

Inflammatory comments blasted

At the conclusion of the two-day meeting in Tok last week, the Board of Directors of the Rural Alaska Community Action Program (RurAL CAP) passed a resolution urging the Governor to "order a halt" to inflammatory comments against subsistence, subsistence users, and organizations designed to protect subsistence emanating from his Administration.

It further calls on the Governor to "take appropriate steps to discipline" any member of his Administration who persists in making such remarks in the future.

The resolution points out several recent attacks on subsistence organizations perpetrated by the Department of Fish and Game and the Board of Game. These include (but are not necessarily limited to) comments by Game Division Director Summer-ville before the Alaska Outdoors Association, Board of Game member Jim Rear-den's comments to the Associated Press alleging that subsistence was not an "issue," and a recent letter transmitted to Nunam Kitlutsisti by the Deputy Director of the Division of Game, Bob Hinman accusing Nunam Kitlutsisti Director Harold Sparck of "gross mis-statements."

The Board concluded that this series of outbursts from the ADF&G constituted nothing less than an all out attack on the subsistence needs of rural Alaskan peoples.

Also, the Board was most concerned that the escalation of negative rhetoric from the Department of Fish and Game is drawing attention from the real issues (effective and sound

management of renewal resources in the State of Alaska).

The text of the resolution reads as follows:

RESOLUTION No. 79

ENTITLED:

URGING THE GOVERNOR OF THE STATE OF ALASKA TO TAKE STEPS TO HALT INFLAMMATORY LANGUAGE AND PERSONAL ATTACKS BY HIS DEPARTMENT OF FISH AND GAME.

WHEREAS:

The Board of Directors of the Rural Alaska Community Action Program represents low-income and rural Alaskans throughout the State of Alaska; and,

WHEREAS: a major priority of that Board, as expressed to it by rural village people, has been the protection of the subsistence way of life constrained only by sound fish and game management practices; and,

WHEREAS: it is essential for all parties interested in the sound management of renewable resources in the State to work together in a continuing and constructive dialogue in order to arrive at sound management plans concerning the allocation of subsistence resources; and,

WHEREAS: various representatives of the ALaska Department of Fish and Game have, on several recent occasions, been making inflammatory remarks and personal attacks on subsistence advocates (specifically) and all subsistence users (by implication), thereby obviating the possibility of constructive dialogue on these issues; and,

WHEREAS: these remarks have contained personal, vindictive attacks on subsistence advocacy groups and their employees, and have gone virtually unchallenged by the Governor's office;

and,

WHEREAS: the net results of these remarks and letters is that a polarization of user groups is occurring, preventing the formulation of sound management plans for ALaska's critically important subsistence resources;

now, therefore, be it

RESOLVED: that the Board of Directors of the Rural Alaska Community Action Program does hereby urgently request Governor Jay Hammond to immediately and publicly order a halt to such inflammatory language and personal attacks emanating from the Department of Fish and Game; and, be it further

RESOLVED: that the Governor is likewise urged to take appropriate steps to discipline any member of his Administration who may persist in making such remarks in the future.

Adopted this 6th day of September, 1979, in Tok, Alaska.

/s/Gordon Jackson

President

RurAL CAP Board of Directors

/s/Philip J. Smith

Executive Director