

# Herring development plan needed Discrimination charge lodged with FAA

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commercial harvests," explained David Nanalook, Sr. of Togiak. "I can see people wiping out their own food supply for a few dollars today..."

And, most of the persons attending the conference agreed that the focus of that problem is the degree to which non-local purse seiners should be allowed to exploit the fishery as opposed to the local gill net fleets.

An example of this problem occurred in the Shaktoolik area when 23 purse seiners showed up. They took about 640 metric tons while local gill netters took only about 45 metric tons.

The local gill netters are small, lack mechanical equipment, and because of their low carrying capacity have to make many trips between the fishing grounds and processors. The purse seiners, on the other hand are larger, packed with mechanical equipment, and are much more efficient. Just a few of them could take the whole Western Alaska harvest unless proper guidelines are established.

A relatively small monetary investment is needed for a gill netter. Most of the fishermen at the meeting said they would be willing to invest about \$10,000 to get the proper equipment for a good return. But, as all the fishermen agreed, gill netting is back-breaking work, and some allowed they might want to get a purse seiner of their own in the future, through a fisheries cooperative or some other arrangement.

Purse seiners represent a relatively large investment and thus must seek a high return. And it is the pressure from this combination that makes the local fishermen wary.

"This virgin industry has always been violated and Western Alaska fishermen face many obstacles to realize goals of local benefit of traditional herring resources," ANF President Roger Lang told the group. "Purse seiners have influence, have dollars to back them up, they have boats to spare due to the decline in resources elsewhere, and herring fishing in Western Alaska fits in with their fishing schedule."

But, David Hoffman, a staffer on the Alaska State Legislature's Interim Committee on Subsistence, points out that the seiners were the entrepreneurs who first opened the fishery and should not be unreasonably restricted. "They have developed, though considerable risk-taking and hard work a

highly efficient method of taking herring," Hoffman said in a draft report to his committee.

He recommended in the report that a minimum take of 33 percent be reserved to local gill netters. This he said might provide adequate protection for gill netters, while not imposing unreasonable restrictions on seiners.

But, Jimmy Huntington, a member of the Board of Fisheries and an ardent supporter of Western Alaska fishermen's interests, said the local people have a prior right to the resource since it has been a traditional source of their livelihood. "The state has the obligation to give the local people the opportunity to earn this livelihood which is now being encroached by commercial pressures," Huntington said.

At the conclusion of their meeting, most of those attending agreed on a set of general goals. First, they should seek unity among themselves in order to present a united front when approaching the various state and federal regulatory agencies. And, along that line, local benefit from traditional herring fishing should be emphasized, with more input by local people over the management policies determined by regulatory agencies. Above all, the attendees agreed, escapement of the herring should be protected so that subsistence use of the herring comes first over commercial exploitation.

And to accomplish those general goals, the group agreed that the Western Alaska fishermen should seek and use local planning funds, see that more research is done, develop financing programs for small fishermen, investigate markets more closely, and develop a marketing association. In addition, local processing opportunities should be explored, and alternate uses of herring studied.

The fishermen have only a short time to accomplish these objectives. The North Pacific Fisheries Management Council is preparing a herring management plan, which they say will be ready sometime in November. In the meantime, the council convenes August 22 for an overall yeild meeting.

Even more urgent, proposals for management of the fishery have to be in Juneau by September 15 so that they may be considered by the Alaska Board of Fisheries for action in early December. The fishermen

also hope to have developed a village plan by November also for consideration by the Board of Fisheries. And, the fishermen have to have their act together by mid-December in order to plan strategy for the next session of the legislature.

In order to accomplish all this, a series of meetings have been scheduled for September and October. Herring seminars will be held in Kotzebue on September 6, in Nome on September 8, in Unalakleet on September 10, and in Bethel on October 6.

As Jesse Foster of Security Cove said at the beginning of last week's meeting, "We made many mistakes this past year; we will not

make these mistakes next year." He said he expected to see better equipment, more knowledge, and more experience. "I expect to see two-to-three times more local fishermen out."

A class action discrimination complaint was filed with the Alaska Region Office of the Federal Aviation Administration (FAA) by Frank Peratrovich.

Peratrovich, currently a community service specialist with the Bureau of the Census office in Alaska, said in his complaint that he and Frank Pagano were discriminated against when they were denied employment as Chief of the Civil Rights Staff for FAA's Alaska Region, a job each applied for last May.

In his complaint, which was sent to FAA Equal Employment Opportunity Counselor Clyde L. Abels late Friday, Peratrovich estimated that 70,000 Alaska Natives have been discriminated by FAA hiring policies throughout Alaska.

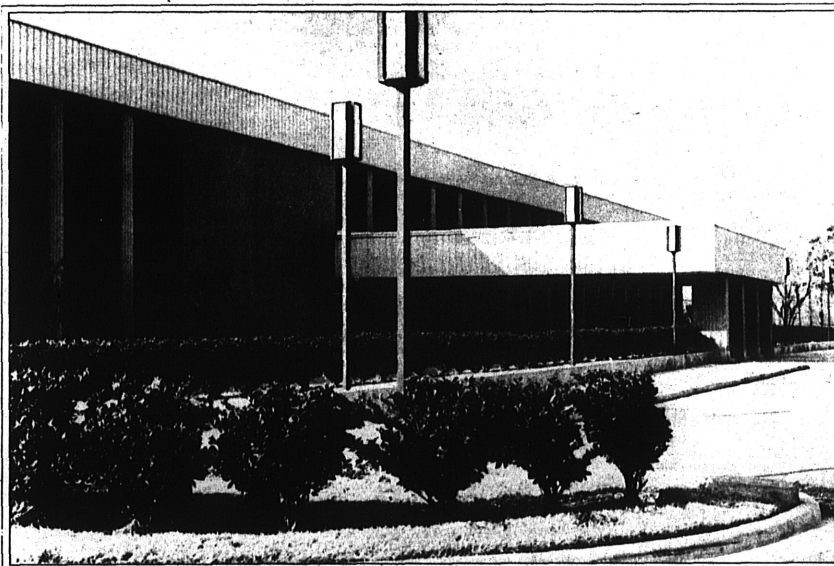
"Either myself or Frank Pagano should be placed in the position of Chief of Civil Rights Staff for FAA's

Alaska Region with back pay to the date we would have been selected had we not been discriminated against and that a vigorous effort be made to identify other Alaska Natives who were similarly discriminated against and that affirmative relief be provided them," Peratrovich's complaint reads.

Peratrovich claimed that Alaska Natives have been denied employment opportunities not only in initial hire, but also in promotions.

"Even though the class action counselor admits that Alaska Natives comprise 24 per cent of the State of Alaska's population FAA's Alaska Region only employs 5 per cent Alaska Natives and 70 per cent of those Alaska Native employees are employed in clerical and wage board type positions," said Peratrovich.

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