

Adams explains need for whales

WASHINGTON, D.C. — Whaling quotas must meet the basic needs of the Eskimo population, according to Jake Adams, who was interviewed by Sen. Frank Murkowski on the senator's weekly radio program.

Adams is a 10-year Eskimo whaling captain and a member of the Alaska delegation of the International Whaling Commission.

"The whale is a very integral part of the Eskimo community," Adams said. "It provides possibly the largest amount of subsistence needs for a lot of the communities that are whaling."

Adams said a goal of his delegation is to "lobby the commission to get what we call a fair quota to meet nutri-

tional and subsistence needs" of the Eskimo population.

The commission, which met in England in early June, limits the number of whales that hunters can take. Prior to the IWC's institution of the quota system in 1978, Adams said the Eskimos would spend about six to eight weeks whaling.

"Since that time, we're lucky sometimes if our whaling season lasts a week," Adams said. "With the quota system, we don't get much of a chance to get whales these days."

According to Adams, the commission set this year's quota at 32 strikes, which were used up in three or four days. The IWC defines a whale

strike as any action which hurts a whale.

"The whaling communities in Northern Alaska landed 18 whales this spring, with two villages conducting fall whaling," Adams said.

The latest bowhead whale count is 7,200, up from the initial observation of government scientists of about 6,800 whales, he added.