



September 28, 2016

NOAA Office of National Marine Sanctuaries
Attn: Mr. William Douros
99 Pacific St., Suite 100
Monterey, CA 93940
william.douros@noaa.gov

Dear Mr. Douros,

I am writing on behalf of the Aleut International Association, which represents Aleut communities throughout Alaska's Aleutian and Pribilof Islands, and the Commander Islands of the Russian Federation, and is a Permanent Participant of the Arctic Council.

AIA strongly supports the right of the community of St. George to create a National Marine Sanctuary for the waters surrounding their island home and in doing so; we endorse the St. George community's efforts to protect its cultural heritage, the marine environment and the animals that depend on the sea.

As an organization working with Aleut communities, we believe a national marine sanctuary for St. George can create important new opportunities to combine research with traditional knowledge to address threats to St. George's marine environment and help to promote community resilience while giving St. George a seat at the table to help develop integrated management of its natural and cultural resources.

We wholeheartedly support the community of St. George in these efforts.

Sincerely,

James Gamble
Executive Director

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