

Editorial —

Subsistence Gloom

The message is clear. Despite a surge of optimism that swept over subsistence advocates late this summer after hearings on federal land proposals, the subsistence issue does not enjoy the favored position in congressional minds that we originally hoped. Friends of subsistence who returned from Washington, D.C. last week were gloomy. They reported that the congressional conservationists are interested in mountain peaks and acreage figures much more than they are interested in protecting the subsistence lifestyle in the d-2 legislation.

Without strong support on Capitol Hill and inconsistent backing by national conservation groups, subsistence advocates must look to reinforcing their battle lines. It is time for the generals and admirals of the Native movement to sit down with the rural militia and talk strategy with the sense of urgency that the moment requires. It is time that village representatives assert a new leadership in calling the subsistence shots. We continue to hope that the village voice will be well heard when the time comes to write good subsistence law.

JRR