

# New Direction for RurAL CAP seen at Kodiak Today

From Our Anchorage Bureau

The annual meeting of the RurAL Alaska Community Action Program begins today in Kodiak, and observers expect anything but a dull, uneventful three-day session.

"Reorganization of RurAL CAP towards a strong, statewide issue advocacy effort promises to make this meeting the liveliest in years," said Gordon Jackson, president of the Board of Directors.

"We are proposing a major

change in direction that will make the organization more responsive and effective to the needs of our constituency," Jackson continued.

According to Jackson, the staff will propose funding the internal management of three non-profit Native associations, Kawerak, Bristol Bay and Copper River.

"This, however, will be the last year," Jackson commented.

"Secondly, we propose to fund three or four regions to develop

a program concentrating on attaching one or two major issues in their regions that will eliminate or alleviate the causes and conditions of poverty.

The staff will also propose a number of major statewide issues for advocacy by RurAL CAP during the next year. Those issues will include: legislative, subsistence and health and social services related issues.

RurAL CAP also hopes to provide regional support, training and technical assistance and

monitoring to find out if the new direction is working effectively.

Jackson also expects some "lively" discussion centering around the Hand Book for Bilingual/Bicultural Education, being proposed by the state for adoption by the Regional Education Attendance Areas.

"Many have commented throughout the state that a handbook accepted by the regulations of the Office of Civil Rights will dictate thereby circumventing local control in the REAA's," Jackson said.

Jackson also cited the "unorthodox" way the Office of Civil Rights determined the REAA's in non-compliance with federal

regulations regarding bilingual education.

All information regarding the bilingual education issue will be presented to the Board in a position paper prepared by the staff. The Board is expected to adopt a formal position to be presented to the State Department of Education as testimony in the matter.

Commissioner Ron Skoog of the State Department of Fish and Game will be guest speaker at the meeting, which will be held Sept. 14-16 at the American Legion Hall.

Also on the agenda is the election of Board officers, where Jackson is expected to retain the Presidency.