

Study to Review Land Claims

An academic and hopefully objective look at federal public land laws and policies in Alaska will begin later this summer.

The U.S. Public Land Law Review Commission last week awarded a contract for a land study to the University of Wisconsin, Rep. Wayne N. Aspinall, D-Colo., chairman, announced.

The Anchorage law firm of Ely, Guess, Rudd and Havelock will be consultants to the university.

Purpose of the study, according to Milton A. Pearl, commission director, is:

1. To understand the laws, regulations policies and practices relating to public lands in Alaska.

2. To review native land claims.

3. To compare federal public land laws with those of the State of Alaska, British Columbia and the Yukon

Territory.

4. To determine the present and future role of public lands and resources in the state's economic development, including an inventory of lands and resources and a projection of future demands.

5. To analyze the relationship between the selection of grant lands by the state and administration of federal lands and resources.

6. To compare existing alternative approaches to public land policy from the standpoint of Alaska development and effectiveness of federal public land management.

The commission report is scheduled for presentation to Congress by Dec. 21, 1968. It will include at least 27 studies.

A research team from the University of Wisconsin, and a member of the Public Land Law Review Commission staff

will meet with authorities and groups in Alaska later this summer.

The study is sponsored jointly by the commission and the Federal Field Committee for Development Planning in Alaska.

Alaska's public land problems are unique, Aspinall pointed out.

"At present, the federal public lands comprise 95 per cent of Alaska's total land area, a fact that in itself places the state in a unique position among the other 49 states," he said.