

D-2 Subcommittee Will Hold "Town Meetings" in Alaska Native Villages

The Subcommittee on General Oversight of Alaska Lands of the House Interior and Insular Affairs Committee will hold two days of formal hearings in August in Alaska's two largest cities, and will hold less formal "town meetings" in two villages of each of the twelve Alaska Native regions of the state.

Subcommittee hearings will be held on August 12 in Anchorage and on August 20 in Fairbanks, it was announced this week. Location of the "town meetings" will be at the discretion of each Native region. Each region, however, will be required to advise the subcommittee of villages it has selected for meeting locations by July 15.

Native regional leaders throughout Alaska seemed generally pleased with the announcement yesterday because of the provision allow each region to select for itself the villages the subcommittee will visit. Many Native spokesmen concerned with the national interest lands proposals, such as Association of Village Council Presidents president Carl Jack, had earlier requested that the subcommittee visit villages other than the "traditional" hearings locations such as Bethel, Kotzebue and Barrow.

It has been the position of the Alaska Federation of Natives and other Native groups that subsistence usage of national interest lands should have priority over any other proposed use of the NIL systems which are to be classified under provisions of the Native Claims Settlement Act.