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APPENDIX L, Sept. 1977

October 14, 1977

Mr. Robert W. Schoning, Director
National Marine Fisheries Service, NOAA
3300 Whitehaven Street, Page Bldg. 2
Washington, D.C. 20235

Dear Bob,

Thank you for your letter of October 7 in explanation of the National Marine Fisheries Service's actions with regard to a harbor at St. Paul Island.

We appreciate your active interest in this project which so closely parallels that of the Council. We will stay in contact with Harry Rietze and work with you in any way possible to further this project.

Sincerely,

Jim H. Branson
Executive Director

cc: Harry Rietze
All Council members (50)

JHB:in



UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE
National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration
National Marine Fisheries Service
Washington, D.C. 20235

F33/DB

OCT 7 1977

Mr. Jim H. Branson
Executive Director, North Pacific
Fishery Management Council
P.O. Box 3136DT
Anchorage, Alaska 99510

OCT 14 1977

Dear Mr. Branson:

We are in full agreement with the Council on the benefits which a harbor at St. Paul Island would afford the U.S. fishing industry in developing the Bering Sea fisheries. We also have another interest which is to improve the economic viability of the Aleut residents of the Pribilof Islands, by affording them employment, including fishing and allied service industries as an alternative to Federal employment that has been predominant on the islands.

As you may be aware, the Corps of Engineers did some preliminary examination of the problem beginning about 1972 and came to the conclusion that the cost/benefit ratio was not high enough to justify further work. Since this decision was reached by the Corps, sporadic efforts have taken place by various groups to reinterest the Corps in the study. With the advent of extended jurisdiction, it appeared that the economic benefits, as well as other benefits such as vessel and crew safety, had changed sufficiently to warrant further study by the Corps. The Alaska Region of the National Marine Fisheries Service cooperated in preparing a paper which was transmitted to the Alaska District of the Corps in an attempt to obtain reactivation of the St. Paul Harbor project. A copy of the transmittal letter and the paper are enclosed.

The District was sufficiently impressed with the new information, that they requested FY79 funds for further work on the project but are unsure whether the funds will be forthcoming. The studies would include: 1) an updated environmental assessment, 2) exploration - essentially bottom coring to determine foundation materials, 3) hydrographics, and 4) economic analysis - reflecting annual benefits.

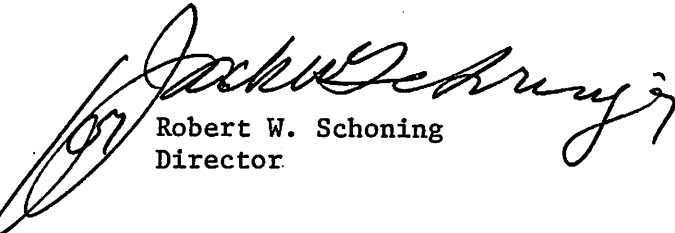
Since the studies could not be done by the Corps until at least FY79, the National Marine Fisheries Service has been investigating the possibility of utilizing our funding to contract for the necessary studies. However, we have not yet identified funds which could be



utilized for such a contract. Perhaps as much as \$200,000 will be required. Should such funds be identified, we would proceed with the studies to hasten the development as much as possible.

We will work with the North Pacific Fishery Management Council on this. Should further questions arise, you may refer them to Harry L. Rietze, Director, Alaska Region, National Marine Fisheries Service, P.O. Box 1668, Juneau, Alaska 99802, whom I have asked to take the lead on dealing with the St. Paul Harbor study and development.

Sincerely,



Robert W. Schoning
Director

Enclosures (2)

Commercial Fisheries and Interests Relating to Construction of a
Boat Harbor at Saint Paul Island in the Pribilof Group

National Marine Fisheries Service

Juneau, Alaska

June, 1977

The Pribilof Islands are in the approximate center of some of the richest fishing grounds in the world. The eastern Bering Sea has supported the removal of five billion pounds annually of fish and shellfish by the U.S., Canada, U.S.S.R., Japan, and Republic of Korea (ROK). Management of the fisheries under U.S. jurisdiction in the 200 mile zone will reduce this catch somewhat during the next few years to let certain depleted stocks rebuild, but even so, the total allowable catch (TAC) for all fisheries in the eastern Bering Sea in 1977 is set at 3.1 billion pounds with an ex-vessel value of \$290 million.

The opportunities for U.S. fisheries to develop further on Tanner crab, clams, and groundfishes have never been better. Wholesale market prices for groundfish products in the U.S. have been rising steadily over the past 16 years. This is generally true also for king and Tanner crab over the past five years. Export market opportunities in Europe, Japan, Republic of Korea, and other countries are also increasing.

U.S. Domestic Fisheries in the Eastern Bering Sea

At present, the principal U.S. fisheries in the eastern Bering Sea are those for Tanner, red, and blue king crabs; and to a lesser extent for halibut participated in by U.S. and Canadian fishermen. In 1975, the aggregate catch of these species amounted to 59.8 million pounds with an estimated ex-vessel value of 22.3 million dollars. Effort and catch for red king crab have increased steadily from 1971 (Tables 1 and 2). Fishing occurs in the period from August to December. A directed fishery



U.S. DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE
National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration
National Marine Fisheries Service
P. O. Box 1663, Juneau, Alaska 99802

June 28, 1977

Colonel George R. Robertson
District Engineer
Alaska District, Corps of Engineers
P.O. Box 7002
Anchorage, Alaska 99510

Dear Colonel Robertson:

Late last month we wrote to you expressing our interest in reactivation of the Saint Paul Harbor project in the Pribilof Islands. We believe that the number of fishing vessels in the area owing to expanding shellfish fisheries, imminence of a U.S. groundfish fleet in the eastern Bering Sea, and favorable prospects for plant construction on Saint Paul Island (if a harbor were constructed) require reconsideration of the proposed project.

In the attached paper we have attempted to provide you with new information to assist you in justification of the harbor. In our view the economic situation has changed markedly within the past 3 years. We have included:

1. An update on the crab fisheries; catch, value, and numbers of vessels.
2. The potential for the imminent U.S. groundfish fisheries as indicated by foreign fleet catches.
3. Indications of processor interest in plant construction on Saint Paul Island to accommodate the groundfish fleet.
4. A statement pertaining to village economy.
5. A description of a favorable U.S. marketing situation for groundfish.

We will be pleased to discuss the Saint Paul Harbor project with you at any time convenient to you. We are also prepared to assist you further if you believe additional study is required. May I ask that you inform us of your decision or proposed actions concerning the Saint Paul Harbor.

Sincerely,

Harry L. Rietze
Director, Alaska Region