

On Galena Houses

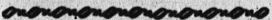
Galena was picked up by the Alaska State Housing Authority Board to receive housing this



Bulletin

The Bureau of Indian Affairs has offered \$170,000 for immediate release to the town of Galena and \$48,000 more has been pledged by the Red Cross for building and repairs. It comes as the result of an emergency meeting called by Sen. Mike Gravel in Washington Tuesday. Jimmy Huntington and John Sackett represented the village.

A Gravel spokesman reports villagers will stay with their old site during the winter and that the Corps of Engineers has agreed to reexamine their criteria for establishment of the 100-year flood plain. A meeting has been called for August 9 in Anchorage to discuss permanent location.



year. Two meetings were held

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Indecision on Housing..

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before the flood.

The first was just an introductory in which the people were told that they would receive 16 units. The second meeting was for a selection of a site for these 16 units.

The majority wanted these units built at the present site of Galena.

ASHA representatives said that they could not put in their program at the present site because it is within the 100 year flood plain and is affected by erosion, but that ASHA could put these homes up for the people at a site they called Alexander Lake.

The people of Galena wanted to have these homes built as close to the river as possible as it is their lifeline and also many work at the Air Force Base which is right over the dike.

ASHA said they would have to take this decision back to their directors for approval. The answer was negative for building at the present site but they can build at the Alexander Lake site.

After the disastrous flood which smashed many homes and ruined many others which will need expensive repair before winter set in, a meeting was held with various agencies. Galena was promised then 36 homes at the Alexander Lake Site.

All of Galena wanted to move to the lake site for many reasons. A few are better houses water and sewer, health facilities higher educational facilities and also to get away from the flood area and erosion.

Sixty-three of Galena's household heads and families had their names down for a house at Alexander Lake providing a road and building pads were put in.

The people were told 36 houses would be put in with a road and gravel pad. After an inspection of the site by ASHA they decided they would not

build at the lake site because certain areas were eight foot under water during the flood but that they would build the homes at Campion Hill site which is an Air Force reserve.

It would take almost two years before Galena village could ever get title for this land and it was recognized by the agency that the need for housing was now.

Galena stayed with their first choice and waited so after many more meetings ASHA came back to Galena and announced that homes would be built on temporary foundations at the lake site and they, ASHA, were the only program doing something to help the people in need of housing.

Many families wanted homes but only six were selected by ASHA to receive this housing and we were turned down once again, as we just learned.

The Bureau of Indian Affairs has also had its ups and downs on decision making. One hundred and seventy-five thousand was allocated by them for the rehabilitation of Galena.

Just before last night's Village Council's housing meeting a call was received from the BIA stating that the \$175,000 was not to be used for building and repair of housing but for food, clothing and furniture.

To this day two full months after the big flood, not a spoonful of gravel or a stick of lumber has been put in at the Alexander Lake site.

Because of the promises made, many of the people did not get logs to build homes for themselves. These people are subject to taxes as well as any one else. Galena is the fastest growing village on the Yukon River, the hub for air transportation and job opportunities are good, yet the people of Galena are being taken as puppets.

- ANDY DEMOSKI