

RurAL CAP Alerts Governor on Rebuilding Nondalton

Immediately upon hearing of the Aug. 6 disastrous fire in Nondalton, Mike Harper, executive director of Rural Alaska Community Action Program, visited Governor Egan to stress the need for prompt and coordinated

action so that the community could regroup and rebuild prior to freeze-up. Harper reported to the governor that former national director of the Office of Economic Opportunity, Alvin J. Arnett, and a

small group of OEO officials had visited Nondalton in April to review the effects of the imminent Bristol Bay economic hardships as dictated by the lack of sufficient opportunities in recent years.

Harper noted, "It is ironic that the Village Council met with our group in the school that has now been leveled. The officials toured the OEO-funded Nondalton Co-Op store which was established only recently and had provided much needed groceries at significantly lower prices than the competing store."

Governor Egan's staff had just met to discuss the situation and had taken action to dispatch Don Lowell, Alaska Disaster Office

director, to the stricken community.

The State of Alaska, through the special legislative session, voted to fund the Bristol Bay region one million dollars in impact money, in light of the depleted salmon fisheries in that region.

OEO, through RurAL CAP, is also granting \$400,000 to that area for the express purpose of providing work projects so that some form of income will be earned in spite of the fact that fishing has not proven successful in recent years.

Harper commented further, "I discussed with the governor the necessity for the various departments of state and federal governments, especially the Bureau of Indian Affairs, to work hand-in-hand with OEO and any other agency that could offer assistance to Nondalton."

"I am very happy that Governor Egan is so concerned over the problem, and I believe if the

federal agencies can react comparably, then we can get Nondalton back on its feet, as quickly as humanly possible."

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