

Angapak, Mitchell on subsistence panel

By Linda Lord-Jenkins

Tundra Times

A five-man special task force appointed last week to study ways to improve application of the 1978 subsistence law includes two well-known representatives of the Alaska Native community — Nelson Angapak, vice president of the Calista Regional Corp. and Don Mitchell, vice president of the Alaska Federation of Natives. Angapak is a former AFN chairman.

Others on the task force include anti-subsistence law advocate Tom Scarborough, president of the Interior Region Chapter of the Alaska Sportsmen Council. He was one of the prime sponsors of the repeal initiative which failed in the November, 1982 election.

Task Force Chairman is former Fairbanks State Senator John Butrovich, who left the Legislature in 1978 and didn't vote on the law when it was passed.

Chris Goll, a former mem-

ber of the Board of Fisheries, is the fifth task force member. He is a sports fishing and game guide and a spokesman for many sportsmen's groups in the state.

In announcing formation of the task force, Sheffield said "When the task force begins meeting in early July, I hope we can have a serious and substantial discussion of the laws without the kind of inflammatory rhetoric that surrounded the issue during the campaigns last fall."

The distinguished and expert members of the new task force have the knowledge and dedication that should help clear the air on this issue.

"A majority of Alaskans have endorsed the priority preference we now have for subsistence hunting and fishing," Sheffield said. "I am positive we can implement these laws with fairness and equity toward all Alaskans."

At the very least, he added,
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Subsistence law "not negotiable"

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"the task force will make a substantial contribution to the manner in which the subsistence issue is discussed in future years."

Sheffield's wishes were almost immediately thwarted as Scarborough, in a radio interview, criticized Mitchell's selection for the task force and said he didn't think anything short of repealing the law would be workable.

Pete Spivey, Sheffield's press aide, said last week that he didn't believe that Scarborough's comments would be cause for his removal from

the task force.

Spivey said that as long as Scarborough works in a constructive manner, that one comment to the press wouldn't be grounds for removal.

Spivey said that the task force is not there to decide if subsistence is a good law. "The law itself is not negotiable, the public decided that it is a good law in the November election," but to analyze how the two boards (of fish and game) have implemented it in the last five years.

That analysis might include a review of the definition of "rural" user which has caused

many urban game and fish users to object to the law. That definition, which says a rural area is one which is not on the connected highway system and is an entity of less than 7,000 persons, has caused many urban fish and game users who support subsistence, to question the law in total because of that definition.

The definition was adopted by the Board of Fish and Game at its March, 1982 meeting with little debate.

Spivey said that the governor is not bound to accept any task force recommendation because the task force is entirely advisory. He also said that, because of the defeat of the

subsistence law repeal effort, the governor considered the issue of repeal unacceptable, should the task force recommend repeal.

As far as the personnel on the task force, Spivey says that Sheffield sought to insure that each segment of the Alaska fish and game user community was represented on the task force.

"We know the sessions will probably be stormy but we hope they will overcome that," said Spivey.

While some subsistence law supporters might criticize Scarborough's membership on the task force as being too anti-subsistence, Spivey said that

others could criticize Mitchell as too pro-subsistence law.

Spivey said Butrovich was included on the task force because of the wide respect in which he is held throughout the state.

"Butrovich is widely respected as a thoughtful and fair Alaska statesman. He will be a solid force in keeping the task force on track," said Mitchell.

Mitchell said that Scarborough can be a help to the task force because of his "understanding of the law." However, Mitchell said he won't know until the task force begins work if Scarborough will work whole-heartedly with the group.