

Gives final report—

Energy Task Force

By SUE GAMACHE

The Rural Energy Task Force appointed by Governor Jay S. Hammond in October 1975 submitted its final report concerning short term and long term solutions to the recurring and severe rural energy problems.

Chairman of the Task Force was William C. McConkey, Director of the Alaska State Energy Office.

The Task Force found that there was a shortage of bulk fuel storage in rural Alaska. There is also a lack of funds to buy the fuel to put in these storage facilities once they are built.

They also found that there is a need for education and training in the areas of energy conservation, fuel management, planning and safety.

Arrangements have been satisfactorily worked out with Federal Agencies for the legal transportation of fuels via Alaska's airways and waterways. Concern is shown about proposed State legislation entitled "An Act Relating to Transportation by Water Carriers".

Concern is also shown about future availability of water carriers in the area of Kodiak

Island, the Aleutians, and the Alaska Peninsula.

The Task Force believes an ongoing energy advisory group should be established by the State Energy Office. This group should operate at no expense to

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the State.

The Task Force found that funds are often available from the Bureau of Indian Affairs, The Department of Housing and Urban Development, Rural Development Agency, Rural-Cap, and Standard Oil for fuel related loans and grants. More effort is needed to inform and assist the public concerning the procedures to obtain these funds.

According to the Task Force careful economic, cost-benefit, and risk analysis should precede capitol projects requiring state financial participation.

The Rural Energy Task Force recommends that the State of Alaska establish a Bulk Fuel Storage Fund to be used either

individually or collectively with other State, Federal, or private funds for the construction of Bulk Fuel facilities in those villages determined to need such storage.

Grants and/or loans, under the provisions of this fund may be made to the village corporation, the village council, and/or any other form of local government or authority or individual business within said village or authority.

The Task Force further recommends that such funds be used as a loan in those instances which repayment is definite and where management costs administering the loan are not prohibitive.

The Task Force recommends that such funds be used as grants in those instances where loan repayment and management are not feasible.

The Rural Energy Task Force recommends that the Alaska State Energy Office, the Department of Community and Regional Affairs, the U.S. Bureau of Indian Affairs and the private sector determine the practicality of multi-village cooperative storage facilities and make recommendations to Village and Regional Corporations, the fuel industry, government agencies and interested parties based upon that determination.

The Rural Energy Task Force encourages private corporations and business' to investigate the possibilities and opportunities in the bulk fuel transportation business within Alaska.

The Task Force recommends that the State Energy Office conduct a village by village energy survey to determine rural energy requirements and projected needs, along with the costs and alternative procedures for development of alternate energy resources to meet these needs.

Any persons having questions about the findings of the Rural Energy Task Force may contact them at the Alaska State Energy Office, Office of the Governor, Juneau, Alaska; or 338 Denali Street, Anchorage, Alaska 99501.