

# ANF, TCC get grants to study future of Native life in Alaska

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Grants totalling \$500,000 have been awarded to the Alaska Native Foundation and the Tanana Chiefs Conference to help the two organizations conduct studies on what changes have occurred in Native cultures since the passage of the Alaska Native Claims Settlement Act.

Two \$250,000 grants were given by the Administration for Native Americans to ANF and TCC.

The ANF grant will be used to study the status of the regional profit-making corporations and the changes that they have gone through as well as the changes they have caused in the lives of Alaska Natives.

The ANF study also will focus on the cultural changes being experienced by Alaska Natives in the 10 years since the passage of the ANSCA.

The goals of the ANF project are to explore the issues relating from ANSCA and identify those which are most in need of resolution; to develop an information network based on a variety of materials and media that will keep Alaska Natives aware of their rights and of the issues resulting from the implementation of ANSCA; to determine the impact of private, state and federal development or lack of development on Native subsistence communities and to provide research data to Native profit and non-profit corporations; and to develop and institute a system to enable the Native corporations and the federal and state governments to address problems of land development, management access, identification and marking in a more efficient manner.

The first year of the ANF project will be devoted to preparing a report on the status of Native corporations, including a report on successes, failures, and the extent which federal and state funding has helped the corporations. The first year also will be used to develop strategies for greater Native economic and social self-sufficiency and to begin a legal and financial analysis of the options open to Natives corporations in 1991 when regional and village corporation stock can be sold in the open market.

The 1991 aspect of this ANA-funded study dovetails into a study which ANF President Roger Lang proposed to the Alaska Federation of Natives several months ago on 1991.

The fear that people have of that year is that Natives will sell off their stock if it is not making enough money for them but it also has been pointed out that if the stock is very valuable, it also might be sold at a large profit.

This project will seek to present alternatives to Native leadership in the hopes that those two scenarios might be avoided.

ANF hired Phil Smith, former director of the RurA LCAP agency which has extensive ties to the Bush and Alaska Native programs, to help conduct the study.

Lang said that ANF won't hire any other new persons for the whole study but will be hiring contract labor to do specific portions of the study.

According to TCC president "Spud" Williams, the TCC grant is actually a continuation and increase of grants awarded to TCC in the past to conduct

planning in the Tanana Chiefs Council region.

Williams said the \$250,000 grant this year will be used to study the non-profit regional corporations and their roles in Alaskan Native life.

One main focus of the study will be to examine economic potential in different areas. Williams said that examination will vary depending on the area and what residents in the villages want.

Williams said the economic study will consult with village leaders, to determine what natural resources and what "human resources," are present in the communities. From that starting point, the information will be used in the study itself and perhaps to aid in establishing new businesses in specific areas.

Williams said the study will focus on what is possible in each particular environment and will place great importance on "what is culturally and socially acceptable. We don't

want any tennis shoe factories like they have in Arizona or pencil factories like in Montana."

An example of what TCC will examine would be the many Native craftsmen involved in beadwork creations. While most of these craftsmen work individually and participate in a barter economy, a group of beadwork artists could form a cooperative and sell their goods for money and

receive a better profit.

Although the grant is being given for a one-year period, Williams said he hopes that a second one-year grant will be awarded to complete the study.

He said the study will be set up so that even if a second grant isn't awarded, the study will have a good view of the economic realities and necessities of Native life in the state.