

# Sea Otter Fur Market Gets Fashion Boost

JUNEAU—Alaska's sea otter fur market got another big shot in the arm last week in the world of fashion as furriers around the world began receiving orders from Europe and the United States for garments made from the rare pelt.

Women's Wear Daily, the "Bible" of the women's clothing industry, predicted in a front page article on Feb. 27 that the legendary fur from Alaska would become "the in fur of 1968."

In an article accompanied by two large fashion drawings of sea otter coats for both men and women, Women's Wear Daily reported that Princess Luciana Pignatelli called from Rome to Reiss and Fabrizio in New York, to order the furrier's first sea otter creation—a coat called a "Midi."

The article said Reiss and Fabrizio have already pre-sold two other sea otter Midis for fall.

More than 800 of the ultrasoft, shimmering pelts were sold by the State of Alaska at the Seattle fur exchange in January. Bids soared as high as \$2,300 for a single pelt—paid for a lot of four skins by Niemann Marcus of Dallas—as dealers from around the world vied for the rare skins.

The sea otter was hunted almost to extinction in the 19th century. No pelts have been legally sold for over 50 years.

Careful conservation practices in Alaska have restored the herds to levels again allowing limited hunting.