



20 percent of the world's northern fur seal population is found on St. George Island.

All photos by Bret Coburn unless otherwise stated.

St. George fishery is high priority

As an initial step towards entry into the commercial fishing industry, the St. George Tanaq Corporation opened a new fish processing plant June 15, 1983. Opening ceremonies were held July 15-17, 1983 with state officials in attendance. The project, administered by Mr. Anthony Merculief, Fisheries Manager for the Tanaq Corporation, has provided a new source of stimulation to the economy of St. George Island, along with much help from Iliodor Philemonoff, our Fisheries Coordinator.

During the 1982 season, St. George fishermen landed 14,000

pounds of halibut. With better equipment and much determination, the 1983 season's catch approached 94,000 net pounds. This figure represents a substantial accomplishment considering fishermen were fishing almost exclusively with hand lines. Long lining operations were just beginning when the season was abruptly cut short by the closure of area 4(c).

Even though St. George fishing interests were instrumental in getting the 200,000 pounds quota increased to 400,000 pounds in area 4(c), a large percentage of the quota was caught by processing

boats from Dutch Harbor. This essentially cut the season in half for St. George fishermen, severely hindering their efforts.

To protect the interests of local fishermen, the St. George Tanaq Corporation intends to wholeheartedly pursue a change in current regulations before the International Halibut Commission. Amendments to existing regulations providing a separate quota for day fishing operations should resolve this problem for next year. It is vital the International Halibut Commission consider this so-

(Continued on Page Ten)

St. George opens new fish-processing plant



St. George fisherman, "Sassy" Malavansky, in his skiff. Mist shrouded Bird Cliffs area in the background.

(Continued from Page Nine)

lution favorably as an equitable method to protect the development of St. George Island's fishing industry.

This year's halibut catch was marketed domestically. However, Pribilof crab fishing operations

are currently underway and a purchase agreement has already been made with the Hokuten Trawlers Association of Japan.

St. George fishermen should be commended for their efforts this year.