

Cowper's vetoes, bills hit legislative snags

by Heidi Bradner

for the Tundra Times

JUNEAU — Gov. Steve Cowper's vetoes and bills ran into trouble in the legislative Special Session, but many of these items were not of critical importance to rural communities.

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• Rural communities to receive funds

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However, it was significant that the core rural lawmakers in the Bush Caucus sided strongly with Cowper on the veto items.

Bush legislators did not make public their reasons for siding with the governor, but it was apparant rural lawmakers hoped to protect their projects in the capital budget, which was left undetermined when the regular session adjourned in May.

The Special Session closed with the approval of an \$89 million capital budget that treated rural areas well.

Among key small community projects was \$2 million for Unalaska to

upgrade old World War II era water systems, which still utilize wooden staves and is in danger of failure.

The project will keep water flowing to Unalaska fish processing plants and help the development of a bottomfish industry and the expansion of onshore fish plants in the future, according to Sen. Fred Zharoff, D-Kodiak.

Another critical appropriation will give \$5.7 million to St. George, in the Pribilofs, to complete their half-done harbor project. Funds for neighboring St. Paul were deferred until 1988, but lawmakers were expected to add language expressing strong support for inclusion next year.

Other key rural projects are: