Indian Affairs - Office of Public Affairs

Media Contact: Bob Walker (0) 202/208-3171 (H) 703/938-6842
For Immediate Release: January 10, 1992
Print PDF

Eddie F. Brown, Assistant Secretary of the Interior for Indian Affairs, today approved an amended constitution adopted in a 139-70 vote by the Sitka Tribe of Alaska in November.

The certificate of approval notes, however, "This approval shall not be construed to validate any assertion that the Sitka Tribe of Alaska has governmental authority over lands (including management of, or regulation of the taking of fish and wildlife) or persons who are not members of the tribe, absent a ruling by a court of competent jurisdiction, an opinion of the Solicitor of the Department of the Interior or an Act of Congress subsequent to the date of the certification which indicates the existence of such authority over lands or non-members."

In issuing the approval, Brown said he was concerned about the sufficiency of tribe's membership or citizenship roll under the amended constitution. He also pointed out that while there are 2,669 names on the membership roll, only 210 votes were cast in the election.

Brown said that although the tribe had failed to make all the technical changes recommended by the Department, he could approve it under the conditions stated in the certificate of approval.