

Hoonah plans timber sale

Another southeast Alaska village corporation may contract out to a private firm for harvest of Native-owned timber.

The Totem Village Corporation based in Hoonah will soon receive title to 20,000 acres of selected land on timber-rich Chichagof Island.

Three-quarters of Hoonah's population of 900 is Native.

Talks are already going on between the corporation and Japanese-owned Alaska Lumber and Pulp (ALP) which is based in Sitka, about joint use of a U.S. Forest Service road. ALP

is seeking access across Native land in order to reach timber acreage included in the company's next five-year cutting plan.

Don Soukup, logging manager of ALP, said the company "hopes to" continue discussion with the corporation about possibly contracting harvest jobs on Totem's soon-to-be-acquired land. "We've got to keep our mill running," he said.

Soukup suggested that ALP could purchase timber from the village corporation or conduct the logging operation without buying the resource.

"I don't see the corporation doing harvest work with ALP," said Robert Loeshner, head of resource management for the state's largest Native regional corporation, Juneau-based Sealaska. "I see a leasing arrangement, rather than selling any land. The decision will be left up to the board

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of directors of Totem."

The Cape Fox Village Corporation (headquartered in Saxman, near Ketchikan) decided to hang on to its recently received land and to contract for harvest of its timber.

The small organization was the first Native Corporation in Southeast to receive title to all of its land selections. So, the resource management decisions it is making are precedent set-

ting.

The roadbuilding and logging operation will have a big impact on the economy of Hoonah, a fishing town. Forest Service personnel will spend the next 18 months building the 100 mile road. The ALP workers will move in.

Soukup anticipated that about 100 employees would make camp in town for its own logging operation. Loescher projected that up to 60 units of new housing

will be needed for Forest Service and ALP workers.

"It will have a tremendous economic impact," Loescher said, "and be a catalyst to corporate land use planning."

The presence of a major industry in the small com-

munity may also spread the burden of high electric costs, according to a spokesperson for the Tlingit-Haida Regional Housing Authority. Many Hoonah residents are struggling with electric bills of more than \$200 per month.