

"I may not agree with a word you say but I will defend unto death your right to say it." — Voltaire

Tundra Times



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Editorial Comment—

Communications Lack

In the more than two years since the passage of the Alaska Native Claims Settlement Act, the regional Native corporations, with interim directors and hastily assembled staffs, have for the most part done an admirable job in meeting extremely taxing deadlines and requirements created by the ANCSA.

Yet, it seems to us that a massive problem has yet to be tackled by the corporations. The first annual meetings of stockholders, Alaska Natives, in these corporations have been scheduled for March and April. But most Natives remain as unaware of the benefits of the Settlement Act and the operation of regional corporations as they were on the date of the act's passage.

Even with distribution of informational materials by Native corporations and organizations and substantial media coverage of land claims implementation, there is very little understanding on the part of stockholders of how their corporations will work for them and manage settlement proceeds.

Almost all communication on basic operations and approaches of the corporations has been limited to two classes of people. On one end of this self-contained dialogue are the officers and interim directors of the Native corporations, and on the other end rest the technicians, who are lawyers and tax consultants and corporate planners.

The corporation's decisions, business transactions, and formation of policies have been based almost exclusively upon the interaction of these two groups of people. And, often, we have observed that the technicians seem to spend more time talking with each other on corporate business than they do with their clients.

This situation, largely, is easily understood. The creation of corporations is a complex process, especially when their organization is governed by such a complex document as the ANCSA. It is necessary to hire expertise, and to retain the most knowledgeable consultants. And, the corporations have been under tremendous pressure to comply with deadlines enforced by the act and meet other organizational requirements.

Yet, as the pressures ease in meeting the more difficult demands of managing corporations in their formative stages, much more attention must now be given to providing greater information to the stockholders. This effort should not be delayed until the time of the meetings themselves because all of the stockholders will not be able to attend these meetings, and because the members must be prepared to decide some basic policy matters.

A number of the interim officers and directors of individual corporations have prided themselves in their capacity for secrecy and in their ability to keep their operations secret from other Native corporations. It is understandable that corporations should possess information which should not be passed to other corporations or individuals, but it is something else to withhold information about corporate operations from the stockholders who are owners of the company.

We are extremely pleased with many talented individuals within the corporations who have risen to meet formidable challenges in organizing the corporations. Yet if some of the interim officers and directors should inadvertently foster ignorance of the operations of the corporations on the part of the stockholders, they may discover such ignorance to be a very unsettling factor.

Letters from Here and There

Pan Keeps Stickman Warm

Nulato, Alaska
Feb. 27, 1974

Dear Friend the Editor:

Well, the thermometer went down to 20 below this morning. For 13 days every morning it was between 50 and 60 below.

Of course it went up to 30 in the day.

But the toughest part for us was the two light plants wouldn't run for 80 hours — three days and 8 hours. That's a long time to stay without any juice. And the worst part was we were not prepared for it. We had to run down to the church for candles. For me, I had to burn Diesel fuel in my lamp. It worked good. We had one gas lamp for pan

house, so the gas was not hurt. What would happen if they close pan quin gee and booze? That preacher should come down here so, he can preach to us about gambling and see if he could stop it.

In a way I was kind of glad the lights went out even though it hurt me. The reason — last summer AVEC brought in a big light plant. I helped finish the sled. That's the "go Devil," and hauled it across the Mukluk Slough. The girls built a house over it when all the boys went out to firefight. It's still not hooked up. They're waiting for it to rust I guess.

And also the State schools have a light plant for emergency, but it's still in the crate. No house for it.

Well, it was a good thing the school was closed and the school kids hauled wood for me with dogs as it was too cold to crank my sno-go.

Well, we got our land claims check. I celebrated three days but still got my check to mount it on the wall till I go broke. That is, down and out cold.

Fred Stickman, Sr.

COMMENTS ON LAND USE

(Comments on the Land Use Planning Commission of the Kenai National Moose Range Study)

By LARRY M. OSKOLKOFF
Land Manager CIRI

As a young boy and young man until the later part of the 1940's, I remember life on the Kenai Peninsula as happy and peaceful. There was an abundance of fish and game. Our Native people were independent and self-sustaining and no one was on relief. In the late 1940's, homesteaders began to appear on the peninsula. Our people helped them to select land and taught them how to live on our land, how to fish and hunt, preserve their game, and grow vegetable gardens. This continued into the 1950's and early 1960's in spite of bad treatment such as ridiculing our lifestyle and exploitation. The fishing sites that were owned almost entirely by our Native people are gone. Now perhaps less than 5 per cent of the total fishermen that own commercial fishing sites and reasonably good boats are Natives. The rest are owned by outsiders, homesteaders, teachers, lawyers, and politicians.

The protection of land and wildlife has always been practiced by our people and always will be.

Although our villages are situated along the coast of Cook Inlet, historically all of the Moose Range was occupied and its resources used continually by our Native people of the Tanana.

Our Native peoples' subsistence way of life is hard to give up and simply not understood by some of our older people.

We have always taken fish and game as needed, never wasting but sharing with others.

It is painful to learn that four of my village people with families have been arrested for taking moose out of season and have been sentenced to spend one to three months in jail. While on the other hand the very people we have helped to get established on our lands are using snow machines and planes and when caught, receive a light fine and suspended sentence.

Regarding the moose in the Moose Range, it has been my experience that grazing and calving activities by moose varies with seasons and the weather. During summer, fall, and light snow conditions, the moose are in the foothills and during heavy snow periods, moose are along the banks of Cook Inlet, highways, oil operation areas, and in village areas.

Regarding mention of the need for further scientific studies of the Moose Range, these have been conducted since 1941, and further studies may or may not be needed. However, I would like to see some recommendations made as to when we will begin rebuilding and restocking our wildlife and salmon resources that have been so effectively exploited and depleted.

The mention of preservation of archeological remains pursuant to the Antiquities Act, that the range is rich in archeological resources and that field studies will contribute to the present knowledge concerning the activities of early Native peoples should indicate clearly to all that our claim to this land is just and right.

COOK INLET REGION & VILLAGE LAND NEEDS

1. Provide a just and equitable settlement for Cook Inlet Region.
2. To satisfy requirements under the Act — Provide land that is reasonably similar in character to our villages.
3. To provide opportunity for resident, commercial and other considerations near places where our people live.
4. To provide opportunities for financial independence and self-sufficiency.
5. To relieve a population roadside pressure on the Moose Range.
6. Remove Point Possession, Swanson River Oil Field, and most of the oil industry from the range.
7. Enable the establishment of a refuge consistent with current needs.
8. Allow the harvest of beetle-infested trees.
9. Provide an opportunity for expansion and allow social and economic growth for all inhabitants of the peninsula.

The Alaska Native Land Claims Bill might be a vehicle to help repair all the past promises broken by the U.S. Government, but unless some justice is done in the case of Cook Inlet, there will always be a mar against the record, a continuing record of all injustices for history to look at. We all know that the boundaries in the Moose Range have been changed to meet the white man's economic interests. We plead that the Land Use Planning Commission seek to square up the balance sheet, this time with a boundary change based on fundamental human needs by a people closely tied to this land. It is time to make some decisions based on people rather than dollars. The Land Use Planning Commission here has a chance to go on record as a champion of equal rights, of just treatment of all people under the law. Our society cannot long survive if men can continue to build and twist the law successfully to meet their own needs. There is a greater need now than ever before to have a rule of law rather than a rule of men. The Land Use Planning Commission with its Moose Range recommendation has an opportunity to make a stand for what is right under the law.

Shriver's Podium Criticized

5 Norma Court
Novato, Calif. 94947
Feb. 5, 1974

Dear Mr. Rock:

I was so happy to read Richard Gardello's letter in the Jan. 23 edition of Tundra Times. I felt the same way he did about Sargent Shriver's speech but could not have expressed it so well. If the Bay area group of Native Americans Women's Action Circle hadn't been so involved with other interests (working with San Quentin Indian prisoners on Christmas program, raising money to help Native American students with education, and speaking at elementary schools) we would concentrate on the drive for Nixon's impeachment, too.

However — I agree with Mr. Gardello that the Tundra Times banquet was a totally inappropriate podium for Sargent Shriver's speech and when I read about it, I wished he had stayed "Outside." I felt embarrassed for him.

Every time I get a copy of Tundra Times I look for a letter from Fred Stickman Sr. and I feel warmed when there is a long letter from this man. Today I will send him my copy of Lane Deer, Seeker of Visions by the old Sioux medicine man who has the same kind of wisdom — you can't learn that in school!

Oh Yes! My friend Jim Marsden (who sends me subscription to Tundra Times for Mother's Day gifts because I'm still homesick for Alaska and my own people) sent me a copy of your poem, "Keshorna," in his last letter. It brought tears to my eyes as it did when I read it last year in the newspaper, but it was good to be reminded of it.

So many good letters and articles have been in your paper I'd like to comment on. I was ecstatic about the Supreme Court decision on the North Slope Borough and wish Eben Hopson well. Also luck to Willie Hensley in his campaign for U.S. House. They need people like him.

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