

• Predictions on ANWR

(Continued from Page One)

said, adding that development could actually increase the herd size if it eliminates any of the major predators.

The document to be released is the final report on ANWR by the Fish & Wildlife Service, required by the Alaska National Interest Lands Conservation Act. It is to contain a recommendation by Hodel, and it will be used by Congress in making its decision on whether to allow leasing in the refuge.

Murkowski called the report "positive," and he said it will show that oil development can be compatible with wildlife protection.

He also discussed the issue of Alaska Native corporations exchanging surface rights of lands in other parts of Alaska for oil rights in the refuge. He said Native corporations will have to work together to come up with a consensus on how the swaps with the federal government should be handled and whether possible revenues gained from oil development should be shared with other Native corporations.

But Murkowski stressed that the issue of land swaps should not stand in the way of deciding whether to open the refuge.

As for support in Congress for opening the refuge, Murkowski said he does not see efforts by environmentalists and others to keep a clamp on the refuge gaining support. Also, he said concerns about U.S. dependence on foreign crude oil supplies will pro-

bably encourage many in Congress to get behind opening the refuge.

Murkowski also discussed 1991 legislation currently under consideration in the Senate to extend restrictions on the sale of Native corporation stock. He said he will not support the bill in the form that it was when it passed the House earlier this spring.

"The type of bill we (the Senate) drafted last time will be pursued again this year," he said. Last year, 1991 legislation also passed the House, but lost Native support after numerous changes were made in the Senate.

Murkowski said among his specific concerns in the House version of the bill are that the means of dealing with dissenters' rights — those who want to sell their stock after 1991 — are "unworkable" and "impractical."

Murkowski also noted that Hodel has stated his opposition to the bill for two years, and that the senator believes the president would veto the bill if the secretary urged him to do so.

"The secretary is convinced the rights of the individual Natives must be protected," he said.

Murkowski also stressed that there must be a consensus within the Alaska Native community before the bill can be passed.

He said he expects hearings to be held on the Senate version of the bill in May, and that he hopes representatives of the Alaska Federation of Natives can meet with Hodel this week.