

Hawaiians Move Toward Claims

Because of two Anchorage lawyers and the Alaska Native

Claims Settlement Act, Hawaiian Natives may soon be getting some of their own claims settled. It all started when the organizer of a Hawaiian Native group contacted the attorneys for help.

Stanley J. McCutcheon and his partner, Clark Gruening, are in Honolulu giving advice and assistance to Aloha — Aboriginal Lands of Hawaiian Ancestry — a new organization. It is concerned with settling claims and returning Hawaiian land to Native descendants.

Louisa M. Rice, the founder, heard what McCutcheon had done for Alaska's Natives and brought him and Gruening to

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the Islands. They see strong possibilities for a Hawaiian claims act partly because Congress now has the Alaskan bill as a precedent-setter.

Also, Alaska's congressional delegation will probably give early support in Washington to Hawaiian claims because of their sympathy to the cause involved.

Although Hawaiian Natives haven't anything like the Alaskans' 40 million acres to look forward to, they would get sizeable land area.

And the land, according to McCutcheon, rightfully belongs to them because "The treaty of Hawaiian annexation was agreed to by persons who weren't Hawaiians," he said. "If you want to look at those treaties, you'll find they were coerced."

McCutcheon and Gruening are currently helping lay out a series of local meetings with Native groups on all islands to expand and strengthen Aloha.

"It's going to work, because it worked before. All the Hawaiians who've been shuffled aside will suddenly be something."