

# Sealaska losses force management appointments

The Associated Press

Sealaska Corp. has appointed an interim management team to deal "aggressively" with its probable loss of more than \$25 million in 1982 and ensure profitability in 1983, board chairman and chief executive officer Byron Mallott said last week.

Despite the loss, Mallott said the Juneau-based regional Native corporation has obtained financing to operate in 1983.

The corporation is studying whether to sell its office building in downtown Juneau for operating capital and then lease it back, he said.

He also said the corporation's fish-processing subsidiary, Ocean Beauty Alaska Inc., will not buy the Alaska facilities of the bankrupt New England Fish Co. Inc.

Mallott said the interim management team will be headed by Bruce Johnson, former president and chief executive officer of Chem-Nuclear Systems Inc.

Other appointments include Archie Kovanen as chief financial officer; Chris McNeil Jr. as vice-president, counsel; and Robert Loescher as senior vice-president operations for Sealaska Timber Corp. McNeil and Loescher are Sealaska shareholders and will retain their current positions as officers of Sealaska.

Mallott said team members have signed three-month contracts, but probably would stay to the end of the year. He refused to say how much they are being paid, but said govern-

ment-level salaries had not attracted the management people Sealaska needed.

Sealaska, the largest of the 12 land-based Native regional corporations in the state, also has closed its Anchorage shareholders office as a cost-saving measure.

The office closure was part of a recent layoff of 22 Sealaska employees from throughout the company. One person worked in the Anchorage office. Two employees have been cut from the corporation's Seattle office but one person will keep that office open, said Ross Soboleff, corporation spokesman.

Soboleff said that the offices handled many referrals to

social service agencies and those services will no longer be handled.

The office also provided information about Sealaska for shareholders and helped handle stock transfers for shareholders. Both will now be handled from Juneau, Soboleff said.

The Seattle office, which has been open longer than the Anchorage office, also handled other duties for the corporation. Those will be continued by the one staff member there.

Other cost-cutting measures include a cutback on staff travel and other adjustments in the "kind of services shareholders are used to getting." He said the public affairs office will still operate and will pub-

lish the Sealaska shareholder newsletter.

A sagging timber market and the recall of Alaska canned salmon were the main reasons

for Sealaska's poor performance in 1982, Mallott said. But he acknowledged management mistakes also contributed to the loss.