

Hammond releases results of d-2 plan questionnaire

Gov. Jay Hammond has released the results of more than 1,100 questionnaires filled out by Alaskans on the state's proposed D-2 plan.

Hammond said, "This questionnaire was but one part of a lengthy and continuing process of involving the public in the decision-making process on this Alaskan issue."

"In general," the governor said, "the survey results indicated support for some of the major concepts of this D-2 proposal. For example, 55% agreed with the idea of establishing a permanent cooperative Alaska Land Commission.

"Fifty-eight per cent agreed if the commission were established, it should have strong land classification and planning authority over state and federal land in the Cooperative Management Areas.

"Sixty-one per cent agreed with establishing Cooperative Management Areas. Seventy-seven per cent agreed if the Comans were established then the state should actively cooperate in the management of the state lands within the area.

"Sixty-five per cent thought the commission should have the authority to identify transportation corridors across federal lands, if it is established. Sixty-two per cent favored the idea of establishing Area Advisory Boards under the commission."

A substantial number of residents wanted more public land made available for private own-

ership. As the lands proposed for (d) (2) withdrawals were carefully selected by the Secretary of the Interior for their important long-term public values, it is unlikely that they will be released for private ownership.

However, the administration recognizes the importance of private ownership and intends to raise it as part of the federal consideration of this bill as well as reviewing state programs in this regard.

Hammond said in general most Alaskans who filled out and returned the questionnaires felt that "too much" acreage had been proposed for new national parks and preserves under National Park Service Management while the response to recreation areas was more evenly balanced.

On the other hand, a majority felt that the acreage proposed for national forests, Alaska resource lands, and National Wildlife Refuges was either "about right," or "too little."

Hammond said, "It appears many individuals wish the entire D-2 issue would simply go away to allow a return to the system that existed in the 1960's.

"It is, however, absolutely clear that Congress will set aside large amounts of land in Alaska into the four federal systems. What I am working for is an alternative to the large, restrictive set-asides by adding a new concept to management of our lands by our people."

Governor Hammond began

the public process with a statewide radio address on Nov. 17.

In addition, he recently spoke before several groups in Fairbanks and Anchorage on this issue.

Thirty-two public meetings were held across the state; 110,000 questionnaires were mailed out.

Included in that group were 1,200 sent to the 12 Native regional corporations, 3,500 to 179 schools, 720 to smaller villages, 1,500 at Fish and Game offices across the state, and several thousand made available at the public meetings.

About 80,000 were distributed throughout the state as newspaper inserts.

Hammond said, "My D-2 Task Force will now begin reshaping the D-2 proposal based on the public comments."

Hammond has already asked that modifications be made to allow state selections of Alaska resource lands following their release for such selection by the Alaska Land Commission. He also requested new language to give the commission the power to designate prime uses on Alaska resource lands, a responsibility the original proposal would have given to Congress.

In addition, proposals for Wild and Scenic River designations will be made in the next draft of the governor's bill.

Hammond said the justification for and boundaries of all proposed new federal refuges, forests, parks, preserves, recreation areas and Alaska resource lands will receive new and thorough scrutiny in the coming months.

To meet congressional guidelines, it appears now the state will have to submit a D-2 bill to Congress in the fall.