



UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE
National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration

National Marine Fisheries Service

P.O. Box 21668

Juneau, Alaska 99802-1668

June 12, 2009

Dear Tribal Representative:

Please find enclosed the proposed rule for the Arctic Fishery Management Plan and Amendment 29 to the Fishery Management Plan for Bering Sea/Aleutian Islands King and Tanner Crabs. The National Marine Fisheries Service (NMFS) is proposing to establish a plan for sustainable management of commercial fishing in the Arctic Management Area. The plan initially would prohibit commercial fishing in Arctic waters from 3 to 200 nautical miles from the shore, until information is available to support sustainable management. No commercial fishing is currently occurring in this area, but this action is necessary to prevent the potential for unregulated commercial fishing in federal Arctic waters. This action will have no effect on subsistence uses of marine resources. By preventing unregulated commercial fishing, this action would protect marine resources from the potential effects of unregulated commercial fishing. The North Pacific Fishery Management Council has conducted extensive outreach activities in Nome, Barrow, and Kotzebue regarding this action to ensure the needs of local communities were considered before the Council recommended this action in February 2009.

NMFS has special obligations to consult and coordinate with tribal governments and Alaska Native Claims Settlement Act (ANCSA) corporations on a government-to-government basis pursuant to Executive Order 13175 and the Executive Memorandum of April 29, 1994, on "Government-to-Government Relations with Native American Tribal Governments." As a result of your tribal or ANCSA corporation status, you have the opportunity to comment to NMFS at any time; however, only comments submitted during the proposed rule comment period would be considered in the development of the final rule for this action. I encourage you to submit written comments by mail or email. The enclosed proposed rule provides instructions for submitting comments and additional information on this action.

Additionally, you have the opportunity to personally consult with and provide comments to NMFS. To request a meeting with NMFS, please contact Melanie Brown at 907-586-7006. I look forward to working with you on this action. For more information on the proposed rule, please visit our website at <http://www.alaskafisheries.noaa.gov>.

Sincerely,

Robert D. Mecum
Acting Administrator, Alaska Region

Enclosure

