

Alutiiq Warrior Kayak Restoration in Planning Stage

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Jennifer Canfield/KMXT

Executive Director of the Alutiiq Museum Sven Haakanson, Susie Malutin and Alfred Naumoff are traveling to Boston this week to visit an Alutiiq warrior kayak housed at the Peabody Museum at Harvard. The trip is another step in a decade-long process to restore the kayak and bring it back to Kodiak. Haakanson says the purpose of this trip is to develop a plan for restoration.

"And to work with the team to identify best ways for restoration of the skin and part of the broken kayak bow tip. So we'll be doing that all this coming week."

Traveling with the group is Alfred Naumoff who Haakanson says is one of the last traditional kayak builders involved with the effort. Haakanson hopes that as the project progresses more people will want to learn tradition kayak building skills.

"I hope to get more folks to give me call to say, 'Hey, I'm interested in this,' or, 'Keep me informed.' That way I can get a list of folks and once we get closer to it we want to do a kayak building class as well as having the kayak here. Kind of take it to the next level so we utilize this piece but to put that traditional knowledge back into a living context where people can use it, share it and keep it alive."

Restoring

what may be a 150-year-old kayak takes a unique skill set. Haakanson says they will be using proven techniques and creating some new ones.

"The

Baranof Museum actually did a kayak restoration project and they did a wonderful job restoring their three-man kayak. And so we're using some of that knowledge but we're also going to be doing some other, I guess, just other experimentations to see what works best so we don't damage the kayak but we also restore it so it looks like it's in its original state."

Restoration

is only part of process of getting the warrior kayak back to Kodiak. The museum is planning a remodel to make space for the 16 foot artifact.

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We wanna be able to build a space where we can have the kayak and our community members and visitors can see it as well as interact with it but not do any damage to it. So there's a whole other thing we have to do in preparing for it, designing an exhibit case for it and raising the funds just to get to that level and then raising the funds just to get it shipped all the way back from Boston."

Once

everything is in place, the Peabody Museum will loan the kayak to the Alutiiq Museum for 10 years.

