

Conference targets issues of subsistence

A two-day conference addressing rural subsistence issues and challenges facing Alaska Natives opens today.

Workshops and discussions of a wide range of topics, including the animal rights movement, are scheduled.

The conference is co-sponsored by the Alaska Federation of Natives and the Rural Alaska Community Action Program. It will include a four-member panel of village leaders to give a rural perspective on subsistence issues.

Alaska Sens. Al Adams, D-Kotzebue, Jack Coghill, R-North Pole, and John Binkely, R-Bethel, and Rep. Richard Foster, D-Nome, are scheduled to speak today.

Gov. Steve Cowper will give a keynote address at 10 a.m. Tuesday. Afterwards there will be a panel discussion about the role of Alaska Native Claims Settlement Act corporations in protecting subsistence lifestyles and conflicts between corporate goals and rural values.

Roy Ewan, president of Ahtna Inc., will chair the ANCSA discussion.

Closing statements will be presented by Ben Nageak of the North Slope Borough and Julie Kitka, vice president of AFN.