



# UNITED FISHERMEN OF ALASKA

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**For Immediate Release  
November 6, 2012**

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## **United Fishermen of Alaska Names John Winther and Eric McDowell to Alaska Seafood Hall of Fame**

United Fishermen of Alaska has posthumously named Alaska fishermen John Winther of Petersburg and Eric McDowell of Juneau to the organization's Alaska Seafood Hall of Fame.

Beginning in the early 1980s, John Winther started building the Alaska Longline Company (formerly known as Prowler Fisheries) that is based in Petersburg, Alaska. John was a Lifetime Member of the United Fishermen of Alaska. John built a reputation as a fierce defender of the Alaska fishing industry and vibrant Alaskan coastal communities. His freezer longline vessels are all homeported in Petersburg and he had a new freezer longline vessel under construction in Ketchikan, the first of its kind in Alaska, at the time he passed away.

Originally from Fairbanks, John served on the North Pacific Fishery Management Council for six years, from 1983 to 1989, a pivotal time in Council history, and on the US Northern Panel of the Pacific Salmon Treaty Commission during the late 1980s through the mid 1990s. During his tenure on the Council, John was a leader in numerous actions that led up to the full Americanization of Alaska's fisheries. Serving under Chairman Jim Campbell, and later under Chairman John Peterson, he was instrumental in a number of major, watershed Council actions. Among the most significant were:

- the first halibut fisheries moratorium (later disapproved by the Secretary)
- restrictions on Japanese long-lining for sablefish in the Gulf of Alaska;
- restrictions on foreign long-lining for cod in the Bering Sea;
- restrictions on pot and trawl gear for sablefish in the Gulf of Alaska;
- development of initial alternatives for 'rationalized' management of sablefish fisheries (culminating in the sablefish/halibut IFQ program);
- closure areas in the Bering Sea to protect crab and halibut resources;
- enactment of the first crab and halibut PSC caps for BSAI and GOA groundfish fisheries;
- affirmation of the 2 million metric tons Optimum Yield (OY) cap in the BSAI;
- enactment of the pilot domestic groundfish observer program;
- emergency actions to address pollock roe-stripping; and
- initial actions to address the inshore/offshore pollock allocations

Eric McDowell was a Southeast Alaska salmon troller, and former Bristol Bay and Southeast gillnetter and halibut and black cod longliner. Eric started McDowell Group in 1972 as a one-man

office, and expanded the firm to its current full-time staff of 14 with offices in Juneau, Anchorage and Bellingham, and remained actively engaged with the business and its clients until his death. McDowell made a career of studying Alaska and helping corporate, non-profit, and public agencies succeed. His professional passions included Alaska Native corporate and tribal interests, strategic planning and facilitation, Alaska's seafood and tourism industries, and helping address the state's major social issues.

Commercial fishing was also one of Eric's lifelong passions. Originally from Haines, he began hand trolling around Juneau in 1970 and in 1978 bought the 38-foot "Christopher K" and learned to fish the outside waters of Cape Spencer and Icy Point. Eric taught his sons to fish on the Christopher K and both of them eventually ran the boat on their own. He later bought and refurbished the 45-foot "Whisper" and continued fishing the outside waters that he loved. He completed the 2012 king season and returned home just days before falling ill.

UFA established the Alaska Seafood Hall of Fame in 2009 to honor the 50<sup>th</sup> anniversary of Alaska Statehood. Previously named members include Bob Alverson, U.S. Senator Bob Bartlett, Bob Blake, The Brindle Family, Chuck Bundrant, Al Burch, Phil Daniel, Oscar Dyson, Senator Dick Eliason, Governor Ernest Gruening, Governor Jay Hammond, Gordon Jensen, Knute Johnson, Armin F. Koernig, Jerry McCune, Alaska State Representative Drew Scalzi, Alaska State Senator Clem Tillion, Tommy Thompson, Bob Thorstenson Sr., and Bob Moss Sr. The UFA Alaska Seafood Hall of Fame is online at <http://www.ufa-fish.org/hof.htm> .

“These individuals each made lasting contributions that helped Alaska fishermen and women continue our sustainable fisheries into the future. We look forward to recognizing the many others that are helping ensure our sustainable fisheries for future generations,” said Mark Vinsel, Executive Director of UFA.

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