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From: Bromwich, Michael R

Sent: Friday, July 29, 2011 10:07 AM

To: OMM AK/Staff

Subject:

Dear Colleagues,

I wanted to send you a brief note of explanation and support. I regret very much the negative publicity over the past 24 hours that has resulted from one of your colleagues being placed on administrative leave in connection with an investigation by the Office of Inspector General.

We are limited in what we can say about a pending investigation, but I can assure you that the decision had nothing to do with his scientific work, or anything relating to a five-year old journal article, as advocacy groups and the news media have incorrectly speculated. Nor is this a "witch hunt" to suppress the work of our many scientists and discourage them from speaking the truth. Quite the contrary. In this case, it was the result of new information on a separate subject brought to our attention very recently.

As you know better than I do, there are people and groups who are all-too-ready to criticize the Alaska Regional Office -- and our agency generally -- in the service of specific agendas. We have worked hard over the past year to continue to build trust with the various stakeholders and constituencies -- to persuade them we will make decisions based on the best scientific information available. It is a sign of the work that remains to be done that so many individuals and groups were ready to criticize us without any knowledge of the facts that led to the decision -- and without asking about them. I am disappointed about that but

we simply need to work harder to change some of those attitudes. This tells us that won't happen overnight.

I selected Jim Kendall as the head of the Alaska Regional Office because he is an outstanding scientist, an inspirational leader, and someone who is well-equipped to move the office forward. Jim is doing a wonderful job -- I had my own judgment confirmed by you when I was in Alaska in May -- and I have great confidence that he will continue to provide the office with the type of leadership it needs.

Please be assured that you have my full support and that I look forward to working with you in the weeks and months ahead.

Warm regards,

MRB