

Unstaked Winter Trails Cause Tiff

Whether neglect, or misunderstanding, is responsible in staking of winter trails in Northern Alaska, the job has not been done for the last

two years although the money for the job has been appropriated.

It has now developed that the State Highway Department had appropriated funds for staking trails to the Rural Development Agency but that agency had failed to carry out the program.

A tiff developed recently when State Senator Robert Blodgett charged that the Highway Department had abrogated its responsibility and placed the lives of villagers in jeopardy who use the trails.

This week, telegrams were exchanged between Governor

(Continued on Page 8)

Trail Tiff . . .

(Continued from Page 1)

Walter J. Hickel and Senator Blodgett regarding the subject.

In his reply to Blodgett, the Governor said he was shocked that trails had not been staked and amazed that winter is half over before the matter was brought to his attention.

"Contrary to your information," Gov. Hickel said in his telegram, "Highway Department reports that money to stake the trails was appropriated to Rural Development Agency which did not carry out the program last fall.

"Rural Development Agency was requested by legislature to hire local people to stake winter trails before the crisis arrived. Thank you for your report. Our administration will carry out this legislative intent."

On receiving the Governor's telegram, Sen. Blodgett replied that he had brought the staking problem to the attention of the proper state agencies on November 12 from Kotzebue in the presence of Nelson Walker, registered guide and outfitter.

Blodgett said he had also brought the matter to the Governor's attention by a personal telephone call early in December.

"It is time to quit quibbling," Blodgett concluded, "and get the trail staked."