



NEWS

U.S. DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR

OFFICE OF THE SECRETARY
FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
February 14, 1997

Contact: Thomas W. Sweeney
(202) 219-4152

PUBLIC COMMENT SOUGHT ON PROPOSAL TO EXPEDITE ALASKA NATIVE ALLOTMENT APPLICATIONS

Public comment is sought on a proposal by the Secretary of the Interior to allow the statutory approval of Alaska Native allotment applications in cases where protests against such actions have been withdrawn. A notice requesting comment is published in today's Federal Register (62 Fed Reg 7033).

The proposed action by the Secretary would overrule an Interior Board of Land Appeals (IBLA) interpretation of Section 905 of the Alaska National Interest Lands Conservation Act (ANILCA). In Section 905 of ANILCA, Congress provided for the approval of pending allotment applications as long as certain conditions are met and unless a timely and sufficient protest is filed. The 1906 Alaska Native Allotment Act was intended to give individuals the opportunity to obtain legal title to lands they used and occupied. Section 905 of ANILCA was enacted to expedite the approval of allotment applications and to fulfill the commitments of the 1971 Alaska Native Claims Settlement Act (ANCSA), which repealed the 1906 Alaska Native Allotment Act. Section 905 was enacted in 1980 to facilitate the approval of allotment applications that were pending on or before ANCSA was passed. The IBLA has ruled that allotment applications must be adjudicated even when the protesting party has dismissed its protest. Approximately 1,800 allotment applications could be approved as a result of the Secretary's proposal.

Interested persons and organizations may submit comments respecting the Secretary's proposal to lift this bar to statutory approval of uncontested allotment applications. The Secretary has requested a legal opinion from the Interior Department Solicitor on this matter. Written comments must be received by April 11. Comments should be mailed to the Bureau of Land Management, Administrative Record, Room 401LS, 1849 C Street N.W., Washington, D.C. 20240. Comments may also be hand-delivered to the Bureau of Land Management, Administrative Record, Room 401, 1620 L Street, Washington, D.C. Comments may also be transmitted electronically, via the Internet to WOCComments@wo.blm.gov. Please include "Attn: Secretarial Decision," and your name and address in the message. If you do not receive a confirmation that your Internet message has been received, contact that office directly at (202) 452-5030.

assets to be used in the proposed business is required.

- **Terms of Loan** - maturity is determined by lenders making the loan and is based on the type of loan, (e.g., manufacturing, retail, construction, seasonal, etc.) and the applicant's repayment capability, except 30 years is the maximum maturity term.
- **Loan Guaranty** - the percentage of a loan that is guaranteed is the minimum necessary to obtain financing, but may not exceed 90% of the unpaid principal and interest on the loan.
- **Application Procedures** - The applicant should work directly with a BIA approved lender and use the lenders' loan application and security documents. The applicant must have a fully completed business plan which demonstrates fiscal responsibility and sound management capability. **The lender** must initiate the request for a BIA Loan Guaranty. Complete guidelines can be obtained by referring to Title 25 of the Code of Federal Regulations Part 103, or contacting the local BIA Area Office, see listing below.
- **Initiation Request** - Requests for BIA loan guarantees may be submitted to the appropriate BIA Agency or Area Office at any time during the fiscal year (October 1 - September 31) but approval is always subject to availability of funds.

"Loan guarantees have helped to finance Indian-owned business in construction, cattle ranching, commercial fishing, air carrier charter services, shuttle bus services, convenience/grocery stores, charter and sightseeing, hotel/conference centers, office building rentals, bulk fuel stations, and others," Nancy Jemison, Director of the Office of Economic Development said.

Aberdeen Area Office
(Nebraska, North Dakota and South Dakota)
Bureau of Indian Affairs
115 4th Avenue, S.E.
Aberdeen, South Dakota 57401
(605) 226-7343 FAX (605)228-7448

Albuquerque Area Office
(Colorado and New Mexico)
Bureau of Indian Affairs
615 First St., N.W.
P.O. Box 26567
Albuquerque, New Mexico 87125
(505)766-3754 FAX (505)766-1964

Anadarko Area Office
(Kansas and West Oklahoma)
Bureau of Indian Affairs
WCD Office Complex
P.O. Box 368
Anadarko, Oklahoma 73005
(405) 247-6673 FAX (405)247-5611

Billings Area Office
(Montana and Wyoming)
Bureau of Indian Affairs
316 North 26th Street
Billings, Montana 59101
(406) 247-7943 FAX (406)247-7976

Eastern Area Office
(N.Y., Maine, Louisiana, Florida, North Carolina, and Mississippi)
Bureau of Indian Affairs
3701 N. Fairfax Drive
Mail Stop 260-VASQ.
Arlington, VA 22203
(703) 235-2571 FAX (703) 235-8610

Juneau Area Office
(Alaska)
Bureau of Indian Affairs
P.O. Box 25520
Juneau, Alaska 99802-5520
(907) 586-7177 FAX (907) 588-7169

Minneapolis Area Office
(Minnesota, Iowa, Mich, & Wisc.)
Bureau of Indian Affairs
331 S. Second Avenue
Minneapolis, MN 55401
(612) 373-1000 FAX (612) 373-1188

Muskogee Area Office
(East Oklahoma)
Bureau of Indian Affairs
Old Federal Building
Muskogee, Oklahoma 74401
(918) 687-2296 FAX (918) 687-2571

Navajo Area Office
(Navajo Res. Only, Arizona, Utah, and New Mexico)
Bureau of Indian Affairs
P.O. Box 1060
Gallup, New Mexico 87305
(505) 863-8314 FAX (505) 863-8324

Phoenix Area Office
(AZ, Nevada, UT, California, and Idaho)
Bureau of Indian Affairs
One North First Street
P.O. Box 10
Phoenix, Arizona 85001
(602) 379-6600 FAX (602) 379-4413

Portland Area Office
(Oregon, Washington, and Idaho)
Bureau of Indian Affairs
911 N.E. 11th Avenue
Portland, Oregon 97232
(503)231-6702 FAX (503) 231-2201

Sacramento Area Office
(California)
Bureau of Indian Affairs
2800 Cottage Way
Sacramento, California 95825
(916) 979-2600 FAX (916) 979-2569

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