

Wallis pursues funding for fisheries education

by Rep. Kay Wallis
for the *Tundra Times*

JUNEAU — A very important issue I am now involved in is fisheries education.

There are many creative ways to introduce fisheries education into the existing curriculum of our schools. This can be done in our elementary schools, our high schools, our trade schools and in our community schools. Let me give you an example: mini-classes on fisheries could be incorporated into the existing curriculum right now. Math, science, geography and history classes could all include a section on fisheries today.

People in House District 24 rely heavily on fisheries resources, and yet we have few local people in charge as fishery managers, biologists or technicians and so on. If, however, we had fisheries education taught in our school systems, then our young people would be better prepared to influence, advise and counsel these fishery managers to help the local people.

We need our young people to learn about fisheries education in order to encourage them to stay in a fishery-related field. We, as Alaskans, need to inventory and document the different fishery jobs available to our young people, especially in rural Alaska.

I have hired former state representative Adelheid Herrmann of Naknek to work on fisheries issues for me from her office in Anchorage. She already is very busy on these fisheries issues and recently conducted a very suc-



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cessful workshop on fisheries education at the Bilingual Education Conference held in Anchorage.

In the past, we have put \$90,000 into the education budget for fisheries education, as well as \$40,000 for fisheries vocational outreach to our legislative districts.

In the Legislature I will be pursuing additional funding for fisheries education as well as informing people about the mini-grants available through the office of vocational education at the Department of Education in Juneau.