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Tardy Regional Groups Will Not Get Interim Funding

By RICHARD La COURSE

WASHINGTON, D. C. — (AIPA) — Three of Alaska's twelve Native regional corporations formally incorporated un-

der the settlement terms of the 1972 Alaska Native Claims Act here June 2.

In sequence of incorporation at the Interior Department were the Calista Corporation of

Southwest Alaska, the Northwest Area Native Association, and Cook Inlet Region Corporation of Southcentral Alaska.

The three regional corporations which represent over 1/3

of the 65,000 Native Alaskans immediately qualified for interim funding of amounts totaling \$500,000 for use to repay loans and other obligations related to the claims settlement, for pur-

poses of organizing, and to identify regional lands under the December Settlement Act.

Calista incorporators were Phillip Guy of Kwethluk; Fred

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No Interim Funding...

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A. Notti, St. Mary's; Elizabeth Bean, Nightmute; William Tyson, St. Mary's; and Robert Nick, Nunapitchuk.

Attorneys Richard A. Baenen and Foster DeReitzen witnessed the signing of the Northwest Alaska Native Association. There were no witnesses for Cook Inlet's incorporation.

The special \$500,000 authorization of interim funding was contained in an appropriations amendment offered by Senator Ted Stevens, Republican of Alaska, to an omnibus appropriations bill.

The bill was signed into law by President Richard M. Nixon in Iran, May 30, enroute to the United States from a diplomatic summit meeting with top Russian leaders in the Soviet Union.

Assistant Interior Secretary, Harrison Loesch, Chief of the Bureau of Public Land Management which oversees Native corporate activities and the Native land selection process, urged the nine remaining Native associations to speed their filing of incorporation papers to be eligible for financial assistance ending June 30.

Major elements essential in qualifying for the \$500,000 financial assistance are: the writ-

ing of a charter, a constitution and by-laws, setting of a corporate budget, and settlement of any boundary disputes in the individual regions.

In a post-signing interview Loesch stated, "I'm not a bit above using this dough (the \$500,000) as a carrot. We want to settle as soon as possible. Although the (Interior) Secretary wants the corporations to settle the boundary disputes by themselves he has the authority to set the boundaries. He does not want to turn these funds loose until the boundaries are settled."

Loesch said the Interior Department "has no indicator or timetable on the other nine" Native corporations for signing their articles of incorporation.

"The Arctic Slope folks are stubborn. They won't even talk about boundaries until their litigation is settled," said Loesch.

The Arctic Slope Native Association has petitioned to form a borough which would give it the power to tax tangible personal property, including that of major oil interests in the area.

Oil interests have also filed suit to prevent the ASNA from forming a borough.