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Exxon Valdez Oil Spill Trustee Council

645 G Street, Suite 401, Anchorage, AK 99501-3451 907/278-8012 fax: 907/276-7178



Media Advisory

CORRECTION

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APR 07 1997

EXXON VALDEZ OIL SPILL
TRUSTEE COUNCIL
ADMINISTRATIVE RECORD
97-05

Date: February 18, 1997

Correction concerning Kenai Natives Association land along the Kenai and Moose rivers

A news release issued February 14 contained an error. Please note the error and make any corrections necessary due to the error.

The release, concerning an offer made to acquire a popular sport fishing site in Soldotna, also mentioned other habitat being protected on the Kenai River. The release was in error when it stated "the Kenai Natives Association *has agreed to sell* 3,254 acres along the Kenai and Moose rivers, which will be managed by the Kenai National Wildlife Refuge. The parcel includes 800 acres along the Kenai River just below Skilak Lake."

The Kenai Natives Association *has not agreed to sell* the property.

The Trustee Council has contributed funds as part of a package offered by the Department of Interior to the Kenai Natives Association, following passage of a federal law last November that directs the offer be made to KNA for a land exchange and land acquisition. However, the Kenai Natives Association has not taken any action so far to accept the offer. A KNA shareholder advisory vote on the offer will be taken in the upcoming weeks, and the results tallied, *before* the board of directors takes any action on the offer.

Contact: Molly McCammon or Joe Hunt at 907/278-8012

General information concerning the oil spill and restoration efforts can be obtained from the Oil Spill Public Information Center at 645 G St., Suite 100, Anchorage, Alaska 99501, ph: 278-8008 toll-free within Alaska at 1-800-478-7745.

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For Immediate Release

Date: February 14, 1997

EXXON VALDEZ OIL SPILL
TRUSTEE COUNCIL
ADMINISTRATIVE RECORD

97-04

Protection of Kenai River takes another step forward with acquisition of popular sport fishing site

The Exxon Valdez Oil Spill Trustee Council voted today to purchase one of the most popular Kenai River sport fishing spots in the City of Soldotna.

The Kenai River, where it passes below the Sterling Highway bridge, has long been one of the most popular fishing locations due to its ease of access and the run of red salmon that move upstream along its banks. The Trustee Council agreed to spend \$698,000 to add the vital 3.34 acre parcel to the list of Kenai River properties to be protected.

The Kenai River Sport Fishing Association recently built a 178-foot fishing platform at the site to allow continued fishing while protecting the banks for rearing salmon. Acquisition of the site allows extension of the "fishwalk" along the river front some 463 feet further downstream. It also creates a nearly continuous stretch of publicly owned river front from the bridge to Soldotna's Centennial Park.

Governor Tony Knowles made acquisition of this and other Kenai River parcels one of his top priorities in meeting the growing needs of sport fishing while at the same time protecting river.

"Protection and enhancement are the keys to maintaining the Kenai River as a unique, and scenic watershed," Knowles said. "We have purchased more than 1,800 acres along the Kenai River, which allows us to protect several miles of shoreline vital for rearing red and king salmon."

Collectively, these acquisitions provide a cornerstone for a larger comprehensive Kenai River restoration effort that also includes bank stabilization and revegetation efforts; scientific research and monitoring to enhance the ability of resource managers to protect fishery resources; and improved management of human uses to reduce adverse impacts.

The Kenai River supports all five species of Pacific salmon and provides habitat for 23 other fish species. It's estimated that sport and commercial fish harvests of Kenai River salmon provide as much as \$78 million annually to the state's economy. The river is accessible to over 70 percent of the state population and accounts for 19 percent of the total statewide sport fishing interest.

Although the Kenai River appears to have recovered from the effects of the oil spill, habitat protection and enhancement is considered essential for the long term health of the system and the resources.

"This has been a collaborative federal and state effort with unanimous support on the Trustee Council," said Molly McCammon, executive director for the Council. "Everyone recognizes that the Kenai River has exceptional biological and economic value and that it receives intense public use. Governor Knowles and the Trustee Council, through habitat protection and enhancement, are seeking a balance to keep both the river and the fishing economy healthy on the Kenai Peninsula."

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Contact: Molly McCammon or Joe Hunt at 907/278-8012

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For Immediate Release

Date: February 14, 1997

EXXON VALDEZ OIL SPILL
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97-03

Trustees offer to protect valuable habitat within Kenai Fjords National Park

The Exxon Valdez Oil Spill Trustee Council today agreed to spend \$14.1 million to purchase more than 32,000 acres within Kenai Fjords National park and an adjacent wildlife refuge.

The Trustee Council voted to make a formal offer to English Bay Corporation to purchase the land on the southern coast of Kenai Peninsula in an effort to aid the recovery of species injured in the 1989 oil spill. The land includes some of the most valuable coastal habitat in the park. Six of seven parcels to be protected were hit by oil during the spill, injuring marine mammals, seabirds and intertidal plants and animals.

Blocks of English Bay Corporation land are spread throughout the park, with tracts on Resurrection Bay, Aialik Bay, Nuka Bay and several smaller bays, coves and islands. Coastal portions are used by numerous species injured by the spill, including harlequin ducks, black oystercatchers, harbor seals, sea otters and herring. Upland areas support river otters, marbled murrelets, spawning salmon and other species injured by the spill.

The habitat protection package was negotiated by the U.S. Department of Interior. It would add 30,200 acres of inholdings to the Kenai Fjords National Park and 2,270 acres to the adjacent Alaska Maritime National Wildlife Refuge.

The negotiated price is based on English Bay Corporation retaining a right of access to its land for certain hunting, fishing and other activities. This is consistent with rights retained by other sellers when large parcels were purchased by the Trustee Council. However, because its land is in a national park where hunting is prohibited, the corporation has agreed to sell its access rights on all but 9,000 acres in the southwest corner of the park, which is located closest to the village of Nanwalek (formerly known as English Bay). Up to \$1.1 million will be spent to acquire these rights and that money will come from the Exxon Valdez criminal settlement with the federal government.

“This acquisition has broad public support and results in everyone coming out ahead,” said George T. Frampton, Jr., who as Assistant Secretary of the Interior for Fish, Wildlife and Parks has spearheaded efforts to acquire park inholdings. “Wildlife is protected from development, the Native shareholders of English Bay Corporation receive an economic return for their lands allowing them to establish a permanent investment fund, and a national wilderness treasure -- the only fjord system in the United States -- will be preserved.”

As part of the agreement, English Bay Corporation will deposit \$500,000 from the sale proceeds into a special cultural conservation fund. The fund will be used to survey and protect archaeological sites on its lands which are of historic and cultural importance to the people of Nanwalek.

This agreement is the tenth in a series of large habitat protection packages stemming from the *Exxon Valdez* oil spill. The Trustee Council has already purchased title, conservation easements or timber rights to approximately 421,000 acres in the Kodiak, Prince William Sound and Cook Inlet regions. In addition, the Trustee Council has agreed to a package protecting approximately 68,000 acres of habitat now belonging to the Tatitlek Corporation. That agreement is pending a vote of the corporation's shareholders

The Council, funded by the \$900 million civil settlement with Exxon, was created to help restore natural resources injured by the oil spill through habitat acquisition and scientific studies.

Contact: Molly McCammon or Joe Hunt at 907/278-8012

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Media Advisory

February 5, 1997

EXXON VALDEZ OIL SPILL
TRUSTEE COUNCIL
ADMINISTRATIVE RECORD

97-02

Agreement signed to protect habitat in western Prince William Sound

Attached is a press release put out today by the office of Agriculture Secretary Dan Glickman who signed an agreement this morning with Chenega Corporation to protect nearly 60,000 acres in Prince William Sound.

This represents the first major habitat protection agreement in Prince William Sound to be formalized.

The package includes: 59,520 acres
 224 miles of coastline
 22 anadromous rivers or streams

Price: \$34 million total
 — \$24 million from Exxon civil settlement
 — \$10 million from Exxon criminal funds (federal)

Acreage breakdown: 20,968 acres sold to the U.S. Forest Service.
 16,268 acres sold to the State of Alaska.
 22,284 acres of conservation easement, managed by USFS.

Two parcels included in the purchase, Eshamy Bay and Jackpot Bay, are among the highest ranked parcels in the oil spill area for restoration of injured resources. These two areas have the largest populations of wild pink salmon in Prince William Sound and together contain 22 anadromous streams. Eshamy Bay is also the highest sockeye producing system in western Prince William Sound.

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Numerous species injured by the spill are found in the area, including harbor seals, harlequin ducks, marbled murrelets, pigeon guillemots and sea otters. The lands include most of Chenega Island, Fleming Island, the northern half of Evans Island and the southern tip of Knight Island.

Under the agreement, the Chenega Corporation will retain ownership of the original village site of Chenega, which was destroyed in the 1964 earthquake. It would also keep several small development sites ranging in size from 30 acres to 1.5 acres.

This agreement is the eighth in a series of large habitat protection packages stemming from the *Exxon Valdez* oil spill. The Trustee Council has already purchased title, conservation easements or timber rights to approximately 361,000 acres in the Kodiak and Cook Inlet regions. In addition, the Trustee Council has agreed to a package protecting approximately 66,000 acres of habitat now belonging to the Tatitlek Corporation. That agreement is pending a vote of the corporation's shareholders.

The Council, funded by the \$900 million civil settlement with Exxon, was created to help restore natural resources injured by the oil spill through habitat acquisition and scientific studies.

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Contact: Joe Hunt at 907/278-8012

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For Immediate Release

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EXXON VALDEZ OIL SPILL
TRUSTEE COUNCIL
ADMINISTRATIVE RECORD

Restoration Workshop to Host
Educational Public Session



EXXON VALDEZ OIL SPILL
TRUSTEE COUNCIL

645 G STREET, ANCHORAGE, AK, 99501
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1997

**Restoration
Workshop**

JANUARY 23-25

ANCHORAGE, ALASKA

Public Session

SATURDAY,

JANUARY 25

2 P.M.

Students and a curious public will be given front row seats this January when leading scientists from throughout Alaska and the nation gather to share what they have learned about the effects of the *Exxon Valdez* oil spill and the prospects for recovery of species injured by the spill.

The Restoration Workshop is sponsored each year by the *Exxon Valdez* Oil Spill Trustee Council to allow scientists to share technical data, analysis and ideas with other scientists. The entire forum is open to the public. This year, however, a special two-hour presentation will be geared specifically for the public, with scientists and researchers on hand to explain their findings to date.

The public session will be ideal for the student who wants to know more about what it's like to be a biologist working in Alaska. It will not only focus on study results, but also on what it takes to conduct research in Alaska waters.

Studying the marbled murrelet, for example, requires creative research techniques. Murrelets, which have been clocked at 100 miles an hour darting through thick forests, are elusive in their nesting habitats. To observe a nest, researchers in full climbing gear must climb 40 feet or more to the tops of old growth Sitka spruce.

The public will get a chance to view a whole new world under the sea through video taken as part of hydro-acousitic research in Prince William Sound. Biologists will talk about killer whales as well as explain how they grow baby clams and "plant" them as seedlings the size of a fingernail. The public will learn about tagging and tracking harbor seals, how vital lab work helps protect Cook Inlet salmon runs, and how kayaks are used to "round up" harlequin ducks into a pen for tagging.

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"A tremendous amount of new research is being done in the spill area," said Molly McCammon, executive director for the Trustee Council. "We want to get the results from these studies to the public in an easy-to-understand and interesting way. The public session is being designed as a learning event for the entire family."

McCammon will present a short slide show explaining the Trustee Council programs for habitat protection, restoration, research and monitoring. Chief Scientist Bob Spies will discuss the ecosystem approach to scientific research and researchers will explain their work in a series of short talks. John Hendricks, executive director of the Alaska SeaLife Center in Seward, will also be on hand to discuss the role of the center in future marine research and public education.

The public session will be held Saturday, January 25, 1997, at the Hotel Captain Cook. The program will begin at 2 p.m. and last approximately 2 hours. Posters, displays, videos and computer programs will be available for public viewing immediately before and after the program.

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Editors: Please include this notice in your calendar of upcoming events.

Contact: Molly McCammon or Joe Hunt at 907/278-8012