

## **The State of Alaska's Position on the Soybean Cargo Of the Selendang Ayu**

### **Beans On Beaches:**

- The un-oiled soybeans are regulated as solid waste by the state.
- State monitors will continue to assess the amount and condition of soybeans on the shoreline during the shoreline cleanup assessment. If the rate of decomposition is acceptable to the state, removal will not be required.
- If the rate of decomposition is slow and unacceptable to the state, removal from the shoreline will be required.

### **Sunken Beans:**

- Soybeans spilled onto the submerged lands represent a possible biological oxygen demand (BOD) or physical smothering threat due to amount and fall under the State Water Quality standards set by ADEC. Treated as a Zone of Deposition.
- Similar condition for comparison is sunken bark at log transfer facilities such as Wards Cove and Silver Bay sites of now closed down pulp mills. State position here is to regulate them as a Zone of Deposition under a permit. However, these bays are protected waters with much less water exchange than the exposed coast at the Spray Cape wreck site.
- The early February ROV survey made in the vicinity of the wreck showed the sunken beans were already fairly widely distributed in sheets of fairly easily lofted drifts of beans as compared with diver reports made in mid-December. In February, 6 weeks after the grounding, the beans were found in observed thicknesses of 6-8" or less, generally much less and often in single bean thickness. The beans were distributed in discontinuous sheets filling in low spots in the bottom.
- Additionally, the wreck site is open to the Bering Sea with strong currents just offshore and strong surge currents present in the immediate area of the wreck. Under the nearly calm conditions of the ROV survey, the ROV operator's estimated the current over the beans to be about a half knot. During periods of larger swells and breaking seas the surges around the wreck should easily loft the beans off the sea floor and re-distribute them as well as deliver a great enough flow of "new" water over the beans so that BOD will not be a concern.
- NOAA and ADEC's Water Quality program do not believe that BOD is an issue for the beans due to the wreck site's exposed, high energy location. The ADEC WQ program does not feel that the beans are an issue of concern to them at this time.
- Monitoring of the soybean distribution and decomposition continues during the Summer Shoreline Assessment and cleanup phases.

### **Beans Remaining in Cargo Holds:**

- Salvors made an inspection of the wreck in mid-April. At that time they inspected the cargo holds and estimated that approximately 75% of the beans originally in the hold were gone. The remaining beans were in a seawater "slurry". The removal of these beans has been proposed as part of the operation required by the State to remove residual pollutants from the wreck.