

St. Paul, St. George enrollees share settlement

Pribilof Island Aleuts who hope to share in an \$8.5 million settlement awarded the islanders by the U.S. Court of Claims have until Feb. 16 to submit their membership enrollment applications.

The Pribilof Aleuts of St. Paul and St. George Islands were awarded the money on June 29, 1979 as a result of two lawsuits alleging "unfair treatment" by the U.S. government.

Despite constitutional protections guaranteed American citizens, the Aleuts of the Pribilofs were held in a state of virtual servitude by the United

States government until the 1960's. They were required to harvest the fur seals which congregate there each year, reaping big payoffs for the government, but little for themselves.

The Aleuts could not leave their islands without special permission from government officials. These conditions led to the lawsuits, and the eventual decision in favor of the Aleuts.

To be eligible for enrollment and to take part in per capita payments from the award, individuals must have been living on June 22, 1980;

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they must meet the membership requirements of the communities of St. Paul and St. George, and file application forms by the Feb. 16 deadline.

In order to meet the membership requirements of the Pribilof Island communities, individuals must be of Aleut descent and have resided on or been a minor child of a parent who resided on St. Paul Island on June 22, 1980; or have been born on either of the two islands on or before Dec. 31, 1946.

Enrollment forms and additional information may be obtained by writing or calling the Enrollment Coordinator, Enrollment Coordinating Office, Bureau of Indian Affairs, Pouch 7-1971, Anchorage, Alaska, 99510 or by calling the office at (907) 271-3761.

Individual payments will be determined by the final number of applicants ruled eligible. According to the 1980 census, the populations of St. Paul and St. George were 551 and 158 respectively, but the number determined eligible for membership and the payments could be considerably different.