

***The Pribilof Aleuts' Dependence on Marine Resources  
of the Bering Sea***

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## *EXECUTIVE SUMMARY*

The United States acquired the world's largest fur-seal rookeries when it purchased Alaska in 1867. These were located in the Pribilof Islands, approximately 200 miles north of the Aleutian Chain. Some Americans recognized the economic potential of this resource from the outset. "The fur business," explained an Army paymaster stationed in Sitka, "is the principal business of Alaska."<sup>1</sup> In 1869, the federal government declared these islands in the Bering Sea to be a "special reservation," and directed the profits from the annual harvests of fur seals to the U.S. Treasury.<sup>2</sup> By the 1880s, the harvest had yielded approximately \$4 million -- more than half the purchase price of Alaska.<sup>3</sup> So significant were the rookeries that in the early twentieth century the U.S. Bureau of Fisheries reported that "The Alaska fur seals constitute the most valuable fishery resource that any nation ever possessed."<sup>4</sup> Throughout the twentieth century, the federal government continued to profit "handsomely" from the commercial harvest on the Pribilofs.<sup>5</sup>

Harvesting fur seals in the Bering Sea required a significant source of labor. During the late eighteenth century, the Russians had brought Aleuts to the Pribilofs for this purpose -- and the Americans inherited responsibility for these Natives when they took over the fur-seal harvest.

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<sup>1</sup>George P. Ihrie, "The Alaska Commercial Company," House of Representatives, Report No. 623 (44th Cong., 1st Sess.), 1876, p. 94.

<sup>2</sup>16 *Stat.* 180, 1870, (41st Cong., 2nd Sess.), p. 181.

<sup>3</sup>Hubert Howe Bancroft, *History of Alaska* (San Francisco: The History Company, 1890), pp. 637-638.

<sup>4</sup>U. S. Bureau of Fisheries quoted in John J. Underwood, *Alaska: An Empire in the Making*, rev. ed. (New York: Dodd, Mead and Company, 1925), p. 258.

<sup>5</sup>Donald H. Green and Stephen M. Truitt, "Memorandum on United States' Obligation to Fund Adequately the Fur Seal Harvest as Required by International Treaty," November 5, 1981, p. 12, IRA Office Files, St. Paul Island.

Accordingly, from the beginning of American possession of Alaska, the United States acknowledged "an obligation to provide for these native inhabitants."<sup>6</sup> Federal officials understood that the Pribilof Aleuts were dependent on marine resources -- including seals, fish, birds, and other wildlife -- and they sought to protect these resources as well as the Natives' ability to make a living by taking them.

The following report outlines this dependence and the federal government's recognition of it. The introduction summarizes Russian Administration and the Treaty of Cession, while the next section focuses on early legislation protecting the Pribilofs as a government reserve. It also describes the leases granted to the Alaska Commercial Company and North American Commercial Company, and their effect on the Pribilof Aleuts. The third section analyzes the Treaty of 1911, which was prompted by the need to curtail pelagic (open sea) sealing. The Aleuts' relocation to Southeast Alaska during World War II is also a subject of the third section. The report's conclusion describes prominent legislation of the modern era, including the Fur Seal Act of 1966, and the Fur Seal Act Amendments of 1983.

## *I. INTRODUCTION: RUSSIAN ADMINISTRATION OF THE PRIBILOF ISLANDS*

### *The Fur Trade in the Far North*

The Pribilofs, which lie in the Bering Sea between the mainlands of Alaska and Siberia, include five islands: St. Paul, St. George, Walrus Island, Otter Island, and Sea Lion Rock. Foggy and windswept, the Pribilofs offered no natural harbors, and they remained uninhabited

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<sup>6</sup>*Hearings Before the Committee on Commerce on S. 2102* (89th Cong., 1st and 2d sess.), 1966, p. 10.

until Russians landed there during the late eighteenth century.<sup>7</sup>

The lucrative fur trade prompted Russian explorers to search the Bering Sea for the seal rookeries, where these animals migrated every spring and summer. By the 1780s, sea otters had been hunted nearly to extinction in the Far North, and seals had become the most important fur resource. Gerrassium Pribylov found the seal breeding grounds on the Pribilofs in 1786, and he quickly returned with 137 Aleuts from Atka and Unalaska.<sup>8</sup> For the next two centuries, the Pribilof Aleuts lived on St. Paul and St. George, the largest of the islands, where their labor became essential to the seal harvest, initially for the Russians, and then for the Americans.

In 1799, the Czar granted a trade monopoly to the Russian-American Company, a private firm. Headquartered in what is now Sitka, this fur-trading enterprise also had the authority to govern and protect the Russian Territory in the North Pacific. Two of its charters, issued in 1821 and 1844, declared the Aleuts and other Natives to be Russian subjects, and granted them citizenship.<sup>9</sup> According to one historian, the Russians relied on the Aleuts "increasingly for the functioning of their colony and in turn the Aleuts adopted many of the Russians' customs, most importantly, their religion."<sup>10</sup> During the 1830s, the Russian Orthodox church established

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<sup>7</sup>Dorothy Knee Jones, *A Century of Servitude: Pribilof Aleuts Under U.S. Rule* (Washington, D.C.: University Press of America, Inc., 1980), p. 1.

<sup>8</sup>Barbara Torrey, *Slaves of the Harvest: The Story of the Pribilof Aleuts* (St. Paul: Tanadgusix Corporation, 1978), pp. 41-53.

<sup>9</sup>Carlos A. Schwantes, *The Pacific Northwest: An Interpretive History* (Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 1989), p. 40; "Russian Administration of Alaska and the Status of the Alaska Natives," Senate Doc. 152 (81st Cong., 2d sess.), 1950, p. 11; Dorothy Knee Jones, *A Century of Servitude*, p. 4-5.

<sup>10</sup>Barbara Torrey, *Slaves of the Harvest*, p. 72.

schools on the islands.<sup>11</sup>

Under the Russian Administration, the Aleuts' economic status resembled that of serfs. Labor was in short supply in Russian America, and the company charters of 1821 and 1844 required half of the Aleut men in each village to work for the company for three years, usually for merchandise or scrip from the company store.<sup>12</sup> At first, the Russians allowed the Aleuts, who were recruited from Atka and Unalaska, to return to their homes after several years of harvesting seals in the Pribilofs. By the 1820s, however, the Russian-American Company had established permanent villages in the islands, forcing the Pribilof Aleuts to specialize in fur-trade activities.<sup>13</sup>

Sealing was a seasonal activity that took advantage of the annual migration of these animals to the Pribilofs. Islanders conducted their tasks, which included driving, slaughtering, and skinning the seals, mostly on the beach. According to a modern observer, the Aleuts were a "race of sea hunters, with great refinements of the skin boat and hunting weapons."<sup>14</sup> While other Aleuts continued to engage in pelagic hunting, however, Natives brought to the Pribilofs were largely consigned to working on land, particularly during the sealing season.<sup>15</sup>

The Russians recognized the Pribilof Aleuts' dependence on the seal harvest, and ensured

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<sup>11</sup>Dorothy Knee Jones, *A Century of Servitude*, p. 27.

<sup>12</sup>Dorothy Knee Jones, *A Century of Servitude*, p. 6.

<sup>13</sup>Barbara Torrey, *Slaves of the Harvest*, p. 55.

<sup>14</sup>Karla Josephson, "Use of the Sea by Alaska Natives: A Historical Perspective," (Anchorage: Arctic Environmental Information and Data Center, 1974), p. 3.

<sup>15</sup>Dorothy Knee Jones, *A Century of Servitude*, p. 8.

that Natives could take a variety of marine resources on the islands. Although Natives could not leave the Pribilofs without permission from the colonial authorities, the 1821 charter entitled them "to catch the sea animals and the wild beasts on these islands and places where they are living," specifying that "everything acquired by them in this way is their full property." The purpose of this provision was to enable the Aleuts "to procure food for themselves and their families."<sup>16</sup> As one Russian explained during the 1860s, the Aleuts needed "the right to hunt these creatures" to survive. According to him, "it would be strange to deprive the inhabitants of the coastal colonies of the right to the free use of the resources of their native sea, which God has given them for their own good!"<sup>17</sup> The reliance of Aleuts on marine resources prompted another Russian to observe the following:

An Aleut personally is not a slave, ... but if one looks more closely at his situation, one has to admit that he is a slave of his environment, in the full sense of the word. His free will is restricted by local conditions to such an extent that all his acts and all his rights are a result of most burdensome duties and are connected either with restrictions or deprivations.<sup>18</sup>

During the Russian Administration, the Pribilof Aleuts subsisted on seals, which provided meat, heating oil, and materials for constructing boats. Natives also harvested sea lions, halibut, and cod, and they made use of whales that became stranded on St. Paul and St. George each

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<sup>16</sup>Aleut Community of St. Paul Island, appellant v. United States, appellee, 480 F.2d 831 (1973), p. 836. See also Basil Dmytryshyn, ed., trans., *The Russian American Colonies, 1798-1867: A Documentary Record*, vol. 3 (Portland: Oregon Historical Society Press, 1989), pp. 363 and 471.

<sup>17</sup>Aleksandr F. Kashevarov, "A Description of Hunting and Conservation in the Russian American Colonies," March 9, 1862, in Basil Dmytryshyn, ed., trans., *The Russian American Colonies, 1798-1867: A Documentary Record*, vol. 3, pp. 521-523.

<sup>18</sup>"Russian Administration of Alaska and the Status of the Alaska Natives," Senate Doc. 152 (81st Cong., 2d sess.), 1950, p. 15.

year.<sup>19</sup> In addition, the islands' numerous bird populations -- which included murre, tufted puffins, and horned puffins -- supplied meat as well as skins for making parkas. Natives collected their eggs, preserving them in sea-lion fat for use throughout the year.<sup>20</sup> The seals, fish, and birds that the Aleuts took on the islands allowed them to remain in this remote region of the Bering Sea -- and their steady source of labor made the continuing fur-seal harvest possible.

### *The Sale of Alaska and the Treaty of Cession*

In negotiating the transfer of Alaska to the United States in 1867, the Russian government attempted to protect the rights of the Aleuts. The Treaty of Cession specified that as "civilized Tribes," the Aleuts were entitled to "all the rights, advantages and immunities of citizens of the United States, and shall be maintained and protected in the free enjoyment of their liberty, property, and religion."<sup>21</sup> As one historian has noted, however, the American government did not treat the Aleuts as citizens throughout the nineteenth and twentieth centuries, but as wards "who had to be taken care of."<sup>22</sup>

During the early years of U.S. occupation, the status of the Pribilof Aleuts was uncertain.

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<sup>19</sup>Barbara Torrey, *Slaves of the Harvest*, p. 59.

<sup>20</sup>Douglas W. Veltre and Mary J. Veltre, "A Preliminary Baseline Study of Subsistence Resource Utilization in the Pribilof Islands," Technical Paper Number 37, Alaska Department of Fish and Game, Division of Subsistence, October 15, 1981, p. 129.

<sup>21</sup>"Russian Administration of Alaska and the Status of the Alaska Natives," Senate Doc. 152 (81st Cong., 2d sess.), 1950, pp. 11-12; Aleut Community of St. Paul Island, appellant v. United States, appellee, 480 F.2d 831 (1973), p. 839.

<sup>22</sup>Barbara Torrey, *Slaves of the Harvest*, p. 103; see also p. 72.



The American government had not signed treaties with the Alaska Natives, and the Treaty of Cession did not address extinguishment of fee title in the Pribilofs.<sup>23</sup> Moreover, with the Russian-American Company ousted, Natives could sell seal skins competitively for the first time. Even so, traders harvested fur seals in prodigious numbers, ultimately endangering the Natives' livelihood. Throughout the nineteenth century, the Russian-American Company and the Pribilof Aleuts had practiced conservation measures to protect the fur-seal trade. These included killing only male seals at the prime age of two or three years, and setting seasons for harvesting. In 1867, the Pribilof seal herd numbered from two to five million animals, with the Russians harvesting approximately 20,000 animals per year. In 1868 -- one year after the purchase of Alaska -- hunters took 365,000 seals.<sup>24</sup> At this rate of harvest, the prospect for continued Native subsistence of the Pribilofs was not encouraging.

"It was not until the spring of 1871," noted one treasury agent, "that order was finally brought out of the confusion into which the fisheries had been thrown by the change in ownership." Arriving in the Pribilofs during March of 1869, he "had found the natives disorganized and terrified concerning their future, as irregularities practiced by the various parties who had raided the islands for seals in the previous year had threatened extermination

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<sup>23</sup>"Russian Administration of Alaska and the Status of the Alaska Natives," Senate Doc. 152 (81st Cong., 2d sess.), 1950, p. 13; Aleut Community of St. Paul Island, appellant v. United States, appellee, 480 F.2d 831 (1973), pp. 837 and 843.

<sup>24</sup>Barbara Torrey, *Slaves of the Harvest*, pp. 66 and 73-74; Dorothy Knee Jones, *A Century of Servitude*, pp. 8-9; Lorna May Buchanan, "History of the Fur Seal Industry of the Pribilof Islands," Master's Thesis, University of Washington, 1929, pp. 2 and 27-28. See also P.A. Tikhmenev, *A History of the Russian-American Company*, Richard A. Pierce and Alton S. Donnelly, trans. (Seattle: University of Washington Press, 1978), p. 409. This author claims that by the 1860s, the Russian harvests had averaged 76,000 per year.

both to islanders and to the seals."<sup>25</sup>

## II. *EARLY AMERICAN ADMINISTRATION OF THE PRIBILOF ISLANDS*

### *The Economic Significance of the Fur-Seal Herd*

The federal government became aware of the value of fur seals during the late 1860s, and this recognition influenced early administration of the Pribilofs. "With proper management," one visitor to St. Paul informed Secretary of State William H. Seward, "the island should be made to yield a handsome revenue to the government," which could endure "for years to come."<sup>26</sup> Furs, as noted, had become the "principal business of Alaska."<sup>27</sup>

Similarly, E. Lester Jones, Deputy Commissioner of Fisheries, described the Pribilof seal rookeries as "a valuable asset to the United States Government."<sup>28</sup> Numerous scientists recognized their economic potential. "Of all the treasures in Alaska," Professor George H. Parker of Harvard wrote in 1917, "the seals are probably the most valuable."<sup>29</sup> By 1925, the Bureau of Fisheries had regarded the Pribilof seals as "the most valuable fishery resource that any nation ever possessed."<sup>30</sup> So profitable was the fur-seal industry that within nine years of

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<sup>25</sup>Charles Bryant, "On the Fur Seal Islands," *The Century Magazine* 39 (April 1890), p. 902.

<sup>26</sup>Frank N. Wicker, "St. Paul's Island," Senate Ex. Doc. 50 (40th Cong., 2d sess.), 1868, p. 10.

<sup>27</sup>George P. Ihrie, "The Alaska Commercial Company," p. 94.

<sup>28</sup>E. Lester Jones, *Report of Alaska Investigations in 1914* (Washington, D.C.: Government Printing Office (GPO), 1915), p. 124.

<sup>29</sup>G.H. Parker quoted in Isobel Wylie Hutchison, *Stepping Stones From Alaska to Asia* (London: Blackie and Son Limited, 1937), p. 99.

<sup>30</sup>John J. Underwood, *Alaska: An Empire in the Making*, p. 258.

the purchase of Alaska, it had yielded the government more than \$1,700,000 through collection of taxes and rent.<sup>31</sup> By the 1880s, the profits had reached approximately \$4 million, more than double the purchase price of the Territory.<sup>32</sup> In the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, London remained the largest market for the skins.<sup>33</sup>

### *Nineteenth-Century Legislation*

Visitors to the Pribilofs recognized the need for federal protection of this new resource. In 1868, one observer urged "strict regulations, similar to those adopted by the Russians," to prevent "indiscriminate slaughter."<sup>34</sup> The following year, Congress established St. Paul and St. George as "a special reservation for government purposes," making it "unlawful for any person to land or remain on either of said islands, except by the authority of the Secretary of the Treasury."<sup>35</sup>

Federal officials also noted the need to maintain and protect the Natives that supplied the labor for the harvest. "The fisheries can be preserved," observed Special Agent McLean in 1869, while "the natives have occupation and support," and "the Government derive a large revenue from them." That year, another special agent to the Treasury Department had

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<sup>31</sup>House Rep. 623 (44th Cong., 1st sess.), 1876, p. 19.

<sup>32</sup>Hubert Howe Bancroft, *History of Alaska*, pp. 637-638.

<sup>33</sup>Lorna May Buchanan, "History of the Fur Seal Industry of the Pribilof Islands," pp. 91-92.

<sup>34</sup>Frank N. Wicker, "St. Paul's Island," Senate Ex. Doc. 50 (40th Cong., 2d sess.), 1868, p. 10.

<sup>35</sup>George P. Sanger, ed., *Statutes at Large, Treaties, and Proclamations of the United States of America From December, 1867 To March, 1869* (Boston: Little, Brown, and Company, 1869), p. 348.

recommended "the passage of a bill authorizing the Secretary of the Treasury to employ the natives residing on the islands in killing the fur-seal and curing the skins, paying them therefor good, liberal prices, in goods, which shall be sent to the islands...." Moreover, only Pribilof Natives were to engage in the harvest, while "Aleutians from the adjacent islands or mainland should not be employed in killing the fur-seal."<sup>36</sup> The Pribilof Aleuts' ability to make a living from marine resources would thus be assured.

Other representatives of the Treasury Department suggested in 1869 that the government address not only the protection of the fur-seal harvest but also "the comfortable support of the natives dependent on its products for a livelihood."<sup>37</sup> That year, Secretary of the Treasury H. McCulloch noted that St. Paul and St. George supported "some 200 natives, whose sole subsistence has been drawn heretofore from the proceeds of seal-hunting and the supplies furnished by the Fur Company in exchange for the skins." He concluded that "unless the government shall intervene to relieve them they will inevitably starve from destitution and starvation," suggesting that the United States "issue rations and clothing so far as may be necessary."<sup>38</sup>

Similarly, a Treasury Department official explained in 1869 that "In placing these people upon the seal islands [Pribilofs], Russia assumed the duty of supporting, protecting, and civilizing them; and with the privileges and immunities which we have purchased, this duty has

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<sup>36</sup>House Misc. Doc. 11 (41st Cong. 2d sess.), 1869, pp. 2-3.

<sup>37</sup>House Doc. 36 (41st Cong., 2d sess.), 1869, p. 17.

<sup>38</sup>Senate Ex. Doc. 43 (40th Cong., 3d sess.), 1869, p. 2.

become ours."<sup>39</sup> Accordingly, early legislation involving the Pribilofs outlined federal responsibilities in protecting the Natives' ability to use the marine resources of the islands.

In 1870, Congress passed further regulations on sealing in the Pribilofs, including the "waters adjacent thereto." Harvesting was limited to June, July, September, and October, and kills could not exceed 75,000 per year on St. Paul and 25,000 per year on St. George. Only adult male seals could be taken, and the act prevented the use of firearms for sealing. This legislation, designed to prevent the extermination of fur-bearing animals in Alaska, accorded the Secretary of the Treasury the right to control the seal trade, and allowed this official to lease the right to take these animals for 20-year terms.<sup>40</sup> The government could then collect rent and taxes from the seal harvest.<sup>41</sup>

In addition to protecting fur seals, the Act of 1870 established the federal government's interest in the welfare of Pribilof Aleuts. This statute became the first in a series of statutes granting "broad authority to provide for the Aleuts in every respect."<sup>42</sup> Section 1 of this legislation allowed islanders "the privilege of killing such young seals as may be necessary for their own food and clothing," and "such old seals as may be required for their own clothing and for the manufacture of boats for their own use." Moreover, sections 4 and 6 made the

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<sup>39</sup>Quoted in David Starr Jordan, *Seal and Salmon Fisheries and General Resources of Alaska*, vol. 1 (Washington, D.C.: GPO, 1898), p. 13.

<sup>40</sup>George P. Sanger, ed., *Statutes at Large, Treaties, and Proclamations of the United States of America From December, 1869 To March, 1871* (Boston: Little, Brown, and Company, 1869), p. 180; Aleut Community of St. Paul Island, appellant v. United States, appellee, 480 F.2d 831 (1973), p. 839.

<sup>41</sup>House Rep. 623 (44th Cong., 1st sess.), 1876, p. 19.

<sup>42</sup>House Rep. 2154 (89th Cong., 2d sess.), 1966, p. 3630.

Secretary of the Treasury responsible "for the comfort, maintenance, education, and protection of the natives."<sup>43</sup>

These passages demonstrate the relationship between the protection of the fur-seal herd and concern for the welfare of Pribilof Aleuts. They also indicate the federal government's recognition of the Natives' dependence on fishing and seal hunting.<sup>44</sup> Federal actions throughout the nineteenth and twentieth centuries would affirm the obligations set forth in the legislation passed in 1870.<sup>45</sup> Although partly motivated by humanitarian concern, federal government officials also recognized that "natives were needed for the success of the seal fur trade, whoever owned the seals." Hence, "their well being was assured by the Government."<sup>46</sup> As one historian commented, "the Aleuts were inextricably linked with the fur seals in the minds of Congress," and "even in the minds of the Aleuts themselves."<sup>47</sup>

The Alaska Commercial Company, which assumed the first 20-year lease in the Pribilofs in 1870, acknowledged this connection as well. In 1870, the acting Secretary of the Treasury granted the San Francisco-based company exclusive rights to take fur seals on the islands. At that point, this enterprise assumed responsibility for providing the Pribilof Aleuts with essential supplies, including dried salmon, firewood, and "a sufficient quantity of salt and barrels for

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<sup>43</sup>Aleut Community of St. Paul Island, appellant v. United States, appellee, 480 F.2d 831 (1973), p. 839.

<sup>44</sup>Aleut Community of St. Paul Island, appellant v. United States, appellee, 480 F.2d 831 (1973), p. 839.

<sup>45</sup>U.S. Congress, Senate, Committee on Commerce, *Hearings of H.R. 9602 and S. 2102* (89th Cong., 2d sess.), February 18, 1966, p. 10.

<sup>46</sup>Aleut Community of St. Paul Island, appellant v. United States, appellee, 480 F.2d 831 (1973), p. 841.

<sup>47</sup>Barbara Torrey, *Slaves of the Harvest*, p. 75.

preserving the necessary supply of meat." The federal government also required the company to maintain a school, and to restrict the use of alcohol to medicinal purposes. By the mid-1870s, the Alaska Commercial Company had voluntarily constructed frame houses to replace the Aleuts' traditional sod and grass dwellings, called *barabaras*. It also supported widows and orphans, and employed a doctor on each island.<sup>48</sup>

Like the work performed under the Russian Administration, the Natives' tasks in the seal harvest included driving, slaughtering, and skinning the animals. For this labor, they received 40 cents per skin, which the Alaska Commercial Company considered to be "good wages." The Pribilof Aleuts "are quite prosperous," reported one official in 1876. "They have saved up a considerable amount of money," amounting in St. Paul to \$42,681 and in St. George to \$8,630. He explained that "We have done this because it was to our interest to do it. They are our laborers, and we want them to be in good condition to labor. We desire to improve their condition in every way."<sup>49</sup>

During the term of the lease, the federal government maintained a strong interest in ensuring that the Alaska Commercial Company fulfilled its obligations to the Pribilof Aleuts. The Treasury Department dispatched field agents to supervise the harvests on St. Paul and St. George, issuing the following instructions:

treat the inhabitants of the islands with the utmost kindness, and endeavor to preserve amicable relations with them. Force is never to be used against them, except in defense of life, or to prevent the wanton destruction of valuable property. The agents and servants of the company are expected to instruct the native people in household economy,

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<sup>48</sup>Lorna May Buchanan, "History of the Fur Seal Industry in the Pribilof Islands," pp. 36-37; Dorothy Knee Jones, *A Century of Servitude*, p. 16.

<sup>49</sup>House Rep. 623 (44th Cong., 1st sess.), 1876, pp. 30-35.

and by precept and example illustrate to them the principles and benefits of a higher civilization.<sup>50</sup>

In 1876, the House Committee of Ways and Means investigated the Alaska Commercial Company, to determine whether it had complied with the "provisions, regulations, and limitations" of the Act of 1870. Stemming from attacks by rival bidders for the lease, the hearing addressed the treatment of the Pribilof Aleuts as well as the management of the fur-seal herd.<sup>51</sup>

This inquiry involved the testimony of Henry W. Elliott, an artist who had studied the islands' seal populations extensively for the Smithsonian Institution as well as for the Treasury Department. The Committee questioned whether "this arrangement not only preserves the seals and seal-fisheries, and therefore, the trade and revenues of the United States, but that it is really a benefit to the natives." Elliott answered that "It is unquestionably a benefit to the natives. Their physical condition has been improved vastly from what it used to be." Additional inquiries addressed the Pribilof Aleuts' living conditions, focusing on heating fuel, supplies, and schools. The Committee thus recognized the federal government's responsibilities for the welfare of islanders. Members asked whether the Natives "seem to be comfortable" and wondered if the arrangement with the Alaska Commercial Company "had proved to be advantageous to the people." As the Committee pointed out, the law required the company "to look after those people, and to exercise a kind of paternal government for their moral

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<sup>50</sup>Hubert Howe Bancroft, *History of Alaska*, pp. 639-640.

<sup>51</sup>House Rep. 623 (44th Cong., 1st sess.), 1876.



improvement," as well as their "physical condition."<sup>52</sup>

The hearing exonerated the Alaska Commercial Company of the charges of rival bidders in 1876. Attacks on the company continued, however, prompting additional congressional investigations in 1888. That hearing, conducted by the Committee on Merchant Marine and Fisheries, included the testimony of an assistant agent stationed at St. George. "I thought that I was placed there to see to the wants of the people," he reported, "and to advance them in civilization, and to correct their morals, etc., as best I could; and I considered it was also my duty as well to do that as to count the seal skins."<sup>53</sup>

As in the hearing of 1876, the Committee in 1888 asked whether the islanders remained "comfortable." Members again inquired about the Pribilof Aleuts' living conditions, including food, clothing, housing, and education. They also asked about wages and the cost of supplies, indicating an interest in the Aleuts' ability to make a living.<sup>54</sup>

Like the earlier hearings, the investigation of 1888 cleared the Alaska Commercial Company of charges that it had violated the terms of the lease. Even so, when the agreement expired in 1890, the Treasury Department awarded the new contract to the North American Commercial Company, the highest bidder. The second lease required more support of the Natives than the original agreement, charging the company with care of widows, orphans, and the infirm as well as the provision of medical care, rent-free housing, and the construction of a church building. Moreover, the government reserved the right to set the Aleuts' wages,

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<sup>52</sup>House Rep. 623 (44th Cong., 1st sess.), 1876, pp. 12, 30, 79, 82-84, 96-108.

<sup>53</sup>T.F. Ryan, House Rep. 3883 (50th Cong., 2d sess.), January 29, 1889, p. 214.

<sup>54</sup>House Rep. 3883 (50th Cong., 2d sess.), January 29, 1889, pp. 264-267.

raising their pay to 50 cents per skin.<sup>55</sup> In the early 1890s, then, the Treasury Department's responsibilities toward the Pribilof Aleuts increased. "The care and welfare of the natives," the agents' instructions for 1891 read, "are matters which should receive your careful attention, and among your most important duties is the insistence that the North American Commercial Company shall fulfill all the obligations of their lease towards these people."<sup>56</sup>

In 1891, the Treasury Department began referring to Pribilof Aleuts as "wards."<sup>57</sup> Seven years later, one federal official suggested that "the Government should limit the number of seals to be killed each year" in part "to protect the natives," who depended on these animals.<sup>58</sup> Similarly, in 1912, a fisheries official asserted that "The natives of the islands are in a sense wards of the Government, and it costs something to keep them. There are about 300 of them, and we are under obligations to look after them. They are maintained by the Government, but they give value received for what the Government does for them."<sup>59</sup> Throughout the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, Treasury and Commerce Department officials used this term to describe Pribilof Aleuts.<sup>60</sup>

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<sup>55</sup>Dorothy Knee Jones, *A Century of Servitude*, pp. 36 and 39. In 1906, the government increased this amount to 75 cents.

<sup>56</sup>Copy of Instructions, Pribilof Islands Agent Logbook, St. George, May 27, 1891, Record Group (RG) 22, National Archives and Federal Records Center, Alaska Region, Anchorage.

<sup>57</sup>David Starr Jordan, *Seal and Salmon Fisheries and General Resources of Alaska*, vol. 1., p. 308; see also Dorothy Knee Jones, *A Century of Servitude*, pp. 44-45.

<sup>58</sup>E.C. Jordan, "Document K," *Seal and Salmon Fisheries and General Resources of Alaska*, vol. 1, 1898, p. 1, Fredericka Martin Papers, Box 9, Accession No. 94-129, File: 1869 Agent, University of Alaska, Fairbanks.

<sup>59</sup>Barton W. Evermann, Hearings Before the Committee on Foreign Affairs of the House of Representatives, January 3 and 4, 1912, in *Alaska Fur-Seal Fisheries: Miscellaneous Hearings, 1910-1923*, p. 47.

<sup>60</sup>U.S. Attorney quoted in Dorothy Knee Jones, *A Century of Servitude*, p. 45.

Attempts to protect and provide for the Pribilof Aleuts resulted in a high level of control over the Natives. During the term of the North American Commercial Company's lease, the federal government granted an annual appropriation of \$19,500 to supplement the Pribilof Aleuts' pay, owing to decreases in the allowable harvest. Government agents allocated this money, which could be used only for purposes that they considered appropriate. They also determined many aspects of the Aleuts' personal lives, including whom they could marry. As late as 1938, Agent John W. Lipke noted that "So far as we know, no St. Paul man has married an outside native woman without the approval of the Seattle office."<sup>61</sup> According to one historian, "the assumption of this control over the most basic choices in life was not relinquished by the federal government until the 1950s."<sup>62</sup>

### *The Use of Marine Resources*

In providing for the Pribilof Aleuts, the government ensured that the Natives could continue to make use of the islands' marine resources, recognizing, as noted, that their survival depended on it. According to Fredericka Martin, a long-time observer of Aleut culture, islanders "looked always to the sea and its creatures, fish and fowl, whale and walrus, sea lion and otter, fur seal and hair seal, to provide them food, clothing, heat, light, weapons, material for boats and shelters."<sup>63</sup> Treasury Department officials remained aware of this point, claiming

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<sup>61</sup>Letter, Agent John W. Lipke to H.J. Christoffers, October 31, 1938; see also Superintendent to H.A. Peterson, January 24, 1933, RG 22, National Marine Service Pribilof Islands Program 1923-1969, File: Agent -- St. Paul, National Archives, Alaska Region, Anchorage.

<sup>62</sup>Barbara Torrey, *Slaves of the Harvest*, p. 96. See also Dorothy Knee Jones, *A Century of Servitude*, p. 39.

<sup>63</sup>Fredericka Martin, *Sea Bears: The Story of the Fur Seal* (New York: Chilton Company, 1960), p. 39.

as early as 1869 that Pribilof Aleuts' "food is chiefly seal meat, and at certain seasons fish, as well as water fowl in small quantities."<sup>64</sup>

During the late nineteenth century, agents stationed on the Pribilofs themselves relied on the islands' animals. One of them explained to Libby Beaman, who had traveled to St. Paul in 1879, that while the company store could provide staples, "We depend on the wildlife right there for the rest of our diet." She discovered that "Both the natives and white people eat the flesh of the seal, which is very tasty."<sup>65</sup>

Throughout the late nineteenth and twentieth centuries, this animal remained the principal food on the Pribilofs. In 1881, artist Henry W. Elliott noted that the village of St. Paul consumed 500 pounds of seal meat per day the year round, averaging nearly 600 pounds per person during the year.<sup>66</sup> A government report in 1914 explained how the government calculated the Aleuts' yearly fur-seal needs. In one month, an eight-person family consumed either 14 fresh seal carcasses, available only 8 months out of the year, or 7 salted ones. The agent in charge, in consultation with the Aleuts' chief, concluded that St. Paul's population of 192 was entitled to 3,360 seal carcasses per year, with St. George entitled to half that number.<sup>67</sup>

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<sup>64</sup>House Doc. 36 (41st Cong., 2d sess.), 1869, p. 12.

<sup>65</sup>Betty John, ed., *Libby: The Alaskan Diaries and Letters of Libby Beaman, 1879-1880* (Boston: Houghton Mifflin Company, 1989), pp. 61 and 124. Libby Beaman's observations about the dependence of islanders on marine wildlife are similar to those found in government reports of the late nineteenth century.

<sup>66</sup>Henry W. Elliott, *The Seal-Islands of Alaska* (Washington, D.C.: GPO, 1881), p. 22. See also Douglas W. Veltre and Mary J. Veltre, "A Preliminary Baseline Study of Subsistence Resource Utilization in the Pribilof Islands," p. 76.

<sup>67</sup>Wilfred H. Osgood, Edward A. Preble, and George H. Parker, *The Fur Seals and Other Life of the Pribilof Islands, Alaska, in 1914* (Washington, D.C.: GPO, 1915), p. 142.

After summer and fall harvests, Aleuts dried the meat for use during the winter months -- a process that, according to Elliott, rendered it "most tender and toothsome."<sup>68</sup> As the success of the fur industry demonstrated, seal skins were also highly prized for their value as clothing.

Harvesting young seals, or pups, was an important activity for the Pribilof Aleuts -- and the legislation of 1870 allowed the Natives these animals for their own use. During the late nineteenth century, government agents kept extensive lists of pup-seal harvests, noting the distribution among Native families.<sup>69</sup> By the early 1890s, however, the Treasury Department had questioned this practice, arguing that "Every little seal that the natives take if not killed, would have the same chances as the rest to return the following year, and in time, become a source of revenue to the Government." Moreover, the skins of pup seals proved to be of "little value."<sup>70</sup> In 1891, the government prohibited killing young seals for conservation purposes. Pribilof Aleuts protested this change in policy, explaining that the "pup seals are our chicken meat, and we used to be allowed to kill 3,000 or 4,000 male pups every year in November."<sup>71</sup> In 1898, the agent on St. George recorded that the Natives appealed to the territorial governor to allow them to take pups for food.<sup>72</sup> In the issue of harvesting pups, economic considerations

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<sup>68</sup>House Doc. 175 (54th Cong., 1st sess.), 1896, p. 117.

<sup>69</sup>See, for example, Pup Seal Distribution List dated 1887, Microfilm Reel 2, A3303, National Archives and Federal Records Center, Alaska Region, Anchorage.

<sup>70</sup>Pribilof Islands Agent Logbook, St. George, July 14, 1891, RG 22, National Archives and Federal Records Center, Alaska Region, Anchorage.

<sup>71</sup>David Starr Jordan, *Seal and Salmon Fisheries and General Resources of Alaska*, vol. 2, p. 102.

<sup>72</sup>Pribilof Islands Agent Logbook, St. George, August 22, 1898, RG 22, National Archives and Federal Records Center, Alaska Region, Anchorage.

seemed to drive the management of the seal herd.

As one Pribilof Aleut pointed out in 1898, the islanders could not "subsist on seal meat alone."<sup>73</sup> Libby Beaman indicated that they also ate sea-lion meat, which she preferred to seal, "because it can be prepared just like good beef."<sup>74</sup> Elliott agreed with this assessment, writing in 1881 that "the superiority of the sea-lion meat over that of the fur seal is decidedly marked." He reported extensive use of the sea lion by Pribilof Aleuts:

This animal supplies them with its hide, mustaches, flesh, fat, sinews, and intestines, which they make up into as many necessary garments, dishes, etc. They have abundant reason to treasure its skins highly, for it is the covering to their neat bidarkies and bidarrahs, the former being the small kyak of Bering Sea, while the latter is a boat of all work, exploration, and transportation. These skins are unhaired by sweating in a pile: then they are deftly sewed and carefully stretched while green, over a light keel and frame of wood, making a perfectly water-tight boat that will stand, uninjured, the softening influence of water for a day or two at a time, if properly air dried and oiled.

Elliott also observed that the islanders used the dried intestines of sea lions as containers for oil and meat.<sup>75</sup>

In addition to seals and sea lions, Pribilof Aleuts harvested a variety of fish. One British visitor to St. Paul observed in the early 1890s that "cod and halibut were hanging before many of the natives' houses." These "had been taken less than 3 miles from St. Paul Island, and between it and Otter Island." As he explained, "natives went out fishing every fine Sunday, and, in fact, every day they were not engaged on work for either the Government or the

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<sup>73</sup>David Starr Jordan, *Seal and Salmon Fisheries and General Resources of Alaska*, vol. 1, p. 15.

<sup>74</sup>Betty John, ed., *Libby: The Alaskan Diaries and Letters of Libby Beaman, 1879-1880*, p. 124.

<sup>75</sup>House Doc. 175 (54th Cong., 1st sess.), 1896, pp. 115-117.

Company, and good catches of fish were invariably made."<sup>76</sup> Elliott, too, reported in 1896 that "The St. George natives manage to secure a good many cod and halibut." In his estimation, however, St. Paul residents had "very poor luck fishing."<sup>77</sup>

Agent logbooks throughout the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries include frequent references to Natives fishing for their own use, occasionally recording "large catches."<sup>78</sup> Wilfred H. Osgood and other scientists explained in a report printed in 1915 that "Since early times the natives of the Pribilof Islands have obtained a part of their subsistence by fishing." Islanders in fact harvested a large number of cod, halibut, and sculpins, with a "high aggregate food value." According to this report, the fishing season extended from summer through December. Its authors described fishing locations and methods as follows:

The place usually resorted to by the people of St. Paul is a mile or two off East Landing, where both cod and halibut are taken. Off St. George there are two principal fishing banks, one about 3 miles to the eastward of the village landing, and about half a mile from shore where only cod are taken; the other is 2 miles west of the village, and about half a mile from shore where only cod are taken; the other is 2 miles west of the village, and half a mile from shore, and here the principal catch is halibut. This species is said to be seldom caught here during the winter. *It is probable that other fishing banks await discovery* [italics added]. In former years the natives fished largely or entirely from their small skin boats or bidarkas, but they have now entirely abandoned the use of this craft, in the management of which their ancestors were so proficient, and now fish only from large rowboats.<sup>79</sup>

This passage could indicate an assumption that Pribilof Aleuts would find additional fishing

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<sup>76</sup>*Fur Seal Arbitration: Proceedings of the Tribunal of Arbitration*, vol. 8 (Washington, D.C.: GPO, 1895), p. 493.

<sup>77</sup>House Doc. 175 (54th Cong., 1st sess.), 1896, p. 118.

<sup>78</sup>See, for example, Pribilof Islands Agent Logbook, St. Paul, August 5, 1911 and December 10, 1897, RG 22, National Archives and Federal Records Center, Alaska Region.

<sup>79</sup>Wilfred H. Osgood, et al., *The Fur Seals and Other Life of the Pribilof Islands, Alaska, in 1914*, pp. 125-126.

spots, and a recognition that harvesting methods would continue to develop.

Osgood also suggested that Pribilof Island fisheries could produce higher yields. Fog and storms, however, "prevented this industry from being prosecuted to the extent that the abundance of fishes probably warrants." That the report appeared as a Senate document in 1915 demonstrates that Congress was aware of these points as well. Its discussion of fishing ended with the recommendation that the government provisions delivered to the Pribilofs -- including 4,000 pounds of canned and salted salmon, along with other preserved meats -- could be "materially reduced by better utilizing the resources of the sea." The report concluded that "it seems certain that in the more systematic development of the resources of the islands which is demanded, the fisheries will prove of considerable value."<sup>80</sup> Fishing continued as an important activity in the Pribilofs. During the 1930s, for example, government officials reported that islanders took small motor boats "two or three miles from shore" for "fishing operations."<sup>81</sup>

Nor was fishing in the Pribilofs limited to halibut, cod, and sculpins. According to Elliott, the Aleuts harvested "a fine table crab, large, fat, and sweet" during May and June. Moreover, they relished sea urchins, considering them to be "a great delicacy." Native women on St. Paul and St. George gathered these echinoderms during the spring and summer.<sup>82</sup> Observers during the 1940s noted that islanders continued to harvest sea urchins.<sup>83</sup>

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<sup>80</sup>Wilfred H. Osgood, et al., *The Fur Seals and Other Life of the Pribilof Islands, Alaska, in 1914*, pp. 125-126.

<sup>81</sup>Superintendent to Treasury Department, February 6, 1933, RG 22, Box 2, National Marine Fisheries Service Pribilof Islands Program, 1923-1969, National Archives and Federal Records Center, Alaska Region, Anchorage.

<sup>82</sup>House Doc. 175 (54th Cong., 1st sess.), 1896, pp. 118-119.

<sup>83</sup>Lyman R. Ellsworth, *Guys on Ice* (New York: David McKay Company, Inc., 1952), pp. 271-272.



The Pribilof Aleuts' diet also included numerous sea birds and their eggs. So abundant was this resource that Elliott described it as "unlimited." Among the birds harvested from May to November were the *choochkies*, "plump little auks" [least auklets] caught with hand scoops or dip nets. "Their tiny, rotund forms," Elliott wrote, "make pies of rare, savory virtue, and they are also baked, roasted, and stewed in every conceivable shape."<sup>84</sup>

In addition, islanders harvested murre, guillemots, and gulls. Cormorants were especially important, for these were often the only sea birds that remained on the islands during the "terrible storms" of February and March.<sup>85</sup> Like Elliott, Libby Beaman described large numbers of these animals during her two-year stay at St. Paul. In 1879, she reported that "Millions of seabirds wheeled into the sky from every nook and cranny of the cliffs," creating a "deafening" noise. When the seal meat spoiled during a mild winter, birds and canned salmon "held the natives through the difficult period until the seals appeared."<sup>86</sup>

According to Beaman, sea-bird eggs were widely consumed. During a day excursion to Walrus Island, she observed Natives gathering "two tons of eggs in a few hours."<sup>87</sup> Similarly, agents described Aleuts returning from Walrus Island in boats "loaded with Murre eggs."<sup>88</sup>

Additional animals harvested on the Pribilofs included white and blue foxes. The federal

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<sup>84</sup>House Doc. 175 (54th Cong., 1st sess.), 1896, p. 120.

<sup>85</sup>Henry W. Elliott, *The Seal-Islands of Alaska*, p. 131.

<sup>86</sup>Betty John, ed., *Libby: The Alaskan Diaries and Letters of Libby Beaman, 1879-1880*, pp. 63, 67, and 143.

<sup>87</sup>Betty John, ed., *Libby: The Alaskan Diaries and Letters of Libby Beaman, 1879-1880*, p. 103.

<sup>88</sup>See, for example, Pribilof Islands Agent Logbooks, St. Paul, June 15, 1907, RG 22, National Archives and Federal Records Center, Alaska Region.

government paid the Aleuts to trap these animals, introduced during the Russian Administration, to sell for their furs. According to one agent, the skins provided "an important source of income to the natives."<sup>89</sup> Island foxes fed on sea birds and their eggs, as well as seal meat, which Natives sometimes set out for them during winter months.<sup>90</sup>

As these sources demonstrate, Pribilof Aleuts relied extensively on the marine resources of the islands to supplement government and company supplies. Natives also used these resources in lieu of cash, exchanging seal skins for goods and using trapped animals for barter. Government officials were aware that the Pribilof Aleuts relied on marine resources not only for sustenance but also to make a living.<sup>91</sup> The fur harvest remained the sole industry on the islands, providing the only available employment. Furthermore, the remoteness of the Pribilofs, as well as government restrictions regarding commerce on the islands, reduced the potential for additional economic opportunities.

In 1886, Elliott suggested the impracticality of activities other than those based on marine resources. Owing to the severe weather, agriculture was difficult to sustain. "A great many attempts have been made," he explained, "to raise a few of the hardy vegetables" on St. Paul and St. George. "With the exception of growing lettuce, turnips, and radishes on the Island of St. Paul, nothing has been or can be done." Moreover, the stock animals that steamers brought

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<sup>89</sup>Pribilof Islands Agent Logbook, St. Paul, May 2, 1897 [DATE IS NEARLY ILLEGIBLE.], and January 2, 1900, RG 22, National Archives and Federal Records Center, Alaska Region.

<sup>90</sup>James Judge, "The Blue Foxes of the Pribilof Islands," November 3, 1918, pp. 1-3, RG 22, Box 57, National Marine Fisheries Service -- Pribilof Islands Program, 1923-1969, Misc. Letters, National Archives and Federal Records Center, Alaska Region.

<sup>91</sup>Betty John, ed., *The Alaskan Diaries and Letters of Libby Beaman, 1879-1880*, p. 176.

to the islands each spring had to be killed by winter. Poultry raising, too, proved to be "a complete failure on the islands."<sup>92</sup> Moreover, the Pribilof Aleuts could not live on the food imported by the federal government -- including sweet crackers, butter, onions, and potatoes -- that supplemented their diet.<sup>93</sup>

This problem continued into the early twentieth century. In 1924, another observer explained that the Pribilofs featured "a tundra soil, a swampy soil, a heavy, sour soil, and they do not really get sunlight enough to do anything in the vegetable line."<sup>94</sup> Attempts to ship fresh eggs to the Pribilofs similarly failed.<sup>95</sup> As one twentieth-century Aleut recalled, "Good thing we had sea lions and ducks and sea gulls around the island, otherwise we would starve."<sup>96</sup> Another Native complained to an agent that "the return for work was insufficient to keep him and his family in proper food," announcing that "he expected to go shooting whenever he could find anything edible to shoot at."<sup>97</sup> Marine resources, then, sustained Pribilof Aleuts, and their availability helped the government maintain a steady labor force on the islands, ensuring the

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<sup>92</sup>House Doc. 175 (54th Cong., 1st sess.), 1896, p. 119; Henry W. Elliott, *An Arctic Province: Alaska and the Seal Islands* (London: Sampson, Low, Marston, Searle & Rivington, 1886), p. 204.

<sup>93</sup>House Doc. 175 (54th Cong., 1st sess.), 1896, p. 119. See also Douglas W. Veltre and Mary J. Veltre, "A Preliminary Baseline Study of Subsistence Resource Utilization in the Pribilof Islands," p. 76.

<sup>94</sup>U.S. Congress, Senate, Committee on Commerce, *Hearing on S. 2122* (68th Cong., 1st sess.), February 25, 1924, p. 13.

<sup>95</sup>Letter, Superintendent to Agent, January 20, 1939, RG 22, Box 7, National Marine Fisheries Service -- Pribilof Islands Program, 1923-1969, File: Agent, St. Paul, 1935-1939, National Archives, Alaska Region, Anchorage.

<sup>96</sup>Quoted in Dorothy Knee Jones, *A Century of Servitude*, p. 71.

<sup>97</sup>Pribilof Islands Agent Logbook, St. Paul, January 31, 1917, RG 22, National Archives and Federal Records Center, Alaska Region.

success of the fur-seal industry.

### *III. FEDERAL CONTROL OF THE PRIBILOF ISLANDS*

#### *Pelagic Sealing and Conservation Measures*

During the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, an alarming decline in seal populations prompted federal officials to secure a firmer hold on the management and administration of the fur rookeries. As noted, when the U.S. acquired Alaska, the seal population numbered from two to five million. By the early twentieth century, it had dropped to approximately 130,000 animals, mostly owing to hunting on the open sea -- an activity that took a disproportionate number of females.<sup>98</sup> For the most part, however, federal efforts to protect the fur seals continued to allow the Pribilof Aleuts' use of these and other marine resources.

This decimation of the seal herd coincided with the depletion of wildlife populations in the Lower 48. During the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, large-scale commercial harvests led to the extinction of the passenger pigeon and the near-extinction of the buffalo. The alarming decline of species that were once abundant helped prompt the rise of the conservation movement. Proponents worried that the fur seal, like the passenger pigeon and the buffalo, was fast approaching "extermination."<sup>99</sup> This fear fueled calls for protecting the marine life of the

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<sup>98</sup>Francis Riley, *Fur Seal Industry of the Pribilof Islands*, Fishery Leaflet 516, May 1961, RG 370, Pribilof Islands Program 1940-1992, File: Fur Seals, National Archives, Alaska Region, Anchorage; Dorothy Knee Jones, *A Century of Servitude*, p. 51; Barbara Torrey, *Slaves of the Harvest*, p. 107.

<sup>99</sup>House Rep. 451 (54th Cong., 1st sess.), February 28, 1896, pp. 1-2. See also John F. Reiger, *American Sportsmen and the Origins of Conservation*, rev. ed. (Norman: University of Oklahoma Press, 1986).

Aleutian Islands in general and the Pribilofs in particular. As William T. Hornaday, one of the nation's leading conservationists, explained, "You see on these islands the remnant of a mighty marine resource." To his mind, this remnant was well worth saving.<sup>100</sup>

Government profits from the seal harvest decreased as the population declined. Between 1870 and 1890 -- the period of the first lease -- the Alaska Commercial Company obtained its annual quotas of 100,000 skins, and the Treasury Department collected \$6 million from the seal harvest. In contrast, the government received only \$46,749 in 1891 and \$23,972 in 1892. The House Committee on Ways and Means worried in 1896 that "the Treasury is being deprived of a very valuable source of revenue by the operators of the pelagic sealers."<sup>101</sup>

In addition to American sealers, hunters of several nationalities, including Canadian, Russian, and Japanese, contributed to this problem. An estimated 60 to 80 percent of the pelagic catch was comprised of females, which the Pribilof Aleuts did not harvest.<sup>102</sup> According to one Treasury Department agent on St. Paul, much of their sealing occurred in U.S. territorial waters. "The natives," he reported, "are eager to protect our property in seals and [to prevent] an invasion of our territory."<sup>103</sup>

To prevent this "brutal and wasteful killing at sea," the U.S. enacted a number of restrictions. In 1891, for instance, the federal government signed an agreement with Great

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<sup>100</sup>William T. Hornaday, Hearings Before the Committee on Conservation of National Resources, United States Senate on the Bill S. 9959, 1911, in *Alaska Fur-Seal Fisheries: Miscellaneous Hearings, 1910-1923*, p. 4.

<sup>101</sup>House Rep. 451 (54th Cong., 1st sess.), February 20, 1896, pp. 1-2.

<sup>102</sup>Wilfred H. Osgood, et al., *The Fur Seals and Other Life of The Pribilof Islands, Alaska, in 1914*, p. 22.

<sup>103</sup>Pribilof Islands Agent Logbook, St. Paul, July 1, 1907, RG 22, National Archives and Federal Records Center, Alaska Region.

Britain prohibiting British subjects from sealing in the eastern section of the Bering Sea. Two years later, a Tribunal of Arbitration in Paris issued a set of sealing regulations subject to reexamination at five-year intervals. These regulations established a closed season on sealing from May 1 to August 1, which was supplemented by a prohibition of pelagic sealing in a 60-mile radius around the Pribilof Islands. Congress implemented these regulations in 1894.<sup>104</sup> The 60-mile "protected zone" was to allow female seals to feed on the fish of the Bering Sea in safety. Later, Hornaday observed that although the seals migrated 2,000 miles each year, "the greatest killing is done around the islands" as well as along the Pacific Coast. Thus, advocates of seal protection turned their attention to the area surrounding the Pribilofs, where the animals concentrated during breeding season.<sup>105</sup>

The regulations proved to be ineffective, however, and seal hunting on the open sea increased during the first year of implementation. By 1897, Congress had passed a law preventing American citizens from pelagic sealing at any time or place. During this period of restrictions, however, the government continued to allow Pribilof Aleuts to take the animals for food and clothing.<sup>106</sup> Federal officials associated the conservation of fur seals with the protection of the Pribilof Aleuts. So closely linked were these two issues that by the mid-

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<sup>104</sup>Wilfred H. Osgood, et al., *The Fur Seals and Other Life of the Pribilof Islands, Alaska, in 1914*, p. 22; Memorandum, May 7, 1913, pp. 17-18, RG 370, 000-94-0010, Box 1, File: Solicitor's Opinions of Pribilof and Aleutian Islands Prior to 1920, National Archives and Federal Records Center, Alaska Region, Anchorage. See also George Archibald Clark, "Appendix to the Story of Matka," in David Starr Jordan, *The Story of Matka: A Tale of the Mist-Islands* (San Francisco: Whitaker & Ray-Wiggin Co., 1910), pp. 69-80.

<sup>105</sup>William T. Hornaday, Fur-Seal Fisheries Hearings Before the Committee on Conservation of National Resources on Bill S. 7242, 1910, in *Alaska Fur-Seal Fisheries: Miscellaneous Hearings, 1910-1923*, p. 6.

<sup>106</sup>Wilfred H. Osgood, et al., *The Fur Seals and Other Life of The Pribilof Islands, Alaska, in 1914*, p. 22; Dorothy Knee Jones, *A Century of Servitude*, p. 37.

twentieth century one observer had explained that the "Pribilof natives are treated as an adjunct of the seal herd."<sup>107</sup>

In an effort to promote the conservation of aquatic resources, including seals, Congress created the Bureau of Fisheries within the new Department of Commerce and Labor in 1903. The Bureau assumed responsibility for the Pribilofs. Six years later, President Taft appointed a fur-seal advisory board, which included such prominent scientists as David Starr Jordan, president of Stanford University; C. Hart Merriam, Chief of the Bureau of Biological Survey; and Frederick A. Lucas, Director of the American Museum of Natural History. These board members, most of whom had visited the Pribilofs, recommended an end to the private leasing system and a moratorium on sealing.<sup>108</sup>

Congress responded by passing the Fur Seal Act of 1910, granting the government sole jurisdiction of fur-seal operations on the Pribilofs. This statute prohibited the killing of fur seals in the Pribilof Islands, "or in the waters adjacent thereto," except under the authority of the Secretary of Commerce and Labor.<sup>109</sup> By 1910, the North American Commercial Company's lease had expired, and a congressional investigation confirmed that this enterprise had itself engaged in illegal pelagic sealing. As a result of the legislation of 1910, the Bureau of Fisheries was no longer limited to regulating the harvest and protecting the seal herd; its responsibilities

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<sup>107</sup>Fredericka Martin, Untitled Report, p. 2, Fredericka Martin Papers, Accession No. 94-129, University of Alaska, Fairbanks.

<sup>108</sup>Dorothy Knee Jones, *A Century of Servitude*, p. 51.

<sup>109</sup>Fur-Seal Fisheries Hearings Before the Committee on Conservation of National Resources on Bill S. 7242, 1910, in *Alaska Fur-Seal Fisheries: Miscellaneous Hearings, 1910-1923*, p. 26.

now included harvesting and marketing the skins.<sup>110</sup>

This statute addressed the Pribilof Aleuts as well. It required the Secretary of Commerce to pay the Aleuts fair compensation for their labor, for example, and indicated that the federal government would "furnish food, shelter, fuel, clothing, and other necessities of life to the native inhabitants of the Pribilof Islands and to provide for their comfort, maintenance, education, and protection."<sup>111</sup> Again, islanders were allowed to kill seals "as may be necessary for their own food and clothing" as well as for "the manufacture of boats for their own use."<sup>112</sup> Like the legislation of 1870, this statute demonstrated the federal government's recognition that Pribilof Aleuts were dependent on the marine resources of the islands. Moreover, that "the manufacture of boats" was addressed indicates an awareness that islanders harvested wildlife in the water as well as on the shore.

Domestic measures to regulate sealing, however, did not address what was an international problem. To that end, the federal government negotiated with the nations involved in pelagic sealing. Japanese hunters, for instance, could kill seals to within three miles of the Pribilof Islands, owing to the lack of a treaty. "They always have had that right," Hornaday complained in 1910, "and during the past fifteen years have exercised it with merciless vigor and persistence."<sup>113</sup> Accordingly, in 1911, the United States signed a treaty with Great Britain

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<sup>110</sup>Dorothy Knee Jones, *A Century of Servitude*, pp. 51 and 126.

<sup>111</sup>Aleut Community of St. Paul Island, appellant v. United States, appellee, 480 F.2d 831 (1973), pp. 839-840.

<sup>112</sup>Fur-Seal Fisheries Hearings Before the Committee on Conservation of National Resources on Bill S. 7242, 1910, in *Alaska Fur-Seal Fisheries: Miscellaneous Hearings, 1910-1923*, p. 26.

<sup>113</sup>William T. Hornaday, Fur-Seal Fisheries Hearings Before the Committee on Conservation of National Resources on Bill S. 7242, 1910, in *Alaska Fur-Seal Fisheries: Miscellaneous Hearings, 1910-1923*, p. 6.



(representing Canada), Japan, and Russia, prohibiting sealing "in the North Pacific Ocean north of the thirtieth parallel of north latitude and including the seas of Bering, Kamchatka, Okhotsk, and Japan."<sup>114</sup> The Americans and Russians agreed to provide the other nations 15 percent each of their seal harvests from rookeries under their jurisdiction.<sup>115</sup>

To rebuild the seal herd further, Congress placed a ban on commercial killing from 1912 to 1917. Pribilof Aleuts, who remained exempt from the restrictions, continued to harvest fur seals for their own use. They also conducted the commercial harvest when it resumed.<sup>116</sup>

In addition to protecting fur seals from pelagic hunting, Congress addressed fishing in the Bering Sea during the early twentieth century. According to the Bureau of Fisheries, an alien fishing act in 1906 sought to "prevent encroachments" by foreign crews landing "at isolated points in Alaska to fish either for food or for other purposes and in so doing carrying themselves in such manner as to bring terror and great discomfort upon the native aboriginal inhabitants." In passing this legislation, Congress intended to protect the fisheries in the Bering Sea "upon which the Indian residents depended for their winter's food." Conservation of marine resources, which included fish, thus related to federal concern about the Natives' ability to harvest them.<sup>117</sup>

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<sup>114</sup>Hearings Before the Committee on Foreign Affairs on H.R. 16571, 1912, in *Alaska Fur-Seal Fisheries: Miscellaneous Hearings, 1910-1923*, p. 3.

<sup>115</sup>House Rep. 98-213 (98th Cong., 1st sess.), May 23, 1983, p. 5; Dorothy Knee Jones, *A Century of Servitude*, p. 51.

<sup>116</sup>Draft Report, National Advisory Committee on Oceans and Atmosphere, n.d., p. 3, RG 370, National Marine Fisheries Service, Pribilof Islands Program, 1914-1985, Box 2, National Archives and Federal Records Center, Alaska Region, Anchorage.

<sup>117</sup>Memo, Department of Commerce and Labor, Bureau of Fisheries, March 7, 1911, in *Seal Islands of Alaska*, House Doc. 93 (62d Cong., 1st sess.), July 19, 1911, pp. 1164-1165.

This point was reflected in federal efforts to protect birds in the Pribilofs. In 1909, President Theodore Roosevelt set aside Walrus and Otter islands as a "preserve and breeding ground for native birds." His executive order prohibited hunting, trapping, and capturing birds, as well as taking eggs on these islands.<sup>118</sup> In 1948, the U.S. Geological Survey indicated that the boundaries of this refuge included "offshore public lands on islands, islets, rocks, reefs and spires."<sup>119</sup> Pribilof Aleuts, however, continued to take a variety of eggs from these islands. Agent logbooks recorded that egg-gathering expeditions occurred after establishment of the refuge in 1909, demonstrating that federal officials were aware that Natives retained this practice.<sup>120</sup> During the 1940s, Ira Gabrielson, Director of the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, explained that the Pribilof Islands "constitute a special reservation" that was not included in the national wildlife refuge system "because of the complicated task of protecting and harvesting the seals and caring for the natives."<sup>121</sup> Like other government officials, Gabrielson associated the conservation of marine resources with the federal responsibility for providing for the Pribilof Aleuts.

### *Managing the Pribilofs in the Early Twentieth Century*

Throughout the early twentieth century, the Pribilof Aleuts continued to take seals and

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<sup>118</sup>Theodore Roosevelt, Executive Order No. 1044, February 27, 1909.

<sup>119</sup>U.S. Geological Survey Map, Bering Sea Unit, 1948. TDX Files.

<sup>120</sup>See, for example, Pribilof Islands Agent Logbook, St. Paul Island, June 12, 1913, RG 22, National Archives and Federal Records Center, Alaska Region, Anchorage.

<sup>121</sup>Ira N. Gabrielson, *Wildlife Refuges* (New York: The MacMillan Company, 1943), p. 75.

fish. The Bureau of Fisheries also provided supplies and coal, which were issued on credit at the government store. Nevertheless, in the absence of a commercial harvest, the Pribilof Aleuts no longer received cash payments. Accordingly, Congress appropriated \$40,000 in 1913, "not as a gratuity but as a return for services rendered." During the periods restricting commercial harvests, these services included "labor of a nature to benefit the community generally as might become necessary or desirable."<sup>122</sup>

Some government officials were uneasy with this arrangement. As the Bureau of Fisheries explained in 1913, the primary difficulty with management of the Pribilofs "was to support the people in such comfort and happiness as the resources would allow and at the same time to minimize those admitted evils of [communal] existence which, in this case, could easily result in reducing the island inhabitants to a mental condition of stolid apathy, and a physical condition of virtual peonage, if not slavery."<sup>123</sup>

The following year, Bureau of Fisheries scientists rejected suggestions that Pribilof Aleuts be moved elsewhere. Although the sources examined do not indicate the origins of this suggestion, that removal was considered an option during the early twentieth century is significant, especially given that the federal government chose not to pursue it at that time. As fisheries scientists argued, "these islands constitute the only home that the inhabitants know." Revealing humanitarian concern and practicality, the agency noted that relocation "would be cruel in the extreme, nor under present conditions would it be justified from any standpoint of

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<sup>122</sup>Bureau of Fisheries, "Support of Natives: Problems in Communistic System," in *Report of the United States Commissioner of Fisheries for the Fiscal Year 1913*, p. 141.

<sup>123</sup>Bureau of Fisheries, "Support of Natives: Problems in Communistic System," in *Report of the United States Commissioner of Fisheries for the Fiscal Year 1913*, p. 142.

expediency or economy."<sup>124</sup> Thus, the Aleuts remained on the Pribilofs during the early twentieth century, losing their status as wage earners and exchanging their labor for food and supplies.

To further study fur-seal operations, the Secretary of Commerce directed E. Lester Jones, Deputy Commissioner of Fisheries, to investigate the islands in 1914. His report described the Aleuts as "undeniably wards of the Government," who resided "on a Government reserve." In his estimation, the United States maintained "a grave responsibility in their general welfare, and they and their homes should be protected."<sup>125</sup>

Jones urged that the federal government provide hospital stewards to assist the physicians on each island, noting again that "the natives are dependent on the Government, which is responsible for them." To his mind, the Aleuts "should be looked after" not only for humanitarian reasons but also because they would prove "infinitely more valuable" as strong, healthy workers than as "sick and puny specimens." It was thus in the best interest of the government to fulfill its obligations toward the Aleuts.<sup>126</sup>

Jones also identified the need to ensure that the Pribilof Aleuts could continue to make a living. "Few people," he lamented, "have any idea of how little the natives really have to live on and to do with. Fishing and a little trapping are practically all that is afforded as a means of livelihood." He recommended that the Aleuts be "encouraged in every possible manner" to pursue activities such as fox trapping. "We want to help these men and women to be more self-

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<sup>124</sup>Wilfred H. Osgood, et al., *The Fur Seals and Other Life of the Pribilof Islands, Alaska, in 1914*, pp. 140-141.

<sup>125</sup>E. Lester Jones, *Report of Alaska Investigations in 1914*, p. 126.

<sup>126</sup>E. Lester Jones, *Report of Alaska Investigations in 1914*, p. 132.

reliant," he explained. What was needed was "permanency and stability to the system on which they depend for their livelihood."<sup>127</sup>

Jones also saw possibilities in the reindeer herds on St. Paul and St. George, which served as a food source in the early twentieth century. In addition, he believed that seal meat had potential commercial value, reasoning that this dish "is not strongly flavored, nor in any way unpleasant to the taste or to the sight, and there are many people who are fond of game who would gladly pay the price in a first-class hotel for a seal steak." This passage indicates an assumption that a market existed for Pribilof resources that went beyond furs. His report concluded with a recommendation that the federal government supply "civilized surroundings, and provide adequate means and necessary facilities to accomplish a proper administration of the affairs of these islands."<sup>128</sup>

In summary, the federal government during the early twentieth century attempted to establish a management system -- based on the use of wildlife resources -- that would support the Pribilof Aleuts' communities. Its development of the fur-seal industry included construction of a processing plant on St. Paul in 1918, to extract oil from the carcasses and blubber, making fertilizer from the residue.<sup>129</sup> That year, the Bureau of Fisheries restored payment to the Pribilof Aleuts for sealing and foxing. Outside of harvest season, however, the government continued to compensate islanders with supplies rather than cash.<sup>130</sup>

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<sup>127</sup>E. Lester Jones, *Report of Alaska Investigations in 1914*, p. 124.

<sup>128</sup>E. Lester Jones, *Report of Alaska Investigations in 1914*, pp. 134-140.

<sup>129</sup>Lorna May Buchanan, "History of the Fur Seal Industry of the Pribilof Islands," pp. 93-94.

<sup>130</sup>Dorothy Knee Jones, *A Century of Servitude*, p. 67.

This "welfare program," as some modern Pribilof Aleuts have termed it, remained in operation for more than half a century. Through the 1930s, Natives relied on the federal government for necessities such as fuel and living quarters, looking to the "outside world for practically all supplies consumed."<sup>131</sup> Pribilof Aleuts continued to receive medical care as well, owing to their status as "beneficiar[ies] of the Government."<sup>132</sup> While providing for the islanders, however, the government denied their autonomy and freedom of movement, causing "some breakdown of the Aleut community and further erosion of individual control." Nowhere was this point more apparent than in the relocation of the Pribilof Aleuts to Southeast Alaska during World War II.<sup>133</sup>

#### *Relocation to Southeast Alaska and Return to the Pribilofs*

According to historian Dorothy Knee Jones, the 1940s marked a "turning point" in the Pribilof management system, owing to the sense of independence that the Aleuts gained during this decade.<sup>134</sup> In 1941, the Japanese withdrew from the North Pacific Seal Convention of 1911, in part because they claimed that the increase in seal populations had depleted that nation's

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<sup>131</sup>Henry O'Malley, "Fur-Seal Industry of Pribilof Islands, Alaska," Department of Commerce, Bureau of Fisheries, Economic Circular No. 71, May, 1930, p. 14.

<sup>132</sup>Letter, Lewis Radcliffe, Acting Commissioner, to Dr. C.C. Pierce, August 10, 1931, RG 22, Box 15, National Marine Fisheries Service, Pribilof Islands Program, 1923-1969, File: Medical Reports, St. Paul, 1927-1937, National Archives and Federal Records Center, Alaska Region, Anchorage.

<sup>133</sup>House Rep. 98-213 (98th Cong., 1st sess.), May 23, 1983, pp. 6-7. See also Dorothy Knee Jones, *A Century of Servitude*, pp. 47 and 65.

<sup>134</sup>Dorothy Knee Jones, *A Century of Servitude*, p. 119.

fisheries.<sup>135</sup> In 1942, the Japanese launched an attack on Dutch Harbor, bringing the Aleutians - and the Pribilofs -- into the war zone. As a result, U.S. military authorities evacuated residents of St. Paul and St. George as well as a number of villages in the Aleutian Chain. More than 850 Aleuts were relocated to Southeast Alaska, while military personnel occupied their vacant homes and other buildings in the Pribilofs.<sup>136</sup>

Living in crowded conditions at a former cannery at Funter Bay, the Aleuts suffered from inadequate food, water, and supplies. Moreover, the Assistant Secretary of the Interior noted that the Natives lived in "buildings not suitable for use as homes," resulting in "a greater incidence of illness and disease" than occurred in the islands.<sup>137</sup> By 1943, it had become "apparent that the camps were not operating successfully, even as temporary refuges."<sup>138</sup> As one Native recalled, however, "the most galling and demeaning feature" of this relocation was "that those in charge regarded us as incapable of awareness and any form of decision-making. At no time ... were we given the right to make choices of any kind."<sup>139</sup> Even so, the personnel from the newly formed U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service who supervised the camp could not

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<sup>135</sup>House Rep. 98-213 (98th Cong, 1st sess.), May 23, 1983, p. 6.

<sup>136</sup>Barbara Torrey, *Slaves of the Harvest*, p. 127.

<sup>137</sup>Letter, Oscar L. Chapman to Henry L. Stimson, March 25, 1944, RG 22, Box 40, Pribilof Islands Program, 1923-1969, Medical Mission, 1944, National Archives and Federal Records Center, Alaska Region, Anchorage.

<sup>138</sup>Letter, Frank W. Hynes to Ward T. Bower, October 28, 1943, RG 22, Box 33, Pribilof Islands Program, 1923-1969, File: Agent - St. Paul, 1941-1943, National Archives and Federal Records Center, Alaska Region, Anchorage.

<sup>139</sup>Philemon Michael Tutiakoff, "The Aleut World War II Relocation and Internment: An Overview," in "The Aleut Relocation and Internment During World War II: A Preliminary Examination," Summer, 1981, Special Collections, University of Washington, p. 8.

prevent some of the Aleuts from moving to Juneau, where they found employment.<sup>140</sup>

In 1943, the government returned those Pribilof men who had not been drafted into the Army to the islands for the summer harvest, indicating the significance of the fur-sealing operation. During September of that year, the men left the Pribilofs once again for Southeast Alaska. In 1944, the Aleuts were allowed to return to the Pribilofs permanently. By that point, however, their attitudes had changed. While they had lived for generations under federal control, the Natives had experienced freedom from its "rules and regulations" during their stay in Southeast Alaska. This new liberty included the ability to earn all of their compensation in wages instead of supplies. According to one historian, it was "impossible for them ever to accept again the roles they had left in 1942."<sup>141</sup>

Accordingly, upon their return to the islands, the Aleuts addressed a number of long-standing problems, including the poor quality and inadequate quantity of the food that the government provided as compensation for labor. In 1946, a doctor on St. George determined that daily meals on the Pribilofs provided only 1,700 calories, whereas a caloric intake of up to 3,500 could be required for those engaged in the seal harvest. Other areas of concern included education and working conditions.<sup>142</sup>

Wages continued to be an issue as well. Like the legislation of 1910, the Fur Seal Act of 1944 had charged the federal government -- the Secretary of the Interior in this case -- with paying the Aleuts fair compensation for labor. The Secretary also was to "furnish food, shelter,

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<sup>140</sup>Barbara Torrey, *Slaves of the Harvest*, pp. 129-130.

<sup>141</sup>Barbara Torrey, *Slaves of the Harvest*, pp. 131-135.

<sup>142</sup>Barbara Torrey, *Slaves of the Harvest*, pp. 138-139.



fuel, clothing, and other necessities of life to the native inhabitants of the Pribilof Islands and to provide for their comfort, maintenance, education, and protection." The Aleuts, however, preferred cash payments as compensation.<sup>143</sup>

By 1949, the Secretary of the Interior had appointed a special survey group to study the Pribilofs, in part to investigate charges of peonage and slavery. This survey recommended that the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service "should expedite the long discussed change from the present system of Government issues plus compensation to a plan of total compensation for services rendered." This solution "would eliminate much of the recurring dissatisfaction among the natives over low wage scales." In 1950, the federal government adopted a new wage plan that granted the Pribilof Aleuts annual pay, gradually replacing supplies with money. Moreover, the Natives were recognized as civil servants with federal benefits, including retirement.<sup>144</sup>

In addition to addressing wages, the 1949 study of the Pribilofs acknowledged that the "economic welfare" of the islanders remained "in large part dependent upon fish, fur, and other forms of wildlife."<sup>145</sup> Accordingly, federal actions throughout the next three decades demonstrated a continued interest in protecting the Natives' ability to use these resources. As one physician explained in 1949, "The islands are isolated. They are 250 miles north and west of Dutch Harbor, and three weeks away from Seattle[,] their purchasing market.... HOW would

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<sup>143</sup>U.S. Department of the Interior, "Pribilof Islands Survey Report," October 8, 1949, p. 72, Alaska Room, University of Alaska, Anchorage. See also *Congressional Record*, Senate, June 16, 1966, p. 13552.

<sup>144</sup>"Pribilof Islands Survey Report," p. 72; Dorothy Knee Jones, *A Century of Servitude*, pp. 129; 131-132.

<sup>145</sup>"Pribilof Islands Survey Report," p. 75.

the natives get stuff in there?"<sup>146</sup>

#### IV. THE MODERN ERA

##### *The Fur Seal Convention and The Fur Seal Act of 1966*

From the 1950s through the 1980s, the federal government maintained its "broad authority to provide for the Aleuts in every respect." As noted, this authority dated back to the legislation of 1870, which recognized the obligation to provide for the Native inhabitants of the Pribilofs, enabling them to take marine resources and to derive a living from them.<sup>147</sup>

Under the federal government's management, seal populations increased rapidly during the early twentieth century.<sup>148</sup> By the mid-twentieth century, the seal herd had reached approximately 1.8 million animals.<sup>149</sup> International problems, however, encumbered federal attempts to regulate pelagic sealing. In 1941, Japan abrogated the 1911 Treaty, and for the next 17 years the federal government managed the Pribilof seals through a provisional agreement between the United States and Canada. In 1957, these nations, along with Japan and the Soviet Union, signed an Interim Convention that banned pelagic sealing except for research purposes and for Native subsistence. As the nations with the rookeries, the United States and the Soviet

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<sup>146</sup>Letter, Herbert B. Wentz to Albert M. Day, December 4, 1949, p. 2, IRA Files, St. Paul. [EMPHASIS APPEARS IN THE DOCUMENT.]

<sup>147</sup>House Rep. 2154 (89th Cong., 2d sess.), 1966, p. 3630; David S. Case, *Alaska Natives and American Laws* (Anchorage: University of Alaska Press, 1984), p. 282.

<sup>148</sup>House Rep. 98-213 (98th Cong., 1st sess.), May 23, 1983, p. 6.

<sup>149</sup>Memorandum, Carmen J. Blondin to William E. Evans, October 26, 1987, p. 3, IRA Office Files, St. Paul Island; U.S. Department of the Interior, "Pribilof Islands Survey Report," p. 1.

Union received 70 percent of the harvests under the Convention, while the remaining 30 percent was distributed equally to Canada and Japan.<sup>150</sup>

As in the past, conservation and harvesting were closely linked through the Interim Convention. Its "dual purpose" was to protect the seals from pelagic kills while managing the animals "at the levels which will provide the greatest harvest year after year."<sup>151</sup> This agreement required the United States to engage in commercial sealing, and the government fulfilled its obligation by employing Pribilof Aleuts to conduct the harvest.<sup>152</sup>

The Interim Convention established the North Pacific Fur Seal Commission to coordinate research programs and to recommend harvest levels. So effective was this agreement that by 1981 Senator Frank Murkowski of Alaska had described it as "one of the outstanding wildlife conservation success stories of the last seven decades." The Sierra Club and Audubon Society supported the Interim Convention, owing to its protection of seal populations.<sup>153</sup>

While international relations fluctuated during the mid-twentieth century, domestic laws and regulations regarding fur seals had remained largely unchanged.<sup>154</sup> The Fur Seal Act of

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<sup>150</sup>Draft Report, National Advisory Committee on Oceans and Atmosphere, n.d., pp. 3-4.

<sup>151</sup>*Congressional Record*, Senate, June 11, 1981, p. 6079, Record Group 370, Pribilof Islands Program, 1914-1985, Box 2, National Archives, Alaska Region; Fur Seal Convention, 1957, p. 2, IRA Office Files, St. Paul Island.

<sup>152</sup>Donald H. Green and Stephen M. Truitt, "Memorandum on United States' Obligation to Fund Adequately the Fur Seal Harvest as Required by International Treaty," November 5, 1981, p. 3, IRA Office Files, St. Paul Island.

<sup>153</sup>*Congressional Record*, Senate, June 11, 1981, p. 6080, Record Group 370, Pribilof Islands Program, 1914-1985, Box 2, National Archives, Alaska Region.

<sup>154</sup>Bureau of Commercial Fisheries, "A Policy for Wildlife and Its Environment on the Pribilof Islands," January 17, 1968, p. 20, RG 370, Box 2, 21-01-14(2), 000-94-0010, National Archives and Federal Records Center, Alaska Region, Anchorage.

1966, however, marked the beginning of a new era. So significant was this legislation that one observer suggested it "may be the crucial point in Pribilof history to which events and changes have been pointing and moving since the Evacuation...."<sup>155</sup> While implementing the Convention of 1957, the Fur Seal Act of 1966 further addressed federal responsibility to the Pribilof Aleuts. Senator E.L. Bartlett, who introduced the legislation, explained that it would ensure "quality of treatment for the Pribilovians."<sup>156</sup> In his estimation, the federal government had "profited from their work all those years," while giving "little" in return.<sup>157</sup> The Fur Seal Act of 1966 reflected a federal effort to give Pribilof Aleuts a greater opportunity to manage their own affairs.

Signed by President Lyndon B. Johnson on November 2, 1966, this legislation provided for the transfer of government land and houses to the Natives as well as township incorporation under Alaska law, allowing taxing privileges, and it offered retirement credits for years worked before 1950. The act also reduced the islanders' dependence on the federal government by transferring responsibility for their health to the Public Health Service and for their education to the State of Alaska.<sup>158</sup>

Administration of the Pribilofs by the Secretary of the Interior continued under the Fur

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<sup>155</sup>Letter, Frederick Martin to Gabe and Tikhon, March 4, 1965, p. 1, Fredericka Martin Papers, Accession No. 94-129, Box 9, University of Alaska, Fairbanks.

<sup>156</sup>*Congressional Record*, Senate, June 8, 1965, p. 12794.

<sup>157</sup>*Congressional Record*, Senate, June 20, 1966, p. 13551.

<sup>158</sup>Bureau of Commercial Fisheries, "A Policy for Wildlife and Its Environment on the Pribilof Islands," January 17, 1968, p. 20; See also Don C. Foote, Victor Fischer and George W. Rogers, *St. Paul Community Study: An Economic and Social Analysis of St. Paul, Pribilof Islands, Alaska* (Fairbanks: Institute of Social, Economic and Government Research, University of Alaska, 1968), p. x.

Seal Act of 1966. As Bartlett explained, the Secretary retained authority to provide the "essentials of life" to Pribilof Aleuts.<sup>159</sup> Like the earlier fur-seal acts, this statute addressed conservation and protection of these animals, while continuing to consider the impact of these actions on the Natives of the islands. It allowed the Pribilof Aleuts "to seal, as they always have."<sup>160</sup> It also established that the Pribilofs would continue to be administered as a "special Government reservation," authorizing the federal government to continue providing services, facilities, and equipment to islanders, including food, fuel, shelter, transportation, and education.<sup>161</sup>

As Stanley A. Cain, Assistant Secretary of the Interior, commented, "This authorization is not based on any treaty. In carrying out this obligation, we have constructed and now maintain schools, homes, public buildings, stores and shops, recreational facilities, water, sewer and electric facilities, and a hospital. Education, medical and dental service, and welfare assistance are also provided." The Pribilofs, he concluded, have been administered "as an economically self-contained community under the supervision of the Secretary of the Interior."<sup>162</sup>

One of the "primary objectives" of the Fur Seal Act of 1966 was to "foster self-

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<sup>159</sup>U.S. Department of Commerce, Legislative History of the Fur Seal Act of 1966, p. 5, TDX Files, Anchorage.

<sup>160</sup>*Congressional Record*, Senate, June 8, 1965, p. 12795.

<sup>161</sup>Senate Rep. 1235 (89th Cong., 2d sess.), June 9, 1966, pp. 3 and 12.

<sup>162</sup>Senate Rep. 1235 (89th Cong., 2d sess.), June 9, 1966, pp. 12-13.

sufficiency among the native inhabitants of the Pribilof Islands."<sup>163</sup> Since 1950, residents of the Pribilofs had become increasingly independent: they were compensated on a wage-rate basis; they elected councils to manage community affairs; and they operated a canteen and store on the islands, as well as restaurants and theaters. Moreover, revenues from the Pribilof fur-seal operations decreased during the late 1950s and early 1960s. When Alaska achieved statehood in 1958, the federal government agreed to pay the state 70 percent of the industry's net proceeds. According to one historian, at that point "both the Aleuts and the seal industry had threatened to become economic liabilities."<sup>164</sup> In considering the need to "foster self-sufficiency" among the Aleuts, the Committee on Merchant Marine and Fisheries explained, "the natives of the Pribilof Islands should assume gradually increasingly responsibility for the development and management of their community on a basis more nearly comparable to other native communities in Alaska."<sup>165</sup>

Alaska Senator Ernest Gruening recognized the difficulties that this transition presented. The development of self-sufficiency for the Aleuts would not be accomplished quickly. The inhabitants of the Pribilofs, he explained in June of 1966, resided in a wildlife reservation created by statute. He noted that the "human beings who live on these remote islands have little more control over their affairs than the valuable animals inhabiting them." The islanders had lived "secluded from participation in normal affairs of [the] world," in a "restricted, paternalistic form of community." While this arrangement "may be fine for fur seals," in his estimation, it

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<sup>163</sup>House Rep. 2154 (89th Cong., 2d sess.), 1966, p. 3643.

<sup>164</sup>Dorothy Knee Jones, *A Century of Servitude*, pp. 139 and 154.

<sup>165</sup>Senate Rep. 2154 (89th Cong., 2d sess.), 1966, p. 3643.

was "not the way American citizens ought to live."<sup>166</sup>

Gruening thus suggested that the federal government "broaden the opportunities for enrichment of the lives of the native inhabitants of the Pribilof Islands." He indicated that the proposed statute of 1966 would "preserve the historic rights of Pribilof natives to take fur seals," while also providing "greater economic opportunity and more independence of action than has been their lot in the past."<sup>167</sup> According to Senator Bartlett, this economic opportunity could include development of fisheries. He informed the Senate that harbor construction at St. Paul would provide employment. Quoting from an article in *Newsweek*, he suggested that islanders were traditionally suited for "seafaring work."<sup>168</sup>

In the Fur Seal Convention and the Fur Seal Act of 1966, the federal government once again established the significance of the Pribilof Aleuts' needs in considering actions to protect fur seals. According to David S. Case, the 1976 and 1980 amendments to the Convention further demonstrated "a growing federal interest in the economic effect of the fur seal harvest on the Native residents of the Pribilof Islands." The 1976 amendments required that proposals to reduce the fur-seal harvest also consider the "'subsistence needs'" of islanders. By 1980, the U.S. Senate had taken this concept further, indicating that changes in the fur-seal harvest should "'be consistent with the development of stable, diversified and enduring economy for the Aleut residents of the Pribilof Islands,'" including Native control of the harvest. As Case commented, these "provisions obviously establish a special relationship between the federal government and

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<sup>166</sup>*Congressional Record*, Senate, June 16, 1966, p. 13624.

<sup>167</sup>*Congressional Record*, Senate, June 16, 1966, p. 13625.

<sup>168</sup>*Congressional Record*, Senate, June 20, 1966, p. 13630.

Pribilof Island Natives."<sup>169</sup> In 1980, the National Marine Fisheries Service (NMFS), operating under the Department of Commerce, similarly noted that "Beyond our responsibility for the management of the Pribilof Island herd and the worldwide conservation of the northern fur seal, we have a special responsibility to the people who live on the Pribilof Islands."<sup>170</sup> Congress, then, did not intend that federal actions would occur "at the cost of the Pribilof Island Aleut economy."<sup>171</sup>

As the federal government considered extending the treaty in 1980, the NMFS commissioned a study that addressed potential avenues of economic development for Pribilof Aleut communities. The resulting report noted that the islands lie "in the middle of the rich Bering Sea bottomfish resource," also indicating the possibility of a crab industry. Harbor construction was critical to utilizing these resources, and projections estimated that it would increase the average household income by approximately \$10,000.<sup>172</sup> Similarly, the State of Alaska believed "the fisheries potential in the area of the Pribilofs to be enormous. Since 1970, the total annual harvests in the eastern Bering Sea have ranged between 1.7 and 2.4 million metric tons."<sup>173</sup> These ideas, which dated back to the 1960s, gained momentum during the

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<sup>169</sup>David S. Case, *Alaska Natives and American Laws*, p. 282.

<sup>170</sup>U.S. Department of Commerce, *Final Environmental Impact Statement on the Interim Convention on Conservation of North Pacific Fur Seals*, September 1980, p. ii, IRA Office Files, St. Paul Island.

<sup>171</sup>David S. Case, *Alaska Natives and American Laws*, p. 282.

<sup>172</sup>National Marine Fisheries Service, *Pribilof Islands Service Plan, Final Report*, December, 1980, pp. 8, 52, 60, and Appendix C, p. 10.

<sup>173</sup>State of Alaska, Response to Questions in the May 17, 1982 Memorandum from the Staff, Subcommittee on Fisheries and Wildlife Conservation and the Environment," p. 5, TDX Files, Anchorage. [ON THE FIRST PAGE, AN ALTERNATE DATE -- MAY 12, 1983 -- IS LISTED.]



1980s, when the federal government sought to terminate its involvement in the fur-seal harvest.

A variety of observers recognized that the transition to a self-sufficient economy would not be quick or easy. As early as 1968, a study produced by the University of Alaska at Fairbanks concluded that the "long history of paternalism that has characterized St. Paul to date has not generally been conducive to encouraging and independent and self-governing spirit among the residents of the Pribilofs." In order to break this pattern, moreover, young people needed assurance "that advancement is possible on St. Paul and that acquisition of skills can mean job security."<sup>174</sup>

Similarly, in 1982, National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA) personnel noted that Natives needed "sufficient time to prepare for the great change" that the government Phase-Out introduced.<sup>175</sup> That year, a study produced by the University of California at Santa Cruz suggested that centuries of federal control had produced an environment that was not readily overcome. "Attempts by outside agents to introduce self-government among people who have stood in some form of stewardship relationship to a government," the report read, "are at best patronizing and at worst tyrannical." Entry into the world of business remained a difficult undertaking, and "the fruits of first entres in arenas as complex as these are not realized in

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<sup>174</sup>Don C. Foote, Victor Fischer, and George W. Rogers, *St. Paul Community Study* (Fairbanks: University of Alaska, Institute of Social, Economic and Government Research, Fairbanks, 1968), pp. 151 and 169.

<sup>175</sup>Memo, H.A. Larkins to Richard B. Roe, U.S. Department of Commerce, May 12, 1982, p. 1, RG 370, Pribilof Islands Program, Box 6, Alternative Economy -- Phase Out, National Archives and Federal Records Center, Alaska Region, Anchorage.

measures of years, or sometimes even decades."<sup>176</sup> Flore Lekanof, president of Tanaq Corporation on St. George, similarly explained in 1983 that "For our entire history, the Pribilof Aleuts have been constrained from developing entrepreneurial skills by the U.S. government. We are trying now to play catch-up in a very risky business arena."<sup>177</sup> The Fur Seal Act Amendments of 1983 brought this transition to prominence.

### *Fur Seal Act Amendments of 1983*

The Fur Seal Act Amendments of 1983 continued to recognize that the Pribilof Aleuts had always derived their livelihood from the marine resources of the islands. As Congressman Don Young of Alaska observed, "As a result of this historical forced dependence on the U.S. Government, the Aleuts have no economic base other than the harvest of fur seals."<sup>178</sup> Accordingly, the Fur Seal Act Amendments intended "to assist the islanders in converting to a private-sector economy not dependent upon sealing operations." To develop a stable, diversified economy apart from sealing, the statute permitted St. Paul and St. George "to enter commercial fishing in the waters contiguous to their islands."<sup>179</sup> Congress recognized that this resource yielded a high potential "for economic diversification and independence," owing to the Pribilofs'

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<sup>176</sup>Michael K. Orbach and Beverly Holmes, "The Pribilof Island Aleuts: Tentative Players in a Hybrid Economy," Center for Coastal Marine Studies, University of California, Santa Cruz, February 1982, pp. 43-44, TDX Files, Anchorage.

<sup>177</sup>Testimony of Flore Lekanof on H.R. 2840 Before the Subcommittee on Fisheries and Wildlife Conservation and the Environment of the House Committee on Merchant Marine Fisheries, May 19, 1983, p. 11, TDX Files, Anchorage.

<sup>178</sup>*Hearing on H.R. 2840* (98th Cong., 1st sess.), May 19, 1983, p. 259.

<sup>179</sup>*Congressional Record*, Senate, August 4, 1983, p. 11676.

location "in the rich Bering Sea fishing grounds."<sup>180</sup>

A congressional hearing conducted in April of 1983 explored the extent of these fisheries. Anthony Calio, Deputy Administrator of NOAA, reported that a commercial harvest could include "Halibut, ground fish, hair crab, all the crabs, king and Tanner crabs." The Pribilofs, he pointed out, lie "in the midst of one of the world's richest fisheries." As he described it, the proposed legislation attempted "to establish a fisheries economy," and he believed that the Pribilof Aleuts' "economic livelihood will depend upon the fisheries in the future."<sup>181</sup>

Developing this potential would require construction of harbor facilities. As NOAA personnel explained, a harbor remained vital to establishing a viable economic base. In late 1982 and early 1983, the Department of Commerce signed a Memorandum of Intent with Tanadgusix Corporation, Tanaq Corporation, and the Pribilof Islands Aleut Communities of St. Paul and St. George Islands, recognizing the State of Alaska's appropriation of funds to build harbors as well as assume responsibility for transportation facilities on the islands. Moreover, as Calico commented, "fish processing and other facilities could provide a badly needed service/support industry, and could permit optimum development of the king crab, hair crab, and halibut fisheries as well as ground-fish resources."<sup>182</sup>

Some observers characterized the Fur Seal Act Amendments, signed by President Ronald Reagan on October 14, 1983, as "essentially a social welfare bill, not a conservation bill." Like previous legislation, it recognized that the Pribilof Aleuts had depended on marine resources for

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<sup>180</sup>*Congressional Record*, House, September 26, 1983, p. 25688.

<sup>181</sup>Hearing on H.R. 2840 (98th Cong., 1st sess.), May 19, 1983, pp. 261-274.

<sup>182</sup>Hearing on HR 2840 (98th Cong., 1st sess.), May 19, 1983, pp. 261-271.

centuries. However, this statute promoted economic diversification apart from seal harvesting, while seeking to terminate federal administration of the island communities. As an attorney representing St. Paul Island commented, the Fur Seal Act Amendments of 1983 allowed development of "neighboring fisheries," enabling the Pribilof Aleuts to "go forward and participate in the American free enterprise economy which has been historically denied them." His testimony included a 20-page report detailing the need for a boat harbor on St. Paul and the potential for developing Pribilof fisheries. This study noted that 70 percent of the fish resources in the western United States are located within 200 miles of the Pribilof Islands.<sup>183</sup>

To assist in the transition to an economy based on fishing, the Fur Seal Act Amendments included a provision for a \$20 million trust fund. However, John W. Katz, Director of State-Federal Relations for the State of Alaska, contended in 1983 that this trust fund was not "some sort of panacea which should be permitted to absolve the Federal Government of further responsibility." As he explained, the "social, economic and infrastructure requirements of the Pribilofs are immense," and the legislation of 1983 terminated the federal government's administration of the islands "abruptly." He doubted that the \$20 million would prove sufficient for harbor construction, characterizing this amount as "a drop in the bucket." He urged that this legislation be viewed in a "realistic context." Otherwise, he predicted, this legislation "could become another sad milestone in the federal government's sometimes insensitive treatment of the Aleut people."<sup>184</sup>

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<sup>183</sup>Hearing on H.R. 2840 (98th Cong., 1st sess.), May 19, 1983, pp. 301-337.

<sup>184</sup>Hearing on H.R. 2840 (98th Cong., 1st sess.), May 19, 1983, pp. 292-294.

Others shared Katz's concerns. In 1984, Jay S. Gage, Trustee of the St. Paul Island Trust, observed that "it is extremely difficult for most of the residents to comprehend the impact of the transition from what might be termed 'wards' of the United States to citizens of the United States and the State of Alaska."<sup>185</sup>

Similarly, a Memorandum of Understanding among the Secretary of Commerce, State of Alaska, and local government representatives recognized in 1984 "the difficulties inherent in creating a viable, long-term private enterprise economy in an environment which has existed heretofore as a government enclave." Accordingly, the signatories were to grant "special recognition to the many legitimate educational, infrastructure, social, environmental, and economic needs of the people of the islands." Moreover, "the existence of the Pribilof Islands Trusts" would "not be deemed a substitute or a replacement for any governmental programs otherwise available."<sup>186</sup>

In summary, for the last century, the federal government has ensured that the Pribilof Aleuts could utilize the marine resources of the islands and adjacent waters. Throughout the late nineteenth and twentieth centuries, legislation protecting fur seals also protected the livelihoods of the Natives. Recent statutes, while terminating the federal government's role in administering the islands and harvesting the seals, continue to demonstrate congressional intention to provide an economic base for the Pribilof Aleuts.

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<sup>185</sup>Letter, Jay S. Gage to Anthony J. Calio, May 10, 1984, p. 2, TDX Files, Anchorage.

<sup>186</sup>Pribilof Islands Memorandum of Understanding, 1984, TDX Files, pp. 4-5.

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## ***APPENDIX***

Maps

Executive Order No. 1044

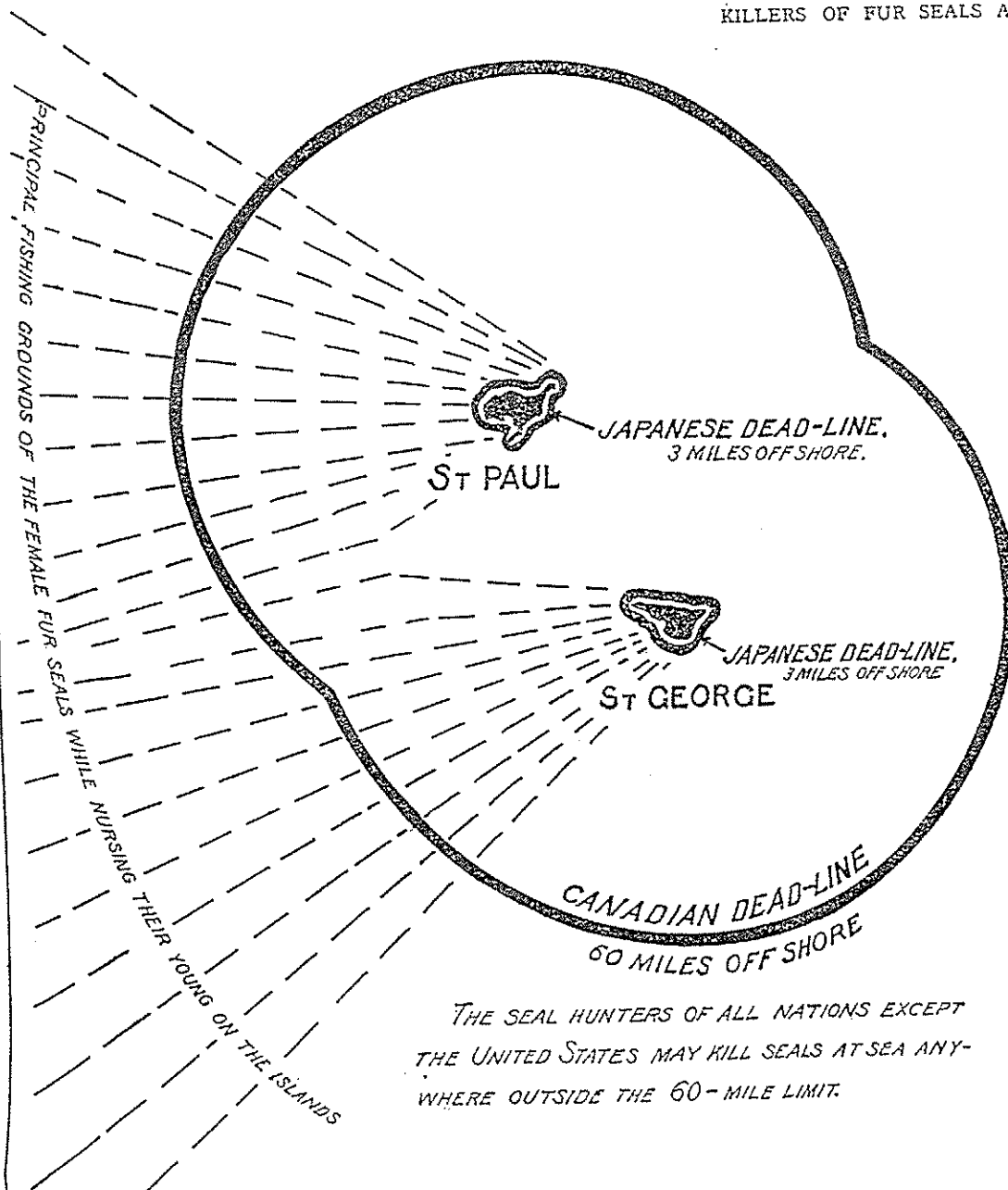
Fur-Seal Harvest Charts

Legislative Histories

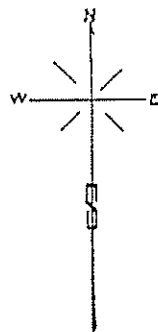


# THE PRIBILOF ISLANDS AND THE SPHERES OF INFLUENCE

OF THE JAPANESE AND CANADIAN  
KILLERS OF FUR SEALS AT SEA.



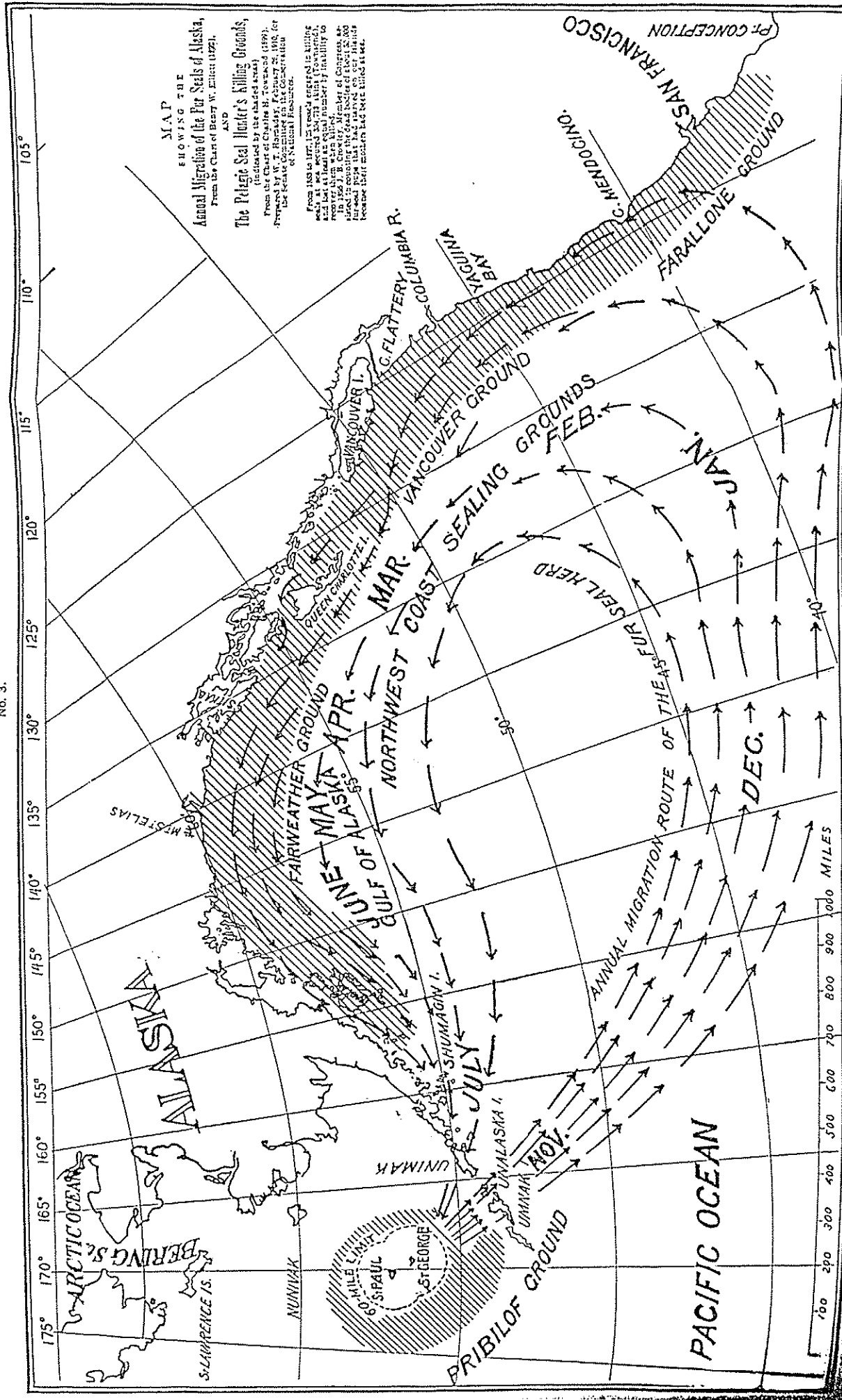
THE SEAL HUNTERS OF ALL NATIONS EXCEPT  
THE UNITED STATES MAY KILL SEALS AT SEA ANY-  
WHERE OUTSIDE THE 60-MILE LIMIT.



10 20 30 40 50 60 70 80 90 100  
MILES.

ANAK IS.





## Executive Order

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It is hereby ordered that two small islands of the Pribilof group, located approximately in latitude fifty-seven degrees north, longitude one hundred and seventy degrees west from Greenwich, in Bering Sea, Alaska, known as Walrus island and Otter island, and located within the area segregated by the broken line upon the diagram hereto attached and made a part of this order, be and same are hereby reserved, subject to the provisions of section nineteen hundred and fifty-six, Revised Statutes, relating to fur bearing animals, and set apart for the use of the Department of Agriculture as a preserve and breeding ground for native birds. It is unlawful for any person to hunt, trap, capture, wilfully disturb, or kill any bird of any kind whatever, or take the eggs of such birds within the limits of this reservation, except under such rules and regulations as may be prescribed by the Secretary of Agriculture. Warning is expressly given to all persons not to commit any of the acts herein enumerated and which are prohibited by law.

This reservation to be known as Pribilof Reservation.

THEODORE ROOSEVELT

THE WHITE HOUSE,

*February 27, 1909.*

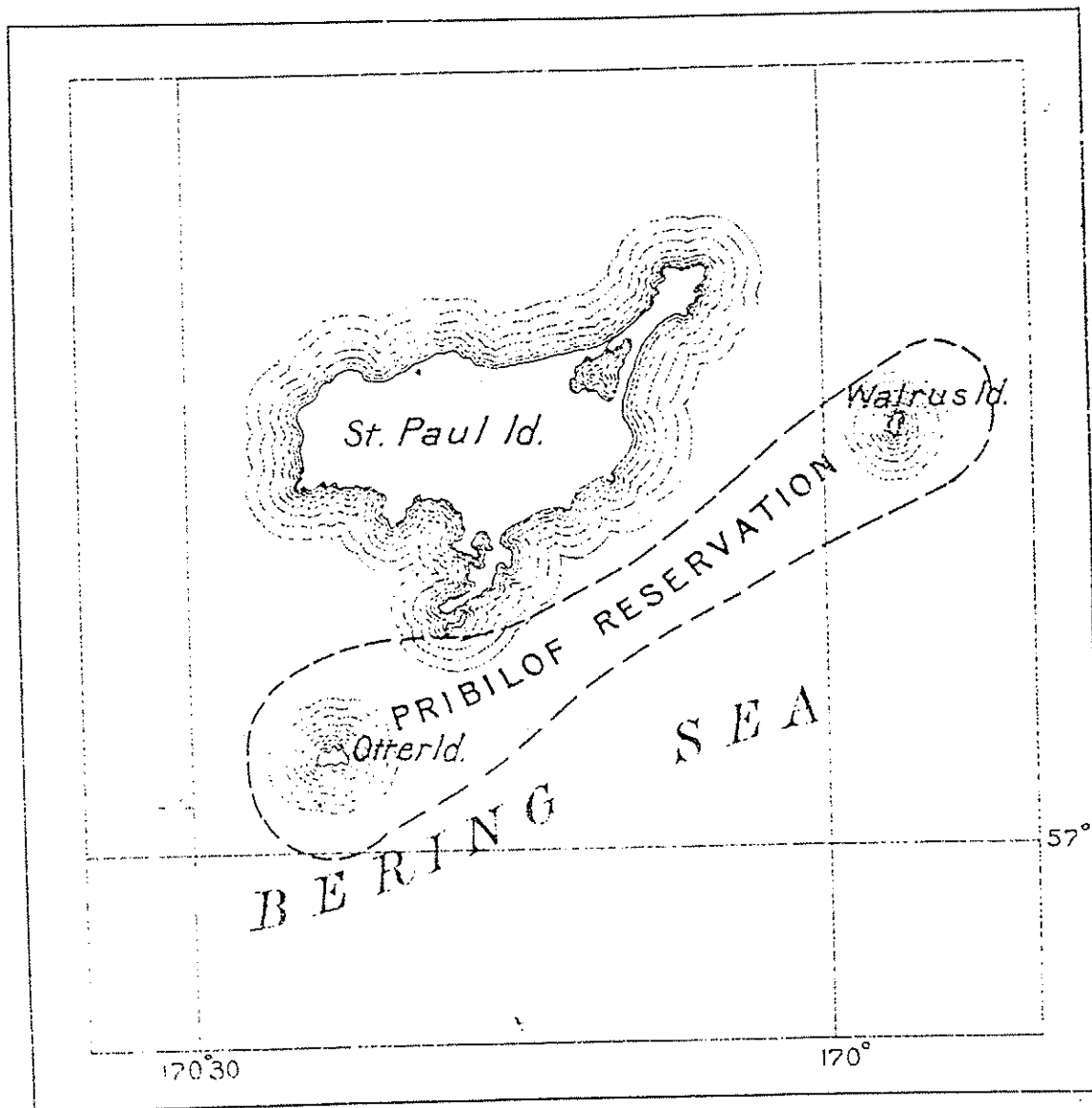
[No. 1044.]

# PRIBILOF RESERVATION

For Protection of Native Birds

## ALASKA

*Embracing Walrus and Otter islands, of the Pribilof group as segregated by broken line and designated "Pribilof Reservation"*



DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR  
GENERAL LAND OFFICE

Fred Dennett, Commissioner

TABLE 5-2:--Fur seals killed on St. Paul for all purposes from 1870 to 1889, inclusive

Year	Seals killed for natives' food				Seals killed for skins for lessees				Totals of bachelors killed, accepted, and rejected			Grand totals of seals killed for all purposes
	Pups	Bache-lors	Skins ac- cepted	Skins re- jected	Bache-lors	Skins ac- cepted	Skins re- jected		Bache-lors	Skins ac- cepted	Skins re- jected	
1870	2800	6449	0	6449	6065	6017	48		12514	6017	6497	15314
1871	2877	2341	2290	51	75585	74628	957		77926	76918	1008	81803
1872	5121	6916	5365	1551	69782	69576	206		76698	74941	1757	81819
1873	5489	2090	1198	892	74408	73884	524		76498	75082	1416	81987
1874	4897	4874	4225	649	88368	88258	110		93242	92483	759	98139
1875	3745	6282	5784	498	84933	84860	73		91215	90644	571	94960
1876	3958	5061	3064	1997	74138	71137	1		79199	77201	1998	83157
1877	5007	4041	2853	1188	58762	58732	30		62803	61585	1218	67810
1878	5206	4718	3632	1086	78595	78570	25		83313	82202	1111	88519
1879	5071	5970	3898	2072	77280	77280	0		83250	81178	2072	88321
1880	4413	4466	3408	1418	75900	75872	28		80366	79920	1446	84779
1881	0	7538	6068	1470	76236	76169	67		83774	82226	1537	83774
1882	0	5175	3362	1813	74659	74581	78		79834	77943	1891	79834
1883	2982	3168	2194	974	57145	57070	75		60313	59264	1049	63295
1884	2741	3907	2582	1325	82213	82086	127		86120	84668	1452	88861
1885	2788	3184	2508	676	82908	82866	42		86092	85374	718	86880
1886	2824	3081	2480	601	82180	82150	30		85261	84630	631	88085
1887	2177	4207	3975	232	82708	82679	29		86915	86654	261	89092
1888	2178	3762	3700	62	80330	80314	16		84092	84014	78	86270
1889	2280	3400	2570	830	81712	81698	14		85112	84268	844	87392
Total	67554	90630	64796	25834	1463907	1461427	2480		1554537	1526212	28314	1622091

TABLE 5-3:--Fur seals killed on St. George for all purposes from 1870 to 1889, inclusive

	Seals killed for natives' food				Seals killed for skins for lessees				Totals of bachelors killed, accepted, and rejected			Grand totals of seals killed for all purposes
	Pups	Bachelors	Skins accepted	Skins rejected	Bachelors	Skins accepted	Skins rejected		Bachelors	Skins accepted	Skins rejected	
1870	1200	0	0	0	7259	7259	0		7259	7259	0	8459
1871	2090	237	237	0	18830	18830	0		19067	19067	0	21137
1872	2000	0	0	0	25000	25000	0		25000	25000	0	27000
1873	2190	0	0	0	25000	25000	0		25000	25000	0	27190
1874	2446	0	0	0	10000	10000	0		10000	10000	0	12446
1875	1500	0	0	0	10000	10000	0		10000	10000	0	11500
1876	1500	0	0	0	10000	10000	0		10000	10000	0	11500
1877	1500	256	256	0	14744	14744	0		15000	15000	0	16500
1878	1500	1532	1216	316	17772	17772	0		19304	18988	316	20804
1879	1506	843	564	279	19841	19758	83		20684	20322	362	22190
1880	1330	702	565	127	18907	18830	77		19609	19395	214	20939
1881	1031	812	509	303	19446	19360	86		20258	19869	389	21289
1882	0	483	371	112	19495	19440	55		19978	19811	167	19978
1883	1000	475	468	7	14739	14675	64		15214	15143	71	16214
1884	1500	345	223	122	14728	14620	108		15073	14843	230	16573
1885	1086	319	304	15	14745	14686	59		15064	14990	74	16144
1886	1286	544	413	131	14606	14578	28		15150	14991	159	16436
1887	1356	58	471	114	14727	14725	2		15312	15196	116	16658
1888	978	1400	1321	85	14647	14592	65		16056	15995	153	17634
1889	1071	512	280	232	13642	13641	1		14154	13921	233	15225
Total	128064	9054	7195	1356	216120	317550	628		327162	324618	2584	355246

# WILDLIFE REFUGES

## PRIBILOF ISLANDS FUR-SEAL INDUSTRY UNDER GOVERNMENT MANAGEMENT

CALENDAR YEAR	ANIMALS IN HERD	NUMBER OF SKINS TAKEN	NUMBER OF SKINS SOLD	GROSS AMOUNT
1910	132,279	12,964	<sup>1</sup> 12,920	\$ 435,532.69
1911	123,600	12,138	<sup>1</sup> 12,002	416,949.62
1912	215,738	3,191	...	...
1913	268,305	2,406	<sup>2</sup> 5,669	195,868.58
1914	294,687	2,735	...	...
1915	363,872	3,947	...	...
1916	417,281	6,468	1,900	74,530.00
1917	468,692	8,170	6,739	269,665.50
1918	496,432	34,890	8,100	375,385.00
1919	524,235	27,821	19,188	1,504,083.50
1920	552,718	26,648	14,852	1,707,071.00
1921	581,443	23,681	31,002	1,050,722.16
1922	604,962	31,156	30,177	924,532.05
1923	653,008	15,920	20,866	632,422.10
1924	697,158	17,219	37,110	999,187.54
1925	723,050	19,860	17,350	565,253.82
1926	761,281	22,131	23,371	761,102.11
1927	808,870	24,942	23,618	775,899.18
1928	871,513	31,099	23,687	808,509.97
1929	971,527	40,068	29,346	823,855.36
1930	1,045,101	42,500	34,475	689,291.73
1931	1,127,082	49,524	45,982	897,196.16
1932	1,219,961	49,336	33,996	403,461.08
1933	1,318,568	54,550	50,587	873,643.22
1934	1,430,418	53,470	50,753	986,699.55
1935	1,550,913	57,296	53,422	1,246,058.85
1936	1,689,743	52,446	43,410	1,222,315.18
1937	1,839,119	55,180	42,968	1,111,039.61
1938	1,872,438	58,364	45,231	964,157.68
1939	2,020,774	60,473	43,071	823,885.90
1940	2,185,136	65,263	60,293	1,247,230.62
1941	2,338,312	95,013	62,788	2,343,319.11

<sup>1</sup> Sold in raw-salted condition by C. M. Lampson & Co., Selling Agents, London, England.

<sup>2</sup> Sold in raw-salted condition; 3,773 sold by C. M. Lampson & Co., London; 1896 sold at St. Louis, Missouri.

Gabrielson, Ira N.

*Wildlife Refuges.* New York: MacMillan Company, 1943.

LEGISLATIVE HISTORY			
ACT OF: November 2, 1966 (80 STAT. 1091)			
YEAR/CONGRESS	SENATE	HOUSE	SUPPLEMENTAL
1964 - 88th Congress, 2nd Session	<u>S.2532</u> (February 20, 1964): Sen. E.L. Bartlett (AK) and Sen. Ernest Gruening (AK) co-sponsor, "a bill to aid in the administration of the Pribilof Islands in Alaska, by the Secretary of the Interior and to provide for the self-sufficiency of the inhabitants thereof, and for other purposes"; referred to the Committee of Interior and Insular Affairs.		<u>S.2532</u> (April 24, 1964): Senate Committee on Interior and Insular Affairs heard remarks from representatives of the Commissioner of Indian Affairs and Bureau of Commercial Fisheries, Dept. of Interior, on the bill.
1965 - 89th Congress, 1st Session	<u>S.2102</u> (June 8, 1965): Sen. E.L. Bartlett (AK), introduced "a bill to protect and conserve the North Pacific fur seals, and to administer the Pribilof Islands for the conservation of fur seals, and other wildlife, and for other purposes,"; referred to the Committee on Commerce.		<i>Congressional Record</i> , 89th Congress, 1st Session, June 8, 1965, Remarks by Sen. E.L. Bartlett in support of his bill, <u>S.2102</u> , "Justice for the Pribilovians."
			<u>S.2102</u> (September 9, 1965): The first part of a two-session hearing conducted by Sen. E.L. Bartlett (AK) included statements from and question/answer sessions with various Aleut residents of St. Paul Island and St. George, Pribilof Islands. Federal and State government agency representative from Dept. of Interior and Alaska Commission for Human Rights.

LEGISLATIVE HISTORY				
ACT OF: November 2, 1966 (80 STAT. 1091)				
YEAR/CONGRESS	SENATE	HOUSE	SUPPLEMENTAL	
		H.R.9602 (July 1, 1965): Congressman Ralph J. Rivers (AK), introduced "a bill to protect and conserve the North Pacific fur seals, and to administer the Pribilof Islands for the conservation of fur seals and other wildlife, and for other purposes." This bill and S.2102 were identical when introduced.		
1966 - 89th Congress, 2nd Session			S.2102 (February 18, 1966): The second part of the two-session hearing conducted in Washington, D.C. by Sen. E.L. Bartlett (AK). In attendance is the president of the St. Paul Community and agency representatives of the USFWS, Dept. of Interior, Solicitor General's Office, and the State of Alaska.	
			S.2102 (June 9, 1966): Senate Report No. 1235, Committee on Commerce. Submitted by Sen. E.L. Bartlett (AK), the report favored the bill, as amended. The amendment added: Title III-Protection of Sea Otters on the High Seas to the text of the original bill. Senate Report No. 1235 (accompanies S.2102).	



LEGISLATIVE HISTORY			
ACT OF: November 2, 1966 (80 STAT. 1091)			
YEAR/CONGRESS	SENATE	HOUSE	SUPPLEMENTAL
	<u>S.2102</u> (June 20, 1966): Debate on the Senate floor centers on the provisions of the bill that dealt with Civil Service Retirements and the funding of these annuities for the Aleuts. The bill was read a third time and passed by the Senate.		
			<u>H.R.9602</u> (August 24, 1966): Congressman John D. Dingell (MI) presides over hearings of the House Subcommittee on Fisheries and Wildlife Conservation, of the Committee on Merchant Marine and Fisheries held simultaneously on this bill and <u>S.2102</u> . <u>H.R.9602</u> does not appear again in the <i>Record</i> . The House apparently decided to support the Senate bill.
	<u>S.2102</u> (September 29, 1966): House Report 2154, with amendments, reported out; passed the House with amendments; Senate disagrees with House amendments and asks for conference.		September 29, 1966: House Report No. 2154 (accompanies S.2102).
		<u>S.2102</u> (October 3, 1966): After the bill is read, Congressman Ralph J. Rivers (AK) addresses the House by summarizing the reasons for the bill and the support it had from various federal agencies. The bill is read a third time and passes the House.	

ACT OF: November 2, 1966 (80 STAT. 1091)		LEGISLATIVE HISTORY	
YEAR/CONGRESS	SENATE	HOUSE	SUPPLEMENTAL
			October 13, 1966: Conference Report No. 2274 (accompanies S.2102).
		S.2102 (October 14, 1966): Conference Report No. 2274 submitted in the House and agreed to.	
	S.2102 (October 17, 1966): Conference Report No. 2274, submitted in the Senate and agreed to.		
	S.2102 (November 2, 1966): Approved by the President, PL 89-702.		

LEGISLATIVE HISTORY			
ACT OF: October 14, 1983 (97 STAT. 835)			
YEAR/CONGRESS	SENATE	HOUSE	SUPPLEMENTAL
1983 - 98th Congress, 1st Session		<u>H.R.2840</u> (April 28, 1983): Introduced by Congressman Don Young (AK), "a bill to provide for the orderly termination of Federal management of the Pribilof Islands,"; referred to the Committee on Merchant Marine and Fisheries.	
			<u>H.R.2840</u> (May 19, 1983): Hearing before the House of Representatives, Subcommittee on Fisheries and Wildlife Conservation and the Environment, Committee on Merchant Marine and Fisheries. The hearing focused on the condition of Pribilof Island infrastructure, the efficacy of a one-time \$20 million fund to help the Aleuts' transitional phase versus a series of yearly payments, and the construction of harbors for Aleut fishing boats.
		<u>H.R.2840</u> (May 23, 1983): The bill was read on the floor of the House. House Report No. 98-213 reported out of the Committee on Merchant Marine and Fisheries with amendments; accepted by the House. The bill, as amended, was passed.	May 23, 1983: House Report No. 98-213 (accompanies H.R.2840).

LEGISLATIVE HISTORY				
ACT OF: October 14, 1983 (97 STAT. 835)				
YEAR/CONGRESS	SENATE	HOUSE	SUPPLEMENTAL	
	H.R.284Q (August 4, 1983): The Senate considered the bill; accepted Senate Report No. 98-212, with amendment, from the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation. The bill was read a third time and passed.		August 4, 1983: Senate Report No. 98-212 (accompanies H.R.284Q).	
		H.R.284Q (September 26, 1983): The House concurs with the Senate amendment with an amendment.		
	H.R.284Q (September 28, 1983): The Senate consents to the amendments en bloc.			
	H.R.284Q (October 14, 1983): Approved by the President, [P.L. 98-129].			

# BERING SEA UNIT

## PRIPILOF SUBUNIT

Refuge includes offshore public lands of islands, islets, rocks, reefs and spires.

B E R I N G

BASE MAP PRODUCED BY THE U. S. GEOLOGICAL SURVEY, 1948. WATER DEPT. CHARTS.

CONTINUED BY THE BUREAU OF LAND MANAGEMENT

TOPOGRAPHY COMPILED FROM U. S. GEO. HYDROGRAPHIC OFFICE CHARTS AND FROM TREASURY DEPARTMENT CHARTS.

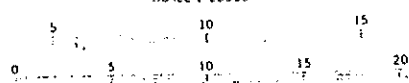
FOR SOUND PROTECTION. ST. PAUL-ST. GEORGE 1944 DATUM. CONTIGUOUS GRID BASED ON ALASKA COORDINATE SYSTEM. ZONE 9. UTM COORDINATE SYSTEM. TRANSVERSE MERCATOR GRID TICS. ZONE 2. SHOWN IN BLUE.

LAND LINES REPRESENT UNSURVEYED AND UNMAPPED LOCATIONS. PREDETERMINED BY THE BUREAU OF LAND MANAGEMENT.

Boundary compiled by the U. S. Fish and Wildlife Service as established by the Alaska National Interest Lands Conservation Act, P. L. 96-487, Dec. 2, 1980.

This map does not distinguish between public and nonpublic lands within this external boundary, and should not be interpreted as authorizing public use of State, native or private lands. Persons desiring information on land status within this area may contact the Alaska Regional Director of the U. S. Fish and Wildlife Service.

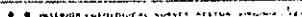
SCALE 1:250,000



CONTOUR INTERVAL 200 FEET

DATUM IS APPROXIMATELY MEAN SEA LEVEL. SHORELINE SHOWN REPRESENTS THE APPROXIMATE LINE OF MEAN HIGH WATER. 1948 MAGNETIC DECLINATION AT SOUTH EDGE OF SHEET VARIES FROM 13° TO 15°.

FOR SALE BY U. S. GEOLOGICAL SURVEY. ORDER FORM, GEOLOGICAL SURVEY, 960 BOSTON, VII.

[illegible]

DATE RECEIVED

**\* NIGHT DUTY** \_\_\_\_\_ **TRUCKS**

PRIBILOF ISLANDS, ALASKA