



Businesses for Conservation and Climate Action, Community-based Business Leaders See True Conservation & Sustainable Economic Potential in New Alaska Marine Sanctuary Nomination, Co-management Model

Washington, DC — December 20, 2021 - Businesses for Conservation and Climate Action (BCCA) today hails our founding member the Aleut Community of St. Paul Island Tribal Government's nomination of a new National Marine Sanctuary surrounding the Pribilof Islands. If designated by the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration, this Marine Sanctuary would be the first in Alaska and the first established on the basis of government-to-government co-management between the United States and a federally recognized tribe.

“The tribe’s approach to sustainable business opportunities, equitable Indigenous leadership, and visionary new approaches to conservation make this nomination truly groundbreaking,” said David Levine, American Sustainable Business Network (ASBN) president and co-founder. “BCCA and ASBN urge swift evaluation of this nomination, pursuant to designation under the National Marine Sanctuaries Program. This is an opportunity, with national implications, for creating new approaches to Indigenous-led governance and a seat at the table for all business interests who depend on the conservation of this magnificent seascape for their wellbeing and livelihoods.”

“Indigenous people of this continent have successfully managed large seascapes and marine resource dependent economies for 10,000 years,” said Dune Lankard, president of the Native Conservancy in Alaska. “When our communities and businesses are provided a genuine role in policy making, we can expect to see meaningful results that mirror this legacy for the good of all communities. This new approach to National Marine Sanctuaries is a major precedent for all Indigenous communities and businesses throughout our country as well as the conservation of the resources we have always depended on.”

“I am thrilled that the St. Paul Tribal Government is advancing this visionary nomination in support of Alaska fishing businesses and their critical island ecosystem,” said Linda Behnken, commercial fisherman and executive director of the Alaska Longline Fishermen’s Association. “We’ve known for decades that family fishing businesses like mine need healthy ecosystems to survive. But to address the climate threats of tomorrow, businesses, tribes, and the government

need to come together to advance grounded and groundbreaking conservation actions, as the Biden Administration has recognized in the America the Beautiful program. This sanctuary nomination truly sets the conservation bar, and I'm proud to stand in strong support of it alongside tribal fishing businesses across Alaska.”

About BCCA

Businesses for Conservation and Climate Action is a coalition of Indigenous-led and community-based businesses, organized to develop and deliver grounded and, therefore, durable conservation policy wins for the benefit of all. Our alliance is formed around the collective vision that solutions between humans and nature are rooted in rediscovering our place within the global environment and having the humility and ambition to embrace this role. Our mission is to establish national policies that recognize sustainable small businesses as compatible with healthy lands and oceans, and to enhance rather than exclude these sustainable businesses from conversations about resource access at every step of the decision-making process. Our work is guided by a firm commitment to social equity, local and traditional wisdom, and triple bottom line solutions that restore social, ecological and economic health.

About ASBN

The [American Sustainable Business Network](#) partners with business organizations and companies to advocate for solutions and policies that support an equitable, sustainable stakeholder economy. ASBN is a multi-issue, business organization advocating on behalf of all sectors, sizes, and geographies of industry. ASBN and its association members collectively represent over 250,000 businesses across our networks. ASBN is coalition-focused in our approach to solving the pervasive and systemic issues of climate and energy, infrastructure, circular economy, and creating an inclusive just stakeholder economy. ASBN is changing the rules by which business is done so it is better for all people and the environment.

Media contacts:

Noah Oppenheim

National Policy Coordinator, BCCA

noah@homarus.co

Linda Behnken

Executive Director, Alaska Longline Fishermen's Association

alfafish@gmail.com