

ADDRESS TO THE NORTH PACIFIC FISHERIES MANAGEMENT COUNCIL BY  
 HAROLD SPARCK REPRESENTING THE WESTERN ALASKA RESOURCE COMMISSION  
 BRISTOL BAY, YUKON, KUKWOKWIM, NORTON SOUND, KOTZEBUE SOUND ON  
 THE 1978 COMMERCIAL HERRING FISHERY.

Gentlemen, I want to thank you for this opportunity to discuss the concerns of the four fishing districts of Western Alaska with the Eastern Bering Sea herring.

I have spoken with this Council and its members before, and I feel that given your past actions, I can dispense with a history of our concerns, and speak bluntly and to the point by making specific requests of this Council at this meeting to satisfy the concerns of the people of Western Alaska that I am representing.

1. The villages of Western Alaska are displeased with the current socio-economic impact study as funded by this Council. Although the Western Alaskan representatives on the Advisory Panel and myself were promised meaningful participation in this study, western Alaskans knowledgeable of the subsistence fishery are not involved with this study. On the contrary, requests by the village appointed Western Alaska Resource Commission to meet formally with the contractor and the staff have been rebuffed. I point this out in a critical way for the current contractor's proposal had been rejected by the villages he must work with in advance of his selection due to the glaring deficiency that western Alaskans familiar with subsistence were missing from the proposal. I am asking this Council for its financial support in having the Western Alaska Resource Commission meet with the contractor in late July and August prior to the contractor submitting his interim and final report to the NPFMC. We disagree with the staff of the Council that the contractor has the capability of adequately doing this study, and call upon the Council to solve this glaring breach in the controls on the study. This is our subsistence the Council is dealing with, this is the guts of the herring issue from our perspective, and we are not being treated fairly at this time by the contractor.
2. We can expect several of the larger processors to come around Cape Newenham into the Yukon-Kuskokwim delta to fish commercially for herring. We did not sanction this move. Our villages have uniformly opposed commercial fishing in lieu of an adequate resource base. Yet the Board of Fish of the State of Alaska distinguished itself by opening up our region. I have word from the majorities of both the Central Bering Sea Fish and Game Advisory Board and the Lower Yukon Fish and Game Advisory Boards that if the big boats come, they will close their areas to commercial herring fishing by emergency order. Given the intense political pressure Commissioner Skoog would face from the commercial fishing people, we expect to be overruled. Can we expect assistance from this Council to sustain our closure on the federal level if we appeal directly to the Secretary of Commerce.
3. We seek this Council's support for some consistency in management and therefore beseech this Council to shuffle its FMP schedule to allow for a January 1979 FMP. We ask for this for it was only two years ago when this Council took the historic step

only to have the State of Alaska and its Board of Fish re-open a domestic sac-roe fishery six times the reported size of the Japanese effort, again with little or no data. We are also pressed by industry statements that a domestic trawl fishery will be begun in the federal management zone in September, 1978. The industry was encouraged that the Board of Fish for some unknown reason opened up trawl fishing within the shallow Bristol Bay to assure Americans of grubbing up every gram of the domestic allocation, so given that surprise, the industry looked further off-shore. NMFS informs us that under a PMP it cannot restrain a domestic fishery in the federal zone, and we cannot count on the State to impose its landing laws on its own commercial people who have proven themselves time and again in harmony with the Board of Fish. We ask that this Council ask the Secretary of Commerce to institute an emergency FMP to prevent any domestic trawl fishery, and to institute a FMP in January, 1979 that will be honestly based on the best available biological and socio-economic data, and featuring a reduced TAC to 12,000 M.T. as a conservation step to insure no serious stock depletion until the three biological/socio-economic studies required for an adequate OSY occurs, the establishment of subsistence as the first priority of domestic allocation, a local fish and game advisory board option to participate in domestic commercial herring activities within its sphere of influence, and an even handed analysis of the food herring industry in Bristol Bay versus the sac-roe purse seine effort so that economic activity can be broadened to include participation by native people once they are assured that their herring have a harvestable surplus.

I have taken the liberty of speaking bluntly about our disappointment with the State mechanism controlling herring. It is not the State people involved, but the process and the tremendous advantage the commercial people have over we Western Alaskans who wish to conserve our resources rather than exploit them.

This Council has been outstanding in listening to us. Your decisions have been fair up to this time. The majority of you have commercial fishing backgrounds, and it has been surprising how even handed you have treated this issue. But events are rushing fast, witness the tremendous increase in harvest capacity in Bristol Bay, the discovery of the foreign incidental catch of herring in a legal fishery which will create awful problems for many years under a reduced TALFF, the actions of this Council to set back the FMP for herring, and the Board of Fish's devotion to a dubious luxury fishery that imperils our resources, and does nothing for stable economic development in western Alaska.

Gentlemen, we do not believe that Prince William Sound, Kodiak Southeastern Alaska or Seattle should dominate this Council or the State of Alaska's decision making on the conservation of marine resources in the Bering Sea. If they ruin own fishery while making their money, we have to pay the expenses. We want conservation, not exploitation, by forcing the industry to prove that its fishery will not harm the resource. As it is now, both the State and Federal government are demanding that we prove it will. I request Council resolutions at this time on the three issues so that the people of Western Alaska will know where their interests stand with this Council.

One minor change which we do endorse at this time is that addressed by Senate Bill 3050, introduced by Senators Magnuson, Stevens and Jackson. As a consequence, the North Pacific Council at its meeting on May 26th, by majority vote favored amending P.L. 94-265:

1. To require that the interests of the seafood processing industry be weighed equally with those of other segments of the fishing industry.
2. To direct the Secretary of Commerce to evaluate the effect of any proposed action under the FCMA on the seafood processors and the development of the entire United States fishing industry.
3. To specify that foreign processing vessels be authorized to purchase fish caught by vessels of the United States in the U.S. fishery conservation zone only if:
  - A. The domestic seafood processing industry lacks the capability to process the fish,
  - B. The conservation and management provisions of the 200 mile act are satisfied, and
  - C. The Secretary evaluates the many considerations relevant to whether the authorization would in the long term benefit the domestic fishing industry and the United States economy.
4. To grant the Regional Councils greater input into the decision making process prior to the granting of permits for foreign processing vessels.

The foregoing recommendations in our opinion are more in the nature of a clarification of existing law than a change.

# North Pacific Fishery Management Council

Harold E. Lokken, Chairman  
Jim H. Branson, Executive Director

Mailing Address: P.O. Box 3136DT  
Anchorage, Alaska 99510

Suite 32, 333 West 4th Avenue  
Post Office Mall Building



Telephone: (907) 274-4563  
FTS 265-5435

May 26, 1978

NIGHT LETTER

The Honorable Juanita Kreps  
Secretary of Commerce  
U.S. Department of Commerce  
Main Commerce Building  
Washington, D.C. 20230

Dear Madam Secretary:

The North Pacific Fishery Management Council requests immediate amendment to the PMP's for the Gulf of Alaska Trawl Fishery and the Sablefish in the Gulf of Alaska as follows:

50 CFR 611.94 (c) (1) is amended to read as follows:

That portion of the Gulf of Alaska which is west of 140° West longitude and which is both seaward of the 500 meter (273.3 fathom) depth contour and beyond twelve nautical miles from the baseline used to measure the territorial sea; and...

50 CFR 611.92 (3) (vi) is amended to read as follows:

- (A) Cape Edgecumbe - Salisbury Sound; between 56°53' North latitude and 57°24' North latitude east of 137°00' West longitude.
- (B) Cross Sound Gully; between 57°50' North latitude and 58°12' North east of 137°25' West longitude.
- (C) Fairweather Gully; the area bordered by rhumb lines connecting the following coordinates in the order listed:

North Latitude	West Longitude
58°28'	140°00'
58°48'	138°50'
58°10'	130°11'
58°28'	140°00'

These amendments will provide protection for the U.S. sablefish fishery until the FMP for the Gulf of Alaska Groundfish Fishery is implemented. They are the same provisions as contained in the FMP for this fishery printed in the Federal Register on April 21, 1978.

Based on the FMP submitted to you by the Council on October 17, 1977, but not yet implemented, many American fishermen have geared up for sablefish, investing heavily in gear and foregoing other fisheries. Because the FMP has been unduly delayed, they continue to find the grounds preempted by or lose substantial amounts of gear to foreign fishermen.

U.S. fishermen need access to the fishing grounds immediately if they are to benefit from the intensive fishing permitted by good summer weather and catch the 4000 MT estimated as DAH in the south eastern Alaska area.

These amendments to the PMP have been discussed with Mr. Nakamura, Vice Chairman of the Japanese Longline and Gillnet Association, and he will not object to their implementation.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script, appearing to read "Harold E. Lokken".

Harold E. Lokken  
Chairman

JHB