

Governor tours Project Hope

"Just the feel of this place makes your heart sing. I think we have a winning project here!" said Governor Walter Hickel, as he recently toured the Point MacKenzie location of Project Hope, an alternative program designed to give prison inmates a head start on skills useful to their return to society.

Alaska Native traditions will be a featured part of many programs at the new prison farms, which are expected to be home in 100 inmates by December 31, with a total population of 150 planned by mid-1994.

Reindeer herding, carpentry and welding are

among the skills being taught at the farms, which are repossessed from the Point MacKenzie agricultural project. Two hundred seven reindeer were airlifted to the site from Hagemeister Island in October.

CIRI President Roy Huhndorf, touring the site with Hickel and Corrections Commissioner Frank Prewitt, said, "CIRI has long been concerned with the unfortunate interface of Native people with the justice system. I think this is a major start in the right direction, and I think it has the right emphasis to make a difference."

Story and photo by Tricia King

