

Sale opposition continues

"We're going to continue our opposition," North Slope Borough Mayor Eben Hopson, said of the proposed Beaufort Sea oil and gas lease sale.

"Nothing has happened that will change our position," Hopson continued. His remarks came as a joint state and federal panel began public hearings on the sale, which is scheduled for December.

Tuesday, the team was to open hearings on the sale in Kaktovik. Wednesday, hearings are scheduled in Nuiqsut, to be followed

Thursday with hearings in Barrow. Further public hearings will be held in Fairbanks on June 4.

Hopson has long been opposed to the sale on environmental grounds, particularly protection of subsistence hunting and fishing habitat. His office has harshly criticized the Draft Environmental Impact Statement, which is the focus of this series of hearings, as being inadequate and based on incomplete or unverifiable research.

Panelists at the series of hearings include Hank Nol-

dan, of the Bureau of Land Management, presiding officer; Gary Wicks, deputy assistant secretary for land and water resources; Tome Cook, director of the state's minerals and energy management office; Hoyle Hamilton, a member of the state oil and gas conservation commission; Dave Page, representative to the assistant secretary for energy and minerals; and (See SALE page eight)

● Beaufort sale opposed

(Continued from page one)

Bob Brock, acting manager of the Anchorage Outer Continental Shelf Office.

The proposed sale covers 514,193 acres, of which 68 percent belongs to the state and 17 percent to the federal government. Ownership of the remaining 15 percent is in dispute.

About \$10 million already has been spent by the federal government in its environmental assessment of the sale. Another \$300,000 or \$400,000 has been spent by the state.