

AFN to sponsor workshop on IRAs

A workshop to explain and discuss the Indian Reorganization Act (IRA) and its effects on Alaska Native Villages and communities is being planned by the Alaska Federation of Natives.

The workshop will be held for village leaders, regional profit and non-profit corporations, and tribal representatives to discuss the issue that may be the most important one to be faced by the Native community in 1983 and beyond.

The AFN Board of Directors voted recently to hold the meeting at the urging of the AFN Human Resources Board and because of the great interest in the subject, said Janie Leask, AFN president.

The workshop will include an entire day's discussion of the history of the IRAs, the amendments to the act which creates them, the implementa-

tion of the IRAs and the relationship of IRAs to the Alaska Native Claims Settlement Act.

Other special issues that are under consideration to be discussed are the tax status of IRAs, their legal status for contracting, the impact on land ownership, and their authority to regulate the behavior of the people living on IRA land.

Leask said that other issues such as the Venetie conveyance will be discussed and representatives from the Native Village of Tyonek will be asked to attend along with representatives from the state and federal government.

Don Mitchell, an attorney working for AFN, will handle much of the workshop, said Leask who called the workshop informational.

This is the second such IRA workshop scheduled for within
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Interest there for IRA workshop

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a year. Another one was held in Sitka last summer but, according to AFN special assistant for Human Resources Sylvia Carlsson, the workshop was more of a "how to become an IRA." session.

The interest and enthusiasm for taking on IRA status is "definitely there" said Leask, who said AFN hopes to meet the interest.

The status of IRAs has been murky for some time now and the issue is gaining public

awareness as publicity about IRA issues occurs. Such issues have included the attempts by the Native Village of Tyonek to enforce a tribal ordinance requiring that non-members have tribal permission to stay in the village more than 24 hours.

In Venetie, Fish and Game officers confiscated the moose meat belonging to a tribal member. They contended the meat was taken out of season. The question of enforcing state

laws on IRA land is one which is very pressing.

Leask said the AFN is planning for about 300 participants in the workshop which is tentatively set for the second week of March. If more people want to attend, the workshop would be moved from its current tentative location and another date probably would have to be chosen, she said.

AFN Board members and village leaders will be receiving her proposals for the workshop shortly, she said.