



UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE
National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration
National Marine Fisheries Service
P.O. Box 21668
Juneau, Alaska 99802-1668

Dear Reviewer:

In accordance with provisions of the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA), we enclose for your review the *Draft Supplemental Environmental Impact Statement (DSEIS) for the Management of the Subsistence Harvest of Northern Fur Seals on St. Paul Island, Alaska*.

This DSEIS is prepared pursuant to NEPA to assess the environmental, social, and economic impacts associated with NOAA proceeding with changes to the management of the subsistence use of northern fur seals on St. Paul Island, Alaska. This proposed action would implement new regulations for northern fur seal subsistence use on St. Paul Island, Alaska to allow for a harvest and hunt of male northern fur seals to meet the subsistence needs and implement new conservation controls. The purpose of the proposed action is to conserve northern fur seals and manage the subsistence use of fur seals on St. Paul Island for their long-term sustainable use for purposes of food, cultural continuity, clothing, arts, and crafts. The proposed action is needed to allow Pribilovians on St. Paul Island greater flexibility to meet their subsistence needs by obtaining fresh fur seal meat and subsistence resources throughout the year. This DSEIS supplements the 2005 Final Environmental Impact Statement for Setting the Annual Subsistence Harvest of Northern Fur Seals on the Pribilof Islands. The Alaska Region has prepared this DSEIS to address the petition received from the Aleut Community of St. Paul Island, Tribal Government. The Preliminary Preferred/Petitioned Alternative (Alternative 2) would establish an annual harvest limit of 2,000 juvenile fur seals, a hunting season, a harvest season, and delegate authority to the Co-Management Council to manage, monitor, and restrict subsistence use, in order to meet the subsistence needs of the St. Paul Island community.

Additional copies of the DSEIS may be obtained from the Responsible Program Official identified below. The DSEIS is available electronically on the NMFS Alaska Region website at <https://alaskafisheries.noaa.gov/pr/fur-seal> or from www.regulations.gov and enter docket number "NOAA-NMFS-2015-0073" in the search bar. A printed copy of the DSEIS may be obtained from the Responsible Program Official identified below.


Written comments should be submitted through mail, facsimile (fax), or email to the Responsible Program Official identified below. Written comments submitted during the agency's 45-day comment period must be received by February 27, 2017. When submitting fax or email comments include the following document identifier in the comment subject line: NOAA-NMFS-2015-0073. Written comments submitted electronically through the www.regulations.gov portal should use docket number: NOAA-NMFS-2015-0073.



Responsible Program Official:

James W. Balsiger, Ph.D.
Administrator, Alaska Region
National Marine Fisheries Service
National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration
P. O. Box 21668
Juneau, AK, 99802
907-586-7221
FAX: 907-586-7557
Web portal for electronic submission of comments:
www.regulations.gov, enter docket number
"NOAA-NMFS-2015-0073" in the search bar.

Sincerely,


for James W. Balsiger, Ph.D.
Administrator, Alaska Region

Enclosure