

## ERUB group visits DC

An ERUB nuclear survivors' group representative and a US United Church of Christ official met with 11 US representatives and senators, or their staff, during a visit to Washington, DC last month, and report that they found considerable support for the RMI government's changed circumstances nuclear test compensation petition.

But they also heard from House and

Senate staff, as well as lobby organization officials, that the Marshall Islands government needs to take more aggressive action if it wants Congressional support.

ERUB group members presented a report on their Washington outreach trip, with recommendations for stepped up action by the RMI government, to President Kessai Note last week.



The ERUB group, from left to right: Elma Coleman, Joanna Jokane, Kallie Edmond, Rev. Ronald Fujiyoshi, Lemeyo Abon, Betty Edmond, Rokko Langinbelik, Jokane Matayoshi, and Peter Eknlang

# Ailuk Atoll's win-win deal



Project manager  
Ken Alfred Melejon.

Ailuk Atoll is getting a \$32,500 upgrade of their airport terminal in return for creating two conservation sites at Enije Island and Enije channel.

The money is being donated by California-based NGO Seacology, which offers support for the protection of island environments and cultures throughout the world, with several projects currently running in other Micronesian islands. This is their first project in the Marshall Islands.

The local NGO Natural Resources Assessment Surveys (NRAS) has been coordinating with the Ailuk Ook Fisheries Committee and the Marshall Islands Marine Resources Authority (MIMRA) over the past year to develop the fisheries management plan.

*'Not only would the community obtain benefits from conserving their natural resources, they could qualify for funding to complete an infrastructure project of their choice.'*

According to Frankie Harriss, the NRAS project manager, the conservation sites were chosen based on traditional knowledge and the results of underwater surveys conducted by NRAS in May and June, 2006.

The two sites chosen for conservation by the fisheries committee and the local government are Eneja (Enije Island), a known turtle nesting area, and To-eje (Enije channel), which is abundant with mega-fauna. "Mega-fauna means

big fish, sharks, and turtles," said Harriss.

The sites involve 215 acres, which will be conserved for 10 years in exchange for the \$32,500.

While NRAS is monitoring the use of the funds, the Ailuk project manager is Ken Alfred Melejon.

Micronesia's Seacology representative is Simon Ellis, who gave a workshop on coral farming for sustainable livelihood on Ailuk. While on the atoll, Ellis

explained to the community that if they were willing to set aside areas for conservation they could find themselves in a win-win situation. Not only would the community obtain benefits from conserving their natural resources, they could qualify for funding to complete an infrastructure project of their choice through the California based NGO, Seacology.

The airport terminal is currently a skeleton of a building.

This grant will allow the community to complete the terminal along with guest lodging and solar power.

The project will be led by Ken Alfred Melejon of Ailuk and funds will be administered by NRAS. Completion of the project is expected within 5 months.