Seal Haul-Out Observation Report for Sandy Hook Bay

BY:
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PRESIDENT
SAVE COASTAL WILDLIFE

DATE: Wednesday, January 27, 2010
TIME: 9:30am to 1:30pm
AIR TEMPERATURE: 40 degrees
WEATHER (cloudy, sunny, etc.): Partly Sunny
TIDE: Low tide around 11:30am

SPECIES OBSERVED: Harbor Seals & perhaps 1 adult Harp Seal
NUMBER OF EACH SPECIES OBSERVED: About 42 Harbor Seal & 1 Harp Seal
AGE CLASSES OF EACH SPECIES: At least 5 juvenile Harbor Seals. The remainder were mostly adults.
LOCATION (Spermaceti Cove, Horseshore Cove, etc.): On the southern end of Skelton Hill island in Spermaceti Cove, Sandy Hook Bay, Sandy Hook NPS.

DISTURBANCES (boat, pedestrian, dog, aircraft, etc. and seal response): None observed, though a few people have been telling me that there has been a hunting boat next to Skeleton Hill Island in the last few days, complete in army camouflage. There were 3 hunters that had rifles and hauled in almost 250 birds. Then they moved closer to the seal's hauling area to look around and turned back. If true, not sure if it is a good idea for the National park Service to allow hunters to set traps/nets close to the seal's hauling area.

COMMENTS (any other information, such as behavior, length of time hauled-out, etc.): I observed two separate pods of seals on Skelton Hill Island today. One was located near the dunes farther up on the Island. This pod had 19 seals. The other seal pod was located about 1,000 feet farther south near the tip of the exposed sandbar. This site had about 24 seals, including what appeared to be an adult Harp Seal.

I was observed an adult seal jumping in and out of the water for about a minute in front of the group of seals lying on the exposed sandbar site.