

# AFN to consider membership for Thirteenth

Three directors of the Alaska Federation of Natives will study a request to admit the 13th Regional Corporation to associate membership.

Thirteenth Regional President Ray Combs last week asked for full membership in the AFN for his corporation which represents about 4,500 Alaska Natives living in the Lower 48.

When the Alaska Native Claim enrollment was conducted, Alaska Natives living in the Lower 48 were allowed to

choose if they wanted to join the Thirteenth, which was not to get any land, or to join one of the 12 land corporations which were receiving a land settlement in the state.

The 4,000 people who joined the Thirteenth received a cash settlement but under terms of the Alaska Native Claims Settlement Act, were to receive no land.

The Thirteenth has 45 acres of land at Cold Bay which it purchased for a fisheries base but that land and buildings on

it is being leased to an oil company as a staging area for oil exploration.

The nature of Combs' conversation with the board of directors is not known because as he began to speak, Tanana Chiefs Council President Spud Williams called an "executive session" and all non-directors were required to leave.

Previous contact between Combs and the board was less than sympathetic, however,

because of long-standing ill feelings between AFN members and the Thirteenth about the process in which the corporation was formed.

An election of all non-resident Natives was held and the majority voted to join the 12 Alaska-based corporations. However, those who wanted to form a separate corporation sued and won their court battle.

According to one person, "too much water has gone under the bridge" in the rela-

tions between the Thirteenth and AFN.

And, according to another person, hard feelings still exist about promises supposedly made by Thirteenth representatives during the election and enrollment process.

Combs, new president of the Thirteenth, wasn't specifically denied land. He says it just wasn't specifically granted land.

The three-member committee will report to the AFN board at its next meeting.