

Land Use Planning Handbook

NIKOLAI — A field test was held here earlier this month of a village land use planning handbook produced by the Federal-State Land Use Planning Commission with assistance from several agencies and individuals.

Two days of intensive work was carried out in the village with Tony Alexie, president of the Nicolai Native Corporation serving as the planning officer.

Aim of the handbook being tested is to help villages redistribute village corporation land under provisions of the Alaska Native Claims Settlement Act, sometimes called 14(c) reconveyances. Provisions in this portion of the Act require village corporations to redistribute lands to residents, businesses and non-profit groups such as churches.

During the field test, villagers including corporation officers and city council members, identified lands they wanted for public uses — streets, airports, boat ramps, designated lots for residents, businesses and non-profit groups.

Commission planner Janet McCabe and Larry Kimball, a planner with the Alaska Department of Community and Regional Affairs, coordinated the handbook project and served as advisers in the Nikolai sessions.

Representatives of the Federal Bureau of Land Management, Alaska Division of Aviation, Doyon, Ltd., and the Alaska Native Foundation also participated in the field test.

The manual is titled "Reconveying Land — A Handbook for Village Corporations." It provides a step-by-step planning guide for villages which have yet to be surveyed by the BLM.

About 100 villages must be surveyed in preparation for land redistribution and could make use of the handbook.