

All Native Fire- Fighting Crew

"They said throughout the years that it couldn't be done," commented Jimmy Huntington of Galena, as he stated with pride that the Bureau of Land Management had just completed its first fire with an all native crew.

This past week had 120 men and women stationed at a fire a few miles south of Huslia at Roundabout Mountain.

The fire was manned and held without any loss of acreage by an all native crew consisting of Jim Commack as fire boss, Jim

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Native Fighters . . .

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Huntington as line boss and Roger Huntington and Barney Attla as division bosses. The only support was one helicopter and a B-25.

"The manning of this fire, being used as an experimental program, has proved that the native people are capable of managing and directing operations in the fire-fighting field," stated John Sackett, president of the Tanana Chiefs Conference.

"For years the BLM has been sending formally educated persons up to Alaska, hired on a seasonal basis, and there is no reason that with the experience that our people have through years of fire-fighting why they cannot perform equally and above these outside employees.

"It is my sincere desire to see that the Bureau of Land Management change their hiring practices for seasonal employees in the future so that more of our capable native persons will be employed."