

Hodel OKs land trades

Final decision on ANWR swaps up to Congress

Interior Secretary Donald Hodel last week recommended to Congress that land trades being proposed by Alaska Native corporations for oil rights in the Arctic National Wildlife Refuge be approved.

The final decision on the recommendation, one of Hodel's last decisions before his tensure ended Friday, will be up to Congress.

Word about the decision was reported by the Associated Press in Washington, D.C., at press time for the *Tundra Times*, and reporters were unable to contact Native corporation

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spokesmen about their reaction to the news.

Alaska Native corporations are offering to trade about 895,000 acres throughout Alaska for mineral rights to about 166,000 acres on the Coastal Plain of ANWR. The Coastal Plain is believed to have the potential for producing large quantities of oil.

The corporations are offering to trade lands that are inholdings within federal refuges.

The trades have generated much controversy, with State of Alaska officials taking a strong stand against the them. Native leaders have defended them, however, saying the federal government has much to gain from them.