

Dan Hull, Chairman  
North Pacific Fishery Management Council  
605 W. 4th Avenue, Suite 306  
Anchorage, AK 99501-2252  
Telephone (907) 271-2809

*Re: NPFMC Visit to St. Paul Island and Ecosystem Committee*

Dear Chairman Hull, Vice-Chairman Tweit:

We wanted to thank the North Pacific Fishery Management Council (NPFMC or Council) and especially Vice-Chairman Bill Tweit and the five Council staffpersons – Diana Stram, Sarah Marrinan, Jim Armstrong, Sam Cunningham, and Steve MacLean for visiting St. Paul Island from June 23-June 28 as part of the Council's Outreach Program. In particular, we wanted to highlight Steve MacLean's contributions in pulling this visit together from a logistical perspective.

We understand this visit represented a significant budgetary commitment on the Council's part as well as valuable staff time. We hope that the Council members found the various community meetings and visits to the fur seal rookeries, bird nesting sites, and the local halibut fishery to be instructive. The community appreciates this Council initiative and believes that it will help inform and guide Council decision-making concerning the Bering Sea's commercial fisheries, fisheries-dependent communities, and its ecosystem approach to fisheries management.

In this regard, one of the issues that arose during discussions with Council representatives was the value of St. Paul Island's potential participation on the NPFMC's Ecosystem Committee. Given the centrality of St. Paul Island's location amidst the Bering Sea's commercial fisheries and its importance to various marine mammal and seabird species, including the northern fur seal, we believe a representative from St. Paul Island would provide valuable input to this committee's work including key information from observations and data collection on the ground. The declining status of northern fur seals and the potential impact this may have on the commercial fisheries would be further reasons for incorporating input from the people of St. Paul Island who have had an intimate and inter-dependent coexistence with fur seals for centuries.

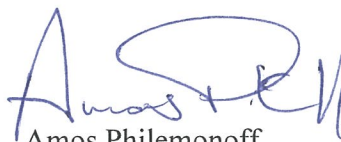
From crab, to halibut, to fur seals, the Council's policymaking affects all aspects of St. Paul Island's economy and are critical to the community's future. We therefore would like to formally request that the Council expand the Ecosystem Committee to allow for the appointment of a representative from St. Paul Island. Our community would recommend Lauren Divine.

We look forward to continuing our positive interaction with the Council on this and other matters as we have for decades.

Sincerely,



Phillip Lestenkof  
President  
Central Bering Sea Fishermen's Association



Amos Philemonoff  
President  
Aleut Community of Saint Paul Island



Ron Philemonoff  
CEO  
TDX



Simeon Swetsof  
Mayor  
City of Saint Paul