



Gov. Steve Cowper was greeted by 92 school children with homemade signs when he arrived in Scammon Bay.

photo by Barbara Crane

## Cowper: Local development begins with vision of future

by Barbara Crane  
for the *Tundra Times*

SCAMMON BAY — Local development must begin with a community's vision of the future it wants, the values it seeks to promote and the way of life it works to maintain, Gov. Steve Cowper told delegates gathered here for the 23rd Annual Meeting of the Association of Village Council Presidents.

Cowper traveled to Scammon Bay Oct. 15 to address AVCP.

The governor praised the organization, saying, "AVCP's ability to sustain itself and expand during this

### Cowper's travels

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period of economic downturn demonstrates to the rest of the state that in spite of decreased state support, communities and public service organizations can maintain their viability."

Cowper acknowledged the importance of community input and involvement from the beginning of any project.

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"In villages, all over Alaska, community facilities were built with state funds during the days when oil money was plentiful," he said. "Unfortunately, these capital projects, which were designed to improve peoples' lives are now a financial drain to operate and maintain."

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***'Local people are acutely aware of the needs and resources. . .'***

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Cowper said state officials have gotten the message from AVCP region communities that they want to control their own destinies.

"Local people are acutely aware of the needs and resources of their own community," he said.

During a question and answer period, the delegates voiced their concerns over 1991 issues, village sovereignty and policies of the Alaska Department of Fish and Game.

Cowper said he will seek to accommodate the wishes of the communities, but he stressed that solutions must be structured within the framework of the Alaska Constitution.



*The governor fielded questions on sovereignty and fish and game policies at the AVCP meeting.*

photo by Barbara Crane