

PRESS POLICY

Last updated: Sept. 2021

ALASKAESKIMO
WHALING COMMISSION

The following statement reflects the official policy of the Alaska Eskimo Whaling Commission (AEWC). All members of the media, the working press, or other interested journalists and those requesting to film whaling activities, or requesting film footage of whaling activities, must agree to this policy if they wish to work with, and received the cooperation of the Commission.

All material referred to in this policy is attached or can be obtained from the AEWC.

ALASKAESKIMO
WHALING COMMISSION

Alaska Eskimo Whaling Commission
P.O. Box 570
Barrow, AK 99723
www.aewc-alaska.com
P: 907.852.2392

Press Contact
Ms. Jenny Evans
907.727.2585
jennykevans@gmail.com
F: 907.

INTERVIEW REQUESTS

All requests for interviews must be made in writing including the following information:

- Name
- Media Outlet/Organization
- Website
- Phone
- Email
- Topic of article/report
- Who you wish to interview
- Anticipated release of article/story
- Sample questions

Address requests to:

- Lesley Hopson, Executive Director, lhopson@aewc-alaska.com
- Jenny Evans, Communications Director, jennykevans@gmail.com

The AEWK will make every effort to be responsive to requests in a timely manner. Please allow a minimum of one week for response from the Commission. The AEWK reserves the right to request all questions in writing prior to an interview.

FILMING / OBSERVATION REQUESTS

The subsistence harvest of the bowhead whale dates back thousands of years and is vital to the food security and cultural well-being of the Inupiat and Yupik living along the Arctic coast of Alaska. As such, access to hunting camps is limited to the public and often not allowed.

All requests must be received in writing no later than March 31 for the spring hunt and by August 15 for the fall hunt. Any requests received after this will not be considered. Submission of requests do not constitute approval.

- Anyone going on the ice and into a camp must share the expenses of the camp. These include but are not limited to, the costs of food, drink, and fuel. The Whaling Captain will determine these expenses prior to going out on the ice.
- All requests to enter a whaling camp out on the ice and cover its activities must have prior approval of the whaling captain, the local whaling captains' association, and the AEWK.

- The written request must include the name of the organization making the request, the theme and storyline of the piece being produced, and where the piece will be aired or published.
- Materials being readied for public airing or printing must be submitted to the AEWCC for a check of all stated FACTS prior to publication/airing.
- At least three copies of the final product (i.e., video, magazine, website, or newspaper carrying the material) must be provided to the AEWCC.
- Any use of material relating to a specific captain, crew, or camp, beyond what was stated in the original request, must receive prior approval of the individuals involved. The captain of the whaling crew should be used as the contact person in such case, with a copy provided to the AEWCC.
- When in a whale camp, it is understood that the Whaling Captain is in charge. Anyone in the camp must obey his directives and orders or they will be asked to leave the camp.
- Visitors are not allowed on whaling boats under any circumstance. This includes cameras or drones attached to boats.
- Footage of the hunt (whale strike) and butchering is not allowed under any circumstance.
- The ice is a dangerous place. Both the natural forces that regulate the movement of the ice, as well as the animals who live on the ice (i.e., polar bears), are dangerous and unpredictable. To ensure your safety, please read the attached Ice Safety Guidelines and observe the simple rules listed.

PERMITS TO FILM

If approved by the AEWCC for filming, organizations must obtain a permit from the Village Corporation to film on their land, as well as the North Slope Borough (for North Slope villages).

PICTURES OR FILM FOOTAGE REQUESTS FOR USE BY MEDIA

All members of the media, the working press, or other interested journalists must request in writing from the AEWCC any film footage/s of any whaling activity from any private individual or organization having film footage to be used for public airing. Please allow two weeks for approval.

- The written request must include the name of the organization making the request, the probable theme of the piece being done and where the piece will be aired or published.

- Material or film being readied for public airing, printing and/or internet must be submitted to the AEWK for a check of all FACTS.
- At least three copies of the final product (i.e., video, magazine, website, or newspaper carrying the material) must be provided to the AEWK.
- Any use of material relating to a specific captain, crew, or camp, beyond what was stated in the original request, must receive prior approval of the individuals involved. The captain of the whaling crew should be used as the contact person in such a case.
- All issues regarding policy and statements on whaling must come from the Alaska Eskimo Whaling Commission or the local whaling captains' association President.
- The President and Vice-President of the local whaling captains' association in their respective village are the official spokespersons on all local whaling issues.
- The AEWK is the liaison between the media and the local whaling captains' associations and the registered AEWK whaling captains.

COMPENSATION

The AEWK will request from individuals or organizations wanting to film on the ice a donation of \$5,000 if approved. This donation covers the cost for the AEWK to process the request and provide logistical support and review of final products. It does not cover the cost for camp participation, which will be determined by the whaling captain and paid directly to him/her.

The AEWK will request from individuals or organizations requesting approval for use of film footage containing whaling activities a donation of a minimum of \$1,000.

AGREEMENT TO TERMS

My signature on this document indicates that I have read, understand, and agree to the above rules for myself and other members of my organization and that I am an authorized signatory for my organization. I, and other members of my organization understand the dangers posed by both animals and natural conditions on the ice and accept full responsibility for our safety and well-being while out on the ice and I release the Alaska Eskimo Whaling Commission, the _____ Whaling Captains' Association, and the whaling captain hosting us from all liability relating to natural dangers from ice conditions and animals as well as any liability relating to accidents out on the ice. I understand the limitations outlined in the policy and agree to adhere to all aspects covered in the policy. I further understand the compensation that is requested and understand that this compensation is tax-deductible as a charitable contribution to AEWC, a 501(c)3 non-profit organization.

Signature

Date

Printed Name

Organization

Website

Address

Phone

Email

Please return the signed agreement to Alaska Eskimo Whaling Commission.

- Lesley Hopson, Executive Director, lhopson@awec-alaska.com
- Jenny Evans, Communications Director, jennykevans@gmail.com

ON THE ICE -- AT WHALE CAMP CODE OF CONDUCT

The subsistence harvest of the bowhead whale is dangerous and critical to the food security and cultural well-being of our communities. All visitors must remember this and use common sense and common courtesy when going out on the ice. Upon approval of request by the AEWC and village Whaling Captains' Association, all guest on the ice and at the whale camps must observe the following rules of conduct:

- Do not drive snow machines or four wheelers around or in whale camps, especially when the whales are active. At any time, you are near the edge of the lead, please keep your voice down and minimize any other noise you might make. Noise drives the whales away.
- If you bring trash out on the ice or to the camps, please clean up after yourself and take the trash off the ice with you. Trash includes batteries, film containers, spark plugs, soda cans, plastic and paper bags and any other items not normally found on the ice.
- Visitors are not allowed on whaling boats under any circumstance. This includes cameras or drones attached to boats.
- Footage of the hunt (whale strike) and butchering is not allowed under any circumstance.
- If you want to take pictures or videos, please use common courtesy, and ask permission before taking pictures of the whaling captain and his crew. Do not let your activities interfere with the work being done at the camp or during the harvest.
- Please remember that bright colors, especially reds, are not acceptable on the ice. Wear a white snow shirt over your parka or wear a camouflaged or dark colored coat.
- Be aware of your surroundings. The ice is the wilderness and wild animals -- specifically polar bears -- live there. Read the enclosed Ice Safety Guidelines and follow them for your safety and the safety of your party.

ICE SAFETY GUIDELINES

The Arctic pack ice is an environment as alien to most people as the dark side of the moon. Certain conditions and dangers exist there that exist nowhere else in the world. The following guidelines have been developed to help protect you while you're on the ice. Please read them carefully and understand that your safety and the safety of everyone in your party is dependent on paying attention to them.

Ice Conditions

Pack ice can shift and break quickly. Always be aware of the ice you are standing on. If it starts to roll, shift or crack -- often accompanied by a groaning sound -- move yourself as quickly as possible towards the LAND side of the ice. The crack can occur with surprising swiftness so do not attempt to save gear unless it is within easy reach when the breakup begins to occur. If you are taking pictures, stop immediately and deal with the danger at hand. Stay out of the way of the crew who will be working quickly to strike camp and move it to safety.

The pack ice is not a solid surface. Snow often covers deep cracks in the pieces of ice forming the pack. Be careful when walking over it or if you are on the back of a sled helping to guide it. You can easily break a leg if you step into a deep crevasse covered by snow.

Everyone in your party should carry a hunting knife available on the outside of their clothing. If you fall or break through the ice into the water, the knife can be used to anchor yourself and prevent drowning. You stab the knife into the nearest stable ice and pull yourself out or hold on until another member of the party can assist you. Remember, you will have heavy clothes on and be in icy water. You can't rely on any swimming skills to help you and treading water is almost impossible. You need the knife firmly imbedded into the ice to hold on to so you don't go under.

Polar Bears

Polar bears live on the pack ice. This is their natural environment, and they are very efficient hunters and stalkers. Always keep this in mind.

Always have a minimum of two people in your party no matter what you're doing. You always need one person who can keep an eye out on your surroundings. Bears are very good at hiding themselves in the open. Remember, they fit in on the ice much better than you do.

At least one member of your party should be minimally efficient in handling a rifle. If no one can, a guide should be hired who agrees to always stay with your party even when a whale has been struck and is being pursued or harvested. The guide should teach all members of the party the basics of loading and firing. It is not the responsibility of the whaling captain and crew to provide you with protection from polar bears. A list of bear guards can be provided to you upon request.