



Signing the agreement recently were St. Paul Mayor John R. Mercurief and Corps Col. William W. Kakel, seated. Behind them, from left, are St. Paul City Manager Vern McCorkle, attorneys Jim Szender and J. Anthony Smith and Corps officials Sam Christian and Harlan Moore.

Corps to start building St. Paul bottomfish harbor

Construction of a \$60 million bottomfish harbor at St. Paul will begin this summer, culminating the city of St. Paul's year-long effort to line up financing for the project, according to the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers.

An agreement signed recently between the city of St. Paul and the Army Corps of Engineers set in motion the city's construction contract with Kiewit-Pacific Co. The construction company was standing by to finalize supply contracts as soon as they received a notice to proceed on the project.

St. Paul Mayor John R. Mercurief signed a revised local cooperation agreement with the Corps in Anchorage last month. The agreement was the first in the nation to allow the federal government to pay local interests for the federal share of the project after construction is completed.

The original agreement was signed last summer, but construction of the project was postponed due to lack of funds. The revised agreement changed the construction schedule and reduced the cost to build the dock.

The revision also made allowances for a cost increase due to inflation during the past year and allows a \$2.87 million credit to the city for previously stockpiled armor rock at Cape Nome.

St. Paul and the Corps will cost share \$27 million of the project's construction cost. The federal government will reimburse up to 80 percent of the cost of constructing the breakwaters, an entrance channel and six-acre maneuvering area to a project depth of 18 feet. This federal share is estimated to be \$19.6 million. The federal government will maintain the breakwaters and the entrance channel after the project is completed and approved.

St. Paul finances all dock and moorage construction costs. The city plans to add 700 feet to the existing 200-foot long dock and add a berthing area and mooring facilities.

The dock will be built in three phases. All work on the project will be completed by March 31, 1992.

St. Paul residents believe the harbor will help fill an economic void left when the federally supported fur seal harvest was terminated.

St. Paul, Alaska's northernmost ice free harbor, plans to establish a marine services industry on the island. By eliminating the long trip to the Aleutians for service, Bering Sea commercial fishing boats will have more fishing time, thereby reducing the cost per pound of fish landed.