Plea Ends Nordic Viking Saga

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Jay Barrett/KMXT

The saga of the grounding of the fishing vessel Nordic Viking seems to be coming to a close. The 130-foot boat, acting as a tender, ran aground near Point Gravina in Prince William Sound in July last year, leaking 35-hundred gallons of diesel fuel. Kodiak skipper Dale Pruitt was at the helm of boat at the time.

In an agreement with the State of Alaska, Pruitt is pleading guilty to one count of Prohibited Operation and one count of Oil Pollution. In the plea, he is not, however, admitting or denying the state’s allegations that resulted in the charges, including those that he was under the influence of alcohol or marijuana at the time of the accident.

On the Prohibited Operation charge, Pruitt was sentenced to a one-year suspended sentence and must complete a state-approved alcohol treatment program. On the Oil Pollution charge, Pruitt was sentenced to 90 days in jail with 75 suspended, plus 40 hours of community service related to improving the marine environment. He is also on four years probation. With the agreement, the state will not bring any other charges against him.

In early July the state reached a settlement with the owners then of the Nordic Viking to pay 17-thousand-500 dollars to an environmental group to settle the case against them.

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