

Tungwenuk Family Qupak Design, used with permission

**KAWERAK, INC.**

**KAWERAK RESOLUTION 2023-09**

*REPRESENTING*

**Brevig Mission**

*Sitaisaq*

**Council**

*Akauchak*

**Diomedede**

*Inqaliq*

**Elim**

*Neviarcuarluq*

**Gambell**

*Sivuqaq*

**Golovin**

*Chinik*

**King Island**

*Ugiuvak*

**Koyuk**

*Kuuyuk*

**Mary's Igloo**

*Iglaaruk*

**Nome Eskimo**

*Sitnasuami Inuit*

**Savoonga**

*Sivungaq*

**Shaktoolik**

*Saktuliq*

**Shishmaref**

*Kigiqtaq*

**Solomon**

*Anqutaq*

**St. Michael**

*Taciq*

**Stebbins**

*Tapraq*

**Teller**

*Tupqaqruk*

**Unalakleet**

*Uqalaqfiq*

**Wales**

*Kinjigin*

**White Mountain**

*Natchigvik*

**A RESOLUTION IN OPPOSITION TO THE NOAA ALASKA FISHERIES SCIENCE CENTER BOTTOM TRAWL RESEARCH PROJECT "NETS"**

**WHEREAS**, Kawerak, Inc. is a tribally authorized non-profit consortium whose mission is to assist, promote and provide programs and services to improve the social, economic, educational, and cultural well-being of Bering Strait region people; AND

**WHEREAS**, the tribes within the Kawerak region include: Brevig Mission, Council, Diomedede, Elim, Gambell, Golovin, King Island, Koyuk, Mary's Igloo, Nome, Savoonga, Shaktoolik, Shishmaref, Solomon, Stebbins, St. Michael, Teller, Unalakleet, Wales and White Mountain; AND

**WHEREAS**, Tribes recognize research activities as actions requiring prior consultation and coordination with federally recognized tribes that may be impacted by such research or its results; AND

**WHEREAS**, To date, there has been no tribal consultation on any proposed bottom trawl research with the Northern Bering Sea Research Area and boundaries of the Northern Bering Sea Climate Resilience Area, AND

**WHEREAS**, Tribes and Tribal organizations have not been collaborated with since the early stages of this project (including with regard to the decision whether or not to do the research, which is not co-productive); AND

**WHEREAS**, decades of research and hundreds of academic publications have irrefutably illustrated that bottom trawl fisheries are destructive to benthic habitat and species; AND

**WHEREAS**, marine animals that Kawerak region residents depend on as subsistence resources, and that are food for animals used for subsistence, are highly dependent on a healthy and undisturbed benthic habitat; AND

**WHEREAS**, the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration's (NOAA) Alaska Fisheries Science Center (AFSC) has proposed to do bottom trawl research within the Northern Bering Sea Research Area and boundaries of the Northern Bering Sea Climate Resilience Area. This research involves using commercial bottom trawl gear on undisturbed tracts of sea floor to determine the effects of trawling on the benthos and benthic species; AND

**WHEREAS**, the nature of the controlled study means that the study area will be off limits to subsistence hunting, fishing and other activities within its boundary for multiple years; AND

**KAWERAK, INC.**

PO Box 948 • Nome Alaska 99762 • 907.443.5231 • [www.kawerak.org](http://www.kawerak.org)

Advancing the capacity of our people and tribes for the benefit of the region.

**WHEREAS**, the Kawerak Board does not support expansion of commercial bottom trawl fisheries into the northern Bering Sea and believes this research will likely facilitate that expansion; AND

**WHEREAS**, the Kawerak Board is also concerned about the damaging effects of this proposed research trawl activity itself (in addition to commercial bottom trawling); AND

**NOW THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED**, that the Kawerak Board is opposed to bottom trawl research in the northern Bering Sea, supports a precautionary approach to protecting the northern Bering Sea – particularly in this time of rapid ecosystem change – and desires that the northern Bering Sea be designated permanently off limits for vessels using bottom trawl gear and other gear that is known to frequently hit the sea floor (such as ‘pelagic’ trawl gear); AND

**NOW THEREFORE BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED**, that the Kawerak Board requests that NOAA AFSC cancel their proposed “NETS” research project (Northern Bering Sea Effects of Trawling Study) in the northern Bering Sea. The Board also encourages NOAA, including AFSC, to rapidly make significant steps forward with regard to tribal consultation, engagement, and outreach, as well as co-production of knowledge.

#### **CERTIFICATION**

We, the undersigned 1<sup>st</sup> Vice Chair and Secretary of the Kawerak, Inc. Board of Directors, hereby certify that the foregoing resolution was adopted by majority vote of the Board during a duly called meeting on September 27<sup>th</sup>, 2023.

By:   
Kawerak 1<sup>st</sup> Vice Chair

  
Kawerak Board Secretary

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<b>President</b>	John Wayne Melovidov
<b>Vice President</b>	Myron Melovidov
<b>Secretary-Treasurer</b>	Robert Melovidov Sr.
<b>Council Members</b>	Michael R. Zacharof
	Amos T. Philemonoff Sr.
	Jacob N. Merculief
	Shiona Melovidov

## Resolution 2024-01

### *RESOLUTION*

#### *A RESOLUTION IN OPPOSITION TO BOTTOM TRAWL RESEARCH PROJECT IN THE NORTHERN BERING SEA*

WHEREAS, the Aleut Community of St. Paul Island (the Tribe), is the federally recognized tribe for St. Paul Island, as listed and recognized by the United States under 84 CFR 1200; and,

WHEREAS, the Tribal Government of St. Paul is the representative sovereign government for the Aleut Community of St. Paul Island; and,

WHEREAS, the Tribal Government of St. Paul is the authorized body through which Unangan of St. Paul Island can fulfill our intrinsic rights and responsibilities, and support, recollect, practice, and pass on our culture; and,

WHEREAS, the Tribal Government, through the Tribal Council, is determined to lead efforts to ensure and strengthen sovereignty, ensure a healthy ecosystem that supports food security, economic self-sufficiency, continued cultural practices, tribal self-determination and self-governance, and the overall health, safety, wellbeing and welfare of Tribal Members; and,

WHEREAS, the Tribal Government recognizes that decades of research and hundreds of academic publications have irrefutably illustrated that bottom trawling is destructive to benthic habitats and species therein; and,

WHEREAS, the Tribal Government recognizes that the broader Bering Sea ecosystem is wholly connected to and interwoven with the Northern Bering Sea, including the Northern Bering Sea Climate Resilience Area; and,

WHEREAS, the Tribal Government recognizes federal research activities are actions requiring prior consultation and coordination with federally recognized Tribes that may be impacted by such research and its results; and,

WHEREAS, Tribes and Tribal organizations have not been collaborated nor consulted with since the early stages of proposed bottom trawling research in the Northern Bering Sea area, including the Northern Bering Sea Climate Resilience Area; and,

WHEREAS, the Tribal Government, through the Tribal Council, supports and stands with our brothers and sisters, respecting and uplifting their sovereignty and recognizing the devastating crisis they are currently undergoing with a loss of access to vital subsistence resources; and,

WHEREAS, the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration's (NOAA) Alaska Fisheries Science Center (AFSC) has proposed to conduct bottom trawl research within the Northern Bering Sea, including the Northern Bering Sea Climate Resilience Area, involving bottom trawl gear on undisturbed tracts of sea floor to determine the effects of trawling on benthos and benthic species; and,

WHEREAS, the nature of the controlled study means the study area will be off limits to subsistence fishing, hunting and other activities within its boundary for multiple years; and,

WHEREAS, the Tribal Government, through the Tribal Council, does not support expansion of commercial bottom trawl fisheries into the northern Bering Sea and believes this research will facilitate that expansion; and,

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, The Tribal Council is opposed to bottom trawl research in the Northern Bering Sea, supports a precautionary approach to recovering the health of the Bering Sea ecosystem, including protecting the Northern Bering Sea in a time of rapid change; and desires the Northern Bering Sea be designated such that it is permanently prohibited for vessels using bottom trawl gear to operate in the area; and request NOAA to cease plans for any and all proposed research that uses gear types that are destructive to the benthic habitat of the area. Further, we support Kawerak, Inc. Resolution 2023-09, and encourage NOAA AFSC to rapidly make significant steps forward with regard to Tribal consultation, engagement, and outreach, as well as co-production of knowledge.



<b>President</b>	John Wayne Melovidov
<b>Vice President</b>	Myron Melovidov
<b>Secretary-Treasurer</b>	Robert Melovidov Sr.
<b>Council Members</b>	Michael R. Zacharof Amos T. Philemonoff Sr. Jacob N. Merculief Shiona Melovidov

Adopted through a poll vote of Tribal Council on this 30<sup>th</sup> day of October ,2023 of 6 in favor, 0 opposed, 0 abstain, and 1 absent.

John Wayne Melovidov  
President

A large, stylized blue ink signature of John Wayne Melovidov is written over a horizontal line. Below the line, the name "John Wayne Melovidov" and the title "President" are printed in a standard black font.

Attested by:

Robert Melovidov, Sr.  
Secretary

The text "Attested by:" is followed by a blue ink signature of Robert Melovidov, Sr. written over a horizontal line. Below the line, the name "Robert Melovidov, Sr." and the title "Secretary" are printed in a standard black font.



**ASSOCIATION OF VILLAGE COUNCIL PRESIDENTS  
P.O. BOX 219  
BETHEL, ALASKA 99559**

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**ASSOCIATION OF VILLAGE COUNCIL PRESIDENTS  
EXECUTIVE BOARD OF DIRECTORS**

EXECUTIVE BOARD  
ANCHORAGE, ALASKA      DECEMBER 2023

**RESOLUTION 23-12-02**

**TITLE: A Resolution in Opposition to the NOAA Alaska Fisheries Science Center Bottom Trawl Research Project “Nets”**

- WHEREAS The Association of Village Council Presidents (AVCP) is the recognized tribal organization and non-profit Alaska Native regional corporation for its fifty-six member indigenous Native villages within Western Alaska and supports the endeavors of its member villages; and
- WHEREAS AVCP fully supports its member villages in all aspects of their self-determination, health, and well-being; and
- WHEREAS Tribes recognize research activities as actions requiring prior consultation and coordination with federally recognized tribes that may be impacted by such research or its results; and
- WHEREAS To date, there has been no tribal consultation on any proposed bottom trawl research with the Northern Bering Sea Research Area and boundaries of the Northern Bering Sea Climate Resilience Area; and
- WHEREAS Tribes and tribal organizations have not been collaborated with since the early stages of this project (including with regard to the decision whether or not to do the research, which is not co-productive); and
- WHEREAS Decades of research and hundreds of academic publications have irrefutably illustrated that bottom trawl fisheries are destructive to benthic habitat and species; and
- WHEREAS Marine animals that AVCP region residents depend on as subsistence resources, and that are food for animals used for subsistence, are highly dependent on a healthy and undisturbed benthic habitat; and
- WHEREAS The National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration’s (NOAA) Alaska Fisheries Science Center (AFSC) has proposed to do bottom trawl research within the Northern Bering Sea Research Area and boundaries of the Northern Bering Sea Climate Resilience Area. This research involves using commercial bottom trawl gear on undisturbed tracts of sea floor to determine the effects of trawling on the benthos and benthic species; and

EXECUTIVE BOARD RESOLUTION 23-12-02

WHEREAS The nature of the controlled study means that the study area will be off limits to subsistence hunting, fishing, and other activities within its boundary for multiple years; and

WHEREAS The AVCP Executive Board does not support expansion of commercial bottom trawl fisheries into the northern Bering Sea and believes this research will likely facilitate that expansion; and

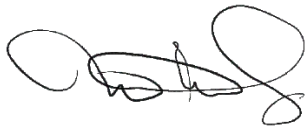
WHEREAS The AVCP Executive Board is also concerned about the damaging effects of this proposed research trawl activity itself (in addition to commercial bottom trawling).

NOW THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED, That the Executive Board of the Association of Village Council Presidents is opposed to bottom trawl research in the northern Bering Sea, supports a precautionary approach to protecting the northern Bering Sea – particularly in this time of rapid ecosystem change – and desires that the northern Bering Sea be designated permanently off limits for vessels using bottom trawl gear and other gear that is known to frequently hit the sea floor (such as “pelagic” trawl gear).

NOW THEREFORE BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the Executive Board requests that NOAA AFSC cancel their proposed “NETS” research project (Northern Bering Sea Effects of Trawling Study) in the Northern Bering Sea. The Board also encourages NOAA, including AFSC, to rapidly make significant steps forward with regard to tribal consultation, engagement, and outreach, as well as co-production of knowledge.

ADOPTED by the Association of Village Council Presidents Executive Board during an Executive Board Meeting held at Anchorage, Alaska, this 7<sup>th</sup> day of December 2023 with a duly constituted quorum.

CERTIFICATION



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Thaddeus Tikiun, Jr., Chairman



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Vivian Korthuis, Chief Executive Officer