ALASKA NATIVE VIETNAM VETERANS LAND ALLOTMENT (PUBLIC LAW 116-9, SECTION 1119)

Many questions have arisen concerning the new Alaska Native Veterans Allotment Act. Here's what you need to know:

Before applications can be accepted by the Bureau of Land Management (BLM), the new law requires that within 180 days of enactment, the Department of Defense, in coordination with the Department of Veterans Affairs, prepare a list of potential applicants based on their service dates. The Bureau of Indian Affairs (BIA) will then use the list to identify the potential applicants based on their Native heritage. Last, BLM will review the list for those who have already received allotments. Only those qualified individuals who have *not* previously received an allotment are eligible under Public Law 116-9.

The Department of the Interior and the Department of Veterans Affairs will conduct outreach to the eligible individuals. Alaska Native Vietnam Era Veterans do not need to apply immediately for their allotment. Once BLM has worked through all of the processes, Alaska Native Veterans who served during Vietnam Era will be notified to apply.

While that is being done, the BLM, with input from other agencies, potential applicants, and the general public, will draft the regulations that will guide the program and identify public lands that will be available for allotment within 18 months.

The application period will open when the regulations become effective. The Department of the Interior will provide assistance in applying for allotments. Applicants will have five years from the date the regulations become effective to apply for an allotment.

In order to help the process proceed smoothly, please ensure that the BIA has your current mailing address.

Frequently Asked Questions about Alaska Native Vietnam Veterans Land Allotment
(Public Law 116-9, Section 1119)

Do I need to apply now?

No. Alaska Native Vietnam Era Veterans do not need to apply immediately for their allotment. Once BLM has worked through all of the processes, Alaska Native Veterans who served during Vietnam Era will be notified to apply.

When did the legislation pass?

The legislation passed the House and Senate as section 1119 of S. 47, the Natural Resources Management Act. It was enacted March 12, 2019, as Public Law 116-9.

Section 1119 was originally the Alaska Native Veterans Land Allotment Equity Act before being included into S. 47.

Once enacted, who will be eligible to select an allotment of land?

Any Alaska Native who:

1. Served in the Armed Forces between August 5, 1964 and December 31, 1971; and
2. Has not already received an allotment of land.

A personal representative, acting on behalf of the heirs of a deceased Native veteran, may also apply for an allotment if:

1. The deceased veteran has not already received an allotment of land; and
2. The deceased veteran meets the military service requirement listed above.

Once enacted, who will certify military service?

The Secretary of Defense, in coordination with the Secretary of Veterans Affairs.

Once enacted, who will certify that an individual is an Alaska Native, as defined in ANCSA?

The Bureau of Indian Affairs.

Once enacted, what land will be available for selection?

The land that will be available for selection is managed by the Bureau of Land Management (BLM) but must not be:

- Designated as wilderness;
- Withdrawn for the Armed Forces;
- Within a National Monument;
- Within a unit of the National Trails or the National Wild and Scenic Rivers System; or
- Within the National Petroleum Reserve-Alaska.

How large can the allotment be?

The allotment must be at least 2.5 acres in size, but no larger than 160 acres of land.

Once enacted, what will be the process for submitting a selection application?

BLM is required to promulgate regulations within 18 months of the date of enactment. Once those regulations are published in the Federal Register, eligible individuals will have five years to submit an application for an allotment of land.

To assist in determining what land is available, BLM will work with the State of Alaska and Alaska Native Corporations to produce a map of land that is available for selection.

If an individual meets all eligibility requirements, and the land that is requested is available for selection, a certificate with the patent for the land must be issued within one year of the application being submitted.

Can selections be made in wildlife refuges?

The Secretary of the Interior is required to conduct a study of any lands that should be made available for selection within National Wildlife Refuges. This study must be complete within one year. It will then require a vote from a future Congress to make lands available within refuges.