

Tom Kelly says he favors subsistence rights

BY MARGIE BAUMAN

Independent gubernatorial candidate Tom Kelly says he's a strong proponent of subsistence rights and doesn't see a need for commercial whaling practices in most places anyway.

Kelly equated the restrictions on Eskimo whale hunts with fishing regulations in Cook Inlet, where "they're worried about people taking a few King Salmon with a hook and line and yet they let the gill netters go out and get tens of millions of them."

"Same way you've got a commercial whaling operation," he said. "And I don't see any need for commercial whaling most places anyway because I don't use whale oil and I don't know who does."

"We don't use it in perfume any more. We might use it in some lubricants. I don't know, but other than that, it all goes into dog and cat food and I'd rather feed them something else besides whale," he said.

Kelly's comments came in an interview with the Tundra Times on his first campaign swing through Fairbanks recent-

ly. The independent candidate also talked about campaign plans, d-2 legislation and the haul road issue.

Team Concept

Kelly and running mate Kay Poland, a Democratic State Senator from Kodiak, won't be listed on the primary ballot. "We're not going to put on a heavy media campaign before the primary, (because) that might be more confusing than advantageous," Kelly said.

What they will be doing is campaigning together and separately all over Alaska, to make themselves better known and to sell people on the concept of voting in a team. "It's the concept of a true team that picked each other; that wasn't a shotgun marriage," Kelly said.

Kelly said Poland, as lieutenant governor, would have "an active role in the decision making process in state government and particularly in areas such as fisheries. She's far better in knowledge and approach in how to make our fisheries a real key to broaden the economic base than I am," Kelly said.

Kelly feels that "somewhere down the line that team idea is going to take hold, because 'nobody else can offer that team via where we know we can work together at the onset.'"

Kelly said he's counting on the number of people who vote independently to cast their ballots for himself and Poland in the general election.

A consultant whose clients include Arctic Slope Regional Corp., Kelly said he favored a lenient attitude toward use of the pipeline haul road. "There are going to have to be certain safeguards, because not only the lands, but the integrity of the pipeline has got to be safeguarded..." he said.

"But, I think there are certain ways it can be opened... so there can be some controls. It's got to be clearly laid out

that the lands outside of the right-of-way are owned by somebody else and before they go on them, they'd better get clearance from whoever that landowner is, be it the federal government, state or Native communities. And particularly the Natives don't want them on their land anyway in many areas," Kelly said.

Kelly said he didn't like the idea of just totally excluding the public, but with restrictions, such as registering vehicles as in a national park, the surrounding lands and pipeline could be protected and people allowed to utilize the state road.

Kelly called for a compromise this year on the d-2 legislation now before Congress. "The chance of a favorable approach from Congress next year, in the next two years, is much less than it will be this year and I strongly believe that a balanced compromise should be sought," he said.

"I believe we have the tools to do it. We've got the resource inventory to do it and I don't buy the business that we've got to go study it some more. That is poppycock. The people who say that don't understand it anyway because they're not in the resource business," he said.

Certain areas better suited for multiple use need to be moved out of the wilderness category and others more logically fit to it put back in, he said.

But Kelly doesn't think the basic contents of House Bill 39, now before the U.S. Senate will be rewritten from scratch.

"I think the will of the Senate and the rest of the people is 'let's get a bill. Let's solve the situation where we can move ahead with final resolution of the land tenure in Alaska. Let's obliterate that issue because we've got some other issues that are very important, that we cannot move to until we've got the land tenure solved,'" he said.