

LAND GROUP PLANS MEETING

Juggled Meeting Date Settled for Juneau Next Wednesday, Thursday

The meeting of the portion of land task force committee that was supposed to have met in Juneau today and tomorrow has been changed to February 26 and 27 in the same city.

The meeting next Wednesday and Thursday will probably talk about the last land bill introduced in Congress, S 3859, and discuss the Federal Field Committee for Development Planning in Alaska report, a 565-page tome entitled, "Alaska Natives and the Land."

It was originally thought that Emil Notti, president of the Alaska Federation of Natives, would call the meet but the latest word is that Morris Thompson of the Governor's Office will handle the meeting.

Thompson will call the conferees, probably 15 members out of the land task force.

When contacted, Emil Notti said the meeting will probably discuss changes in the last land bill introduced in Congress.

"Two major things we are thinking about are the land area

and the amount of money," said Notti.

The Federal Field Committee's recommendations for land settlement have been, 4 to 7 million acres of lands would be granted the natives of Alaska and \$100 million from the U.S. Treasury Department as payment for native rights taken in the past.

The S 3859 asks for 40 million acres and \$500 million. The Federal Field Committee's report, however, recommended that the Alaska natives be given 10 percent share of the United States resource income at the rate of \$100 million a year for ten years, or \$1 billion in total.

The meeting in Juneau will probably discuss the possibility of calling a special conference of the AFN in not too distant future.

"We'll do what the group wants," said Emil Notti, "If we call one, it will be to discuss the final bill before we go to Congress."

(Continued on page 6)

Group Plans Meeting . .

(Continued from page 1)

The AFN will press for unity among the native organizations in its effort to draft a land bill that will be satisfactory to all. The AFN is under pressure to achieve this level as congressional members have been asking that it be achieved.

"We are going to have to make a united stand if we are going to have anything near what we're asking," stated Notti.

The Juneau meeting will be discussing the confidential report by the Federal Field Committee made public by Sen. Henry M. Jackson last Tuesday in Washington.

The report said in general:

The first bill on Alaska Native land claims was introduced in Congress in June 1967. When the 90th Congress adjourned there were six bills pending. The settlement proposed in the Federal Field Committee's confidential report draws heavily on these previous bills. It differs, however, in several important ways.

While the proposal confirms grants of land and important rights to surface resources for all present Native needs, it seeks to resolve the potential conflict among individual Natives - urban and rural, those residing in resource rich areas and those residing in barren areas, and those who live in Alaska and those who live elsewhere—by providing a state-wide compensation package.

Like those in some of the previous bills, this package is composed of lands, cash, and shared future revenues. Unlike earlier proposals it emphasizes money and revenue sharing as the primary form of compensation rather than land.

By this emphasis, conflict over land between Natives and the State of Alaska is minimized. An adequate source of funds would be provided by opening more lands to competitive mineral leasing.

These funds would not be distributed directly to Natives or to village groups, but would be channelled through one investment corporation owned by all Alaska Natives.

The grants of land proposed are to individuals for their use or to legally recognized communities - not to tribes or bands or to other racially defined groups.

Most existing Native reserves would be abolished. Specifically, the proposal would:

1. Give Native individuals the lands they use or occupy for homes; businesses, hunting, fishing, trapping and reindeer management camps;

2. Provide for emergency protection for subsistence hunting and fishing on public domain lands;

3. Grant to any Native Village which incorporated under Alaska State law, up to 36 square miles of land for community use and expansion;

4. Grant to a new corporation owned by Alaska Natives, \$100 million from the U.S. Treasury as payment for Native rights taken in the past; and,

5. Grant to the Native Corporation in compensation for rights taken by this legislation, 10 percent of the income from the leasing or sale of minerals and other resources from Federal lands for a period of 10 years, including lands selected by the State during the land freeze or after it is lifted.

The total lands granted would range between 4 and 7 million acres, while the money payments over a 10 year period would be a minimum of \$100 million, plus the revenue sharing up to a maximum of \$100 million each year for 10 years.

The Federal government would not make cash payments directly to Native individuals, but the corporation would pay dividends to Natives as stockholders out of the income from its investments; it could also make grants as loans to individuals, to communities, or to Native organizations.

For the first 10 years the corporation would be managed by a board of directors, some of whom would be appointed by the President and others elected by the Alaska Natives. During this 10 year period the management and investments of the corporation would be closely supervised by the government.

At the end of 10 years a new board of directors would be established, elected entirely by the corporation stockholders, and after a final review by Congress, all special supervision of its affairs would end.

The President would also appoint a five man Alaska Native Commission to supervise the enrollment of Natives eligible for a share of the settlement and the administration of land grants to individuals and communities.