

STATE OF ALASKA
THE LEGISLATURE

2001

Source
HJR 26

Legislative
Resolve No.
25



Requesting the National Marine Fisheries Service to relocate the Alaska Fisheries Science Center Steller sea lion research team to Alaska.

BE IT RESOLVED BY THE LEGISLATURE OF THE STATE OF ALASKA:

WHEREAS the National Marine Fisheries Service (NMFS) has listed the Steller sea lion as endangered under the Endangered Species Act of 1973; and

WHEREAS NMFS released a biological opinion on November 30, 2000, which would significantly restrict the groundfish fisheries in Alaska; and

WHEREAS currently there is no clear scientific data on which to base this restriction; and

WHEREAS Senator Ted Stevens was successful in securing the funds needed to coordinate a comprehensive research and recovery program for the western Alaska Steller sea lion and to conduct an independent scientific review of the November 30, 2000, biological opinion; and

WHEREAS the western United States stock of the Steller sea lion is located in waters adjacent to Alaska; and

WHEREAS it is vital to study the recent decline of Steller sea lions in Alaska waters on an ongoing basis throughout the year; and

WHEREAS the NMFS research program involved with study of the western Alaska Steller sea lion is based in Seattle at the Alaska Fisheries Science Center; and

WHEREAS recent restrictions on the travel of NMFS staff have prevented key personnel based in Seattle from traveling to Alaska to participate in Steller sea lion recovery meetings; and

WHEREAS it is important that Alaskans who are directly affected by the status of the endangered western Alaska Steller sea lion have local access to NMFS personnel conducting critical sea lion research to discuss the actions necessary for sea lion recovery;

BE IT RESOLVED that the Alaska State Legislature respectfully requests the National Marine Fisheries Service to relocate all portions of the Alaska Fisheries Science Center associated with research on the western Alaska Steller sea lion from Seattle to a facility that is located in western Alaska.

COPIES of this resolution shall be sent to the Honorable Don Evans, United States Secretary of Commerce; Dr. William T. Hogarth, Acting Assistant Administrator, National Marine Fisheries Service, United States Department of Commerce; and to the Honorable Ted Stevens and the Honorable Frank Murkowski, U.S. Senators, and the Honorable Don Young, U.S. Representative, members of the Alaska delegation in Congress.