

# 5,000 Cemetery And Historical Sites To Be Inspected By BIA

In the first six months of 1974, nearly 5,000 Alaska Native cemetery sites and historical places located outside of village withdrawals will be inspected by the Bureau of Indian Affairs, U.S. Department of the Interior, as part of initial efforts to comply with terms of the Alaska Native Claims Settlement Act. Morris Thompson, Area Director, Juneau Area Office, of the Bureau indicated today.

"These sites which are so important to the Natives will, where applied for and approved, be withdrawn from the public domain and conveyed to the appropriate regional corporation," the Juneau Area Director said.

By authority of the Act, 12 regional corporations were formed in 1972. They include essentially the same cultural groups and have the same approximate geographic boundaries as the Native associations that were named in the Act and in existence prior to its passage.

Conveyance of the cemetery and historical sites to the corporations will be part of the 40 million acre total settlement. Re-

gional corporations will have such acreage conveyed to them in gradual stages beginning with completion of the enrollment of Alaska Natives. The deadline for completion of the roll is December 18, 1973.

Cemeteries and historical places will include only the area actually used and a reasonable buffer zone not over 66 feet wide around abandoned cemeteries; not over 330 feet wide around an area identified as an historical place. An area will also be conveyed to provide for reasonable future expansion around cemeteries that are still in use.

The regional corporation must apply to the Manager, Land Office, Bureau of Land Management in Fairbanks or Anchorage for the area on which the cemetery site or historical place is located.

The corporation must agree that these cemetery sites or historical places will be maintained and preserved solely for these purposes. However, they may be used for easements for rights-of-way if this becomes essential.