

North Pacific Fishery Management Council

Dan Hull, Chairman
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Dr. Ivonne Ortiz, Research Scientist
JISAO
University of Washington
3737 Brooklyn Ave. NE
Seattle, WA 98195

Dr. Kerim Aydin, Fishery Biologist
Alaska Fishery Science Center
7600 Sand Point Way NE, Bldg 4
Seattle, WA, 98115

Dear Drs. Ortiz and Aydin,

This letter is to confirm the support of the North Pacific Fishery Management Council (Council) for the development of a seasonal forecasting biophysical model for the Bering Sea, as described in the Bering Seasons Project. The Council is a recognized leader in the application of ecosystem-based fishery management, and believes that the proposed project to develop short-term, seasonal forecasting models will provide useful information for sustainable management of Alaska's fishery resources.

The Bering Sea is a highly productive region where fishing is one of the main economic activities. Groundfish fisheries in the North Pacific off Alaska have long been managed under an ecosystem-based approach, and the availability and use of environmental information to enhance and inform management in the area is of great interest to the Council. As part of the annual stock assessment review, the Ecosystem Considerations chapter compiles and summarizes information about the status of the Alaska marine ecosystem. The inclusion of short-term environmental forecasts could better inform the Council of potential impacts to the fisheries within the annual management schedule, including implications for ongoing review of essential fish habitat (EFH).

Although neither the Council, nor its Ecosystem Committee have reviewed the technical merits of the proposed project, we trust that the Modeling, Analysis, Predictions, and Projections (MAPP) Program will ensure that the proposed project is technically sound. After discussion at our recent October meeting, and based upon input from our Ecosystem Committee, the Council wishes to confirm its support for this project, and its belief that such short-term forecasting models will provide timely information useful to the Council and its management decisions.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads 'Chris Oliver'. The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Chris Oliver
Executive Director