

Governor Appoints Thompson To Head NORTH Commission

JUNEAU—Gov. Walter J. Hickel this week announced the appointment of 28-year-old Morris Thompson, deputy director since January 1967 of the State Rural Development Agency, as Executive Secretary of the NORTH Commission, the 10-man agency within the governor's office which is

supervising efforts to secure an extension of the Alaska Railroad to the Arctic.

Thompson, an Athabascan Indian, was born in Tanana, and lived and worked for many years in the very area of the Alaska interior which will be straddled by the railroad extension.

Thompson succeeds Roger A. Bye, formerly of Anchorage, as the commission's staff administrator. Bye, presently studying at the University of Southern California, was appointed to the post last August on a temporary basis pending his return to school early this year.

As executive secretary of the NORTH Commission, Thompson will handle the administrative and clerical functions of the agency.

He will also act as full-time liaison between the governor's office, the commission's ten members, five of whom live within Alaska, with the others living all over the United States, and the NORTH Commission winter trail field crew which is presently at work near

Nenana.

The crew is building a pioneer winter trail toward the Arctic.

The trail, to be completed to a point just below the proposed site of the Rampart Dam on the Yukon River, is intended to serve both as a resources development trail to the north, and as a source for specific terrain data for the proposed rail extension.

Thompson will move into the \$16,332-a-year position immediately.

Before joining the rural development agency, Thompson was employed by RCA Service Co. in Fairbanks. A graduate of Mt. Edgecumbe at Sitka, he earlier attended elementary school in Tanana. He also studied for two years at the University of Alaska in Fairbanks.

Hickel called Thompson a "highly-qualified executive; an Alaskan of total devotion and with total enthusiasm for helping our state advance."

"Mr. Thompson has the supervisory skills we need in this post," the governor

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Thompson . . .

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added. "But even more valuable will be his vast personal knowledge about the details and problems which must be surmounted in carrying out this extension of the Alaska Railroad."

Thompson will remain in Juneau in his new job, along with his wife, Thelma, and the couple's two-year-old daughter, Sheryl.