



Linda Warner/ Tundra Drums

# Separation of state?

Calling their move sort of a "Salmon Rebellion" two Bethel men have proposed a 51st state to be formed in rural Alaska.

Eddie Hoffman, president of the Association of Village Council Presidents, and Andy Edge, former state Democratic Party chairman and former city manager of Nome, have called for a meeting of representatives from the regional Native corporations this spring to discuss the idea.

They have proposed Alaska-chuk, meaning a piece of Alaska, as a name for the new state. Principal reasons for the move, the two said were their feelings bush areas are shortchanged by the state government, even though the bush holds most of the state's revenue-gaining resources, particularly in salmon

fishing and petroleum.

The idea came from a suggestion made some time ago by Sen. Frank Ferguson that Alaska be divided into three states sectioned into central, southeastern and western Alaska. The state proposed by Edge and Hoffman would include areas from Prudhoe Bay southwest to the Aleutian Islands.

The proponents of the new state listed several conditions that led them to suggest the change. Included were the subsistence repeal movement, the proposed capital move and a recently passed municipal aid bill intended to reduce statewide property taxes but would mostly benefit urban areas. Edge called the last one a raid on the permanent fund by the big cities of Alaska.