

# Subsistence forces make Bethel stand

Fish and game meeting  
heard in D.C.

BY NANCY HARVEY

BETHEL—They say there's always a good turnout for meetings in Bethel. And, if last week's Association of Village Council Presidents (AVCP) Caucus was any indication, they're right.

Some 200 people representing more than 50 of the region's surrounding villages, Bethel, and other areas of the state met for two days and listened to Native leaders and state legislators explain the status of d-2 legislation affecting the subsistence way of life, and recommendations for the future of fish and game management in Alaska.

Rep. Nels Anderson (D-Dillingham) and Steve Cowper (D-Fairbanks) spoke to the group and explained legislation sponsored by the Interim Committee on Subsistence.

Based on hearings held across Alaska last summer, Anderson's committee is sponsoring a series of bills which respond to subsistence needs in rural Alaska. House Bills 674 and 725 seek to decentralize the Alaska State Department of Fish and Game and create 12 regional boards whose boundaries would be those of regional corporations established by the Alaska Native Claims Settlement Act. The boards would have full regulatory powers over their respective regions, and board members would have to be residents of the areas covered by the 12 boards.

House Bill 673, also sponsored by the Subsistence Committee, would create a Division of Subsistence within the Department of Fish and Game similar to the already existing Division of Sport Fishing. And, House Concurrent Resolution 93 would extend the life of the Subsistence Committee through 1978 to monitor and identify problems and suggest further resolutions with respect to subsistence hunting and fishing.

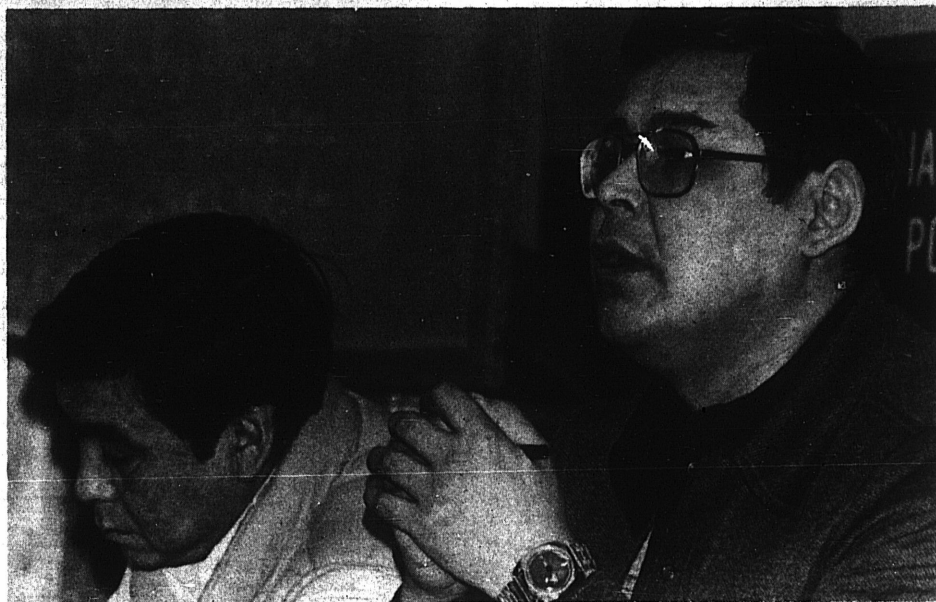
## COWPER ENDORSES TITLE VII

Recognizing the need to protect subsistence, Rep. Steve Cowper, who chairs the powerful legislative D-2 Steering Council on Alaska Lands, told the Bethel meeting the language in Title VII of the draft d-2 bill now pending in Congress defining subsistence "is about as good as we can get."

"The people here have unwritten laws among themselves," Cowper said. "Subsistence is a matter of need vs. greed, and we should be able to draw the law along those lines."

Cowper drew a good response when he told the AVCP Caucus he would support legislation requiring

PLEASE TURN TO PAGE SIX



The subject was subsistence and villagers from throughout Southwest Alaska converged on Bethel for several days last week to meet with the Boards of Fish and Game about possible subsistence regulations, and to meet with representatives of the Dept. of Fish and Game to discuss several pending proposals to put more control of subsistence resources in the hands of local people. In the top photo, Rep. Nels Anderson of Dillingham, sponsor of several of those proposals, speaks to the Caucus of the Association of Village Council Presidents. In the bottom photo, AVCP delegates study proposals. Photos by Nancy Harvey.

# ● AVCP Caucus draws subsistence testimony

CONTINUED FROM PAGE ONE

all subsistence needs of an area to be met before foreign hunters are allowed to take fish and game. Cowper also said the Department of Fish and Game should use local residents in making decisions affecting subsistence.

## STEVENS NOT SO POPULAR

Performing a near magical feat, KYUK Radio personnel hooked up a telephone patch allowing conferees and guests to hear a two-way telephone conversation between AVCP President Carl Jack in Bethel and Sen. Ted Stevens in Washington, D.C.

However, Stevens didn't win any friends—or votes—when responding to questions concerning Title VII of H.R. 39 (the d-2 bill), he said, "I don't like that bill yet."

Stevens reminded residents of the recent bowhead whaling decision by the federal government and warned, "Washington doesn't like anyone who harvests animals and uses guns."

AFN President Byron Mallott drew applause from conferees when he told Stevens the history of state management dealing with subsistence has been "faint hearted."

Stevens responded by saying he was not opposed to federal oversight of subsistence management, but expressed strong concern over the possibility of being forced to return management authority to the federal government.

Reacting to a question asking if he would work to make sure the d-2 bill passes Congress in time to meet the December 18 deadline mandated in the 1971 land claims settlement act, Stevens said, "That's one goal, to meet the date established." Stevens said he had discussed the issue with Senator Mike Gravel and both agreed the bill must receive fair consideration in the Senate.

Saying it's a little early to look at one section and say we'll support it, Stevens reminded the AVCP Caucus the bill has a long way to travel before final congressional approval. "We're on the first step of a 12 step ladder," Stevens said.

## MALLOTT ADDRESSES OTHER ASPECTS OF D-2

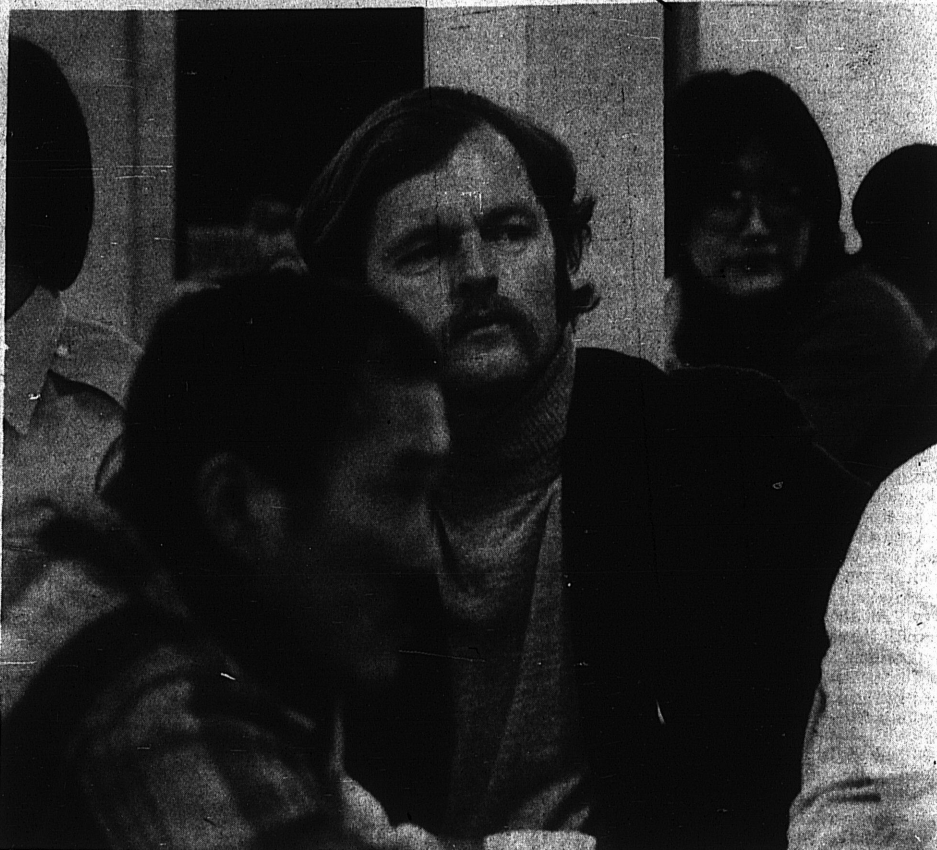
"Villages will be critical in making sure Title VII is the way we want it," AFN President Byron Mallott told the Caucus delegates.

"The next year in Congress is going to be critical, not just as to whether H.R. 39 works, but ANCSA as well."

Mallott said there is no question the Settlement Act has some weaknesses regarding Native people who want to maintain a traditional way of life. "In order for us to use H.R. 39 to strengthen ANCSA, AFN and the regions have had people constantly in Washington, D.C. working on the bill," Mallott said.

"The effort in the next year will have to be greater. This means village people and your leaders will have to spend time in Washington, D.C. making a strong case for language in the bill to protect your rights. If we don't use H.R. 39 to strengthen ANCSA, there is great danger ANCSA may not work to protect your interests."

Mallott said the language in Title VII is good, but that it has taken hard work in the past year to improve and keep it. "We've got a lot of people on our side, but there are also many who don't understand and would do away with our lifestyle," he continued.



Rep. Steve Cowper of Fairbanks listens intently to speakers at the AVCP Caucus in Bethel last week. Cowper, like Rep. Neil Anderson of Dillingham, is a member of the Interim Committee on Subsistence created by the state legislature to research possible solutions to the difficult problem of managing subsistence resources. Nancy Harvey Photo.

"We hope by working together during the next year we will have the kind of legislation that allows us to say we have served our people well."

\*\*\*

The Caucus meeting adjourned late Sunday night, although many delegates remained in Bethel to testify before the joint Boards of Fisheries and Game the following day.

Before adjourning, however, the AVCP passed a resolution making the following recommendations to the Alaska State Legislature:

- that the Governor's proposal for five regional fish and game councils is not acceptable in that AVCP is the largest of the Native regions in terms of people and subsistence concerns, and that a separate region should be made for the AVCP area;

- that the policy making structure proposed by the Interim Committee on Subsistence be adopted by developing 12 fish and game boards;

- that special mention in the legislation should be made to allow regional boards to cooperate in the case of migratory species;

- that current laws concerning barter, trade, and sharing of foods for subsistence purposes among rural villages be repealed and replaced by a state law recognizing the village extended family system, and giving power to regulate this system to the regional policy making council;

- that a Division of Subsistence be created within the Department of Fish and Game;

- that a permanent Subcommittee on Subsistence be created by the Legislature with oversight on State Fish and Game functions involving subsistence;

- that the State of Alaska support the current House Joint Resolution seeking legislative support for legalization of migratory bird hunting in the spring for village subsistence hunters; and

- that the state replace the current funding mechanism of the Division of Game and Sport Fish through the sale of licenses and trophy fees with support for these divisions through the Alaska general fund revenues.

AVCP will also announce later this month the creation of a d-2 steering committee to advise the village council presidents on d-2/subsistence related matters.