

Begich Announces Report on Foreign Fishing Off U.S. Coasts

Congressman Nick Begich announced the results of the August, 1972 REPORT ON FOREIGN FISHING OFF U.S. COASTS published by the National Marine Fisheries Service of the U.S. Department of Commerce.

Foreign fishing off Alaska peaked in July when over 500 vessels were observed, and decreased by almost 50 per cent in August.

The decrease was due, in large part, to the departure of the Japanese salmon fishing fleets (about 240 vessels).

The largest Japanese fishery in August was for Alaska pollock (over 100 vessels), now in its sixth month.

Japan's catch of Alaska pollock for the East Bering Sea increased from 175,000 metric tons in 1964 to an estimated 1,400,000 tons in 1971 when it

represented 80 per cent of Japan's total East Bering Sea catch.

The second largest fishery, in terms of vessels, was that for Pacific crabs (48 vessels). Tanner crab, rather than king crab, was the main species sought, but its catches this year are reportedly 30 per cent smaller than in 1971.

Other minor Japanese fisheries off Alaska in August were

for Pacific ocean perch (18 stern trawlers), various groundfish (24 stern trawlers), and sablefish (8 longliners).

In contrast to the Japanese effort, that of the Soviet fishermen was small. Only 32 vessels were observed, most of them in ocean perch and other demersal fisheries.

The number of South Korean vessels fishing off Alaska decreased from 4 to 2 stern traw-

lers in August. The two trawlers which had been fishing off the Pribilof Islands in the central Bering Sea departed.

The two remaining stern trawlers continued fishing for ocean perch in the Segum-Amukta Passes area in the central Aleutians.

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Happy Valley Settled

JUNEAU The state has received \$3,000 in compensation for environmental damage from Alyeska Pipeline Service Company for an oil spill which occurred last summer at the company's Happy Valley camp on the North Slope.

Attorney General John Havelock said Alyeska was charged with violations of Alaska's environmental protection act after diesel fuel seeped from a broken underground line into a small stream adjacent to the camp.

Dr. Max Brewer, environmental conservation commissioner, said the break in the line apparently was caused by contraction of the ground during freeze-up.

The frozen soil encasing the pipe prevented other than minor leakage until spring thaw when an estimated 1,000 gallons of fuel leaked from the broken line before being detected, he said.

Brewer said Alyeska personnel had done "a conscientious job of clean-up on the spill" and had taken "positive steps" to prevent future spills from occurring.

"The underground line which caused the spill has been replaced by a protected, above ground line and a metering system has been placed on the line so it will be easier to monitor fuel consumption and spot any problems immediately," he said.

Brewer said Alyeska officials, who had not designed or built the Happy Valley camp, had agreed to inspect all their temporary camps for environmental problems which "periodically crop up when a camp goes into housekeeping status."

Brewer said he had discovered that "once a camp basically deactivates and goes into a housekeeping or holding status, the potential for environmental problems increases. By asking Alyeska officials to thoroughly check their temporary camps, we hope to prevent incidents such as the Happy Valley spill from occurring."

He said the Department of Environmental Conservation had received "excellent cooperation" from Alyeska officials during all phases of the Happy Valley incident and noted that the company's overall environmental record in Alaska is "very encouraging."

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