

# U.S. bowhead regulations up for review

BY JEANNE ABBOTT  
Anchorage Daily News

A set of proposed regulations governing this year's bowhead whaling season on the arctic coast has been released, allocating the quota of 12 whales to be taken among nine Alaska Eskimo villages that have traditionally participated in the hunt.

The rules also establish licensing and reporting procedures for the whalers, and set penalties for illegal taking of the bowhead whale which is being protected as part of an international conservation effort.

Controls on the hunt are to be instituted to prevent wasteful whaling practices. Prohibited are such activities as shooting a whale with a rifle or shoulder gun without the use of a darting gun. Any calf or bowhead whale accompanied by a calf are not to be taken.

Whales struck or landed must be reported. Should the quota for a village not be reached, what remains may be reassigned to a second village.

Penalties for violations are a maximum \$10,000 fine, a year in jail or both, and loss of whaling license (or crew status) for an indefinite period.

The regulations are broad, leaving many of the details of monitoring the hunts up to the commission.

Said one federal official Sunday, "The federal government is attempting to allow whaling commission enough latitude for self-reporting and self-regulation, and at the same time insure the accuracy of the information the government receives."

Apparently, employees of the National Marine Fisheries Service will be stationed around the whaling villages to help oversee the activity.

Indications are that federal action will be taken immediately in the event one village exceeds its quota, in order to protect the take of other villages.

This international issue of bowhead whale hunting has put an endangered species up against an endangered culture. It involves the continuation of traditional subsistence hunting and a cooperative effort to protect a dying population of whales.

Initially, a ban against hunting the bowhead was leveled that included the Eskimos and the U.S. government failed to protest. Later, when the International Whaling Commission met in Tokyo in December, the matter was reconsidered and Eskimo whalers were given their small quota for the year. (Last year's catch was estimated at 29 whales, and 48 the year before.)

These proposed regulations were announced Friday by the U.S. Department of Commerce,

within weeks of the whaling season, the period of annual migration of the bowhead north to the arctic. Because whale hunts generally begin in late March and early April, public comments on the rules are to be made by March 20. The rules will be published in the Federal Register.

The village allocation provides for the following quotas during 1978: Kaktovik, one whale landed or two struck whichever occurs first; Nuitsut, 1-2; Barrow, 3-3; Wainwright, 2-2; Point Hope, 2-2; Kivalina, 1-2; Gambell, 1-2; Savoonga,

1-2; Wales, zero.

Members of the Alaska Eskimo Whaling Commission were unavailable for comment on the plan Sunday. The commission was established last year to fight for fair treatment in the wake of an international ban on bowhead whaling. They were successful in pushing for an exception to the ban, and in December were permitted the quota of 12 whales killed, or 18 struck, when the International Whaling Commission adopted an amendment.

Federal officials said the Eskimo whaling commission was in-

strumental in helping develop the regulations.

In a memorandum of understanding printed earlier this year, the commission drew up its own management plan for subsistence hunting of the bowhead whales which included the same village quota.

According to the guidelines from the Commerce Department, and its National Marine Fisheries Service, licenses will be issued to Native whaling captains for a fee of \$100. Only licensed or certificated whaling captains and crews may engage in the hunt.

## LAST WEEK IN ALASKA

A weekly summary of Alaska News prepared for  
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**THE KODIAK SCHOOL DISTRICT AND the Island Teachers' Association** have reached agreement on their new two year contract. The pact, which is yet to be ratified by the 120 teacher-members, calls for a cost of living wage increase for each year of the pact. Teachers and the Bering Straits REAA School District are at an impasse. A former Anchorage School District superintendent is representing the Bering Straits district in the talks. He says, "Negotiations started out with a series of conditions of employment to discuss, and a major portion of those were resolved." The talks will now go to federal mediation.

**HOUSE TELECOMMUNICATIONS COMMITTEE CHAIRMAN FRED Brown** of Fairbanks says current investigations into ways of retaining the satellite program once state funds expire have revealed a very competitive field of satellite companies. Brown says it's a "very distinct possibility" that the state could change satellites at least for television programming.

**GUBERNATORIAL CANDIDATE WALTER HICKEL TOLD** the Alaska Miners Association that the average man on the street knows that we must have both development and environmental restraints. Hickel said "We need to preserve that part of the land that is beautiful, and we need to fearlessly pursue the resources needed by all. How will this happen? Out of the ranks of both the conservationists and developers we need to raise a new generation, and I call them the practical environmentalists."

**THE U.S. SUPREME COURT HAS** struck down portions of Washington State's oil tanker regulation law. Gov. Jay Hammond says the high court's ruling should influence lawmakers to approve another bill aimed at safeguarding the environment should Alaska's tanker law also be ruled invalid. The governor said his bill introduced last year, "has the highest oil spill penalties in the nation. These penalties will hopefully make spills so unprofitable companies will insure tankers are properly constructed and operated to avoid a spill."

**THE HOUSE SPECIAL COMMITTEE ON** royalty oil is to take up this week the contract for sale of the one-eighth share of Prudhoe Bay oil to Alaska Petrochemical Company. The chairman of the House Special Committee on Royalty Oil, Bill Miles of Anchorage, says he is concerned with a portion of the contract that would guarantee Alpetco 145,000 barrels of oil a day. And Miles says in another portion of the contract the state is guaranteeing sale of undiscovered, unknown reserves if we don't meet that particular quantity of 145,000 barrels.

**SOME 300 AIRLINE PILOTS FROM** 30 different air lines picketed Boeing Company's flight training center in Seattle, Wash. The picketing is in support of the 10-month old Air Line Pilots' Association's strike against Wien Air Alaska. ALPA spokesman Gary Mercer said, "Boeing's interference has undermined the bargaining process." Boeing says its contract for sale of its aircraft to Wien includes a clause that guarantees the training of pilots who fly those planes.

**GOVERNOR JAY HAMMOND HAS TOLD** RCA Alaska Communications that it will take every legal means available to prevent RCA from shutting down the toll centers at Juneau and Fairbanks. RCA has threatened the move if an appeal of their interim rate increase request for in-state phone calls is denied. The chairman of the House Committee on Telecommunications, Fred Brown of Fairbanks, says one legal remedy may involve the federal contract under which RCA purchased the communications system in the state. Brown said, "It's a very serious question, because, of course, the most extreme remedy, and one we hardly even like to think about, and we hope we never have to get there, could even conceivably constitute rescission of the entire contract."

**THE CAMPAIGN MANAGER FOR GUBERNATORIAL** candidate Ed Merdes of Fairbanks says a current land transaction involving Merdes is "ordinary." Under terms of the deal, Merdes is reportedly using the controversial Delta Junction land, that was involved in a lawsuit with the state, for collateral to buy back a small piece of land from the Teamsters Union. Merdes as an individual is buying back the land. The questions arise because the farm land was purchased by the OHM corporation, of which Merdes is vice president. Merdes campaign manager Mark Fox says, "Reporters insinuate certain things. I think if they looked at the records, they'd find out that the corporation is essentially Ed Merdes. It's a family corporation."

**THE MANAGER OF THE BOEING FLIGHT** Training Center in Seattle says picketing by the Air Line Pilots Association will not halt their training of pilots of Wien Air Alaska. Peter Bush says the contract for sale of the Boeing aircraft to Wien makes Boeing obligated to train the pilots who fly the planes. Bush said, "Wien has the opportunity to ask us to train flight crew members whenever they choose, and we'll do the training just as soon as we possibly can."

**REPUBLICAN GUBERNATORIAL CANDIDATE WALTER HICKEL** has asked the California State Chamber of Commerce to join him in seeking an amendment that would postpone a decision on d-2 land designations in Alaska until at least 1980. Hickel said Alaskans are up in arms "not because of the damage it will do to the state, but because of the disaster it could do to the country as a whole." Hickel said knowledge could be learned of the location of rich mineral deposits if d-2 is delayed.

**THE STATE SENATE HAS APPROVED** a supplemental appropriation for the University of Alaska totaling \$3.2 million. The money represents funds not included in this year's fiscal budget during the last legislative session. Anchorage Senator Pat Rodey said the appropriation "will insure that the university system, including the Anchorage Community College...will be going on as scheduled."

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