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Senator John Torgerson District D

For Immediate Release: April 21, 2001
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Sen. Torgerson's Effort Makes Seward Land Lease Possible **Igloo #9 to Use Land for Community Events**

(JUNEAU)—Seward's Pioneers of Alaska organization will have a new place to hold group events thanks to a land deal brokered by Senator John Torgerson (R-Kasilof).

Under the proposal, the state will lease a 4-acre parcel to Igloo #9 at 1 percent of fair market value. The term of the lease is 25 years.

"We've been looking for a place for years," said Jim McCracken. "We sure are glad that Senator Torgerson was able to help us get this property."

The property, located at mile 24.5 of the Seward Highway near the Lawing Air Strip, is currently the resting place for numerous abandoned vehicles, fuel drums and the remnants of old buildings. In years past, the land had been used by an air taxi service.

McCracken, Don Lynch and Louis Bencardino initiated the land lease project and contacted Sen. Torgerson for help. Torgerson then worked with Bob Loeffler, Director of the State Division of Mining, Land and Water, who was instrumental in getting state approval to lease the land.

"This was an excellent opportunity to take something that wasn't working right, and convert it to something that makes sense and benefits a lot of people," said Loeffler.

The Pioneers plan to clean up the property, restore the old buildings and use the area as a center for recreational and community events.

"This is the way things should be done," said Torgerson. "We're taking a parcel of land that has been sitting idle and full of trash, leasing it to a responsible group like the Pioneers, and now the entire community will benefit. Working out this lease was a real pleasure for me and I'm glad to know the Seward community will reap the rewards for years to come."

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