

# Timeline of the Pribilof Islands

## Historical and Ecological Dates

## Population

### 1700

- 1786** □ Gerasim Pribilof discovers Saint George Island
- 1787** □ Peter and Paul Island discovered (Saint Paul Island today)
- 1788** □ Russians enslave Aleuts from Siberia, Atka, and Unalaska to hunt fur seals on the Pribilofs

### 1800

- 1867** □ Alaska purchased from Russia by the United States  
□ Treaty of Cession guarantees the Aleuts full rights of U.S. citizenship.
- 1869** □ Pribilof Islands are set aside as a special reservation to protect fur seals  
□ Alaska Commercial Company awarded private 20-year lease of fur seal industry on Pribilof Islands
- 1870** □ Lease provided housing, food, and medical care to the Aleuts in exchange for seal harvesting

#### 1880 population

298 (St. P)

92 (St. G)

#### 1890 population

244 (St. P)

93 (St. G)

- 1890** □ North American Commercial Company awarded private 20-year lease of fur seal industry on Pribilof Islands  
□ Fur seals have been over-harvested and a period of severe local poverty ensues
- 1891** □ Pup seal harvest forbidden

### 1900

#### 1900 population

214 (St. P)

92 (St. G)

- 1907** □ Present St. Peter and Paul Orthodox Church built

#### 1910 population

201 (St. P)

90 (St. G)

- 1910** □ Fur Seal Act ends private lease system and the Dept. of Commerce and Labor becomes responsible for the program  
□ Communities and fur seals placed under the US Bureau of Fisheries  
□ North Pacific Fur Seal Convention signed by Canada, Japan, Russia and the U.S.  
□ North Pacific Fur Seal Commission established
- 1911** □ Government suspends fur seal killing on Pribilof Islands for 5-years except for subsistence harvesting  
□ Reindeer introduced to the islands

- 1912** □ Alaska becomes a U.S. territory

- 1914** □ Pribilof Aleuts granted legal right to residence on islands and to be sole harvesters of the seals

#### 1920 population

212 (St. P)

138 (St. G)

- 1924** □ Indian Citizen Act passes conferring citizenship on all U.S. Natives (did not affect Pribilofs)

#### 1930 population

247 (St. P)

153 (St. G)

- 1930s** □ A small amount of electricity becomes available on the islands
- 1934** □ Indian Reorganization Act  
□ St. Paul adopts constitution and elects council
- 1936** □ Aleut community of St. Paul organized

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		299 (St. P) 183 (St. G)
<b>1940 population</b>		
<b>1941</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▫ Evacuation and confinement of Pribilof Island residents to an abandoned cannery and mine camp at Funter Bay (WWII)</li> <li>▫ Fur Seal Convention of 1911 expires</li> </ul>	
<b>1944</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▫ Pribilof Island residents return to islands from Funter Bay</li> </ul>	
<b>1945</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▫ Use of Aleut language forbidden by government</li> <li>▫ Fire destroys St. Paul Recreation Hall (New one built in 1946)</li> <li>▫ Indian Reorganization Act</li> <li>▫ Voting precinct established in the Pribilofs</li> </ul>	
<b>1948</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▫ Post office established on St. Paul</li> <li>▫ Increased sealing bonuses and fuel provided on cost basis</li> <li>▫ Pribilof Islands join Alaska Native Brotherhood</li> <li>▫ No reindeer left on St. George due to natural causes</li> </ul>	
<b>1949</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▫ First tourists come to the islands</li> </ul>	
<b>1950 population</b>		359 (St. P) N/a* (St. G)
<b>1950</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▫ Fire destroys St. George sealskin handling facility (New one built in 1951)</li> <li>▫ Pribilovians given vacation time, sick leave, retirement and disability</li> <li>▫ Small businesses start up on St. Paul</li> <li>▫ Aleutian Airways begins service to St. Paul</li> <li>▫ Installation of large electric generators on islands</li> <li>▫ Tribal government of St. Paul formed</li> </ul>	
<b>1951</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▫ St. George mail delivery initiated</li> <li>▫ Clothing supplies eliminated</li> <li>▫ Private cars appear on the islands</li> </ul>	
<b>1953</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▫ Water system installed on St. Paul</li> <li>▫ Reindeer herd established on St. Paul.</li> </ul>	
<b>1954</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▫ Food supplies eliminated</li> </ul>	
<b>1955</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▫ Health care turned over to the Public Health Service</li> </ul>	
<b>1956</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▫ First movie theater on St. Paul</li> </ul>	
<b>1957</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▫ A successive North Pacific Fur Seal Convention signed by Canada, Japan, Russia and the U.S.</li> </ul>	
<b>1958</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▫ Alaska becomes state</li> </ul>	
<b>1959</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▫ Attempt to relocate islanders off the Pribilofs by the U.S. Fisheries</li> </ul>	
<b>1960 population</b>		378 (St. P) 264 (St. G)
<b>1960</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▫ School board organized on St. Paul</li> <li>▫ Sale of beer legalized on the islands</li> </ul>	
<b>1962</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▫ Federal civil service wage scale introduced on islands</li> <li>▫ State begins operation of Pribilof Island Schools</li> </ul>	
<b>1964</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▫ Exposé by Tundra Times on life of Pribilof Islanders under U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service</li> <li>▫ Fur Seal Act passed: transfer of some community services begins</li> </ul>	
<b>1966</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▫ Full U.S. citizenship granted</li> <li>▫ Small businesses established (movie theater, refreshment shops)</li> </ul>	
<b>1967</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▫ Alaska Federation of Natives organized</li> <li>▫ Loran Station and Weather Bureau begins to train locals</li> <li>▫ Airstrip built on St. George</li> </ul>	
<b>1968</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▫ Japan introduced stern-trawling factory ships with on-board surimi processing</li> <li>▫ Factory ships begin fishing in Pollock in the Eastern Bering Sea</li> </ul>	

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		450 (St. P) 163 (St. G)
<b>1970 population</b>		
<b>1971</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▫ Village of St. Paul incorporated</li> <li>▫ Tanadgusix Corporation established on St. Paul</li> <li>▫ Alaska Native Claims Settlement Act (ANCSA)</li> </ul>	
<b>1972</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▫ The Aleut Corporation formed as a result of the ANCSA</li> <li>▫ U.S. Marine Mammal Protection Act passed by Congress</li> </ul>	
<b>1973</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▫ Tanaq Corporation established on St. George</li> <li>▫ Animal rights groups harass islands</li> <li>▫ St. George seal harvest stopped</li> </ul>	
<b>1974</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▫ Local schools begin "Aleut" classes</li> <li>▫ First television on St. Paul</li> </ul>	
<b>1975</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▫ All major commercial fish and shellfish species of the Bering Sea region are considered overfished</li> <li>▫ First telephone on St. Paul</li> </ul>	
<b>1976</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▫ Eco-tourism begins on the Pribilof Islands</li> <li>▫ Major shift in climate of Bering Sea - associated with warmer temperatures</li> </ul>	
<b>1978</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▫ Pribilof Island Aleuts awarded \$8.6million settlement as partial compensation for unfair and unjust treatment by the federal government between 1870 to 1946</li> </ul>	
<b>1980 population</b>		551 (St. P) 158 (St. G)
<b>1980</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▫ Animal protectionists organize lobbying efforts to cut Pribilof budget entirely and terminate International Fur Seal Treaty</li> <li>▫ 96th Congress establishes a commission on wartime relocation and internment of civilians</li> <li>▫ Reindeer reintroduced to St. George</li> <li>▫ Pribilof Islands Unit of the Alaska Maritime National Wildlife Refuge established</li> </ul>	
<b>1981</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▫ Commercial halibut fishing begins on St. Paul</li> <li>▫ Limited subsistence seal harvest granted for St. George (quota = 350 seals)</li> <li>▫ TDX pilot project to harvest and process local halibut began</li> <li>▫ City of St. George established</li> <li>▫ Fur Seal Act Amendments passed by Congress ending federal government control of commercial fur seal harvest and daily life on the islands</li> </ul>	
<b>1983</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▫ Community services and fur seal management left to local entities</li> <li>▫ Local radio station established</li> <li>▫ US Senate fails to ratify the Fur Seal Treaty</li> <li>▫ TDX sells halibut processing operation to local IRA council</li> </ul>	
<b>1984</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▫ Commercial harvest of sub-adult fur seals discontinued on St. Paul</li> <li>▫ Commercial seal harvesting ceases on St. Paul</li> <li>▫ Trust fund established to help Pribilof economic transition</li> </ul>	
<b>1985</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▫ State of Alaska does not provide harbor improvement funding to supplement transition funds as assumed by federal government</li> <li>▫ First annual subsistence seal harvest</li> <li>▫ Area 4C designated</li> </ul>	
<b>1986</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▫ Department of Army Environmental Restoration Project begins</li> <li>▫ Aleutian and Pribilof Islands Restitution Act signed</li> <li>▫ IRA council leases processing facilities to PIP to process halibut, cod, and crab</li> </ul>	
<b>1988</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▫ Northern fur seals listed as "depleted" under the U.S. Marine Mammal Protection Act</li> </ul>	
<b>1989</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▫ First crab-processing plant set up</li> </ul>	

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		763 (St. P)
<b>1990 population</b>		138 (St. G)
<b>1990</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▫ Stellar Sea Lion placed on the U.S. Endangered Species List</li> <li>▫ Over 500 restitution payments made to eligible Aleuts</li> <li>▫ Native American Graves Protection and Repatriation Act (NAGPRA) signed</li> <li>▫ New harbor completed and docks built</li> </ul>	
<b>1991</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▫ Unipac acquires PIP assets, including St. Paul processing facilities; built a large crab plant</li> </ul>	
<b>1992</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▫ Aleutian and Pribilof Restitution Trust established</li> <li>▫ St. George Airport completed</li> <li>▫ CBSFA, APICDA and CDQ Program established</li> </ul>	
<b>1993</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▫ Pribilof Islands Stewardship Program begins</li> <li>▫ Trident fish processing plant built</li> <li>▫ St. George Harbor completed</li> </ul>	
<b>1994</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▫ Amchitka's nuclear testing facility officially closed</li> </ul>	
<b>1995</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▫ CDQ harvests begin: 50% of IPHC quota for Area 4C goes to CDQs</li> <li>▫ F/V Citress spills bunker-C oil killing thousands of birds</li> </ul>	
<b>1996</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▫ Pribilof Islands Restoration Advisory Board begins</li> <li>▫ Pribilof Environmental Clean-up Project Phase 1 begins</li> </ul>	
<b>1997</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▫ Adak Naval Air Station closes</li> <li>▫ Productivity and biomass of bottom species decreases from this year forward</li> </ul>	
<b>1998</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▫ Pribilof Islands Marine Mammal Commission (PIMMC) is formed</li> <li>▫ Aleut International Association formed</li> <li>▫ Alaska Commercial Company (ACC) opens a grocery business on St. Paul</li> <li>▫ Wind generation begins</li> </ul>	
<b>1999</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▫ Alaska Department of Fish and Game (ADF&amp;G) announces reduced opilio crab quota for fisheries</li> <li>▫ Pribilof Alaska Seafood Company (PASCO) forms</li> </ul>	
<b>2000 population</b>		532 (St. P)
<b>2000</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▫ Major shift in climate of Bering Sea - associated with warmer temperatures</li> <li>▫ Pribilof Environmental Clean-up Project Phase 2 begins</li> <li>▫ Unisea barge leaves St. Paul Harbor</li> </ul>	
<b>2005</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▫ Regulation change allows all Area 4C IFQ and CDQ fishermen to harvest their IFQ or CDQ in Area 4C or Area 4D.</li> </ul>	152 (St. G)

\*Alaska Department of Community and Economic Development data shows a zero population count for 1950, although this is known to be incorrect. There has always been a civilian population present in the community during this time span except during the evacuation period.

## **Notes**

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Sources Used:

BeringSea.com:

[http://www.beringsea.com/communities/Saint\\_Paul/museum/aleutindmov/timeline.php](http://www.beringsea.com/communities/Saint_Paul/museum/aleutindmov/timeline.php)

Aleutian Pribilof Islands Association website:

<http://www.apiai.com/history.asp?page=history>

NOAA website on the Bering Climate:

[http://www.beringclimate.noaa.gov/bering\\_status\\_overview.html](http://www.beringclimate.noaa.gov/bering_status_overview.html)

Downs, M.A., M. Galginaitis, and M. Watson. 2004. Social impact assessment of the environmental impact statement for Bering Sea and Aleutian Islands crab fisheries overview and community profiles. Juneau, Alaska: EDAW, Inc, prepared for the North Pacific Fishery Management Council and National Marine Fisheries Service.