

Conversion Fund Of \$75,000 For Wildwood

Approval of a \$75,000 grant to help plan for the conversion of Wildwood Air Force Station into a civilian facility to stimulate economic growth of Kenai Peninsula, Alaska, was announced today by Robert A. Podesta Assistant Secretary of Commerce for Economic Development.

"The grant was approved in support of President Nixon's program to help communities plan and carry out programs to create new jobs," Podesta said.

Kenai Peninsula Borough, Soldotna, is the applicant for the funds from the Economic Development Administration, U. S. Department of Commerce.

Borough officials say the Federal funds will help the borough's Overall Economic Development Program Committee convert the 4,300-acre station into a civilian facility and plan for the establishment of an educational center on the station, which is scheduled to be closed by the Department of Defense on July 1, 1972.

Kenai Peninsula Borough will provide \$25,000 to help complete the \$100,000 total cost of the planning program for one year.

Borough leaders say use of facilities at Wildwood for educational purposes will help Alaskan natives obtain skills to encourage industrial and commercial growth on the Kenai Peninsula. New year-round industry is needed to combat high unemployment, especially during the winter, the local officials add.

"EDA is pleased to join in partnership with Kenai Peninsula Borough in planning for the re-use of the facilities at Wildwood as a center to foster economic development.