


MEMORANDUM

TO: Council, AP and SSC Members

FROM: Clarence G. Pautzke   
Executive Director

DATE: January 4, 1990

SUBJECT: Northern Sea Lions

**ACTION REQUIRED**

Status report from National Marine Fisheries Service.

**BACKGROUND**

In December the Council received a report documenting the decline of the Northern Sea Lion population in the North Pacific Ocean. NMFS scientists also reported that the listing of Northern Sea Lions on either the threatened or endangered list could have major ramifications for fisheries off Alaska. NMFS is prepared to report further on this subject.

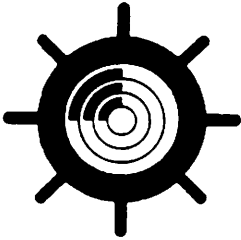
Table 1. Ranking of northern sea lion rookeries in order of need for protection. A lower value has higher ranking. List progresses east to west.

Rookery	Prox. to roe fishery	Sea lion abund.	Years of decline <sup>a</sup>	Import./sensit. <sup>b</sup>	Sum	Rank	Importance to groundfish fishery <sup>c</sup>
Forrester	No values; Control area						Less important
Sugarloaf	2	3	10	4	19	4	Very important
Marmot	1	1	9	1	12	1	Very important
Chirikof/ Chowiet	1	2	8	4	15	2	Very important
Atkins/ Chernabura	2	6	7	5	20	5	Very important
Pinnacle	3	5	6	5	19	4	Very important
Clubbing	3	8	5	5	21	6	Very important
Amak	4	15	3	4	26	8	Very important
Ugamak	1	7	2	2	12	1	Very important
Bogoslof	1	10	4	2	17	3	Very important
Yunaska	2	11	10	5	28	9	Very important
Seguam	1	4	10	5	20	5	Very important
Kasatochi	2	13	11	6	32	10	Less important
Gramp	3	12	12	6	33	11	Less important
Ulak	4	9	13	6	32	10	Less important
Kiska	5	14	14	7	40	12	Less important
Walrus (Pribilofs)	5	15	1	3	24	7	Very important

<sup>a</sup> Ranking values, not actual years of decline but duration of years declining compared to others. For example, sea lions at Walrus (ranking of 1) has been declining longer than at Kiska (ranking of 14).

<sup>b</sup> Subjective appraisal of the likelihood of continued decline or "sensitivity" of the rookery.

<sup>c</sup> Level of importance is qualitatively evaluated based on historical importance of fishing ground to at-sea and shore-based processors.



NPFVOA

DEC 26 1989

Dr. William Fox  
Administrator, NOAA Fisheries  
9334 Metro One Building  
1335 East-West Highway  
Silver Spring, MD. 20910

December 19, 1989

Dear Dr. Fox:

The fishing industry based in the Pacific Northwest and Alaska joined environmentalists and other industry representatives in 1988 in national negotiations to develop an acceptable format for the re-authorization of the Marine Mammal Protection Act (MMPA).

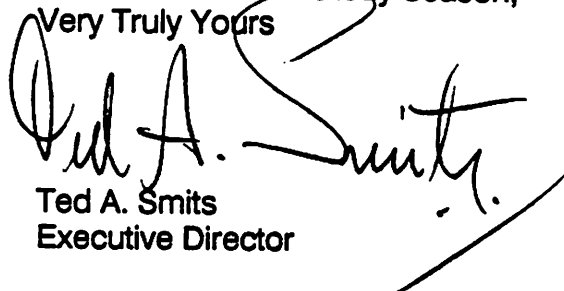
One of the compromises reached during the meetings was the agreement for fishing vessels of certain sizes and involved in certain fisheries to accept marine mammal interaction observers, provided that these observers were also to serve as fisheries research observers and would be funded by the National Marine Fisheries Service (NMFS). Industry organizations, including the North Pacific Fishing Vessel Owners' Association, even lobbied Congress for funds to sustain the MMPA/Fisheries observer agreement, which resulted in Congress setting aside \$7.5 Million for the program.

We are dismayed to now find that NMFS has unilaterally decided not to allocate any part of this \$7.5 Million for the Pacific Northwest/Alaska observer needs, supposedly because of a recent North Pacific Fishery Management Council action implementing an industry-funded fisheries research observer program. We understand that in lieu of a "fair share" approach to Atlantic/Pacific coast distribution of federally-funded observers (based for example on seafood production for the respective areas), most of the available money will be assigned to East Coast observer programs, leaving an insignificant amount available to be directed to West Coast Marine Mammal research facilities or studies.

We consider this action, which was not coordinated with the fishing industry or the Management Councils, to be a clear breach of faith, violating the specific Congressional direction as well as the spirit of the fishing industry/environmental community negotiations and agreement. We sincerely hope

that a review by your office will result in a reversal of this unfortunate NMFS policy decision.

With best wishes for the Holiday Season,  
Very Truly Yours



Ted A. Smits  
Executive Director