

Unalakleet Plans To Establish Fish Processing Plant

The town of Unalakleet has proposed an establishment of a new industry, a fish processing plant, to utilize the fish resources from Unalakleet, Shaktoolik, and Moses Point areas.

The town's council voted to make an application for a loan from the Greater Anchorage Local Development Corporation and the Small Business Administration for the construction of such a facility.

Unalakleet and the Alaskan Smokey Joes, Inc. of Anchorage have made an agreement, that in the event the facility is completed, the latter will supervise the operation initially until such time the local people become proficient in handling the job themselves.

"We hope that this can be done by giving some of our people on the job training with the assistance of the Employment Assistance branch of the Bureau of Indian Affairs," said Frank Degnan, mayor of Unalakleet, recently.

Degnan said that the following positions will require on the job training; plant manager, fish receiving supervisor, fish processing supervisor, fish storing and shipping supervisor, and 14 fish processors.

In addition to the fish processing plant, Unalakleet hopes to establish a fish smoking and drying unit. Degnan said that this will also require on the job training for some of the Unalakleet people.

"We have an assured market, at a good price, for every pound of hard smoked salmon we can produce in the village," Degnan said.

He also said that they need an experienced commercial fisherman for a season to show the local fishermen proficiency in ways of efficient fish catching methods.