

Native News Update

SEALASKA TIMBER COMPANY - The Sealaska Corporation board of directors voted to authorize the formation of the Sealaska Timber Corporation (STC) during its Dec. 3 board meeting. STC is a wholly-owned subsidiary created to develop and market Sealaska timber resources. The Sealaska board approved initial funding in the amount of \$7 million for the new company, and elected a six-member board of directors for the subsidiary. STC directors include Sealaska directors Judson Brown, Al Kookesh, Marjory Young and Joe Wilson, and Sealaska president Michael Chittick and Sealaska finance officer David Larsen. Since three-quarters of Sealaska timber resources are in the vicinity of Prince of Wales Islands, STC will be headquartered at Ketchikan. In creating STC, the Sealaska directors cancelled a planned 1980 stumpage sale, leaving disposition of that timber to the control of the new company.

ARCTIC SLOPE PAYS DIVIDEND - The board of directors of the Arctic Slope Regional Corporation (ASRC) has approved a dividend of \$.75 per share to be distributed to ASRC shareholders in March of 1980. ASRC has reported net income of \$3,269,000 for the year ending June 20, 1979, as compared to \$1,893,000 for the previous year. Corporation officials say shareholders equity in ASRC is now \$13,975,895, not including the value of nearly 5 million acres of corporation-held lands. ASRC paid other regional corporations about \$13 million in revenue-sharing payments, which is not included in reported net income. Regional corporation insiders say the ASRC 7(i) payments allowed regions such as NANA and Bristol Bay corporations to be able to report a profit on the last year. The ASRC board has also extended the agreement under which Larry Dineen is retained as Executive Vice President for another five years.

VILLAGE ACQUIRING AIR TAXI SERVICE - The Ukepeavik Inupiat Corporation (UIC) of Barrow is reportedly in negotiations to acquire the Barrow-based Cape Smythe Air Service, Inc. Cape Smythe, the largest air taxi operator owned and operated from the arctic slope, is owned by UIC and ASRC share-

holder Tom Brower. Cape Smythe is believed to have been a profitable operation for several years and enjoys an excellent safety record in serving arctic slope villages. UIC directors were reportedly in Los Angeles this week to discuss financing for the acquisition with California interests.

NATIVE ALLOTMENT WIN OUT - A report on Alaska land ownership prepared for the House Finance Committee and released this month says that up to one million acres of land held by the State of Alaska will revert to Natives who selected the land under the 1906 Native Allotment Act. The report cites a ruling by Federal District Court Judge James Von Der Heydt in August 1979 that the Interior Department has a duty to recover and convey land which has been patented or tentatively approved to the State and to issue Native allotment certification to Natives who applied for allotments on the land and who can demonstrate use of the land before the State applied for it. About 7,000 Native allotment applications affecting 1,12 million acres of land are involved in the decision. The decision came in a class action suit against the Secretary of the Interior filed by a Native woman named Ethel Aguilar.

PRIBILOF SETTLEMENT NEAR - Representatives of the Pribilof Aleut communities are enroute to Washington, D.C. this week to finalize plans for use of the \$8.6 million awarded the Pribilovians by the Indian Claims Commission for historic injustices wrought by the U.S. The Aleuts nearly lost the money earlier this month because of the failure of Bureau of Indian Affairs trust operations personnel to advise the communities of an important deadline for presenting plans for use of the award. The Aleuts chartered a Lear jet at a cost of \$4500 over the weekend to meet the deadline imposed by the government. Ironically, the award was for severe government abuses against the Aleuts, and now the judgement will be used under close and restrictive supervision of the B.I.A. because of strings attached to the money. Pribilovians were awarded damages for abuses suffered in the fur seal harvest.