

Aleutian/Pribilof Islands Association, Inc.

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Presented to The North Pacific Fishery Management Council

The Aleutian/Pribilof Islands non-profit association serving the Native people throughout the entire Aleutian/Pribilof Region realizing that fisheries has been our livelihood for hundreds of years and that these same areas our people have lived in and fished will continue to be our main source of income in the changing world ahead- We have established a Fisheries Cooperative within our non-profit organization.

RESOLUTION 77-12

- WHEREAS, The Board of Directors of the Aleutian/Pribilof Islands Association, Inc., deems it important and necessary to take advantage of all human, economic and environmental resources available to its people and within its region, and
- WHEREAS, it is known that the most valuable resource available to the residents of the Aleutian/Pribilof region is the fisheries and the by-products of the fisheries, and
- WHEREAS, it is felt that in order to take full advantage of the fisheries potential in the Aleutian/Pribilof region that immediate steps be taken to set up an office, council, and/or regional fisheries cooperative, so as to become totally familiar with, and to take full advantage of, all State and Federal programs associated with, or concerning fisheries, fisheries development, and/or fisheries marketing potentials.
- NOW THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, by the full Board of Directors of the Aleutian/Pribilof Islands Association, Inc., that there be caused to be formed, a fisheries office, or regional fisheries council, or a regional fisheries cooperative, to better serve the people of the Aleutian/Pribilof region, and further, the Executive Director is instructed to begin working on this project and that the Executive Director has full authority to implement this program.

Our mission is to represent, participate, watch dog legislation, and oversee the interests of our people in the Aleutian and Pribilof Fisheries. We intend to assist our people in obtaining training, learning new technology and changing their methods with the demand of the times.

One primary thrust at this time is to train our Native people to fish these waters with their own boats. Boats designed for the rough waters of area A, of the Bering Sea as well as throughout the Chain. Our goal is to have ten - 90 + feet vessels operating in the Pribilof's with the most modern and sophisticated equipment within two years and at least 20 smaller vessels of the 40 to 60 ft., class within a 3-5 year period supported by a floating processor competitive with anything now afloat.

We look to cooperative financing and training agreements with our foreign neighbors in becoming fully operational throughout the region. We intend to fully and completely fish these waters. No longer will we sit back comfortably while the rest of the world carries away our livelihood.

Arrangements are now being negotiated for foreign fishing interests to teach our people ground fishing techniques and to serve aboard our vessels as teachers and consultants in the realm of bottom fishing.

A planning group will meet in March to outline the details of our upcoming Bottom Fisheries Conference to be held in Anchorage in February of 1979, representation is expected from all International Fishing countries. The emphasis will be on new techniques and practices in bottom fishing. Training opportunities will highlight this conference.

If Americans are to become active in the Bottom Fishing Industry it is imperative that proper docking facilities be built as soon as possible particularly in the Pribilof's.

We see ahead great opportunities for international cooperative fishing ventures and intend that the Aleutian Fisheries Cooperative will be right in the middle of what happens.

We will push hard for the development of docking facilities in the Pribilof's and at least one dry dock for our vessels built central to the Aleutian Fishing Fleet within the next two years.

We expect to represent approximately 13 fisheries, 11 villages along the Chain and about 800 fishermen in the months ahead.

It is important to note that though domestic concerns may be somewhat leary of joint ventures with foreign nations, this country must face the fact that without the expertise and technical assistance of those nations who know bottom-fishing, this domestic fishing may never become competitive in the world market. Along these lines we have insisted on domestic ownership, but have opened our arms to foreign financial and technical assistance.

From the foregoing comments we hope you draw the same conclusion we do: Alaskans will be active in bottom fishing in a matter of months. If a domestic bottom-fishery is to be born and live, the Government must be of assistance in providing opportunities for cooperative ventures and the physical plants and facilities necessary to dock and maintain such a fleet. We must prepare now for tomorrow.

One major decision we hope to get from The North Pacific Fishery Management Council is a recommendation to close area A to foreign fishing now as called for in the 200 mile limit law.