

Statewide in Alaska

April, 1970

Big Salmon Catch Expected: According to predictions, Alaska's 1970 salmon catch will be the State's largest in 30 years; nearly 100 million fish should be taken by fishermen this summer. This would result in a total salmon pack of around 5.6 million cases, better than double the 1969 figure. A salmon pack of this magnitude would comprise 10 percent of the total national fish production and nearly 20 percent of the value of that production. Much attention will be focused on the Bristol Bay area which expects the largest red salmon run in its history. However, major harvests of pink salmon are expected in both the South-central and Southeastern areas of the State.

Freezer Barge Completed: A 150 foot long seafood processing barge, built for the Kuskokwim Fisherman's Cooperative Incorporated of Bethel, was launched in Seattle in early May. The vessel, whose construction was financed through grants and loans by the Economic Development Administration, will be towed to the Kuskokwim River and is expected to be available for fishing operations by about June 10. The facility has a sharp freeze capacity of 50,000 pounds with a storage capacity of 500,000 pounds. It is anticipated that the facility will provide immediate benefits in terms of employment and increased incomes from higher fish prices for the 171 members of the cooperative. Depending upon the success of the venture, membership in the cooperative may be raised to 300 persons in the near future.

Uranium Found in Southeast Alaska: Core Drilling by Newmont Exploration Ltd, a subsidiary of Newmont Mining Corp., has confirmed the presence of commercial quantities of high grade uranium-thorium ore on Prince of Wales Island. The drilling was carried out on property of the Kendrick Bay Mining Company. Ore from the deposit is to be milled at the mine site and then shipped to Washington State for further processing. Preparations for further mining operations are expected to begin as soon as weather conditions permit. Because only minimal processing is to be done at the mine site, total employment will probably not exceed thirty persons.

Denali Copper Venture: In another hard rock mining project, Cities Service Minerals Corp. resumed work during May on a copper mining venture it is managing near Denali, Alaska. Plans include diamond drilling along a 1400 foot decline to evaluate the deposits at a greater depth than had previously been attempted. Currently an estimated 20 men are to be employed at the site with the possibility that the workforce will be expanded if results continue to be favorable.

Oil Company Expenses: According to figures released by the Alaska Oil and Gas Association, oil industry expenditures in Alaska totaled roughly \$2 billion during 1969. This accounts for about half of the total \$3.9 billion spent by the industry in Alaska. Of the \$2 billion, \$900 million was spent by companies in acquiring oil and gas leases on the North Slope, while the balance went for drilling, exploration and other operations.

Residents Being Recruited for Oilfield Training: Statewide recruitment is

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currently underway for 120 trainees to participate in a ten week industry-government sponsored training course to be conducted at Mount Edgecumbe. The course, which begins June 8, will provide disadvantaged Alaska residents with basic skills required for work in the State's oil industry. Instruction will be conducted by representatives of eight major oil companies and the State departments of Labor and Education with funding to be provided by the U. S. Manpower Administration. Training will be in areas such as general work habits, arctic survival, safety, and the use and maintenance of equipment and instruments.

Total Employment: Total estimated employment rose by 2400 over the month as Alaska's economy continued its seasonal expansion. Large gains were noted in construction, manufacturing, transportation and services. Over the year, total employment registered an advance of nearly 5,000, reflecting the continued steady economic growth that the State has experienced throughout most of the decade.

Mining: Employment in mining continued to drop, falling by 100 over the month and 300 over the year. Accounting for the decline is the spring thaw and delays in the granting of a right-of-way for the Trans Alaska Pipeline. Also figuring in the decline are negotiations concerning unitization <sup>2/</sup> of the Prudhoe Bay oil field. Although it has been agreed to unitize the field, specifics of the plan have yet to be worked out. Because of this, even if a pipeline completion date were known, many companies would be unable to proceed with development plans.

While the pace of work in the oil industry is slowing, employment in mineral mining appears on the upswing. Reports indicate that 1970 will see considerable mineral exploration throughout the State. Major companies expected to be operating in Alaska this summer include: Cities Services Mineral Corporation, Humble Oil and Refining Company, and El Paso Natural Gas Company.

Construction: Employment in construction rose by 700 over the month and 300 over the year. A major contributor to the advance is the steadily increasing level of building, road, and airport work in the Anchorage area. This, together with construction projects in other parts of the State, has apparently taken up some of the slack resulting from delays in the Trans Alaska Pipeline project.

Manufacturing: Increased activity in both the timber and food processing industries pushed employment ahead by 500 for manufacturing as a whole. Food processing employment rose by 200 as canneries prepared for the 1970 salmon season. Wood products employment rose by 300 as logging camps continued their seasonal expansion of operations. Employment in this sector was also

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<sup>2/</sup> Unitization refers to treating the whole oil field as one lease block. Under this system, companies would receive shares of oil produced from the field based upon extent of their holdings.