

Aerial wolf hunt update

By LAURY ROBERTS

Gov. Jay Hammond says he will not let the Department of Fish and Game (ADF&G) go through with a proposed aerial wolf hunt this month if the Board of Game opposes the action. At least one board member has asked his colleagues to

request ADF&G to postpone the hunt until the board can gather additional public input.

Hammond admitted the proposal was "ill-timed" in relation to d(2) hearings being conducted by congressional committees. The state wants to retain management of fish and game on federal public lands, while Native groups favor regional control with federal oversight. The wolf kill could be used by environmental concerns as evidence that the state cannot adequately manage its fish and game resources.

Legislators who travelled to Washington D.C. last week to lobby on d(2) confirmed Ham-

mond's observation.

"They couldn't believe we'd played into the hands of the environmentalists," says House Speaker Terry Gardiner.

"We felt embarrassed we were from Alaska," noted Rep. Bill Miles (D-Anchorage).

"It came over like it was a sabotage effort," says Sen. Bill Sumner (R-Anchorage).

The proposed kill, aimed at protecting the moose population in southwest Alaska, has come under criticism from Native interests because of inadequate public comment procedures and the sense that subsistence is being wrongly used to justify the aerial kill.

