



2020 Community Meeting Q & A

Due to COVID-19 Sealaska was not able to hold community meetings this year. We held a virtual community meeting on May 20, 2020 from inside Shuka Hit (ancestors house) inside the Walter Soboleff Building. During community meetings there was an opportunity for Q & A. Below are written questions regarding advocacy.

You can view the video from the Q & A from the community meeting at MySealaska.com/FAQs/CommunityMeetingQA.

Advocacy Q & A

1. Can you provide an update on the landless bill?

The landless legislation remains the top legislative priority for Sealaska. We continue to advocate on this inequity, and we regularly work with representatives from the five unrecognized communities to correct this injustice. Currently, we are awaiting re-introduction in the U.S. Congress, but due to COVID-19, Congress has not prioritized any legislation beyond budget, appropriations and COVID-19 relief. Sealaska and landless representatives recently presented at RES2020, a tribal economic gathering, to continue to educate others on the issue and to seek tribal support from the Lower 48.

2. How is Sealaska advocating for our veterans?

For several years, the Sealaska board included the Alaska Native Vietnam Veterans Land Allotment bill on the list of public policy priorities. While this legislation was successfully enacted into law in 2019, the limitations on the available lands for these allotment allocations make it impossible for our Southeast Alaska Native veterans to select lands within our homelands. We are working with the Alaska delegation to ensure that more lands are made available so that our Native veterans can be adequately compensated for missing the opportunity to apply for an allotment due to active service in Vietnam. Sealaska also supports other entities that serve veterans' interests.

3. Sitka Tribe of Alaska filed a lawsuit against the State of Alaska regarding mismanagement of the herring sac roe fishery. Can you give us an update?

In April 2020, Sitka Tribe of Alaska won a round in its lawsuit; the judge writing that the State of Alaska's implementation of current regulations was unlawful. Sealaska always contributes to advocacy efforts to protect subsistence, or our way of life, generally. Sealaska has joined with the Sitka Tribe of Alaska by supporting litigation efforts to protect the important subsistence herring fisheries in the Sitka area. The tribe sought a temporary injunction to prevent commercial harvest until a plan could be implemented to ensure protection of this important resource. The temporary injunction was denied but appealed to the Supreme Court. In both the initial proceeding seeking a temporary

injunction, as well as the Supreme Court appeal, Sealaska participated in an amicus brief in support of the Sitka Tribe of Alaska.

4. How is Sealaska advocating for the Alaska Marine Highway System? Who is helping and advocating for the fishermen?

The Sealaska board of directors adopt policy priorities for its advocacy efforts. One of the highest state priorities is continued and adequate funding for the Alaska Marine Highway System (AMHS). The AMHS is critical to the shareholders and communities within Sealaska's region, due to the island archipelago that makes up Southeast Alaska. The AMHS provides our communities with access to healthcare, cultural events, affordable travel for school activities, as well as access to our regional hubs to purchase basic needs. We work with legislators, the governor's administration, other ANCSA corporations, Southeast Conference and other groups to advocate for appropriate funding and improved ferry service. Sealaska is also monitoring and supporting efforts to help the fishermen impacted by COVID-19.

5. Can Sealaska help shareholders with DNA testing to find out who they are as well as who their biological parents are?

At this time Sealaska does not provide assistance for DNA testing. SHI has been involved in DNA testing projects and could be a resource to help, but most of their projects have been scientific and research related.

6. Can Sealaska help with blood quantum that's listed incorrectly?

The blood quantum information at the Bureau of Indian Affairs currently cannot be changed without an act of Congress. There are many shareholders in this predicament. We are looking at a legislative fix that would provide authority to the local or regional BIA offices to receive documentation and make the appropriate changes. In the meantime, if a descendant cannot enroll due to incorrect blood quantum, we encourage the descendant to apply for descendant stock and to use the appeal process to provide additional documentation showing one-quarter or more blood quantum to the independent examiner. With this supplemental information provided on appeal, the independent examiner can allow stock to be issued despite the incorrect BIA records.

7. Is it possible to sell out or just quit a village corporation and become at-large?

No, that is not possible. The 1991 amendments to ANCSA continue the stock restrictions. Stock cannot be sold, cannot be pledged as an asset, cannot be subjected to a lien or judgment, cannot be assigned, cannot be treated as an asset in bankruptcy or insolvency, and cannot otherwise be taken away.

8. Is Sealaska considering a way to switch from blood quantum to descendant/lineage?

The Sealaska board regularly reviews the blood quantum issue and continues to have discussions around a move to descendant/lineage as opposed to strict blood quantum requirements for descendant shares. Any person who can show descendancy or lineage to an original shareholder can participate in our scholarship and internship programs. Additionally, an individual with descendant status can inherit shares from an original shareholder, and those shares would remain voting shares due to the descendancy/lineage of the Native, regardless of blood quantum.

9. What have you done politically to pressure Senator Lisa Murkowski and others in our Alaska delegation to take action on ocean acidification?

Sealaska annually adopts public policy priorities for our advocacy efforts. We have heard from shareholders consistently on ocean health issues, including ocean acidification, rising temperatures and pollution, and we do advocate on these issues. Sealaska advocates directly, but also supports the efforts of sister organizations and partners in these areas. We have had conversations most recently with Senator Dan Sullivan, who has taken the lead on ocean health issues for the delegation.