

*Alaska Climate and Health E-News*  
*Raising Awareness and Connecting People in the Interest of Public Health*  
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**Melting sea ice forces walrus onto Northwest Alaska beaches** – *Anchorage Daily News* (September 13, 2010) Tens of thousands of walrus have come ashore in Northwest Alaska because the sea ice they normally rest on has melted. Federal scientists say the massive move to shore by walrus is unusual in the United States. But it has happened at least twice before, in 2007 and 2009. In those years Arctic sea ice also was at or near record levels. [Read Story](#)

*E-News note: Walrus are an important food for Alaska Natives of the Northwest coast and the North Slope. In recent years spring harvest of walrus has been down in part because of poor ice conditions. Changes in walrus population effect Arctic human populations. Impact on traditional diet is a health concerns related to climate change.*

**Arctic ice melt threatens the iconic Narwhal** – *Montreal Gazette* (September 8, 2010) The ongoing disintegration of Arctic sea ice cover is posing a particular hazard for the narwhal – one of Canada’s iconic species to a new U.S. study that details how the slow-moving whale with the spiraled tusk is increasingly threatened by the proliferation of giant ice floes and other changes to the Arctic seascape. The danger is being dramatically highlighted this year by a colossal, 70 kilometer-long "ice island" that broke away from a Greenland glacier and is now drifting toward Baffin Bay - the principal habitat for the world's estimated 80,000 narwhals. [Read Story](#)

**Fabled Northwest Passage Open in Arctic Again** – *ScienceFair* (September 13, 2010) Arctic ice has melted enough again this summer for the legendary Northwest Passage to open up, according to the National Snow and Ice Data Center. It's the third time in history - and the third straight year - that both the Northwest and the Northeast passages are open due to a lack of Arctic ice. The center reports both passages are largely free of ice, allowing the potential for a circumnavigation of the Arctic Ocean. At least two expeditions are attempting this feat, the Norwegian explorer Borge Ousland and the Peter I and the yacht from Russia. [Read Story](#)

*E-News note: for more information on sea ice conditions in the Arctic, visit the National Snow and Ice Data Center [website](#).*

*The Climate and Health E-News is received around the circumpolar north by people who are interested in climate change and community health. If you have an observation or an update you would like to include or add to our [Alaska Climate Events Map](#), please send a message to [mbrubaker@anthc.org](mailto:mbrubaker@anthc.org). To join the [Climate and Health E-News mailing list](#), just respond to this message with your contact information (e-mail/name/location). You can find [Archived E-News](#) at the Arctic Health Library. Just scroll down until you see “Climate and Health E-News”.*

**Regards – Mike**

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