

Aleut suit to send message to industry: 'We won't tolerate this'

by Anna M. Pickett

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The Aleut Community of St. Paul Island has filed a claim against THE M/V Citrus for ITS blatant and purposeful oil spill approximately three miles off the coast of St. Paul Island, Pribilofs. Monetary

value has not been established for the value of the King Eider ducks, used as subsistence winter ducks by the Aleuts, but according to the *Anchorage Daily News*, Fish and Game is estimating that each surviving duck that is cleaned and returned to their natural habitat has cost

• Aleut suit to send message



about \$2,300. There were about one thousand ducks that were killed.

"The spill happened at a time when there is a great abundance of ducks," said Richard Zacharof, president of The Aleut Community. "It's one of our main diets. We subsist off these ducks."

"We want to send a message to the industry," said Zacharof. "That we as Pribilof Island people will not stand for gross negligence of vessels like that to deliberately dump contaminated fuel in our waters. They don't care what they do, but they jeopardize our subsistence

lifestyle. We're not going to tolerate this."

Zacharof said that some monies received from any claim and/or lawsuit settlement will be reinvested back into the community to establish their own oil spill response team.

"It will consist of our own people," said Zacharof. "We'll put money into education and train our people to respond to oil spills."

Lloyd Miller, who was one of the lead attorneys handling the Exxon Valdez Oil Spill Litigation, has been retained to handle this case.



Richard Zacharof, president of The Aleut Community, St. Paul Island's IRA Council.

Photo by Anna M. Pickett