



Indian Affairs - Office of Public Affairs

**Media Contact:** Bureau of Indian Affairs

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Secretary of the Interior Rogers C. B. Morton today announced that on the basis of a vote count made on November 6, a Thirteenth Regional Corporation will not be established for Non-Resident Alaska Natives.

The Alaska Native Claims Settlement Act provides that if a majority of all eligible non-resident Alaska Natives, 18 years of age or older, voted for the establishment of a Thirteenth Regional Corporation the Secretary would establish that corporation. The necessary majority was not obtained.

A tabulation made by the Bureau of Indian Affairs' data center in Albuquerque, N.M., on November 6 indicates that of the 5,774 Natives eligible to vote for a 13th region, only 2,375 elected to be so enrolled.

In telegrams sent today to the 12 regional corporations and to representatives of Native associations outside of Alaska, Under Secretary John C. Whitaker said: IIA final tabulation will be made on or about November 30 to include additional applications now on appeal or subject to appeal, but there does not appear to be a sufficient number of such applications to obtain the majority necessary for establishment of a thirteenth region.

"Therefore, and unless a contrary result is indicated by such final tabulation, all those who elected to be enrolled in a thirteenth region, if established, and the dependent members of their households who are less than 18 years of age, will be enrolled in one of the twelve Alaska regions in accordance with the priorities provided in section 5 (b)."

The Native Claims Act of December 18, 1971, provides for settlement of awards totaling \$962.5 million and 40 million acres of land. It is expected that the first payments under the Act after the completion of the enrollment in December will amount to about \$130 million, which will go in the first instance to the Regional Corporations.

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