

Blue-Ribbon subsistence committee named

By Linda Lord-Jenkins
Tundra Times

Declaring "We are all Alaskans from all walks of life, from communities throughout our state and we believe that the proponents of the initiative (to ban subsistence laws in Alaska) are intent on destroying a way of life which has served as the foundation from which all Alaska history has sprung," the drive to retain subsistence in the state announced a "Blue Ribbon" panel of supporters.

The Alaskans for Sensible Fish and Game Management panel is made up of "well-knowns" from throughout the state and includes former governors Walter Hickel, Keith Miller and William A. Egan, well-known sports fisherman Jim Repine and Clem Tillion, director of the Office of International Fisheries and External Affairs for the Office of the Governor.

Other panelists include State Rep. Al Adams; championship dog musher Geroge Attla; University of Alaska President Jay Barton; Democratic National Committee Woman Peggy Begich; Brice Construction Co. president Helenka

Brice; Larry Carr, owner of Carrs Quality Centers, Inc., in Anchorage;

Juneau attorney Jim Clark; Board of Regents Chairman Jeff Cook; Anthropologist Dr. Nancy Yaw Davis; Anchorage contractor and former Commissioner of Public Works George Easley; State Sen. Richard Eliason; Alaskan Artist and author Claire Fejes; State Sen. Vic Fischer, State Rep. Jack Fuller; State Rep. Terry Gardiner; Lee Gorsuch, director of the Institute of Social and Economic Research and president of the Anchorage School Board;

Barney Gottstein, co-owner of Carr-Gottstein, Inc., in Anchorage; Dave Hickox, director of the Arctic Environmental Information and Data Center and chairman of the Alaska Council of Science and Technology; James J. Immel, a Fairbanks realtor;

Terry Williams, former director of the Division of Parks, and a dog musher; Sealaska Chairman Byron I. Mallott; Alaskan author Lael Morgan; Connell Murray, owner of Murray Inc., public relations firm; Don Nelson, of North Pole; Juneau Mayor Bill Overstreet;

former state commissioner of Highways and former co-chairman of the Federal/State Land Use Planning Commission Walt Parker; Nome Mayor Leo Rasmusson; Labor representative from Local 302 of the Operating Engineers in Fairbanks, Dave Rosley;

Alascom president Chuck Robinson; former Anchorage Borough Mayor Jack Roderick; State Rep. Brian Rogers; State Sen. John Sackett; NANA Regional Corp. President John Schaeffer; State Sen. Arliss Sturgulewski; former Lt. Gov. Lowell Thomas Jr; Tay Thomas, Alaskan author;

Bob Uchitel, owner of U Uchitel Construction and Visions, the private movie pay-television channel; Nome businessman Pearse M. Walsh; Doyon Ltd. President Tim Wallis; Nome businessman James D. West; and Dr. William R. Woods, former president of the University of Alaska and former Fairbanks mayor.

Hensley, in announcing this who's who of Alaskans, said, "We believe that the current state law should be retained because it provides ALL Alaskans with an equal opportunity to live off the land, which is

an option ONLY AVAILABLE in Alaska.

Hensley said Sensible views subsistence hunting and fishing as the "work and livelihood of rural residents and understands that it constitutes an economic structure which produces goods and services. The value of this productivity is conservatively estimated to be

more than \$100 million annually."

The state subsistence law is for all Alaskans, be they cheechako or sourdough, Native or non-Native, as long as any Alaskan wishes to reside in the rural areas and live off the land.

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Hensley pointed out that despite the existence of the subsistence law since 1978, no sports or commercial users have been eliminated from hunting or fishing opportunities.

"If we manage our fish and wildlife resources carefully in the future, all competing users should be able to be accommo-

dated.

"However, if the antisubsistence initiative is approved, the state's ability to manage fish and wildlife will be critically undermined. Because of federal law, which provides for subsistence priority on federal lands, the Secretary of Interior will be forced to take over management of fish and wildlife pro-

duction if the state refuses to protect this user group."

Hickel, in an impassioned speech, said "When people tamper with the law they are forgetting what makes this state unique."

He joined the group of people who warn against the subsistence initiative because it would lead to the federal gov-

ernment stepping in to manage fish and game. "Wouldn't it be ironic for Washington D.C. to have to do that?" He pointed out that during the statehood fight, "We believed we could manage our destinies,

protect our interests."

Miller reminded those present that Interior Secretary James Watt said he would enforce the federal subsistence provision and that might not be the best for Alaskan game management.

After the meeting, Hensley took questions from the few members of the press at the meeting and said that he supports Sen. Ted Stevens and Frank Murkowski's proposal to open up "some" of the National Parks to sport hunting.

"Those parks are awful big and could be used." He added, however, that he was "unhappy" about Watt's recent admission that he doesn't have a contingency plan for game management in Alaska if the initiative passes.