

SAVE SEAL SKINS

Sen. Ted Stevens has asked the Commerce Department to cut federal red tape which he says could ruin seal skins harvested by Alaska Natives.

Under the new Marine Mam-

mal Protection Act, Natives are allowed to hunt seals and other protected ocean mammals, but non-Native processing companies must have special permits to treat the skins.

The catch, Stevens said today, is that such permits cannot be issued until after special Marine Mammal Protection Act rules are published later this month.

In a wire to Commerce Secretary Frederick Dent, Stevens asked that processing companies be granted temporary approval to process skins already harvested, subject to withdrawal if the company fails to qualify under rules published later.