

Foundation seeks Native records

The Alaska Native Foundation announces the beginning of a state-wide survey of the historic records of Alaska Native organizations. The project is made possible by a \$39,328 grant from the National Historical Publications and Records Commission, a division of the National Archives.

Twenty-two Native organizations which were the forerunners of the Alaska Federations of Natives are the focus of the project. The survey itself will be conducted by staff members of those organizations which have continued to the present; many of these are now non-profit corporations. The Native Foundation will provide training for the surveyors in archival methods and records description, and technical assistance in all aspects of the project.

Barbara S. Smith, history instructor at the University of Alaska, Anchorage, and an archival consultant, has been named project director. She will assist the surveyors and, where possible, survey the records of those organizations which no longer exist or have no paid staff. In addition, she will compile a statewide directory to the loca-

tions of historic Native records.

"Alaska Natives have a unique place in American history, as advocates of self-determination," notes Robert D. Arnold, executive vice president of the Alaska Native Foundation. "The records of this campaign reach back to the early days of this century; they are invaluable historic documents but have never been identified. We see this survey as the first vital step in a massive preservation effort, which will make recent Native history accessible for the first time to all students of Alaskan and American history."

The grant for this survey is the first award made to Alaska by the National Historical Publications and Records Commission. The project was initially screened and approved by the Alaska State Historical Records Advisory Committee, which is chaired by John Kinney, State Archivist.

