

Editorial —

D-2 and Subsistence

Let us say for a moment that some areas of controversy can be set aside in advance of deciding how many acres of land ought to be classified as nation interest land under Sec. 17(d)2 of the Native claims act. Say, for example, that the various interest groups concerned agree that economic development on Native-owned land would not be limited under provisions of the D-2 legislation. And that another provision of the legislation requires the Federal government to swiftly and fully implement the provisions of the Native claims act, especially with respect to conveyance of land to regional and village Native corporations.

And let us further imagine that restrictive easement regulations affecting property owned by Native corporations are erased by yet another provision of the D-2 proposed legislation.

And, further yet, that the legislation would provide for establishing a land bank for banking Native lands for future use and development.

Let us imagine that all of these issues have been settled, save two: (1) protection of subsistence lifestyles, and (2) the amount of acreage to be included in the D-2 systems.

If then, at that point, protection of subsistence usage can be assured, how much acreage should be included in D-2 lands?

Should 115 million acres be placed under Federal management with guarantees of protecting subsistence needs of Alaska Natives? Or, should 25 million acres be placed in Federally managed D-2 systems, with the rest under state or some "cooperative" management system?

If we can possibly narrow the options to those two alternatives by settling the questions of resource development guarantees, land conveyances, the easement nightmare, and the land bank, how easy would it be for you to make that decision?

It wouldn't be very difficult for us. Not with the state making increased threats of enforcement against subsistence bird hunting. And, not with the State Board of Game turning down all five proposals it has received for creating subsistence zones from villagers. And, not with the state game officials threatening to restrict severely Eskimo subsistence walrus hunting. And, not after learning of the conviction last week of Carlos Frank for transporting an illegally killed moose for an Athabascan Indian funeral potlatch at Minto.

How would you decide that question?

As we said in this space last week, if it takes a Udall Bill to keep Native families in fresh meat and fish, than so be it.