

Hammond Handles Highway Hassle

Gov. Jay Hammond has issued a statement aimed at clarifying his administration's position on the establishment of corridors on Alaska lands. Hammond stated that there has been no change in his administration's policy regarding corridors.

The governor said, "So long as I am governor, even if corridors were established by Congress, we would build roads through them only if most people living in the areas impacted wanted them. We'll not cram roads down the throats of Alaskans. All the road construction monies available in the foreseeable future will be required just

to improve road systems in areas where people do want them."

In an Aug. 10 copyrighted story, the Tundra Times unveiled a state Proposal for bush highways to Bethel, Kotzebue, Barrow and other towns. Concern over the controversial corridor question resurfaced during d-2 lands hearings when a congressman said his committee would be considering "access." Commissioner of Transportation Don Harris attempted to find out if there were any logically defined prospective corridors which could be agreed to as acceptable by all impacted landowners, Hammond said.

The highway planning map obtained by the Tundra Times was dated July 1977, prior to the issue of easements and corridors raised during the Alaska hearings.

Hammond said, "Some have drawn from the commissioner's efforts the totally erroneous inference that we are trying to jam corridors through native lands over native protest. That is absolutely untrue. Our position is that the cooperative management approach which draws no inflexible lines on maps but rather provides that a joint federal-state commission would determine where

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Hammond . . .

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the corridors should be is a much more logical way of dealing with the question of access. Through the cooperative management system, corridors could then be identified as future uses, needs, and population patterns dictate."

Draft language prepared by the State Highway Planning and Research Division outlined a highway system apparently intended for incorporation into a d-2 lands classification bill.