

RURALCAP's ACTION REPORTS

RurALCAP



The weekly newsletter of the NON-PROFIT, PRIVATE CORPORATION which serves rural Alaska in the battle against poverty in our state.

An information and education function of Rural Alaska Community Action Program, Inc.



Vol. IV, No. 7

May 30, 1969

Natives Learn New Roe Process

International Seafoods, Inc., a Seattle-based firm engaged in fishing in Alaskan waters, has offered to train some 20 Native Alaskans to work in its processing operations this summer.

Robert Needham, company president, said the firm is engaged in herring processing and will maintain four operations this year; roe operation, Halibut Cove 2; roe operation in the Kodiak Island area; aramaki (Japanese roe style) operation in Halibut Cove; and aramaki and frozen salmon operation in the Kodiak area.

Miss Verna Mickelson, director of the Nome Regional Action Center, received the applications and selected the men through the job bank at the Nome Center. Miss Mickelson coordinated with Mrs. Mary Gange, director of Operation Mainstream in RurALCAP, for further selections and transportation for the men. They were all selected from villages in the northwestern region of Alaska.

The first group of men arrived in Homer late last month to begin on-the-job training on the M/V Victor. A second group of 10 men arrived in Homer on May 3 and were transported to the company's Halibut Cove operation.

Norimichi Suzuki is the chief technician and trainer. He is a graduate of the University of Seigo, Japan, majoring in Economics. Suzuki has spent nine years in research of fishery technology. The trainees are processing and exporting a finished Japanese product from Alaska to Japan.

The first group of trainees will work aboard the Victor until about June 10, when they are expected to be able to find similar employment in the Kodiak or Bristol Bay areas for the rest of the season. The second group is working at Halibut Cove until early August.

A third group of 10 men may be trained later for work on a second processing vessel, but plans are tentative, a company

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Aboard the International Seafoods, Inc. vessel, M/V Victor, Alaska Native trainees learn the technique of processing salmon and herring roe. The training is provided by the Seattle based company. Robert Needham, president of the company, offered this training to the Alaskans rather than import labor.

Heavy Equipment Maintenance Operator Training Completed

Trainees of the heavy equipment operator/maintenance course have completed the two-week course and are now returning to their homes. Men from all over the state have learned to operate D-4, D-7 and D-8 caterpillar tractors; two and one-half ton trucks, jeeps, and other heavy equipment.

Part of the on-the-job training was building a dike at Seward to protect homes from the rising Resurrection River, and pushing a road through as far as possible towards the glacier. Trainees working with land graders improved Seward's motorcycle race track and the Lowell Point Road at the request of the City of Seward.

Loading the equipment began on

Friday, May 22, and was completed on the following day. The shipment consisted of about 19 pieces designated for villages in the Northwest area of Alaska. They will travel to Kodiak by military cool barge and on to the Northwest by other barges that serve the vicinities where the equipment is scheduled to go.

Art Jett, RurALCAP's supply specialist who was instrumental in arranging for the equipment, said, "This has been a very challenging and satisfying experience for me, to see the completion, personally, after such a long waiting time!"

A more extensive and detailed mechanic's training session will be held this fall, Oct. 6 through Dec. 12, in Seward for those same trainees.

RurALCAP



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Profit By Building

Tourists passing Mentasta on the Glenn Highway near Tok Junction will soon see a traditional Indian village, unmixed with other cultures. The building of this unique project is being wholly done by women ranging in age from 22 to 50 years. The men are helping with the heavier work.

According to Mrs. Mary Gange, director of Operation Mainstream in RurALCAP, many people in the Tok area know how the local Indians lived years ago. The older people are instructing the younger ones and supervising construction of the "Indian Village."

The Mentasta project is one of demonstration to motivate other Native communities to preserve their cultures, to take pride in their heritage and at the same time, draw tourist revenue into the community.

The village will be located just off the Glenn Highway, near Mentasta. It will include a store displaying authentic art and craft products; a 6 x 6 food cache; and log housing typical of Indian villages years ago. The houses will have fireplaces, tables and benches all hand-made.

Also on display will be bark utensils, fish and meat drying racks and dip nets. These items will be used in demonstrations showing the Indian's way of life and also ceremonial dances.

Five acres of land has been donated to the project by Ruth Hicks who homesteaded land just outside the village. Virgil McClure has donated to the project his time and heavy equipment on an in-kind basis. He has cleared the donated

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Mountain Village's "rammed earth" experimental storage house has been tested and endured Alaska's winter months. Constructed last fall, the unit has 6-ft. thick walls with a wooden-frame roof and is divided into two parts. The larger portion is the freezer room, the remaining part a cooler. Villagers now have a place to store their foodstuffs and get supplies as they need them.

Training Ended

In-Service trainees have completed another session of leadership training this past week. Highlighting the schedule was Planning and Project Management with Leadership and Human Relations being closely attached.

This particular session dealt mostly with specific problems, where former sessions were more general in text. Instructors were teaching on their particular field of economics and development.

The instructors were: Jim Mott/Frank Peterson on community development, village administration and regional board meetings; A Bureau of Indian Affairs sanitary engineer taught village hygiene; Frank Peterson on Community Service Corps workshop; Emil Notti on Alaska Federation of Natives and Alaska Native Brotherhood (Arctic); and Chuck Harrison instructed on leadership, human relations, and planning and project management.



RurALCAP leaders training in Anchorage while in service seated from left to right are: Dolores Padilla, Kodiak; Judith Cooper, Hoonah; William Johnson, Dillingham; Truman Emberg, Dillingham; James Nathaniel, Ft. Yukon; and Markle Ewan, Gulkana. Standing: Roland Robinson, ATAP trainer; Richard Stitt, Juneau; Adam John, Anchorage; Donald Peter, Ft. Yukon; Steven Hotch, Klukwan; Prof. Donald McIntosh, Instructor; George Hobson, Copper Center; and Kelly Simeonoff, Kodiak.

Decisions Pending

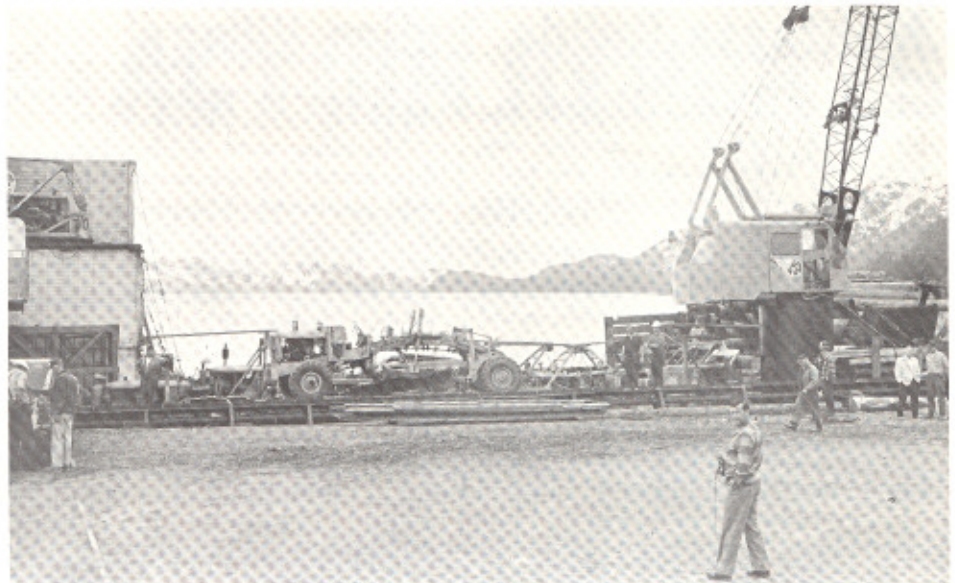
A controversy between private logging companies, the U. S. Forest Service, state forestry officials, and residents in the Southeast Region has reached major proportions regarding the exportation of round yellow and red cedar logs to foreign processors.

The U. S. Forest Service held a public advisory hearing May 5 in Juneau to determine whether Alaskan logs sold from national forest lands between May 15, 1969 through Dec. 31, 1971 are surplus to the needs of domestic utilization and processing. If found surplus, these logs would be declared available for export from the United States.

Residents of the Southeast Region gave statements strongly against cedar log export, and favored primary manufacturing of them within the state. Richard Stitt of Juneau urged that since a shake mill has been started in Klawock, the need of this and other possible small industries be considered instead of exporting the logs.

Steve Hotch, a member of the Southeast Advisory Board of RurALCAP, said, "The logging companies pay the Alaska people \$18 a thousand board feet, but if they send round logs outside the United States unprocessed, the companies can get as much as two to three times that amount thus making a substantial profit and leaving the Alaskan workers unemployed. Unemployment of the Alaskan workers is the main objection of the Southeastern residents."

A similar hearing was held Dec. 3, 1968 in which wood processors announced a mill designed to cut cedar as well as spruce and hemlock was under construction in Metlakatla. At that time, they indicated a demand for both species of



The road grader is being loaded onto a military cool barge is part of the surplus equipment acquired by RurALCAP. It is on its way via Kodiak to northwestern Alaska villages to build roads, airstrips, etc. in developing rural areas.

cedar of about 200 million board feet annually. As a result of this testimony, the Secretary of Agriculture concluded during the period of Jan. 1, 1969 through Dec. 31, 1971 no cedar from Forest Service sales would be considered surplus to domestic needs.

Later, however, it became increasingly doubtful that a local domestic market could be found for Alaska yellow cedar logs. Therefore the second hearing was scheduled. Written and oral statements from about 25 people were received.

The Secretary's decision as to disposition of cedar logs produced from sale areas sold between May 15, 1969 and Dec. 31, 1971 will be announced in the very near future. The complete record of the statements taken are now in Washington, D.C., awaiting the Secretary's decision.

Receives Engine

The Noorvik sawmill has received and installed an engine for the mill. The International gas diesel engine was set in place May 17. The sawmill began operation for raw lumber May 21 and the purchase of finished lumber is expected to take place within a few weeks.

Art Jett, RurALCAP's supply specialist, met with the Indian Reorganization Act (IRA) Council and one member of the Noorvik City Council to discuss how the sawmill will be operated. Both groups decided that the IRA Council would be in charge of the sawmill.

James K. Wells was appointed supervisor of the sawmill and Raymond George as the operator.

Both councils agreed that all lumber would be purchased at a reasonable rate so that all Natives would benefit. The councils also agreed that if no money be found available, raw timber could be used on a 50-50 basis. Villagers will do their own logging and pay the mill for finish work, in lumber or cash.

Robert Newlin, president of the Noorvik City Council, was informed of this agreement by Frank Ferguson, Kotzebue Regional Action Center director for RurALCAP.

A voluntary Legal Services program is being started in some part of the U.S. Covington and Burling, one of Washington, D.C.'s most prestigious law firms, will assign two lawyers for full-time work on the Neighborhood Legal Services program in July.



The heavy equipment shown above being renovated by trainees during the mechanic's training course in Seward, sponsored by the Office of Education, is now being loaded onto the military cool barge going to villages to be used in developing the rural areas.

Mentasta Builds 'Indian Village'

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acreage and put a road through to ease log hauling operations. McClure also taught the women to operate the heavy equipment, a simplified on-the-job type training.

The women are being trained in surveying techniques and land grading. Mrs. Gange said they have been active in the past in helping construct their own homes and are now showing what they can do on their own. They will also be trained in building traditional steam baths, skin

New Process

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spokesman said.

The spokesman said both United States and Japanese technicians will serve as instructors. They will teach care and handling of freshly-caught fish prior to processing, and the techniques for handling, processing, grading and packing herring roe, export salmon and salmon roe.

Initial training sessions were held in Homer before the trainees moved to the processing barges. During the initial training the men were paid a set wage and provided room and board. On the processing barge, the men are paid according to the amount of processed fish, by weight.

Company spokesmen indicated they were interested in training Native Alaskans in the new processing technique, rather than importing Filipino labor from Washington state.

RurALCAP is loaning the trainees transportation funds to and from Homer for the sessions, which the men will repay upon gaining full-time employment as a result of the training.

stretching racks, bark utensils and other implements of the Indian culture.

The village store, which is being built first, already has a foundation and some walls constructed from peeled logs. Most of these women have families and are caring for their families while continuing with the job of building and log hauling for their "Indian Village."

Mrs. Gange justifies this type of project with this concept in mind; it is hoped that the Mentasta project will present an opportunity to the Indians to explain their method of living and working to tourists, and how their living pattern is adapted to Alaska's climatic conditions and today's cultural conditions.



The above photo shows the bins where the freshly-caught fish are kept prior to processing. The trainees are instructed in the care and handling of these fish in the bins. The trainees are learning how to handle, process, grade, pack and export the fish under the new process.

Alaska Railroad Needs Laborers

Anyone wishing to work as railroad section or extra gang laborer, may apply at the Alaska Railroad personnel office in the depot at First & "D" Streets in Anchorage. The business office hours are 8-12 a.m. and 1-5 p.m.

Kotzebue area residents may receive their applications at the RurALCAP Regional Action Center in Kotzebue.

Extra gang laborers construct and maintain track on a 40-hour work week basis. Overtime will be the exception rather than the rule.

A rigid physical examination by a Railroad physician, including hearing and vision, will be given. Heavy work shoes, clothing, gloves and raincoat are necessary apparel.

Applicants must make their own personal arrangements for travel and bring proof of an honorable discharge from military service, if they have been in the Armed Forces.

Payday is every two weeks and there is a lag of 14 days in pay periods. Sufficient spending money should be brought to carry workers over this period.

Sleeping quarters are furnished in outfit cars, meals cost \$2 per meal and are deducted from paychecks. Workers are required to eat 3 meals per day for 6 days and 2 meals on Sunday. Employees must supply their own bedding, towels, soap and toilet articles.

These mobile gangs are stationed at various line points and employees can get to Anchorage or Fairbanks on infrequent occasions.

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