

# Herring problems addressed

How to properly manage one of Alaska's newest fisheries, the herring roe fishery will be the subject of a two-day meeting August 9 and 10 at the Alaska Native Foundation (ANF).

Rural residents from the Bristol Bay, Kuskokwim and Bering Straits area who have expressed interest in getting into the new industry have been invited to the meeting.

The relatively small-scale fishery can provide good economic benefits for villages in those areas, but there are a lot of questions that must be asked and answered first, according to Kay Koweluk, financial analyst for ANF who is coordinating the meeting.

Formerly, this fishery was run and managed almost exclusively by the Japanese, who value the roe highly and represent the main market for the herring roe.

But with the limitations on foreign fishing efforts off Alaska's shores that resulted from the establishment of the 200-mile limit, Alaskans have been attracted to the relatively new market opportunity.

In 1977, about 2,536 metric tons of herring were harvested in the Bristol Bay area. That amount increased to about 7,033 tons in 1978. Data on how much were caught this year are incomplete, but estimates place the catch far and above last year's effort.

Even more effort is expected in the fishery next year, as more and more of the area villages have become interested in the new fishing opportunity.

Current harvest guidelines for commercial exploitation of the fishery are conservative, due primarily to limited knowledge of the

resource, fish migration, and other scientific data. And, the fishery, although attractive, is an extremely high risk endeavor because of fluctuations in fish spawning, price variations, and the timing of the harvest.

The purpose of this week's meeting is to give more say to rural fishermen in the regulatory policies that have to be worked out by state and federal agencies. Any policy or economic decisions made by those agencies will have a direct impact on village fishing efforts.

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According to Koweluk, the meeting is a chance to share information and experience in order to improve the chances of success of all Native and rural fishermen.

The agenda for the meeting is as follows:

- 1). Welcome - Roger Lang, President, A.N.F.
- 2). Current Status of the Herring Fisheries and Domestic Allocation Harvest.
  - a) Ron Regnart; Alaska State Department of Fish and Game
  - b) Mark Hutton; North Pacific Fishery & Management Council
- 3). Proposals, Alaska Board of Fisheries; Jimmy Huntington, board member
- 4). Gear Techniques and training programs, John Doyle, Marine Advisory program, U.of A.
- 5). 1977 - 1979 Native Fishermen's Experiences Norton Sound Fishermen's Co-op.  
Security Cove  
Bristol Bay
- 6). Socio-Economic Research, Kay Larsen - B.B.-N.A., Pat Wennekens - Wennekens & Associates
- 7) Political Action
  - a) Herring
  - b) Salmon