

No response yet in Doyon fire suit

No state response has been filed to a Doyon, Limited trespass complaint against the State of Alaska because the Alaska Attorney General's Office hasn't received the complaint yet.

Doyon, Limited, the Native-owned regional corporation, filed the fire trespass against the state in Mid-May, after a fire southeast of Nenana burned 2,600 acres of Doyon land. The fire had first burned 7,000 acres of state land prior to May 19 but the state officials recalled Bureau of Land Management fighters. One week after the fire-

fighters were recalled, the fire spread to the Doyon land.

According to Dave Williams of the Doyon Land Department, the Doyon complaint seeks "recovery." "We plan to get recovery and we feel the state is responsible. We still intend to go for recovery for damages."

He declined to define recovery but such terms usually mean monetary compensation.

According to Joe Casselik, a BLM divisional fire management employee, the state told BLM to break off fighting the fire "because it didn't anticipate to grow." BLM is under contract to

protect state lands and BLM is also obligated to protect the Native-owned lands under provisions of the Alaska Native Land Claims Settlement Act.

At that time, state officials said they were not concerned about the fire as it burned on state land because of the relatively small value of the timber as compared to the cost of fighting the fire. State officials also felt the burn would increase the wildlife habitat.

Jerry Timmins, BLM Fire Chief in Fairbanks said the fire is still being watched. "We still have people down there making sure it doesn't go beyond Doyon land. We're just mopping it up."

He said the fire was stopped before it got the mainstay of the Doyon Timber land. Some 16 fire fighters and one helicopter are still manning the fire.

Shelley Higgins who is with the Attorney General's Office said, "They (State of Alaska) are in the process of asking this office to address some legal questions. We have not yet received that complaint." She added, "It hasn't ripened into an investigative case yet."