

# Andrus says (d)2 bill will pass this year

BY MARGIE BAUMAN

Interior Secretary Cecil Andrus predicts that d-2 legislation will pass Congress this year. If not, he said yesterday, provisions of the Bureau of Land Management Organic Act would go into effect in Alaska.

The Organic Act directs the BLM to manage all federal lands in the state over 5,000 acres in area, which are roadless and of wilderness character, to protect surface value until those lands can be studied for inclusion into wilderness areas. In effect, the result might seem to be another federal land freeze.

Specific language of the Or-

ganic Act says, "Those lands shall be managed in a manner that will not cause degradation of the environmental qualities that might be on that land," Andrus said.

Andrus said he did not feel this would happen. He was optimistic about H.R. 39 passing, though not in its present form. That legislation would put 123 million acres of Alaska lands into protective status within federal systems of parks, forests, wilderness areas and wild and scenic rivers.

**Supports Subsistence: "A Necessity"**

During his travels around Alaska, Andrus was interviewed in

(See ANDRUS, Page 12)

# • Andrus says a (d)2 bill will pass this year

(Continued from Page One)

Kotzebue by Nellie Ward of Radio Station KOTZ. Ward asked Andrus if he felt the d-2 legislation reflected Native Alaska opinions or met their needs.

"Yes, I really think so, but I'm going to have to be honest with you," Andrus said. "I'm a member of the cabinet and a supporter of the President and my answer would probably be yes."

"But what I have to say to you is that I'm confident that when your children and my children look back to see what we did while we were in the driver's seat, that they will applaud our actions. Let me remind you that when an Alaska Native man who appeared before our hearings on this bill—I thought he stated it better than anyone else: 'God will forgive us if we make a mistake in the designation of the d-2 legislation for he is forgiving in nature, but our grandchildren will never forgive us.'"

"And I think that is very important. We're going to be judged not by the people today but by our children and our grandchildren and I hope that they just don't have any reason to be ashamed of us," Andrus said.

The secretary told Ward that the Interior Department had

supported subsistence all along, "because you have a lifestyle and a necessity here that absolutely must be maintained."

Andrus said in Fairbanks that solutely must be maintained."

Andrus said in Fairbanks that the designation of certain lands as wilderness areas would not affect use of snowmachines for subsistence hunting, in the context of the present legislation.

During his stay in Kotzebue, Andrus and his crew were treated to reindeer stew, sheefish, and some fresh-cooked mukluk provided by Nellie Ward's family.

## Vague on State Selections

In a news conference following a week-long tour of Alaska, Andrus also said he found most Alaskans favored d-2 legislation, if not in its present form, then in some form. Several reporters at the press conference said they had not found this to be true and questioned whether the secretary and staff from the Interior Department had talked with a broad spectrum of Alaskans during their travels.

The secretary's party has been overflying much of the proposed d-2 selection area, including the Brooks Range, Kak-tovik on Barter Island the Arctic National Wildlife Range, Yukon Flats area and Mt. McKinley National Park. After their departure from Fairbanks

Tuesday they were to overfly the Wrangell Mountains and spend the night at Seward. Wednesday they were to tour the coastal areas by boat, then fly to Anchorage for an overnight stop and head south to Washington on Thursday.

Andrus was questioned at some length about the effects of the Organic Act on state selections. He said that lands withdrawn under section 603 of the organic act might be open to state selection, but that there were still legal questions to resolve.

"It would depend upon the land order that was involved," he said. "Some of those lands that have not had title transferred to the state fall within some of our boundaries, but keep in mind that we're talking about a lot of land and it depends on what management patterns they would fall under."

"But all this would be moot if in fact we do pass a d-2 bill, get the conveyance of a lot of

these lands and move forward and I think that's going to happen this year," the secretary said. "Any projection into next year would be purely hypothetical."

## Beneficial and Timely

Andrus said he felt the d-2 legislation "would be far more beneficial and timely" (than invoking provisions of the Organic Act) because it would take place by "legislative action instead of bureaucratic inaction. And the state would benefit a great deal more under the d-2 selections."

Andrus discounted several pointed questions from members of the Alaska news media questioning his opinion that the majority of Alaskans favored d-2 legislation. "There's a great deal of support for d-2 in the state of Alaska," he said.

"I did find many people that were very supportive of a d-2 bill, but might be opposed to the d-2 bill (now before

Congress). Frankly, I don't think the one before now will be passed in final form."

"There will be adaptations to it," he said.

The secretary said he felt the legislation in its final form would be somewhere between House Bill 39 and the compromise measure being pushed by U.S. Sen. Ted Stevens, R-Alaska. There are reports from Juneau that the Stevens bill may be marked up for Senate consideration.

Andrus also said he hoped the final legislation would allow for state control of fish and game management.

"I think fish and game management can best be handled by the state," he said. "I can't guarantee what will be in that bill, but I would have to say I agree with your governor." Alaska Gov. Jay Hammond has been emphatic about the state's right to control fish and game management.