



# NORTH PACIFIC FISHERY MANAGEMENT COUNCIL

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## Action Memo

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**File #:** REP 17-018, **Version:** 1

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**Dan Hull, Chairman**  
**Chris Oliver, Executive Director**

**SUBJECT:**  
Protected Species Report

**STAFF CONTACT:** Steve MacLean

**ACTION REQUIRED:**  
Review Protected Species Report, action as necessary

**BACKGROUND:**

Bearded seals

On October 24, 2016 the U.S. Court of Appeals for the Ninth Circuit reversed a district court's judgement against NMFS regarding the threatened status of the Okhotsk and Beringia distinct population segments of the Pacific bearded seal subspecies. The panel held that NMFS final rule listing the Beringia DPS as threatened was not arbitrary or capricious, and its listing was supported by substantial evidence.

On February 22, 2017 the Ninth Circuit Court of Appeals denied the petition for rehearing by the Alaska Oil and Gas Association, the case is back with the District Court for Alaska to reinstate the listing of the Beringia DPS of bearded seals as threatened. The case affirms that NMFS can list a species as threatened based on foreseeable effects of climate change, even if the species is not currently in decline.

Steller sea lions

The Alaska Fisheries Science Center has launched the [Steller Watch](https://www.zooniverse.org/projects/sweenkl/steller-watch) project on Zooniverse to allow the public to review and classify photos of Steller sea lions taken in the Aleutian Islands. The hope is that this will help AFSC scientists identify and track marked sea lions in the Aleutians and get important data on survival, reproduction, etc.