

# Closure of Unimak False Pass Fishery Asked

News Release from: Bristol Bay Native Corporation; Bristol Bay Area Development Corporation; and Bristol Bay Native Association.

The following people attended the Kodiak Fish and Game Board hearings Nov. 27-Dec. 2, 1972: William Johnson, John Christensen, Nick Christensen, Nels A. Anderson, Jr. and Herman Schroeder, Sr. testified at the hearings.

The main point of the presentation centered around the closure of the Unimak False Pass Fishery during the month of June. Mr. Dean Paddock, former employee of the Alaska Department of Fish and Game, testified in behalf of Bristol Bay.

He has 17 years experience as a fisheries biologist and demonstrated conclusively that the Unimak False Pass Fishery is taking Bristol Bay stock during the month of June.

Sen. J. Hammond, Earl Molohan, Jake Gregory and Dean Paddock remained in Kodiak for the remainder of the board hearings. The Fish and Game is expected to act on the Bristol Bay proposal to closing the Unimak False Pass Fishery in June.

A quota system was proposed by the staff of the Alaska Dept. of Fish and Game. This was violently opposed by the Bristol Bay delegation. The reason for opposition is simply that a quota would only be a license to steal.

The Unimak False Pass Fishery is only a recent gill net fishery and should never have been allowed in the first place. Governor Egan was contacted by phone and notified of the wishes of Bristol Bay.

Nels A. Anderson, Jr. commended the governor for his concern and felt encouraged that the governor would continue to keep the fishery's problem a high priority.

The discussion touched on the problem of the Japanese fisheries, predators, and the high volume of fisherman and gear in Bristol Bay. Many Alaska residents who are salaried year round utilize the salmon fishery. Also, many outside fisherman come in to take the Bristol Bay fish.

This pressure on a diminishing salmon run decreases the average catch per boat, thereby reducing the average annual in-

come of watershed residents.

This problem is especially harmful to those people who rely totally on the summer salmon catch for their annual income.

This last fishing season, Bristol Bay fisherman spent most of their time on the beach while the Unimak False Pass fisherman fished 24 hours a day, five days a week.

The local fisherman are very concerned for the fish. They know that the fish must escape in order to perpetuate themselves.

Bristol Bay people have never objected to proper management and perpetuation of the salmon stock. They have sacrificed and watched while others take Bristol Bay salmon before they reach the streams.

"The Bristol Bay people," stated Nels Anderson, "can no longer tolerate the taking of our fish. Intermingled stock, as they migrate to Bristol Bay and points north, should not be disturbed. The Kuskokwim, Norton Sound and Yukon Fisheries are affected by the same factors as the Bristol Bay Fishery. Bristol Bay is calling for a unified voice to do what must be done. The Alaska Fish & Game Board must act to protect the fish and twenty thousand pairs of eyes are watching to see that justice is done."