

Blatchford to lead DCRA, Usera named labor head

JUNEAU — Gov. Walter J. Hickel announced the appointment of Nancy Bear Usera as commissioner of the Department of Labor and Edgar Blatchford as commissioner of the Department of Community and Regional Affairs.

Usera, 41, is currently president and chief executive officer of the Alaska Credit Union League and Affiliates, a trade association representing Alaska's 18 state and federally chartered credit unions.

"The key to Alaska's economic future is having a qualified, trained, available work force," said Usera. "The face of the work force is changing, and we need to prepare both businesses and workers to meet the needs of the future."

Blatchford, 40, is the editor and publisher of The Tundra Drums and The Seward Phoenix Log. He is also the chairman of the board for Chugach Alaska Corporation, where he is responsible for implementing all corporate policies both public and private. He has been a board member for 13 years.

Blatchford holds a journalism degree from Columbia University and a J.D. degree from the University of Washington.

"There's a great deal of enthusiasm in the Hickel administration," said Blatchford. "I'm pleased I can be a part of that excitement."

Both positions are located in Juneau and have annual salaries of \$79,860.