

Senate Joint Resolution 13

Senate Resources Committee

March 12, 2018

Presented by Senator Bert Stedman

Senate Joint Resolution 13

Urging the United States Congress to amend the Marine Mammal Protection Act and urging certain federal agencies to permit Alaska Native Organizations and the Alaska Department of Fish & Game to co-manage, take, and study sea otters.

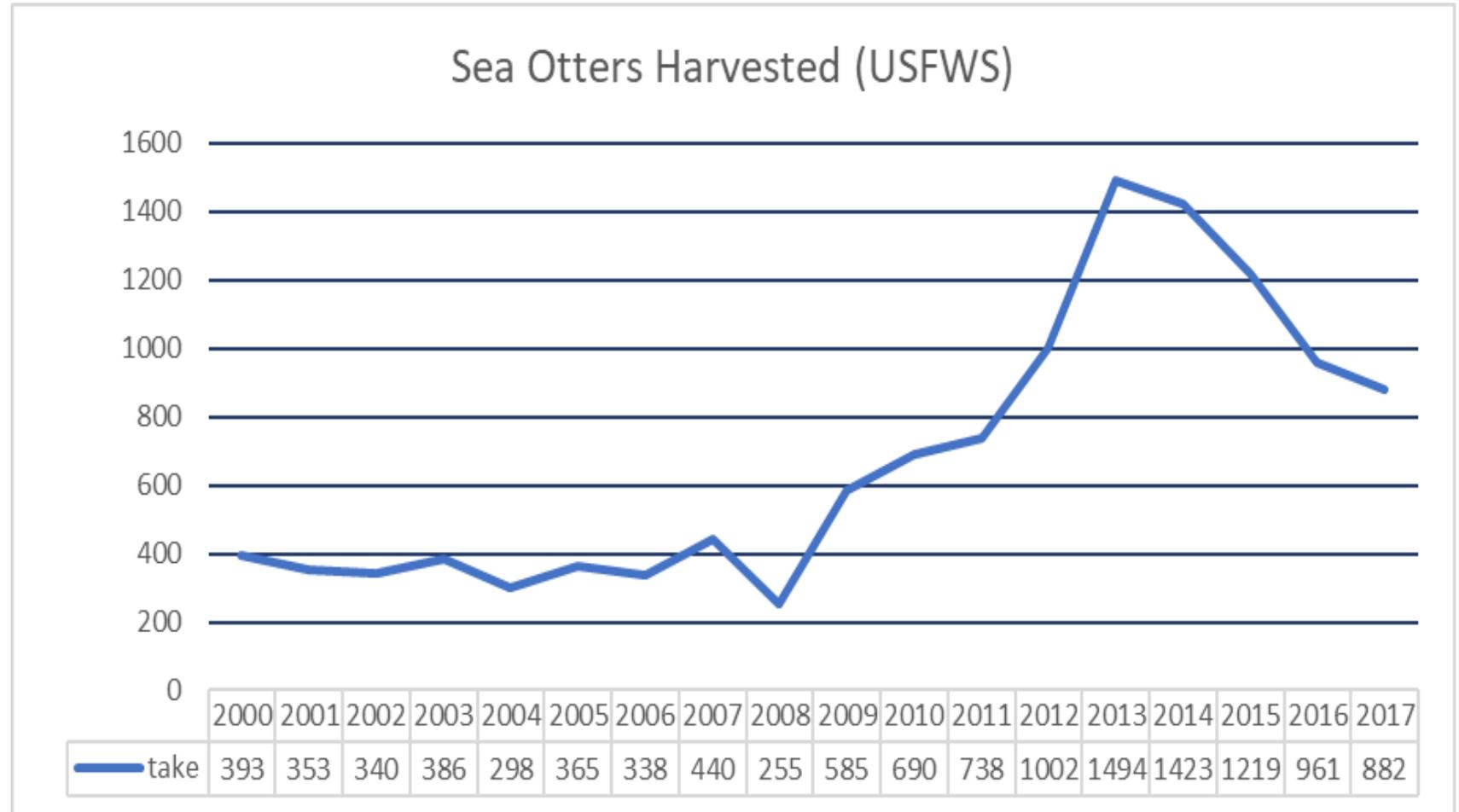
Growing Sea Otter population is devastating the shellfish population.

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- 1965-1969 - 400 otters were reintroduced in Southeast Alaska.
- Current population is over 25,000 with estimated growth rate of 13%.
- ADF&G has closed 18 dive fish areas due to sea otters.
- Subsistence fishery resources are threatened.

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The number of sea otters harvested is well below the Potential Biological Removal level (set by the USFWS) of 2,179 animals.



Resolved Clauses

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- Urges federal agencies to work with state, native, and local leaders to establish a sea otter management plan to protect shellfish resources.
- Urges transfer of sea otter management authority to ADF&G or to National Marine Fisheries Service.
- Urges state and federal agencies to consider small business enhancements and economic activities in management plan.

Resolved Clauses (continued)

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- Urges amendments to Marine Mammal Protection Act:
 - Change regime from protection to management of sea otters.
 - Expand the scope of allowable uses of harvested sea otters.
 - Permit any Alaska Native who is a member of a federally recognized tribe to take sea otters.

Resolved Clauses (continued)

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- Urges amendments to Marine Mammal Protection Act:
 - Provide that “authentic native” crafts be sold without restriction.
 - Allow ADF&G or Native Organization to co-manage the subsistence use of sea otters.
 - Permit the sale and foreign export of sea otter pelts.

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Final Resolved Clause

Urges federal agencies to issue a permit authorizing ADF&G or Native organizations to take as many sea otters as is necessary to protect the threatened subsistence fisheries.

Thank you.

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Sen. Stedman, Susie Stedman, and Russell James holding a sea otter pelt at Sitka tannery.