

*Editorial —*

# Coastal Planning

An important test of local determination in coastal resource management is underway this month. The Alaska Coastal Policy Council will meet in Barrow on Thursday, January 17, to give final consideration to the North Slope Borough's mid-Beaufort Coastal Management Plan.

The Borough's mid-Beaufort plan, like the Coastal Zone Management ordinances adopted by the municipality, is a product of one of the most thorough planning efforts ever undertaken in Alaska. The entire Coastal Zone Management Program developed by the Borough was authorized by the Alaska Coastal Management Act of 1977.

The framework for the plan, and particular provisions proposed by the government are the product of exhaustive meetings, workshops and other consultations with the citizens of the Borough. At the foundation of the plan is the concern of north slope citizens for protection of their chosen lifestyle and arctic ecosystem and subsistence values. Local people, citizens of the region, are the origin of each facet of the comprehensive program.

From their direction, the plan was refined and further developed by the finest professional planning talent available in Alaska under continuous scrutiny of the Borough's citizens and elected representatives.

Some provisions, such as classification of the mid-Beaufort as a subsistence zone (except Prudhoe Bay's oil field) and restriction on oil exploration north of the Barrier Islands, are strongly criticized by state and oil industry officials.

Adoption of a plan which recognizes the values of citizens of the area would be an important precedent. The Borough has devoted itself to a massive planning effort, accepting the policy direction from its citizens, and retaining the most professionally competent expertise in constructing the documents. If the final plan fails to respect the intent expressed by the Borough's citizens, there can be little hope for a coastal zone planning process in "unorganized borough's" which would respect the concerns of citizens of those areas.