

TCC supports traditional use in subsistence

Delegates elect Ipalook president

by Warren Jarvis
for the Tundra Times

Straddling already-drawn battle lines and adding yet another option to the subsistence preference controversy, the Tanana Chiefs Conference Inc. last week endorsed a "traditional-use" concept as the basis of any future subsistence legislation.

"They voted to approve a preference for traditional use, essentially," said David Mathers, director of finance and administration for TCC.

According to Mathers, the recommendation differs from current proposals by allocating resources on the

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basis of traditional use, rather than by race or geographic location.

Proper definition of the term "traditional use," one person attending the meeting said, could meet the needs of both Native culture and of those dependent upon subsistence for food.

"Traditional use" was one of several criteria used to determine rural standing under the 1985 subsistence law, a law declared unconstitutional by the Alaska Supreme Court late last year.

In another last-day vote, Catherine Ipalook was elected the new president

of the 44-village organization.

Ipalook was chosen for the three-year term over three other candidates, including standing president Mitch Demientieff. The actual vote count was unannounced.

Originally from the village of Ruby, Ipalook is a 15-year veteran of the TCC whose most recent assignment was director of the Fairbanks sub-region of the TCC.

Demientieff, although losing his bid for a second term, was re-elected to the TCC board of directors.

Over the course of the four-day meeting the 44 delegates, one from each member village, presented almost

150 resolutions for consideration.

According to Mather most of the resolutions dealt with a wide variety of individual village issues such as education, capital projects and local control issues. Those approved by committee, Mather said, will set the direction of the TCC agenda for the coming year.

The meeting has been held annually since the formation of the Tanana Chiefs Conference in the late 1960s. It was held this year at the Eagles Hall in Fairbanks and drew a crowd of 200

to 300 people from across the state. Most, including groups of elders and youth, came from within the 44-village membership of the TCC.

The Tanana Chiefs Conference, although not affiliated with Doyon Ltd., encompasses the same general area. It is a non-profit organization with an annual budget of roughly \$24 million, most of which comes from the performance of state and federal contracts.

TCC delegates also voted not to re-join the Alaska Federation of Natives.