CENTRAL BERING SEA FISHERMEN'S ASSOCIATION

Post Office Box 288 ▲ St. Paul Island, Alaska 99660 ▲ Phone (907) 546-2597 ▲ Fax (907) 546-2450

Glenn Haight
Executive Director
Boards of Fish and Game
1255 W. 8th Street
P.O. Box 115526
Juneau, AK 99811-5526

January 7, 2015

Re: Alaska Department of Fish and Game -- Appointment of Sam Cotten

Dear Mr. Haight:

We understand that the acting Commissioner of the Alaska Department of Fish & Game (ADF&G), Mr. Sam Cotten, has submitted his name for consideration to serve as permanent ADF&G Commissioner.

As the Community Development Quota (CDQ) entity for Saint Paul Island, Central Bering Sea Fishermen's Association (CBSFA) has worked closely with Mr. Cotten over the past decade on issues related to the Bering Sea crab, cod and halibut fisheries. CBSFA is invested in the Bering Sea crab and pollock fisheries, and both are critical to the health of Saint Paul Island's economy. The local halibut fishery provides significant income to many of our local residents and has also faced recent challenges.

As a past and current member of the North Pacific Fishery Management Council (NPFMC), Mr. Cotten has been fair, accessible and dedicated in his approach to fisheries issues.   Most important to Saint Paul and CBSFA, Mr. Cotten has been a tireless advocate in support of community interests and participation in Alaska's fisheries. Mr. Cotten understands that proper management of the Bering Sea's commercial fisheries includes developing policies that take into account and protect the investments of fisheries-dependent communities.

Fisheries-dependent communities such as Saint Paul, and the CDQ entities that serve them, cannot continue to prosper without supportive decision-making at the State level. We appreciate the ongoing support of Mr. Cotten, and of the State of Alaska.

CBSFA recommends that Sam Cotten be appointed permanently as Commissioner of the ADF&G.

Please do not hesitate to contact me if you have any questions or concerns.

Sincerely,

Phillip Lestenkof, President