



United States Department of the Interior

FISH AND WILDLIFE SERVICE

WASHINGTON, D.C. 20240

ADDRESS ONLY THE DIRECTOR,
FISH AND WILDLIFE SERVICE

MAR 28 1983

Mr. Craig S. Harrison
Chairman, Pacific Seabird Group
46-024 Puulena Street, #614
Kaneohe, Hawaii 96744

Dear Mr. Harrison:

I apologize for taking so long in responding to your letter of January 17 which stated your objections to any change in the status of St. Matthew Island and to the disbanding of the Alaska Maritime National Wildlife Refuge (NWR).

The Fish and Wildlife Service does not now, nor did it ever, intend to disband the Alaska Maritime NWR. In fact, to do this would require an Act of Congress. However, we were at one time contemplating relocating and reorganizing the administrative headquarters of the refuge now located in Homer. This proposal is no longer under consideration.

The proposed St. Matthew Island/Kenai Peninsula, Nunivak Island and Yukon Delta land exchange will add valuable recreation land to the Kenai NWR and simplify management of Nunivak Island, plus insure that undesirable development does not take place on certain black brant nesting areas within the Yukon Delta NWR. Although negotiations are still underway, we are confident that the exchange will fulfill the purposes of ANILCA and benefit the National Wildlife Refuge System. Please be assured that before any decision is made on this proposal, all issues, including those impacts which might occur on St. Matthew Island, will receive careful consideration.

We appreciate your comments and will consider them in our decisionmaking process.

Sincerely,

Robert H. Simmons
Acting Associate
Director