

STATEWIDE IN ALASKA

Highlights: Alaska salmon packers have reason for optimism this season. After a nearly disastrous 1967 season, the total canned salmon pack as of mid-August is more than double last year's mid-August level. Optimistic forecasters place the total pack for the 1968 season at an estimated 3 1/4 million. The abundant salmon harvest is credited with adding \$5 million to the KETCHIKAN economy alone. VALDEZ is steadily restoring its fish processing industry destroyed in the 1964 tidal wave. Twenty-one fishing boats have been reported as making the ice-free port their home as well as a port for the sale of their catch.

Initial stages of construction have been completed on the multi-million dollar program to transform SKAGWAY'S waterfront into a modern dock and terminal to accommodate ore boats. The port facilities should be completed and in operation by August 1969. At that time railed-in ore from Canada is expected to begin arriving for sea transfer to industrial centers. The Bureau of Indian Affairs is sponsoring an elementary school construction program for the communities of SAVOONGA and GOLOVIN. The \$1.4 million project at Savoonga, which will accommodate about 130 students, is scheduled for completion in September 1969. At Golovin, elementary school children will benefit this fall from the \$42,000 school project now under construction. Both B.I.A. projects will utilize local labor in the construction. WRANGELL'S new \$2.4 million airport is nearing completion and will be open to traffic in September. A 4,000 foot unpaved air strip is being constructed at HOONAH under a joint venture of both public and private sectors.

The first of a string of barges carrying freight to the North Slope began arriving in August at Foggy Island near PRUDHOE BAY. The barges are being beached at Foggy Island, then the material and supplies are taken overland about 12 miles to drilling sites. A second oil company is scheduled to begin construction on a \$13 million oil refinery in the NORTH KENAI area. The refinery will produce jet fuel and marine diesel oil.

Employment: Total estimated employment in Alaska rose 2,700, a 2 percent increase from mid-July. Industries indicating advances over-the-month are manufacturing, construction, mining, trade, government, and transportation-communications & utilities. The remaining industries registered no month-to-month changes in employment. The gain in hires for manufacturing was influenced by increased activity in both the logging-lumber & pulp and food processing sectors. Both industries have been active in placing additional workers due to expanded activities. The employment increase in food processing is located in the salmon canneries and cold storage plants as fishermen continue to report catches in excess of last year. Construction continues advancing at a moderate pace. Employment increases in this industry group are spread statewide over projects ranging from highway, airport & harbor developments to housing, school, & shopping center projects. Crude oil & natural gas industries have increased their employment over-the-month, influencing a mining industry gain of 200. The annual statewide back-to-school sales campaigns waged by merchants stimulated business enough to increase employment by 100 in trade. Local government was the only sector of government to increase over-the-month as additional non-professional school personnel were hired by local authorities for the upcoming school year. Water transportation hires increased as more barges were needed to haul oil rig supplies and other freight to various ports in Alaska.