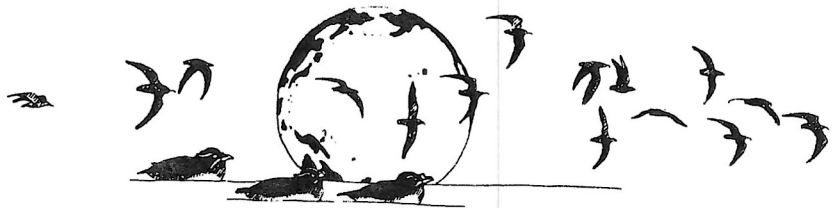


# Pacific Seabird Group



DEDICATED TO THE STUDY AND CONSERVATION OF PACIFIC SEABIRDS AND THEIR ENVIRONMENT

September 18, 1992

Larry Mercurieff  
Coordinator Bering Sea Coalition  
Pouch 1  
St. Paul, AK 99663

Dear Mr. Mercurieff,

The Pacific Seabird Group (PSG) is an international scientific organization that was founded in 1972 to promote knowledge, study, and conservation of Pacific Seabirds. Its members are drawn from the entire Pacific Basin, including Russia, Canada, Japan, China, Mexico, Australia and New Zealand. There are 54 Alaskan members. Our primary interest is the scientific study and conservation of seabirds of the Pacific Ocean. Among PSG's members are biologists who have research interests in Pacific seabirds, state and federal officials who manage seabird refuges, and individuals who are interested in marine conservation.

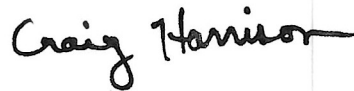
We support your proposal for a closed zone to trawl fishing around the Pribilof Islands. Nearly all commercial fisheries must be regulated to avoid overharvest, and this type of buffer zone is environmentally a very beneficial way to do so. This buffer zone would do the following to protect the critical near-shore area by: 1) ending bottom trawling which causes physical disruption of the bottom biological community and habitat, 2) protect food sources for seabirds and marine mammals in the buffer zone from capture as target or bycatch species, 3) lessen the risk of shipwrecks and possible consequent oil spills and rat introductions, and 4) lessen direct disturbance to seabirds and marine mammals.

As you know, the Pribilof Islands are a world famous wildlife area. Some of Alaska's largest seabird concentrations nest on the islands (over 2 million birds) which contain a high percentage of Alaskan

and world populations of some species. Also, the Pribilofs constitute the northern fur seal's principal rookery (800,000 animals) and are used by several other marine mammal species, including the threatened Steller's sea lion. Attached are maps which clearly show the importance of the Pribilof Islands and near-shore waters to seabirds.

We appreciate the awareness and concern of the Pribilovians toward the Bering Sea ecosystem and applaud your foresight and efforts at wise resource management. If PSG can be of further assistance in this effort, please let us know.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Craig Harrison". The signature is written in a cursive, slightly slanted style.

Craig Harrison  
Conservation Chairman  
Pacific Seabird Group  
4001 N. 9th St., Apt. 1801  
Arlington, VA 22203

Attachments