

Rural cities owed land

Some rural Alaska municipalities which filed under the Townsite Law are, entitled to lands within their boundaries that were unsubdivided and unoccupied on Oct. 21, 1976, according to the Interior Department's Alaska Solicitor, Jack Allen.

Allen said that the Federal Land Policy and Management Act, which became law in Oct. 1976, repealed the 1891 Townsite Law, thereby closing the

lands to further occupancy by private individuals.

The 1891 law permitted people living on unsubdivided village lands to petition for the appointment of an Interior Department townsite trustee who would hold the land in trust for them until completion of a townsite survey.

Allen explained that unsubdivided and unoccupied townsite lands will become available to Alaska municipalities after they are surveyed if the municipalities request those lands be deeded to them.

If there is no municipal corporation, the Bureau of Land Management will hold the land in trust until one is created or until Congress authorizes conveyance to the state which would hold it in trust for the village.