

North Pacific Fishery Management Council

Dan Hull, Chairman
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December 30, 2014

Senator Lisa Murkowski
United State Senate
709 Hart Senate Building
Washington, DC 20510

Dear Senator Murkowski:

I am writing to follow up on a request for comments we received from your office this past summer regarding proposed legislation titled the "Improved National Monument Designation Process". At our recent December meeting, our Council was able to discuss your proposed legislation, and our Council agrees that the current process for monument designation does not allow for adequate input, either by the U.S. Congress, affected States, or the public. Your legislation would indeed improve upon the existing process, and would require deliberate consideration of consequences, rather than unilateral Executive action. We recognize the potential for monument designation of certain sites in waters off Alaska, and we believe your legislation would result in a much more robust and appropriate assessment of the veracity of such designation.

Further, we note that the Regional Fishery Management Council process provides an open and transparent forum to consider potential impacts of monument designation relative to fishing and related activities within any proposed monument site. We recommend you consider adding language to this legislation which would explicitly allow for Council input prior to finalizing any monument designation. We also agree with the comments of the Pacific Fishery Management Council that, if an area is designated, any fishing regulations within that area would be accomplished through the authorities of the relevant Regional Fishery Management Council and the processes of the Magnuson-Stevens Act.

We appreciate the opportunity to provide comment on this legislation and stand ready to provide additional input should you determine the need for such. Please have your staff contact me, or the Council's Executive Director Chris Oliver, if you have any questions regarding our Council's comments on this issue.

Sincerely,



Dan Hull
Chairman

CC: Senator Dan Sullivan
Congressman Don Young
RFMC Executive Directors