

Federal-State Land Use Planning Commission Meets Here

By JACQUELINE GLASGOW
Staff Writer

The star of the show was Land. With an excellent technical crew and a fine supporting cast, there was drama, tension, schmaltz, and conflict but in the end, the star walked away with the show.

Against a backdrop of soft green, earth-colored maps, another act in the continuing drama of land in Alaska unfolded on the stage at the Alaskaland Theatre in Fairbanks, May 17 and 18.

The Joint Federal-State Land Use Planning Commission heard testimony in that city to guide in the planning of 80 million acres of national interest lands, the vast D-2 withdrawals made in conjunction with the Settlement of the Alaska Native Land Claims.

The hearings drew a small but vocal crowd of interested parties and private citizens. Speakers included geologists, trappers, oil men, native leaders, glacierologists, engineers, guides, students, conservationists, law-

yers, and just plain people.

The Commission panel, dwarfed by the giant jigsaw maps set on the stage behind them, listened with incredible patience and courtesy to a hodgepodge of testimony that would task the mind of Solomon.

With many weeks behind them and more weeks in front of them, the Commission is conducting hearings in major communities of Alaska, many small, remote villages, and will also journey stateside to garner testimony from the other Americans in whose interest these lands have been set aside by the federal government.

Object of the hearings is to gather information from all segments of the population on suggestions for distribution of the lands into one of the four federal land systems: National Parks, Wildlife Refuges, the U.S. Forest Service, and Wild and Scenic Rivers.

Two points seem to be emerging out of the series of hearings throughout the state-one, that scarcity of accurate

knowledge and data makes it difficult to assess the correct long-range usage of these lands; and two, that there may be more than two options.

John Sackett, Athabaskan leader, asked that the Commission pay special attention to views expressed by villagers in Alaska, to the "voice of the Native people."

Sackett called 80 million acres an "excessive amount" and questioned whether the D-2 lands are to be "planned for the full spectrum of man's use."

Gregory Nicholas from the Ahlta Corporation reminded the Commission that rural Alaskan natives still "depend on source of life — hunting and trapping. Therefore protection is very important to us."

Sackett and the Commission exchanged thoughts on how protection of native subsistence is to be achieved. This responsibility was given to the Secretary of the Interior by the Congress as part of the Settlement of the Land Claims.

How much land and how

much protection is needed to preserve the game and subsistence hunting was a subject on which there was little agreement.

Wilbur Mills, photographer and advisor to the Commission, opposed mining or development on any D-2 national interest lands.

"It's hard to put into words what this kind of (undeveloped) country does for man," he said "to explain the value of a vast herd of caribou, the value of a of a native culture."

In attempting to explain it, Mills called it "the Spirit of the North."

On the other side of the picture, speakers for the Alaska Oil and Gas Association urged that the Commission not bar mineral exploration and development on D-2 lands. John McKeever reminded the Commission that the financial health of both the State of Alaska and the new native regional corporations are dependent on oil and gas revenues.

"I urge that the Commission look 3-dimensionally at the surface and the sub-surface of D-2 lands," said McKeever.

Several speakers endorsed multiple use but there was debate about what agency should administer it. Each federal bureau had its supporters, with the Forest Service and the Bureau of Land Management the most frequently mentioned possibilities.

Whether or not either agency had the structure, manpower and the needed regulations to function effectively in administering the lands in Alaska was questioned.

A few speakers called for a unique Alaskan agency and/or policy of land-use. Alaska land managed and planned by Alaskans, rather than by bureaucrats in Washington, D.C.

The large, shiny map segments are packed up at the end of the day and shipped along with the Commission to the next hearing. The maps follow them wherever they go.

Eskimo-Indian . . .

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Villagers from all over Alaska and Canada are asked to send representatives and contestants to the gala and colorful event. Also the Russian and Greenland Eskimos have been invited. Highlight of the three day festivities is the crowning of a Miss World Eskimo-Indian Olympics queen, chosen from native candidates not only for beauty but for knowledge of her culture.

The Olympics feature unbelievable endurance contests such as the knuckle hop and ear pull, spectacular events like the high kick and nalukutuk (blanket toss), and dramatic, fully-costumed native dance groups.

Chris Anderson, who is both Eskimo and Indian, will fill the the all-important job of Chair-

man of the Olympics Committee. Chris is presently Native Planning Administrator of Doyon, Ltd., one of the twelve regional corporations established under the Land Claims Act.

Chris will be supported by the entire Board of Directors of the Tundra Times, acting as the Committee for the World Eskimo-Indian Olympics. The Committee is asking for volunteers to help in putting together this community event.

All interested parties are invited to attend a planning meeting at The Switzerland on Airport Road at 7 P.M. Friday, May 25. For more information phone 452-2244 from 8 to 5 P.M. or 456-6818 after 6 P.M.

Professor, Windmills..

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to the Aleutian Chain and the coastal portions of Western Alaska. "Our objective is twofold," he said. "We know the power is there. The question is, is it useable in Alaska or can it be packaged?"

So far, Wentink is proceeding just from seed money from the state of Alaska, but in June, he goes to the National Science Foundation in Washington D.C. to try for further funds, to determine whether to go big scale with wind driven electric generators.

In Holland, back as early as 1500, windmills were used for pumping water off the land, but mostly now they are show pieces, said Wentink. The modern windmills he is interested in using in Alaska don't look much like their forebearers. They are streamlined and may have only two arms, rather than four.

But they can produce energy, make it readily available and make it relatively cheap. "The crisis right now is not in energy. It's in cheap energy," Wentink said.

"We have to look at this project from the viewpoint of national interest, but we must also look on the effect it will have on the Native villages," Wentink said. Many villages spend thousands of dollars annually simply heating schoolhouses, not to mention homes.

"But in Alaska of all places we have the winds. How much wind can we get and what can

we do with it?" Wentink asked.

"Windmills will never be the total answer," but they can be part of it, he said.

If windmills prove a feasible idea, they will have to be designed and built for the larger villages. Wentink says there is no place in the United States now which makes the type needed.

The type of windmill needed would possibly vary from village to village, depending on wind velocity and dependability.

Then a pilot program could be set up, in villages with suitable winds, if there is clear cut evidence that the village residents would welcome and assist in the project, Wentink said.

Once the pilot program is run successfully in one community, it would not be hard to sell it to the rest, Wentink figures.

Wentink, who is of Dutch ancestry, admits that his Dutch ancestry may have been the factor interesting him in windmills originally, but his studies now have him fairly sure of his work.

Recently Wentink has been seeing an oil firm television commercial which zeros in on a windmill and asks, "What do we do when the winds stop?"

What indeed! "Harness the wind," Wentink says.

The wind can provide good clean energy for village people in Alaska and perhaps far beyond the 50th state.

District. The fee at that time was \$15 for the complete tests.

Now the fee is only \$5. The tests are given once a month by Corbell Taylor, official GED tester for the District and wife of Walker Taylor, Director of the Adult Education and Vocational Training Program.

At the first request from Careers to test Nellie Tagarook privately and not in a group, the answer was a flat no. It was not the policy of the District to administer individual tests.

Upon repeated urging by the Career Extension staff that an exception be made, Taylor referred Morang to Dr. Dayton Benjamin, Assistant Superintendent for the School District.

Benjamin authorized the test but then Taylor notified Careers there would be an \$80 charge. The \$80 fee, said Taylor, was based on the salary of the tester (Mrs. Taylor) to oversee the tests which require ten hours of testing time, \$8 an hour for a total of ten hours.

Initially, it appeared that Nellie Tagarook would be unable to take the tests on which hinged her employment in June with the Forest Service Lab at the University of Alaska.

Then through the efforts of Careers and with the okay from Dr. Benjamin, funds were eventually found within the Careers budget.

Nellie Tagarook took her GED test and passed. Jerry Morang still asserts that the outcome could have been different if the test had not been done on an individual basis.

Irene Cleworth is equally sure that the one to one relationship of student and tester was all-important in this particular case.

"Mrs. Taylor was very sympathetic," she said, "and I'm sure this played a big part in Nellie's passing."

"We were asking for something special," Ms. Cleworth admitted. "The teachers had worked very hard to get her ready. If she can take the test privately, we thought, she won't get flustered."

Taylor defends the District's position. "I did not have the authority to authorize that test and lose money on it," he stated. "It cost us \$88."

"I signed the purchase order to have the school district pay for that test," said Benjamin, "I couldn't do that again. That was a very exceptional case."

"The idea for the GED program," he explained, "was to have it self-supporting. Initially,

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the fee for the GED test in the District was \$15. Then we had some communication with a fellow over at Tanana Chiefs," said Benjamin, "indicating that the fee was too high for some of their people."

"We wrote the state and we examined our costs," he said, "and the fee was lowered to \$5, or \$1 for each section of the test."

The "fellow over at Tanana Chiefs" turned out to be John Bergamaschi, actually representing the Fairbanks Native Association. Bergamaschi said he had one or two conversations with Benjamin on the subject of GED fees but that no agreement was ever reached.

Then, to his surprise, he received a notice in the mail saying the fees had been lowered.

"Five dollars is better than fifteen," admitted Bergamaschi, "but what we'd like is to get it down to nothing."

In many cases people applying for a GED are financially disadvantaged. The test increases their chances of employment.

"I would authorize the individual tests for any person for any reason if the money was available," said Taylor, who administers the District's present program.

In many other states there is no charge whatsoever for GED tests. There are many districts in the state of Alaska that do not charge a fee.

"I have given many GED's in other parts of the state," said one teacher, "and there was no fee charged at all."

"At Lathrop," said Benjamin, "the high school people didn't want to release the counselors during the day, so it was decided to administer the GED tests at night through the Adult Education Department."

The Fairbanks Native Association is now sponsoring its own Adult Basic Education Program at 1500 Gillam Way under the directorship of Roy Corral.

Corral said Tuesday that his Program has no charge for the GED exam. "They are completely free," he said, "and to my knowledge the Fairbanks School District is the only one in the state that does charge."

Benjamin said he is not adverse to the idea of the new, native-run Adult Education Center being authorized to give GED tests along with the District.

As things stand now, however, there are no specific budget provisions in the School District

Program for another special case like Nellie Tagarook. Under present policy, the \$80 special fee would have to stand.

Dr. Judith Kleinfeld of the Institute of Social, Economic, and Government Research at the University of Alaska, has conducted extensive studies of how Native students adjust and react in the transition from small village schools to large urban high schools.

Dr. Kleinfeld's data indicates that they may very well be other instances where special tests of the kind allowed for Nellie Tagarook are needed.

"After all," she said, "equal education does not mean superficial equality but equal education in the sense that people should have the opportunity for demonstrating their abilities under conditions that make it possible to correctly evaluate those abilities."

"I have just completed a study," said Dr. Kleinfeld, "which will be published in the Journal of Social Psychology on the effect of a warm examiner in testing native students as opposed to an impersonal examiner. The results clearly show that when the examiner is warm, the native student received significantly higher scores."

Dr. Kleinfeld believes that special testing should be incorporated into the normal budget of a school district.

Individual testing is an expensive proposition. It could certainly not be applied, as Dr. Benjamin pointed out, to every case, nor is it needed in every case.

As to the problem of fees for GED's, Walker Taylor said, "I'd like to make the GED available to anyone who needs it without charging them for it. However, it takes personnel to handle it and personnel costs money."

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