

# Herring permit approved

JUNEAU — Gov. Steve Cowper recently approved the processing of up to 1,600 metric tons of herring by Japanese processors in the Togiak District in order to ensure Alaska fishermen a market for their catch in the recent herring opening.

Cowper signed an internal waters processing permit shortly before the opening for the earliest herring fishery in recent memory in Bristol Bay. The seiner opening was from 11 to 11:30 a.m., and the gillnet opening from noon to 5 p.m. last month.

"The fish arrived so early this year, there weren't enough domestic processors on the grounds to handle the run," Cowper said. "The permit guarantees that our

State Department of Fish and Game biologists anticipate a harvestable surplus of 10,700 short tons of herring at Togiak this year. In 1985, some 16,310 short tons were harvested, with 79 percent caught by seiners and the rest by gillnetters.

Cowper based his action on the federal Magnuson Fishery Conservation and Management Act, which grants the governor of any state authority to give permission for foreign vessels to process within a state's internal waters if domestic processors lack the capacity to handle the fishery.