

Angvik says coal development will reduce rural energy bills

Democratic candidate for lieutenant governor Jane Angvik says the high cost of energy in western Alaska must be reduced. Angvik recently told a meeting of Koyitl'ots'ina, Ltd., a Native corporation in Allakaket, that she is actively involved in a program to do just that.

Angvik is president of the Alaska Native Foundation, which has evaluated the Western Arctic Coal Development Project.

"It is our hope that we might be able to substitute an Alaskan product — coal — for fuel oil, all of which comes from the Lower 48, and is used in the villages at great expense," Angvik said.

In fact, says Angvik, "current prospects are that with this coal, we will be able to provide an alternative to ex-

pensive fuel oil, not only for the regional centers of Nome, Kotzebue and Dillingham, but also for the villages in western Alaska."

The western Arctic coal region is located along the Chukchi Sea from Cape Beaufort to Point Lay. An estimated 122 million tons of mineable coal are found there.

This is relatively "clean" coal with high heat value, which does not require on-site washing or other processing, according to the project. An estimated 500,000 tons a year of this Alaskan resource could be mined and delivered to western Alaska power plants by the early 21st century.

Angvik says she is working through the ANF to make coal "an alternative to importing fuel oil in western Alaska."