

BLM Land Questions

By JOETTE STORM

Q. An oil company has asked to lease part of my allotment for setting up a billboard. Can I do this?

P.D., Tok

A: If you have applied for land under the 1906 Allotment Act, your claim is probably in the process of being examined and you have not received any notification of ownership yet. Even after title is transferred to the Bureau of Indian Affairs, which will hold it in trust for you, you cannot lease or sell any part of the land without prior permission from BIA.

You may not lease the land now or allow any construction on it except for those structures used in proving your use of the allotment area. You may continue to use the land as a home or campsite, for fishing or food gathering as you have in the past. But remember, an allotment must have been filed for before Dec. 18, 1971 since that is the date the Allotment Act expired.

If there are timber, gravel, or other resources on your land, they are subject to the same restrictions.

Question: What is a field examiner and what does he do?

Answer: A field examiner's main function is to inspect a land claim for evidence of use. As a BLM employee, a field examiner visits a claim such as a Native Allotment, homestead, or mining site to locate the on-the-ground boundaries. He is NOT a surveyor, but one who tells the surveyor how to find the claim.

After inspecting a claim, the examiner will make a report and recommendations to the BLM

adjudicators who will decide if the claim should be granted. Field examiners often mark the claim they inspect with a small metal tag. This is NOT a survey will be made at a later date.

A field examiner's official title is Realty Specialist. (Questions on the Alaska Native Land Claims Act, the Native Allotment Act, or related issues may be sent to: BLM Claims Questions, (912) 555 Cordova Street, Anchorage, AK 99501)

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Applications for grants from the Alaska State Council on the Arts are currently being received