900 EVOS Plaintiffs Still Owed $1-Million

Wednesday, 26 September 2012

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Jay Barrett/KMXT

There is about $1-million dollars sitting in a trust account waiting for its owners to claim it. You might be one of them. The Exxon Qualified Settlement Fund is looking for about 900 people who still have money owed to them from the Exxon Valdez Oil Spill settlement.

Dave Oesting is the court appointed lead council for the plaintiffs in the case. He says there is just one more push to find these folks.

-- (EVOS 1 20 sec “We’ve made quite a thorough search over the last two years, and some over 15 years …contact us in order to get their distribution.”)

He says the search has been going on for many years, and these last 900 people have turned out to be the hardest to find.

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(EVOS 2 20 sec “We’ve employed someone for the last two-and-a-half years engaged in extensive skip-tracing activities … It’s presumed even if you’ve dropped off the face of the earth, the IRS you’ll still be in touch with.”)

He says there will be one last publication of the names in the next few weeks in local papers before the money has to be turned over to various states:

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(EVOS 2 32 sec “The reason it’s an issue for us is that all states have unclaimed property laws … pay it over to the state, and they sheet it and it becomes property of the state …give the money to all the different states from which these people hail.”)

He said for example, Vermont, where at least one plaintiff is from, has a deadline of February.

A plaintiff can still get the money owed them even after a state claims it, but Oesting (ESS-sting) says the states don’t make it easy:

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(EVOS 3 17 sec “In my experience in the state of California and the state of Oregon they make very little effort if any to try to contact a missing person … to search the databases online for unclaimed funds, looking for your own name.”)

There are about 70 names on the unpaid claimant list from around Kodiak Island – many of them the estates of people who have died since the 1989 Exxon Valdez Oil Spill. In those cases, their heirs will get the money. We’ve got a link to the list on our web site, KMXT.org. Go take a look even if you’re not expecting a payout yourself, as you may see the names of people you know.

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