

Land claim denied

A new Native land claim has been denied by the Bureau of Land Management (BLM) on a claim for ownership of all Alaskan lands north of the Arctic Circle.

On December 19, 1978, Kalupsak, also known as Vernon F. Miller, Chief of Wiseman, Nunamiut of the Eskimo Nation, claimed surface and subsurface rights to all lands north of latitude 66 degrees north. In his claim filed with the Fairbanks office of BLM, Kalupsak demanded fee simple title to the land citing the Alaska Native Claims Settlement Act as his authority.

The BLM, in declining to take action on the claim, cited Sec-

tion 4(b) of ANCSA that states: "all aboriginal titles. . . that may exist are hereby extinguished." In addition, Section 4(c) of ANCSA states: "All claims against the United States, the State and all other persons that are based on claims of aboriginal right, title, use or occupancy of land or water areas in Alaska. . . are hereby extinguished." BLM claims that since ANCSA terminated all aboriginal land claims, the BLM cannot take action on Kalupsak's claim.

Wiseman, an historic mining community, was not recognized as a Native village or Native group under the provisions of ANCSA and thus did not receive entitlement to Alaska lands.