

**ALASKA DEPARTMENT OF FISH AND GAME
DIVISION OF COMMERCIAL FISHERIES
NEWS RELEASE**



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Date Issued: May 17, 2017
Time: 12:00 p.m.

2017 NORTON SOUND COMMERCIAL HERRING BAIT FISHERY OPENS

Herring catches have been reported in the Unalakleet area since Monday and at the request of the buyer, the department opened the commercial herring bait fishery to set gillnets at 12 noon today until further notice. Norton Sound Seafood Products plans to buy approximately 75 tons of bait herring this season. Permit holders will need to check with NSSP before fishing to make sure there is a market for their catch.

There is over 6,000 tons of herring quota this year, but there is no buyer interest for the sac roe fishery.

Leaving the herring bait fishery open continuously allows the buyer to direct the bulk of the fishing fleet to areas where harvest efficiency can be maximized. To commercial fish for bait herring, permit holders must have a valid 2017 bait or sac roe herring permit and an ADF&G vessel license is required. Crew members must have a 2017 crew member license or current year state of Alaska commercial fishery permit. For example, a 2017 Norton Sound king crab or salmon permit can substitute as a crewmember license if one intends to crew on a herring vessel.

The ADF&G Unalakleet field office is not yet open and a test fishery crew will not be conducting operations this season. Permit holders should contact the Nome ADF&G office for information needs.

If you have any questions regarding the commercial bait herring fishery, please call the ADF&G Nome Area office at 1-800-560-2271 or 443-5167.

Good Luck and Good Fishing.