

Sealaska reports gain

Despite losses from the six-year battle to set up corporate shop common to all the Native land claims corporations, Sealaska Corporation reported to its 15,000 shareholders this month a profit of \$443,000 for Fiscal Year 1977. This figure represents a gain of \$28.59 for every 100 shares of Sealaska stock.

In an annual report almost as noteworthy as the profit, Sealaska President John Borbridge, Jr. stated that the corporation's purchase of Alaska Brick Company had an initial drag effect on Sealaska's economic momentum. The purchase launched Sealaska into the construction and transportation industries but the construction segment was hit hard by competition from other companies and a slowdown in Anchorage housing and general building markets.

Borbridge optimistically predicted:

"We look forward to improvements in Alaska Brick's profits, particularly as the new concrete batch plant gains efficiencies and sales volume increases."

Sealaska's annual report offers the shareholders a substantial departure from the standard format for such publications. The basic financial statements required to be furnished by law are extensively supplemented with notes and explanations in an effort to clarify the confusing language of the financial world.

Describing its business outlook as "positive but cautious," the management of Sealaska outlined the possible future of the corporation in resource development:

--Sealaska wants to put at least part of its 280,000 acre land entitlement into the timber industry. The company estimates that its timber resources could be worth in excess of \$200 million.

--The corporation is interested in exploring for hard rock minerals. Four of six geologists will be gathering data in the field this summer, but management cautioned the shareholders that the mining industry was extremely costly to get into and could be unpredictable.

--Not mentioned in the report is Sealaska's participation with five national firms in Alaska Petrofining, organized this fall to bid for a share of Alaska's North Slope royalty oil. The venture proposes to build a \$1.25 billion petrochemical refinery in Alaska with a capacity of 250,000 barrels per day.

--The new \$7 million Sealaska Plaza in downtown Juneau may be expanded.

Sealaska was one of 12 regional Native profit-making corporations created by the Alaska Native Settlement Act of 1971 to manage and disburse the land and financial resources of the 40 million acre, \$1 billion claims settlement.