understanding the composition and range of each stock is key to ensuring sustainable harvests.

Most genetic work to date has involved mitochondrial DNA (mtDNA), which comes exclusively from the mother, and is a powerful tool to determine maternal ancestry and relationships. By analyzing the frequency of small sections of the mtDNA code, called haplotypes, we can determine which population we are harvesting from. Each beluga has



A team tags a beluga in Point Lay in 2025 under NMFS ESA/MMPA Permit No. 24334. See opposite page, top, for movements of belugas tagged in 2025.



Top: Movements of two belugas tagged in Point Lay, Alaska in the summer of 2025. Tagging was conducted under NMFS ESA/MMPA Permit No. 24334.

Bottom: Movements of a beluga tagged in between Stebbins and Kotlik in 2019. Note that spring summer, and fall movements are mostly in Norton Sound, while winter movements are outside Norton Sound. Tagging was conducted under NMFS ESA/MMPA Permit No. 18890.

ABWC Beluga Studies (continued)

one haplotype, which we show as colors in the figure. For example, Bristol Bay has a large number of belugas with the orange haplotype, while the Eastern Chukchi Sea stock has a large number of the green haplotype. This genetic information, combined with movements of tagged belugas showing that the different stocks winter and summer in their own distinct areas, is how stocks were defined in Alaska using samples provided by beluga hunters and the ABWC.

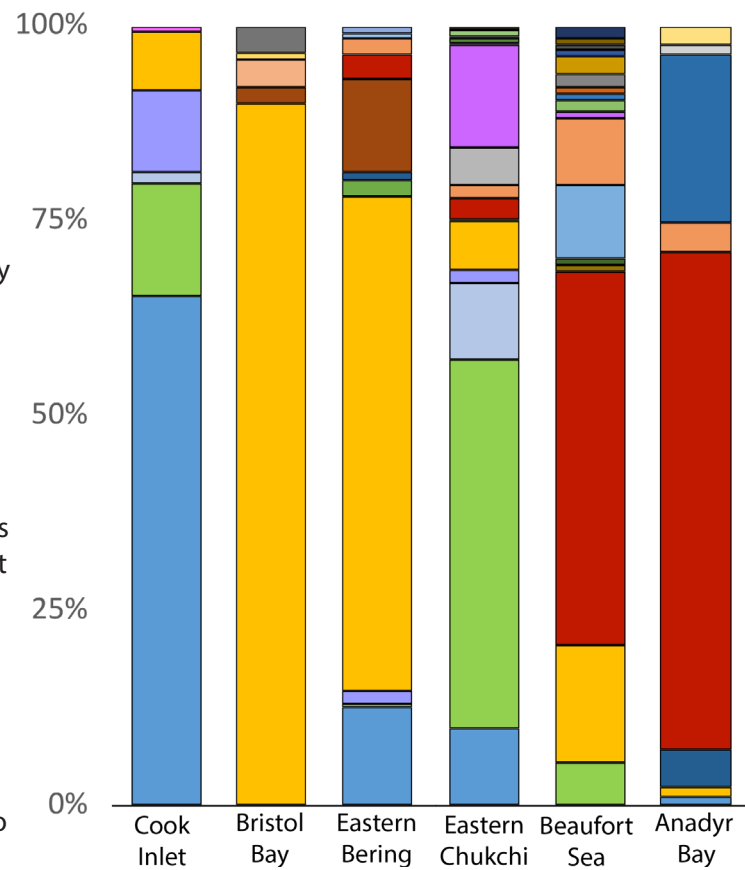
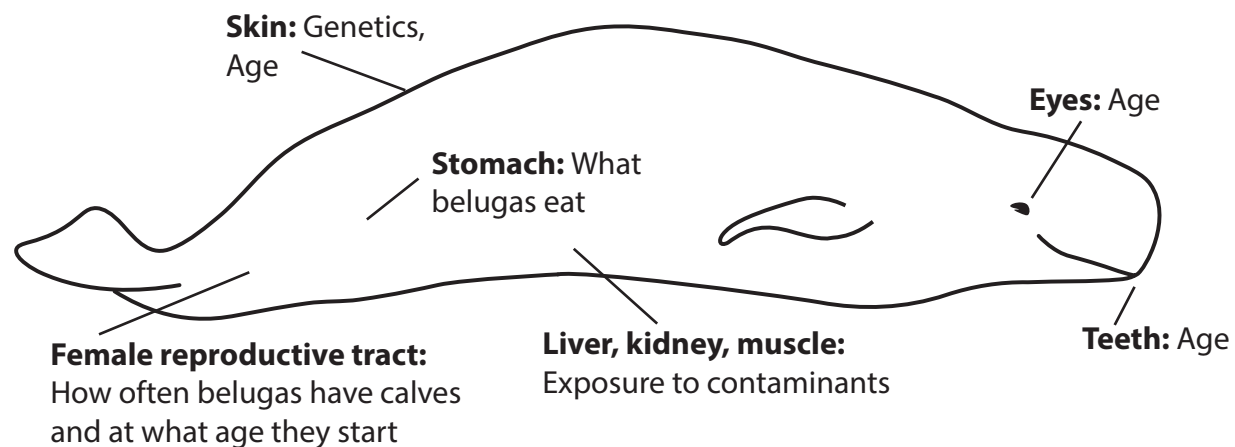
While mtDNA has been a critical tool for identifying and separating stocks, ABWC is working on more powerful methods that we hope will make it easier to determine what stock a beluga is from if only one beluga is harvested. For example, while Anadyr belugas in Russia look different from Beaufort Sea belugas, if one beluga is harvested and has the "red" haplotype, the beluga might be from Anadyr Bay, the Beaufort Sea stock, the Eastern Chukchi Sea stock, or the Eastern Bering Sea stock (they all have a little bit of red in them in the figure).

Nuclear DNA (nDNA) markers called microsatellites have greatly improved our ability to determine where most, but not all, individual whales are from. ABWC is contracting Dr. Greg O'Corry Crowe and Dr. Rays Jiang to develop much more powerful genomic tools. This work is important for clarifying what stock or stocks are being harvested in Kotzebue Sound and also for places, such as Utqiagvik, Point Hope, and the Kuskokwim region, where belugas from multiple stocks may be harvested.

Hunters can share samples to help with this research. Fresh skin, muscle, or organ samples with the blubber trimmed off are best. Freeze the samples as soon as possible and ship them frozen. For further information on how to share samples, email AlaskaBelugaWhaleCommittee@gmail.com.

Harvest Sampling

Samples from hunters are key to the success of all ABWC research. Harvest data and the necessary biological samples can typically be taken without affecting anything that the hunter would like to use. Here's what we can learn from various samples:



The percentage of each genetic haplotype (color) in each beluga population (stock) in Alaska.



Community _____

Alaska Beluga Whale Committee

2025

Beluga Harvest Report

Reporter _____ Phone _____ Email _____

- TOTAL belugas harvested in your community in 2025, all seasons combined?** _____
 Number of whites? _____ Number of grays? _____ number unknown color? _____
 How many by boats? _____ How many in nets? _____ How many at the lead? _____
 Do you know How many Males? _____ How many Females? _____
- SUNK: How many belugas were sunk and lost in 2025? This is important!** _____
 To make sure the harvest is at a safe level, we need to know how many total belugas were killed.
- WINTER:** Were any belugas harvested in winter (January-March)? _____ How many? _____
- SPRING:** Number harvested in SPRING? _____ What months (circle) Apr May Jun
 _____ whites _____ grays _____ STRUCK & LOST
 _____ by boat _____ by netting _____ from the lead/ice edge _____ shallow water _____ deep water
- SUMMER:** Number harvested in summer? _____ What months (circle) Jul Aug
 _____ whites _____ grays _____ STRUCK & LOST
 _____ by boat _____ by netting _____ from shore _____ shallow water _____ deep water
- FALL:** Number harvested in fall? _____ What months (circle) Sep Oct Nov
 _____ whites _____ grays _____ STRUCK & LOST
 _____ by boat _____ by netting _____ from shore _____ shallow water _____ deep water
- If no belugas were harvested this year, why not** (write a comment about why no hunting)
- Were there unusual beluga deaths or belugas washed up on the beach?
- Did anyone see **Killer Whales** this year? If so, when and how many?
- If you looked in any stomachs, **what were the belugas eating this year?**
- Is there anything interesting or unusual to report about belugas this year?** Write a comment about this year's hunting (write more on back)
- If you know **harvest information about another village**, please write it.

Please email to alaskabelugawhalecommittee@gmail.com or mail to Lori Quakenbush, 1300 College Rd., Fairbanks, AK 99701; text photos to 907-978-2760, and bring the report to the ABWC meeting.



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The Alaska Beluga Whale Newsletter is produced by the Alaska Beluga Whale Committee. The ABWC is an organization with representatives from coastal beluga hunting villages in Alaska, from Bristol Bay to the Beaufort Sea. It also includes local, state, federal and other scientists who study belugas. The ABWC was formed to conserve beluga whales and their habitat, provide for adequate subsistence harvest of belugas, and protect subsistence hunting for belugas in Alaska. The ABWC is dedicated to the wise conservation, management, and use of beluga whales.

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