

**HAPPY NEW YEAR
2016**

**ADAK WEATHERS WORST EVER
RECORDED STORM**

Many Adak residents are still picking up the pieces after a record breaking wind storm tore across Adak on December 12. The category 3 hurricane force winds damaged several warehouse buildings, the fish plant, harbor and residences.

The damage left the City of Adak, Aleut Enterprise, LLC, Premier Harvest and several residents scrambling to get repairs done before the next wind storm, expected to land on December 17, with forecasted gusts up to 75 mph.



A housing unit that lost siding during the storm is getting boarded up the morning after.



City of Adak holds a strategic planning session for clean up



Dock at Sweeper Cove folded over on itself



White shed lost a large amount of siding then the wind ripped holes into the frame work.

City Manager Resigns

Layton Lockett, Manager for the City of Adak since October of 2010, has resigned. The City Council accepted Lockett's resignation effective March 31, 2016.

There have been many changes in Adak with Lockett's Administration. The City of Adak was broke and in a very poor state of management when Lockett came to Adak. Even though the economy has not been the best during Lockett's tenure, Lockett has managed to stabilize the City's finances and operations.

During his tenure here he has advocated for the City of Adak at every winter legislative conference. He has represented Adak with a membership in Southwest Alaska Municipal Conference, as well as, holding the positions of Treasurer and President on the SWAMC Board. Lockett has attended many other conferences and meetings including a recent Arctic Conference held in Anchorage with Mayor Thomas Spitler.

Other remarkable contributions, include the purchasing of fish processing equipment, once belonging to the now defunct "Adak Fisheries", at auction for a total of \$2.1 million; nearly all of the money the City of Adak had at the time. The City has since entered an agreement to sell the equipment to Premier Harvest, LLC, securing a return on investment for the City of Adak.

Lockett has seen some very real issues that may have changed the way of life in Adak. Through negotiations and perseverance, he was able to tackle these tough issues and elicit a positive outcome for the City of Adak. An example; in 2012, Alaska Airlines did not put in a bid for the Essential Air Services Contract on the initial bid request from the United States Department of Transportation. Lockett spent many hours on the phone with the Alaska Airlines Administration, convincing them that Adak still had a future.

Lockett has become a part of the local community and economy. He was elected to and served on the Adak Community Development Board. He opened and began operating the 100 Knot Stop grocery store, with two other resident partners in August of 2013. The 100 Knot Stop store has since moved to its present location on Kagalaska Dr. in June 2015.

While Lockett has resigned, he will maintain a relationship with the City of Adak through and hopefully after the transition of Administrations.



Lockett, 3rd from left served on the Adak Community Development Board.

Changes at Adak Island Inn

Helene Sparks, longtime Manager of the Adak Island Inn, has resigned and moved to the lower 48. Helene, husband Christopher Lagua and son Christopher "Ryan" Lagua Jr. were longtime members of the Adak community.



While Helene's presence at Adak Island Inn will be missed, long-time resident Nicole Gordon has been hired as the new Manager and business will go on as usual.



Nicole Gordon

Adak City Council News

Resolution 2015-16-018 – passed by the Adak City Council declaring a local disaster requesting technical assistance but not financial assistance from the State of Alaska. The disaster declaration will help residents and commercial business owners file and receive insurance claims if they were insured prior to the cyclone that hit Adak on December 12, 2015.

During the Public Comments sector, Dustin Anderson stated Alaska Airlines was willing to help the residents of Adak by flying out any emergency supplies that might be needed due to the storm.

Scenes of the Holidays



Adak Children patiently await their presents.

Mr. and Mrs. Claus and Elves were very generous.



Santa Claus showed up at the airport the very next day! Julianna Rizo receives a package from Santa

JANUARY

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3	4	5	6	7	8	9
10	11	12	13	14	15	16
17	18	19	20	21	22	23
24	25	26	27	28	29	30

- January 1 – New Year's Day
- January 7 – Russian Orthodox Christmas
- January 18 – Martin Luther King Jr. Day
- January 20 – Adak City Council, 5pm in Council Chambers



No harvest this year...

Emperor geese nest on the Yukon-Kuskokwim Delta and winter on Kodiak, the Alaska Peninsula, and along the Aleutians. Here on Adak these beautiful and regal geese are easiest to find foraging on the mud flats in Clam Lagoon or gathered on beaches and offshore rocks. Often you'll see family groups: adults with noble white heads and napes, and youngsters with sooty patches on their faces.

Numbers of emperor geese have increased steadily to the point that they have now met the threshold (>80,000 birds) set by the Pacific Flyway Management Council to allow limited hunting, for the first time since 1986. The Alaska Migratory Bird Co-Management Council proposed a subsistence harvest of 3,500 birds for this spring, but has been having a difficult time agreeing on how to allocate the harvest between and within regions. Another point of contention is the harvest season, since the proposed spring and summer harvest would not be fair to regions where the geese are present only in late fall, winter, and very early spring. Thus, the Council decided it needs more time to come to an agreement on how the geese should be managed, and has postponed a subsistence harvest until 2017.

Joel Schmutz, a research biologist with the USGS Alaska Science Center, is currently conducting a multi-year project to address several other issues. One is that though emperor goose numbers have been generally stable on their breeding grounds and have continued to increase in the Kodiak archipelago, they have remained below management goals along the Alaska Peninsula. Sometimes an apparent change in population is actually a shift in distribution.

In addition, Schmutz has hypothesized that breeding success and population growth of the emperor goose population is constrained by the wintering environment, and that where a goose winters may significantly influence its ultimate fitness. He identifies two ecological factors that likely affect emperor goose population trends, but have not yet been adequately investigated. The first is the role of cross-seasonal effects, or, simply, that conditions on wintering areas or spring staging areas may impact breeding. For example, some winter foraging environments might not be sufficient to allow all adults to breed. Linking knowledge of where a particular goose wintered to breeding success could help identify which winter habitats promote breeding success.

The second ecological factor Schmutz considers is disease. It was recently found that about 30% of nesting emperor geese were infected with blood parasites, which may affect clutch size, and may also become more prevalent in years of high goose density, thus hindering population growth. Because other species of geese breeding in the same area as emperors but wintering elsewhere are less infected with these parasites, it is possible that the infection may be a function of cross-seasonal effects. Other diseases may also affect the success of emperor geese. For example, during summer, more than 90% of emperor geese carry antibodies to avian influenza virus (AIV), indicating recent past exposure to live virus. In contrast, only 45% of geese of three other species sharing the emperors' breeding grounds carry AIV antibodies. Active infection with AIV in winter or spring may lessen the breeding success of emperors.



c Neil Hayward



c Jay Lehman

One component of Schmutz's research comprises two visits to each of three wintering islands to evaluate habitat and physiological condition of geese, this winter and next. Adak was selected as one of the sites; two researchers will be here for a week in January and another week in March, conducting replicate population counts and age ratio scans, recording intensive time budgets, scoring abdominal profiles via digital photography, surveying beaches to assess habitat composition, and collecting fecal samples to evaluate active AIV presence. As Brian Uher-Koch, who will be leading the fieldwork this winter, put it, "Very glamorous work..."

Data collected this winter and next should help Schmutz answer a few questions: Are emperor geese really increasing in numbers, or is their distribution changing? When and where are the geese being exposed to AIV? What is the physiological condition and habitat quality for geese in different sectors of their wintering range? What are they eating? Combined with information collected on the breeding range (including evaluation of stress hormone levels, types of nutrient investment in different seasons [via stable isotope analysis], and quantification of migration patterns [using geolocators]), these data should reveal whether breeding status, clutch size and disease state are related to regions within the wintering areas. Understanding whether and how emperor goose numbers are constrained by their wintering environment will enable objective decisions about future hunting and conservation measures for the species.

Murre madness

Thousands of dead and dying murrelets have been washing up on beaches this year, from California up the coast to the Gulf of Alaska. In the first two days of January, 8,000 dead common murrelets were counted along a single mile of beach in Whittier. Murrelets have been turning up unusually far inland this winter, as far as Fairbanks, and have been observed swimming and apparently foraging in fresh water streams and lakes. What is causing this strange behavior? So far the main cause of death appears to have been starvation, probably due to warmer than usual sea-surface temperatures caused by an El Nino weather pattern and by the "Pacific Blob," both of which alter the ocean ecosystem as cold-water species die or migrate beyond their usual range. Are the birds found inland simply searching further afield for food, or are they disoriented due to some other cause? Investigations are still underway. If you find dead or distressed seabirds, please call the Refuge office at 592-2406.



c Dave Irons

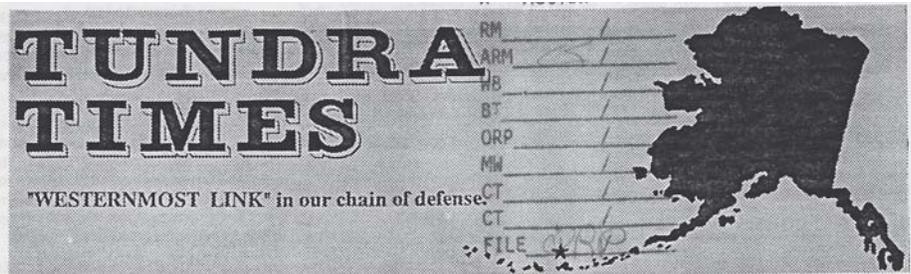
Better Safe than Sorry

Some of us old timers can remember when Adak was a bustling Naval Air Station with a dedicated Search and Rescue team, and anyone wanting to go hiking or hunting off base was required to attend a safety lecture to obtain a military blue card. Blue card lectures included cautionary information about hypothermia, man-made and natural hazards, and recommended gear and equipment. Once you had your blue card, you were still required to file a detailed hiking plan with the Quarterdeck before heading out. Winter hiking was not advised, nor was hiking alone permitted. This may sound draconian, but even with such precautions, the SAR team was kept busy looking for overdue hikers or rescuing injured ones.

Nowadays we have no such rules, but plenty of visiting hunters, not all of whom are familiar with how quickly conditions on Adak can change. And we no longer have masses of young, fit Navy personnel chomping at the bit to join a SAR team. The burden of philanthropy resting upon the shoulders of our few locals able to go out looking for missing people would be greatly eased if they knew exactly where to look, or that the overdue hunters were not actually in need of assistance.

Here's how you can help. If you provide housing or transportation to visitors, encourage them to file a hike plan before they head out, detailing where they intend to go, when they plan to be back, and what equipment they are carrying (including contact numbers and whether or not they are prepared/equipped to spend a night in the tundra). Also advise people to carry a GPS (for when visibility suddenly drops to zero) and some form of satellite communication (so they can let their contact back in town know they are fine but delayed, or in need of help, and exactly where they are). A number of places in Anchorage rent satellite phones, and the new DeLorme inReach products are great--you can send and receive text messages via satellite as well as transmit your position at pre-set intervals; the fancy ones can function as both GPS and transmitter.

Here's a story from the good old days...I bet if sat phones had been invented back then, CWO2 Davis would have been carrying one!



Naval Security Group Activity, Adak, Alaska

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Excellent adventure turns to bogus journey

By CWO2 Alan R. Davis

Having grown up in Idaho and transplanted to Fairbanks, I have had many opportunities to enjoy the "great outdoors." Stationed on Adak for two years now, I have traveled many miles of Adak's tundra. For the past year, I have conducted some of the Blue Card lectures for NSGA, expounding on the items to take with you while hiking.

Many of the people who attended these lectures must have thought I was going a bit overboard with my list of hiking necessities, but I am here today, tired and sore, but none the worse for wear, because I listened to my own advice.

Recently, my hunting partner, an Adak Search and Rescue Team member, RM1 William Thornton, his wife, Annette, and I, set out from Finger Bay in search of caribou. We filed our hike plan at Security, planning to return by 2100 that night. We inventoried our various equipment and checked the latest weather report. Our plan was to go through Hiker's Pass, hunting the ridge tops over to Gannett Lake, swing through the Gannett Lake Valley and take a look down toward Tear Drop Lake. Then we planned to return through Gannett Pass to the Finger Bay trailhead.

Our adventure was going according to plan, when Thornton fouled up a perfectly good hunting trip by bagging a prime young bull about 1400 on the Tear Drop Lake side of the pass. By 1630 we had the bull dressed out and the meat on our backpacks, ready for the long trip home, when our "most excellent adventure turned into a bogus journey."

As we got through the Pass back to the Gannett Lake Valley, a storm, which had threatened all day, hit. Though we were dressed in Gortex and wool, we were quickly soaked and chilled. The hour it should have taken to reach SAR Barrel 12 took almost two-and-a-half. We could see from SAR Barrel 12 that Gannett Pass was fogged in. With the storm raging the valley, it would be twice as bad in the Pass. It was decision time.

We could cache our gear and meat and make a run for it, or stay in the barrel. As tired as we were, we took the most prudent route and decided to stay where we were. After hanging the meat on the side of the barrel, the sterno canned heat and stove I have carried for two years, quickly warmed

up the barrel while we prepared hot soup to go with the sandwiches left over from lunch. We got out of our wet coats, boots and gaiters and put on dry socks. We laid out the caribou hide we'd brought with us flesh-side down in the bottom of the barrel. This was a nice extra that added tremendously to our comfort on a miserable night.

Next, we pooled our space blankets, covering the caribou hide with one and laying the others over us. We then took the wool blankets in the barrel, which were wet, and covered up. We huddled together for a fitful night's sleep. It was very close quarters for three people. With the storm raging outside, we spent the night wrapped in warm, wet, wool. The operative word here is "warm," not comfortable.

At first light, about 0800, we stirred out of the barrel, knowing (hoping) the SAR team would be out and probably meet us in Gannett Pass. The storm had subsided a little, but a stiff wind still buffeted the barrel. With the remaining sterno, we heated water for some hot chocolate and ate a high-energy bar for breakfast. By 0915 we were heading out with our caribou meat. Our weapons, ammo and other

equipment were either used or cached in the tundra. By 1000 we were in Gannett Pass, but the SAR team wasn't. (It turned out that NAS Security didn't report us overdue until 1300 that day). The rain began falling again about 1100.

To make a long story short, we finally made it back to the Finger Bay trailhead at 1337 that same day -- soaked, chilled and exhausted.

You may be asking, what is my point? My point is this. Even experienced hikers get caught! If you think you know too much to make "a foolish mistake," you might want to think again. The weather on Adak can change so quickly that even a twisted ankle could become fatal if you're not prepared. We have been very lucky this year. Several parties have spent miserable nights in the tundra with no lasting ill-effects. Our experience is no different from that of many others.

Our collective luck on Adak could be running pretty thin, so before you hit the trail, remember the Blue Card lecture. Take your emergency day pack, with food, space blanket, water-proof matches, Sterno, a pan to heat water in, dry socks, map, compass and whistle. Dress in wool, invest in Gortex and wear a good, rugged pair of boots with gaiters. I'd add one item not listed on the back of the Adak hiker's map.

Tell a friend where you are going and when you'll return. It was an isolated incident that NAS Security did not report us being overdue, but they're human too!! Enjoy the tundra, but go prepared.

