

Halt easements

From BERING STRAITS AGLUTUK Bering Straits Native Corporation has asked the Bureau of Land Management to halt all further village easement meetings until further notice.

Vice president of lands Diane Hemmes advised state BLM director Curt McVee in a letter November 13 that the corporation was firmly opposed at this time to any further village easements meetings.

She listed two main reasons:

1. The BSNC villages and regional office are currently occupied with the extremely important land selection considerations of ANCSA sections 12b, 12c and 14h. The deadline for these selections is a solid December 18th, 1975. There is no such time deadline for the easement procedure.

2. The uncertain, flexible "guideline" criteria for easements has created much confusion in our villages as to what constitutes an easement. Additional time will allow for BSNC to send villages more background information on easements and historical data on what has formally been considered justification for easements. We anticipate that the future will yield firmer guidelines and this should also serve to alleviate the village confusion regarding easements. BSNC is also opposed to raising the subject of navigability at village easement meetings.

"It is our feeling that this further serves to complicate the situation for our regional villages," Hemmes said.

The easements themselves present a problem to people who live in the villages of the Bering Straits region.

Historically easements have been reserved on private land only where there is an

established need, for the public good.

The situation has been abruptly reversed in the current easement battle in Alaska. A number of easements are being sought by people who do not live in the area, who may wish to travel through private Native lands for reasons based mainly on speculative interests.

In the case of the Bering Straits region, it means the government is going into an area with no previous history of public use and reserving it in a manner that restricts its use by those who have traditionally lived on the land.

No Permission Needed

An easement means someone can cross your private property without even asking your permission.

In most cases, individuals or business firms or even a government agency which desires continuous unrestricted access to private land must pay for the privilege—with the price set by the owner of the land.

Native Americans in other states, like other private land owners, have at times been paid large sums of money by persons wishing such entry.

However, when the government declares a portion of private land to be part of an easement, the owners can get no compensation; yet the owners are restricted in use of the land. At the same time, the government has not up with a viable means of assuring that who will use the requested easement do damage the environment with litter, fires, or other means of destruction.

Collectively, easements stand to use of thousands of acres of lands by Native Corporations here and around the state.

Native women win . . .

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ment of money to any member of the class of persons upon whose behalf the suit was brought. It preserves the right of one of the named plaintiffs to make such a claim.

3. Once approved by the United States District Court Judge, the settlement would dispose of all other claims and liabilities which might be made of the defendants by the plaintiffs.

Interested persons objecting to the settlement should mail two copies of a signed statement to: Clerk for the United States District Court, Federal Building, Fourth & G Streets, Anchorage, Alaska 99510. Finnesand v. Kleppe, Civ. No. A-75-42.

Such statements must be received by Jan. 26, 1976.

The suit is entitled Hannah Finnesand, et al. v. Thomas S. Kleppe, Secretary of Interior, et al., Civ. No. A-75-42. The defendants in the suit are the Secretary of Interior and various of his subordinates charged with administering the Bureau of Indian Affairs general assistance program.

The policy of the Bureau of Indian Affairs has been to determine the eligibility of families for general assistance on the basis of the race of the head of household. This policy was embodied in a 1939 agreement between the then Office of Indian Affairs and the Territory of Alaska.

The 1939 agreement was subsequently superseded by provisions in the BIA's Indian Affairs Manual and the Alaska Division of Public Welfare Staff Manual.

Pursuant to the provisions of its manual, the BIA has re-

fused general assistance to all members of families with non-Alaska Native heads of household and has referred these families to the State of Alaska for general relief.

The BIA's policy irrefutably presumed that a husband, who was legally responsible for the support of the family, was the head of household.

Therefore, the policy resulted in a denial of general assistance to Alaska Native women married to non-Alaska Native men (legally responsible for their support) and the dependent children of such marriages.

On the other hand, the presumption that the male spouse was the head of household, so long as he was legally responsible for the support of the family, resulted in a situation where non-Alaska Native women married to Alaska Native men, and the dependent children of such marriages, were eligible to receive Bureau of Indian Affairs general assistance.

The Secretary of Interior has determined that past policies should be reassessed in light of recent developments in constitutional law and changes in the laws and constitution of the State of Alaska.

Accordingly the parties to this law suit have proposed to settle the issues raised by the suit without proceeding to trial.

Questions with respect to the suit or the proposed settlement may be addressed to:

Bruce C. Twomley (272-9431) or James H. Holloway, (272-9431), Alaska Legal Services Corporation, 524 West Sixth Ave., Suite 204, Anchorage, Alaska 99501.

Being studied--

Arctic caribou herd

FAIRBANKS — Methods to halt the decline of the Arctic caribou herd are being carefully studied and changes will be made in present regulations or programs only after extensive review, a top Department of Fish and Game official said recently.

Robert Hinman, game supervisor for Interior Alaska, said that some Native groups have expressed concern over the department's evaluation of the Arctic caribou herd.

"We know that the herd has declined from an estimated 240,000 animals in 1970 to an estimated 100,000 in 1975. At the moment, we are primarily interested in halting that decline so that the herd can continue to meet the traditional subsistence needs of the area," Hinman said.

Department of Fish and Game biologists say that the exact reasons for the herd's decline are not known, but probably include a combination of hunting, long-range natural change in the habitat, disease and predation, primarily by wolves.

"At this time, we see no reason to attribute the decline to oil or other development in the Arctic," Hinman said.

"Given the herd's present low population, it does appear advisable to do what we can to reverse the decline. Failure to stem this decline will soon threaten the herd's ability to support the essential subsistence requirements of the residents of the region," he added.

Biologists point out that predation and hunting are the only two factors causing the decline that can be controlled by man, so any efforts to rebuild the herd must take these factors into account.

Subsistence hunters traditionally take about 25,000 caribou from the Arctic herd, which is more than the herd can support at its present level of 100,000. Studies have shown that caribou herds usually cannot support an annual harvest of more than 10% of the total population.

Wolves also take a significant, but unknown number of caribou. Aerial wolf hunting was

Elaine Ramos . . .

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"needs to be a lot of work done on quality education in the villages in order to help the Native people adjust to the new changes being made."

Ms. Ramos commented on the progress of the Native people pointing out that for the first time in history there are Native Alaskans in the State Legislature.

She said that one of the questions she is concerned with is "how do we help our children prepare for the future so that they can still maintain their identity and not destroy their culture."

Past administrations have said that it is too expensive to deliver education to the bush, but Elaine Ramos doesn't think so. "We have already paid too much. The villages should determine the kind of education their children will receive. This is self determination."

Dennis Demmert, head of Native Students at the university said that with this new position he sees real changes in the university's attitude toward Native students and Native student needs.

He went on to say, "I hope this is a step in the real progress of Native needs. With Elaine in there I have high hopes."

curtailed in the Arctic beginning in 1970, and wolf populations have recovered to a fairly high level since then.

Hinman said that the department can utilize a number of methods in its efforts to reduce the mortality on Arctic caribou and thus permit the herd to regain its traditional numbers.

These include halting the presently allowed commercial sale of caribou in the Arctic, establishment of bag limits and/or closed seasons, predator control to decrease the wolf take and education programs designed to help residents to better utilize their harvest.

Hinman said that before any new regulations are established regarding the Arctic caribou herd, meetings will be held in villages throughout the area so that all residents will have the opportunity to voice their opinions and propose solutions to the problem.

FNV office moves

The Fairbanks Motor Vehicle Field Office has moved to a new location at 675 Seventh Ave., Section F.

The move consolidates the motor vehicle registration and driver licensing functions of the Division of Motor Vehicles of the Department of Public Safety.

The office manager of the Motor Vehicle Field Office is John Daugherty.

Lives in garage . . .

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on the case and reports the Makalik's folder at Social Services is thick.

"They have some money. She's a widow. There's aid to dependent children. But they don't understand how to manage the money. They get the check and a week later it's gone," Mrs. Drake worries. "I asked Social Services to send a home health aid to help them plan. Instead Extension Service sent someone, but Annie doesn't understand English."

During the long spells when it's been 40 degrees below or colder in Fairbanks, the Makalik household has been grim. Someone has to stay awake all the time to feed the stove and wood is short.

The family bought all they could and the youngsters "scrounged" what they could find. Problem is, they can't find anyone who sells wood even when they have money, so they've had to buy commercial fireplace logs sold at Market Basket and these don't last as long as real wood.

All the Makaliks work at what they can. Annie sews constantly.

"I want to help," worries buyer Claire Fejes of Alaska House, who sometimes donates food to the family. "But I've bought just about all the Eskimo dolls from Annie that I can buy

Frickle manager Clarence Rhode

Don Frickie of Fairbanks has been named manager of the Clarence Rhode National Wildlife Range headquartered at Bethel.

The refuge is located on the massive Yukon-Kuskokwim delta and encompasses some 2.7 million acres of the finest waterfowl and shorebird nesting habitat in Alaska.

Frickie is moving from his job as an Assistant Manager of the Arctic National Wildlife Range, and is replacing Dr. Calvin Lensink who recently accepted the job of Activity Leader of Fish and Wildlife's outer continental shelf studies.

Frickie began his career with the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service as a research biologist working with endangered species at the Patuxent Research Facility in Laurel, Maryland.

Frickie then worked as a flyway biologist in Washington DC and later served as an Atlantic Coast Flyway Biologist in Atlanta, Georgia before accepting the Fairbanks position.



If your blankets are badly worn, you can cut out the bad spots and combine what's left to make one big blanket, which can now be used for the warm interlining of a quilt cover.

for a while."

Donald, 17, works for Neighborhood Youth Corps and Alice, 15, found a job at the Tanana Valley Fair this summer. Annabelle, 13, laments she's so young people won't hire her, but all the girls babysit whenever possible.

They're nice kids; bright and articulate. And it's easy to see why their mother wants the best for them.

"We like it here. Kids aren't always bugging us," Donald says. "Sometimes food gets a little low," admits Alice. "But we like school. We like Fairbanks."

Christmas was bright. If anyone had given them a Christmas tree, they would have had to use it to fuel the stove, because wood is still a problem, but just in the nick of time, their land claims checks (just over \$90 each) arrived.

That didn't go far, however. The family arrived in Fairbanks without blankets (Pauline helped there) and any extra money goes to clothing and home improvements.

And it does seem they will have to continue to improve the home they have. Low income housing is so tight in Fairbanks, it looks like the Makaliks are lucky to have even a garage. But that doesn't make garage living any easier.

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