

## Nearly Half Kodiak Jobs Tied Directly to Fishing

Wednesday, 08 August 2012

{audio}/images/stories/mp3/120808.fisheries\_econ.mp3{/audio}

Jay Barrett/KMXT

Whether you work in the seafood industry in Kodiak or not, odds are your presence here is partially due to commercial fishing - even if it's in a service or supporting role. That statement is reinforced by figures compiled by the Kodiak Chamber of Commerce and published in its August newsletter.

Lale Gurer is the economic development specialist at the chamber. Using figures from Fish and Game and the Department of Labor, about 45 percent of Kodiak's jobs are directly tied to the sea - either as a fisherman or a cannery worker.

Fishermen account for about a quarter of all jobs in Kodiak, with a payroll of \$118-million in 2011. Processing workers brought in another \$73-million.

-- (Fishing Econ 1                    10 sec                    "Twenty percent is the number of employment of the seafood industry, but if you look at the regional wages, the seafood industry accounts for 28 percent of the total.")

She says the figures for the cannery workers are more solid than the ones for fishermen, because the latter are harder to count:

-- (Fishing Econ 2                    30 sec                    "This was taken from the Department of labor's last year's study. They did a survey of active permit holders and estimated crew and then the Department of Labor post those numbers just for the seafood processing industry because they don't have any record for fishermen to be able to follow. Because they calculate that based on unemployment insurance and fishermen don't have to report it.")

Government payroll at all levels: city, borough, state and the feds, totals \$67-million and accounts for about 27 percent of all wages outside of fishing. Education and health services accounted for \$32-million in wages, while trade and utilities saw \$26.7-million in wages.

Gurer also broke down fish type and ex-vessel value for Kodiak. Groundfish - mainly pollock and cod - represented 75 percent of the harvest, and 44 percent of the value. Salmon accounted for 21 percent of the catch and 28 percent of the value. Halibut, which has seen record prices in recent years, accounted for only 2 percent of landings in Kodiak, but 22 percent of the value. Crab, herring and other species make up the rest.

You can find out more in the August "Currents," the newsletter of the chamber of commerce, available at Kodiak.org.

###