

Great Pacific fears effects of closing fisheries areas

by A.J. McClanahan

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The Great Pacific Fish Co. Inc., which owns a 124½-foot trawler that cost about \$4 million, is worried about its future, according to Trefon Angasan Jr., chief executive officer.

"We're finally getting settled in, recovering from losses, and now we find ourselves in a position to plan long-term growth," Angasan said, explaining that in its first eight years of existence the firm lost about \$3 million.

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• Firm not 'domestic'

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Angason said the company is "stymied" by a proposal before the North Pacific Fisheries Management Council to establish a priority access area for domestic processors around Dutch Harbor by closing the area within 100 miles to all but domestic fishing.

Great Pacific is not considered "domestic" because it operates in a joint venture with Taiyo, a Japanese fish company. Great Pacific now depends on Bering Sea bottomfish for its revenue, and the Dutch Harbor area is the most promising, Angason said.

He said Great Pacific's trawler is one of the few wholly Alaskan catcher boats fishing in the Bering Sea bottom fishery. The vessel is capable of cat-

ching between 25,000 and 30,000 metric tons annually.

The problem Great Pacific faces, he said, is that without participating in a joint venture, the firm cannot feasibly deliver its catch to an on-shore facility.

"It takes up to six days, between catching, running to the shore facility, delivery, returning to the fishing grounds and again finding the fish," Angason said in recent testimony to the North Pacific Fisheries Management Council.

He said the six days lost in fishing time represent \$100,000 minimum to each delivery.

Angason said he hopes the council's action does not hurt Great Pacific because he believes it can be a viable and important resource for the Native villages that own it.