



NATURAL RESOURCES CONSULTANTS

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Agenda Item I-3

April, 1980

April 16, 1980

FILE	ACT	INFO	ROUTE TO	INITIAL
			Exec. Dir.	J
			A. Exec. Dir.	JK
			Admin. Off.	
			Exec. Sec.	
			Writer/1	
			Writer/2	
			Sec. Recep.	
			Sec. Typist	
APR 21 1980				

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

Dear Jim:

Enclosed please find a copy of the "Proposal to Conduct a Study of Herring Stocks and Populations in the Eastern Bering Sea." Of the nine sponsors listed, five have definitely committed to us and four have expressed definite interest. We feel the study of sufficient impact to the Council that it warrants your sponsorship. You will note that because of the increased number of interested parties, we have reduced proposed contributions from \$2,500 to \$2,000. NRC would go ahead with the project if eight of the nine sponsors committed to support the proposal.

If the Council agrees with the project, please initial this letter and send a copy back to NRC.

Your interest in this matter is appreciated.

Sincerely,

Dayton L. Alverson
 Managing Partner

Enclosure

PROPOSAL TO CONDUCT A STUDY OF HERRING STOCKS
AND POPULATIONS IN THE EASTERN BERING SEA

TO: Alaska Department of Fish & Game
Alaska-Shell, Inc.
Icicle Seafoods
Marine Resources Co.
North Pacific Fishery Management Council
Northwest and Alaska Fisheries Center
Pan Alaska Fisheries
Trident Seafoods
Washington Fish & Oyster Co.

Statement of Need

Throughout the 1960's and early 1970's, herring resources of the Bering Sea were largely harvested by Soviet and Japanese fishermen, although some small-scale subsistence fisheries occurred in western Alaska. The size of the herring population, stock composition, and role in the finfish and total regional ecosystem and potential harvest or yield have recently been examined to formulate background information required for a management plan being prepared by the North Pacific Fishery Management Council. These data have been incorporated into a "Bering Sea-Chuckchi Sea Herring Draft Fishery Management Plan."

The Plan will impact on Alaska Native fishermen, Alaska non-native fishermen, non-resident fishermen, largely from the State of Washington, and foreign fishermen from the Soviet Union, Japan, and Korea. The Plan will be of obvious interest to environmentalists, the marine mammal community, and proponents of ecosystem management strategy. Because of the varied interests of user and other concerned groups, the Plan with its interpretation of the status of herring resources is likely to be highly controversial. This has already been demonstrated as a result of litigation regarding proposed changes in the preliminary management plan.

For these reasons, Natural Resources Consultants (NRC) feels an independent assessment of the status and character of the Bering Sea herring resources would provide a prospectus of value to the Council, management entities, user groups, and the general public.

Work Plan

NRC would concentrate on the biological attributes of the herring resources of the Eastern Bering Sea. Our studies would not involve any detailed descriptions of participating fisheries or socio-political factors governing past and/or current harvest strategy. It will be our intent to carefully review the literature regarding distribution, abundance, stock composition, recruitment patterns, and general life history. Data sources would include published or memo reports of NMFS (BCF), ADF&G, other government agencies, Council documents, and the general scientific literature. From these reviews, specific estimates and descriptors of (1) stock sizes, (2) status of stocks, (3) stock composition, (4) potential yield relationships, and (5) reaction of stocks to fisheries would be made. Note that NRC does not propose to extend its studies to modify biological yields to establish optimum yields or concerns with DAH and TALFF. NRC interests are confined to the biological aspects of the resources and the yield potentials based on density dependent responses to fishing.

Estimated Cost: \$18,000

Sponsor share: \$2,000

Payment Schedule: 50 percent after 6 weeks; 50 percent on completion of the final report.

Time of Completion: 4½ months

NRC Commitment to Sponsor

NRC will review and solicit comments from the sponsors on completion of a final draft. Twenty days will be provided for sponsor critiques. NRC will analyze and take these comments into account in preparing the final draft, but will be exclusively responsible for the final conclusions of the report. Five copies of the report will be dispatched to each sponsor.

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