

Arco agrees to clean up Swanson River oil field

Arco Alaska Inc., the new operator of the Swanson River Oil field on the Kenai Peninsula, has agreed to assume the cleanup obligations incurred by the former operator of the field, according to the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service.

The cleanup involves polychlorinated biphenyls — PCBs — which were inadvertently laid down with gravel fill materials as road surfacing. Discovery of the PCBs was

made in January 1985 by the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, said Robert Jacobsen, assistant regional director of the service.

The oil production unit lies within the 2-million-acre Kenai National Wildlife Refuge. Arco assumed operatorship of the Swanson River Oil Field from Chevron USA Inc. on Oct. 1.

With this transfer came the respon-

sibility to complete the investigation and cleanup of PCBs agreed to by Chevron and four agencies — the Fish and Wildlife Service, the Bureau of Land Management, the Environmental Protection Agency and the Alaska Department of Environmental Conservation. As the previous operator, Chevron had agreed to complete the cleanup by the end of 1987.

"The new agreement with Arco

establishes actual cleanup levels and brings us one step closer toward returning the contaminated areas to an environmentally safe condition," Jacobsen said.

The agreement outlines levels for the cleanup and calls for all but two of the contaminated areas to be cleaned up to a level of 12 parts per million or less.